

E-Birth Certificates Likely - With Nilekani's Help

New Delhi: (IANS) A birth certificate at the click of a mouse? It's quite likely. The health ministry has started brainstorming with Nandan Nilekani - the man tasked

with India's unique identification project - to produce e-health cards and birth certificates for newborns.

"We were discussing it yesterday (Wednesday) over dinner. I proposed it to him," Dinesh Trivedi, minister of state for

health, said Thursday while inaugurating the Life Science Conclave here.

He said the birth certificate is an important document and it should be available to people anytime, anywhere. "People should be able to go to a cyber cafe and get a printout of their birth certificate," the minister added.

About the e-health certificate, Trivedi said this document will have the entire history of the newborn - weight, vaccination, any birth problem and other related information - and all these will be available on the net.

"I told Nandan, 'you have to start from somewhere. Why are you not thinking about it?' We are brainstorming it," the minister told IANS after the inaugural session of the conclave.

Nilekani, a co-founder of software giant Infosys, has joined the central government as chairperson of the Unique Identification Database Authority of India. It is a new agency set up to provide unique identification numbers to all citizens for accessing various government services.



YSR - A Congress Icon And Mass Leader

Hyderabad: (IANS) YSR was a true mass leader, one who ruled the hearts of people in Andhra Pradesh.

For Yeduguri Sandinti Rajasekhara Reddy, YSR in short, the end came while serving the very people who had reposed their faith in him by voting him to power for a record second consecutive term in May this year.

A doctor by profession, YSR was very close to the public pulse and carved a niche for himself by taking up revolutionary public welfare schemes, which had become a model for other states in the country.

Undoubtedly one of the most popular leaders Andhra Pradesh ever produced, YSR's death has not only created a vacuum in the state politics but dealt a major blow to the ruling Congress party.

One of YSR's main achievements was subduing the ultra-left Naxalite insurgency in the state that had one time gripped 21 of its 23 districts. In the process, the People's War Group (PWG), once the dominant Maoist group in India, was crushed beyond recognition.

YSR, who turned 60 on July 8, came up the hard way in his public life spanning three decades. He emerged as one of the strongest state leaders and also set new records in the state's political history.

By retaining power in Mah, he became the first Congress chief minister to retain power in Andhra Pradesh after serving a full five-year term.

YSR, whose popularity among masses is often compared with that of the legendary N. T. Rama Rao or

NTR, proved his charisma by winning the elections on the plank of his political and administrative credibility.

Without promises of free colour televisions and cash doles and without banking on cine glamour, he proved why he was more popular among masses.

Popular as a "people's leader" among his followers, YSR was successful despite facing a hostile poll campaign from both the Telugu Desam Party-led four-

party Grand Alliance and the Praja Rajyam Party of actor-turned-politician Chiranjeevi. He emerged as a real hero in the election battle dominated by film stars.

Seen by political rivals as an aggressive leader but adored by followers, YSR had always been a winner.

Elected to the state assembly for the fifth time, YSR was also a four time Lok Sabha member and he held the record of never losing an election. The man who singularly spearheaded the Congress cam-

paign this year not only retained power but also ensured that the party gets 33 out of 42 Lok Sabha seats.

When he took over as chief minister on May 14, 2004, it was a dream came true for YSR. The leader from the badlands of Rayalaseema had come up the hard way.

Born in a middle class family in Pulivendula, a small town in Kadapa district, on July 8, 1949, YSR made a modest beginning. The eldest of five sons of Y.S. Raja Reddy, a dynamic local leader, he evinced interest in politics while studying at the M.R. Medical College



in Gulbarga in Karnataka.

After studying MBBS, YSR served as medical officer at the Jammalamadugu Mission Hospital for a brief period. In 1973, he established a 70-bed charitable hospital.

He entered active politics in 1978 and was elected to the state assembly from Pulivendula. He served as state minister from 1980 to 1983 and retained the assembly seat in 1983 even when NTR swept to power with a mammoth victory.

Sensing a potential leader in him, then prime minister Indira Gandhi appointed YSR president of the state unit of Congress when he was only 34 years.

In 1989, he was elected to Lok Sabha from Kadapa constituency and held the seat till 1999, when he shifted again to state politics. From 1998 to 2000 he was president of the state Congress again.

The year 2003 was a turning point in his political career as he undertook a 64-day 'padayatra' or walkathon across the state. Covering 1,500 km in the scorching sun, he received petitions from people over their numerous problems, mainly relating to agriculture and unemployment.

It was this 'padyatra' which catapulted YSR to power. His experiences during the tour helped him shape up his policies after assuming office, as he implemented free power for farmers, waived off their loans, introduced several welfare schemes like pension for the aged, widows and handicapped, housing for poor, Rs.2-a-kg rice, a 'Rajiv Arogyasri' or community health insurance scheme and a massive program to build irrigation projects.

Even his last visit to Chittoor district — which never materialized as the helicopter in which he was traveling crashed in bad weather — was to launch another innovative mass contact program to know the people's problems.

Family, Peer Pressure Pushing Up Teen Suicides, Say Experts

New Delhi: (IANS) An exaggerated importance to brands, pressure to perform and peer pressure have pushed up suicide rate amongst adolescents today - a case in point being the 19-year-old student who killed herself apparently after not getting admission to a prestigious Delhi college, say psychologists and parents.

Kritika Khanna, a bright student who scored 92 percent in her Class 12 board exams, did not get admission to the sought after Lady Shri Ram college and instead had to take admission in Jesus and Mary college under Delhi University. She was apparently depressed about it. She flung herself to death from her 11th floor residence in a Gurgaon high-rise.

According to psychiatrist Samir Parikh, suicide is an extreme step that may be triggered by one incident but the individual would have been suffering from depression for quite some time.

"Suicide is on the rise amongst adolescents. It may be triggered on an impulse, by an incident but for that the person must have been suffering from depression for quite some time, maybe five to six months," Parikh told IANS.

"In the case of Kritika, she must have been vulnerable for some time. All this is because of

things like an exaggerated importance to brand names and being made to believe that getting into one particular institute can make your successful and, if not, it will mar your career," he added.

Peer pressure, pressure from family and the media play a big role in building these perceptions, Parikh said. Shocked at the incident, many parents said they are at a loss as to how to handle their teenagers.

"It's absolutely shocking.

This madness over marks and cut off percentages can drive anybody up the wall - and these are just kids we are talking about" said Rashmi Jain, a mother of two teenagers.

Rajesh Agarwal, whose daughter is in Class 12, said that after hearing of the increasing number of cases of teenage suicides - the latest being that of Kritika's - he is worried to bits.

"As a parent, I want my child to do well. But is it enough that the child is not pressurised at home? What about peer pressure?" Agarwal asked.

While counselors said that parents must interact with their children as much as possible and assure and re-assure them of unconditional support even while reprimanding them, counselor Gunjan Doga said that the tell-tale signs of depression should not be ignored. One should get help.

Girl kills self after poor result

Times News Network
Ahmedabad: Pooja Rathod, 18, jumped to death from the balcony of her room, located on the seventh floor of Namdev Apartments in Satellite on Friday.
Police said Pooja, a Class XII science student, had promised her father that she would secure more than 70 per cent marks in the final exams, but she was shocked when she got only 35 per cent marks in the results declared recently, and was distressed since then.
Sub-inspector of Satellite police station, S M Khareli said, they have registered an accidental death case and investigations are on.
Police sources said that, Milan Rathod, who stays at Nandlavan Tower with his wife Rashmi and three children, Pooja, 18, Karish 17 and Shikha 14, runs a computer business from his house. "On Friday the family was sleeping in the afternoon when Pooja went to her bedroom," said police.
Khareli said, at about 2.30 pm Pooja's mother went to the bedroom to call Pooja for tea, but could not find her. "The family searched for her until they saw Pooja's body lying in a pool of blood in the apartment premises, right below the balcony of her room," the police said.
"The family had even tried to console her but the poor result weighed heavily on her mind," said Rathod. Police said as the family was in state of shock they could not record their statements.



Manmohan, Jayalalitha Thackeray Play Here

Lucknow: (IANS) Here Jayalalitha takes Bal Thackeray on her lap when he sobs, Manmohan Singh is fond of riding on Mulayam Singh's shoulders, while Kalyan Singh and Rajnath Singh have no differences and love playing cricket with Giani Zail Singh. The next one to join them could well be Mayawati.

Daily wage labourer Mithai Lal, 45, and his wife Chandrasena, 42, named their seven children after the political leaders due to their belief that this would bring good fortune to the family.

The couple expects one more child later this year and hopes it will be a girl so that it can name her after Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mayawati.

The family lives in Jalalpur town in Uttar Pradesh's Ambedkar Nagar district, some 180 km from Lucknow.

"As I firmly believe names can change one's destiny, I named my six sons and one daughter after popular politicians of the country," Mithai Lal told IANS over phone.

"I have full faith that names would guide my children's future and one day they would become as popular as the politicians," he added.

While 18-year-old Mulayam Singh is the eldest son, the youngest Bal Thackeray is just

five months. The others sons — Kalyan Singh, Giani Zail Singh, Rajnath Singh and Manmohan Singh — are 16, 15, 13 and five respectively. Jayalalitha, the couple's only daughter, is eight years old.

The eighth child is expected in a few months and the couple hopes it is a girl.

"Despite coming from a Dalit community, but braving all odds, Behenji (Mayawati) emerged as one of the most powerful politicians of the country. We too belong to the Dalit community and want to have a daughter who could make her parents feel proud like Mayawati," said Chandrasena, who came to know she was pregnant again a few days ago.

Like their parents, the children too believe they will be able to achieve big things one day due to their names. "It may come late to us, but I believe all of us will attain popularity similar to that of the politicians," said eldest son Mulayam Singh, who works as a private tutor in his spare hours to augment the family income.

While it remains to be seen whether the children will be able to live up to the names, all of them have become quite popular in the district, and Jalalpur is now known as the town where the "politicians' family" lives.