GODAVARI-PENNAR
Linkage Next

SOUTH KOREA
Keen to invest in AP

ALPHABET X
to bring wireless internet to state

TRANSGENDERS
Get helping hand from Govt

TECHNOLOGY IN THE SERVICE OF THE PEOPLE

Happy New Year
Designs for the memorial centre for Dr B R Ambedkar which is coming up in Amaravati capital city are in the final stage. The State Government released two designs for the proposed Dr B R Ambedkar Smruti Vanam, and completed an online poll to select the best design. A 20 acre site was identified on ceremonial axis of Amaravati capital city. The Smruthi Vanam consists of a Memorial Centre of international standards, celebrating the achievements of Dr B R Ambedkar. The two designs, Icon and Park, offer a breathtaking view of the memorial. The park is shaped as a ceremonial axis on the lines of Rajpath Memorial in New Delhi. The project has two components, the Memorial Programme and the Convention Programme. The Ambedkar Smriti Vanam, coming up with an outlay of Rs 97.28 crore, would be a new landmark destination in the capital city of Amaravati.
Shaking hands with South Korea

High growth rate in agri and allied sectors

Guidelines for Direct Selling in AP

Pension scheme for transgenders

Literary Reminiscences Of Gurazada Apparao Pantulu

CM’s Social Network

Happening Andhra

Guidelines for Direct Selling in AP

The visit to South Korea is one more step in CM Chandrababu Naidu’s efforts to bolster the manufacturing sector in AP to generate incomes and increase the economic profile of the state.

AMAZING ANDHRA

Kapu quota Bill passed by Assembly

AP Pioneers Digital Connectivity of India

CM’s family declares assets

The economic profile of the state, governed by income and increase manufacturing sector in AP to Maliki’s goals to bolster the modern Andhra Pradesh in CM Chandrababu

2018 happening Andhra

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Tech-tonic Shift

Leveraging technology for socio-economic uplift of the fledgling state of Andhra Pradesh has been the focus of the Government led by Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu. The launch of the Real Time Governance State Center recently at the Andhra Pradesh Secretariat in a bid to provide ‘seamless and frictionless’ real time governance is the culmination of these efforts.

Described as a fully-functional and highly evolved ecosystem of technology and skill, the Centre operates with data input from people hub - which hosts the data of all the households in the state. The info contained in the system is in turn linked with various Government departments.

The initiative to make all the data and information accessible from the respective digital portals even as the Government aims to go paperless by 31st March is part of the same mission. The process of data integration by various departments has begun in right earnest, which when completed can empower the Government to target schemes more scientifically and with optimal benefit to the population.

The ambitious AP Fiber Grid, launched by the President of India Ram Nath Kovind, is expected to bring about a bandwidth revolution in the state, leading to rapid connectivity. About 1.3 crore households, 50,000 schools, 10,000 government offices and 5,000 public health centres will be connected under the project, fundamentally changing the way the Government and the citizens interact.

IT and Panchayat Raj Minister N Lokesh has provided ample evidence of how village-level grievances such as roads or drains can be addressed through the effective use of social media. He received 10,111 complaints through social network sites till date, 70 percent of which were tackled by the Minister through personal monitoring.

The proof of the pudding lies in the achievement of 33 Gram Panchayats of Andhra Pradesh which were identified among 83 most developed Panchayats across the country on development index, in a baseline survey done by Union Rural Development Ministry under Antyodaya Scheme.

No other government in the country has so productively used technology for not only economic uplift of the citizens but also for betterment of their living standards. The cynics may wallow in their gripe, but the results on the ground speak louder.

Ramesh Kandula
Editor
In an effort to improve transparency in public life, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has been declaring assets of each and everyone of his family members for the last seven years.

The family members of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu declared their assets for seventh year in a row. Telugu Desam Party (TDP) national general secretary and Information Technology and Panchayat Raj Minister Nara Lokesh made the announcement on behalf of the family.

At a press conference, Lokesh said while he has total assets of Rs 26.39 crore, bank loans and advances accounted for Rs 11.17 crore, leaving his net assets at Rs 15.21 crore. His wife, Nara Brahmani owns net assets to the tune of Rs 15.01 crore. The liabilities stood at Rs 36.14 lakh. Nara Devansh, his son, has fixed deposits and house property worth Rs 11.54 crore.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has more liabilities than assets. His total liabilities are Rs 5.64 crore, while the net assets are Rs 2.53 crore. Naidu took a housing loan of Rs 5.60 crore from Bank of Baroda and has Rs 40 lakh in savings account and owns Ambassador car worth Rs 1.52 lakh. He has a residential building in Hyderabad worth of Rs 7.75 crore.

Nara Bhuvaneswari, the Chief Minister’s wife, owns net assets worth Rs 25.41 crore, while the liabilities are Rs 20.90 crore. She owns an Audi car worth Rs 91.93 lakh and has Rs 7.44 lakh in savings account.

Replying to queries, Lokesh said that before questioning the property details announced by him, the opposition leaders should emulate the example of the Chief Minister and declare their assets. The Minister said that he has been challenging the critics to come for a debate on the assets and bank deposits owned by his family. But no one was coming forward. Neither had they disclosed the details of their properties, he said.

“We are declaring the assets taking the acquisition value into account. Present market value is not being taken into consideration as it keeps fluctuating,” he explained.
CM's three-day visit kindles interest in AP

SHAKING HANDS WITH SOUTH KOREA

The three-day visit of the high-level delegation led by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu to the East-Asian economic powerhouse South Korea paid rich dividends in terms of exposing the slew of opportunities Andhra Pradesh can offer for investment as well as economic and technological cooperation. The Chief Minister and his team kicked off their whirlwind tour to South Korea in December first week on a positive note by entering into a letter of intent (LoI) with a group of 37 companies.

The Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (EDB) entered into the LoI and the group of companies evinced interest in investing Rs 3,000 crore in AP and providing employment to 7,171 people. Besides, the ancillary units of Kia Motors have confirmed their participation in the venture. The Korean automotive company Kia Motors is in the process of beginning works on its greenfield plant in Andhra Pradesh, where it plans to invest over $1.1 billion. Various ancillary units of Kia Motors have confirmed their plans to invest about Rs 4,995.2 crore with potential to generate 7,171 jobs.

The Chief Minister appealed to the Korean companies to draw inspiration from Kia Motors and come forward to invest in the State. The Government was providing many facilities and creating the ecosystem for growth of industry. When some representatives sought clarifications over the investment climate, Naidu said, “I assure you again that any problems faced by you will be solved immediately. Anantapur, which you have selected, is close to Bangalore airport and Krishnapatnam port. Infrastructure is in place. There are no law and order problems. Neither is there labour unrest.”

The visit to South Korea is one more step in CM Chandra babu Naidu's efforts to bolster the manufacturing sector in Andhra Pradesh for generating incomes and increasing the economic profile of the state.
Solar power plant

Jusung Engineering CEO Hwang Chul-joo, who met the CM, said the company had plans to establish a solar power plant with a capacity of 100 giga watts in India. The company was also developing the next-generation LED bulbs, called OLED. Naidu invited the company to set up a research & development unit in the state. Y Kim, adjunct professor to India Studies at Hankook University of Foreign Studies, and MD of BTN Co. Ltd., presented a proposal for the development of the first local-friendly Sustainable Integrated Smart City in India in Anantapur.

The CM’s next meeting was with Kim Daehoon, CEO of Iritech. The organization supplies iris-based biometrics software and hardware solutions for identity assurance in the fields of security and safety. The Chief Minister explained all the initiatives with high level technology being implemented in Andhra Pradesh, including sensors, Internet of Things, drones, cloud and more. Daehoon agreed to visit Andhra Pradesh in the second week of December, and discuss the plan ahead. For a lunch meeting, the Chief Minister met with the CEO and President of Lotte Corp., Kag-Gyu Hwang and Executive Vice President Lim, Byung Yun. The Chief Minister explained the investment opportunities of AP, the growth potential and the development project of the capital city, Amaravati. He said that Andhra’s strength lies in the agriculture, horticulture and allied sectors. He urged the Hwang to come to AP, as it has enterprising people, a huge market, a skilled younger generation and is a peaceful state. It was decided that a joint working group would be set up with representatives of the AP government and Lotte Group to explore the possibilities of cooperation. Lotte Corp. is South Korea’s eighth largest business conglomerate, and is engaged in diverse industries like candy manufacturing, beverages, hotels, fast food, retail, financial services, heavy chemicals, electronics, IT, construction, publishing & entertainment. They also have a strong presence in India near Chennai, Kolkata and Delhi.

The Chief Minister’s delegation visiting the Busan Port.

Pact with MIC

On the second day, the State government and Make in India Korea Center (MIC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to set up Korea Industrial Complex in the State. As per the MoU, the Andhra Pradesh Centre will be established at Busan in South Korea. The MIC will also conduct outreach programmes in Korea for the promotion of investment and business in AP. Chief Minister Chan-
Chandrababu Naidu attended a business seminar on the second day of his visit at Busan. Addressing the gathering, Naidu said Andhra Pradesh was ahead of other States in creation of infrastructure. Also, an investor-friendly atmosphere prevailed in the state. AP unveiled the best industrial policy and was offering best packages to the investors. Isuzu, Hero, Bharat Benz and Kia Motors were a few automobile giants that have footprints in AP. "To know more about our efficiency, you can talk to Kia Motors who are setting up their plant in our state," he said. Naidu also praised Korea for developing "very fast" despite facing similar problems as that of Andhra Pradesh.

"Taking inspiration from you, we are passing on the path of development. I request your participation in building a new Andhra Pradesh. Our state has many resources. Thousands of kilometers of sea coast are one of the advantages. There are no labor problems, nor issues of law and order. We have a peaceful ecosystem for industries," he added.

"I will be available on a phone call or SMS text. I believe South Korea can be a confident business partner to Andhra Pradesh," Naidu said.

Busan metropolitan city vice mayor Kim Young Wan addressed the AP Eng Jan 2018 30th_Layout 1 12/30/2017 3:09 PM Page 8

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister as a dynamic leader, and said there were many similarities between South Korea and Andhra Pradesh, and underlined the need for mutual cooperation in various areas like health and medicare, agriculture, renewable energy, sea ports, development of cities, and the like.

Indian ambassador to South Korea Doraiswami expressed happiness over Naidu’s visit, and said Busan city and AP have many comparisons in work culture, usage of technology, development of ports etc. He also recommended Andhra as the best place for doing business in India, to the Korean industrialists. Doraiswami further said that the land allotted to Kia motors in Anantapuram district was a rocky land. "We thought it will take one year but Andhra Pradesh government cleared and flattened it in just three months," he added. Later a short film on development works at the land allotted to Kia motors was screened.

Invite to Busan Mayor
At another meeting, Busan Mayor Suh Byungsoo said AP and Busan can establish sister state relationship. "So far, we have been focusing on Japan, China and the US. We are now keen on establishing economic ties with other countries as well," he said.

Naidu requested him to visit AP as State guest. Busan Vice Mayor Kim Young Wan and the CM discussed the prospects of mutual cooperation between fisheries university of AP and Pukyoung national university of Korea. The Chief Minister visited Busan new port, which can handle up to 13.2 million TEU shipping containers per year. The CM and his team visited the Busan-jinhae Free Economic Zone (BJFEZ), Busan-jinhae FEZ and Nok-san National Industrial Complex, and New Indian Cultural Centre – Make in India Centre, Busan.

LG to consider setting up unit
Consumer electronics giant, LG Electronics, responded positively to Chandrababu Naidu’s invitation to set up its unit in Andhra Pradesh. Its president Soon Kwon said, "We haven’t set up manufacturing unit outside South Korea. But, we will consider the proposal of the AP government." Naidu and his team interacted with the LG officials in South Korea and wanted the Korean company to start manufacturing storage and display systems such as LED and OLED screens in AP. Soon Kwon asked Naidu about the competitive advantage of Andhra Pradesh other states in India. The CM told him that Andhra Pradesh was ranked No. 1 in Ease Of Doing Business. He also explained him the facilities available in the State and its flexible industrial policy. "AP is ahead of other States, registering double-digit growth rate. Other companies can take a cue from the experience of Kia Motors," he said. "Even Foxconn left Tamil Nadu to set up its unit in AP. Foxconn now employs 13,000 people in the State," he said, adding, "You can visit AP to
APEDB hopes to attract direct investment of about Rs10,000 crore to the State through the cluster project. This has the potential to generate around 45,000 jobs, according to APEDB.

Korean Cluster Project

Andhra Pradesh is seeking to develop a South Korean City project in Andhra Pradesh where KIA Motors is likely to be the anchor industry along with a clutch of other ancillary industries in the automotive sector. The Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board signed an MoU with Tier-2 and Tier-3 ancillaries of KIA Motors, referred to as the Korean Association in Chennai, for the project.

“This is a very vital step towards global visibility and also a great way to carve the path for upcoming collaborations,” J Krishna Kishore, CEO, APEDB, said. The Korean Association in Chennai is an association of Korean companies. The proposal is to develop an integrated industrial cluster in the state to be occupied by Korean companies, which include Tier-2 and Tier-3 ancillaries of Kia Motors. The Korean Cluster Project is subject to due process and applicable rules and regulations in Andhra Pradesh.

APEDB looks at commitment to bring in direct investment of approximately Rs 10,000 crore to Andhra Pradesh through the Korean Cluster Project. This has the potential to generate employment for approximately 45,000 persons, according to APEDB.

The board has agreed to provide the necessary assistance, including necessary assistance in discussion with the Centre. KIA Motors had earlier outlined plans to invest about $1.1 billion on a greenfield plant in Ananthapur district of Andhra Pradesh. The project is set to come up at a strategic location close to Krishnapatnam port and also to major cities.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, during his South Korea visit, interacted with some of the companies there, to encourage them to set up their projects in AP along with KIA Motors, seeking to make it a Korean industrial hub.

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the proposed Logistics University. The Chief Minister also met the CEO of Greencross Cell Dr Lee Duckjoo, Executive Director Ahn Jong Seong and Team Manager David J Eun.

Greencross Cell conducts research on cancer treatment; they are specialised in liver and pancreatic cancer and have already produced a commercialised drug in South Korea. The company is trying to get clearances from the United States and is currently working with Singapore, and looking forward for increasing their reach in East-Asian markets.

Naidu even asked Greencross Cell’s officials to get in touch with the Andhra Pradesh Government as soon as they get clearances.

Further in the day, the chief minister met the officials of Korean Automobile Manufacturers Association (KAMA), who are keen to enter Andhra Pradesh after Kia Motors selected the region. He also met the Deputy General Manager, Young-Hoon Kim and Young-Joon from Trade and Technology Support Division of Korea Auto Industries Corp Association (KAICA). Later, Naidu met the Chairman and CEO of Youngone Corporation, which is a manufactures and sells apparel, footwear and gear products. During the discussion, the Chief Minister emphasised on AP potential in the textile sector, he even invited them to the Partnership Summit in Vizag in February.

Youngone Corporation operates majorly in Bangladesh, Vietnam, China and El Salvador. The last time they had invested in Chennai and Coimbatore, but withdrew later. Now they have expressed interest to enter India again.

Ministers Yanamala Ramakrishnudu and N Amaranatha Reddy, Government Advisor (communications) Parakala Prabhakar, CMO Chief Secretary G Sai Prasad, Industries Secretary Solmon Arokiaraj, Economic Development Board CEO J Krishna Kishore, and APIIC MD Babu A were part of the delegation during this trip.

Positive Response: CM

The response of the Korean companies and industrialists towards investing in AP was very positive, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said after wrapping up his three-day visit to South Korea. "Korean companies have recently had bitter experiences in China and now they are looking for better alternatives. It is high time that we attracted them here," he said. Applauding their work culture, he said South Korea strived very hard to come out of poverty after the division with North Korea and today it has surpassed India in many economic parameters. "If they start a project, they put their time and blood into it and make it a global brand," he added.

He said several companies showed interest to invest in AP. Global players such as Lotto, Dasan Networks, Kokam, Posco Daewoo Corporation, OCI, Darcl and Greencross Cell etc had responded positively, he said. A South Korea township would be developed as 37 suppliers of automobile industry came forward to invest Rs 5,000 crore, he disclosed. A logistics university would be set up and, as part of it, he discussed with the authorities the best ports in South Korea, he said.

The visit to South Korea is one more step in Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu’s efforts to bolster the manufacturing sector in Andhra Pradesh to generate incomes and increase the economic profile of the state. Going by the interest shown by many leading industrial houses during this visit, AP may witness an increased flow of investments from South Korea in the near future.
In a first of its kind, the Andhra Pradesh Cabinet approved a scheme to provide a pension of Rs 1,500 to transgenders. The Cabinet meeting, which was chaired by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, took the decision after deliberations. Information and Public Relations Minister Kaluva Srinivasulu and Municipal Administration Minister P Narayana disclosed the decisions. The Cabinet discussed in depth about the transgender policy. It was decided to keep the policy online, and to take feedback from all sections of the society. Once the policy comes into effect, 26,000 transgenders in the state will be benefitted. Under this scheme, the transgenders will also be provided skill development for financial stability. The transgenders will also be provided ration cards, plots and scholarships. They will also be extended loans through banks so that they can start small businesses. Special toilets will be built in public places like malls and cinema halls. Subsidized bus passes and health care through Arogyasri scheme will also be provided. The Chief Minister had earlier announced the proposed pension scheme for the transgender community in the state. Andhra Pradesh has become only the next state after Kerala and Odisha to sanction a pension scheme for the transgender community.

The Cabinet decided to introduce Chandranna Pelli Kanuka for the BCs, the SCs, the STs and the minorities in February. The BCs will be get Rs 30,000 and the SCs and the STs Rs 50,000. Almost 40,000 people will be benefitted from this scheme in 2018.

DGP appointment

The Cabinet resolved to bring an ordinance to amend the A.P. Police Act for appointing the Director General of Police (DGP) on its own. The DGP appointment would be, however, subject to the All India Services Act, 1953. The Cabinet had also decided to bring about a comprehensive Police Act at that time for the welfare of the police forces.

Urban mandals

The Cabinet cleared the creation of 9 urban mandals: 2, 3 and 4 mandals in Visakhapatnam, 2, 3 and 4 mandals in Vijayawada and one each in Guntur, Nellore and Kurnool. The Cabinet decided to constitute a sub-committee for taking steps for speedy redressal of grievances of the AgriGold victims. Another significant decision was to give Transstroy another year’s time to return the mobilisation advance amounting to about Rs530 crore. It will now have time until September 2018 to do so.
After successfully linking the Godavari with Krishna through the Pattiseema Lift Irrigation Scheme (PLIS), the State Government is mooting linking the Pennar with the Godavari. It is estimated that funds to a tune of Rs 80,000 crore will be needed for diverting 320 TMCs of surplus water from Godavari to Pennar. The State Government is also contemplating setting up another barrage on the Krishna’s downstream Pulichintala project.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu made a few suggestions to the Water and Power Consultancy Services (WAPCOS) team of experts on Godavari-Pennar River Linkage plan and asked them to get back to him with their inputs.

A team of WAPCOS experts made a presentation to the Chief Minister on the Rs 80,000-crore project at the Secretariat. The Chief Minister asked the experts to make the project more cost effective and segregate the parts that could be taken up immediately.

Suggesting the low-hanging fruit concept to the team, Naidu asked them to identify the components that would bear fruit immediately to be taken up in the first phase. He said he would discuss the project when the Union Water Resources Minister Nitin Gadkari comes to the State.

The WAPCOS team, presenting the report on the project, said that 3,625 MW power would be required for the pumping 320 tmcft of Godavari water. Land to the tune of 32,000 acres, including 7,000 acres forest land, had to be acquired.

Two tunnels were needed between Polavaram and Prakasam Barrage and a reservoir was needed near Bollapalli. And 701 km of canals needed to be excavated from the Polavaram project to Sangam Barrage. On completion of the project, 1,500 tmcft could be stored in various reservoirs, the experts said.

The process of Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) and Hydrographic surveys have already been completed for linking the rivers, and the geotechnical studying is in the final stage. The Government aims to provide adequate water for irrigation, industries and drinking purposes for the four Rayalaseema districts and also Nellore and Prakasam by linking Pennar with Godavari. The Chief Minister directed officials to prepare plans for completing the linkage of rivers in a phased manner and also for reducing the project cost. He also suggested to them to make a study over the feasibility of diverting water through existing canals. He said that the state will have 1,500 TMCs water storage capacity once the linking of rivers was over.

Water Resources Minister Devineni Umamaheswara Rao, Secretary Shashi Bhushan Kumar, CM’s personal secretary Sai Prasad and Engineer-in-Chief M Venkateswara Rao were present at the presentation made by WAPCOS.

A new barrage

Officials also informed the Chief Minister that Rs 3,278.60 crore will be needed for construction of another barrage upstream Prakasam barrage in the Krishna. Completion of the project will take three years. The Chief Minister is favouring the construction of a barrage at Vyakuntapuram, which is 23 km upstream Prakasam barrage and 60 km downstream of Pulichintala project.
The Government of Andhra Pradesh has notified the direct selling guidelines putting in place a predictable regulatory environment for the direct-selling industry in India. This notification would result in policy pragmatism, ease of doing business and will be a major boost to the Rs. 10,000 direct-selling industry in India.

South India accounts for one fourth of market share of the direct selling industry and Andhra Pradesh’s entrepreneurial ethos makes it an important state for direct selling entities.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has adopted the Centre’s draft guidelines as final norms for direct-selling business. Andhra Pradesh was part of the inter-ministerial committee established by the Government of India for establishing direct-selling guidelines.

Sikkim, Chhatisgarh and Telangana have already notified the guidelines and Maharashtra is in the process of notifying the guidelines soon. Being a state subject, direct-selling industry is regulated by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs at the Centre and concerned ministry in states for consumer protection.

Direct selling industry in India has not witnessed large-scale participation owing to lack of regulations in the industry, these direct-selling guidelines would provide the required fillip to the direct selling industry in India and the ‘Andhra Pradesh Direct Selling Guidelines Order 2017’ provides for a framework for compliance for direct selling entities to ensure consumer protection and safeguard against potential fraudulent activity.

The Andhra Pradesh government is also setting up a mechanism to monitor and supervise the activities of direct sellers and direct selling entities regarding compliance of the guidelines.

J Krishna Kishore, Chief Executive Officer, Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board, said “Andhra Pradesh’s entrepreneur ethos makes direct-selling an important aspect of growth especially when South India accounts for one fourth of India’s direct selling market share”

“The notification of guidelines provides the policy pragmatism and a predictable regulatory environment for the direct selling industry and Andhra Pradesh is poised to lead efforts in furthering investments and job creation in the sector”

Leena Jaisani, Assistant Secretary General & Head FICCI – Retail, FMCG, Direct Selling and E-Commerce remarked “Indian Direct Selling Industry is an important component of the Indian economy and acknowledging this, we at FICCI through our focused task force on direct selling is working dedicatedly towards the growth of this industry and seeking regulatory clarity for this new industry.”

“FICCI is working closely with the Central and State Governments on the same and. I would like to congratulate Government of Andhra Pradesh for implementing the much awaited guidelines to govern the sector. I am certain that the effective enactment of the same would facilitate the further growth of the sector and act as a growth catalyst in the state,” she added.

Direct-selling is a heavy-employment generating industry with an estimated 50 lakh entrepreneurs engaged in India by this sector. This number is expected to increase to 1.8 crore entrepreneurs by 2025.

In terms of gender-parity, Direct selling industry plays a critical role in empowering women by offering an opportunity for generate income and acts as an alternative for those desiring to earn flexible income earning opportunities. This notification from the Government of Andhra Pradesh will not only play a key role in entrepreneurship through self-employment, but also have a multiplier effect on the GDP growth rate of the economy.
The proposed structure for the legislative building in Amaravati will have a tower design. The State Government took a decision finalising the tower design for the Assembly building, which would be a 250-metre high structure including a four-storeyed main building. The Chief Minister and the Ministers felt the tower design was the best one, while it was also favoured by the majority of the public whose feedback was taken. Municipal Administration Minister P Narayana said Foster + Partners would come up with the action plan for the design's implementation in six to eight weeks, after which the construction was likely to begin and be completed in 1 1/2 to 2 years. According to an official release, the Assembly design includes a viewing tower and a museum, with the complex spread over 17 lakh square feet.

Earlier, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu gave his approval to the design of the Legislative Assembly building from two options at a meeting with the officials of the AP Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) and representatives of the Foster+Partners, in which film director S S Rajamouli had made some suggestions on giving a cultural dimension. A tower having the Assembly hall on the ground floor and other facilities above, which include space from where visitors could have a bird’s eye view of the capital region, was what the CM had chosen. The second design is a square-shaped structure. The CRDA sought feedback from the public on both the designs, on the basis of which the final decision was taken by duly factoring in the suggestions given by Rajamouli.

The well-known director gave a presentation on the historic backdrop of Andhra Pradesh starting from its prominence as a hub of maritime trade centuries ago to its makeover as a Sunrise State.

Rajamouli told the media that the majority of the participants in the meeting had voted for the tower design and another one for which he submitted the images of the Telugu history, language and cultural aspects to the F+P was set aside. It could be used for the proposed cultural city or the media city.

Rajamouli said his concept to install a statue of ‘Telugu Talli’ in the Assembly hall with the rays from rising sun falling on it was unanimously approved.

“At the beginning of this exercise, I helped in documenting the aspirations of the Chief Minister, who wanted the building to be a showpiece of Indian-ness and one that reflects the richness of Telugu history and culture. Now, I provided images asked by the F+P. Otherwise, my contribution is as little as that of the squirrels in the construction of the Rama Sethu,” he said.

There was yet another round of deliberations on the designs of the iconic government buildings in the ‘Amaravati Deep Dive Workshop’ conducted by the CRDA in Vijayawada on December 14 and 15. Construction activity will begin at the earliest since the State Government has formally finalised the designs for the State Legislature as well as the High Court. It may be recalled that a Buddhist monument prototype for the High Court was finalised earlier.

As the process of getting the final
Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC, Singapore) Executive Director Khoo Teng Chye said he was proud to be associated with the prestigious project while being conscious of the challenge of implementing the master plan.

An urban design policy that incorporates futuristic concepts but does not lack in the human element is what experts emphasized at the valedictory session of the two-day Amaravati Deep Dive Workshop on Amaravati project. Judging by the rich array of global resource persons pooling their knowledge, Benjamin Yap, Group Director (north and south Asia) of International Enterprise, Singapore, said the entire world was coming together to help Andhra Pradesh in realising its dream to build its capital city not just as a seat of governance but also a place where different cultures co-exist and have economic development models that sustain growth.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said he was keen on developing Amaravati into one of the best cities by involving the top brains and stressed the need to speed up execution of the project with the help of the Singapore government and others who came forward to assist AP in building a happy and healthy city. Earlier, experts from McKinsey & Company, World Bank, Centre for Liveable Cities (Singapore), Foster + Partners etc. suggested that public transport should account for 80% of the road traffic even as a large component of it should be electric mobility combined with bicycling and walking.

Population density not exceeding 17,000 per sq. km, a dig-once policy of creating utilities, houses as social clusters but not a mere urban agglomeration and IT infrastructure comprising Internet-of-Things etc. were among many recommendations that emerged. Earlier, the CM launched a block-chain-enabled asset (land record data) management system, a web GIS portal that gives precise location of government lands and private holdings and a Building Information Modelling System.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister disclosed that the prestigious Harvard University in the USA had taken up land pooling process of Amaravati as a case study. "It is a matter of privilege for us. During the deep dive workshop on Amaravati, Junji Shibata, Urban Planning expert from Transport and Mobility, Tokyo, was also surprised at the way farmers of Amaravati had responded to a simple appeal from the government to support the land pooling effort, which would be a win-win situation," he said.

**A responsible local government**

A responsible local government is being visualised for the capital region. One of unique aspects of the capital region, as revealed in an "expert pre-read (document) on governance matters" prepared by the AP Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) was a feature for recall. The document was circulated at the two-day Deep Dive Workshop on Amaravati development, organised by the CRDA.

"The elected representatives and staff of the metropolitan government shall be answerable to electors for performance and delivery, failing which there will be a provision of recall," the document reads.

"Ward sabhas held every six months with the electors under the Constitution will decide on the continuity of the elected representatives and the key staff," the document adds. The report further adds that there won’t be an elected body to govern the capital to begin with as the AP government proposes to constitute the Amaravati City Council as a nominated body in the period when the city gets populated.
Andhra Pradesh has registered a growth rate of 11.37% during the first half of the current fiscal compared to the national growth rate of 5.8%. The growth rate, however, has fallen compared to 12.23% in the first half of 2016-17.

The State has registered highest growth rate in the agriculture and allied sectors with 25.60% as against the national growth rate of 2%. Industry and services sectors also registered highest growth rate of 7.43% and 8.38% respectively. These growth rates are higher than the national growth rates of 3.6% and 7.9% respectively.

All the three sectors have shown a fall in growth during Q2 compared to Q1.

The agriculture and allied sectors’ growth rate slipped to 24.05% in Q2 from 27.6% in Q1. Similarly, the industry sector has shown a growth rate of 6.80% in Q2 as against 8.05% in Q1. The services sector registered a growth rate of only 8.38% in Q2 as against 8.67% in Q1.

The agriculture sector has registered 25.60% growth during the first half compared to 24.44% during the corresponding period in 2016-17. There is a fall in the industry and services sectors’ growth compared to the last fiscal. A growth rate of 9.98% had been registered in the industry sector during the first half of 2016-17, while it is 7.43% during the first half of the current fiscal. The services sector too registered a fall from 9.57% in 2016-17 to 8.38% in 2017-18.

The growth in these sectors, however, is high compared to the national growth. Also, there is a fall in the national growth in the agriculture and allied sectors and services sector.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said the government would continue to focus on 40 growth engines to sustain and further the growth rate. The objective was to achieve 80% satisfaction level of people with 80% political ownership. A sustainable growth rate of 10% to 15% for the next 15 to 20 years was required for laying a strong foundation for development of the State. “To achieve it, a stable government is necessary for the next two decades,” he said.

The highest growth in the agriculture and allied sectors was achieved despite meagre rainfall. It was possible due to better water management, Naidu said.

**Phenomenal Growth**

The agricultural sector in the State has recorded an astounding growth of 25.56% which is five times the national average growth, according to Minister for Agriculture Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy. He told reporters after chairing a review meeting on agriculture and allied sectors that the phenomenal growth rate in the farm sector was the result of a massive technological intervention which marked a turnaround in con-
The phenomenal growth rate in the farm sector was the result of a massive technological intervention which marked a turnaround in conventional farming, according to Agriculture Minister S Chandramohan Reddy.

Beginning with the introduction of soil health cards in the State to the integration of technology with Aadhar enabled distribution of fertilizers, the agricultural department had played a crucial role in the success story of farm sector, the Minister said. "We have provided 54.27 lakh soil health cards after testing 13.48 lakh soil samples and I am proud to announce that the State has stood first in the implementation of soil health card scheme," the Minister said.

The Department of Agriculture would be receiving CSI Nihilent eGovernance award for the project ‘D-Krishi’, which enabled Aadhar-linked seed distribution. The award would be presented in Kolkata on January 20, 2018.

The Minister said that the target set for sowing kharif was achieved with over 90% of sowing reported. Out of 40.47 lakh hectares, sowing was completed in 36.62 lakh hectares. The details of the row sowing in kharif was recorded in e-crop booking. In the ongoing rabi season, 49% of the sowing area was covered so far.

Per capita income highest
Andhra Pradesh’s Per Capita Income (PCI) is the highest in South India, the Chief Minister said. Addressing a meeting of Heads of Departments (HODs), Secretaries and Ministers at the Secretariat, he said Andhra Pradesh registered a growth rate of 11.37% during the first half of the current fiscal compared to national growth rate of 5.8%.

The growth rate, however, has fallen compared to 12.23% in first half of 2016-17. The State registered highest growth in agriculture and allied sectors with 25.60% as against 2.0% of national growth rate. The other sectors in industry and services also registered highest growth of 7.43% and 8.38% respectively. These growth rates are higher than national growth of 3.6% and 7.9% in industry and service sectors, he said.

Asserting that it was not just growth rates and GSDP that were important, the Chief Minister said: “Every performance indicator is equally important to the growth of the State. We are paid to serve the people.”

The Government could achieve 11.37% growth rate during first half year of the current fiscal though impact of Goods Services and Tax (GST) and demonetisation could be seen. It would not be a challenging task to achieve the set goals for next half year if everyone worked eight hours a day dedicatedly, he said. The State government would establish Centre for Good Governance (CGG) very soon.

Biodiversity Index

Temple Town to host Pilot Scheme

A pilot project to determine the ‘City Biodiversity Index’ of major cities across the State will be a reality soon in the temple city of Tirupati. Keeping in view the steady increase of population in urban areas and changing patterns of city growth, the Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Board (APSBDB) is embarking on the project. The pilot project would evaluate biodiversity indicators, existing environmental indices and several other factors, according to Chairman of APSBDB SBL Misra.

Tirupati hosted a district-level awareness programme/workshop on the ‘Concepts of Biodiversity, Biological Diversity Act and Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) Mechanism’ recently. Misra revealed that APSBDB’s new area of focus would be ‘City Biodiversity Index’. It would assess the prevailing conditions in urban areas, which of late had witnessed a gradual rise in population, infrastructure etc., followed by a disconnect with nature.

“Through this project we intend to evaluate the existing conditions and ensure that the biodiversity/natural resources are not disturbed beyond the limit,” the report quoted him.

Misra said they had already called for ‘expression of interest’ and would decide on the consultant in a couple of months. The process would be followed by a detailed assessment of the city over 23 parameters as per the ‘City Biodiversity Index’, also known as ‘Singapore Index on Cities Biodiversity’.

Elucidating on the evaluation process, APSBDB Member Secretary R K Suman said every indicator can be assigned points between 0-4 and could reach a total of 92, with the city’s baseline year being the year of initiation. ‘Biodiversity Park’ at Amaravati is on the cards, he added.
Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has given a firm assurance to the people of Visakhapatnam that it will be made an international city and financial capital of the State besides developing it as a top tourist centre of the world.

True to his word, he inaugurated the much-awaited heli tourism project being jointly run by Visakhapatnam Urban Development Authority (VUDA) and Tourism department at the VUDA Park here mid-December. The project is bound to attract foreign tourists as one could see not only the city but also places like Araku and Lambasingi. Paderu, Araku and Lambasingi have tremendous tourism potential and there is need to develop them.

As he rightly mentioned, heli tourism would also be of great help in transportation in medical emergency. Most important is the Chief Minister’s announcement that the CII Partnership Summit will be held again early 2018 in February, as the last two Summits proved to be a great success in that several foreign players evinced interest in setting up their centres in Andhra Pradesh, investing lakhs of crores of rupees. Even if half of them are grounded in the new year, the State will become a vastly developed one without doubt.

Already, Visakhapatnam is emerging as a prominent Information Technology hub in the State as the city is attracting huge investments because of connectivity and the infrastructure readily available which is why the Government is showcasing it as a hotspot for financial technology – fintech. After the protracted economic slowdown and drastic measures like demonetization and goods and Service Tax (GST), the industry is treading with circumspection. But it is only a matter of time that it would settle down and begin to expand its wings by utilizing the resources made available to it by the Government.

They have to take cue from the Karur Vysya Bank which picked on Visakhapatnam city to celebrate its 101st anniversary on a grand scale. Of course, the Chief Minister also attended the function and took the opportunity to advise the public sector as well as private ones to leverage technology to provide quality services and products to the people. He also dedicated online the first digital village facilitated by the KVB at Bandarupalli in Guntur district on the occasion.

Karur Vysya Bank has adopted Bandarupalli, a remote village with no banking facilities and set up a digital branch there. Cashless transactions and all banking operations are conducted there in a digital atmosphere.

The Chief Minister observed that the visionary leadership of KVB’s founders in identifying the banking needs of the local community in Karur, a small town near Trichy in Tamil Nadu, and thereby earning the trust of the people had placed the bank on a strong foundation as it had grown into one of the major banks in the country. He also appreciated the KVB contributing Rs. One crore from its CSR funds to Visakhapatnam district and hoped others would emulate it.

Another significant development in Visakhapatnam city in December was that the AP Government in association with UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) are likely to establish a centre of excellence for children with learning differences as well as a “gaming for e-learning hub”.

It will be the first of the its kind in India and in Asia-Pacific...
region, according to Anantha Kumar Duraiappah, the Director of UNESCO MGIEP who announced it at the end of the three-day TECH-2017 on education jointly organised by the AP Government and the UNESCO in the city.

“We have developed a Telugu app that was tested at the conference. We will be working with a number of schools in the State to screen students at a very early age to see if they are dyslexic or have any other form of learning difficulty,” he said.

The app will be rolled out in the New Year.

Duraiappah said that they would be starting with 200 government schools and we need to train teachers first. The centre will have a team of child psychologists.

About the gaming hub coming up in AP, he revealed that they were working on developing a blueprint for this hub which will be a centre of excellence as well. They will decide on the infrastructural and logistical needs, the knowledge partner and institutional partner, and the governance of the hub. They will have a close connection with the universities and institutes like the IITs and the IIMs.

The hub will advise the universities what the future courses that they have to be designing. “The old style of just computer science and design doesn’t work. You have to bring them together. Recruiters often lament how they are unable to find candidates with multiple skills. This centre will address that issue. Skill development will be one of the areas of focus. Many of the foreign firms are very excited about the centre,” he disclosed.

The TECH-2017 even brought together experts from some of the biggest companies from across the world in the conference. Every day discussions on what this would look like were held. “We are focussing on creating an ecosystem which is very different unlike the Montreal gaming hub. We want this to be the global centre of excellence for gaming and digital learning,” Mr. Duraiappah said.

new e-Visa services inaugurated

The President, Ram Nath Kovind was delighted to see the students of Andhra University, particularly of Engineering stream, are engaged in R&D projects with defence institutions. He visited the University, Visakhapatnam recently to open the Centre for Defence Studies. He also laid the foundation stone for the E-Classroom Complex and Incubation Centre.

Speaking on the occasion, the President said that the Centre for Defence Studies will focus on cybersecurity, nanotechnology, radar and communications, corrosion technology, and other technologies that have strategic dimensions.

The President noted that professors and researchers from the Andhra University are collaborating on specific projects with DRDO as well as with the Naval Research Board and other institutions. Professors from Andhra University have been used as R&D consultants for missile projects, including in the development of the Brahmos missile. Additionally, expertise from this University has been sought by the Eastern Naval Command, headquartered in Visakhapatnam, for civil engineering structural applications and corrosion related issues.

Research related to defence and military applications and technologies will have multiple benefits for our country. It will provide a tonic to the effort to Make in India. And as experience in other countries has shown, research in defence technologies can also lead to innovations that have diverse civilian applications.

Kovind lauds AU’s collaboration in missile projects
Wireless Internet Technology to Andhra
AP ties up with Alphabet X

IT Minister N Lokesh posing in front of driverless car parked at Alphabet X premises. CEO of Real Time Governance and VC & MD APİİC Ahmed Babu is also seen.

AP State FiberNet, which is working with X to launch the project in 2018, has announced that it will be rolling out 2000 FSOC links as far as 20 kilometres apart on posts and rooftops to bring a wireless internet connection to the state. The breakthrough agreement was reached during IT Minister Lokesh’s US visit.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has entered into an agreement with the moon-shot factory of Alphabet (earlier Google) - X - to bring the breakthrough Free Space Optical Communication (FSOC) technology to Andhra Pradesh. The new technology will enable the State Government to provide internet through the Fibergrid project. The agreement came through during the visit of Information and Technology Minister Nara Lokesh to Mountain View headquarters of Alphabet.

The Free Space Optical Communications (FSOC) technology to be brought in the state will enable the state to provide internet facility in rural areas and the tribal belt of the state.

The technology involves beaming of light between FSOC boxes mounted on towers, which could be placed kilometres apart from each other. This technology works like fiber optic cable but without the cable. It frees the service provider from digging earth to lay the cables or stringing cable along poles.

“This association with X labs to implement FSOC in AP is first of its kind in the world to provide wireless internet connection at a higher speed of up to 20Gbps and to a distance of up to 20kms. This significant partnership will offer a major boost to the state’s digital infrastructure and help overcome hindrances in terms of connecting isolated and difficult terrain, forest areas, river crossings, railway crossings etc,” a press release said.

Less than 20% of the 53 million people in Andhra Pradesh currently have access to broadband connectivity. In order to bridge this gap, the state government and telecom service provider AP State FiberNet have been working on an initiative called AP Fiber Grid to connect 12 million households and thousands of businesses by 2019.

Lokesh said that the FSOC technology will enable the government to “provide bandwidth data to every household not only in plain areas but also in the tribal belt.” “This is first of its kind. No other country has done it. We are very proud that India is going to get this technology and Andhra Pradesh is going to lead the way,” he remarked.

The X Labs will initially supply the AP government with two thousand FSOC links and the X engineers and experts on site in AP will work with the government personnel to identify and select suitable sites for deployment of the FSOC links. Alphabet’s X will also set up a local office with the help of the
Government of Andhra Pradesh in order to provide real time support for smooth operation of the project, the government said in a statement.

“We are delighted to be partnering with AP FiberNet on this promising innovation that could overcome some of the longstanding challenges of getting high speed internet too hard to reach areas, and looking forward to helping them make the benefits of the web accessible to more people in Andhra Pradesh,” said Astro Teller CEO of Alphabet X. The IT minister said the CEOs of other major companies have also made commitment to bring technology to India and start their offices in Andhra Pradesh.

X Development Centre, LLC, formerly known as Google X, coming to Visakhapatnam augurs well for the city, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said. He congratulated IT Minister N Lokesh on his efforts stating he had been sent to sign a different MoU but he clinched the Google pact too. “A number of other MNCs and IT companies will follow suit. With Fintech and Blockchain technologies also contributing, it will usher in knowledge economy and help in the city emerging as financial capital of the State,” he said. Alphabet, which owns Google, and other online service providers view increasing internet accessibility in developing countries as crucial to maintaining their fast-growing businesses. X plans to deploy free space optical technology, which transmits data through light beams at up to 20 gigabits per second between the rooftop boxes.

Investment in health and education should be treated as an investment in human capital which was a critical building block for the economy, the President Ram Nath Kovind said in his inaugural address at the centenary conference of the Indian Economic Association at the Acharya Nagarjuna University (ANU).

“The weaker sections of the society such as the Scheduled Castes (SCs), the Scheduled Tribes (STs), segments of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and women, have insufficient access to healthcare, education, housing and civic amenities. Addressing these issues is necessary in order to achieve the dream of a New India,” he said.

Expressing concern over the persistence of poverty in the country, Kovind said it is vital to address the marginalisation, as significant number of citizens still living in poverty or being very close to poverty line. “Tackling inequalities in our society and overcoming the social and economic inequalities between different sections and regions require imaginative policy-making,” he said.

He called upon emerging economies, including India, to speak up for an interconnected world with a fair and growing trade, in the wake of some countries turning protectionist. He also said imaginative policy-making was required to overcome the social and economic inequalities between different sections and regions.

“We face a situation where many societies that had so far advocated the cause of a liberal trading order are turning protectionist. The onus is on emerging economies such as India to speak up for an inter-connected world where fair and growing trade helps the largest number of people,” he said.

Referring to the importance of the States in an era of cooperative federalism, the President said addressing the concerned issues at the local and the state-level with an appropriate policy mechanism would drive forward the Indian development experience.

“After the implementation of the report of the 14th Finance Commission, more funds had been transferred to the states. There is a lot of responsibility and hope that rests with our various states,” the president said.

Andhra Pradesh Governor E S L Narasimhan, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, former RBI governor C Rangarajan, Nobel Laureate and Bangladesh Grameen Bank founder Muhammad Yunus, Indian Economic Association (IEA) president Sukhadeo Thorat, ANU Vice Chancellor A Rajendra Prasad and others attended the event.
Prez Launches Fiber Grid
AP Pioneers Digital Connectivity in India

Andhra Pradesh is poised to emerge as the pioneering state in the country in digital connectivity with the launch of Fiber Grid project by the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind. With this major initiative unveiled at AP Secretariat, the State achieved a major milestone in taking Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) closer to the people, even as the President dedicated the Fiber Grid project to the common man. The state-of-the-art 'triple play services' of the project comprises Internet, television and voice telephony, and makes the recent ruling of the Apex Court that Internet access must be a fundamental right of the citizens a reality. Emphasising the same in his speech, the President said governments should no longer treat technology as an add-on as they move to provide access to the Internet which was a luxury till a decade ago.

"What AP has done is outstanding. It paves the way for joining the ambitious Bharat Net project and is worthy of emulation by other States," the President said. The President inaugurated the project in the presence of Governor ESL Narasimhan, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Supreme Court judge Justice NV Ramana, Assembly Speaker Kodela Sivaprasad Rao and IT Minister Nara Lokesh.

The President underlined the need for the governments to be online and on-time in serving the people who are increasingly adopting latest technologies. Kovind observed that the access to data had become a utility like water, gas and electricity and that the fiber grid project was a major milestone on the way to the transformation of the State into Digital AP.

At the macro level, technology had come to drive modern governance and States could not afford to be merely reactive. Integration of their responsibilities with platforms like AP’s fiber grid and Real-Time Governance (RTG) projects would have multiple benefits as these systems result in human empowerment. With the fiber grid, the CCTV camera surveillance, the drones and the RTG, AP lived up to its reputation as an innovator in catching up with the latest technology trends. Farmers and small producers could find buyers at distant locations and the Cloud-based virtual classrooms would provide a level-playing field to the better-off children in the cities and the talented in the villages, he said as an example.

The President hoped that with the rich assortment of technologies the AP government was putting in place, Amaravati would become India’s leading technopolis when the construction of the capital city was completed.

AP will be India’s knowledge hub: CM
"We are trying to make Andhra Pradesh no.1 in the country and it will be made knowledge hub of India. Students
of AP are very strong in Information Technology (IT) and they are ruling in world IT industry,” the Chief Minister said. Referring to the economy of the state, the CM said the State’s economic parameters are very strong vis a vis India. Though there was a depletion in some of the parameters owing to the bifurcation, AP is striving hard to reach top position, he averred. He added that good economics coupled with good governance, and led by good politics will make the state flourish.

"The vision of Fibre Grid project is to establish a highly scalable network infrastructure, accessible on a non-discriminatory basis, to provide on demand, affordable and end-to-end broadband connectivity of 15 Mbps for all households and 100 Mbps to 1 Gbps for institutions and Offices by 2018, to enable realization of the Vision of Digital AP, in partnership with the Government of India and the private sector," the CM said.

Later, during a demonstration of the RTG at the Secretariat, the President suggested to the CM to help other States in becoming technology-enabled by drawing from his experience in rolling out Information and Communication Technologies across sectors. The Chief Minister himself gave a presentation on RTG Centre.

While appreciating the State’s proactive approach in realising the potential of technologies, Governor ESL Narasimhan cautioned the people against getting addicted to the multi-media content that the fiber grid would beam into their houses. IT Minister Lokesh said that the Fiber Grid must be put to full utilization in sectors like education, telemedicine, e-governance, agriculture, rural development, and e-commerce.

The State to be wi-fi hub
To begin with, high-speed internet grid connections would be available to around one lakh households with 100-per cent connectivity in 55 villages in Krishna and Guntur districts. By April next year, the Government aims to bring 30 lakh households under the fiber grid.

The project, when completed by 2019, will cover over one crore households, 50,000 schools and educational institutions, all government offices, over 5,000 government hospitals and health centres and all panchayat offices. The project will turn every household into a Wi-Fi hub and people can avail the services with a set top box. The fibre grid will also offer services like video-conferencing and movies on demand. The district command control centres, all public CCTVs, the AP State Wide Area Network will be integrated into the grid.

Officials hope that the project will boost digital literacy and skill development in the state, and provide citizen services on digital platform to every household. It also expected to facilitate setting up BPOs or call centres in rural areas.

Every household needs two set top boxes to avail the services. They cost Rs 4,000 and the same may be paid to the government in monthly instalments of Rs 99.
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.
Andhra Pradesh figured top on development index of gram panchayats in the country. The list released by the Centre is overwhelmingly crowded by Andhra Pradesh. As many as 33 out of 83 panchayats in the country that figured in the list are from the State. Tellapur gram panchayat in Sangareddy district of Telangana has been found to be the best village in the country followed by Parapatla in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. Cheedikada in Vishakhapatnam is ranked 3rd, Kajuluru (East Godavari), Unguturu (Krishna) and Eguva Thavanampalle (Chittoor) in AP, are ranked 4th, and Koujalagi in Belagavi in Karnataka and Indupalli in Krishna in AP, are ranked 5th.

The most developed panchayats include 33 from Andhra Pradesh, 21 in Tamil Nadu, six in Kerala, five from Maharashtra and Karnataka each, and four from Telangana.

The first-ever ranking of villages forms part of the “baseline survey” done by Union rural development ministry among 50,000 gram panchayats that the ‘Antyodaya’ scheme aims to turn “poverty free”.

**Gram Panchayats**
33 of the 83 most developed panchayats in India are from Andhra Pradesh

**Rankings**
- Parapatla (Chittoor) is ranked 2nd
- Cheedikada (Visakhapatnam) is ranked 3rd
- Kajuluru (East Godavari), Unguturu (Krishna) and Eguva Thavanampalle (Chittoor) are ranked 4th
- Indupalli (Krishna) is ranked 5th

The first-ever ranking of villages is done by Union Rural Development Ministry among 50,000 gram panchayats.
My dear Munisubrahmanyam,

I like your letter. I did not misunderstand you. I started commenting on your statement that the scenes in which the nautch girl appeared (in Kanyasulkam) were not very edifying and that I wondered over the ethics of literature. I never said that the moral sense was a matter of temperament (though some of it certainly is). What I said was that moral censure was a matter of temperament. I was referring to literary judgements. I am surely stating a fact and the history of literary criticism will bear me out. If you go to spiritual ethics, there is an end of all argument. I want the sexual relations to be thoroughly analysed, shutting out all the light of conventional sentiment from the laboratory. Examine biologically and historically and learn to rate it at its true value. You care for truth in life. Why don’t you seek truth in sentiment? I can imagine what thralldom women have suffered under men. Can’t you? Try to study married life around you. Try to imagine what wives think of poor husbands, ugly husbands, bad husbands, weak husbands. You will perhaps ask what of bad wives, ugly wives etc.? But they are slaves and we expect a higher standard of purity from them than they from us! That makes all the difference. Suppose you actively abhor all men who are not pure, how many of your friends would be left to you? If a woman is unhappy because man expects more than woman can give, man is unhappy because woman does not adore him as he could wish. What is jealousy? If a husband is not beautiful - a woman cannot admire his person. She cannot help admiring a beautiful person. How impossible! Even if a husband is a fool, his wife should admire his wisdom! You can enlarge. You have no doubt heard of Geishas of Japan. In Japan sexual morality is lax. Side by side there is rigorous national life and material prosperity and what is surprising, there are high political ideals. Sentiment apart, I view the sexual question like this: There are laws imposed by society. It is our duty to respect them. Such a law is the law that regulates sexual relations.

It is a crime to violate it, except when you feel that the social law is defective and you want to reform it, openly of course. If you obey the law you should not be debarred from scrutinising it and reforming it, if need be. I admire the sentiment of purity. But what is the exact nature of that sentiment, its genesis and working? And wherein lies that purity? I believe that the present social laws about sexual relations have set up an unattainable standard - and the
Lapses are very numerous. It is time we tell the truth to ourselves. You say unchaste married men and women are equally abominable as nautch girls. Cannot you think out and try to distinguish? Certainly your searching intelligence will readily find points of difference. For one thing, a nautch girl is true to her profession. I am viewing that one point by itself. I dilate—because my next play touches this problem slightly. Yes. Comte, the positivist philosopher elaborated humanity as a creed. I don’t rate it exactly as he does. Creeds are cumbrous and impracticable. Love of man is a simple rule and it will make men very happy. Love wins back love. Modern European society is a strange combination of extreme selfishness and some humanity. Which will triumph? Self possibly!

About Usha, I read it recently and noted my remarks on the book itself. I lent it to Mr. Narayana Murty. It is a worthless book. I never thought that Mr. Venkatarama Sastri was so puerile and lacking in healthy imagination. One act is Usha’s श्रांक (Viraha), another is श्रांक (Pradyunna Viraha) in the disguising conventional style, lotus leaves. moon-beams. and what not. No action, no character: The love between Bana’s nephew and wetnurse of Usha is conceived in bad taste and is extremely vulgar. Mr. V. Venkatarama Sastri thinks that buffoonery is wit.

The last scene of K (Kanyakulam) is in print. You will have the entire book very soon. Mr. Y.N. (Yanamandra Narayana Murty) calls my book a wonderful work of art. Leading book-sellers promote speedy sale. Mr. Yates wrote admiring my preface. We live on such praise.

I became very weak as soon as I arrived here. I am glad to tell you my health has improved considerably.

I shall print a portion of your glossary at the end of the book. My pranamas to your father. When do you return to Nellore?

Yours very affectionately,

PS. At what O’clock does the Mail arrive at Nellore - from Madras, I mean?

APSSDC To Make One Lakh Students Industry-Ready

Practical skill development can ensure a ready workforce. In a highly competitive world, being academically sound might just not be sufficient for graduates. Applied knowledge with pragmatic training would go a long way in making the graduates employable and industry-ready. Keeping in mind the requirements of the industries, Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC) started imparting training to their students in developing employable skills. Accordingly, APSSDC will impart training to the students in the next three years in 3D software applications. To achieve the goal, the State will seek assistance of Dassault Systems of France.

The APSSC Managing Director and CEO K Sambasiva Rao and Managing Director of Dassault Systems India Pvt. Ltd Samson Khau signed an MoU to this effect in the presence of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu recently.

"The training will increase the talented manpower in the State which in turn will attract investments, as the investors seek talented workforce, which is the need of the hour besides good infrastructure," the CM said.

The Dassault Systems (DS) will establish an Experience Centre (EC) in an area of 5,000 square feet space provided by the APSSDC. The centre will help learners to visualise the designing of the products for the customers under the direct supervision of DS, a leader in imparting training through designing software CATIA, manufacturing software DELMIA and Analysis software SIMULIA. Sambasiva Rao said the cost of the project was Rs. 309 crore over a period of three years. The State would provide Rs 36 crore in three instalments, while DS would invest Rs 273 crore to establish the Centre and to offer the product/service at a subsidised price to the students.

He said it would enhance the employability skills of the engineering and polytechnic students by making them industry-ready. The centre would foster innovation and eventually incubate student start-ups, he said.

Khau said they were happy to be imparting training to students of AP and hoped that it would enhance their employability skills. Dassault Systems is a company with a turnover of $3.26 billion (Rs. 19,560 crore approximately) headquartered in Paris. It has 1,90,000 clients worldwide across 12 industries in 140 countries.

JANUARY 2018
Pawan Kalyan and Trivikram Srinivas are two of the biggest names in the industry without a shadow of doubt. Their previous film Atharintiki Daredhi, which released in 2013, was a blockbuster, and five years later, the duo is back with yet another family drama Agnyaathavaasi which is poised to be a smash hit at the box-office. The film also stars Kushbu, Boman Irani, Rao Ramesh, and Murali Sharma in supporting roles, along with Keerthy Suresh and Anu Emmanuel who’ll be playing the lead roles alongside Pawan Kalyan. The music album, composed by Anirudh Ravichander, has already become a runaway hit. We can only imagine how the film, which is slated for release on January 10, is going to turn out with such big names coming together for what could be one of the most talked about films of the year.

With the staggering success of ‘Baahubali 2’, Prabhas went on to become the ‘darling’ of the nation. Five years after the actor began working on the Baahubali series, he finally kick-started his next action drama, Saaho, in late 2017. Directed by Sujeeth, the film is now being touted as one of the expensive films in Telugu cinema’s history. That’s not all. The makers roped in actors like Shraddha Kapoor and Neil Nithin Mukesh to play the other lead roles in the film which will also release in Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, and Malayalam. The makers are leaving no stone unturned to give the film an international look and they even roped in acclaimed action choreographer Kenny Bates to supervise jaw-dropping stunt sequences which will be shot in Dubai soon.
10 TELUGU FILMS TO WATCH OUT FOR IN 2018

Rangasthalam

When Ram Charan and Sukumar announced that they are working together, for the first time, on a village-based drama that’s set in the 80s, it couldn’t be more surprising for Telugu movie aficionados. Sukumar has made a mark as a director with a unique vision, thanks to his previous films like 1-Nenokkadine and Nannaku Prematho. And him teaming up with an actor like Ram Charan, who has an immense fan following among the masses, made news for obvious reasons. Rangasthalam is slated for release in late March and it’s expected to be a trendsetter.

Mahanati

The life of legendary actress Savitri has been the subject of intense discussion among several scholars, writers, and movie buffs over the past few decades. Now, Nag Ashwin, who had earlier made Yevade Subramanyam, is bringing alive the story of the ‘Mahanati’ for Telugu and Tamil audience. With actors like Mohan Babu, Dulquer Salmaan, Samantha, Prakash Raj, Vijay Devarakonda, Malavika Nair, and Shalini Pandey playing some of the most important characters in the film, Mahanati has piqued our interest and bow! Keerthy Suresh will portray the lead character and her transformation to look like Savitri is magical to say the least. The film is among the most awaited biopics of 2018 and Nag Ashwin is said to have done plenty of research to present an unknown side of Savitri’s personality through this film.

Bharath Ane Nenu

Post the debacle of Brahmotsavam and Spyder, it wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say that Mahesh Babu desperately needs a hit. And his upcoming film Bharath Ane Nenu, directed by Koratala Siva, is expected to give him the much needed success. Interestingly, Mahesh Babu will be seen as the Chief Minister of a state in this political drama, and expectations are high from the film considering that Mahesh Babu-Koratala Siva’s previous film Srimanthudu was the biggest hit in their respective careers.

Naa Peru Surya

Allu Arjun is on a roll, thanks to his recent films like Sarainodu and DJ which cemented his position as one of the biggest stars in Tollywood. For his next, the actor has collaborated with writer-turned-director Vakkantham Vamsi for an action drama titled Naa Peru Surya. The makers have kept the story and theme under the wraps for now.

2 Point O

Post Baahubali 2, the only film which has brought the entire South Indian audiences together is Rajinikanth-Shankar’s 2 Point O. The sci-fi action drama, which also stars Amy Jackson and Akshay Kumar, is slowly turning out to be an unstoppable force and it’s expected to have one of the biggest release ever for a South India film in recent times. Although it’s not a sequel to Endhiran (Robo in Telugu), Rajinikanth will return to play two different roles including that of Chitti, a robot, and Akshay Kumar will be seen as his arch nemesis. Touted as the most expensive film ever, 2 Point O has been made with a budget of over Rs 400 crores, and it’s slated for release in summer, 2018, in Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, and it’ll also be dubbed in several other foreign languages.

RGV-Nagarjuna’s Film

Filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma and Nagarjuna have collaborated after 23 years for an intense action drama which will have Nagarjuna playing the role of a tough cop. The duo had first collaborated for Shiva, which went on to become a classic, and after Govinda Govinda released way back in 1994, the two haven’t found an opportunity to team up once again, until now.

Goodachari

Adivi Sesh stunned everyone with his portrayal of a youngster trying to search for a young girl in the 2016 thriller Kshanam. Now, almost two years later, he’s back with a spy drama titled Goodachari. The actor has, so far, played the cards close to his chest; however, buzz in the industry is that Sesh and his team have another winner in their hands. We can’t wait to see what a desi spy is going to solve with this film.

- Hemanth Kumar C R
Kondaveedu Fort

An Impregnable Fortress
It is a memorable experience for any wanderlust to trek to the high ridge of Kondaveedu Fort, a historical place, once flourished as the capital of Reddy kings. Hill fortress located 1,700 feet (520 m) above MSL, is in Kondaveedu village near Phirangipuram 33 km from Guntur, 65 KM from Vijayawada and 265 KM from Hyderabad.

Historical Reminiscence
Three forts, dated to the 12th century, are on top of the narrow hill range. Considered to be one of the strongest forts in the region, Kondaveedu main fort was built by the Reddy dynasty and renovated by succeeding rulers. A total of 21 structures have been recognised within the fort. Its fortifications were built with granite stones comprise massive ramparts, magazines, warehouses, granaries and wells. ‘Kolepalli Darwaza’ and the ‘Nadella Darwaza’ are the two entry gates into the forts. The entrance gate is three storied, massive and made of granite stone blocks. A building built with rock pillars and covered with rock slabs, has 110 metres (360 ft) long inscriptions. A defence bunker is also seen. The source of water supply to the inhabitants of the fort was from three sources namely, the Mutyalama Cheruvu (pond), the Puttalamma Cheruvu and the Vedulla Cheruvu.

A Peek at History
Kondaveedu Fort was considered impregnable and spread across 30 hillocks during the rule of Gajapathis, according to the historians like Roy Chaudhuri and Amol Majumdar. It was actually constructed during the time of Telugu Cholas and was occupied by Kakatiya Ganapati Deva during his campaign in the coastal Andhra. After the capture of Prataparudra by Tughlag in 1323 AD, his subordinate Prolaya Vema Reddy became autonomous and shifted his capital from Addanki to Kondaveedu. Later it was taken over by Gajapathis of Orissa and ravaged by the Muslim rulers of the Bahmani kingdom (1458). The Vijayanagara emperor Krishnadevaraya captured it in 1516. The Golconda Sultans fought for the fort in 1531, 1536 and 1579, and Sultan Quli Qub Shah finally captured it in 1579, renaming it Murtuzanagar. Later it was recaptured by Vijayanagara dynasty.

The fort came under the control of the French colonists in 1752 when it was extensively fortified. It passed on to the English imperialists who got control of the fort in 1788 but abandoned it in the early 19th century.

Regaining Past Glory
Aiming at developing ecotourism in the State to attract tourists, Government of Andhra Pradesh, under the aegis of the Chief Minister, N Chandrababu Naidu, planned for Kondaveedu Fort festival in March, 2018. Accordingly, monumental fort of Kondaveedu, once the citadel of Reddy Kingdom, is all set to get a makeover. Proposals are afoot to set up cottages, a five star hotel, zoo, fitness clubs, auditorium, children’s park, sports arena and amusement centres. Laying of 3 km length of road has completed and work on the remaining 2.1 km is in the final stage.

The Department of Archaeology is taking up work to restore Mutyalamma Cheruvu, Vedulla Cheruvu, Nemala Buruju, Khilla Bhuruju resetting and providing railing along the rocky pathway, and improving the view-points, bastions, garrison barracks, stables and internal roads with appropriate tourist signages.

Government of AP has sanctioned a 65-acre plot at the foot of the hill to ISKCON South India for its Spiritual Heritage Revival Project to build a magnificent temple for the ancient Venu Gopala deity, which is only one deity in entire Asia with Vennamudda (butter-lump) in his hand. It was originally installed 500 years ago by the great Telugu Emperor Krishnadevaraya.

Kondaveedu fort, with its historical significance and the tranquil vicinity, has always been a favourite tourist spot, especially on Saturdays, Sunday and other public holidays. Since Kondaveedu village is near Guntur, which is easily accessible by road and rail from all parts of India. The nearest airport is at Vijayawada. After reaching Guntur one should board a Guntur-Chilakaluripet ordinary bus and alight at Bhoyapalem-Pirangipuram Road and can hire an auto rickshaw to the fort. The simplest way to reach the fort by one’s own vehicle, after reaching Guntur.

accommodation
Being commercial capital of AP with biggest markets of Chilli, Tobacco and Cotton, Guntur has good number of hotels of all categories for accommodation.
Vizag airport gets e-visa on arrival facility

e-Tourist Visa on Arrival (e-TVOA) at the Visakhapatnam International Airport is now a reality. The e-Tourist Visa facilitates arrival of tourists from 147 countries at 16 airports in India — Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Gaya, Goa, Jaipur, Kochi, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Thiruvananthapuram, Tiruchi and Varanasi. The facility, now extended to the Visakhapatnam airport, will facilitate foreign tourists to fly into Visakhapatnam and Andhra Pradesh. The Vizag airport will become the first in A.P. to get the facility.

State to introduce cradle system

Officials of the Women Development and Child Welfare (WD&CW) Department are planning to introduce cradle system at some public places to check abandonment of children. With the number of such cases increasing in Krishna district, the cradles would allow people to safely deposit babies in them who could be handed over to interested couples. K. Krishna Kumari, WD&CW Krishna district Project Director said that the cradles would be kept at the Government General Hospital, the bus and railway stations. People could keep the babies in them and alert officials by ringing the bell.

Start-up gets ‘Baahubali’ support

Director S.S. Rajamouli and producer Shobu Yarlagadda, who have tasted one of the biggest successes in the country with Baahubali, have now turned investors for a start-up. The duo has recently invested a huge sum in an IIT Madras incubated start-up Conzumex which came up with innovative ‘Internet of You’ platform that includes smart devices, artificial intelligence and exergaming called Muse Wearables. The company is building India’s first Hybrid Smartwatch which does not require any charging for one whole year, unlike any other digital smart watches. says K.L.N. Sai Prasanth, CEO of Conzumex Industries Pvt. Ltd and one of its founders.

TTD diaries and calendars online

The TTD has decided to market its New Year diaries and calendars through online stores. People can either log into the website ttdsevaonline.com and place the order or can purchase them through Flipkart. However, they have to bear the transportation charges. TTD Executive officer Anilkumar Singhal said the facility will be made available from December 7. After the launch of the Tamil version of the TTD website, efforts are on to launch a Hindi website. For the speedy redressal of complaints of the devotees regarding cottages and guest houses, the management has set up a free FMS helpline 18004251111111 at Tirumala.

Resolution on quota for women passed

The Legislative Assembly passed a resolution urging the Central government to enact the Women’s Reservation Bill providing for 33% reservation for women in Parliament and State legislatures. Moving the resolution during a discussion on ‘Women empowerment and child rights protection - The role of Amaravati Declaration,’

Kurnool student scales Mt. Kilimanjaro

B raving the cold weather, Suresh Babu, a first year B.Sc. student of Silver Jubilee Government College in Kurnool climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, the highest mountain peak in the African continent, on December 25, the college principal S. Abdul Khader said. Suresh Babu climbed Mount Everest in April this year.

He scaled the Gilman’s Point at a height of 5,685 metres and displayed his college banner there. TDP MLA B. Jaya Nageswar Reddy and Maheswara Reddy of Madhu Cements at Kodumur, sponsored his mountaineering expedition.
Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said it had been a long-pending demand. The Centre should have no doubt about the importance of political empowerment of women, which would be possible only when 33% reservation was provided to them in Parliament and State legislatures. Naidu said the State government enjoyed the distinction of providing 33% reservation for women in government jobs, local bodies, and in educational institutions, and was committed to replicating the same in the political arena.

**Airport at Donakonda**

Plans of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) are now afoot to revive the British-era airfield at Donakonda in Prakasam district into a no-frills airport coinciding with the State government’s proposal to promote a Rs 5000 crore Donakonda Industrial city. A detailed project report (DPR) has also been submitted through Bhogapuram International Airport Company Ltd. (BIACL), a special purpose vehicle promoted by the government to develop a string of airports in the State. “To start with, the British era airstrip will be revived at a cost of about Rs 30 crore to facilitate landing of smaller aircraft and will be expanded in phases depending upon aerospace and other projects taking concrete shape in the Donakonda Industrial Park being promoted by the State government,” the officials said.

**AP TET postponed to Feb. 5**

As the outcry to postpone the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) had grown louder, the Government of AP was considerate to change the schedule. Acting on the requests of the students seeking time for preparation, the schedule of the TET exam was postponed, HRD Minister Ganta Srinivasa Rao announced. As per the fresh schedule, the exams would be held from February 5 to 15 in two sessions of 9.30 a.m. to 12 noon and 2.30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Payment of fee through the Payment Gateway can now be made till January 17. Online mock test will be held from January 23 and hall tickets could be downloaded from January 24. The initial key will be published on February 16, final key on February 24 and the results will be declared on February 26.

**Vijayawada youth bags national youth award**

Vijayawada based Naga Sravan Kilaru has been selected for the National Youth Award 2015-16 by the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports for his efforts in empowering and driving youth towards social service and strengthening democracy. Sravan heads Vijayawada Needs U (VNU), an NGO here and has attended various international youth conventions. In a communique from the Ministry of Youth Affairs informed him that he would be honoured with the National Youth Award. The award will be presented by the President of India on January 12 at the opening ceremony of the National Youth Festival. When contacted, Sravan said the award was making his responsibility towards strengthening advocacy for youth rights and democracy, more. The six-day youth festival will be held in Jaipur, Rajasthan. Youth working in the fields of entrepreneurship, health, research and innovation, culture, human rights, art and literature and others get selected for the award.

**TemplateMonster to launch operations**

TemplateMonster, of the U.S., a $15 million company with specialisation in e-solutions, digital marketing and training, will soon launch its operations in Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada. According to reports, TemplateMonster’s India partner Satish Babu said that the company will start with a 100-seater facility each in both the cities and later scale up the manpower to 500. Andhra Pradesh Non-Resident Telugu (APNRT) Society promised to provide rented accommodation. In Visakhapatnam, it is likely to get space at Millennium Tower, which is on the verge of completion at Rushikonda, the report added.

**First Lady Relishes Andhra Culture**

The First Lady Savita Kovind and her daughter Swati Kovind experienced the flavours of the Andhra culture in Vijayawada, during the President Ram Nath Kovind’s recent visit. They spent the three-hour-long span going around places in Vijayawada by road and visited the rose show at the Swaraj Maidan, had darshan of Goddess Kanaka Durga atop Indrakeeladri and then reached the picturesque Bhavani Island. They also went around an exhibition of locally-manufactured traditional garments like the Mangalagiri silk saris, bought world famous kondapally toys from a Lepakshi stall and tasted Bandar laddu and headed back to the Punnami Ghat after enjoying the recently-installed musical fountain and laser show.

The First lady at a crafts stall in Vijayawada.
KAPU QUOTA
Bill passed by Assembly

The State Government is committed to uplifting Kapu community. CM at a welfare scheme to Kapu youth. File Photo.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu fulfilled his promise of providing reservations to Kapu and other sub-castes by passing the bill in this regard. The Government ensured that the other BC castes were not affected by the new inclusion.

The Assembly unanimously passed the AP Kapu (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions and of Appointments or Posts in Services under the State) Bill on the last day of its winter session. The Bill would now be sent to the Governor, who would refer it to the Central government for inclusion in the Schedule IX of the Constitution as the total reservations for the Backward Classes (BCs), the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and the Scheduled Tribes (STs) had crossed the cap of 50% stipulated by the Supreme Court and reached 55%.

After the Cabinet decision to provide 5% reservation for the Kapus, the draft bill was approved at a special Cabinet meeting. It was then introduced in the Assembly by Minister for BC Welfare K Atchannaidu while the Leader of the House and Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu sought the support of the House.

With the Assembly passing this long-pending piece of legislation, the Kapu, Telaga, Balija and Ontari communities would get the quota under the new category ‘F’ in government jobs and seats in educational institutions, which would take the total reservation for six categories of the BCs to 34% (A-7%, B-10%, C-1%, D-7%, E-4% and F-5%). The SCs and the STs have 15% and 6% reservations respectively.

The Bill left no scope for political quota by clearly mentioning that it was confined to admission to educational institutions and in the State services but that it should not be construed as giving reservation in political positions or posts.

The Chief Minister said the passage of the Bill was in fulfilment of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP)’s promise to recognise the Kapus as Backward Classes (BCs) and pointed out that it was one of the main items in the party’s 2014 election manifesto.

He asserted that the entitlement of the existing communities within the BCs would not be affected as a separate category had been created for the Kapus and three other sub-castes. Anybody left out of the Pulse Survey could get themselves registered with the department concerned even now to avail themselves of the benefit. He said the BC Commission headed by Justice K L Manjunath (re-constituted on January 18, 2016) took a long time to submit its report as the matter dealt by it was a serious one that could not be rushed through due to the risk of courts striking it down.

The CM said the Commission had recommended 4% to 5% quota for the Kapus on the basis of the data provided by the government from the Pulse Survey and the feedback received by it at public hearings conducted in all 13 districts.

He said the Kapu reservation issue had a historical background dating back to the British regime, under which the Kapus were considered BCs but were deleted from that list when Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy was the Chief Minister. Several committees had since been set up, to no avail, as the Congress party lacked the political will to keep its word to alleviate the plight of the Kapus by giving them the reservation, he added.

The CM kept his word by passing the bill for Kapu reservation to the various Kapu sub-castes.
Pic 1: CM inaugurated the 100th Annual Conference of Indian Economic Association at Acharya Nagarjuna University with President of India Sri Ram Nath Kovind and Governor Sri ESL Narasimhan.

Pic 2: Chandrababu at the 101 Founder’s Day celebration of Karur Vysya Bank, where he dedicated the "Digital Village" app facilitated by Karur Vysya Bank in Andhra Pradesh.

Pic 3: The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, visited the Andhra University, and opened the Centre for Defence Studies. Governor and Chief Minister are also seen.

Pic 4: The CM participated in the Christmas celebrations at St. Paul’s Cathedral Church, Vijayawada.

Pic 5: Film director S S Rajamouli making a presentation on Amaravati iconic buildings to the Chief Minister at Secretariat.
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