UNVEILING DIGITAL AP

The state is forging ahead in ushering a cashless economy in the aftermath of demonetisation, thanks to CM Chandrababu Naidu’s aggressive approach.
The classical dance of Andhra Pradesh 'Kuchipudi' found a place in the Guinness World Records when a record 6,117 dancers came together to present a show at the IGMC Stadium in Vijayawada on December 25th evening. Guinness adjudicator Rishinath declared that "Jayamu Jayamu" item presented in unison by the participants created a new record and handed over a certificate to Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu.

The "Maha Brunda Natyam" (grand group dance) was organised as part of the '5th International Kuchipudi Dance Convention' organised by the state Department of Language and Culture. "Jayamu Jayamu" is one of the glorious items of 'Kuchipudi' dance choreographed by the legend Vempati China Satyam.

“We aim to take Kuchipudi to a global level. It will highlight Telugu culture & encourage new talent,” said Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu who received the honour from the Guinness representative.
Striving for Digital Economy

Andhra Pradesh is pushing hard to herald a cashless digital economy in the aftermath of demonetisation move of the Centre.

Paytm Office in Visakhapatnam

A.P. Cabinet clears proposals for five smart cities

Centre releases Rs 1981 cr for Polavaram

From the CM’s desk

Polavaram Irrigation Project

Symbol of Secularism

AP’s role in evolving National Flag

Happening Andhra

Various developments across the state of Andhra Pradesh.

An Epic Year Ahead!

Sona Springs

GCC, going great guns
Hope smiles in the New Year

The New Year augurs well for the fledgling state of Andhra Pradesh as it rings out the one gone by. Even as the rest of the country is grappling with the implications of the demonetisation move, the happening state has been able to make tangible progress in ushering a digital economy.

While the Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has covered the whole gamut in heralding cashless transactions in the state, the cap in the feather is certainly the transformation of a tiny village in East Godavari district into a cent percent digital village.

Mori will be an inspiration for all those who believe technology is an instrument of change for the better. Many Silicon Valley entities partook in turning the village into a smart place to live in.

AP Government’s Fibre-net initiative has also been rolled out in the village, which will come in handy in enabling cashless transactions. The piped gas project, to be piloted in Mori soon, will reduce considerably the domestic drudgery to the rural women folk, when it covers the entire state.

There is no better news to the state than the possibility of expeditious completion of the Polavaram Project. The release of first tranche of funds by the Centre will be fully utilised by the Chief Minister who has been single-mindedly pushing for its speedy execution.

In a major initiative, spillway works on the multi-purpose Polavaram hydel project also got under way in December. Diaphragm wall works are set to be launched in the first week of January.

Many more things which have been in the pipeline are likely to take shape in the year to come, even as the Chief Minister turns every challenge into an opportunity.

In the words of German poet Rainer Maria Rilke, the year ahead is, “Full of things that have never been” for the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Ramesh Babu Kandula
Editor
Paytm Office in VISAKHAPATNAM

Paytm has instituted a new corporate office in the coastal city of Visakhapatnam. Andhra Pradesh CM Chandrababu Naidu was present at the inaugural event to officially welcome the company’s operations in the city. Within the last few weeks, Paytm has registered a strong surge in payments transactions across all major cities in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana including Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam and Hyderabad. To support the growing demand for cashless solutions in the region, Paytm has also announced it will add over 1,000 offline agents to its Andhra Pradesh and Telangana team.

Speaking at the launch, Vijay Shekhar Sharma, Founder-CEO, Paytm said, “An easy and affordable digital payment solution can help democratize the payments sector in India. Our Visakhapatnam campus is a showcase of our commitment to the region’s development and reflects its importance as an important market for us.”

“Our mission is to make cashless payments a way of life across India’s cities and towns. We will ensure there are more merchants across Andhra Pradesh accepting Paytm than ever before”, he added.

Merchants across India can start accepting Paytm at zero extra cost. They have to simply log on to Paytm.com/business and fill an online form to start accepting payments using Paytm’s PCI-DSS certified technology. The company has even waived off its 1% transaction fee for transferring money to the Bank to facilitate the ongoing shift in customer and merchant behavior towards going cashless.

Today over 1.5 Mn offline merchants across India accept Paytm as their preferred payment mode. Paytm is accepted everywhere such as taxi, autos, petrol pumps, grocery shops, restaurants, coffee shops, multiplexes, parking, pharmacies, hospitals, kirana shops, newspaper vendors and many more. With its strong focus on mobile payments, Paytm is inching closer to its aim of making cashless transactions a way of life across India.

To support the growing demand for cashless solutions in the region, Paytm has also announced that it will add over 1,000 offline agents to its Andhra Pradesh and Telangana team.

“Our Vishakhapatnam campus is a showcase of our commitment to the region’s development and reflects its importance as an important market for us. We will ensure there are more merchants across Andhra Pradesh accepting Paytm than ever before,” Sharma added.
STRIVING FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY

Andhra Pradesh is pushing hard to herald a cashless digital economy in the aftermath of demonetisation move of the Centre. Being the Chairman of the Committee on demonetisation, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has been devising effective ways to execute a seamless payment system that can be adopted by the common man.

Since the day higher denomination notes were banned by the Centre, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has been on a mission to ensure that the transition to the new economy is least disruptive to the common man in the state. He had been continuously monitoring the situation, holding meetings with district collectors, senior officials, bankers and the RBI to find ways and means to ameliorate the problems faced by the people in transacting day to day business.

In a relatively brief period, the CM came up with various measures, both administrative and technological to switch over to the new system with least amount of disruption.

**AP Purse**

One of the major initiative of the Chief Minister was the launch of ‘AP Purse’, a mobile app, as a first step to enable digital payments in the state. Unveiling the app, the CM explained that 13 mobile banking and 10 mobile wallets were available in the purse and could be used to pay bills.

Cashless transactions were the need of the hour to tide over the currency crunch. “The government is introducing Marpu Nestam, an agent, to educate the people on digital financial literacy. The government will pay incentives to the agents who train the people in digital financial literacy.”

Engineering students would be encouraged to train people. It would help them to earn while learning. The government would recognise the services of the colleges and the
students for their service to society at the time of crisis, he said.
The Chief Minister, who is closely following the cash crunch since the day one of demonetisation, announced the smart phone application to promote digital wallets leaving everyone including the technologically savvy people stunned.
The app’s beta version was released within less than a week of demonetisation and is available on Google Play for Android devices under the developer account ‘Andhra Pradesh State FiberNet Limited’.
The application is an e-wallet aggregator that lists 15 applications popular and being used by smart phone users. Paytm, Airtel Money, Freecharge, Mobikwik, Jio Money, SBI Buddy, PayU Money, Ola Money, Oxigen, Citrus, Vodafone m-pesa, Rupee, Icash, ItzCash and Idea Money are the apps listed.

One can open any of the above apps or download them by clicking on the icon featured in the Purse. Users need to register with name, phone number and OTP before using the Purse. Description of the app says one of the benefits of using it is to have exposure to the top payment wallets available in the market.

Incentives to promote cashless transactions
Acting swiftly on its commitment to promoting cashless transactions in the wake of demonetisation, the State government announced a scheme of incentives to trainers and villages showing the path to others.
The Information Technology, Electronics and Communications (ITE&C) Department issued guidelines in this regard, paving the way for rewarding individuals (trainers) and villages. The department was vested with the responsibility of implementing the scheme.
Under the scheme, unemployed youths, students, SHG members, and others would be given an incentive of Rs.15 for first time introduction of an individual / vendor to digital transactions and Rs.20 for a minimum of five transactions carried out by the individual / vendor within one month from the date of introduction.
As far as villages were concerned, it was decided to reward those villages, or groups of villages, wherein each household and business establishment had at least one bank account and at least one person digitally literate for carrying out digital cashless transactions.
The reward would be given in the following four categories, based on Population Census of 2011: Rs.10,000 for villages with a population less than 2,000; Rs.20,000 for villages with a population between 2,001 and 5,000; Rs.50,000 for villages having a population between 5,001 and 10,000; and Rs.1,00,000 for villages with a population exceeding 10,000.
Digital transactions done by individuals on their own without the help of trainers and claims made by them personally would also be considered at par with other individuals on whose behalf the trainers claim.
The ITE&C Department was mandated to create and maintain a portal for registration under the scheme and establish transparent procedures with the involvement of banks and other stakeholders.

Aadhar Pay
Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu appreciated the Krishna District Collector Babu Ahamed for having come up with a solution to ease the currency crunch being faced by people following demonetisation.
AadharPay, a cashless payment system which needs only a smartphone and a biometric reader, can be used for transferring money with a thumb impression.
The trader (or recipient of money) needs a smartphone fitted with biometric reader as an accessory. “I struggled for 40 days. I had sleepless nights. We searched the world and broke our heads to find a solution. But now, Babu has come up with a simple solution that will transform the nation,” the Chief Minister said at the conference of District Collectors.
He felicitated the Collector at the conference. “Aadhar-enabled payments are the best way to overcome the currency crisis. We will discuss this in our committee meeting,” Naidu said.
“One can transfer money using AadharPay from any bank under one platform...It’s a simple solution but will transform the nation,” he added.

Banks lagging behind
However, the chief Minister criticised banks and said that while his government was taking steps to normalise the situation, banks were lagging behind in adopting technology.
Addressing a state-level bankers’ committee meeting in Vijayawada, Naidu sought the cooperation of bankers to encourage mobile banking transactions. The chief minister appealed to the bankers to extend cooperation for mobile banking transactions and said that Andhra Pradesh was ready to extend 50 per cent subsidy for purchase of biometric devices to carry out mobile banking transactions in the state.
Chandrababu Naidu asked the bankers to make available small currency in ATMs to spare people the
inconvenience being faced in withdrawing cash.

A complicated issue
"It still remains a sensitive and complicated problem," Chandrababu -- who heads the 13-member central committee to look into demonetisation issues observed. Unless there were remedial measures, people’s woes would continue in the long-term, Chandrababu warned.

Refuting reports that he had made any critical remarks against demonetisation, the Chief Minister, in a statement, said he had expressed his concern over the suffering of people even after more than one month due to non-availability of currency. "It is very painful to see reports of old people collapsing while waiting at ATM counters," he said.

Stating that cashless and digital banking transaction is the only alternative to end the crisis, Naidu, who is spending more than three-four hours a day monitoring the cash distribution system, asked the officials to think innovatively to address the crisis and to encourage urban people to switch over to mobile-banking transactions and distribute the available small currency to farmers in rural areas to carry out agricultural operations for the current Rabi season.

He said that cashless transactions were successfully implemented in all 29,000 fair price shops in the state and the dealers of FP shops were appointed as banking correspondents to solve currency problem in rural areas.

Positive Signs
Speaking in Delhi after a meeting of the Chief Ministers’ Committee on demonetisation, the Chief Minister said that digital economy was showing positive signs of growth post demonetisation.

"On digital economy, things are moving very positively. The NITI Aayog has presented best practices of different countries," said Naidu after the meeting of the Chief Ministers’ Committee.

Stating that digital transaction was the only way to overcome the cash crunch, Naidu emphasised that the public needs to switch over to Aadhar Pay, mobile phones, swipe machines and online banking system. The Andhra CM mentioned that the panel was planning to reform the Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AEPS) by introducing biometric machines.

"For AEPS or Aadhar Pay, only merchant must have smartphone and we need to just add biometric system. That way the consumer doesn’t need to have a smartphone for making payments," Naidu added.

"As of today only 4 banks had mechanism of Aadhar card based payment. We will request all the banks to start Aadhar card based payments," he said. There will also be a new version of the Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD), which allows people to conduct transactions upto Rs 5,000 even on feature phones.

The Chief Ministers’ Committee was set up by the Niti Aayog on November 26. While the AP Chief Minister is convenor, the chief ministers of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim and Puducherry were made members of the committee.
A.P. CABINET CLEARS PROPOSALS FOR FIVE SMART CITIES

The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet cleared the proposal to establish Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV) for implementing State-sponsored Smart Cities Scheme in Anantapur, Eluru, Kurnool, Ongole and Srikakulam as per the guidelines of the Central government’s Smart Cities Mission.

The Cabinet also resolved to set up an SPV called ‘Guntur/Vijayawada Urban Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited’ for the two cities.

The Cabinet met at the Interim Government Complex at Velagapudi in Guntur district.

Other important decisions were development of a multi-purpose recreation and commercial centre as part of the Vijayawada City Square project in the public-private partnership mode at Swaraj Maidan and its surroundings spanning 27.5 acres. The detailed project report would be prepared under the aegis of a Cabinet subcommittee.

Construction of an international convention centre in Visakhapatnam under the supervision of the Industries and Infrastructure Department.

A 35 per cent hike in the wages of the workers of the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty and an extra 10 per cent performance-linked incentive benefitting 5,038 Velugu workers.

Another decision was to move a Bill in the Assembly for the establishment of a Tourism and Culture Board instead of forming it through an ordinance.

Land allotments cleared were 62.18 acres at Mylavaram in Kadapa district to the Handlooms and Textiles Department for the setting up of a textile park, 21 acres at Serikolam village in Parigi Mandal of Anantapur district for the establishment of an industrial park and a multi-product SEZ at the rate of Rs.3 lakh per acre and 44.78 acres for a Mega Food Park at Settipanta village in Railway Koduru Mandal of Kadapa district at Rs.9.50 lakh per acre.

In addition, 75 acres had been allotted for expanding the Visakhapatnam Special Economic Zone at Pudimadaka (Rs.10 lakh per acre) and Duppiluru villages in Atchutapuram Mandal (Rs.12 lakh per acre) and 61.56 acres in RAnantapuram village in Madakasira Mandal of Anantapur district (Rs. 90,000 per acre) for establishing an MSME Park.

Haryana to emulate AP on ‘Praja Sadhikara Survey’

Impressed by the successful implementation of the “PrajaSadhikara Survey” in Andhra Pradesh, Haryana has proposed to emulate it.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and his Haryana counterpart Manoharlal Khattar exchanged Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) on the subject in Delhi.

Senior officials of the Andhra Government gave a presentation of the socio-economic data collection in all sectors at the Andhra Bhawan here. Speaking on the occasion, Naidu said technology played a key role in the collection of the data of the people and households.

He said the E-Pragati chapter of the project was very ambitious. It is an interface between citizen and citizen and citizen and the government. Giving details about the project, Naidu said real time data could be collected with effective use of technology in programmes like electrification, cleanliness and controlling pollution.

Naidu said Andhra Pradesh was saving 12 per cent in the distribution of PDS and 22 per cent in social welfare programmes.

He said the system had brought transparency besides wiping out corruption because responsibilities had been fixed for the officials. Naidu said he was sure Haryana could also succeed in this endeavour.

Khattar had praised Naidu saying he was the pioneer of the technological system. He said his State was facing several challenges because of corruption and lack of transparency. Both Chief Ministers sought cooperation from each other.
Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu efforts to expedite the works on the prestigious Polavaram Project have received a boost with the Central Government releasing Rs.1,981 crore, in the much-awaited first instalment through Nabard. Union Minister for Finance Arun Jaitley handed over the cheque to Chief Minister in the presence of Union Ministers for Water Resources Uma Bharti, Information and Broadcasting MVenkaiah Naidu, Ministers of State Vijay Goel and Sanjeev Kumar Balyan, Nabard chairman Harsh Kumar Bhanwala and AP Water Resources Minister Devineni Umamaheswara Rao at a programme in New Delhi.

The Nabard chairman said funds were being released from the Long-term Irrigation Fund for 99 projects in the country. The Polavaram project was getting Rs.1,981 crore as the “first disbursement”.

Uma Bharti said Nabard was releasing funds for major irrigation projects for the first time. Irrigation would be given a great deal of priority in future. A cheque for Rs 2,480 crore made out to the National Water Development agency that includes the Rs 1981 crore for the Polavaram and the remaining amount for other States was handed over to the Chief Minister.

Jaitley said the handing over of a cheque for Polavaram had more than just symbolic value. It would restore in the people of Andhra Pradesh the confidence and trust
Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said the Centre created an ‘excellent arrangement’ for the funding of the Polavaram project. The Union Minister said the release of funds for Polavaram would not only fulfil the long-pending dream of Andhra people, but would also restore their faith in the Centre.

they lost in the Centre after the bifurcation in which the State was subjected to “economic discrimination”. The Union Minister said the release of funds for Polavaram would not only fulfil the long-pending dream of Andhra people, but would also restore their faith in the Centre. The Centre preferred to invest in irrigation over industry because the returns were faster. While it took just one season to get returns in agriculture, it took much longer in industries, he explained.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said the Centre created an ‘excellent arrangement’ for the funding of the Polavaram project. All Central governments talked about developing agriculture and irrigation, but he had not seen till now a Centre releasing funds for 99 irrigation projects.

Naidu said not only would Polavaram be the biggest irrigation project in the country, it would also be the last of the big projects. It would not be possible to build such big projects in future, he said.

Naidu said the Polavaram project would be completed in the first quarter of 2019. He said all records not only in the country but outside also would be broken. Andhra Pradesh would become a drought-free State once the project was completed.

Venkaiah Naidu recalled how Jaitley stood by him when he fought for a better deal for Andhra Pradesh in Parliament. He said for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), industry and agriculture were like two eyes. One would not be sacrificed to promote the other, he added.

Consent of other states obtained

Union Water Resources minister Uma Bharati clarified on this occasion that the construction on the multi-purpose irrigation project was allowed after Odisha along with two other states gave consent for this. The minister was responding to media queries after the Centre through Nabard released Rs. 1,982 crore to Andhra Pradesh towards the irrigation project. “For the project (Polavaram) Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh have given consent. After that only the project was given a go ahead”, she said.

NGT nod not needed

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister rubbished the allegations of Telangana government that NGT’s nod has not been taken for Polavaram and said the clearance is not related to this project. Speaking at an event in Delhi after receiving first tranche of funds for Polavaram multi-purpose project, the Chief Minister said, "NGT clearance is not related to this project".

“The original height proposed in the old project has been retained,” he added.

On Telangana’s demand to reduce the height of the dam to avoid submergence of Ram temple in Badhrachalam and other nearby mandals, Naidu said the height of the dam was never increased. “The original height proposed in the old project has been retained,” he added.

Naidu recalled the opposition he had to face for the implementation of several other projects in the state. “Pattiseema was opposed, but we finished it. Political parties, instead of working for national interest are batting for petty issues and hindering every step,” Naidu said.

17 colonies for the displaced of Polavaram

As many as 17 housing colonies with all modern facilities will be constructed at a cost of Rs 230.42 crore in Buttayagudem, Jeelugumilli and Polavaram mandals for the displaced families of Polavaram project as part of a relief and rehabilitation package. East Godavari. District Collector K Bhaskar held a meeting with Sub-Collectors, RDOs and Housing Board officials on construction of colonies for the Polavaram Project oustees.

He said 10 colonies would come up in Jeelugumilli, five in Buttayagudem and two in Polavaram mandals for the project oustees. As many as 2,271 displaced families would get pucca houses. A sum of Rs160 crore would be spent on housing for the project oustees, he said.

Spillway works get underway

The spillway works on the multi-purpose Polavaram hydel project got under way on December 30 in the presence of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu.

As per plans of the long pending irrigation project, after the concrete works begin, it is proposed to take up diaphragm wall works early next month. The Chief Minister participated in a special yagna and a puja was performed for the Telebelt, and then the CM started the conveyor belt to put the concrete in Block Number 3 of the spillway. The Polavaram dam spillway will have the capacity to carry a flood of 50 lakh cusecs (spillway with the highest capacity in the world).
Introduction
National River-Linking Project, which works under the aegis of the Indian Ministry of Water Resources, was designed to overcome the deficit in water in the country.

In this project's case the Godavari over basin is considered as a surplus one, while the Krishna River basin is considered to be a deficit one. Every year thousands of TMC of Godavari water flowed into the Bay of Bengal.

The Study recommended that sizeable surplus water was to be transferred from the Godavari River basin to the Krishna River basin.

Polavaram Irrigation Project, widely known as the Polavaram Project, is planned on the river Godavari, near Ramayyapeta Village, Polavaram Mandal of West Godavari District.

- The Project is located 42 Kms upstream of Sir Arthur Cotton Barrage at Dowlaiswaram.
- The Project is a Multi-purpose Terminal reservoir on the river Godavari.
- The unique feature of Polavaram Project involves construction of 1.5 m thick concrete diaphragm wall up to a depth of 100 m below the river bed under the earth cum rockfill dam which is first of its kind in India.
- Spillway of 1054.40 m with 48 vents to enable discharge of 50 Lakh cusecs of water which is first of its kind in world.

History
- The Polavaram Project was first proposed during the year 1941 and preliminary investigations were conducted during 1942 — 44.
- At that time, the project was contemplated with FRL up to +208 feet with storage of 836.35 TMC.
- The Board of consulting Engineers, (BOCE) under the Chairman-ship of Dr. J L Salvage (retired Chief Designs Engineer of USER, Denver), was formed to study the difficulties in dam construction.
- The other members of Board of consulting Engineers were Dr. Karl Terzagi, Professor of Soil Mechanics & Engineering Geology (Harvard University, USA) and father of soil mechanics, Mr. S. O. Harper, retired Chief Engineer of USBR, USA and Sir. Murdoch Macdonald & Partners consulting Engineers, London for the Polavaram Project.
- The Project was earlier named as -Rama Pada Sager Project*.
- After reorganization of States, the Godavari Water Disputes Tribunal passed final orders directing that Polavaram Project shall be cleared by CWC as expeditiously as possible for FRL/ MWL + 150 ft
- In 2004-05, execution of the Polavaram Irrigation Project (main dam and canal works) was started.
- The Government of India, recognizing the importance of this Project, declared it as a National Project under AP Reorganisation Act, 2014.
- As per special package announced to new State of Andhra Pradesh by Govt of India, the balance cost of Irrigation component of the Project as on 1st April 2014 will be borne 100% by Govt. of India taking financial assistance from NABARD.

Hydraulic Particulars

- Full Reservoir Level : +45.72 metres (+150.00 feet)
- Minimum Draw Down Level : +41.15 metres (+135.00 feet)
- Crest Level of Spillway : +25.72 metres (+84.39 feet)
- ECRF Dam Top Bund Level : +54.00 metres (+177.16 feet)
- Gross storage of Reservoir : 194.60 TMC :
- Live storage : 75.20 TMC
- Probable maximum Flood Discharge : 75.20 TMC
- Catchment Area : 3,06,643 Sq. Kms
- Benefits
  - Irrigation to 6.14 Lakh Ha. (15.2 Lakh Acres)
  - Production of Hydro power with installed capacity of 960 MW
  - Diversion of 80 TMC of Godavari water from river Godavari to Krishna river (which will provide Irrigation to 8.0 Lakh Acres)
  - Supply of 23.44 TMC of water to Vishakhapatnam city
  - Drinking water facility to 540 villages (population of 28.5 lakhs)
  - Development and export of pisci-culture & boating facilities
  - 5 TMC & 1.5 TMC of water to Odisha & Chhattisgarh, respectively
  - Stabilization of existing command area of KDS & GDS of 23.50 Lakh Acres

FACTS & FIGURES
POLAVARAM IRRIGATION PROJECT

Considered to be a lifeline for the residuary State of Andhra Pradesh, the project when completed will play a major role in drought proofing the State and boosting the prospects of agriculture in the agrarian economy, while also providing drinking water.
Clearances obtained
- Environmental clearance from MoEF.
- R&R Clearance from Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- Forest Clearance from MoEF — Stage I & Stage II.
- TAC clearance for revised cost of Rs 16,010.45 Crores (2010—11 price levels) from CWC / MoWR. TAC clearance for original cost of Rs. 10,151.04 Crores at Price level of 2005-06.
- Investment clearance for original cost from planning commission.
- All the statutory clearances required for the Project have been obtained.

Main components

Head Works

Spillway: A concrete spillway is proposed on right flank for a length of 1054.4 metres with 48 nos. radial gates, each of size 16 metres x 20 metres with Hydraulic hoist arrangement

Earth cum Rockfill Dam: It is proposed across the main river course for a length of 2454 metres with a top width of 15 metres (Gap - I: 564 M, Gap-II: 1750 M and Gap-III: 140 M) and a Diaphragm Wall under the ECRF Dam throughout the dam portion, with a thickness of 1.5 metres and depth varying from 40 metres to 100 metres

Hydro Electric Power House: A Hydro Electric Power House of 960 MW with 12 nos of vertical Kaplan turbines, each of 80 MW capacity is proposed on the left flank of the river

Right & Left Connectivities: Connectivities with regulators, twin tunnels and saddle dams are proposed for diverting water to the right and left canals from the reservoir

Main Canals

Right Main Canal: The 174 Kms length of right main canal will provide irrigation facility to 3.2 lakh acres of new command area in West Godavari & Krishna districts, besides diverting 80 TMC of water from river Godavari to Krishna river, which will provide irrigation to a new ayacut of 8.0 Lakhs acres

Left Main Canal: The 181.5 Kms length of the left main canal will provide irrigation facility to 4.0 lakh acres of new command area in East Godavari & Vishakapatnam districts besides supplying of 23.44 TMC of water to Vishakapatnam city.

Status of Works (As on Dec 31 2016)

Head Works

Spillway
Earthwork excavation of 151 Lakh CuM has been completed against a total of 161 50 Lakh CuM (93% Completed)
Concrete work of 17 Lakh CuM is proposed to be commenced from the new year. Proposed to start fabrication of Radial Gates of 22,000 MT from 14th January, 2017.
Approach Channel, Spill Charnel, Pilot Channel & Left Flank Earthwork excavation of 512 Lakh CuM has been completed against a total of 1055 Lakh CuM (49% Completed)

Earth cum Rock Fill Dam
Earthwork embankment of 131.00 Lakh CuM (Including Gap I ECRF Dam, Gap III and Cofer Dams) is to be taken up.
Diaphragm Wall of 1.20 Lakh CuKil of plastic concrete is proposed to be commenced from January, 2017

Main Canals

Right Main Canal: 90% of the work has been completed
Left Main Canal: 61% of the work has been completed

Expenditure
Expenditure incurred before National Project 5548.69 Cr.
Expenditure incurred under National Project :3133.75 Cr.
Total expenditure incurred under Polavaram Irrigation Project : 8682.44 Cr.

Important Events
The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh N Chandra Babu Naidu visited the project site 11 times so far. Every Monday the CM is conducting virtual review of the project from Vijayawada. So far 12 No’s of virtual inspections and reviews have been conducted.
Invited as one of the 21 leaders, who are shaping and instrumental in shaping tomorrow’s world in different spheres including politics, economics, art, culture and spirituality, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu shared his views at the penultimate session of 14th Hindustan Times Leadership Summit-2016. He spoke on the on-going progress of Navyandhra- the Sunrise State of Andhra Pradesh- after the bifurcation. The Hindustan Times Leadership Summit - a two-day session held in New Delhi, was a platform where the visionaries including David Cameron, British Premier, Arun Jaitley, union minister of finance and corporate affairs, Piyush Goyal, union minister of state (independent charge) of power, coal, new & renewable energy and mines, Dr. Paul Krugman, renowned scholar of economics, besides Naidu, had spoken about their outline for the future of their land. Naidu revealed his vision during his conversation with the editor-in-chief of ’Hindustan Times’, Bobby Ghosh, who called Naidu ‘the Globetrotting, power-point presenting, visionary politician’. On behalf of the audience, who are also invitees as heads of the States, business tycoons, artists, sports personalities and Nobel laureates, asked the CM a plethora of questions the latter’s take on a variety of issues.

Here are a few excerpts from the answers of the Chief Minister, made during the session:

**On demonetisation**

- We need to think of ways to reduce the suffering caused by demonetisation. We need to think forward. One of the ways is the use of digital currency.
- Digital literacy is a must to control corruption and development. The future should be digital transparency.
- For standby, there should be some physical currency too. You need currency if you visit small shops. This decision will help improve transparency and reduce corruption and black money.

**On AP’s progress**

- I don’t think of other states as competitors but prefer to adopt their best practices to improve my state because we are starting from scratch.
- I want to take fibre to the last mile. Will provide 15mbs internet speed to all homes. With tele-con, people don’t have to meet me.
- I’m using technology to provide real-time government in my state. I’m not competing with Indian states but with the best in the world.
- The issue (with Telangana) is over, both states need to move forward for better prospects. Some issues between both the States have to be settled amicably.
- By 2022, AP will be among the top 3 in the country. By 2029, it will be the
best state in India and by 2050, the best destination in the world.

On Amaravati
- If you are very strong and provide everything, people will come to you. I am confident that multinational companies will invest in Amaravati.
- Amaravati will be a ‘blue and green’ city. It will be among the top 10 cities in the world. Linking of rivers has happened for the first time in Andhra Pradesh.
- Best institutions in health, education, hospitality are coming to Amaravati.
- One of more joys is that I built two cities -- Cybercity in Hyderabad and the new Andhra capital Amaravati.
- I’m watching other cities’ best practices and borrowing it to build the new Andhra capital, Amaravati.

On agriculture and farm income
- Ensuring rainwater harvesting and linking of rivers to improve the agriculture industry in Andhra Pradesh.
- Nowhere in the world is there as much water in a one place as in Andhra Pradesh.
- I am focusing on agriculture and irrigation. We have taken the lead in linking rivers which will help solve water woes in the state. I want to make AP one of the best agriculture clusters in the world.
- This year’s rainfall deficit was 29%. I’m looking at making the sector draught-proof.

On education
- In primary education, I’m going to introduce digital classrooms. I will generate competition among government schools as private schools compete.
- Our education is sector is very strong. Everywhere you go there’s a Telugu engineer or doctor. I want to increase higher education rating from 30% to 50%.
- In a few years, Andhra Pradesh will be the best in primary and higher education in the country.

On how to ensure continuity in governance
- Keep working for the people and do the right developments, considering all sections of the society. That’s how people will trust you and give you their mandate.
- Some of my actions caused problems (regarding losing an election). This time I’m planning everything.
- Health, minimum standards, education, eradicating poverty are some of the measures we’re looking at.
- Happiness is a development marker I want to focus on. Stress is a major problem for people.

NADIKUDI-SRIKALAHASTI foundation stone laid

Foundation stone was laid for the much awaited Nadikudi-Srikalahasti new railway line by Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu.

The Railway Minister who is a member of Rajya Sabha from the state, took part in the programme through a video link from New Delhi while Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Union Civil Aviation Minister P Ashok Gajapati Raju and others attended the function at the Railway Institute.

The Minister also launched free high-speed WiFi facility in Guntur railway station, and flagged off a new double-decker train between Tirupati and Visakhapatnam.

The renovated route-relay interlocking system at Vijayawada railway junction was also dedicated to the nation while a new hostel building of the Electric Traction Training Centre at Satyanarayanapuram was inaugurated.

The Chief Minister said Rs 300 crore was initially allotted for acquiring land for the Nadikudi-Srikalahasti railway line. The 309-km line would propel economic growth in Chittoor, SPS Nellore, Prakasam and Guntur districts, he said. In all, 2400 acres of land would have to be acquired for the project taken up at an overall cost of Rs 2999 crore.

Vijayawada MP Kesineni Srinivas, South Central Railway General Manager Vasisht Joshi and other officials attended the event.

JV for Rail Projects
Andhra Pradesh government signed memorandum of understanding with the Indian Railways for setting up a joint venture company for taking up major rail projects in the state.

While many new railway lines will be built by the JV, the main objective is to develop at least 21 railway stations in the state akin to airports. Speaking from New Delhi, Suresh Prabhu said they were trying to tie up with banks and other financial institutions to fund the JV.
Mori becomes first digitally literate village in country

Giving fillip to the efforts of the Government, the tiny cashew-exporting village located near the Bay of Bengal in the East Godavari district has gone fully digital with all the households enjoying WiFi, Internet connectivity and cable TV while making all transactions cashless.

The village of Mori in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh has become the first 100 per cent digitally literate village in the country on December 29. It has also achieved the status of complete cashless transaction village, besides being open defecation free (ODF) village.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu made the announcement during the launch of the AP Fibre Grid services which offers cable television, telephone and internet services at just Rs 149 per month.

"Today is the most memorable day for me and the villagers of Mori as well as the entire state. I am extremely happy to see the progress Mori has made in creating a digital revolution in the country. With this great inspiring achievement of Mori citizens, the Government would put its efforts to change all villages into Smart villages in a phased manner," Naidu announced.

All the 1,900 houses in the village are tuned in to new Fibernet-hosted television, internet and telephone network in Mori, which had already bagged the national-level Swachh village award from the Centre.

Marking the launch of the Fibre Grid services, the chief minister switched on the TTD-SVBC channel and also interacted with the AP Fibre Grid authorities through video conference.

The Chief Minister visited the residence of professor Soleman Darwin and interacted with the representatives of Silicon Valley companies from US who played crucial role in turning the village into a Smart village.
He spoke to Secretary of Department of Telecommunication, Delhi, and asked him to provide the villagers phone connections at Rs. 149. He inaugurated a digital classroom and declared the village open defecation free.

Addressing a public meeting, the Chief Minister said 22 multinational companies had come to Mori to make it a smart village and start cashless transactions, provide fibre optical cable connections, aquaponics and smart water grid management. He said digital transactions had already begun and cashless transactions would start shortly with the support of various cards. The Chief Minister inaugurated LED lights from the dais.

He said villagers should adopt three things as the village was connected with the OFC: Adhar based transactions, smart purchases and swiping of cards. He specially thanked Prof. Salmon Darwin, Berkeley University, who was born in the village and settled in U.S., for contributing his mite for the development of the village.

Prof. Darwin introduced representatives of 22 multinational companies to the village.

**Piped Cooking Gas to Mori**

The Andhra Pradesh government is planning to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Andhra Pradesh Gas Distribution Corporation (APGDC) Limited for supplying piped LPG to Mori village in East Godavari district.

More than 1,100 households will get cooking gas supply through pipeline. The project would be completed soon, said East Godavari District Collector H Arun Kumar.

“We will fix metres to all the houses and the government will charge as per the metre reading. The survey, project works such as laying pipeline [and] fixing metres will begin shortly,” the Collector said.

**Ericsson introduces IoT solutions to Mori**

Swedish communication technology firm Ericsson on December 29 demonstrated at Mori village of Andhra Pradesh its Internet of Things (IoT) solutions for creating smart and sustainable villages in the state.

Both projects — Connected Aquaponics and Smart Water Grid Management — were demonstrated in the presence of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, after a three-month pilot.

Ericsson earlier this year signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Andhra Pradesh government and the University of California – Berkeley to help improve lives of farmers in and around Mori.

“The ‘Connected Aquaponics’ and ‘Smart Water Grid Management’ IoT solutions being demonstrated here will help improve harvest and optimise water distribution. It has the potential to provide an improved life for millions of farmers in the country,” said Anand Varadarajan, head of Ericsson Research, Chennai, at Ericsson India, in a statement.

The Connected Aquaponics integrates aquaculture and hydroponics for reuse of the ammonia-rich waste water from aquaculture for organic farming and recycle the water back to the aqua farm.

“Using wireless sensor network and Ericsson’s ApplIoT platform, we enable the monitoring of the aqua farm 24×7, thereby enabling the farmers with real-time information,” the company said.

This enables the farmers to increase the yield as well as bring down the production cost with optimum use of the raw materials and repeated use of water.

The ‘Smart Water Grid Management’ solution has been designed to enable efficient use of natural water resources in the Godavari basin through use of sensors and actuators.

The sensors measure the quality of water, flow of water and level in the water storage tanks across the village.
Girijan Cooperative Corporation was in the news recently for something which it did not venture to do since its inception almost six decades ago.

GCC released kumkum or saffron powder. It was like a God sent opportunity as the idea came from none-the-less than the Srisailam Devasthanam. The GCC Vice-Chairman and Managing Director ASPS Raviprakash, always ready for innovation, promptly obliged them and the result is the kumkum powder. Srisailam Devasthanam placed the first order for Rs.10 lakh for supply of 50 kg, of kumkum to it every month. It was only a beginning. Sri Kanakamahalakshmi Devasthanam in Visakhapatnam city where the GCC headquarters is located, took the cue to place order for as much as 150 kg of kumkum every month.

Now all major temples in the state have requested the GCC to supply its quality kumkum powder for their daily rituals. According to Raviprakash, at present there is no reliable kumkum powder available in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana markets. The quality of kumkum in the market was found to be substandard. “Other major temples in the State are also placing indents with GCC and the total requirement of various devastanams works out to about 30 metric tons a year,” he disclosed. Also, superior quality turmeric is abundantly grown by the tribal farmers in Paderu of Visakhapatnam agency region. The GCC is already selling turmeric in powder form in the market. The sales turnover is around 50 metric tons worth Rs.55 lakh.

The kumkum powder is being manufactured in the industrial unit of V. Madugula where turmeric processing is taken up. Kumkum is produced using superior grade turmeric rhizomes and fine mesh. The sale rate is Rs.35 per 100 grams packs and Rs.20 for 50 gm. packs.

GCC’s kumkum is pure and is also cheaper compared to other brands in the market and will greatly benefit the general public and pilgrims. “We are expecting a Rs. One crore sales turnover through sale of 30 metric tons of kumkum next year,” he said. The other product released simultaneously last month along with kumkum was Vaisakhi Coffee.

The GCC’s Araku Coffee brand gained world-wide acclaim. The Vaisakhi Coffee is a blend of 70 per cent coffee and 30 per cent chicory, and the coffee part contains a mix of 85 per cent berry coffee of Chintapalli mandal and 15 per cent parchment of Paderu mandal. The blend is prepared by Chief Analyst of Coffee Lab of Bengaluru, Sunali Menon. About 20 tonnes of coffee is being prepared. The name was given to the coffee brand to represent the district and also because Vaisakhi means spring and the coffee cultiva-
tion brought spring into the life of the Girijan farmer. GCC’s sales could be a hundred crore on coffee alone but for some setbacks. The tribal farmers are given a free hand by the State Government but they are exploited by outsiders, nay middlemen, mostly from Karnataka. They collect coffee seeds on a large scale keeping in mind only exports. For this, they lend money to the gullible tribal farmer and descend on the agency area at the time of harvest. They take away the entire produce for a song leaving the farmer in the lurch. AP Minister for Tribal Welfare Ravela Kishore Babu has assured the tribals that in two to three years, all the middlemen would be totally eliminated from coffee plantations in the Agency area.

And to help the Girijans farmers come out of the clutches of the middlemen and private money-lenders and traders, the GCC is advancing a loan of Rs. 10,000 to each of the 5,000 farmers. This would help the farmers sell coffee directly to the GCC for a remunerative price. Once this is done, the GCC’s coffers will be boosted by the turnover through coffee alone which would even touch the three-figure mark. For, individuals who are non-resident Indians are making a few crores by marketing Araku coffee in the US. The State Government has also announced a debt waiver of Rs. 1.88 crore to 2,771 Girijan farmers.

Apart from coffee, GCC honey is very much in demand in the two Telugu speaking States of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. As much as 500 tons of honey is sold here against the demand of 1000 tons. GCC honey is most sought-after since it is pure unlike other brands some of which are said to have added foreign stuff for making them more viscous.

Other new products of GCC in the pipeline are natural herbal drinks to be introduced next summer. Encouraged by the sales of nannari and maaredu juice bottles at its outlets, the GCC has plans to come out with ‘ready to drink’ variety of the mix, in safe packs each costing Rs.10. Similarly, it is working on an organic shampoo from soapnut.

Thanks to the advantage it enjoys in sales of quality coffee and honey, the GCC now wants to launch other products like karakkaya, usiri or amla, kumkudu or soapnut, maaredu, cleaning nuts, and gum karaya.

Incidentally, the two outlets of the corporation – at the Millennium Petrol Pump in Siripuram and at Ushodaya Junction have proved to be thumping success, netting a profit of Rs.3 lakh and Rs.1 lakh respectively. Another outlet was also started at the Kakinada Collectorate recently with instant success. It is expected to reap a profit of around Rs.5 lakh a month. One more outlet will be opened at Vijayawada soon.

This has made the GCC to now take a decision to appoint educated youth as francisees to run its exclusive outlets.

The GCC also draws strength from the 14 petrol pumps run by it in the State.

- B Prabhakara Sarma
We are living in religious exclusion; nevertheless, there are a few places where tolerance bridges between the people of different beliefs. Vijayawada is such place of inclusion that glows in terms of secularism. The city houses three important places of worship from each of the major three religions- Hindu, Christian and Islam. The significant places of worship are-Kanakadurga temple atop Indrakeeladri, Mary Matha holy shrine atop Gunadala hill and Hazratbal shrine in one town, which contains the Holy relic of Prophet Muhammed. With this rare religious order, Vijayawada quietly adds a chapter to the nation’s abiding saga of secularism.

**KANAKA DURGA:** Reigning Goddess

Kanaka Durga, the Goddess of power, riches and benevolence is the presiding deity of Vijayawada. Ancient temple of Kanaka Durga, atop Indrakeeladri on the banks of the sacred river Krishna abounds with legends of mythological and also historical interest. No pilgrim passes through the city without a holy dip in the river and darshan of the Goddess. The hoary antiquity of SwayamBhu (the self-existent deity) dates back to millenniums. According to mythological belief, Indrakeelaadri is also known for ages as Arjunikonda (The Hill of Arjuna). Arjuna is said to have done his tapascharya in order to obtain Pasupata from Lord Shiva. This hill Indrakila is said to be the scene of the Kiratarjuniya where Lord Shiva in the form of an aboriginal/tribal hunter (Kirataka) had a fight with Arjuna.

The rush of pilgrims of eclectic mix at Durga temple is a regular sight. But, after the 10-day Dasara festivities of goddess Kanakadurga, an exclusive group of lakhs of pilgrims throng the temple and paint the river Krishna-red! The large turnout of devotees in their traditional red robes are called ‘Bhavanis’, who take Durga Bhavani Deeksha for one mandalam (40 days), or arthamandalam (21 days). After Dasara, Bhavani’s relinquish the deeksha in river Krishna, before having a darshan of Goddess.

The three-day annual Shakambari festival, being held in every Ashada month on Indrakeeladri, is another important event. More than one lakh pilgrims throng every year to worship Durgamata in the incarnation of Shakambari Devi for bountiful rain and a good harvest.
Gunadala Mary Matha festival, an annual event, is considered to be one of the largest congregations of worship in Andhra Pradesh. At an average, about 10 lakh believers come to offer prayers and fulfill their vows during the fete. The celebrations of Gunadala Matha festival began way back in 1924. It was the incessant affords of a Catholic priest HugesPezzoni, Mary Matha Shrine was built in 1924. Under the aegis of Pezzoni, FrArlati alias AlladiSwamy installed a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes (Mother Mary) in a natural grotto on the Gunadala Hill slope. The Gunadala hill is the tallest hillock in the clump of hillocks that interrupt the rather plain terrain of the city. As Gunadala Mary Matha is synonymous for healing power, the hill is believed to have the powers of breaking the curse of infertility. Thus, childless couples spend an entire night in prayer and hang miniature cradles on the branches of trees on the hill slopes. People ailing from chronic physical afflictions offer prayers for relief. The shrine attracts a large number of people from all faiths and pilgrims from all corners of the State and neighbouring States like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka throng to offer prayers at statue of Mother Mary during the three-day carnival.

Gunadala Catholic Shrine: Lady of Lourdes

Jumma Masjid: Hazaratbal

Juma Masjid, the mosque in one town is the most famous and majestic of worship place in Vijayawada. That honour probably goes to Hazaratbal, holy relic of Prophet Mohammed (SAS), who is regarded by Muslims as the last messenger and prophet of God. It is a solid, sober masjid which carries an aura about it. Located in one town of Vijayawada near Kaleswaraarao Market, the mosque is annually in news due to its huge congregation, when Mosque authorities allow the devotees to view the relic only once a year. The display attracts the people irrespective of caste, creed and religion who join the celebration with an open heart and complete devotion. Devotees weep as the relic is displayed after the prayers.

Juma Masjid, the oldest masjid in Vijayawada, was built in 1733 by Hazarat Syed Shah Musafir Bukhari, who hails from Samarkand, Uzbekistan in central Asia. According to the local account on Shah Musafir Bukhari, he was impressed with the environs of Vijayawada particularly on the banks of Krishna River and spent his rest of the life in Vijayawada in the 18th century and built the masjid. Later, it became famous for having the holy relic of prophet Mohammed (SAS).

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The sound of azaan from the mosque, the rendering of hymns from ancient temple and the chimes of bells from the church.... what does all this point to? Simple! The harmonious tradition of Vijayawada, indeed our nation, goes back many centuries. Time then to take choice to talk of inclusion; exclusion excerpts too heavy a price!
Sound and light are the two vital factors in creating an illusion called cinema. Apart from strong content, it is these two departments that define the quality of a movie and thus contribute for its success. Perhaps it is for this reason that not only debut directors but also experienced filmmakers depend on expert cinematographers and sound designers.

Veteran director K. Raghavendra Rao’s ‘Sri Ramadasu’ was a fine example of how sound designing made all the difference to a movie. A rush print of ‘Sri Ramadasu’ was shown to the film’s hero Akkineni Nagarjuna without background score. Nagarjuna did not like it. He feared its fate at the box office. However the film’s music director M.M. Keeravani told him to watch the movie after the re-recording work was done. Nagarjuna was bowled over by the result. The contributing factors were besides Keeravani’s genius in composing the background score it was also the sound engineer E. Radhakrishna’s expertise in sound mixing.

Considered a guru in the field of Sound designing was A. Krishnan, the South’s first generation sound engineer. His work at Vauhini studios for Telugu and other language films was legendary. The master of sound was such a rage then that even though they have shot their films elsewhere producers would throng to Vauhini Studios to have their sound mixing done by A. Krishnan who was the studio’s sound department chief.

Early days
Born in Thrissur in Kerala in 1905, Krishnan studied at Maharaja College, Ernakulam and at St. Joseph College, Tiruchirapalli from where he obtained a degree in Physics. In 1927 the Madras University started a course in Electrical and Mechanical Engineering and Krishnan joined as a lecturer in the department at his alma mater, St. Joseph College. As the subject was new to him and since not much text books were available on the subjects then, Krishnan had a tough time learning and teaching his students. Krishnan not only mastered the subjects but also earned a name as the best in the field. During his teaching stint, Krishnan also learnt the nuances of sound engineering which helped

“Sound unbound by nature becomes bounded by art.”
-Dejan Stojanovic

In this brand new series we bring to you non-Telugu technicians who have worked for the growth of Telugu cinema.]
Born in Thrissur in Kerala, Krishnan started his long association with Telugu films with ‘Grihalakshmi’. Vauhini pictures shot its classics – ‘Vandemataram,’ ‘Sumangali,’ ‘Devata,’ ‘Pothana,’ ‘Swargaseema’ and ‘Yogi Vemana’ at this studio and Krishnan worked along with Sekhar in the films sound designing. Krishnan’s masterly job was evident in the sound mixing of Vauhini Pictures ‘Malleswari’.

Debut in film industry

It was in 1937 that ace lens man and director K. Ramnoth founded Karthikeya Studios in Madras and talent hunt brought him to Tiruchi. He invited Krishnan to join the studio’s sound department. Always looking for new challenges, Krishnan accepted the offer and came to Madras to work along with the legendary sound designer and art director A.K. Sekhar. The first film to roll from Karthikeya Studio was in Tamil, ‘Sundaramurthy Nayana’ directed by Murugadasa. Ramnoth cranked the camera while Sekhar and Krishnan designed the sound. The movie won all round appreciation for its technical excellence.

It was the second movie that was shot at the studio which later paved the way for Krishnan’s long association with Telugu cinema. It was Roheni Pictures, ‘Grihalakshmi’ that introduced a set of actors and technicians to Telugu film industry. Sekhar and Krishnan worked as its sound engineers. During the making of this movie, Krishnan came into contact with B.N. Reddi and Vauhini Pictures.

In 1939 when Karthikeya Studios seized functioning, Krishnan along with Ramnoth and Sekhar joined Newtone Studios. Vauhini pictures shot its classics – ‘Vandemataram,’ ‘Sumangali,’ ‘Devata,’ ‘Pothana,’ ‘Swargaseema’ and ‘Yogi Vemana’ at this studio and Krishnan worked along with Sekhar in the films sound designing. Besides he also worked on Nagaiah’s ‘Bhagyalakshmi’ and ‘Thyagaiah.’ It was then he caught the attention of veteran filmmaker B.N. Reddi.

However, a new turn took place in his career, albeit briefly. The then Madras (Tamil Nadu) Government founded in 1945 a polytechnic institute (also known as Adyar Film Institute and now functioning as MGR Government Film and Television Training Institute) to teach film craft. Krishnan was appointed to teach the subject of sound recording to the students. For six months he held the post but the recording theatres in the studios were beckoning him to return as they needed his services more.

Tryst with Vauhini Studios

It was the time when Moola Narayana Swamy and B.N. Reddi built Vauhini Studios and B.N. who was helming the studio affairs was on the lookout for a capable man to head its Sound department. He brought Krishnan back from the polytechnic institute to the recording theatre. Vallabhajosyula Sivaram was chosen to assist him. P.V. Koteswara Rao later known as ‘Gemini’ and ‘Bharani’ Koteswara Rao was another assistant of Krishnan at Vauhini Studios.

The construction of Vauhini Studios was started in 1945 and completed in mid 1948. Two films, Vauhini Pictures, ‘Gunasundari Katha’ and Eastern Art Productions Tamil film, ‘Lavanya’ were launched almost simultaneously at the studios. However, the first film to have its recording done at Vauhini under the baton of Krishnan was, ‘Lavanya’ which had its recording launch on July 1, 1948 as against ‘Gunasundari Katha’s recording launch on August 13. Krishnan recorded two songs rendered by P. Leela for ‘Gunasundari Katha’ on that day. Krishnan’s assistant recordist, V. Sivaram played the lead in it opposite Jr. Sri Ranjani.

After B.N.’s brother B. Nagi Reddi took over the studio management, the facilities were improved on par with the best in the country. Interestingly, later day’s iconic director K. Viswanath too joined the Sound department of Vauhini Studios during the making of ‘Gunasundari Katha.’ Krishnan’s masterly job was evident in the sound mixing of Vauhini Pictures ‘Malleswari,’ Arudra in his review in the magazine Telugu Swatantra commended the excellent sound designing by A. Krishnan and P.V. Koteswara Rao. “Heavy rain with winds lashed outside and Malli’s mother converses with her husband Nagappa. Their conversation is clearly audible along with the sound of the rain and the wind. Even the flutter of the towel on Nagappa’s shoulder is heard clearly.” Such was the technical standard at a time when the word ‘digital sound’ was not even heard.

Besides Vauhini’s ‘Peddamanushulu,’ and Vijaya Productions, ‘Shavukaru,’ ‘Pathalabhairavi,’ ‘Pelli Chesi Choodu,’ and ‘Chandraharam’ Krishnan’s repertoire include films produced at Vauhini Studios by other popular banners such as Prathibha, NAT, Annapurna, Jagapathi etc., and films in various other languages. It was Krishnan who recorded Lata Mangeshkar’s first and only Telugu song, the famous lullaby, ‘nidurapora thammuda’ for ‘Santhanam’ under the baton of music director Susarla.
Dakshina Murthy. Interestingly Krishnan also recorded her rendition for a Sri Lanka film, ‘Sadasulang’ composed by Susarla at Vauhini recording theatre on November 9, 1954.

From 1948 to 1962 he was the director of Audiography at Vauhini Studios. When the studio was closed for a few months due to a strike, producer Dukkipati Madhusudana Rao who was filming all his productions at Vauhini studios revived Saradhi Studios at Hyderabad and invited A. Krishnan to head its Sound department. Krishnan moved to Hyderabad and joined Saradhi Studios to work for Annapurna Pictures, Chaduvukunna Ammayilu' and continued his stint there for a few more years enriching the quality of Telugu films produced at the Studio.

Accolades & Awards

Popularly known as Krishna Iyer, Krishnan was mild mannered and patience personified. His smiling face endeared everyone and won him many friends in the industry. In 1963 he was a consulting engineer for Cinema Ltd., Colombo. He was the President of Cine Technicians’ Association of South India (CTA) and was the author of Cinema Operators Manual, published by the Government Board of Examiners for cinema operators. He received the K. Ramnoth award in 1981 from CTA in recognition of his service to the film industry. A. Krishnan was one of the veteran technicians to whom the South Indian film industry in general and the Telugu film industry in particular owes a lot.

- M L Narasimham

The Obulavari-Krishnapuram Port broad gauge railway line connectivity work in Kadapa district would be completed by December next, said Union Minister for Urban Development M Venkaiah Naidu.

The work on the 262-metre-long first tunnel had been completed and 56 per cent of the work was completed on the 3,063 metre-long second tunnel which was progressing briskly, said Naidu after inspecting the railway line and tunnel work near Cherlopalle in Chitvel mandal in Kadapa district, along with Union Minister for Human Resources Prakash Javadekar. Completion of the rail and road connectivity between Obulavari and Krishnapatnam port was his long cherished goal, Naidu said. Recalling that the project was sanctioned in 2006 by then Union Railway Minister Nitish Kumar, Venkaiah Naidu said it progressed at a snail’s pace for want of funds. Work picked up pace in 2014 he said and lauded the Rail Vikas Nigam Limited engineers and officials for it.

An outlay of Rs 1,168 crore was spent so far on the railway project, undertaken with an estimate of Rs, 1,646 crore, he said. With an estimate of Rs 47 crore per km, it was a low-cost project. While 1,900 acres was acquired, clearance was accorded for 325 acres of forest land, he said. Earthwork would be completed by February 2017 and tunnel work by July 2017 and the cement lining work would be taken up from March to October, he said.

The area would develop with the rail connectivity and development of internal roads. Development would be easy where facilities such as roads, railways, flight and power were available, he said.

Venkaiah Naidu said a special task force had been constituted to examine the viability of establishing an integrated steel plant in Kadapa and the Government would take an appropriate decision on getting the task force report. Union Minister Prakash Javadekar, Minister for Municipal Administration P. Narayana, RVNL Managing Director Satish Agnihotri, Kadapa Joint Collector Swetha Teotia were present.
E
very Indian respects the national flag. But not many Indians can claim to know how the tricolor evolved over decades. The present flag underwent at least six radical changes from colours to symbols of authority on it between 1906 and 1947 when it was finally adopted by the Constituent Assembly as the National Flag. Jawaharlal Nehru introduced the resolution to that effect. The first flag in India is believed to have been hoisted on August 7, 1906, in the Parsee Bagan Square (Green Park) in Kolkata. The flag had horizontal stripes of red, yellow and green. The second flag to have been hoisted was by Madame Cama and her band of exiled revolutionaries in Paris in 1907. Some say that it was in 1905, though. This was very similar to the first flag and it was exhibited at a socialist conference in Berlin. Dr Annie Besant and Lokmanya Tilak hoisted the third flag in 1917 during the Home Rule movement. The Union Jack symbolized the ideal of Dominion Status. At a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Bezwada, now Vijayawada, in Andhra Pradesh in 1921, Pingali Venkayya, a young man from Machilipatnam in Krishna Mandal, prepared a flag and took it to Gandhiji. It was red and green, representing the two major communities in India. Gandhiji suggested that a white strip to represent the remaining communities in the country and a ‘charkha’ be added. Thus was the tricolor born and it was hoisted.

A committee of seven persons was appointed in 1931 to elicit opinion on the choice of a flag. It proposed a plain saffron flag with a ‘charkha’ in reddish brown. The All-India Congress Committee rejected the proposal. The same year a resolution was passed at the Karachi session of the All-India Congress Committee adopting a tricolor as the national emblem. It had three colors: saffron, white and green. No religious significance was, however, attached to the colors. They represented saffron for courage and sacrifice, white for truth and peace, and green for faith and chivalry. On July 22, 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru presented the national flag to the Constituent Assembly. This was the tricolour, but the “charkha” was substituted with the “Dharma Chakra” of Asoka, the wheel of the Law of Dharma. Dr Radhakrishnan said on the occasion: “Truth or satya, dharma or virtue, ought to be the controlling principles of all those who work under this flag. Again, the wheel denotes motion. There is death in stagnation. There is life in movement. India should no more resist change; it must move and go forward. The wheel represents the dynamism of a peaceful change…”

On the same occasion, Jawaharlal Nehru moved the following resolution in the Constituent Assembly: ‘Resolved that the National Flag of India shall be horizontal tricolour of deep saffron (kesri), white and dark green in equal proportions. In the centre of the white band, there shall be a wheel in navy blue to represent the “charkha.” The design of the wheel shall be that of the wheel (charkha) which appears on the abacus of the Sarnath Lion Capital of Asoka.’

- Y V Ramakotaiah
senior Journalist
2016 was a mixed bag for Tollywood. Despite the resounding success of films like Sarrainodu and Janatha Garage, Tollywood also saw several high profile films fail at the box-office. New heroes emerged and at the same time, it was clear the audience too is willing to watch films which boast of different content. The success of films like Pelli Choopulu, Dhruba, Kshanam, 24 and Ekkadiki Pothavu Chinnavada is proof enough that Tollywood is going through a sea change. Having said that, given the list of films that are going to release in 2017, it clearly looks like an epic year for tinsel town with some of the biggest names vying for attention at the box-office. Starting with Balakrishna’s Gautamiputra Satakarni to Baahubali 2, here are 10 films that could make a big mark:

**Gautamiputra Satakarni**
Nandamuri Balakrishna’s 100th film Gautamiputra Satakarni has been making a lot of buzz over the past few months and it’s not without a reason. Directed by Krish, the film narrates the story of Gautamiputra Satakarni, one of the greatest rulers from Satavahana dynasty, who lived during 1st Century A.D. The film’s spectacular visuals and an emotional storyline have already become a topic of discussion and Krish states that the movie will reiterate the greatness of Telugu culture and identity.

One of the dialogues in the film which goes like ’Desham meesam thippudham’ has struck a chord with the audiences and the songs, composed by Chirantan Bhatt, have mesmerised the music aficionados. The fact that Gautamiputra Satakarni is Balakrishna’s 100th film too has added an element of prestige to the project and the success of the film could trigger another wave of period dramas in Telugu cinema. The film is slated for release in early January, 2017 and it could add another feather in the cap for Balakrishna and Krish respectively.

**Khaidi No 150**
Megastar Chiranjeevi’s comeback film Khaidi No 150 is turning out to be both a litmus tests as well as the proof of his larger-than-life image and popularity. Although the actor-turned-politician-turned-actor took a long time to decide the script for his 150th film, he finally decided to go ahead with the Telugu remake of Vijay-Murugadoss’ Kaththi. Directed by VV Vinayak, the socio-drama stars Chiranjeevi and Kajal in lead roles. While the original version had Vijay played dual roles and fighting against a cola com-
pany which had been destroying water resources in a village, it remains to be seen what changes have been made in the Telugu version. No matter what the content of the film is going to be, Khaidi No 150’s USP is going to be Megastar Chiranjeevi himself who looks more dashing than ever before. Incidentally, Ram Charan himself has produced the film and Devi Sri Prasad has scored the music.

Om Namo Venkatesaya
After the success of Annamayya, Sri Ramadasu and Shirdi Sai, Nagarjuna and K Raghavendra Rao have teamed up for the fourth time to make a devotional time. This time, their latest film, Om Namo Venkatesaya narrates the story of Hathiram Baba, an ardent devotee of Lord Venkateshwara who lived in the 16th century. Not much is known about Hathiram Baba; however, K Raghavendra Rao and his team are said to have done an incredible amount of research to bring Om Namo Venkatesaya to life. The film also stars Anushka and Jagapathi Babu in important roles, whereas Saurab Raj Jain has played the role of Lord Venkateshwara.

Guru
A remake of Irudhi Suttru, Guru has Venkatesh playing the role of a boxing coach. Venkatesh will be seen in a befeef look in this movie directed by Sudha Kongara, whereas Ritika Singh will be reprising her role which catapulted her to fame in Tamil and Hindi cinema. Shot in Vizag and Hyderabad, Guru has all the makings of an inspiring sports drama and it’s been a while since someone has dabbled with this genre. The fact that Venkatesh has taken up an author-backed role speaks volumes about the confidence he has on the content in the film and it could turn out to be the surprise hit of 2017.

Ghazi
For the first time ever, a war drama set underwater is going to surface on Indian screens in February. Directed by Sankalp, this Telugu-Hindi bilingual film narrates the story of the mysterious sinking of PNS Ghazi off the coast of Vishakapatnam during the 1971 Indo-Pak war. Rana, Taapsee, Kay Kay Menon have played the lead roles in this war drama which has been shot in Hyderabad, where a special submarine set was erected. Going by the buzz in the industry, Ghazi promises to be a thrilling experience.

Allu Arjun’s DJ
Allu Arjun is on a high post the success of Sarrainodu, which became one of the highest grossing films ever in Telugu cinema. Not only was it a testimony to Allu Arjun’s ever-growing popularity, but also the idea of a ‘summer blockbuster’ was reinforced with its success in mid 2016. Now, all eyes are on his upcoming film DJ - Duvvada Jagannadham, which is being directed by Harish Shankar. Pooja Hegde is the lead actress in DJ. Given Allu Arjun’s dream run at the box-office in the past few years, it wouldn’t be surprising if DJ too turns out to be one of the biggest hits of 2017.

Mahesh Babu-AR Murugadoss’ Film
Mahesh Babu’s forthcoming film in AR Murugadoss’ direction is one of the most awaited films of 2017 for numerous reasons. Not only is this combination of Mahesh and Murugadoss a dream come true for many, but also the film will mark Mahesh Babu’s debut in Tamil. Interestingly, Mahesh Babu will be playing the role of an intelligence officer and it’ll also, reportedly, touch upon themes like sibling rivalry among other things. Industry insiders reveal that the film has the potential to become the second highest grossing film of all time in Telugu, behind Baahubali and pre-release hype is certainly pointing the expectations in the right direction.

Katamarayudu
After the debacle of Sardar Gabbar Singh, Pawan Kalyan is back as Katamarayudu, which is expected to kick off the summer season in Tollywood in 2017. A remake of ‘Veeram’, the film has Pawan Kalyan reprising the role of Ajith, whereas Shruti Haasan will play his romantic interest. Directed by Kishore Pardasani, the film has Pawan Kalyan playing a middle-aged man who’ll do anything to protect his brothers. It’s a perfect recipe for an action entertainer, and Pawan Kalyan’s new look and style are expected to weave their magic on silver screen.

Baahubali 2
Trust SS Rajamouli to captivate the nation once again in summer, 2017. Baahubali - The Conclusion, the continuation of Baahubali - The Beginning, is going to be a box-office juggernaut when it arrives in style in Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Hindi on April 27, 2017. The first part introduced us to the world of Mahishmathi and its rich & vibrant characters including Shivudu, Amarendra Baahubali, Bhallaladeva, Kattappa, Shivagami, Devasena and Avantika. And if the confessions of the cast and crew of the movie are anything to go by, Baahubali 2 will make the first part look like child’s play. The second part is going to delve deep into the rivalry between Baahubali and Bhalaladeva, the crucial roles which Devasena, played by Anushka, and Shivagami (Ramyakrishna) have played in the lives of the two siblings. And finally, we’ll get to know the answer to the question - Why did Kattappa kill Baahubali? Jai Mahishmathi.

Shankar’s 2.0
In a year which promises to be epic in every sense, Shankar’s 2.0, starring Rajinikanth, Akshay Kumar and Amy Jackson, is expected to shake things up in a major way. Not only is it one of the most expensive films ever made, but also Shankar has shot the film in 3D. With Akshay Kumar playing the role of an evil scientist, all our eyes will be on Chitti - The Robot, played by Rajinikanth, to save the world. It just doesn’t get bigger than this!

- Hemanth Kumar CR
Women in India want to work but cannot or do not due to family responsibilities, lack of skills and social norms. India is ranked 139 among 145 countries on the economic participation and opportunity sub index, in the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report 2015.

In the rankings by indicator, India stood 136th in female labour force participation rate.

Women’s workforce participation in India is the lowest among the BRICS nations. A range of countries, such as Bahrain, Malaysia and even Somalia (37%), do much better, IndiaSpend reported in March 2015. Female workforce participation rate- defined as the percentage of the population that is either employed or unemployed (that is, either working or actively seeking work)- in India rose from 25.8% in 2012-13 to 27.4% in 2015-16, according to data from the ministry of labour.

While Uttar Pradesh and Bihar had some of the lowest female workforce participation rates with 15.5% and 18.1% – states such as Rajasthan and Jharkhand did much better than national average of 31.1%. All the southern states have scored better than the national average, with Andhra Pradesh being the highest (51.3%).

UP, Rajasthan, and Bihar had low rates of workforce participation among urban women, with the lowest being in Bihar (9.3%), while Andhra Pradesh was the highest at 35.1%.
CM Chandrababu Naidu is an active social media user. Many of you have been actively following his activities with admiration. Here are a few snapshots from his Twitter account and those on him.

**Tweet**

N Chandrababu Naidu @ncbn

Virtually inspected the Polavaram Project works from Velagapudi and directed the site engineers to expedite works.

7:45 am - 13 Dec 2016

50 RETWEETS 354 LIKES.

Dr. Narendra Kumar V @Rynk9999 Dec 13
@ncbn sir pls clear the CRDA files regarding plots from 2ys people are waiting,one sign will bring 1000crs income to govt pls focus on it

sairam @makshaamm Dec 13
@ncbn good

K Padma Rani @KPadmaRani1 Dec 13
@ncbn let the world go to hell,you will achieve your dream AP / hats off to you Mr. CM

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**Tweet**

N Chandrababu Naidu @ncbn

A conversation with @SadhguruJV is always enlightening. Had a chat with him during the #HTLS in New Delhi.

---

**Tweet**

N Chandrababu Naidu @ncbn

Inaugurated new building of Orthopedic Super Speciality Hospital for the Disabled run by TTD in Tirupati.

8:25 am - 16 Dec 2016

75 RETWEETS 525 LIKES.

SHAMA SUNDER. @shamsun... Dec 16
@ncbn
Congratulations sir. Today only Parliament passed bill on physically challenged. You have inaugurated the hospital. Hats off to you.

SHAMA SUNDER. @shamsun... Dec 16
@ncbn
Beware of NGOs as some are exploiting physically challenged. Before releasing funds, their accountability must be checked.

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**Tweet**

N Chandrababu Naidu @ncbn

Interacted with young & energetic students from Sri Padmavathi Medical College in Tirupati.

8:26 am - 16 Dec 2016

48 RETWEETS 437 LIKES.

Sudhendu J Sinha @sudhenduJ25 Dec 3
@ncbn In addition to infra, education & healthcare under Govt. umbrella needs urgent priority. It empowers poor & restores confidence inGovt

Not sure who i am @Mano217 Dec 3
@ncbn @SadhguruJV please give him land to setup spiritual center

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**Tweet**

N Chandrababu Naidu @ncbn

Glad to inaugurate @Paytm development centre in Vizag after a surge of digital payments in AP. A welcome move!

9:28 pm - 17 Dec 2016

218 RETWEETS 924 LIKES.

WatsAp+91 9912808993 @Suru... Dec 17
@ncbn hi sir

ranjeeth @nadelia3 Dec 17
@ncbn @Paytm instead of relying on PayTM AP wallet has potential to do wonders. Good to have Govt supported payment platforms first

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**Tweet**

Anup Nayak @anupnyk Dec 16
@ncbn events like these questions are curated

Munisekh K @MunisekhK1 Dec 16
@ncbn what is the outcome

Kavya @BubblyKav Dec 17
@ncbn they are young & energetic while you are Old & Outdated! Best combination 😄😊😊

Doke Venkataramana @RAM... Dec 18
@ncbn Super sir
SONA SPRINGS
A Visual Feast To Nature Lovers
I happened to be in Chintavaram Kothapalem village of Chillakuru mandal in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh a few months ago. It was high noon and I was hungry but was so surprised to see a stream flowing amidst the sand dunes. The water was sweet and quenched my thirst and hunger as well. When I asked the locals where from this stream comes from, they said it does not come from anywhere but it is a spring. It was told that thousands of acres in Chillakuru mandal use such springs for irrigation purpose. Locals call these springs as ‘Sona rivulets’. The meaning of Sona in a dictionary says the white in the egg. The water springs from the sand eternally.

Folklore on Sona Springs

They had an interesting folklore to tell in which they had belief. Long, long ago once the sea was angry and a huge tide fell and damaged all the villages on its way back to the sea. Since then sand dunes were formed and God has been creating the spring between them. There are big cities buried underground and the Sona water is the tears of the people living there. That was what the locals said. We cannot brush aside their belief just like that. The reference of Sona springs appears in the 51st volume of East and West Journal. It says that there used to be a port city near this Kothapalem. Between 300 BC and 200 AD Greek and Romans were engaged in trading from this port to foreign lands. The research article was written by Archeologist KP Rao with ample proof to substantiate his writings. Then I realized that the locals are there to carry forward the tales of the past from one generation to the other.

Edward Hutchins, who worked as the Madras Deputy Conservator of Forests in 1883 has written in his 58-page report on The Measurement of Rates of Growth of Kasurina in Nellore district that the region has everlasting springs which keeps the area fertile and keeps the drought away. He has categorically stated and recorded about the springs and also mentioned that he had shown these springs to the Duke of Edinburgh.

The farmers of 30 villages depend on Sona Springs for irrigation needs, as the resourceful Sona springs which holds 1, 00,506 million of US gallons water. The fact is that the pH level in the Sona Springs is better than that of branded packaged water of multinational companies. Sona spring is a visual treat to the true nature lovers, who always seek for the caresses of the nature to make the world their kin.

how to reach:

Being one of the major cities of Andhra Pradesh and also being one of the affluent districts of coastal Andhra, Nellore has many a source of connectivity through road and rail. It is very near to pilgrim city Tirupati and also Chennai. Nellore Railway station falls in the important railway route, connecting Chennai. Thus, it is well connected to most major cities of the country like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Bhubaneswar. All the villages in and around Chillakuru mandal are around 45 KM away from Nellore and obviously very accessible.

accommodation

Haritha Hotel, Nellore

Beautiful with tranquil locality of Dargamitta, Haritha Hotel of APTDC is to provide comfortable accommodation to tourists. AP Tourism has opened this modern hotel, with excellent spacious deluxe rooms and attached restaurant. It is located near AC Subba Reddy Stadium, Trunk Road.

Rooms could be booked online, or through phone booking: +91 861-234 7707/08/09

- Dr Lenin Dhanisetti
Biodiversity park at Amaravati
Sakhamuru village in Thullur mandal of Andhra Pradesh will host the single largest lung space in the State’s capital region in the form of a 200-acre botanical garden. The AP-Capital Region Development Authority (AP-CRDA) which is developing it, has identified a 100-acre parcel of land for the garden and got it incorporated in the master plan. When complete, the garden will serve as a tourist spot and a place of interest for school and college students.

Inauguration of CGHS wellness centre
Central Government Health Scheme’s wellness centre on the premises of the Hospital for Mental Health will be inaugurated on January 9. Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda will inaugurate the centre. He will also address a meeting on the occasion. Central government officials have informed the inauguration details to Lok Sabha member K Haribabu. The wellness centre will benefit 30,000 Central government employees in the city, 20,000 retired staff and together with their family members covers about 1.6 lakh persons.

Boeing-shaped IT tower in Vizag
Work is set to be launched on the IT tower, a Boeing-shaped super-structure with glass frames, in the heart of Visakhapatnam. The Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) has entrusted the job of construction to the Visakhapatnam Urban Development Authority (VUDA). The stone for the prestigious project was laid by Union IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad early 2016. The ground-plus-eight-floor tower is expected to give a big boost to the growth of the IT sector in the city – the largest with a turnover of Rs.2,000 crore in Andhra Pradesh. The tower will come up at Siripuram, where VUDA office is located. While the Centre will spend nearly Rs.40 crore on the project, VUDA’s equity will be the land admeasuring 1.2 acres. The construction time will be 12-18 months.

No More Cockfights in AP
The High Court at Hyderabad upheld the ban on cockfighting and directed the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana governments to ensure no cockfights take place during the Sankranti festival. The court extended the ban on cockfights wholly and not just during the Sankranti festival in January. The common High Court for both the Telugu states passed the orders on petitions filed by the Animal Welfare Board of India, Humane Society International/India, People for Animals and other organisations.

Singapore model of policing
Andhra Pradesh will take a leaf out of Singapore in policing by involving the community at large, Director-General of Police N. Sambasiva Rao said. The DGP told a media conference that community policing implemented in Chittoor district on a pilot basis would be replicated in other districts as well in the new year. Successful policing demanded community participation and working from behind, he said even while underscoring the need for a change in police personnel outlook while dealing with public. Expressing concern over a high 24,000 accidents in the State this year with over 8,000 people succumbing to injuries, he said all the liquor shops close to National Highways would be removed as per the Supreme Court’s guidelines.

Sri Lankan President invites CM
Sri Lanka’s President Maithripala Sirisena has invited the Chief Minister of India’s Andhra Pradesh Nara Chandrababu Naidu to attend the second anniversary celebrations marking the completion of two years in office as President. According a special honor the Sri Lankan President has also invited the Chief Minister Chandrababu to address the nation on development. In his letter to Chandrababu, the Sri Lankan President lauded Chief Minister’s policies in reducing poverty in the state and commended his developmental schemes to better village administration and his schemes like pension and food processing. The Sri Lankan President has expressed his wish to maintain close ties with Andhra Pradesh.

NEET paper to be in Telugu too
Medical aspirants from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana can write the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) test in Telugu language from next year. The NEET is mandatory for entry into medical colleges from the ensuing academic year. In fact, the exam can be taken in eight languages — Hindi, English, Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali, Assamese, Tamil and Telugu. The decision was taken by the Central government after consultations with the State governments on the exam pattern and related aspects.

Akademies to be re-launched
In a bid to revive the glory of Telugu language and culture, the State government is going to re-launch three akademies, besides conducting theatre workshops on a large scale, according to Mandal Buddha Prasad, Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. “An announcement will be made soon by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu with regard to the re-launching of
the Andhra Pradesh Sahitya Akademi, Sangeeta Nataka Akademi, and Lalita Kala Akademi, which are the need of the hour to revive our past glory and continue the legacy of our forefathers,” he said addressing the centenary celebrations of the city-based theatre troupe, Young Men’s Happy Club, at Dantu Kala Kshetram.

Sr Journo Hanumantha Rao no more
Senior journalist V Hanumantha Rao, aged 91, popularly known as DNF Hanumantha Rao, passed away on Dec 12th at his residence in Srinagar colony. Rao was associated with media for about 65 years. He worked in several media organizations, including Krishna Patrika, Eenadu and Economic Times. Rao had been running the media agency Data New Features (DNF) for over three decades. Over the years he had trained scores of journalists and was considered as one of the most respected figures in the field of journalism.

Special cell to tackle Red Sanders Smuggling
State Government of Andhra Pradesh is to constitute a special ‘Organised Crime Cell’ to gather information pertaining to red sanders smuggling in the Seshachalam region. Announcing it in a recently held press conference in Tirupati, the Director-General of Police N. Sambasiva Rao said that the unit would not only gather intelligence but also study various aspects related to red sanders smuggling. According to him, the unit, which is predominantly an intelligence wing, would be made operational by February 1. It would be set up at the Red Sanders Anti Smuggling Task Force (RSASTF) headquarters in Tirupati.

APIIC’s borrowing limit raised to Rs. 5,000 crore
The Andhra Pradesh Government has issued orders authorising the Board of Directors of the Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation Limited (APIIC) to borrow up to Rs. 5,000 crores from time to time for land acquisition (LA) and for standing as guarantor for a Rs. 2,000-crore loan proposed to be taken by it (APIIC) from the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO). The G.O paved the way for the APIIC to proceed with acquisition of land for industries in the Visakhapatnam—Chennai Industrial Corridor (VCIC), Chennai and Bangalore Industrial Corridor (CBIC) and the Peninsular Region Industrial Development Corridor (PRIDE Corridor) with financial assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

JICA to work for AP capital region
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has signed up with the Centre and the Andhra Pradesh Government for implementing a technical cooperation project titled ‘Comprehensive Traffic and Transport Study for Andhra Pradesh Capital Region’. The study aims to contribute to the sound development of the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region (APCR) and will be implemented in coordination with the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority. The record was signed in the presence of Sreedhar Cherukuri, Commissioner, Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority, Ajay Jain, Principal Secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh, and Takayoshi Tange, Senior Representative, JICA India office.

Inauguration of CGHS wellness centre
Fulfilling a long-pending demand, Central Government Health Scheme’s wellness centre on the premises of the Hospital for Mental Health will be inaugurated on January 9. Union Health Minister J P Nadda will inaugurate the centre. He will also address a meeting on the occasion. Central government officials have informed the inauguration details to Lok Sabha member K Haribabu. The wellness centre will benefit 30,000 Central government employees in the city, 20,000 retired staff and together with their family members covers about 1.6 lakh persons. BJP city president M. Nagendra said the functioning of the centre fulfilled the BJP election promise made in 2014. Earlier, Central government employees had to go to Hyderabad to get treatment at the health centre there.

Carrom players create Guinness record
Husna Sameera 16 year-old and 22-year-old Allada Pavan created a Guinness record for the ‘longest marathon carrom playing’ by registering 34 hours, 45 minutes and 56 seconds at the DRRMC Indoor Stadium in Vijayawada on December 26. They successfully erased the earlier timing of 32 hours and 45 seconds set by Narayan Paranjpe, Atul Kharecha, Prakash Kagal and Pramod Sen in Texas, U.S., in 2005. Husna and Pavan started playing from 8 am on Dec 25th and played non-stop (with seven official breaks) until 6.45 pm. and 56 seconds on Dec 26th to register the new timing.

Floating stage in river Godavari
Municipal Commissioner V Vijayarama Raju announced that a floating stage would be set up in river Godavari to organise cultural programmes, which would attract more tourists and locals too. It would be set up at the Chintalamma ghat near the Kotilingala Revu and the citizens of Rajamahendravaram could witness programmes by sitting in the ghat. People and organisations could make use of this facility.
Transitioning AP into a CASHLESS ECONOMY

The demonetisation drive by the Centre is gradually but silently driving the cashless economy in our country. As the Chief Minister of a state, I’m witnessing the problems that people are facing, following the withdrawal of high-value currency.

Given that our country’s ratio of cash to gross domestic product is one of the highest in the world —12.42% in 2014, compared with 9.47% in China or 4% in Brazil, we will face these issues for a while. However, we need to look at solutions instead of harping on the problems.

In this direction, I have had meetings with my officials to understand the readiness of Andhra Pradesh into transitioning into a cashless economy. We are studying the challenges and trying to address them.

For instance, I’m witnessing this readiness in a few gram panchayats in the state. Nallajerla Panchayat in West Godavari district has been creating massive awareness drives on switching to digital transactions.

While pushing for digital transactions, I’m also aware that we need a huge infrastructure in place before we ask people to embrace digital modes of transactions. For this, students can be prepped up to train older people on using technology.

There are challenges in implementing this despite the recent expansion in digital wallet usage as well as the introduction of specialized payments banks.

A robust payments mechanism to settle digital transactions is also needed. NEFT and RTGS have been a good start, however. I also see a bright future for FinTech start-ups in this space as this move opens a gamut of opportunities for entrepreneurs.

At this juncture, I’m glad to have received the invitation by the Centre to head the Committee of Chief Ministers (comprising of 5 CMs) to look into the issues arising out of demonetisation.

This crisis has hit us hard. However, any crisis gives us opportunities to do better and emerge stronger. We will ensure that we carefully take into account the issues of the unbanked population who need to be trained and try to come up with solutions for a better and brighter India.
Pic 1: CM Chandrababu Naidu discussing implementation of Smart Village programme with representatives of University of California, Berkeley, who contributed to making Mori in East Godavari into a digital village.

Pic 2: CM presenting a bouquet to President of India Pranab Mukherjee at a dinner hosted in honour of the visiting dignitary at Raj Bhavan. Telangana CM K Chandrasekhar Rao is also present.

Pic 3: Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu at the inauguration of the 68th Indian Pharmaceutical Congress in Visakhapatnam.

Pic 4: Chief Minister addressing the press after a meeting of the Committee on Demonetisation. Niti Ayog Vice-Chairman Arvind Panagariya and CEO Amitabh Kant are also present.

Pic 5: CM and Union Minister Y S Chowdary in a meeting with Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in Delhi.

Pic 6: Chief Minister addressing a gathering on World Disabilities Day in Vijayawada.