

My risk-taking capacity hasn't been fully utilised : PM Modi in podcast

► PM Modi's podcast with Nikhil Kamath, in New Delhi...(PIB)

New Delhi, Jan 10 (GNS) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday asserted that he has never lived in a comfort zone and that his risk-taking capacity has not been fully utilised yet. In a free-wheeling chat with Zerodha co-founder Nikhil Kamath, the prime minister said people are unsuccessful in life when they get used to the comfort zone.

"It has been my luck that I have not spent life in comfort zone, have never been there... Since I was out of comfort zone, I knew what I had to do. Probably I am unfit for comfort..." he said during the podcast.

"The kind of life I have lived, even small things give me satisfaction," he added. Modi said that people are unsuccessful in life when they get used to comfort zone. "I am in a position in which I have to detach myself from emotions, and the natural ten-

dencies human beings have...I have to rise above it," he said. "Like in 2002, there were elections in Gujarat. It was the biggest test of my life... I was not watching TV, at noon I heard sounds of drums outside my house. I had told people not to tell me about the results till noon...then I was sent a letter that we are ahead.

"I don't think it had any effect on me, whether you call it restlessness or anxiety... but there was a thought to overpower it," Modi said. "Once there were blasts at five places... Imagine my situation as the chief minister. I said I wanted to go to the police control room, but my security denied saying it is risky. I insisted that I will go. I went and sat in the car, and said I will go to the hospital first. They said there were blasts in hospitals too, but I insisted that

I will go. You can say there was anxiety, restlessness in me. But my way was to be totally involved in my mission, a sense of responsibility takes over," he said.

Modi also recalled the Godhra train fire incident of 2002 in which many karsevaks returning from Ayodhya were killed. "On February 24 2002, I became an MLA for the first time. On February 27, I went to the assembly for the first time. I was three-days old as an MLA and the Godhra incident happened.

I was restless, I was worried, I was in the House... I said I want to go to Godhra. I suggested that we will go to Vadodara, and take a helicopter from there. They said there is no helicopter and I asked them to find one..." Modi recalled. "There was one chopper of ONGC, but it was a single-en-



gine one. They said they can't take a VIP in that...I said I am not a VIP but a common man, I will go by a single-engine helicopter...and I reached Godhra," he said. "It

was a painful sight. There were dead bodies everywhere, but I knew I am at a post where I have to rise above my emotions. I tried to keep myself together," he said.

Future not in war, but in Buddha: PM

New Delhi, Jan 10 (GNS) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday reiterated that "the future does not lie in war" and emphasised India's commitment to peace, drawing on the teachings of Lord Buddha.

Over the past year, Modi has consistently highlighted the futility of war, advocating for peace in the context of the Ukraine-Russia conflict and the Israel-Hamas conflict.

The Prime Minister made these remarks while formally inaugurating the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Addressing the Indian diaspora, he said, "Due to the strength of its heritage, India is able to tell the world that the future does not lie in war but in Buddha (peace)." "India is not only the mother of democracy but democracy is a way of life here,"

Modi added. He also highlighted that the world now listens to India, a nation that presents not only its own perspectives, but also the voices of the Global South. In his speech, Modi praised the Indian diaspora for their ability to embrace diversity and integrate seamlessly into societies worldwide, respecting local traditions and laws.

He commended their honesty and contributions to the growth and prosperity of their host countries while maintaining a strong emotional connection with India. He noted their enthusiastic celebration of India's achievements. On India's development, Modi stated that within the past decade, the country has lifted 250 million people out of poverty and risen from the world's 10th-largest economy to the fifth largest. Expressing optimism, he said, "In-



dia will soon become the third largest economy." He highlighted India's achievements in the space sector, including Chandrayaan mission. He said India is now manufacturing "Made-in-India" fighter jets and transport aircraft.

He envisioned a future where people will travel to India for PBD in "Made-in-India" planes. Addressing the Indian diaspora at the event, Modi said he always considers them as "ambassadors of India". He also said it is India's responsibility to assist the diaspora during crisis situations. He urged the Indian diaspora to bring at least five friends of non-Indian origin on their next visit to India to encourage tourism in the country.

Kejriwal alleges BJP manipulating electoral roll in New Delhi seat, files complaint with EC

New Delhi, Jan 10 (GNS) AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal lodged a complaint with the Election Commission, alleging that the BJP has manipulated the electoral roll in the New Delhi assembly constituency from where he is contesting the upcoming elections. Kejriwal alleged that people associated with the BJP applied to add 13,000 new voters in the electoral roll and they sought to cancel 5,500 voter entries to "influence" the voting in its favour.

The former Delhi chief minister visited the Election Commission (EC) on Thursday to lodge a complaint against these alleged malpractices. Addressing the media after meeting EC officials, Kejriwal said, "In the past 22 days, 5,500 applications have been received for deletion of voter names in the New Delhi constituency. There are about one lakh voters in this constituency, meaning

applications to remove 5.5 per cent of the electorate have been filed in just 22 days." "This raises serious concerns, as when the Election Commission contacted some of these people, they denied submitting such applications.

All 89 individuals contacted said they had not filed any requests. It clearly indicates a scam," he said. Kejriwal further highlighted the sudden surge in voter registration applications. "In the last 15 days, applications for adding 13,000 new voters have been received.

If such largescale additions and deletions take place at the last minute, it will make a mockery of the election process," he said. Kejriwal, the three-time MLA from New Delhi since 2013, is locked in an intense triangular contest against the sons of two former chief ministers of Delhi. While the BJP



has fielded former chief minister Sahib Singh Verma's son Parvesh Verma, Congress has given ticket to Sandeep Dikshit whose mother Sheila Dikshit was a three-term chief minister of Delhi. The AAP chief also demanded action against BJP leader Verma, accusing him of bribing voters and distributing money. Kejriwal called for a raid on Verma's residence to check the "presence of illicit funds".

BJP candidates for ensuing elections for Council announced

Hyderabad, Jan.10 (NSS): Union Minister of Coal and Mines G Kishan Reddy in a pressnote here today sated on the instructions of Jagat Prakash Nadda, president, All India BJP, the following names are hereby announced as the BJP candidates for the ensuing elections for the Legislative Council, Telangana.

MLC Teachers' Constituency Nalgonda-Warangal-Khammam Puli Sarotham Reddy (Warangal) hails from Warangal served as a school assistant for over 21 years and as a headmaster for over 10 years. He was General Secretary of PRTU from 2012 to 2019. He was very active in the Telangana separate State struggle as part of Teachers' JAC.

As a teacher and as an activist, he has done exemplary service for the resolution of long-pending teachers' issues. MLC Teachers' Constituency - Karimnagar-Nizamabad-Adilabad-Medak

Malka Komariah of (Peddapally) hails from Peddapally in Karimnagar district. He completed his B.E. from Osmania University. Subsequently, he established schools and has done significant work in promoting quality education at the school level.

He established educational institutions in Peddapally, Nirmal and Hyderabad. Currently, he is the Chairman of Pallavi group of institutions Hyderabad. As an academic administrator and an educator, he has made immense contributions towards enhancing quality education.

Further, with his vast experience in the domain, he has a vision for the promotion of educational architecture in Telangana. MLC Graduates' Constituency - Karimnagar-Nizamabad-Adilabad-Medak C. Anji Reddy (Sangareddy) is a BA Maths graduate, hails from Ramachandrapuram in Medak



district. He has been an entrepreneur with investments in diverse areas. He has been associated with the nationalist ideology right from childhood. His wife Godavari Anji Reddy is presently the president of the BJP Sanga Reddy district. Anji Reddy runs SR Trust for last two decades. SR Trust has been actively working for providing drinking water in the villages in addition to enhancing education opportunities for the poor.

Sena (UBT) leader files police complaint over video 'defaming' Aaditya Thackeray

Mumbai, Jan 10 (GNS) Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Vinayak Raut on Friday filed a police complaint alleging that a video of a raid at a dance bar is being falsely linked to party colleague Aaditya Thackeray, an official said. According to the official, the purported video was shot at a dance

bar in Mumbai's Andheri area. It shows a few women emerging from a cavity created inside the premises after police action. However, the text superimposed on the visual claims that the place is a "cafe" owned by Aaditya Thackeray, Raut said in his complaint. Raut told the police that

the content was intentionally created and shared on social media to defame Thackeray, a former Maharashtra minister, the official said. The cyber police of the Mumbai crime branch have initiated an inquiry into the video and further action is being taken, the official added.

SC stays GST notices worth over Rs 1 lakh crore against online gaming firms for tax fraud

► GST authorities in October 2023 issued showcause notices to online gaming companies for tax evasion

Mumbai, Jan 10 (GNS) The Supreme Court on Friday stayed showcause notices issued by GST authorities worth over Rs 1 lakh crore to online gaming companies and casinos over alleged tax evasion. A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan said the matters required hearing and all proceedings against the gaming companies should remain stayed in the meantime. Additional solicitor general N Venkataraman, representing the GST department, said some showcause notices would come to an end in February. The matter was posted on March 18. GST authorities in October 2023 issued showcause notices to online gaming compa-

nies for tax evasion. The government amended the GST law, making it mandatory for overseas online gaming companies to register in India from October 1, 2023 onward. In August, 2023, the GST council clarified 28 per cent GST would be levied on the full value of bets placed on online gaming platforms. Gaming companies moved various high courts against such GST demands, contesting the claims of the revenue authorities. The top court last year allowed a petition of the Centre and transferred to itself pleas, challenging the imposition of 28 per cent GST on e-gaming firms, from nine high courts for an authoritative pronouncement. Many online gaming



firms like Games 24x7, Head Digital Works, Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports had moved the top court challenging the GST imposition. The top court had stayed the Karnataka High Court verdict quashing the GST intimation notice to the tune of Rs 21,000 crore issued to an online gaming firm.

City cyber crime police in nationwide pursuit of fraudsters

Hyderabad, Jan.10 (NSS): In view of the alarming rise in cyber fraud cases, the Cyber Crime Police Station, Hyderabad, has taken significant measures to combat cybercrime by conducting extensive operations across Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh States. These efforts, carried out by the Cyber Crime Teams, targeted various

modus operandi and resulted in the apprehension of several key players with sophisticated networks exploiting systems and loopholes to perpetrate large-scale financial frauds. The detected cases spanned a variety of Modus Operandi. Investment fraud five of 2068/2024; 3063/2024; 2483/2024; 3064/2024; 2802/2024 under Sections 66 C, 66 D IT Act, &

Sec 111(2)(b), 318(4), 319(2), 336(3), 338, 340(2) of BNS. Digital arrest scams two 2859/2024; 2315/2024 under Sections 66 C, 66 D IT Act, & Sec. 111(2)(b), 308(2), 318(4), 319(2), 336(3), 338, 340(2) of BNS. Trading Fraud three 2806/2024; 21/2024; 3081/2024 U/s 66 C, 66 D IT Act, & Sec. 111(2)(b), 318(4), 319(2), 336(3), 338, 340(2) of BNS.

Mollycoddling the fundamentalists

On July 28, as many as 20 people were killed in a Taliban attack at the office of the vice-presidential running candidate Amrullah Saleh in Kabul. He, however, was evacuated. Three days later, a bus ran over a roadside bomb, planted by the Taliban on the Kandahar-Herat highway, killing 34 passengers, mainly women and children — an act of inhuman, senseless killing. On August 1, 10 Afghan police officers were killed at the Daikundi province police checkpoint. Overall, in recent decades, one of the nations in the world which has been intensely afflicted with recurring fratricidal violence and tormented with grave externally driven political instability, unquestionably, has been the land of the Hindu Kush, namely Afghanistan.

A victim of America's inability to bring about a modicum of peace despite the superpower's involvement in it for nearly 18 years — the longest war in its history — with costs amounting to at least \$2 trillion and thousands of fatalities, Afghanistan displays no signs of normalcy returning to it. That the situation inside Afghanistan has been aggravated by regional rivalries, the unholy ambitions of the extremist Afghan Taliban and neighbouring Pakistan's eternal quest for a pliant regime in Kabul is beyond question. The major stakeholder in hapless Afghanistan since the launch of Operation Freedom in 2001 to rid Afghanistan of the then alive terrorist kingpin Osama bin Laden and his formidable network of terrorists has been, undoubtedly, the US. However, it is more than clear that, in the last five years or so, the US has shown signs of being militarily fatigued and financially exhausted with its prolonged deployment in Afghanistan. Thus, successive US administrations, including those of Barack Obama and Donald Trump, have been eagerly looking for an honourable exit from Afghanistan. Just the other day, the mercurial President Trump casually stated that if he desired, he could solve the Afghan problem in a week's time but did not do so as there would be 10 million casualties! That this statement coming from the head of the sole global super power is nothing short of being bizarre and irresponsible is to say the least. In the last two years, the US has

► India must endeavour to synergise its Afghan policy with Russia and Iran and not get relegated to regional oblivion, thanks to the US strategic blundering in South Asia. India must steer clear of the myopic US policies for Afghanistan and the region.



endeavoured to open up channels with the totally anti-Kabul government militant Taliban to strike some sort of a deal which would give the US a face-saving exit from Afghanistan. And now with the US General Election approaching early next year, President Trump appears to be in an ignoble hurry to strike an agreement with the same lot of terrorists, who continue to not only target US soldiers but also innocent Afghan civilians, with impunity and utter disdain. That the Trump administration is negotiating with the Afghan Taliban behind the back of the democratically elected government of Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, it officially supports, is reprehensible. The US talks with the Afghan Taliban, spearheaded by its special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad (himself of Afghan origin) and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, too, appear to be in haste to arrive at some agreement with the wily, violence-sprouting Taliban. That the latter are more than conscious of the US' tearing hurry to depart from Afghanistan is enabling the Taliban to extract the maximum they can from the US, disregarding the Ashraf Ghani ad-

ministration in toto. That the Taliban will mount their major offensive against any Kabul government, once the US departs, is beyond question. If that happens, Afghanistan will revert to the dark ages with a highly medieval fundamentalist Islamic government in power. Such an eventuality also portends likely instability and terrorism spreading throughout the region. Apart from the Taliban, Pakistan, largely isolated by the global community for years and ostracised by its one-time mentor, the US, is now back in business, thanks to its supposedly close links with the Taliban. Just last week in Washington, during his maiden visit to the US, Pakistan PM Imran Khan too was feted by Donald Trump to influence the Pak-friendly Taliban to arrive at a suitable agreement with the US. That the crafty Pakistanis would pull out all stops to extract maximum financial and military aid from the US for any so-called assistance vis-à-vis the Taliban is a foregone conclusion. Meanwhile, Pakistan has successfully ensured that India, despite having excellent relations with Afghanistan and being a major donor in civil aid

to Kabul has been marginalised in the current negotiations being conducted for the future contours of Afghanistan. India also appears to have, after many years, again been hyphenated with Pakistan by the US in regional affairs. Nevertheless, India must endeavour to synergise its Afghan policy with Russia and Iran and not get relegated to regional oblivion, thanks to the US strategic blundering in South Asia.

India must steer clear of the myopic US policies for Afghanistan and the region. Accordingly, it must transform its civilisational links with Afghanistan into a stronger strategic partnership for enhancing peace in the region. God forbid, if the Taliban ever come to power in Afghanistan, terrorism in greater potency, will be a natural outcome to enter our boundaries and give an additional boost to terrorism in Kashmir. The Government of India may wish to send a strong message to the US not to aggravate Kabul's misery by any hasty withdrawal from Afghanistan. The security situation demands a strong US presence in support of a democratically elected Afghan Government.

Debt Market Outlook: Term spreads remain attractive

What went by: Bonds continued their positive run with the 10-year bond yield falling by 51 basis points (bps) while the 10-year 'AAA' and 10-year SDL eased by 33 bps on the decision of the government to stick to fiscal consolidation in their FY20 budget, announcement of sovereign bond (which could help balance domestic demand/supply gap) and positive global cues. The curve bull flattened with the 10-year to 5-year G-Sec spread reduced to 6.5 bps from 15 bps on an average in June as market participants started pricing in more easing.

The FY20 Budget surprised the market by lowering the fiscal deficit target to 3.3 per cent of GDP vis-a-vis the indicated level of 3.4 per cent presented earlier in the interim budget in February 2019. In the final budget, FY20 estimates (versus the interim budget) were cut by Rs 51,000 crore for income tax and Rs 98,000 crore for total GST collections. However, no overall expenditure cuts or higher borrowing is planned. This reduction in revenue estimates is planned to be met by higher customs (Rs 11,000 crore), excise duties (Rs 40,000 crore), non-tax revenues (Rs 41,000 crore from higher RBI and nationalised bank dividends, possible spectrum auctions, among others) and higher non-debt capital receipts (Rs 17,000 crore from disinvestments, among others).

Furthermore, the government announced its decision to start raising a part of its gross borrowing programme in external markets in external currencies. The Finance Secretary has said first bond may take 3-5 months and that they will target borrowing 10-15 per cent of gross borrowing offshore. India's merchandise trade deficit was broadly flat month-on-month (m/m) at \$15.3 billion in June (May was at \$15.4 billion). Exports fell 9.7 per cent year-on-year (y/y) in June, the weakest print since January 2016 (May was at +3.9 per cent), and imports declined 9.1 per cent (May was at +4.3 per cent), a 31-month low. Industrial production growth for May 2019 saw a moderation in growth to 3.1 per cent from 4.3 per cent a month back and 3.8 per cent, a year ago. Economic activity-wise classification show that this moderation was largely due to the manufacturing sector which grew by 2.5 per cent.

On the user based classification, strong performance came from consumer non-durables at 7.7 per cent and infra and construction at 5.5 per cent. Growth for capital and intermediate goods remained weak at 0.8 per cent and 0.6 per cent, respectively. June wholesale, or WPI, inflation further moderated sharply to 2.02 per cent (consensus: 2.25 per cent) as against 2.45 per cent in May owing to favourable base effects and moderation in manufacturing, fuel and power inflation. In a widely expected move, the US Federal Reserve cut interest rates by 25 bps to a new range of 2.00-2.25 per cent. The Fed also announced plans to end the reduction of its \$3.8 trillion asset portfolio, effective August 1, two months earlier than previously expected. In the press conference post the meet, the Fed chair described the cut as a mid-cycle "insurance" cut in order to make sure that the recovery prolongs in the face of global and trade related headwinds and also to give support to inflation. In particular, he was focused on the cumulative change in financial conditions since early in the year during which the Fed has turned from being on a hiking cycle, to being on a patient hold, to finally cutting rates by 25 bps.

Outlook:

The RBI's MPC in its August policy cut the repo rate by 35 bps to 5.40 per cent, while maintaining the policy stance as accommodative. The move to cut was decided with the 35 bps to 25 bps vote counting as 4:2. It may be recalled that RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das had earlier floated the idea of challenging the conventional 25 bps moves, with unconventional steps like this one possibly reaffirming the signalling effect of policy direction as well. The policy is largely in line with the dovish end of expectations. There is no decision with respect to the working group on liquidity management framework. However, the Governor did note the very large surpluses in the system today and reaffirmed the commitment to provide abundant liquidity. Thus, the implementation basis to the recommendations of the framework is very likely to be consistent with the current market view that the RBI has already moved to targeting surplus liquidity.

Game theoretic approach to India-Pakistan conflict

The tensions between India and Pakistan refuse to abate. Ties between the two countries are probably at their lowest point in two decades. The deep hostilities today are only overshadowed by the ghosts of the Kargil war in 1999 and the 2001 Parliament attacks. Even the 2008 Mumbai attacks did not bring the relations between the two nations to such a low. This comes riding on a series of events starting from the shocking Pathankot attack (2016), Uri attack (2016), Amarnath Yatra Attack (2017) to the recent Pulwama attack (2019). As a result, the leaders of the two nations have not met since 2015.

The matter reached a crescendo when India abrogated Article 370, which ended the special status that had been accorded to Kashmir and brought it under central control. Even though the matter is a domestic issue for India, Pakistan has made concerted efforts to internationalise the issue. Imran Khan even went on to appeal to the international community through The New York Times for wider involvement over the issue arguing that a "threat looms over the world... under a nuclear shadow." The developing animosity does not seem to be nearing its end anytime soon. While the

threat of nuclear war has been repeatedly used by Pakistan to rile up international support over the Kashmir issue, India needs to practice restraint in its approach towards the issue. The gains from peace far exceed the returns from adopting a belligerent stance. In this regard, the idea of reconsidering India's no first use (NFU) posture on nuclear weapons is quite problematic. This can be understood from a game theoretic viewpoint. What remains of utmost importance is whether India should revoke its no first use policy or not. This question can be answered using a classic example of a "Prisoner's dilemma." The game involves two players - India and Pakistan, each having two sets of strategies to choose from, i.e. to launch a nuclear attack (called "attack") or not to attack. If only one country attacks, the attacker receives a positive payoff, and the opponent gets a negative one. Fixing the strategy of other players as attack or not attack, attacking will always give the maximum payoff to each. Therefore, the dominant strategy of each player is to attack, which is the only Nash equilibrium in the game. However, both the players would be understandably better off by choosing not to attack at all. Their overall

payoff would be higher than the dominant strategy Nash equilibrium. Hence, reconciling their differences and not attacking can indeed provide higher gains to both. This is so because the country attacking first might have first-mover advantage, but it would be followed by a series of counter strikes and eventually both would receive negative payoffs. Thus, even though both countries have a dominant strategy of attacking each other, both would be better off by cooperating. The NFU policy acts as an assurance for Pakistan that India would not attack first, which allows it to choose the strategy of not attacking. If India abandons the policy, then it brings an element of uncertainty into the game. In such a case, when there is a deterioration in ties the next time, Pakistan will be uncertain of India's actions. And given the history of wars that both countries have fought, Pakistan would be skeptical of winning a conventional military strike. So, the best strategy for Pakistan would be to use nuclear weapons at the very beginning. Uncertainty in such case would indeed act as a catalyst in a nuclear strike from Pakistan's end. This is because Pakistan will be afraid of India's possible actions. If India uses its nuclear weapons, it will in all likelihood

destroy its neighbour's nuclear capabilities. Fearing that if such a situation arises, the chances of Pakistan losing the war using conventional force would be extremely high, the country will strike first. Thus, ambiguity is likely to escalate the chances of a nuclear war. The NFU policy is a tool to ensure peace in the region and should not be abandoned.

If India sticks to its no-first-use policy, Pakistan's best response should also be to not attack. The policy ensures that the countries do not gravitate towards the Nash equilibrium where both countries attack each other. It acts as a deterrent that forces both countries to remain at the Pareto superior condition of not attacking where both of them are better off. This game theoretic model also shows that if India asserts its commitment to NFU, Pakistan would choose to attack in spite of its warmongering. Pakistan would be fully aware of the repercussions that would follow if it attacks India. Apart from destruction, the fear of a social boycott by the world would also be a deciding factor for Pakistan. Thus, calmer heads should prevail in such times instead of a needless engagement in a futile standoff.

It's advantage BJP in Haryana, Maharashtra

The BJP-led NDA is never short of showcasing virtues of holding simultaneous polls. But when it came to holding the Jharkhand Assembly polls along with those of Haryana and Maharashtra, it developed cold feet. There has been no plausible explanation as to why Chief Minister Raghubir Das did not toy with the idea of recommending the dissolution of the House a month ahead of its schedule. As per the constitutional provisions, an elected government, enjoying majority in the House, can advance polls by six months. The North Block, which has been proactive under the leadership of BJP chief Amit Shah, too, has maintained a stoic silence. Political grapevine has it that advancing Jharkhand polls did not get the go-ahead as the political situation in the state is not conducive, as in Haryana or Maharashtra. This is one state where alliance talks are still on among the Congress, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Jharkhand Vikas Morcha

(Prajantrik), RJD and the Left parties. The Congress alliance with the JVMP and JMM was, however, not rewarding in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections as the BJP had walked away with 12 out of the 14 seats. An opinion poll conducted by ABP News-C-Voter has shown that both the Manohar Lal Khattar- and Devendra Fadnavis-led BJP-NDA governments are set to return home with ease. The survey findings for Haryana predict 78 seats for the BJP and a single digit tally of eight for the Congress out of 90 Assembly seats in Haryana. In Maharashtra, the BJP-Shiv Sena combine is projected to get 205 out of 288 Assembly seats. The opposition seems happy to be unhappy. Going by this survey's indication, the electoral chances of the Congress in Haryana and Maharashtra appear to be next to nothing. But the party is making no attempt to reach out to anti-BJP parties in these states to put up a joint fight. Perhaps, the failure of the Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj

Party in Uttar Pradesh during the 2019 Lok Sabha polls has had a demoralising effect on the entire opposition. In Parliament, too, there were no signs of floor coordination on triple talaq or even on gaining control of the parliamentary panels that were constituted recently. The Trinamool Congress was treated shabbily, but it found itself protesting alone. The BSP, which has some presence in Maharashtra and Haryana, is going solo in the coming round of Assembly polls. BSP supremo Mayawati is not sitting idle. Rather, she plans to consolidate her traditional support base of Dalits in these states. The development is bad news for the Congress which has bravely made Selja, a Dalit, as Haryana PCC chief. The painstakingly-worked out efforts to retain Bhupinder Singh Hooda have averted a split in the Haryana Congress, but the grand old party would be struggling to get 30-odd Assembly seats in the state. Even as Maharashtra gets ready for the polls, the

Congress, facing many desertions, is left wondering whether its reliance on Maratha votes would help it put up a credible fight. A Congress-Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) alliance has been worked out. Since 1999, the Congress has contested three successive elections with the NCP. During the 2014 Assembly elections, the NCP broke the alliance literally a few hours prior to the announcement of polls, leaving the Congress in the lurch. The Congress-NCP ugly spat hugely helped the BJP to come to power, reducing its ally, the Shiv Sena, to a poor second spot. The BJP had won 122 seats in the 288-member Assembly, while the Shiv Sena won 62 seats. The Congress and the NCP bagged 42 and 41 seats, respectively. Both the Congress and NCP have been badly hit by exodus. Senior NCP leader Udayanraje Bhosale, a descendant of warrior king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, quit his Lok Sabha membership to join the BJP.

NIT Warangal's mission is to build a startup ecosystem

► Prof. Bidyadhar Subudhi, Director, National Institute of Technology Warangal

Warangal, 10 January : A Technology Transfer agreement event was organized this morning in the Bose Hall of Seminar Halls Complex, National Institute of Technology Warangal. The technology was jointly developed by National Institute of Technology Warangal and Indian Institute of Technology Ropar as part of a project funded and supported by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India. Bhuvnesh Kumar, IAS, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and CEO, Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), Smt. Sunita Verma, Group Coordinator, Electronics and Information Technology, MeitY, Prof. Rajiv Ahuja, Director, Indian Institute of Technology Ropar, Prof. Bidyadhar Subudhi, Director, National Institute of Technology Warangal were the guests and the Technology named Method for continuous production of silver nanowires for electrically conductive adhesive and ink applications was transferred to Vasanthabala Functional Materials Pvt. Ltd. and Chematico Technologies Pvt Ltd by NIT Warangal and IIT Ropar was transferred in their presence. Speaking at the occasion, Prof. Bidy-

adhar Subudhi shared recent accomplishments of NIT Warangal and he said NIT Warangal is keen to develop a lot of patents and startups. He said in the next one year, NIT Warangal will aim to build a startup ecosystem in the campus where students and faculty will be encouraged to start companies. Prof. Rajiv Ahuja, Director, IIT Ropar emphasized the importance of studying basic sciences and traditional engineering courses. He said India is interested in becoming one of the largest nations for developing semiconductors and hence we need a lot of skilled resources in basic sciences and materials. Sunita Verma, Group Director, E&IT said MeitY is focused on encouraging research that leads to societal impact. "Today we are very happy that the technology developed in the project will now be in the market", she said. Bhuvnesh Kumar, IAS, Additional Secretary, MeitY said it is important for institutions to collaborate and work together. He spoke on several opportunities that MeitY offers in Research and Development. He said MeitY has a very focused approach on helping research reach society and he congratulated the startups and the technology. He further said



that MeitY is always in the forefront to encourage any such collaboration. Project Coordinators, Prof. Shirish Sonawane, NIT Warangal, Prof. K S Raj Mohan, NIT Warangal Prof. Sarang Gumfekar, IIT Ropar, Shri Surendra Gotherwal, MeitY, Deans, Heads, faculty and research students participated in the event.

PICTALK

Chennai, Tamil Nadu, 10 January : Polycab India Ltd., a front-ranking wire-&-cable brand and one of the fastest growing Telecom EPC service-providers in India, announces its showcase of end-to-end network roll-out project of TANFINET, the SPV to implement the BharatNet scheme in Tamil Nadu, at UmagineTN 2025, slated to be held from 9-10th Jan, 2025 in Chennai.



UmagineTN 2025 is a highly recognized IT Conference for accelerating Tamil Nadu's Tech Progression, organized by ELCOT, a government undertaking of Information Technology & Digital Services, Department of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

Polycab through its presence at UmagineTN 2025 will showcase its execution and progress under BharatNet Phase-II, that is making digital dreams and aspirations of millions into reality in Tamil Nadu.

"We'll be presenting our successful execution of the transformative vision to shape Tamil Nadu's digital future and utmost commitment to revolutionize rural empowerment in the state", said Ashish D. Jain, Executive President & COO, Telecom Division, Polycab India Ltd. Polycab will be demonstrating its capabilities of Survey, Sup-

ply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning, E-2-E Integration, Operation and Maintenance of the high-speed Digital Highway it has created in Tamil Nadu.

The company will be displaying the state-of-the-art S-NOC at Chennai, it has designed, built and managed to monitor entire network in the state across all the packages under BharatNet Phase-II.

By laying the underground and aerial optical fibre cable-based network across Gram Panchayats and Blocks, Polycab aims to enhance Tamil Nadu's communication infrastructure, that will propel the state into a new era of high-speed internet-connectivity, sustainability and prosperity.

Unwaveringly committed to meet the digital needs of today's users and years to come, Polycab has successfully completed BharatNet Phase-II projects in Gujarat and Bihar and is all geared up for 2 new packages under BharatNet Phase-III projects in Karnataka, Goa, Puducherry and Bihar.

PICTALK



VS on the Occasion of Vykunta Ekadashi took Darshan at Venkateswara Swamy Temple Chikkadapally along With Arshanapalli Rajesh Rao, Jyothi Reddy and Sanjay

ers Resham Mallesh, Netha Srinivas, Sirigiri Shyam, Sirigiri Kiran, Karthik Yadav, Harish, Venkatesh, Arun, Sai, Aju, Kalpana, Rekha, Jahnavi and others were Present. BY SOURCE BTS NEWS & TV CHANNEL

PICTALK



AmberPet : January 10; Amberpet Division Prem Nagar on the occasion of Mukkot Ekadashi. Vaikuntha Srinivasa was visited under the guidance of Acharya Atreya at Sri Veera Abhayanjaneya Swamy Temple. On this occasion, Telangana BC student wing leader Gangaputra Rajasekhar said that he had prayed to God that all the people should be happy and healthy and Congress

had cheated the people by not fulfilling any of the promises made in Telangana, the promises given to 55% of the BC population in Telangana. Informing that Revanth Sarkar has betrayed by not fulfilling. Like every year, this year too, blankets were distributed to Ayyappa Swami who was visiting Ayyappa. Santhosh, Sai, Manohar and others participated in this program.

Velimala lands scam is unreal



Sangareddy District, January 10 : Lawyers and representatives of Green Mark Housing Private Limited held a media conference at Redlows Hotel in Sangareddy town centre. Speaking on this occasion, they ve-

hemently denied the allegation of land related to Velimela village of Rama Chandrapuram Mandal. They said that there was no land scam and they have all the documents related to the land. Lawyers and rep-

resentatives have made it clear that some people are making allegations against them for their own benefit. They have warned that legal action will be taken against them if they are falsely accused.

ARF management is doing injustice to the contract workers

- TPS will fight on behalf of contract workers.
- Telangana Prajashakti Party State President Dodla Venkat
- Ravi is a contract laborer in Gangojipet

Sangareddy District January 10 : The management of YRF Company in Sadashivapet town is unfair to the contract workers in every way. Telangana Prajashakti Party state president Dodla Venkat and AMRF contract worker Gangoji Peta Ravi spoke on this occasion. It is very sad that the contract workers are not given the result they deserve even though they are working at par with the permanent workers in the company. It is very sad that they have not given at least a tee number which has been working for a few years. According to the law implemented by the central government, every worker should be paid more than 20 thousand. But they are beating the stomachs of the



workers and sucking their blood and living on their hard work. He said that the management has completely failed to provide proper facilities to the contract workers who are working at par with the permanent workers in the industry. However, there is a need for all the contract workers to unite

and fight for their rights and show full support to Gangojipeta Ravi and achieve their rights. Similarly, we request the local public representatives, MPs and MLAs to fight on their behalf and support them. They said that they will fight on a large scale if they are not provided with the facilities they deserve.

Amena Begum awarded PhD in History

Hyderabad, Jan.10 (NSS): Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU) has declared Ms. Amena Begum D/o Md. Omar Pasha Miya qualified for the award

of Doctor of Philosophy in History. She has worked on the topic "Nobility under the Nizams of Hyderabad: A Study of Umar-i-Paigah (1724-1948 AD)" under the

supervision of Prof. Danish Moin, Professor, Department of History, MANUU & Dr. S Abdul Thaha, Assistant Professor, CSSEIP, MANUU is the co-supervisor.

Dhanak Bazar held at MANUU

Hyderabad, Jan.10 (NSS): Maulana Azad National Urdu University Anjuman-e-Khawateen (MAK) in collaboration with SAFA organization organized much awaited Dhanak Bazar 2025 at University campus today. This event serves as a platform for fostering entrepreneurship among women from marginalised sections. Mumtaz Ali, Chancellor of MANUU was the chief guest and Prof. Syed Ainul Hasan, Vice Chancellor presided over the inaugural session. Dhanak Bazar 2025 features about 40 different stalls, offering a diverse range of products and services, including handcrafted items, innovative startups, and cultural exhibits. The event

promises an exciting line-up of panel discussions, workshops, and cultural showcases throughout the day, engaging participants from diverse backgrounds. The event aims to foster meaningful collaborations and provide a platform for young entrepreneurs and artisans to showcase their talents. Mumtaz Ali in his address emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts in driving social and economic growth. Prof. Syed Ainul Hasan in his presidential remarks reiterated the role of academia in shaping the future of entrepreneurship and innovation. Several dignitaries from MANUU and SAFA were also present, adding prestige to the occasion.

Vaikunta Ekadashi Darshan at Ahobhilmutt, D D Colony



The President of BJP Hyderabad central Dist Dr. N. Goutham Rao along with Dr. G. Haricharan, Vice-President, BJP HCD; P. Goverdhan Reddy, BJP State Executive member; Dr. Putta Pandu

Rangaiah, Secretary, BJP HCD; Dr. Raji Reddy, Malla Reddy BJP Sr. Leaders and Prasanna* Secretary, DDCWA were present on the occasion of the Vaikunta Ekadashi puja today at Ahobhilmutt, at DD colony.

Devotees throng Tirumala for Vaikuntha dwara darshanam

Tirumala, Jan.10 (NSS): The Vaikuntha Dwara Darshanam on the auspicious day of Mukkot Ekadasi was observed with a religious fervour in Tirumala on Friday. The Dwara Darshanam began at early hours of the day after Abhishekam. The officials commenced the darshan for

devotees half-an-hour earlier much to their satisfaction. The entire Tirumala reverberated to the divine chants of Govinda ... Govinda and the religious ecstasy of devotees overflowed every where. As per the instructions of CM N Chandra Babu Naidu, the TTD authorities made

special darshan arrangements to the injured of Tirupati stampede incident on Friday. The devotees after Vaikuntha Dwara Darshanam expressed immense happiness and thanked the CM, TTD Chairman and authorities for providing them the most wanted Mukkot Darshanam.

ODI squad : Bumrah and Shami's fitness under scanner

New Delhi, Jan 10 (GNS) India have played only six ODIs since the 2023 World Cup - and just three in 2024 - so the selectors don't have any recent international form to guide them when they pick the squads for the upcoming bilateral ODIs against England and the Champions Trophy in February. In those six games, India gave exposure to several players earmarked as contenders for the 2027 ODI World Cup. With the T20 set-up already revamped and the Test side facing a period of transition, there are questions around the make-up of the ODI squad too, both in terms of form and fitness of certain players.

Should Yashasvi Jaiswal open in ODIs too?

It might feel like Yashasvi Jaiswal is a regular in all formats for India but he hasn't been selected in an ODI squad yet. Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill are the incumbent openers and could remain

so. They formed a successful partnership in the 2023 ODI World Cup once Gill recovered from dengue and displaced Ishan Kishan at the top, but both were rested from India's subsequent ODIs in South Africa in December that year. Gill then lost his place to Jaiswal in the T20I squad for the 2024 T20 World Cup, and made scores of 16, 35 and 6 in the 2-0 defeat in the ODI series in Sri Lanka last August. While he scored a Test century against Bangladesh in the home series in September, he failed to convert starts in the recent Border-Gavaskar Trophy, where he was dropped for the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne. With Rohit set to lead the ODI squad and open the innings, and Virat Kohli at No. 3, Jaiswal could be an option if India want to bring a left-hand batter into the top order. He was India's leading run-scorer in the Test series in Australia and his domestic 50-over numbers are impressive: 1511 runs

at an average of 54 and strike rate of 86.19 with five centuries and seven fifties in 32 innings. The other batters who opened for India in South Africa after the 2023 ODI World Cup are Ruturaj Gaikwad, B Sai Sudarshan and Rajat Patidar.

Does Ravindra Jadeja still make the cut?

Jadeja hasn't played an ODI since the 2023 World Cup, where he formed the middle order with Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul, and Suryakumar Yadav once Hardik Pandya was injured. In contrast to the selection for the ODIs in South Africa under the previous coaching regime, when specialists like Sanju Samson, Tilak Varma and Rinku Singh played in the middle-order, Gambhir and selectors were keen to have more bowling options and batting depth in Sri Lanka. The competition for allrounder spots has now increased with Axar Patel, Shivam Dube, Washington Sundar and Riyan Parag all getting a go while Jadeja and

Suryakumar missed the series in South Africa and Sri Lanka. Hardik is expected to return, having proved his fitness while playing domestic 20 and 50-over games for Baroda this season, and Parag is expected to be fit as well after recovering from a shoulder injury, though his selection is not certain. Nitish Kumar Reddy, who was injured around the Sri Lanka ODIs last year, is also a contender. Iyer and Rahul, who played in Sri Lanka, are expected to retain their spots but the case for Jadeja and Suryakumar is not as clear-cut. Rahul was India's first-choice wicketkeeper in the 2023 ODI World Cup and the bilateral series in South Africa and Sri Lanka. He is likely to retain that position. Sanju Samson was the back-up in South Africa, but Rishabh Pant was preferred over him in Sri Lanka once he made his comeback from injuries suffered in a car crash and was first choice in India's T20 World Cup winning squad in 2024.



Sinner leads Italy back to Davis Cup semis

Malaga, Jan 10 (GNS) No. 1-ranked Jannik Sinner won matches in singles and doubles to lead defending champions Italy to a 2-1 comeback victory over Argentina, earning a return trip to the Davis Cup semifinals.

"I'm here trying to do the best I can in the singles," Sinner said. "If they put me on the court in doubles, I'll also try my best."

On Saturday, Italy will face Australia in a rematch of last year's final, but this time it will only be for a chance to play for the championship. Australia eliminated US 2-1 to reach the final-four at the team competition for the third consecutive year.

The other semifinal is Netherlands against Germany. The Dutch got past Rafael Nadal and Spain in the quarterfinals earlier in the week, sending the 22-time Grand Slam champion into retirement.



IPL Auction: Pant set for date with history but Arshdeep won't be far behind

Dubai, Jan 10 (GNS) The bids on Rishabh Pant could well soar like his audacious no-look six at Perth as he seems poised to become the highest paid player among the 577 who will go under the hammer at the two-day IPL mega auction starting here on Sunday. There will be INR 641.5 crores cumulatively in the kitty of 10 teams with 204 possible slots to be filled but one can be rest assured that all eyes will be trained on Pant's name when it comes up. Punjab Kings, with INR 110.50 crore in their coffers, are ready to outbid the other franchises. Royal Challengers Bengaluru, with INR 83 crore, can be another serious bidder, so can be Delhi Capitals, who have INR 73 crore and a Right To Match (RTM) card to get their skipper for past few seasons back. However, it is reliably learnt that Pant

doesn't want DC to flash the RTM card as their parting of ways has not been the most pleasant and he no longer feels a part of the franchise. His comment that "my Retention wasn't about money for sure" is a reflection of his thought process. But the biggest question will be whether Pant can become the first Indian player to breach the INR Rs 25 crore mark? The answer lies in how the 10 franchises are stacked up and how they are looking at their team composition. A Chennai Super Kings (CSK) or Mumbai Indians (MI), with only Rs 45 crore, wouldn't even be going for the star keeper-batter. But Punjab Kings, known for changing their team every two years, have kept their entire purse on advice of their head coach Ricky Ponting, who wants to reunite with his favourite player. There are



81 players bracketed in INR two crore category base price and two sets of marquee players but one can trust the current India internationals to breach the million dollar mark (INR 8.5 crore). If Pant would be the cynosure of this auction, Arshdeep Singh, with a staggering 96 T20 International wickets in three seasons, can easily have multiple teams going for him. Punjab has the RTM card but they wouldn't know where the bidding stops as it could be north of Rs 20 crore.

Telangana's Arush Reddy wins bronze at 68th National School Games Table Tennis Championship

Hyderabad, Jan 10 (GNS) Telangana's Arush Reddy clinched the bronze medal in the 68th National School Games Table Tennis Championship held in Daman and Diu on Thursday. Arush suffered a loss in the semifinals to West Bengal's Debraj Bhattacharjee, who went on to win the title.

Displaying resilience, Arush bounced back to dominate the bronze medal match with a commanding 3-0 victory over Ajinsu Bhandari, also from West Bengal, securing a podium finish for Telangana.

Results: Semifinal: Debraj Bhattacharjee (West Bengal) 3 bt Arush Reddy (Telangana) 0, Bronze medal tie: Arush Reddy (Telangana) bt Ajinsu Bhandari (West Bengal).



Matthews & Molineux star to send Renegades top

Melbourne, Jan 10 (GNS) Melbourne Renegades crushed the Sydney Thunder by nine wickets to take top spot on the WBBL ladder.

Thunder were bowled out for 133 in 19.1 overs with Renegades spinner Sophie Molineux snaring 4 for 23 at Melbourne's Junction Oval.

Renegades then raced to the target from 14.2 overs with opener Hayley Matthews blasting an unbeaten 60 from 37 balls and Molineux capping a stunning all-round performance with an unbeaten 42 from 29 deliveries with the pair adding an unbroken 95. Renegades moved to 14 points, taking top spot from the Thunder (13 points). Brisbane Heat (12 points) will need a big win over Sydney Sixers on Sunday in the last match of the regular season to jump ahead of Renegades and host the grand final.

Perth Scorchers (nine points) hold fourth spot ahead of their last game on Saturday night against the fifth-placed Hobart Hurricanes which will likely decide fourth place entering the finals - unless the Sixers (sixth, eight points) can upset Heat. Thunder struggled to gain traction with the top-order batters failing to capitalise. Phoebe Litchfield top-scored with 30, hitting six fours from her 17 deliveries while No.



7 Sammy-Jo Johnson made 21 from 19 balls. Openers Georgia Voll, Chamari Athapaththu and Georgia Adams all made 11, as Thunder slipped from 95 for 3 in 12th over and lost their last seven wickets for 38 runs.

Lionel Messi, Vinicius Junior fail to inspire teams

Asuncion (Paraguay), Jan 10 (GNS) Argentina's Lionel Messi and Brazil's Vinicius Junior had frustrating nights in South American World Cup qualifying. While Messi could not help his team avoid a 2-1 defeat at Paraguay, Vinicius Junior missed a second-half penalty as Brazil were held to a 1-1 draw at Venezuela.

Argentina will remain on the top of the 10-team round robin competition with a 22 points in 11 matches. Brazil are provisionally in third place in the standings with 17 points. Also on Thursday, Ecuador beat Bolivia 4-0.

The Ecuadorians remain in fifth position with 16 points, while Bolivia are in eighth place with 12 points. Paris: France and Italy qualified for the quarterfinal stage of the revamped Nations League as England got their revenge on Greece ahead of the imminent arrival of Thom-

as Tuchel as coach. France drew 0-0 with Israel in a match requiring a high-security operation in and around Paris on Thursday, a week after violence erupted in Amsterdam in connection with Israeli club Maccabi Tel Aviv's visit for a Europa League match.

Around 150 Israel supporters were among a crowd of 16,611 inside the 80,000-capacity Stade de France and there was a brief scuffle between some fans at one point in the first half.

The draw was enough to secure France a top-two finish in their group along with Italy, who beat Belgium 1-0 away thanks to Sandro Tonali's 11th-minute goal. They advance to the quarterfinals in March, from which the lineup of the Final Four mini-tournament in June will be determined. Germany and Spain were the first two nations to qualify for the quarterfinals.

'Take it down immediately': Sunil Gavaskar warns of legal action over fake article

New Delhi, Jan 10 (GNS) Former India cricketer Sunil Gavaskar has strongly denied writing an article attributed to him on a cricket website and has threatened legal action against those responsible.

The website, Cricket Ception, published a column on Friday evening titled "A New Era in Leadership: Bumrah's Captaincy and Kohli's Leadership Revive Team India," falsely claiming it was written by the former captain.

Gavaskar addressed the issue on Instagram on Saturday, sharing a video where he clarified that he had no connection with the article and demanded its immediate removal. The cricket legend also asked the website to issue a public apology, warning that failure to comply would

lead to legal action. In the video, Gavaskar stated: "Hi, this is Sunil Gavaskar, and I want to say that there is a website, Cricket Ception, which has printed an article under my name. I have to say that it is completely fake. I have not contributed that at all, and I want to tell that website to take it down immediately."

Issue an apology. If you don't do that, I will give the matter to my legal team. So don't believe a word of what you've read. This is a completely fake article attributed to me." Gavaskar also urged fans to be cautious about misinformation online, writing, "Never believe everything you see on the Internet #alwaysverify" in the caption of his Instagram post. The controversy arose during the first Border-Gavaskar Trophy Test at Perth Stadium, where India delivered a dominant performance under stand-in captain Jasprit Bumrah.



kar Trophy Test at Perth Stadium, where India delivered a dominant performance under stand-in captain Jasprit Bumrah.