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NEVER LOSE HOPE. HOPE IS A ROPE THAT SWINGS THROUGHOUT LIFE

Dear Readers,

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Current Affairs

10th India-EU Summit Held in New Delhi:

The 10th India-European Union (EU) summit was held in New Delhi on November 6, 2009. The high level summit was chaired by the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh. The EU was represented by the European Commission President Mr. Jose Manuel Barroso and Swedish Prime Minister Mr. Fredrik Reinfeldt, whose country currently heads the EU. At the summit, Dr. Manmohan Singh urged the international community to continue its support in matters related to Afghanistan. He urged the West to introduce a more open and friendly visa regime to enable greater people-to-people movements. Union Commerce and Industries Minister Mr. Anand Sharma said that both India and the EU were taking forward the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations in the spirit of partnership and both entities hoped to wrap up an agreement by the end of 2010. The pact has the potential to double bilateral trade from over \$100 billion to \$200 billion by 2013. Mr Sharma urged that any movement of unskilled labour would not be encouraged from EU countries. At the same time India impressed upon the EU to ensure free movement of people from India to EU countries. India and the EU resolved to expedite work on greater information-sharing on the issues relating to terrorism. India and EU signed a pact to promote joint research in the field of nuclear fusion.

Disinvestment Programme:

In a major thrust to the disinvestment programme of the government, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) decided on

November 5, 2009 that all listed Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) would offload 10 percent of their holding in the public domain. It was also agreed that all unlisted profitable state-owned entities should go public. These important decisions were taken at a high-level CCEA meeting chaired by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in New Delhi. Currently there are over 40 listed state-run companies. Besides, there are over 100 others, including the telecom giant Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL), which qualify for listing on the stock exchanges. The decision will have a major bearing on the mineral giants National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) and Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC), as the public shareholding in these companies is 1.62 and 0.67 percent respectively. The Central Government offloaded its stake in the Hydro Power major National Hydro Power Corporation (NHPC) and Oil India Ltd. (OIL) in the 2009-10 fiscal. The disinvestment of these two raised Rs. 2013 Crore and Rs. 2,247 Crore respectively. The government have also decided to reduce its shareholding in the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), the Sutej Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN) and the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC).

Trilateral RIC Dialogue:

The Trilateral Russia India China (RIC) dialogue was held in Bengaluru, Karnataka on October 27, 2009. **India's External Affairs Minister Mr. S.M. Krishna, Russian Foreign Minister Mr. Sergei Lavrov and Chinese Foreign Minister Mr. Yang Jiechi**, have participated in the dialogue. During the talks it was decided to step up talks between India and China to build trust at several levels. The meeting of the Ministers did not express any sign of unease despite the tensions in bilateral relations between India and China. The two sides also discussed issues related to trade and explored ideas to increase the bilateral trade volume. Both countries resolved to step up communication in order to avoid any difference of opinion.

50 percent share for Women in Local bodies

The Union Cabinet approved on October 22, 2009 a proposal to increase reservation for women in Urban Local bodies from the present 33 percent to 50 percent. The provision will apply to the total number of seats to be filled by direct

election, offices of the chairpersons and seats and offices of the chairpersons reserved for the SCs and STs. **The Minister for I&B Ms. Ambika Soni** said that the amendment would bring women into the decision-making process more effectively.

3 schemes included in 15 point programme for Minorities

The Central Cabinet has decided to include the three schemes National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP), Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for small and medium towns (UIDS) and Urban Infrastructure and Government (UIG) Scheme, in the 15 Point Programme for Welfare of Minorities, which was introduced in 2006 with a view to incorporating programme specific interventions so that benefits of various government schemes for the underprivileged reach the disadvantaged sections of minority community.

Strengthening of Fire & Emergency Services in the Country

Government have approved the scheme of Ministry of Home affairs for strengthening of Fire and Emergency services in the country which would be implemented at an estimated cost of Rs. 200 crores during the remaining 11 five year plan. The Govt. also approved the National Policy on Disaster Management that would provide the framework for handling disasters in a holistic manner. The policy covers all aspects of disaster management including institutional, legal and financial arrangements; disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness.

Indo-ASEAN Bilateral Summit

India's 7th bilateral summit with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was held in Cha-am Hua Hin, Thailand on October 24, 2009. It was held in the sidelines of 15th ASEAN Summit. The Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh sought to raise the level of India's engagement with ASEAN. He proposed for the establishment of a joint task force to ensure a substantive outcome for India's 10th summit with the ASEAN grouping in 2012. He also offered to play host to the bilateral gathering that year. Highlighting India's centrality to the future Asian arrangements, Dr. Manmohan Singh requested the Japan's

Prime Minister Mr. Yukio Hatoyama to use the existing East Asian Summit (EAS) platform, which includes India, as the building block for the proposed East Asian Community. The two leaders agreed that the EAS architecture needed to be based on the new opportunities that India and Japan present to the region. In keeping with the theme of the summit Dr. Manmohan Singh proposed to set up an Indo-ASEAN Round Table to provide policy inputs in such areas as agriculture, food security and space technology and other future areas of collaboration. During the summit the leaders reviewed the progress of joint activities under Plan of Action to implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity signed in 2004. This included Science and Technology, combating terrorism and human resource development. Apart from India ASEAN held separate meetings with the representative of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea. At the ASEAN-China summit the leaders addressed a wide range of issues including infrastructure development, trade, investment and people-to-people contacts. The operationalisation of the China-ASEAN Fund on Investment Cooperation and On Commercial Credit was also discussed and three important MoUs were signed. Japan and ASEAN agreed on cooperation in areas of energy, security, connectivity, economic integration and pandemic diseases. At the ASEAN-Korea meeting, the leaders decided to elevate their comprehensive cooperation to a higher level of strategic partnership for the next fifteen years and beyond. Climate change issues including low-carbon growth and green growth were also discussed.

National Skill Development Corporation Launched

Union Finance Minister Mr. Pranab Mukherjee launched the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in New Delhi on October 20, 2009. The NSDC is a unique public-private partnership (PPP) enterprise, which has been mandated to impart skills to 30 percent of the overall target of 500 million people by the year 2022. It is aimed at augmenting the number of talented and skilled workers in 21 high-growth industries. In the new corporation, the Central government will hold 49 percent stake and industry 51 percent stake. It will primarily focus on reducing the skill gap of India's workforce over the next decade. NSDC will engage with multilateral and bilateral funding agencies to ensure that the resources for the corporation are periodically replenished, and its activities remain on track. Sectors included are media and entertainment, information technology, electronics, gems and jewellery, automobiles, leather, financial services, textiles, retail, realty, healthcare, transportation, food processing etc.

ISRO to launch exclusive satellite to study climate

The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) on October 19, 2009 announced that it would launch two exclusive, dedicated satellites in the polar orbit to study the phenomenon of climate change through atmospheric research and detecting greenhouse gas, which is one of the main reasons responsible for the increasing pressure on the world climate. The two satellites would be launched in 2010 and 2011. The first will be a 50 kg micro satellite to pursue atmospheric research. The second one will be a remote sensing satellite to monitor emission of greenhouse gases like methane and carbon dioxide. Till now only Japan and some European countries have launched dedicated satellites.

Prithvi-II Missiles test-fired successfully

Two nuclear capable, medium range surface-to-surface Prithvi-II missiles were successfully test-fired by the armed forces from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) Chandipur, off the Odhisa coast on October 12, 2009. The two missiles were launched within 2 minutes of each other. Both the missiles had a range of 350 Kms and were launched as part of the operational exercise by the Strategic Forces Command. The successful operation proved the army's capability to attack multiple targets at the same time. The advanced inertial guidance system of the missiles enabled them to hit the targets within a few meters of Circular Error Probability (CEP). These missiles are equipped with advanced features that help enhance maneuverability and deceive the enemy defence systems. Nine meter tall Prithvi-II is a single-stage liquid-fuelled missile and has a diameter of one meter. The Defence Research Development Organization (DRDO) has developed three variants of the missile to meet the requirement of the Army, Navy and the Air Force.

India signs Nuclear Pact with Argentina

India, on October 14, 2009 signed an agreement in civilian nuclear cooperation with Argentina, expanding its presence in the field of nuclear commerce. This is the seventh pact signed by India with various nations in the nuclear domain. The "Agreement of Cooperation in the Peaceful uses of Nuclear Energy" was signed by **Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. Vivek Katju** and **Argentine Foreign Minister, Mr. Jorge Talana** in New Delhi. The nuclear pact was one of the 10 agreements signed with Argentina following talks between the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and visiting **Argentine President Ms. Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner**. Both India and Argentina agreed to encourage and support scientific, technical and commercial cooperation for mutual benefits in the area under the pact. Both the nations resolved to make use of the synergies between the two and the vast experience and expertise of their nuclear scientists and technologists. Apart from

the nuclear agreement, India and Argentina also signed pacts on business visas, cooperation in science and technology and outer space besides memoranda of understanding in hydrocarbon sector, sports, trade and geological research. Both Dr. Singh and Ms. Kirchner agreed to fix the bilateral trade target at \$ 3 billion by 2012 while expressing keenness to expand and diversify commerce and economic cooperation to utilize untapped potential.

Carbon Dioxide emissions in developed nations

The latest report of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), released on October 27, 2009 revealed that carbon dioxide emissions in the developed nations increased by 1.1 percent (128 million tones) in just a single year, i.e., 2006-07. This is more than what total 100 million population of India emits (110 million tones). The new report has exposed the sharp contrasts in the rhetoric and actions of the developed nations in addressing climate change concerns. Since 1990 to 2007 the emissions in 41 developed nations increased by 16 percent with Australia leading the way with a shopping 42 percent, Canada with 29 percent and US with 20 percent. The trend of emissions within the energy sector during 1990-2007 suggests that the greatest increase occurred in transport (17.9 percent) and greatest decline occurred in sectors like manufacturing industries and construction (17.3 percent) among others. The discrepancy in emissions between the developed and the developing nations has led experts to comment that countries like India should steadfastly hold on to their stated policies of not accepting any legally-binding emission reduction targets unless the developed nations fulfill their commitments for reducing greenhouse gas emissions as laid down in the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. On an average, developed nations would need to reduce their emissions by five percent against 1990 levels over the five-year period 2008-12, when the Kyoto Protocol expires. Despite being a part of the UNFCCC, the US and Australia, the biggest emitters, have continued to distance themselves from the Kyoto Protocol. In fact, they are now drumming up support to junk the Kyoto pact, ratified by 184 nations including G-77, which represents 131 developing nations led by India, China, South Africa and Brazil among others.

Vaccines - Facts

Immunization prevents an estimated 2.5 million child deaths a year.

Vaccines have helped eradicate Polio in all countries except India, Nigeria, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Days to Remember

1st December: World Aids Day
3rd December: World Day for the Handicapped.
4th December: Navy Day
5th December: International Volunteers Day.
7th December: Armed Forces Flag Day.
10th December: Human Rights Day, International Children's Day of Broadcasting.
14th December: National Energy Conservation Day.
18th December: Minorities Rights Day.
23rd December: Kisan Divas.

APPOINTMENTS

Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, Director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) Thiruvananthapuram has been appointed as Chairman, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). He is a graduate in Electrical Engineering from Kerala University and MBA from IIM, Bengaluru, PhD from IIT Kharagpur. He has 38 years of experience in Space Technology.

Mr. P.S. Veeraraghavan, a rocket technologist, assumed as charge as Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), Thiruvananthapuram. He is graduate in Electrical Engineering from College of Engineering Guindy, Chennai, M.Tech from IIT Madras. He began his career from ISRO in 1971. He is accredited with developing sensor systems not only for launch vehicles but also for satellites.

Mr. Subir Gokarn has been appointed as Deputy Governor (Economist) of Reserve Bank of India. He was Chief Economist, Global rating agency Standard and Poor's (S&P) for Asia Pacific. He had worked with think-tank National Council of Applied Economic Research as an Economist.

Mr. Bhupinder Singh Huda was sworn in as Chief Minister of Haryana for the 2nd term.

Mr. Ashok Chavan was sworn in as Chief Minister of Maharashtra for the 2nd term.

Mr. Dorjee Khandu was sworn in as Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh for the 2nd time.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Lalbahadur Sastri Award:

Mr. Sunil Bharti Mittal, M.D. The Bharti Enterprises was nominated for the 2009 Lalbahadur Sastri Award. This award is given for management, administration and academic excellence.

Oil Industry Safety Awards:

Mr. Murali Deora, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas has given the 2009 Oil Industry Safety 2009 Awards. ONGC has won 7 awards, Indian Oil Corp. & GAIL won 4 awards each. BPCL has got 3 and Reliance Industries one.

Mr. Pramod Kumar Agarwal, Scientist Indian Council of Agriculture Research, has won the 2009 Ernesto Illy Trieste Science Prize. He shares this prize with Mr. Carlos Clemente Cerri of Brazil for developing a broad range of innovative strategies to examine the potential impact of global warming on agriculture, esp. in India.

Mr. Nitin Jain (18) from Faridabad, Haryana who topped IIT-JEE and AIEEE 2009 has won the Gold Medal at the International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics, held at Tehran, Iran.

INVENTIONS & DISCOVERIES

Mr. Jack Gallant and Team California University, USA developed a computer that can read the minds of people by scanning their brain activity and reproducing images of what they are seeing and remembering. The research shows that it is possible to decode signals in the brain. This is useful, scientists say, for allowing people who are unable to speak to communicate via visualization of their thoughts through the computer, recording dreams, and also helpful in Police investigations.

ABBREVIATIONS

Iccrom: International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property.

ICMJE: International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.

NABI: National Agri-food Biotechnology Institute.

SDIS: Skill Development Initiative Scheme.

UNIFEM: The United Nations Development Fund for Women.

EXAMINATIONS:

5th December: UPSC Geologists Exam 2009.

6th December: Management Aptitude Test (MAT) offline by All India Management Association.

12th December: Management Aptitude Test (MAT) online by All India Management Association.

13th December: Exam for Recruitment of Probationary Officers of Oriental Bank of Commerce.

13th December: Staff Selection Commission, Tax Assistant Exam. 2009

20th December: Exam for recruitment of Specialist Officers in Punjab National Bank

27th December: Exam for Recruitment of Clerks in Oriental Bank of Commerce.

27th December: UGCs National Eligibility Test (NET)

SPORTS

Hon'ble **President of India Ms. Pratibha Patil** was handed over the Commonwealth Games baton by Queen Elizabeth in London, England on October 29, 2009. The Commonwealth Games will be held in New Delhi in 2010. The baton was then given to **Mr. Ms. Gill, Sports Minister of India** and 2010 Games **Organizing Committee Chairman Mr.**

Suresh Kalmadi. Sports persons Abhinav Bindra, Sania Mirza, Kapil Dev, P.T. Usha, Vijender Kumar, Prakash Padukone etc., set off the relay race. This will cover 1,90,000 km over 340 days across various Commonwealth Nations to reach New Delhi on 3rd October, 2009.

CRICKET: Master Blaster **Sachin Tendulkar** became the first cricketer in the history of One-Day Internationals to score 17,000 runs, when he notched up a brilliant 175 off 141 balls during the fifth ODI of the India- Australia series. The ODI played at Hyderabad on 5th November 2009 was the 453rd match. The century scored was his 45th ODI Century, another mile stone and a world record.

BADMINTON: Chetan Anand, Indian Badminton Star, ranked 18th in the world won the men's category of the Dutch Open Badminton Championship held at Almere, Netherlands on 18th October, 2009, beating Eric Pang of the Netherlands by 21-12, 21-15 in the Final. It was Anand's first title in more than a year after winning the Bitburger Open in 2008.

BOXING: British Boxer David Haye clinched the WBA heavy weight title, defeating Nikolai Valuev of Russia in the title bout in Nuremberg, Germany on 8th November, 2009. The 29 year old Haye, a professional pugilist from London, scored a majority decision verdict after taking his Russian opponent the full 12-round distance.

CHESS: Soumya Swaminathan of India emerged champion at the World Junior Chess Championship at Puerto Madryn, Argentina on 4th November, 2009. She became the 3rd Indian Girl to win the coveted crown after Koneru Humpy(2001) and Dronavalli Harika (2008).

Harikrishna, Indian Grand Master won the Chigorin Memorial blitz Chess Tournament at St. Petersburg, Russia on 26th October, 2009.

FOOT BALL: The SAI Eastern Centre (Kolkata) won their maiden title in the 50th **Subroto Cup 2009**, over Government Central School (Mizoram) 1-0 in the under 17 Final in New Delhi on 26th October 2009. A. Lakra of Odhisa adjudged the Man of the Tournament.

HOCKEY: China inflicted a 5-3 defeat on India in the final to regain the trophy in the Asia Cup Hockey championship for women in Bangkok, Thailand on 8th November 2009.

TENNIS: Serena Williams of USA won the title of the Doha WTA championship in Doha, Qatar on 1st November, 2009. She defeated compatriot and sister Venus Williams 6-2, 7-6(4) in the final. With this victory Serena became World No 1 in Women's rankings.

WHO IS WHO

President:

Ms. Pratibha Devisingh Patil

Vice President:

Mohammed Hamid Ansari

Lok Sabha Speaker:

Smt. Meira Kumar

Rajya Sabha Dy. Chairman:

Mr. K. Rahman Khan

CABINET MINISTERS

Dr. Manmohan Singh

Prime Minister and also in-charge of the Ministries/Departments not specifically allocated to the charge of any Minister.

Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions;
Planning; Atomic Energy; Space; Culture;

Shri Pranab Mukherjee: Finance.

Shri Sharad Pawar

Agriculture and Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.

Shri A.K. Antony: Defence.

Shri P. Chidambaram: Home Affairs

Km. Mamata Banerjee: Railways

Shri S.M. Krishna: External Affairs

Shri Virbhadra Singh: Steel

Shri Vilasrao Deshmukh:

Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises

Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad:

Health & Family Welfare.

Shri Sushilkumar Shinde: Power

Shri M. Veerappa Moily: Law & Justice

Dr. Farooq Abdullah:

New & Renewable Energy.

Shri S. Jaipal Reddy:

Urban Development

Shri Kamal Nath:

Road Transport and Highways

Shri Vayalar Ravi:

Overseas Indian Affairs

Shri Dayanidhi Maran: Textiles

Shri A. Raja:

Communications & Information Technology

Shri Murlidhar Deora:

Petroleum and Natural Gas

Smt. Ambika Soni:

Information & Broadcasting

Shri Mallikarjun Kharge:

Labour and Employment

Shri Kapil Sibal:

Human Resource Development

Shri B.K. Handique: Mines;

Development of North Eastern Region

Shri Anand Sharma:

Commerce and Industry

Shri C.P. Joshi:

Rural Development; Panchayati Raj

Kumari Selja:

Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation;

Tourism

Shri Subodh Kant Sahay:

Food Processing Industries

Dr. M.S. Gill:

Youth Affairs and Sports

Shri G.K. Vasan: Shipping

Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal:

Parliamentary Affairs; Water Resources

Development.

Shri Mukul Wasnik:

Social Justice and Empowerment

Shri Kantilal Bhuria: Tribal Affairs

Shri M.K. Azhagiri:

Chemicals and Fertilizers

MINISTERS OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)

Shri Pratul Patel: Civil Aviation

Shri Prithviraj Chavan:

Science & Technology;

Earth Sciences;

Prime Minister's Office;

Shri Shriprakash Jaiswal: Coal;

Statistics & Programme Implementation.

Shri Salman Khursheed:

Corporate Affairs and Minority Affairs

Shri Dinsha J. Patel:

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

Smt. Krishna Tirath:

Women & Child Development

Shri Jairam Ramesh:

Environment and Forests

MINISTERS OF STATE

Shri Srikant Jena:

Chemicals and Fertilizers

Shri E. Ahamed: Railways

Shri Mullappally Ramachandran:

Home Affairs

Shri V. Narayanasamy:

Planning and Parliamentary Affairs

Shri Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia:

Human Resource Development

Shri K.H. Muniappa: Railways

Shri Ajay Maken: Home Affairs

Smt. Panabaka Lakshmi: Textiles

Shri Namo Narain Meena: Finance

Shri M.M. Pallam Raju: Defence

Shri Saugata Ray:

Urban Development

Shri S.S. Palanimanickam: Finance

Shri Jitin Prasada:

Petroleum & Natural Gas

Shri A. Sai Prathap: Steel

Smt. Preneet Kaur: External Affairs

Shri Gurdas Kamat:

Communications & Information Technology

Shri Harish Rawat:

Labour and Employment

Prof. K.V. Thomas:

Agriculture; Consumer Affairs, Food and

Public Distribution

Shri Bharatsinh Solanki: Power

Shri Mahadev S. Khandela:

Road Transport and Highways

Shri Dinesh Trivedi:

Health and Family Welfare

Shri Sisir Adhikari:

Rural Development

Shri Sultan Ahmed: Tourism

Shri Mukul Roy: Shipping

Shri Choudhury Mohan Jatua:

Information & Broadcasting

Shri D. Napoleon:

Social Justice and Empowerment

Dr. S. Jagathrakshakan:

Information and Broadcasting

Shri S. Gandhiselvan:

Health and Family Welfare

Shri Tusharbhai Chaudhary:

Tribal Affairs

Shri Sachin Pilot:

Communications and Information

Technology

Shri Pratik Prakashbapu Patil:

Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises

Shri Arun Yadav:

Youth Affairs and Sports

Shri R.P.N. Singh:

Road Transport and Highways

Shri Shashi Tharoor:

External Affairs

Shri Vincent Pala:

Water Resources

Shri Pradeep Jain:

Rural Development

Ms. Agatha Sangma:

Rural Development

JUDICIARY

Chief Justice of India:

Justice K.G. Balakrishnan

Attorney General of India:

Mr. Goolam E. Vahanvati

Solicitor General of India:

Mr. Gopal Subramaniam

Chairman, Central

Administrative Tribunal (CAT):

Mr. Justice Ashok Agarwal

ARMED FORCES:

Supreme Commander:

Ms. Pratibha Devisingh Patil

Chief of the Army Staff:

General Deepak Kapoor

Chief of the Naval Staff:

Admiral Nirmal Kumar Verma

Chief of the Air Staff:

Air Chief Marshal P.V. Naik

Commander-in-chief, Strategic

Forces Command:

Vice-Admiral Vijay Shankar

Chief of Integrated Defence

Staff: Vice-Admiral Raman Puri

APPOINTMENT

Sri Srikumar has been appointed as

Chairman Atomic Energy Commission

and Secretary Dept. of Atomic Energy.

He will succeed Mr. Anil Kakodkar on

his retirement on 30.11.2009.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Governor :

Dr. Narayan Datt Tiwari

Chief Minister:

Shri K. Rosaiah

Speaker Legislative Assembly:

Sri N. Kiran Kumar

Chairman, Legislative Council:

Sri Chakrapani

Chief Justice of AP High Court:

Justice Anil Ramesh Dave

Chairman AP Public Service

Commission:

Prof. Venkatrama Reddy

Chairman A.P. Administrative

Tribunal:

Dr. Justice Gurugubelli Yethirajulu

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