United By Half

The first of its kind National Women’s Parliament held at Amaravati set the tone for fruitful discussions on women empowerment in all fields of human endeavour.
Krishna River Front in the new capital Amaravati is all set to undergo a transformation. The consultant appointed for the purpose gave a presentation to the Chief Minister in February on development of ghats and canals and the proposed entertainment centres on river banks. Under the plan, business hotels, convention centre, service apartments, multiplexes, food courts, central park, greenery, cycle tracks will come up on the river front. The Chief Minister asked the consultants to add some more attractions for the development of river front and submit fresh proposals.
United by Half
The distinction of holding the first ever National Women’s Parliament goes to Amaravati, as women discussed and debated the need for women leadership in all human endeavours.

Land allotted to nine cities in Amaravati

Horticulture on the growth path

Vijayawada Railway Station Gets Ready for MakeOver

Visakha Utsav a veritable success

Ugadi - Perfect time of highest divinity

Happening Andhra
Various developments across the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Araku coffee to debut in Paris

AP strikes major deals with Visa, Reuters

Cyber security policy approved

Andhra gains ground in auto sector

Epic Tales: A Shot In The Arm For Tollywood

Kia close to finalising AP for car plant

New AP Assembly building is ultra-modern

Gamesa opens Rs1,000-cr plant in Nellore
Celebrating Andhrapreneurship

The Andhra Pradesh Government is focussing on creating an IT eco-system to grab the emerging opportunities in the field.

The month of February saw a slew of initiatives by the Chandrababu Naidu Government to transform the State into a hub of entrepreneurship in the technology area. The Fintech Startup Challenge 2017 in Visakhapatnam was aimed at transforming the city into a hub for the next wave of digital disruption in financial technology.

The StartAP Fest was also held in the same month in Vijayawada, which targets to be the largest platform for start-ups and innovators in Andhra Pradesh.

Good news for creation of an IT eco-system in the new State came in the form of IT Tower in Vijayawada which attracted eight IT companies along with 15 training institutes, providing employment for 500 persons.

The State’s first premier digital technology institute, the International Institute of Digital Technologies (IIDT), also began activity this month in Tirupati. Internet of Things-enabled Millennium Tower is all set to become an iconic superstructure for showcasing Visakhapatnam as the IT capital.

The comprehensive approach to the IT sector development was also evident in the approval of the Andhra Pradesh Cyber Security Policy, 2017.

While focussing on the knowledge-driven economy, the State Government has not forgotten the need for social transformation. The first of its kind National Women’s Parliament held at Pavitra Sangamam was the high point of the month with its inspiring initiative of bringing women empowerment to the centre stage of debate.

Attempts at tarnishing the image notwithstanding, Brand AP is in safe hands.
LAND ALLOTTED TO NINE CITIES IN AMARAVATI

The Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP) allotted lands to nine thematic cities. This lends clarity to sector-wise infrastructure to be created in the capital city which will be spread over a mammoth 217 sq.km.

Government, Finance, Knowledge, Justice, Health, Sports, Tourism, Media and Electronics cities are the ones that the GoAP proposed to construct on the basis of urban development models. Officials of the A.P. Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) and Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department have studied these models in China, Europe, Eurasia, Middle East and South America.

These cities will be in conformity with the internationally acclaimed fused grid model of development where a huge chunk of the population will ‘walk to work’ and also have most of their daily needs available within walking distance. A total of 6,577 acres has been set aside within the cities for future purposes.

The Government City is the most important one that will have the Legislative Assembly and Council, Secretariat buildings and head offices of various government departments.

Land for residential buildings (covering 833 acres), for entertainment and social requirements (567 acres) and for commercial establishments (237 acres) have been earmarked within this city.

The Tourism City will have offices related to the hospitality sector, star hotels and other amenities which will be of tourist attraction. The Knowledge City will have campuses of universities and educational institutions of global repute.

The river-front development is a part of this city. The Finance City will be like a ‘central business district’ where the offices of the Finance Department of GoAP and private financial institutions will be located.

Sports stadia and other facilities will come up in the Sports City. The A.P. High Court will be established in the Justice City in addition to other courts and offices of various judicial departments. The residential quarters of the Chief Justice of AP will be one of the prominent structures that will be built in this city.

Amaravati will be a comprehensive, ultra modern habitat with sector-wise infra facilities. Towards this end, the Government allotted lands to nine thematic cities, which will provide completeness to the state-of-the-art capital.
The three-day National Women’s Parliament (NWP), organised by Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly with the theme of ‘Empowering Women — Strengthening Democracy’, brought the focus back on the importance of women empowerment in all spheres of modern life.

The one of its kind event, in the state capital region Amaravati with active cooperation and encouragement of the Andhra Pradesh Government, was successful in bringing the women issues to the fore, and in infusing a new sense of purpose and determination among the half of the humanity.

Buddhist spiritual leader Dalai Lama, Union Ministers M Venkaiah Naidu and P Ashok Gajapati Raju, AP Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Puducherry Lieutenant Governor Kiran Bedi, Bangladesh Parliament Speaker Shirin Chaudhury, Gandhian Ela Bhatt, actress Manisha Koirala and many other dignitaries attended the inaugural event at Pavitra Sangamam.

The vision of NWP is to enable and encourage social, political and economic empowerment of women in all strata of the society. One of the objectives of NWP is to generate new ideas, concepts, theories and ideologies for women empowerment.

The event brought together a host of eminent women, who are achievers across a spectrum of human endeavours to talk about the need for empowering women and the benefits such a move would bring to the society.

There were seven plenary sessions at the event.
In its true sense, women’s empowerment means empowering women socially, economically and politically.

Friends, the egalitarian index of civilization of a given society can be gauged from the position that it accords to its women in every sphere of human endeavour and activity. Women in ancient India held a most elevated position. They had similar education as men and participated with men in philosophical debates. I strongly believe that the development of our country depends on the empowerment of women. A man and a woman are like two wheels of a cart. The cart can move fast and safely too, when both of them pull it in the same direction and with equal strength. Hence no developing country or society can afford to ignore the role of women, if they are to progress. We must provide educational opportunities to every girl child to transform them into empowered women. I sincerely compliment the efforts of our dear Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji for his commitment towards empowering women of our country, and laud his ‘Beti Bachao Beti Padhao’ initiative.

Friends, my government has taken a number of steps to empower and protect the dignity of women such as gender equality, gender justice, social security, elimination of discrimination against women in all walks of life, economic development and integration of women into mainstream of economy.

To tackle socioeconomic poverty, self-help through savings has been taken up as a mass movement. There are about 8.6 lakh women Self-Help Groups in Andhra Pradesh covering nearly 86 lakh rural and urban women. As a part of my election promise, I have provided Rs 10,000 to each SHG member for generation of income in their households. My mission is to make each of these women earn at least Rs 10,000 rupees per month.

We have allocated 1/3rd of the budget of all the departments for taking up developmental programs for women, Most of the wage employment schemes (MGNREGS) are targeted to create sustainable employment and income opportunities to women wage seekers so that the families will be socially and economically empowered. To improve institutional deliveries and to reduce IMR and MMR, I have introduced Talli Bidda Express. By 2019, Andhra Pradesh Government is committed to raise female literacy rate to 100 per cent substantially increase the seats held by women in state legislature.

End all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls everywhere. Ensure women’s effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life. I reaffirm my commitment to ensure gender equity and empowerment of women in our state by enabling them to realize their full potential.

Excerpt from CM’s Speech
Women in the country should not confine themselves to any particular sector. Women should be teachers, social activists, civil servants, leaders from Panchayat to Parliament. The former IPS officer believes that leadership is not outside us. It is within us and what matters is how we use it.

**LEADERSHIP IS WITHIN US : KIRAN BEDI**

I consider the present convention as a continuation of our endeavour to empower women. Women with inherent qualities of love, compassion, devotion, understanding, tolerance and patience have a very crucial and proactive role to play at every level. Women have to be in the driving seat to navigate the ship of life for family, society and nation.

**WOMEN HAVE TO BE IN DRIVING SEAT: LS SPEAKER**

The evidence is overwhelming across the globe that women’s empowerment is a powerful force for economic growth, social and political stability and sustainable peace. Gender equality and women participation in the workforce and income generation are linked to higher gross domestic product (GDP), equal access to land and agricultural inputs.

**WOMEN POWER ECONOMIC GROWTH : GOVERNOR**

Look inwards and find out what do you want to do. Do some introspection. Do we have to blindly follow tradition? Or are we to reinterpret it? Can we reinterpret the tradition to pave way for a new democratic society? *Hum bharat ki nari hai, komal komal phool nahi, hum aag ki chingari hai.*

**HUM AAG KI CHINGARI HAI : SAGARIKA GHOSE**

Education would pave way for achieving women empowerment. There is need for imparting moral values in education system to prevent attacks on women. Mere women empowerment is not sufficient. Women need basic human dignity. Parents should encourage their children and instill self-confidence among them to reach their goals.

**EDUCATION KEY FOR EMPOWERMENT : JUSTICE ROHINI**
All the women need to be inspired by the trailblazers in various fields who are present in this conclave. Late NTR brought forth a law giving equal rights to women in ancestral property, besides launching Mahila University as well as reservation for women in local bodies. This tradition of women empowerment is being carried out by the present CM.

**TRAILBLAZERS INSPIRE US : BRAHMANI**

What other proof does one need than the existence of Goddesses for all the important portfolios such as Wealth (Goddess Laxmi), Education (Goddess Saraswathi) and Defence (Goddess Parvati). Even all the major rivers in the country are named after women, such as Godavari, Ganga, Yamuna, Krishna, Narmada etc.

**WOMEN’S PLACE HIGHER IN OUR CULTURE : VENKAIHAH**

Men and women are same kind of human beings – both mentally and physically. But unfortunately, even in religious matters, male dominance continued for a long time. Time has come to impart compassion among humans to respect and empower female world. Women should take more active role in the new century.

**MEN AND WOMEN ARE SAME : DALAI LAMA**

Why should we demand anything? As we comprise 51 per cent of the population, everything should come on its own for us. We do not need any sympathy or compassion from men. Our quota should be given to us. We are different and we should cultivate the habit of being different in every field.

**LET’S GET OUR DUE : SONAL MANSINGH**

Despite the differences on several counts, women across the globe have similar problems and same issues. A prosperous state cannot exist, if women are not part of the decision-making. Women have resilience and they should play a lead role in nation building. The balance between the men and women should be maintained.

**JOYCE LABOSO, DEPUTY SPEAKER, KENYA**
teacher who taught him love and compassion.

Union Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Urban Development M Venkaiah Naidu announced that the long awaited bill providing 33 per cent reservation to women in all the legislative bodies in the country would be passed once the National Democratic Alliance got majority in Rajya Sabha.

“But we have the strong political will and administrative skill. The day is not far off when the Parliament would pass the bill through the process of consensus. We are just waiting to get the majority in Rajya Sabha,” he said.

Stating that gender inequality was hampering the progress of the country and stalling economic empowerment of women, the Union Minister affirmed women were not inferior to men in any field and given the right opportunity, they would prove their mettle in all the fields.

Stressing the need for gender equality, Governor ESL Narasimhan said that the evidence was overwhelming across the globe that women’s empowerment is a powerful force for economic growth, social and political stability and sustainable peace.

Gender equality and women participation in the workforce and income generation are linked to higher gross domestic product (GDP), equal access to land and agricultural inputs, increased farm productivity and reduce the world hunger.

Governor of Pondicherry Kiran Bedi called upon the women in the country not to confine themselves to any particular sector. Women should be teachers, social activists, civil servants, leaders from Panchayat to Parliament, the former IPS officer said, and added, “Leadership is not outside us. It is within us and what matters is how we use it”.

Kiran Bedi wanted the National Women’s Parliament be an annual event so that “we can gather here every year. States like Rajasthan and Gujarat or any other State should come forward to continue this. Till that time Andhra Pradesh should continue to host this event”.

Richly complimenting Chandrababu Naidu for conducting the mega event, she said wonderful leadership and entrepreneurship was shown as usual by the AP CM in organising the event.

Several women aired their views during the round table meetings organised at National Women’s Parliament. The women were divided into various groups for taking up discussions on various topics including role of women in politics, education, health, nutritious food, entrepreneurship, legal issues, social security, role of women in research, digital literacy and inclusive growth.

Referring to the debate that took place in the Parliament during the enactment of the Nirbhaya Act, popular TV host Sagarika Ghose recalled with regret on how some of the male MPs made misogynist remarks.

Naidu is the first and foremost feminist Chief Minister in the country. There are several women Chief Ministers in this country and none of them thought it fit to organise an exclusive gathering of the women leaders.

- Journalist & TV Personality Sagarika Ghose

Speaker of the AP Legislative Assembly Kodela Sivaprasada Rao was the moving force behind the historic conclave. At the end of the three-day event, the Speaker was a happy man as the objectives of the conclave were met.

The idea behind the NWP is to have interactive session with the women leaders who have broken the glass ceilings with the young girls and other women who want to do it big in their career and personal lives. “This is an opportunity for the younger generation to get inspired directly from these successful women mentors. NWP will not stop at this, it will have several programmes and action plans for the future,” the Speaker said.

Kodela said over 2000 speakers gave their views on women empowerment. Efforts made for the past four months for the conference proved to be worthwhile. He said various issues of women were discussed in the conference by organising round table conferences. Referring to false campaign on his comments in a section of social media, the Speaker expressed pain that his remarks were misinterpreted, after all the hard work he had put in to make the conference successful.
The three-day National Women’s Parliament won the appreciation from all quarters for the meticulous planning that went into organising it. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Assembly Speaker K Sivaprasada Rao in particular received rich encomiums for the care they had taken to host the event on a grand scale. The Andhra Pradesh Government left no stone unturned to make the prestigious event a success. Though invitations were extended to 10,000 women, nearly 22,000 women right from Jammu and Kashmir to Kerala and abroad attended the conference.

The venue of the conference on the banks of Krishna River was picturesque and the delegates enjoyed the pleasant atmosphere. Amaravati International Music and Dance Festival was performed on a specially erected floating dais on the river bank. The event manager Venkateswar of Avens Expositions Pvt Ltd said that the main conference hall was the first biggest conference hall in the country with a seating capacity of 14,000 delegates, including 1500 VIPs. The Aluminium hangar was raised covering two lakh sq ft area, 50 metres width and 400 mts length, which was the biggest in India. He said 3000 tonnes air conditioners were set up for the comfort of delegates.

The front elevation had a length of 380 feet and 38 ft height. Generators were set up with 8000 KVA to provide uninterrupted power supply. A huge dais was developed with 3D Buddhist Stupa in the background with moving clouds atop the Stupa. In addition 120 ft LED screens were set up on both sides of the dais for the convenience of delegates. In addition to the main conference hall, a food court was erected with a capacity of 10,000 guests. A separate food court was arranged for VIPs. The organisers set up sufficient wash rooms to prevent inconvenience to the delegates.

A festival atmosphere prevailed at the conference venue during all three days with continuations of sessions and groups discussions. The organisers set up DWCRA bazaar stalls, which attracted the delegates with their hand made products.

The state government took initiative to provide free transport and accommodation to the delegates including thousands of students to the venue.

remarks. “Unlike these politicians, Chandrababu Naidu is different and his attitude is at variance compared to other political leaders. It is a great honour that he is organising this conference and he should be congratulated for this,” she said.

Describing NWP as a great initiative of visionary leader Chandrababu Naidu, Dr Simone of Switzerland said that the Chief Minister understood the power of women to strengthen and build a sustainable and strong nation. MLA Bhavna Goud of Aam Aadmi party of Delhi said such conferences would help to increase confidence levels among women. Another MLA Alka Lamba of Delhi said the conference kindled the hope of women reservation bill being passed in Parliament.

Joyce Chenono Laboso, Deputy Speaker of National Assembly, Kenya, felt that there should be more participation of women in political arena. She said of the total 350 MPs in her country, 69 were women. Praising the Government of Andhra Pradesh for organising the event, she said such conferences would help women uplift in a big way.

Margadarsi Chit Funds MD Sailaja Kiran said life is not knowing oneself but creating oneself. “I have told my employees that though I am a mother, daughter, daughter in law, wife, Margadarsi will be top on my priority, and went on achieving the target,” Sailaja said. She advised the young girls to find out where they are and where they need to be. The young girls in the country have all the capabilities to change the society, opined Meenakshi Lekhi, BJP MP and Spokesperson.

Actress and politician Jayasudha said that women have no substantial role to play in decision-making. Even countries like South Sudan and Saudi Arabia have more women representation in their decision-making bodies compared to India, she observed.

The Amaravati Declaration that was to be adopted by the just-concluded National Women’s Parliament is being prepared under the auspices of United Nations. Speaking to the media after the conclusion of NWP, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said the meet had discussed various issues related to women empowerment and said that it was possible to arrive at a political consensus on providing reservation to women at the highest political level.
Leading Corporates in India are making efforts to make Araku a gourmet coffee brand in global markets.

ARAKU COFFEE TO DEBUT IN PARIS

One hears of cooperative farming where government, NGOs or corporate entities provide resources or knowhow to support cultivation. But in the picturesque and protected Araku Valley of Andhra Pradesh, a unique agri enterprise has taken shape. Tribals from this region, with the backing of four business leaders, are growing top-notch quality coffee, which will make its debut overseas this week under an exotic brand. Anand Mahindra (chairman, Mahindra & Mahindra), Kris Gopalakrishnan (co-founder, Infosys), Satish Reddy (chairman, Dr Reddy’s Laboratories) and Rajendra Prasad Maganti (chairman, Soma Enterprise, a construction company) have joined hands to form an enterprise that will launch Araku coffee’s first store in Paris. For the 150-odd tribal communities living in the Maoist-infested belt, the global debut is a big step forward.

Until 15 years ago, their life was dependent only on collecting forest produce. A predominantly tribal area (including the Bagathas, Valmikis, Kondus and Poorjas) in Visakhapatnam district, the Araku region is classified as an agency area; the government has created a special developmental and funding plan for locals.

All the land here belongs to the government and a tribal is entitled to get land as much as s/he can till for free, to earn a living. Coffee cultivation is not new to the area—the British did it and the government continues to grow the beans under its own brand, but it was only in the recent past that tribals tried their hand at it on a large scale.

From 1,000 acres some years ago, the land under coffee production has gone up to 20,000 acres. The four investors have stepped in to assist them in increasing bean production by roping in global experts.

"We want to make Araku a gourmet coffee brand, acceptable in global markets and that’s why we chose Paris for the debut,” Mahindra told TOI, adding that the profits made from the venture will be ploughed back to improve the quality of the farmers’ lives.

Araku will be sold under five variants with the most expensive stock priced around Rs 7,000 a kg. The steep price can be justified by the fact that this is perhaps the first time in the world that coffee is being produced using techniques similar to those in wine making. Like unique tastes of different wines identified by the soil in which the grapes are grown, the variants of Araku coffee also draw their flavours from the ‘terroir’ or unique environment.

“Araku coffee is unique because of its complex terroir and that’s why premium. Everybody wants a simple life but they pay for complex things. Luxury is all about complexity,” Mahindra said.

Araku coffee was originally a nonprofit venture supported by Naandi Foundation, the brainchild of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Anji Reddy, founder of Dr Reddy’s. The late Reddy brought Mahindra into Naandi and the chairman of the auto major, along with the other three in-
Araku coffee was originally a non-profit venture supported by Naandi Foundation, the brainchild of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Anji Reddy, founder of Dr Reddy's.

Investors, soon transformed the social enterprise into a for-profit venture.

"Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime. All these are passe. I believe it is now time for private enterprise at shared value, which I call 3.0," Mahindra said.

Araku coffee has already got a geographical indication (GI) tag, which authenticates the unique properties a region can offer to a product. But until now, the Arabica coffee produced by the tribals was being sold in bulk to roasters who were ready to pay a premium for this brew.

Plan is to launch the next set of retail stores in New York and Tokyo, which means the world famous Columbian and Sumatra coffees will soon have competition on the shelf from a little-known region called Araku in India.

A hit at CII Partnership Summit

At the CII-sponsored Partnership Summit, what seemed to really rejuvenate the Indian and foreign delegates and participants is a steaming cup of Araku coffee. In fact, the hot cuppa added to the flavour of deliberations amidst the various plenary sessions on sustained growth and economic development and signing of MoUs.

The coffee and handicrafts stalls set up by Giri Jan Cooperative Corporation (GCC) and DWCRA, respectively, at the Partnership Summit venue turned out to be quite a hit among the participants including the foreign dignitaries.

Sophie Barbier, an Australian settled in Singapore, has come as a representative of the Global Education and Leadership Foundation. While sipping Araku coffee, she remarked, "I prefer strong coffee to tea and the taste of this coffee particularly is special and different."

Aleira Susane, a professor from Iowa State University, USA, was also bowled over by Araku Coffee. "I just landed some time ago in beautiful Vizag and got a taste of this delicious coffee at this summit venue. It's very nice indeed," she said.

Vipashana V K & Reeba Zachariah

Courtesy: Times of India

AP strikes major deals with Visa, Reuters

Andhra Pradesh Government took significant steps in making the state in general and its commercial capital Visakhapatnam in particular as key financial technologies hub and entered into MoUs with financial technology giant Visa and information powerhouse Thomson Reuters.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, who was in Mumbai to participate in Microsoft’s ‘Future Decoded’ event, held discussions with several important people from IT and Financial Technology sectors.

He interacted with Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella and discussed skill development initiatives for the youth in the state, before sharing the dais with him in ‘Future Decoded’ event. Speaking on the occasion, he explained how they are successfully utilising Kaizala Application developed by Microsoft in the State for effective coordination between various departments and said as many as 62,000 police personnel were linked by the app in the State.

Naidu said that the idea had enabled for real-time governance and claimed Andhra Pradesh as the Cloud First-State.

The Chief Minister also held discussions with Visa CEO Alfred F Kelly Jr. and exchanged MoU with him for making Visakhapatnam a cashless city as part of the Smart City project. The MoU is intended to take help of VISA for effective digital payment platform for the government and business segments using latest financial technologies. The financial giant will also collaborate with the state government for creating modules to scale financial literacy.

MoU was also signed in the presence of the Chief Minister between his Government representatives and Reuters. As part of MoU, Reuters will collaborate with universities in the state and set up a centre of excellence in Visakhapatnam. Naidu also interacted with YES Bank Chairman Rana Kapoor, who proposed to set up Fintech Park in the state. MoUs were also signed between Andhra Pradesh transport department and Microsoft for Hybrid Cloud technology and between AP Skill Development Corporation and Project Sangam of Linkedin (now acquired by Microsoft) for creating better-integrated platform for job seekers in the state.
South Korea’s Kia Motors Corp is close to finalising Andhra Pradesh as the site for its first factory in India, according to reports published in various business publications.

Reports of Kia looking to pick a site have been doing the rounds for a while, but an official with the Andhra Pradesh administration had told Reuters last year that the state was the frontrunner given its proximity to Tamil Nadu - home to plants of Kia’s affiliate, Hyundai.

A Reuters report said that the Korean firms, jointly the world’s no. 5 car maker, are chasing new business after missing targets over the past two years. And now, there are worries sales to the United States, one of their biggest markets, could be affected by protectionist trade policies under President Donald Trump.

India, however, remains a bright spot, with Hyundai - the country’s no. 2 automaker by sales - reporting growth there. Kia is hoping to leverage its affiliate’s supply chain network built over nearly two decades to gain a foothold in the market that is tipped to become the world’s third largest by 2020.

This month, Kia is likely to choose a site in the district of Ananthapur, Andhra Pradesh, for its factory, the source said, adding the state had offered about 600 acres of land to the automaker.

A second source also said that Kia was likely to pick Andhra Pradesh as its factory site. The sources did not want to be named as they were not authorized to talk to media.

Kia intends to produce small sedans and small sport utility vehicles at the plant from July 2019, although the plan is subject to change, a third person said.

The CEO of Kia Motors, Park Han-woo, said the automaker was in the process of picking a site for an Indian factory, without giving any details on location. “Preparations are going well. We are ready to break ground on the factory anytime,” he told Reuters on the sidelines of an industry event in Seoul on Tuesday.

The states of Maharashtra and Gujarat have also been wooing Kia for the factory, Reuters reported last year.

Kia is likely to compete with its affiliate Hyundai, Tata Motors, Honda and Maruti Suzuki in India, a market skewed towards cars costing less than Rs 4.75 lakh.
VIJAYAWADA RAILWAY STATION GETS READY FOR MAKEOVER

Vijayawada Railway Station is all set to undergo major renovation under Station Redevelopment Project (SRP) plan. Around Rs 194 crore would be spent for Vijayawada railway station under the plan, aimed at changing the face of railway stations on its network in the coming years.

Announcing the salient features of SRP plans for Secunderabad and Vijayawada railway stations, South Central Railway general manager Vinod Kumar Yadav said the bid documents for these two stations have been uploaded on Indian Railways website and are available for potential bidders and that the last date for submitting the bids is May 24.

The station redevelopment will primarily consist of upgrading the level of passenger amenities by new constructions, renovations, redevelopment of station buildings, platform surfaces etc.

Vijayawada Railway junction is one of the 23 railway stations in the country that would witness rapid progress under the Station Redevelopment Programme of Indian Railways launched by Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu at New Delhi.

It is the second busiest railway junction of Indian Railways, next to Mumbai Central and is situated on the mutual lines of Howrah-Chennai and New Delhi-Chennai main lines. The station is the divisional headquarters of Vijayawada railway division in South Central Railway zone.

Officials said that the programme will be taken up in 7.87 acres (31,849 sq mts) of reserved railway land located adjacent to the railway station which ill be used for leveraging the real estate potential.

In addition, station development land of 14,337 sq mts of station building area, 33,821 sq mts of platform area and 13,000 sq mts of circulating area is available at Vijayawada Railway Station to carry out the commercial development of airspace.

According to SCR officials in Vijayawada, the programme will be taken up in 7.87 acres of land in Rayanapadu, Satyanarayanapuram and Ajit Singh Nagar would be utilised for commercial purpose to generate revenue for the railways.

The SCR officials have already identified suitable land near the main entrance of Vijayawada Railway Station to construct multipurpose function hall.

Vijayawada railway station is categorised as an A-1 station and is also one of the busiest railway stations in India with over 400 trains of freight and passenger pass through it and serving about 1.40 lakh passengers every day.
Andhra Pradesh has set sights on horticulture as one of the potential areas of growth. Wide range of agro-climatic conditions of Andhra Pradesh is conducive for growing a large variety of horticultural crops, including, root and tuber crops, ornamental crops, plantation crops like coconut, cashew and cocoa etc. It contributes about 7.40 percent of the State GVA and is moving towards value enhancement in addition to focus on production.

A total of 15.41 lakh hectares area is under horticulture with production of 202.50 Lakh MTs of horticulture crops in Andhra Pradesh. The area under fruits is 5.98 lakh hectares, Vegetables 2.28 lakh, Spices 2.37 lakh and Plantation crops 4.58 lakh hectares.

Growth has been considerably high in horticulture, registering 18.33 per cent last year.

During the year 2016-17 the Government has set a target of 20% growth in output and to achieve this, the Government has taken up new initiatives, new interventions and implementations with the support and coordination of farmers and entrepreneurs.

AP ranks first in the production of oilpalm, papaya, citrus and chillies and second in the production of mango & tomato in India.

Programmes

Several farmer-oriented activities are being taken up to encourage adoption of modern technologies, evolving sustainable farming practices, provision of post-harvest infrastructure facilities and supplying knowledge inputs to the farming community.

The Horticulture Department is implementing the following Central and State sponsored schemes with a financial outlay of Rs. 1017.28 crores.

(A) Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY)
(B) Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)
(C) Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)
(D) National Mission on Oielseeds and Oilpalm Programme under Mini Mission - II (NMOOP)
(E) Promotion of Horticulture Activities (State Development Plan)

**Major Achievements during 2016-17**

GVA target of Rs. 49,485 crores has been fixed with constant prices for horticulture sector for the year 2016-17.

Area expansion with crops like mango, lswet orange, banana, acid lime, cashew, papaya, banana, guava, pomegranate, grapes, fig, areca nut, cocoa, dragon fruit, apple be, pineapple, turmeric & ginger was taken up in 17,369 hectares.

Plantation of oilpalm was taken up in 3489 hectares.

Rejuvenation of mango, sweet orange and cashew orchards, canopy management in mango, cashew, acid lime, ccoa, pomegranate & guava was taken up in 21,471 hectares to improve the productivity from senile gardens.

To combat drought, the Government has allocated a target of 1.50 lakh hectares to implement micro irrigation on large scale. As on date an area of 75,770 hectares has been covered.

To mitigate the dry spell 13,334 rainguns and 13,334 sprinklers were positioned in drought prone Rayalaseema districts.

Protected cultivation was taken up in 5,08,059 Sq.Mtrs under polyhouses & shadenet houses. Under cultivation of high value vegetables and flowers in an area of 2,54,907 Sq. Mtrs has been covered.

**Soil Samples Analysis/Soil Health Cards**

The Department has taken up soil analysis of plantation crops for the first time. ICRISAT, Hyderabad and RARS, Tirupati (ANGRAU) were entrusted the work. So far soil analysis was completed for 13701 number of samples against total samples of 15,000.

Integrated Ripening chambers (collection centres, pre-cooling unit, integrated pack house, ripening chamber & vending van) were sanctioned at Agiripalli of Krishna district, Korukonda & Tuni of East Godavari district, Bangarupalem of Chittoor district, Dhone (M) of Kurnool district and Vempalli of Cuddapah district to reduce post harvest losses.

It is proposed to cover a million farmers in next three years under FPOs for agriculture and allied sectors. As on date, 181 FPOs covering 1,80,500 farmers have been formed and few interventions like collection centers, procurement of inputs, primary processing units were already started in these FPOs.

Revenue generated by the horticulture, which is an allied sector of agriculture, increased by 33 percent currently. The CM wants the target for coming fiscal to be 60 percent. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) funds can be utilised in the horticulture sector, the CM suggested in a review meeting recently.

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**FORM IV (see Rule 8)**


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I, Ramesh Babu Kandula, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date : 01-03-2017
Sd/-Ramesh Babu Kandula (Publisher)
Andhra Pradesh has come up with a cyber security policy and decided to introduce courses in cyber security, Internet of Things, machine learning, financial technologies in colleges from this academic year itself, and reckon 2017-18 as the year of e-Pragati.

The AP Cyber Security Policy (AP-CSP) 2017 envisages protection to cyber and information assets in public and private spheres through various measures, including capacity-building across the departments and strengthening the law enforcement agencies to better equip them with the rising graph of cyber crimes.

Cyber security is aimed at providing more safety to internet users and prevent cyber crimes. The policy would help track the perpetrators of the crime, Minister for Information Technology Minister Palle Raghunatha Reddy said. All the government portals would be provided additional security features to prevent hacking. An emergency response team would continuously monitor the critical information safety. The government would also initiate measures to create awareness about the cyber laws and cyber safety, said the Minister.

He said the new policy would help prosecute those indulging in cyber crimes. Steps would be taken for better coordination with internet service providers.

Other Decisions

The Cabinet resolved to pay an additional Rs. 30,000 as a special grant to building workers under the Chandranna Bima scheme. It cleared the appointment of a security audit consultant for the Intelligence Department through a limited tender system.

Other decisions include allotment of 65 acres in survey number 314 at Kapuluppada village in Bheemunipatnam mandal of Visakhapatnam district to the Eastern Naval Command, making requisite changes in the letters of agreement to facilitate the establishment of campuses of Amity University, Vellore Institute of Technology, Centurion University and SRM University. The Cabinet also approved G.O. RT No. 118 issued on January 18, 2017, for creation of a committee that would sort out the issues faced by the State post-bifurcation, auctioning of 350 acres in Keesara and eight commercial establishments in Visakhapatnam district.

The State Cabinet also gave its nod for creation of new urban development authorities (UDAs) for five cities. While two major cities in East Godavari - Kakinada and Rajahmundry - will be covered by Godavari Urban Development Authority (GUDA), separate urban development boards will be constituted for Kurnool (KUDA) and Anantapur and Hindupur (AHUDA).

Municipal Administration Minister P Narayana said there would be nine UDAs in 13 districts after the formation of the new bodies. The UDAs would facilitate the systematic growth of the cities. The urban housing programme taken up under the NTR Ho using scheme would be extended to the new UDAs. The cabinet also cleared construction of 1.2 lakh houses in the urban areas. “We will start tender process in the towns where there is no election code in a couple of weeks,” said Narayana.
German bank KfW has agreed to sanction a loan of Rs 2,500 crore for the metro rail project in Vijayawada. The State Government proposes to construct two corridors with a length of 26 km. While one corridor will come up covering 12.5 km, the other will cover 13.5 km. Municipal Administration Minister P Narayana said the Government was planning to complete the phase-I in Vijayawada before 2018. Another metro project, which was planned for Visakhapatnam, would be taken up on a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. The Government is proposing to construct two corridors in Visakhapatnam. The other two corridors are from Gurudwara to the Old Post Office and Taticchetlapalem to Park Hotel. The Visakhapatnam project is envisaged for completion by 2019. Earlier, the Government approached the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for loan, but later opted out. The government opted out of JICA loan because the soft loan was to be a ‘tied’ loan and for insisting that 30 per cent of the loan component must be utilised for procurement of the rolling stock from Japan. The State Government is now looking funding by the German and French development banks KfW and Agence Francaise de Development (AFD) to put the Metro project on track. The Government is expecting a loan of Rs 4,000 crore from these banks, which have in-principle approved the loan. The Amaravati Metro Rail Corporation (AMRC) held talks with various external funding agencies, including the European Investment Bank, World Bank and Asian agencies. Logos invited The Amaravati Metro Rail Corporation Limited (AMRCL) invited logos for the prestigious project. The logo for Amaravati will depict the Sunrise State, a train, tracks, water and greenery and local cultural traits / icons reflecting Amaravati history. The Corporation is now in the process of finalising the best among the entries received. The best design will be awarded Rs.500000 and the second best design Rs.30000 and the third one Rs.20000.

Metro gets boost

Metro Rail projects in Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam have received a fillip following the interest shown by German and French development banks.

The State Government is planning to construct apartments for Government employees, judges, MLAs, and MLCs in capital city Amaravati. The Government chalked out plans to construct ground plus eight (G+8) apartments to provide housing to 9,061 employees and others in 139 acres. The flats will come up in the range of 900 sq. ft to 2,900 sq. ft depending on the category. The employees can repay the loan as Equated Monthly Instalment (EMI). AP Capital Region Development Authority officials said that they plan to construct flats in five categories in two G plus 8 towers in Amaravati region. Judges, MLAs, MLCs and IAS officials will come under first category, gazetted officers will come under second and third category, non gazetted officials in fourth category and Class IV employees in fifth category. The issue came up for discussion at a review meeting of the AP Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) in February. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu asked the CRDA officials to earmark the area that is conveniently accessible to everyone. The construction should meet all quality standards and also be affordable, he said.

The CRDA and the Housing Department prepared plans last July for constructing 12,000 quarters to accommodate all those who shifted to the new capital. Plans were chalked out to provide four BHK (bedroom-hall-kitchen) and three BHK duplex houses to judges and senior judicial and IAS officers.
HCL TECHNOLOGIES

to set up operations in AP

India’s fourth largest global IT services company HCL Technologies (HCL) is all set to become the anchor client of an upcoming IT cluster being developed near Andhra Pradesh state’s new capital Amaravati.

A report in Business Standard said that HCL chairman Shiv Nadar and Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu are likely to make a joint announcement about HCL Tech foray into AP in March.

AP Investment Promotion Board, headed by Naidu, has already cleared the company’s proposals, which entail an investment of Rs 500 crore in two phases, according to government officials.

HCL would set up two green field campuses across 27.5 acres of land with Rs 300 crore investment in phase 1, which is expected to commence operations as early as from next year, and another Rs 200 crore investment in phase 2 related to the second project. The company’s proposed operations would include IT, BPO services as well as the high end engineering R&D, according to the officials.

Besides agreeing to provide the necessary land, the state government has also allotted 42,000 square foot of space in a ready-built tower to HCL for a skill development centre to train local boys and girls for their possible absorption in future jobs to be created by the company. The company has promised to create 3000 jobs in the first phase and 2000 jobs in the second phase, each spread across a time line of five years.

HCL Tech’s move to expand its operations into AP comes at a time the Indian IT companies were fearing the slowdown in global business, while raising the hopes among hundreds of tech graduates coming out of the engineering college campuses in districts like Krishna and Guntur. Also HCL will be the first major company to come forward to establish operations in Vijayawada region where the efforts to create an IT cluster by the previous governments had met with little success.

"An ecosystem conducive to the IT companies would take shape with the entry of a prominent player like HCL in this region. We consider this as a big breakthrough," a senior IT department official reportedly said.

While AP contributes a substantial amount of human resources for the IT sector, the growth of IT industry was not much in the region for various reasons including the local tech graduates’ preference to migrate to big cities in the south such as Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai for greater opportunities.

According to the plan submitted to the AP government, HCL proposes to complete the construction of the first IT center and the skill development center by June and start the regular operations with 500 employees from October, 2017. It would start the training programme for local graduates from the temporary premises from July, 2017.

Besides the usual incentives that are linked to the investment, land and jobs, the company has also sought provision to run the operations in 24/7 shifts and engage women employees across the three shifts.

With 1.10 lakh employees working on its rolls Noida headquartered IT services company operates out of 32 countries and has a consolidated revenues of $ 6.7 billion for 12 months ended December 31, 2016.
NEW AP ASSEMBLY
building is ultra-modern

The newly-constructed Assembly building in the Interim Secretariat Complex at Velagapudi will host the Assembly budget session, the first on AP’s soil after the State bifurcation.

The Andhra Pradesh Assembly building is all set to host the upcoming budget session in capital Amaravati. The ultra-modern structure is receiving final touches on the premises of the Interim Government Complex (IGC) at Velagapudi. Interestingly, the new set-up offers an antidote against the unruly scenes resulting in breaking of mikes on the floor of the House quite often.

The benches have been fitted with a small device in a rectangular shape called linear vocal microphone facing the members. Once fitted, it cannot be unplugged and broken. The contracting firm Shapoorji and Pallonji executed the IGC works.

As a result of the new technology deployed, there is little scope for pulling out mikes and damaging them and create violent scenes in the House, according to observers.

The linear vocal microphone and the other fool-proof equipment in place can be expected to prevent unsavoury incidents during the Assembly proceedings.

The device offers in-built features such as electronic voting system as a substitute to the manual form of hand raising, and language interpreter enabling the translation of the speeches of members in multiple languages.

The Assembly is built on the ground floor with 225 seats in anticipation of delimitation of the Assembly constituencies by 2019 as against the strength of 175 at present. If delimitation happens, the number of seats will go up to 225 and another six seats meant for accommodation of officials.

The seating arrangement is provided for the Leader of the House on the right side of the Chair while the Leader of Opposition on the left side as is the parliamentary practice. The first floor facing the Speaker’s podium accommodates galleries for visitors, VIPs, officials and media. Besides, two conference halls each with 60 seats and another conference hall with 250 seats have been built.

In addition, offices for the floor leaders representing the BJP, TDP and the YSRC are built with an additional provision for another two offices.

The Assembly building has three entry points – one for the Chief Minister and officials, another two for ministers, their staff and visitors. Parking facility was provided on a sprawling five acres of land.

The new Assembly building, constructed in a record time of one year, is to be inaugurated on March 2. The budget session is scheduled to commence from March 6 will be held in the new premises.
Visakha Utsav

A VERITABLE SUCCESS

The annual Visakha Utsav held from February 3 to 5 in the port-cum-steel city was a thumping success with thousands of people not only from Vizag but from neighbouring districts as well as other states like West Bengal, Orissa, Jharkhand and Chattisgarh, being delightful witness to the unfolding of a cultural extravaganza.

The Visakha Utsav was always a success. But this year, it was like never before, offering a rich variety of events for all. A carnival atmosphere prevailed all through, something different than earlier shows. Unlike in the past, the programmes were all held at one place—the road from Rama Krishna Beach to the YMCA on a three-km stretch specially decked up with stalls and amusement parks drawing the tourists endlessly.

There was Vedika, the main platform for performing artists, Sannidhanam where replicas of major temples of north Andhra were showcased, Parimala—the flower show at the MGM Park and Jatara where the handicrafts stalls were set up.

Of course, there were about 50 food stalls selling cuisines from different parts of Andhra Pradesh. Women artists walked on stilts which the school children watched in awe with the ‘super tall’ women carrying steel pots on their head. The folk artistes performed Tappetagullu, Dhimsa dance, Jalari, tribal, street and tier dances catching the attention of the tourists on the opening day. The cultural evening at the main stage near RK Beach saw disciples of Dwaram Tyagaraju, grandson of the legendary violinist Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu presenting devotional music, followed by the high decibel music and songs belted by pop singer Baba Sehgal.

On Saturday, the penultimate-day,
While the performing arts had great following, the flower show at the MGM Park was also drawing serpentine queues on all three days.

District Collector Pravin Kumar was seen in the thick of it. He sprang a pleasant surprise when he whistled his way through four songs to strike a ‘Jugalbandi’ with noted flautist Navin Kumar. “I decided to perform in the utsav that has given so much of support to me in my endeavour to do the best for it,” he explained.

Whistling and singing has been his hobby since school days and his last whistling performance was in 1994 in college.

Ministers Bojjala Gopalakrishna Reddy (Forests) and Ganta Srinivasa Rao (HRD) released the Telugu trailer of war film ‘Ghazi’, based on true incidents in Visakhapatnam during 1971 Indo-Pak war. Actor Daggubati Rana who starred in the main role, presented himself at the utsav for a lively interaction with the people. He fielded questions on his much-awaited sequel to ‘Bahubali’ and his marriage, and concluded by delivering a dialogue from ‘Ghazi’.

A fusion of Kuchipudi and Kerala martial arts Kalaripayattu was also presented at the venue. Magician BS Reddy had quite a few tricks up his sleeve to win several rounds of applause from the spectators. At Jatara, another venue on the beach road, Veerabhadra Natyam and Kommu dance of East Godavari district, and folk songs were rendered to a packed attendance, providing opportunity to both local artistes as well as outsiders.

On the final day, the Sunday holiday crowd swelled into a sea of humanity as if vying with the Bay of Bengal. Ministers Ganta Srinivasa Rao, Ravella Kishore Babu, Palle Raghunatha Reddy, Pattipati Pulla Rao and Kamini Srinivas, as also Puducherry minister Malladi Krishna Rao participated in the valedictory function and gave away the Visakha Utsav Puraskar to noted Kuchipudi dancer and film actor Manju Bhargavi.

The replicas of various temples – Sri Varaha Lakshmi Nrusimha swami temple of Simchachalam, Sri Kanaka Mahalakshmi temple of Burujupeta in old city, Sri Nookambika of Anakapalle, and the popular Sri Sampat Vinayagar temple on display also saw long lines of visitors and devotees as darshan was offered and prasadam distributed to them. While the performing arts had great following, the flower show at the MGM Park also drawing serpentine queues on all three days. Flowers in various hues and shapes, including some imported varieties, were very enchanting. There were about 120 varieties –from roses, chrysanthemums, tulips, orchids to dry flowers. The theme-based flower arrangements –a Flower Tower with 12,000 flowers, vegetable carvings and a bonsai exhibition were major attractions. People were seen capturing photos of the beautiful flowers and indulged in taking selfies.

A novel feature this year was the power glider which was an instant hit with the fun-loving. It was a sortie lasting about five minutes from the Hawa Mahal to RK Beach, only a couple of kilometres but it became so popular that the demand of all could not be met due to paucity of time and also the risk involved with people swarming all over the beach road. Maybe, there will be more power gliders next year to cater to the adventure lovers, to match the fun and frolic during the festival.

- B. Prabhakara Sarma
Harbinger of New Hopes & New Life

Ugadi

Ugadi is the New Year's Day for the Telugus. The Saka calendar begins with the month of Chaitra (March–April) and Ugadi marks the first day of the new year.

Ugadi means the start of a new year. This festival heralds Vasantha Ruthuvu (Spring) — the season of flowers, mists and mellow fruitfulness — the period between winter and summer, when the cuckoo sings with full-throated ease, when Mother Nature exults in her splendour; gladness breathes from the blossoming ground, the squirrel gaily chirps from his den, and the wilding bee hums merrily by. Fruits and flowers are all smiles. Small wonder then this day is regarded as most auspicious to launch new schemes and projects.

Every Ugadi comes with a new nomenclature in Telugu tradition. This year is called Hevalambi Ugadi.

According to the Chaandramaana (Lunar) system, Ugadi falls on Chaitra Shuddha Paadyami of the Shalivahana Shaka.

Though it is called the Telugu New Year day, Ugadi is also celebrated as the New Year day by Kannadigas and Maharashtrians.

Legend has it that it was on Chaitra Suddha Paadyami that Lord Brahma created the earth and everything on it as part of the creation of the universe. This day is therefore celebrated as Ugadi, a corrupt form of Yugadi (Yuga+Adi).
Welcome to Hevalambi Ugadi!

The lure of this festival is Ugadi Pachchadi, a kind of sauce which is eaten on empty stomach on the Ugadi day. The ingredients of the chutney are neem (Margosa) flowers, Jaggery, cane-juice, raw mango pieces and pulp of new tamarind mixed with water, and a little salt. The preparation is said to be symbolic of the different tastes life holds in the year to come.

Varahamihira, a renowned 6th century saint-mathematician-astrologer in the court of Vikramaditya, of Ujjain, started celebrating this festival on Chaitra Shuddha Paadyami. During the period of Ramayana, however, this New Year was celebrated on the first day of Uttarayana (the half of the solar year during which the sun moves northward from the tropic of Capricorn to the tropic of Cancer).

To welcome the New Year the people of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra commence their preparations a week before Ugadi. They clean their houses and surroundings, shop for new clothes and gifts, and ingredients to prepare a variety of sweets and savouries.

The lure of this festival is Ugadi Pachchadi, a kind of sauce which is eaten on empty stomach on the Ugadi day. The ingredients of the chutney are neem (Margosa) flowers, Jaggery, cane-juice, raw mango pieces and pulp of new tamarind mixed with water, and a little salt. This sauce, which has great medicinal properties, signifies the ups and downs in human life - the joys, sorrows, success and frustration one experiences year after year.

Some make good resolutions on this day and try to execute them; and some break them the very next day.

Almost all the tradition-bound people, both young and old, take oil bath in the morning and wear new clothes, visit temples to pray to their favourite gods, and eat the Ugadi Pachchadi.

On this day learned priests read out the Panchangam (almanac) for the benefit of lay people and make predictions for the year ahead. This is known as “Panchanga Pathanam.” For the listeners, it is “Panchanga Sravanam.”

A traditional feature of Telugu Ugadi is “Kavi Sammelan” (poets’ gathering) where they recite their verses—some on the significance of the festival, some with literary flourishes, some humorous and satirical verses on the socio-economic ills, the games politicians play, and some seek to hold up for ridicule the faults of men or institutions. Such programmes are broadcast over All India Radio and even telecast.

- Y. V. Ramakotaiah
Senior Journalist
A slew of epic tales have turned Tollywood into the cynosure of all eyes on a national level. Here’s a lowdown of how this trend is making heads turn. Tollywood might be one of the largest film industries in the country, second only to Bollywood, but it has, over the years, lagged behind when it comes to churning out great stories. Barring a few films which transcend boundaries, Tollywood has become synonymous with commercial, larger-than-life films, known for its extravagant productions and lavish budgets. While there’s certainly nothing wrong with it, but the film industry has, traditionally, struggled to find its feet when it came to discourse about out-of-the-box story-telling.

However, there’s been a change in the winds, of late, thanks to a series of massive productions which focus on epic tales of heroism and bravery. Yes, we are talking about the likes of Baahubali, Gautamiputra Satakarni, Rudramadevi. The latest film to join the list is Rana starrer Ghazi.

Ghazi, directed by Sankalp Reddy, is a war drama set in the run up to the 1971 Indo-Pak war; however, it's biggest USP is that it is India's first war-at-sea film that showcased an epic battle that not many of us knew about. Since the original mission to stop PNS Ghazi in early December, 1971 remains classified, Sankalp Reddy turned the story into a thrilling encounter between Pakistan's PNS Ghazi and...
India’s S21, which culminated in the sinking of Ghazi. The film had critics raving across the spectrum and the icing on the cake was the fact that it was made in Telugu film industry. It’s truly a moment to remember, considering how rarely Telugu films cut across barriers - both cultural and geographical. The original budget of the film, which it was conceived in 2012, was no more than Rs 10 lakhs and then it increased to Rs 25 lakhs. Sankalp had planned to release it on Youtube. Later, when Sankalp decided to pitch it to producers, the budget increased to Rs 1 crore; however, five years later, when the film made it to theatres, the budget grew manifold, so did its star-power. The film had been in news for its intricate production design with Shivam Rao building a submarine set in Hyderabad. More than 3/4th part of the film is set under water, an unprecedented feat, which propelled the film’s popularity to newer horizons. While it's worth noting that Ghazi had the distinction of having an universal storyline, which made it relevant to everyone in the country and abroad, Tollywood is paving the way for regional cinema to give the bigwigs in Bollywood more reasons to look closely at the developments in South Indian cinema. Earlier this year, Balakrishna, Shriya starrer Gautamiputra Satakarni made heads turn with its larger-than-life tale of the Satavahana emperor who unified India in 1st Century AD through his conquests. Shot within a span of 79 days, Gautamiputra Satakarni looked epic in every sense and considering how the team was hard pressed for time and resources, not to forget a mammoth budget, it has set a template for others to emulate in near future. Talking about the film, Krish said, “We had different team working simultaneously to wrap up the film within a short duration. By the time we finished shooting in Morocco, our team had already constructed a huge set near Hyderabad to shoot some key portions. Even before we finished it, another team had gone to Georgia to scout for locations. It all boils down to proper planning and a great execution.”

No discussion of epic tales is complete without SS Rajamouli’s Baahubali. The first part earned the distinction of being India’s first tentpole film. Apart from the second part of the Baahubali franchise, the team is stepping into the world of virtual reality, comic books, novel, TV series, and also a game based on the characters of the movie. SS Rajamouli’s journey to superstardom began in 2009 with Magadheera and then in 2012, his fantasy drama Eega made him a national treasure. Now with Baahubali franchise, he has become the flag bearer of Telugu cinema. With Baahubali 2 slated for release on April 28, there’s no doubt that once again the whole country will be talking about Telugu film industry, especially the making of Baahubali.

Given the success of these three films, there might be plenty of war-based films in near future and Rana himself is acting in another war film titled 1945. Then, there’s buzz that Megastar Chiranjeevi is eager to do the biopic of Uyyalawada Narasimha Reddy, a freedom fighter who revolted against the British in the 19th century. It’s not just the pride that such epic films are being made in Tollywood, alone that’s grabbing eyeballs all over the country. More importantly, such films have turned the spotlight on the talent that’s brewing in the industry and how hundreds of people have come together to showcase the best of what Telugu cinema has to offer. Several VFX and animation studios based in Hyderabad are competing with the best in the business and the whole eco-system is slowly evolving to a stage where anything seems possible. All you need is a great story to tell and a team which believes in the vision that Telugu film industry is indeed capable of scaling greater heights.

- Hemanth Kumar CR
Spanish wind turbine manufacturer Gamesa has inaugurated Rs 1,000 crore new wind blade manufacturing facility in Nellore, Andhra Pradesh.

The inauguration ceremony was presided by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Gamesa India CEO Ramesh Kymal, Games chief corporate and general secretary José Antonio Cortajarena, Gamesa industrial managing director Iñaki Murgiondo and Gamesa commercial managing director Enrique Pedrosa among other executives, attended on behalf of Gamesa.

Phase one of this new facility, already up and running, is earmarked for the manufacture of the blades for the G114-2.0 MW class turbines, a product custom-configured for India’s wind conditions. The factory currently employs 500 people and its headcount is expected to rise to 1,000 within three years.

Gamesa, which is the country’s largest wind turbine company in terms of sales, has invested Rs 500 crore so far to set up a plant that will make blades for its flagship product, G 114-2.0.

Up till now, Gamesa has been getting its blades either from its own plant in Halol, Gujarat, or buys from other companies, notably LM of Denmark which has plants in India. The remaining ₹500 crore will come up in due course, for a factory to make nacelles — the ‘box’ on top of windmills, which houses the electricity-producing generators.

In addition, the plant will make inverters for solar power plants.

Speaking on the occasion, Naidu said that the plant would predominantly employ local people. He said the State was willing to spend on skilling people, if necessary. He spoke of the importance of creation of jobs in the country, setting it in the context of the US making work visas more difficult under the Trump administration.

Naidu stressed that Andhra Pradesh was an attractive investment destination given its advantages such as easy availability of land, abundant water and power and long coast with several deep draft ports. Further, the State, he said, was centrally located.

The State, he said, was fast turning into a renewable energy manufacturing hub, with the presence of wind turbine manufacturers Gamesa, ReGen Powertech and Suzlon.

The Chinese solar cells and modules manufacturer, Trina Solar, is putting up a plant in the State. Windar, an associate company of Gamesa, which makes steel towers for wind turbines, has just agreed to invest Rs 130 crore in the Sri City industrial estate.
Andhra Pradesh is emerging as the hub for auto mobile industry, thanks to the relentless efforts of the State Government, according to this report by Business Standard.

Andhra Pradesh has set its eyes on attracting investments to the tune of $2 billion, especially from automobile makers. The development comes even as neighbouring Tamil Nadu, which is already a hub for the auto and auto-component industry, has been facing political instability.

For instance, Kia Motors, which is a part of the Hyundai Group, is in the advanced stages of finalising its plans in the state, while auto major Hero is expected to commence construction of its new factory in the state at a cost of around Rs 600 crore. An e-mail sent to Hero did not elicit any response.

According to a senior official from the Andhra Pradesh government, companies like CEAT, Apollo Tyres, Bharat Forge, Ashok Leyland and others are also likely to invest in the state. Apollo Tyres recently announced that it would invest around Rs 500 crore in Andhra.

"In the near term, we are expecting around $2-2.5 billion investment in the sector in Andhra Pradesh. In 2017, you will see a lot of auto, auto-component project executions happening in Andhra Pradesh," said the official on the condition of anonymity.

Kia Motors had conducted a comparative study between Gujarat, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh before finally deciding on whether to invest in Maharashtra or Andhra Pradesh. Over the past two-three months, teams from Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh went to South Korea. Maharashtra’s principal secretary and industry minister, along with the state’s team, and the team from Andhra Pradesh both visited Seoul. South Korean auto major Hyundai Group expects to invest around $1 billion in its new plant in Andhra Pradesh.

For any investor, the key factors that attract them are what incentives the states are offering. Since the competition is growing among the states, the key is ‘ease of doing business’ and infrastructure. Andhra Pradesh is placed well in both these aspects. The state has ranked number one in the country and it is also located in two industrial corridors.

"The speed with which a company can execute supporting infrastructure and the existence of major infrastructure, which ensures connectivity to the port and better movement on highways etc, is higher (in Andhra Pradesh). While we talk about multiple industrial corridors, there are only three major industrial corridors in the country — Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, Visakhapatnam-Chennai Industrial Corridor and Chennai-Bangalore Industrial Corridor. We are lucky that we host two of them. That is a big advantage in terms of infrastructure," noted the official.

Further, for an automobile maker, immediate access to the entire south Indian market is another advantage. The companies would be looking at locating themselves in the triangle of Bengaluru, Chennai and Andhra Pradesh. The other option would be to locate themselves in Gujarat, Maharashtra or Delhi NCR.

According to reports, by 2020, Indian vehicle production is expected to touch 46 million units and south India expects to contribute at least a third of this output.

- T E Narasimhan
AMAZING ANDHRA PRADESH

Madhava Swamy Temple

ARCHITECTURAL SPLENDOUR
Gandikota by now has become known for its amazing gorge and the ruins of the historic fort. Two old temples and a masjid that are located within the fort area are of late becoming popular attractions.

Gandikota is a small village on the right bank of the river Pennar, 15 km from Jammalamadugu in YSR Kadapa district. Gandikota was founded in 1123 by Kapa Raja of nearby Bommanapalle and played a significant role during the Kakatiya, Vijayanagara and Qutub Shahi periods. The fort was made more impregnable by Pemmasani Timma Naidu. The fort was under the control of Pemmasani Naidus for over 280 years.

The fort of Gandikota acquired its name due to the ‘gorge’ (in Telugu it is called 'gandi'), formed between the Erramala range of hills, also known as Gandikota hills and the river Pennar that flows at its foot, reducing its width to a mere 300 ft. Situated amidst beautiful landscape and wild forests, it is endowed with vast natural resources.

Within the fort are two ancient temples, dedicated to Madhava and Ranganatha, both magnificent, but unfortunately not maintained. The fort area is full of the debris of ages and many ancient structures in varying stages of decay. The large granary, with a vaulted roof, is now used as watchman’s quarters. The Jamia Masjid has two adjacent minarets.

The other structures within the fort, include another large granary, a magazine, a graceful ‘pigeon tower’ with fretted windows and an extensive palace built by bricks with some plastered decorations and some wells. There is an old cannon still lying in the fort. There is also the ‘Rayalacheruvu’ with its perennial springs irrigating some lime and plantain gardens. It is said that this ‘Cheruvu’ was connected to a fountain in Jamia Masjid by pipes, traces of which can still be seen.

The local administration has been making efforts to create interest in the heritage by conducting Gandikota Heritage festival every year. This year, this was held on February 18 and 19.

**Madhava Swami Temple**
The Madhavaraya Temple is the grandest structure in Gandikota. Situated on a higher plane within the fort, Madhavaraya Temple boasts of architectural splendor, very close to the temples in Hampi. From the gopuram at the entrance to the interior structures including the main sanctum sanctorum,

**how to reach:**
Located around 360 Kms from Hyderabad in Cuddapah district, Gandikota makes the perfect picturesque weekend getaway. Nearest Railway station is 26 km away at Muddanuru in Kadapa Dist. There are number of trains from Gooty Jn. Nearest Town is Jammalamadugu. There are buses available from Jammalamadugu Old Bus Stand (Gandhi Statue Junction) to Gandikota.

**stay**
The nearest accommodation is the APSTDC’s Hotel Haritha just outside the Gandikota Fort. It is a reasonably comfortable place of stay. If you are adventurous, you can pitch your tents and camp on the gorge cliffs.

**activity**
The 13th century Fort is miles and miles long. If a little adventure makes your heart go pumping, you can climb the fort walls, making your way through the boulders and reach the gorge. If history intrigues you more, there's a rich culture and ruins that you can explore.

- Madhavaraya Temple
- Jama Masjid
- Granary
- Ranganatha Swamy Temple
- Gandikota Fort View Point
- Fort Entrance
- Gandikota Gorge View Point
- Jail
- Rayala Cheruvu
MLC elections in State on March 9

The Election Commission announced the schedule of biennial elections to the Legislative Councils of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Bihar. Polling will be held from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on March 9 and the votes will be counted on March 15. The elections in AP are for three graduates and two teachers constituencies necessitated by the expiry of term of the existing members. Model Code of Conduct will come into force with immediate effect in the districts where the above constituencies exist.

Big boost to AP beach tourism

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu proposed to build a beach corridor from Visakhapatnam to Bhogapuram for a distance of 48 km to give a fillip to beach tourism. He asked the officials at a review meeting with the Roads and Buildings department to initiate the process forthwith. The Chief Minister said the proposed Visakhapatnam-Tada and Kakinada road will replicate Los Angeles-Sandigo beach road.

Isuzu opens its fourth dealership in AP

Isuzu India has opened a new dealership in Andhra Pradesh. The carmaker now has four such facilities in the region, the other three being at Visakhapatnam, Ra- jahmundry and Tirupati. The new outlet is located to ensure to cater to the sales and after-sales requirements of Isuzu customers residing in Vijayawada and the bordering areas of the region. In addition it adds to the convenience of customers from neighbouring states as well. Isuzu is the first car manufacturer to set up shop in Andhra Pradesh, following the CM’s initiatives.

AP inks MoU with IRRI

The State government entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Philippines-based International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). As per the agreement, IRRI will take up the required research, surveys of the paddy cultivation area, focus on developing advanced rice varieties that yield more grain and better withstand pests and disease as well as flooding, drought and other harmful effects of climate change and will also extend technical support. IRRI will map the paddy cultivated area through satellites and will also have access to get weather forecast using the technology.

App for fisherfolk

A mobile app was developed by the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) with the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) as a knowledge partner. According to Dr. Sourav Maity, scientist with the INCOIS of the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences, all that the fishermen should have is an android mobile phone with data pack on their hand while going for fishing in the sea. They could save on diesel, their main expenditure, by getting precise information on potential fishing zones. Over 9,000 fishermen in the south, including 2,000 in Andhra Pradesh, had so far enrolled for availing themselves of these services offered in, among other languages, Telugu and English.

Kerala proposes to grow cashew in AP

Following an agreement, the cashew industry in the State is going to have 75 lakh man-days of employment generated and adopt the best practices implemented by the Kerala State Agency for the Expansion of Cashew (KSACC). As per the proposal submitted to him by Kerala Minister for Fisheries, Harbour Engineering and Cashew Industry, J Mercykutty Amma, Andhra Pradesh will give 50,000 hectares to the KSACC for cashew cultivation with an initial investment of Rs700 crore over five years (2017-22). The farming will be done by farmers’ societies of A.P. under the supervision of the KSACC and the production is to be procured by Kerala.

Geo-tagging of sports assets in AP

Geo-tagging of all sports facilities in Andhra Pradesh has been completed and those with a smart phone can easily identify stadia, playfields, swimming pools and the Kreeda Vikas Kendras in all 13 districts by just swiping their gadgets, according to Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh (SAAP) Managing Director and Vice Chairman N Bangaru Raju. The SAAP would be initiating collection of data on the talent available from all the districts in different age groups in different disciplines and admissions for the academics will be based on this data. He said this data-based system would put an end to favouritism and nepotism as the selections would be made on facts and data.

Coast Guard Patrol vessel Arnesh commissioned

Vice Admiral H.S.C. Bisht, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command and Inspector General S.P. Sharma, Commander Coast Guard Region (East) commissioned the Indian Coast Guard Ship ICGS Arnesh, in Visakhapatnam. The ICGS Arnesh is a fast patrol vessel built by Cochin Shipyard.

New director appointed for IIM-V

Prof. Chandrasekhar, engineer and management professional, has been appointed new director of IIM-Visakhapatnam. Prior to his current role, he served as Professor & Director of the Centre for Public Policy, Gov-
ernance & Performance. He was also the first Director (May 2010 – July 2011) of the Centre for Innovations in Public Systems established at ASCI at the recommendation of the Thirteenth Finance Commission.

**BLS vehicles to replace 108 ambulances**

The State Government is replacing 200 ambulances across the State with Basic Life Support (BLS) vehicles. With GVK-Emergency Management and Research Institute (EMRI) 108 Ambulance Service being the nodal agency to operate emergency services, the initiative has been taken up under the public-private partnership mode with the support of the Commissioner of Health and Family Welfare. Of the total 439 ambulances, 200 will be replaced with BLS vehicles. In line with this proposal, 175 BLS vehicles have already been deployed in 13 districts of the State.

**Traffic Training Institute mooted**

The Visakhapatnam City Police have mooted the idea of starting a Traffic Training Institute. Commissioner of Police T Yoganand has sent a proposal with details of the requirement for the institute. The city has grown exponentially, and it needs an institute to train the traffic police, as well as counsel traffic violators,” said Yoganand. If the proposal is accepted then Visakhapatnam will be the first city in the successor state of AP to have a TTI. There is a TTI in Hyderabad which earlier served for the combined State.

**Yatra inks MoU with AP for homestays**

Yatra.com has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Government of Andhra Pradesh to promote homestays and enhance tourism in the state through their holiday packages, the company said in a statement. The MoU was signed during the partnership summit at Visakhapatnam. Through the partnership, Yatra will promote all the state tourism approved homestays, wherein guests (travelers) can rent a room in the home of a local family (host) or the entire house. As a part of this partnership, Yatra will list over 200 properties in Andhra Pradesh.

**Ashok Babu re-elected president of APNGO**

P. Ashok Babu and N. Chandra Sekhar Reddy were re-elected unanimously as president and general secretary of the A.P Non-Gazetted Officers’ Association (APNGOA). Ch. Purushottam Naidu was elected associate president, D.V. Ramana, G. Ramakrishna Reddy, C. Subba Reddy, Sk. Bajeeth, R. Ravi Sankar, K. Ramesh Kumar, P. Srinivasu and Y. Prasad (vice-presidents); A.V.V.S.V. Narasimham, K. Jagadeeswara Rao, A.S.V.S.

Bapuji, K. Vasantha Rao and B. Krupavaram (secretaries); P. Veerrendra Babu (treasurer); B. Tulasiratnam (woman secretary); G. Gangi Reddy (organising secretary) and Ch. Ajay Kumar (publicity secretary).

**Prisons Department head office**

Deputy Chief Minister and Home Minister N Chinara-jappa inaugurated Prisons and Correctional Services Department head office at Gulabithota area in Vijayawada. He also opened the administrative block for Vijayawada District Jail on the jail premises at Gandhinagar. Director-General (Prisons and Correctional Services) Ray Vinaya Ranjan, IGs M. Chandrashekar and B. Sunil Kumar, Vijayawada Joint Commissioner of Police P. Hari Kumar, Vijayawada Jail Superintendent Ch. Nityanand and other officers were present.

**Yuva Bhavans to dot AP**

The Youth Services department has decided to construct Yuva Bhavans in all the district headquarters. The department has earmarked Rs 5 crore for each Yuva Bhavan and already released Rs 2 crore to each CEO of district STEP society and the entire construction work should be completed within six months after tenders are finalised. The district collectors were instructed to identify and earmark 2 acres of land in favour of the youth services department. Facilities for recreation, counselling, e-library and computer lab with internet will also be provided.

**Social reformer Mythri no more**

Mythri, chairperson of Atheist Centre, humanist, Gandhian social reformer, educationist, and a tireless crusader for women empowerment, is no more. She passed away in Vijayawada. She was 85. Born on December 1, 1932 at Vizianagaram, she was the third child and second daughter of Gora and Saraswathi Gora. Mythri spent some time with Mahatma Gandhi at Sevagram along with her father Gora. She was associated with Vasavya Vidyalaya, a secular school with comprehensive education started at Atheist Centre in 1961.

**Waste-to-energy plant in Ongole**

The State Government has decided to set up a waste-to-energy plant in Ongole. With this, the number of such plants proposed touches 11. Municipal Administration Minister P. Narayana reviewed the progress of the work on waste-to-energy plants at the interim Secretariat. The Government had decided to take the waste generated in Ongole town as well as in nearby municipalities and panchayats into consideration and set up a waste-to-energy plant in Ongole.
India’s first river-front music and dance festival was held on the glistening banks of river Krishna at Pavitra Sangamam in Amaravati, to coincide with the historic National Women’s Parliament. The riverside venue at Amaravati witnessed some of the finest Indian and Western Classical music and dance performances along with a fusion of folk and contemporary music and dance performances by artists from around the globe. Bharathanatyam dansuese Hemamalini, Singer Kavitha Krishnamurthy, Ghatam artiste Vikku Vinayakaram, Violinist Dr L Subrahmaniyam, Drummer Sivamani were some of the cultural icons, along with folk artistes from Rajasthan, who dazzled the four-day long Amaravati Global Music and Dance Festival.

A Cultural Confluence
Pic 1: The inaugural of the National Women’s Parliament at Pavitra Sangamam in Amaravati was a grand event. Seen on the stage are CM Chandrababu Naidu, Kiran Bedi, Dalai Lama, Venkaiah Naidu, Ela Bhat, Bangladesh Parliament Speaker Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, Peethala Sujatha, Manisha Koirala, Kodela Siva Prasada Rao, Ranjani Kumari, Nannapaneni Rajakumari and others.

Pic 2: CM and AP Assembly Speaker felicitating His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the NWP.

Pic 3: Andhra Pradesh Ministers Kimidi Mrunalini, Paritala Suneetha, Peethala Sujatha along with the AP Assembly Speaker felicitating a participant at NWP.

Pic 4: Thousands of girl students participated in the historic 3-day National Women’s Parliament at Amaravati.

Pic 5: Girls from the across the State making a point with their presence at NWP.
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HONBLE CHIEF MINISTER OF ANDHRA PRADISH

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