

# the pioneer

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QUOTE OF THE DAY  
The pioneer

The BRS government introduced the Dharani Portal and grabbed lakhs of acres. The Dharani website has become synonymous with corruption. The Modi government provided land rights to everyone through the Bhū Swamitva Yojana scheme. Land borders were recorded using satellite data to eliminate disputes through the Swamitva scheme. Banks are giving loans to people based on land records which they get through the Swamitva scheme.



-Rajnath Singh, Union Defence Minister P2

**'DMK will get a fitting reply for remark on Sanatana Dharma'**

**VIKRANT DIVING SOMETHING INTO MORE THAN JUST AN EXAM**

**'I've been trying to be as realistic as POSSIBLE'**

**DON'T MISS...**

**OMC wins final round...**

Osmania Medical College (OMC), Hyderabad, won the qualifying round of the inter-collegiate Sweden-India Nobel Memorial Quiz 2023, held at RV College of Engineering, Bengaluru on Monday. Over 45 teams participated in the quiz from various reputed colleges and technical institutes across the city and from nearby areas. The quiz competition qualifying rounds were earlier held in Pune, Mumbai and Chennai with the finals to be held in New Delhi. The winners - Sayed Mohammad Hashmi, Hussain Ahmed....

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**Allahabad HC acquits Pandher...**

The Allahabad High Court on Monday acquitted domestic help Surendra Koli and his employer Moninder Singh Pandher in the 2006 Nithari serial killings for lack of evidence, recalling for many the chilling crime targeting young girls that came to light with skeletal remains being found behind a Noida bungalow. A two-judge bench of Justices Ashwani Kumar Mishra and SHA Rizvi allowed the appeals filed by Koli and Pandher, who were challenging the death sentence given by a CBI court in Ghaziabad. The high....

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**India expected to grow at 6.3% in...**

India's economic growth is expected at 6.3 per cent during 2023-24 on the back of good health of the financial sector and uptick in private investment even as downside risks remain, said a survey by industry body Fici unveiled on Monday. The latest round of Fici's Economic Outlook Survey pegs annual median gross domestic product (GDP) growth for 2023-24 at 6.3 per cent - with a minimum and maximum growth estimate of 6 per cent and 6.6 per cent, respectively, the chamber stated. The median....

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**Cricket is included in 2028 Olympics...**

For long, cricket remained a statistical global sport sans a true global footing. A solid fan base of 2.5 billion and an ever-swelling TV revenue formed its axis to be labelled as a sport with a worldwide appeal, second only to football. However, in reality, all of it is parked in the Commonwealth countries and even among them India alone helm around 70 percent, if not more, of those numbers. But now, all this could change as cricket, in its T20 avatar, has made its re-entry into the Olympic fold....

-SPORTS

**Neelam Madhu Mudiraj quits BRS**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BRS got another shock with its Patancheru leader Neelam Madhu Mudiraj quitting the party. He said that he is resigning from the BRS as he did not get the party ticket.

The resignation letter was sent to Chief Minister KCR. On Monday morning, Madhu announced his resignation in the Kothapalli village of Gummadidala mandal in Sangareddy district. Madhu is in the election ring this time and he is undertaking a padayatra from Kothapalli village. Neelam Madhu was disappointed as he waited till the last moment for a BRS ticket.

Neelam Madhu took the decision after sitting MLA Goodem Mahipal Reddy got the BRS B-Form on Sunday.

## 'Dump Cong in Bay of Bengal'

CM KCR addresses massive rallies at Jangaon and Bhongir



K VENKATESHWARLU ■ HYDERABAD

BRS President Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao said that the opposition is saying that they will dump the Dharani Portal in the Bay of Bengal and that the opposition is trying to impose officialdom on farmers. Congress leaders are saying that three hours of power supply is enough for farmers. You must dump the Congress in the Bay of Bengal, KCR appealed to the people.

Addressing the Jangaon Praja Ashirvada public meeting on Monday at the Jangaon Medical College Grounds, KCR said that the BRS will implement KCR Bima benefitting 93 lakh people if the BRS

**"Did any CM think about introducing the Dalit Bandhu scheme across the nation?"**

**KCR said that the BRS will implement KCR Bima benefitting 93 lakh people if the BRS wins again.**

**"The election will change our fate. It will decide the future of our state."**

wins again. He said that Rs 5 lakh will be given to bereaved families within a week if a person dies like in the case of Rythu Bima scheme beneficiaries. He said that super fine rice will be given to ration card holders immediately after taking charge.

KCR said that they did not prepare a manifesto of lies for the sake

of votes. "Did any CM think about introducing the Dalit Bandhu scheme across the nation? The situation would not have been like this if Dalit Bandhu was introduced decades ago," KCR said.

He said that the investments are coming to the state in a big way as conditions are good. The law and

order situation is good and there are no communal riots. However, some people are trying to create differences in the name of religion. There is a brotherhood between Hindus and Muslims in Telangana. Muslim leaders voluntarily postponed Milad-Un-Nabi for a day as Milad-Un-Nabi clashed with Ganesh Immersion Day, he said.

"The election will change our fate. It will decide the future of our state. Vote is a strong weapon in democracy. How do we vote, our karma will also be the same. People have to vote after identifying what is good and what is bad. The results would be good if we do like that."

2



## Bhongir now in peace

We have eliminated anarchist groups: CM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Without naming the Nayeem gang, Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao said the Congress supports anarchist groups in Bhongir town and that the BRS government eliminated them. He said the people of Bhongir are now living in peace after the elimination of anarchist groups. KCR said that brokers' raj will come if the Congress comes to power as they would scrap the Dharani Portal and the Dalit Bandhu scheme.

He called upon people to dump the Congress in the Bay of Bengal using their votes as the Congress has been saying that it will throw the Dharani Portal into the Bay of Bengal.

Addressing the Bhongir Praja

Ashirvada public meeting at Bhongir on Monday, KCR said that he will construct an IT and Industrial Park in Bhongir and that they will make Yadadri Bhongir district a green one by completing the 98 per cent completed Baswapur project after elections.

He said that their survey had revealed that the BRS candidate sitting MLA Pailla Shekhar Reddy will win the elections with more than 50,000 vote majority in Bhongir.

He asked the people attending the meeting to decide whether they want a 24-hour power supply or a 3-hour power supply. He said that farmers too have to think about this.

2

## 'Some IAS officers envious of power companies'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Transco and Genco CMD D. Prabhakar Rao said that funds are not being released to electricity companies by the government even though Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao himself had ordered it.

He said that no matter how many times he tried to meet Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao regarding this it was not possible to meet him.

Prabhakara inaugurated the Accounts Officers Union Building on Monday at the Mint Compound.



Speaking on the occasion, Prabhakara said that some IAS officers are envious of the popularity of Telangana power companies. They are trying to block the progress of power companies, he said.

2

## 'KCR gives first priority to his family's interests'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Alleging that KCR's government is corrupt and that corruption is increasing in Telangana, Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said that only the KCR family developed in Telangana. KCR cannot live without power and that KCR's first priority is his family, he added.

Rajnath said that three states were formed by the Vajpayee government. Development is taking place in those states but why is it that there is no development in Telangana, Rajnath asked.

He said that Telangana has gone back 10 years under KCR. "KCR should answer why Telangana did not develop in the last 10 years," he added.



"BJP-ruled states have developed in a big way. The nation is moving on the path of development under the BJP. The BJP is committed to the development of Telangana," he said. Addressing a public meeting at



Jammikunta under the leadership of Huzurabad MLA Eatala Rajender on Monday, Rajnath described the BRS government as a leakage government.

BJP had a major role in the for-

mation of Telangana state. Telangana was not formed only because of KCR. KCR failed to fulfil his assurances.

2

## Ponnala Laxmaiah joins BRS, lashes out at Cong

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former Congress leader Ponnala Laxmaiah joined the BRS in the presence of Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao at the Jangaon Praja Ashirvada public meeting on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, Ponnala said that he faced insults in the Congress during the last 45 years.

Showering praises on KCR, Ponnala said that KCR had taken up a caste census and a comprehensive family survey immediately after becoming the CM and stood as a model to the nation.

He said that KCR is the only CM who did justice to oppressed sections and that KCR constructed seven reservoirs in Jangaon itself.



## EC trains officials in combating bribery of voters

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Election Commission's resource persons sensitized Assistant Expenditure Observers (AEOs) on the need to combat the menace of bribing voters. All Assistant Expenditure Observers attended the training camp conducted on Monday at the CEO's office in Hyderabad.

Briefing the objective of monitoring election expenditure they said, "Election expenditure can broadly be divided into two categories. The first category of expenditure is the legal expenditure which includes expenditure connected with campaigning, public meetings, public rallies, posters, banners, vehicles, advertisements etc. The second category of expenditure is on items which are not permitted under the law like distribution of money, liquor or any other item given to voters. This expenditure comes under the definition of

**"Election expenditure can broadly be divided into two categories. The first category of expenditure is the legal expenditure which includes expenditure connected with campaigning, public meetings, public rallies, posters, banners, vehicles, advertisements etc."**

'bribery' which is an offence both under IPC and under the RP Act, 1951 (The Act)."

"Yet another form of expenditure is surrogate advertisements, paid news and social media etc. Expenditure on campaigning through social media tends to be underreported if at all by candidates. The systems should be robust enough to record such expenditure as well and not only include it in the account of election expenditure but also take action against offenders under the law, including filing of

complaints before the police/ competent magistrate etc if required," they said.

"According to Section 78 of the RP Act, 1951, every contesting candidate is required to file a true copy of his election expenses with the District Election Officer (DEO) within 30 days of the declaration of the result. Failure to file the statement about election expenses within time and in the manner required by law may result in disqualification of the candidate by the Election Commission under Section 10A of the RP Act,

## I will defeat KCR in Gajwel, says Eatala

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Senior BJP leader Eatala Rajender said that he will certainly contest from Gajwel sticking to his statement issued earlier. He said that he is aiming to defeat KCR after the Huzurabad by-poll victory.

Speaking to the media at Jammikunta on Monday, Eatala said that he did not make the statement that he would contest

against KCR in vain. "I will definitely contest against KCR in Gajwel," he said.

He recalled that KCR spent hundreds of crores in Huzurabad to defeat him and that he won the election although KCR made Ministers, MLAs and government officials camp in Huzurabad. Eatala made it clear that the BJP would defeat the BRS and come to power.

Staging a dharna at the Telangana Martyrs Gun Park on Monday along with his followers, Vijaya raised slogans against Revanth saying 'Vote for note in the past...now seat for note.' Speaking on this occasion, Vijay said that Revanth sold 65 Assembly seats for Rs 600 crore.

"Revanth is discriminating against Telangana activists and is not giving them tickets. He is allocating tickets to leaders who joined recently, ignoring people who were working for the party for years. The party is suffering reverses due to Revanth. I am demanding that the high command should remove Revanth from the post of TPCC president immediately. The party has to cleanse the first list announced on Sunday with 55 names," Vijay said.

Vijay has been criticising Revanth for allotting the Gadwal Assembly seat to the recently joined Saritha Yadav. Vijay tried hard to get the Gadwal ticket and had gone to New Delhi in vain for that.

## 100% voter registration finalised

District Election Officer (DEO) and Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Commissioner Ronald Rose said that the final voter list has been cleared for 100 per cent voting registration in Hyderabad district. A press conference on voting awareness and election management was held at Panwar Hall of the GHMC headquarters on Monday.

Ronald Rose said that although the final list was published on October 4, the newly eligible 18-year-olds and

those who have reached the age can register through Form-6, while those who have shifted their house or those who have wrong names in the voter list can get them rectified for which the Election Commission of India has given flexibility to apply till October 31. He said that since the voter list has been released, one should recheck whether their name is there in the list or not.

2



Jupalli calls Pragathi Bhavan 'Slaves Bhavan'

Describing the Pragathi Bhavan as 'Slaves Bhavan', senior Congress leader Jupalli Krishna Rao said that Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu is synonymous with arrogance.

Criticising the CM for mentioning his name during the release of the BRS manifesto on Sunday at the Telangana Bhavan and describing him as an arrogant person, Jupalli said that KCR purchased MLAs with thousands of crores due to his arrogance.

'KCR grabbed lakhs of acres using Dharani'



Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said that KCR and the BRS government introduced the Dharani Portal and grabbed lakhs of acres using it. He said that the Dharani portal is synonymous with corruption.

He said that Modi's government provided land rights to everyone through the Bhu Swamitva Yojana scheme. He said that they decided borders using satellite data and ensured that no disputes arose among people through the Swamitva scheme.

He asked people to give a chance to the BJP as the people gave a chance to the BRS twice. He said the political parties in Telangana have been operating on the basis of caste, religion and sections, but the BJP will not do such things, Rajnath said.

Cong suspends Kuruva Vijay Kumar, Kaleem Baba

The Congress suspended TPCC secretary Kuruva Vijay Kumar and Kaleem Baba, a Congress leader from Bahadurpura, saying that they were engaging in anti-party activities.

The TPCC Disciplinary Action Committee had a meeting on Monday under chairman Dr G. Chinna Reddy and suspended Vijay Kumar and Kaleem Baba from the party with immediate effect. The TPCC Disciplinary Action Committee considered seriously the acts of the two leaders burning effigies and tearing flexes on Gandhi Bhavan premises and making derogatory statements against party leaders as they did not get party tickets.

KCR'S LUCKY NUMBER May turn out to be unlucky for some BRS candidates

How many BRS candidates will have the misfortune of seeing BRS supremo Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu's lucky number turn into their unlucky number? Discussions are going on in BRS circles about this.

In August, KCR announced his party candidates for 115 constituencies out of a total of 119 constituencies. But on Sunday only 51 candidates were given B-Forms to contest in the Telangana Assembly elections scheduled for November 30.

Tension has gripped BRS candidates who did not get the B-Forms. They say that if KCR thinks that six is his lucky number the total number of candidates announced by him is 114 and if he did not give B-Forms to all candidates.



While releasing the BRS election manifesto on Sunday, KCR said that only five or six sitting MLAs were refused tickets to contest in the Assembly polls and added that other opportunities have been kept for them.

Congress brass will decide on TJS tie-up: Mallu Ravi

Telangana Jana Samithi (TJS) president Prof. Kodandaram and TPCC senior vice-president Mallu Ravi held talks on the alliance between the TJS and the Congress on Monday at the TJS office.

He said that they discussed only political understanding. He said that the high command will take the final decision on this.

Kodandaram said they will explain the demands of the TJS to the Congress high command. He said that they had asked the Congress to give 12 seats to the TJS.

TJS senior leader Prof. PL Vishweshwar Rao also attended the meeting.

First signature on Cong guarantees: Revanth



Vikarabad brings luck to me. We will know who is lucky on December 3.

He said that to avoid repeating the mistake of the 2018 elections, Chandra Shekhar was given the Zaheerabad ticket. Revanth asked the people to elect Prasad in Vikarabad, Chandrasekhar in Zaheerabad and Rammohan Reddy in Parigi.

He said that Manohar Reddy was included in the party to win Tandur for the Congress. YSR is credited with bringing the Congress to power from Chevella.

100% voter registration...

It can be corrected through the toll free number 1950, voter helpline app or the website voters.eci.gov.in or contact the BLOs or check the GHMC website for the numbers of BLOs.

Following the release of the final voter list, 44,680 dead and duplicate voters were removed by October 9, he said. He said that since the last four months, 3,56,830 voters in different polling stations in the same constituency in the names of members of the same family have been rectified.

Congress deceived sincere workers: Nagam Janardhan

Former minister Dr Nagam Janardhan Reddy said that the Congress did injustice to those who worked hard for the party by not giving them tickets and that TPCC chief Revanth Reddy should be held responsible for this.

A meeting of Chintalapalli Jagadishwar Rao, dissident leaders and activists was held at Mushtipalli in the Peddakothapally mandal of Nagar Kurnool district on Monday.

Nagam Janardhan Reddy, who attended the event said, "Will Jupalli Krishna Rao say that he will not change party if he wins from the Congress?" He said Jupalli is an opportunist. He asked whether Jupalli would have joined the Congress if it had not won in Karnataka.

He said the Congress had insulted them by not giving them tickets and that they will teach them a fitting lesson.

Prior permission needed for ads

Deputy District Education Officer and Hyderabad District Collector Anudeep said that as the Model Election Code of Conduct is in force, advertisements of various political parties on print, electronic media and cable channels should be given prior approval by the Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC) from the date of notification.

The Deputy DEO said, "As for the advertisements, there are restrictions related to inappropriate remarks on the country's sovereignty, religions, personal insults, incitement to violence and on the legal system. Action will be taken against those who violate these as per the Cable Act."

'Take action against cops for arresting Cong war room volunteers'

The Telangana High Court ordered an inquiry into the arrest of Congress war room volunteers saying that the police behaved against rules and directed the Commissioner of Police to take action against the officials who engaged in irregularities.

**TODAY ALMANAC**  
Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha  
Tithi: Tritiya  
Chaturthi  
Nakshatram: Vishaka  
Anuradha  
Rahukalam: 2:55 PM to 4:22 PM  
Yamagandam: 9:07 AM to 10:34 AM  
Varjyam: 12:36 AM to 02:14 AM  
Gulika: 12:01 PM to 1:28 PM  
Amritakalam: 11:22 AM to 01:02 PM  
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:38 AM to 12:24 PM

**HYDERABAD WEATHER**  
Forecast: Mostly Sunny  
Temp: 33°  
Humidity: 54%  
Sunrise: 6:09 AM  
Sunset: 5:53 PM  
Updated: October 16, 2023 5:00 PM

Bhongir...

Continued from page 1  
"There is now no chance to grab the lands of others due to the Dharani Portal. However, Congress leaders are saying that they will dump the Dharani Portal in the Bay of Bengal if they come to power. If Dharani goes VROs and officials' raj will come. Land rights will be disturbed. People have to hang around Tahsiladar offices and courts if Congress comes. The BRS government introduced the rule that only the people's thumb can change land title deeds. Even the Chief Minister cannot change that."

'KCR gives first priority...

Continued from page 1  
There is no development in Telangana except in Hyderabad. Gujarat development is a model for the nation.  
The BJP has ruled Gujarat for the last 27 years with the development mantra. Congress' attitude is the reason for the non-solution of bifurcation issues, Rajnath said.  
He said that KCR failed to defeat Eatala Rajender in Huzurabad by-poll even though the BRS spent huge amounts and KCR himself personally campaigned in Huzurabad.  
"Why did the BRS government fail to give jobs to the youth? Where happened to KCR's assurance of giving

jobs? The KCR government has to answer the youth on its failure to conduct competitive exams properly.  
Dalit Bandhu has become a Bandhu for BRS activists. The BJP fulfilled all its assurances," he said.  
Eatala said that the BRS is asking people to join the BRS if they want the benefits of any scheme.  
The people of Kamalapuram elected him as an MLA with a majority of 25,000 votes although he had no political background, he said.  
"I brought many development projects to Huzurabad. I did many things when I was Minister.  
I know the problems of hostel students.  
I provided superfine rice

to hostel students after becoming minister.  
I improved the facilities in hospitals after becoming the health minister.  
KCR did not like when municipal workers went on strike in Hyderabad.  
KCR dismissed 1700 workers for that. KCR banned dharnas at the Indira Park.  
KCR did not like it when I supported VRAs. KCR hatched many conspiracies to defeat me in Huzurabad.  
Is it possible to defeat a leader who lives in people's hearts? The Huzurabad people won in 2021.  
I won the elections even though the BRS spent hundreds of crores.  
The people must endorse the BJP now," he said.

'Some IAS....

Continued from page 1  
"There is a chance that some problems will arise in power supply if IAS officers follow the same policy towards power companies. I am requesting these officers not to continue this.  
There is a chance that conspiracies may be hatched to remove us from our posts after this statement.  
That is no problem for us as these IAS officers did not appoint us. The CM appointed us seeing our work," Prabhakara said.  
He said that the per capita power consumption in TS is now 2126 units.  
He made it clear that industries are coming to Telangana only because of the quality power supply.

'Dump Cong...

Continued from page 1  
Don't believe leaders who come here only during elections," KCR said.  
He assured people that Cheryal would be made a Revenue Division if Jangaon BRS candidate Pilla Rajeshwara Reddy wins. He said that they will set up nursing colleges and paramedical colleges in Jangaon district and that he used to get tears seeing the district headquarters and mandal headquarters in some places before the formation of Telangana state.  
KCR said that there are bright chances in Jangaon for the development of the IT industry as it is near Hyderabad.  
"I did not see a single youth when I went to Bachhanapet

during the Telangana movement as all of them had gone out for their livelihood. Now Bachhanapet is getting water for 365 days. We considered several issues while creating new districts. I prepared plans for the development of the state by inviting financial experts. We made the state walk on the development path after huge brainstorming. Today, paddy is going in thousands of trucks for two months from Telangana. Telangana farmers are now on the right path. We introduced the Dharani Portal to provide full rights to farmers on their land. I know the troubles of farmers and so I kept the power of revenue officials in the hands of farmers. Nobody can touch the land without the thumb impression of the farmer," he said.

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TO BOLSTER INVESTMENT LANDSCAPE IN TS

# T-Hub invests \$500,000 in BIVA analytics platform

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

T-Hub on Monday announced an investment of \$500,000 in BIVA Analytics, a plug and play analytics platform.

Speaking of the investment, T-Hub CEO, Mahankali Srinivas Rao said, "The investment in BIVA Analytics reaffirms our unwavering commitment to fostering innovation within the startup ecosystem. BIVA Analytics epitomises the pioneering spirit we wholeheartedly champion. This investment perfectly aligns with the strategic vision of T-Hub's T-Fund, which was established to bolster the investment landscape in Telangana and bolster indigenous startups."

BIVA's Founders, Abhiram Kollu and Akhila Ganti said, "This successful fundraising round is a testament to the hard



Representatives of BIVA at T-Hub

work and dedication of our entire team. We are excited about the future and are well-positioned to accelerate our growth, drive innovation and make a lasting impact in the B2B SaaS Analytics space."

Rajesh Sehgal, Managing Partner, Equanimity Ventures, said, "BIVA's platform empowers e-commerce businesses with unified analytics, automation

and growth potential. Abhiram and Akhila have a deep understanding of user problems, which is reflected in the robust SaaS platform that they have built. Until now, they have been under the radar fine tuning the product. The current funding round will help them get discovered.

We believe that BIVA is poised to revolutionise e-commerce analytics and are excited to partner with them as an early backer. Investor support highlights strong confidence in BIVA's unique approach to E-commerce analytics."

Vikrant Varshney of SucSEED Innovation Fund, said, "We firmly believe in BIVA Analytics' unique go-to-market strategy, which positions them for exceptional growth in the e-commerce analytics landscape."

BIVA Analytics is designed to empower e-commerce businesses by aggregating data from various sources, including e-commerce stores, marketplaces, marketing platforms, logistics platforms, payment gateways, and order management platforms. The platform offers a unified dashboard and intuitive pre-built reports, enabling workflow automation and streamlined data interpretation.

## Two men sentenced to jail for eve-teasing

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In two separate cases of eve-teasing reported from the city, a local court on Monday sentenced two men to simple imprisonment.

In the first case, convict identified as Bakshi Ali aka Jada Goldie was arrested by the Rein Bazar Police following complaints by the victims. Metropolitan Magistrate TR Padmaja sentenced Ali to three days imprisonment.

In the second case, the convict identified as Abdullah aka Abdul Nabi, a resident of Yakutpura, was arrested following complaints of eve-teasing. The Metropolitan Magistrate sentenced Abdullah to one day imprisonment.

It is to be noted that eve-teasing incidents have become a common place in the city of late.

# CII EXCON to aid India become second largest CE market

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) organised a roadshow in the city on Monday to announce EXCON 2023. The event witnessed the participation of industry leaders, senior government officials and stakeholders from the infrastructure and construction equipment sector.

Over 1,200 companies will participate in the CII EXCON, South Asia's largest construction equipment exhibition, to be held in Bengaluru from December 12 to 16.

EXCON is poised to propel India to become the second largest and fastest growing construction equipment market in the world by 2030. With a strong focus on policy reforms, India is currently undergoing a rapid and transformative expansion of its infrastructure, spurred by increased government spending on various infrastructure projects. All these positive



measures would help India achieve this great milestone.

The event will spread over 30 lakhs sq. ft of display area and is expected to attract over 1,200 exhibitors from India and abroad, including countries like the USA, UK, France, Germany, Italy, UAE, South Korea, Singapore, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Romania and Czech Republic. The 5-day exhibition would attract over 80,000 business visitors from all over the world. The Government of Karnataka is the host State for EXCON 2023.

EXCON 2023 Steering Committee and Managing Director, Schwing Stetter (India) Pvt Ltd said, "The theme 'Building India's Tomorrow' encapsulates the essential pillars of Technology, Globalisation, Sustainability, and Inclusivity. EXCON 2023 is not merely an event; it's a driving force propelling India towards relentless progress. It aspires to embody our robust infrastructure development, reaffirming India's leading position as a global destination for construction equipment manufacturing".

THREATENING MEDICAL OFFICERS

## HRDA seeks action on TSMC contestant

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad Resident Doctors Association (HRDA) on Monday wrote to Telangana health secretary seeking action against a doctor for threatening district medical officers ahead of the Telangana State Medical Council (TSMC) elections.

The HRDA raised concerns over Dr D Mathru, the District Coordinator of Health Services of Nalgonda, for threatening medical officers, asking them to hand over postal ballots of the elections to him. The HRDA also urged the health secretary to direct private medical colleges not to gain postal ballots forcibly by threatening faculty and post-graduates in their institutions.

"The HRDA hereby brings to your kind notice that Dr D Mathru who is contesting in TSMC election and also DCHS, Nalgonda district, is threatening Govt Medical Officers with dire consequences if blank postal ballots are not handed over to him so that he can vote in his favour. We also bring to your kind notice that private medical colleges management is also threatening teaching faculty and post-graduate students to hand over blank TSMC election postal ballots. Hence sir, we urge you to take necessary action and disqualify the candidate and give directions to all private medical colleges' management not to collect TSMC election postal ballots from teaching faculty and post-graduate students," read a letter from the association.

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## Man jailed for dancing with knife in marriage procession

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A local court here on Monday sentenced a man for dancing with a knife in hand during a marriage procession.

The accused identified as Shaikh Sameer (24) is a resident of Tallabkatta, who was found dancing and wielding a knife during a baraat at Bhavaninagar when the police caught him. He was shifted to the police station.

The Bhavaninagar police booked a case under Section 61 A (whoever between sunset and sunrise is found armed with any dangerous instrument with intent to commit an offence), 70B (whoever in any street or public place or place of public resort behaves in an indecent, riotous or disorderly manner) and Section 22(2) ((a) carrying in any public place of swords, spears, bludgeons, guns, 10[knives] and other offensive weapons).

## TiE Young Entrepreneurs programme launched

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TiE Hyderabad launched the TiE Young Entrepreneurs (TYE) programme on entrepreneurship for school students in Class IX to class XII.

In a press note here on Monday, Rashida Adenwala, Chairperson of TiE Hyderabad, said TiE is a global volunteer-driven organisation fostering entrepreneurship.

The Hyderabad Chapter has over 150 industry leaders as Charter Members who offer guidance and mentorship to aspiring and established entrepreneurs and provide orientation to school and college students.

Subba Raju Pericherla, the Programme Chair, said that the programme would culminate with a business plan competition amongst teams formed by the students and the winning team would go to the US to compete against teams from around the world. It is an inclusive programme.



It will be our endeavour to see that every team has a student from a government school.

Sri Charan mentioned that all the instruction in the 3-month programme is given by TiE Charter Members who bring their vast experience to build the right foundation for the students in all aspects of building a startup.

Venkatsh explained that TYE is a transformational programme that provides a

## Police seize goods worth Rs 1,09,11,15,917

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The police seized Rs 58,96,98,917 from October 9 to October 16. The police seized Rs 7,29,72,290 from 9 am on October 15 till 9 am on October 16, according to a statement issued by the police.

The police seized 6,974 litres of liquor, 625 kg jaggery and four kg alum worth Rs 77,00,729. The total value of the liquor seized by the police is Rs 6,64,81,307.

The police seized narcotics worth Rs 2,97,61,595. The police seized ganya valued at Rs 29,51,135 and 0.3 litres of weed oil on October 15.

The police seized a total of freebies (laptops, vehicles, cookers, sarees etc.) worth Rs 6,89,18,002. The value of the articles seized by the police on October 15 is Rs 29,67,857 (3900 kg rice and other material).



seized articles (from 9 am on October 9 to 9 am on October 16 is Rs 1,09,11,15,917).

Meanwhile, The SR Nagar police on Monday arrested a man and seized an accounted cash worth Rs 9,81,250 from him.

The accused was identified as M Ram Kishore (60) an employee of the HP Gas and a resident of RTC colony Khairatabad. Kishore was apprehended during vehicle check in the afternoon. The accused was arrested as he was unable to produce valid documents for carrying the large amount.

Earlier on Monday, the Hyderabad police also seized cash worth Rs 2.6 crore.

## FICCI conducts workshop for ease of doing business

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) on Monday conducted the "ATA Carnet" document for ease of doing business.

ATA Carnet is an International uniform customs document issued in 79 countries, including India and is considered as a passport for goods, which facilitates green channel route for doing business in India and abroad.

Speaking of the document in his keynote address, DP Naidu, Principal Commissioner, Hyderabad Customs Commissionerate said, "ATA Convention is signed by 79 countries around the world. The system is a perfect illustration of how close cooperation between business and customs can facilitate and stimulate international trade. Each country in the system has a single guaranteeing body approved by the national customs authorities and the ICC World Chambers Federation. The national guaranteeing association is entitled to issue Carnets and to authorise local chambers on the national territory to deliver them on its behalf. In major trading nations, dozens of local chambers have that authority. In India FICCI has been appointed as the National Issuing and Guaranteeing Association



(NIGA) for the operation of ATA Carnet system." He further said, "This service is available to exhibitors at trade fairs, business and sales executives and traveling professionals, such as film crews, architects, artists, engineers, entertainers, photographers, sports teams and many more. A single Carnet covers visits to an unlimited number of ATA countries in a year. It thus provides a simple and speedy way to travel abroad with business materials, saving both time and money."

## TSRTC to start buses from JBS to Vijayawada from October 18

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) on Monday announced that it will operate 24 buses from the Jubilee Bus Station to Vijayawada from October 18.

These buses will cover areas including KPHB Colony, Balanagar, Boyn Pally, JBS, Sangeet (Pushpak Point), Tarnaka (Pushpak Point), Habsiguda (Pushpak Point), Uppal (Pushpak Point), LB Nagar.

"There is no change in the ticket prices of these buses passing through JBS. Charges are the same as services operated from MGBS. One can contact tsrtconline.in for advance reservation of these services. At present buses from BHEL/Miyapur are going to Vijayawada via MGBS." Due to this, the pas-



sengers of the surrounding areas of JBS and Secunderabad had to come to MGBS. A few passengers brought this matter to the attention of the management of #TSRTC.

The decision comes after passengers appealed for buses to Vijayawada via JBS. Based on their requests, the company decided to run 24 services to Vijayawada via JBS. TSRTC wants to use these buses, which are very useful for the passengers of Bowenpally, Secunderabad, JBS, Tarnaka, Habsiguda and Uppal areas.

## Special trains for festival

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In order to clear extra rush during Dussehra festival season South Central Railway to run Special Trains between various destinations.

Train No. 07453/07454 Narsapur-Vikarabad-Narsapur Special Trains (2 services): These special trains will stop at Palakollu, Bhimavaram Jn, Bhimavaram Town, Akivida, Kaikaluru, Gudivada, Vijayawada, Guntur, Sattenapalli, Piduguralla, Miryalaguda, Nalgonda, Secunderabad, Begumpet and Lingampalli stations in both the directions.

Train No. 07489/07490 Secunderabad - Tirupati - Secunderabad Special Trains (2 services): These special trains will stop at Kacheguda, Umdanagar, Shadnagar, Jachchela, Mahbubnagar, Wanaparthy Rd, Gadwal, Raichur, Mantralayam Rd, Adoni, Guntakal, Gooty, Tadipatri, Yerraguntla, Kadapa,



Rajampet and Renigunta stations in both the directions.

Train No. 05303 / 05304 Gorakhpur - Mahbubnagar - Gorakhpur weekly specials (12 services): These special trains stop at Khalilabad, Basti, Gonda, Aishbagh, Kanpur Central, Orai, Virangana Lakshmi Bai Jn, Bhopal, Itarsi, Nagpur, Balharshah, Sirpur Kaghaznagar, Bellampalli, Ramagundam, Kazipet, Malkajgiri, Kacheguda, Shadnagar and Jachchela stations in both the directions.

These trains consist of First AC cum 2AC, 2AC, 3AC, Sleeper Class and General Second-Class Coaches.

Railway (SCR) will restore the trains that were cancelled earlier on Monday.

Train No 12806 (Lingampalli-Visakhapatnam) which was cancelled from October 17 to 23 will be restored on October 18. Train No 12805 (Visakhapatnam - Lingampalli) which was cancelled from October 16 to 22 will be restored on October 17. Train No 17219 (Machilipatnam-Visakhapatnam) which was cancelled from October 16 to 22 will be restored on October 17 and Train No 17220 (Visakhapatnam-Machilipatnam) which was cancelled October 17 to 23 will be restored on October 18.

## Colliers assists Pinnacle set up office in city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Leading industrial reliability solutions company, Pinnacle, which has a strong presence in the US is now setting up shop in India. Trusted real estate advisor, Colliers, led the assignment and successfully transacted a premium space at Skootr, My Home Twitza in Hyderabad's secondary business district.

Keen on making the right real estate choice for its business and people, Pinnacle appointed the well-known property consulting firm to conduct a thorough market analysis, finally closing in on Hyderabad. Hyderabad has emerged as a preferred market for several sectors including IT, manufacturing and BFSI, driving up the demand for commercial and industrial real estate.

According to Colliers' latest research release, the State witnessed a strong 64% QoQ growth in gross leasing in 2023.

"Given Pinnacle's focus on long-term expansion in the professional services and technology sector, our team narrowed its search to Hyderabad's SBD micro-market. After conducting an analysis of Pinnacle's growth projects and market conditions, we recommended managed spaces as the most viable and cost-effective option. The team negotiated terms that maximised revenue for the client, employing creative financing solutions and other strategies to optimize the transaction," said Arpit Mehrotra, Managing Director, Colliers India.

## OMC wins final round of Nobel Quiz

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Osmania Medical College (OMC), Hyderabad, won the qualifying round of the inter-collegiate Sweden-India Nobel Memorial Quiz 2023, held at RV College of Engineering, Bengaluru on Monday.

Over 45 teams participated in the quiz from various reputed colleges and technical institutes across the city and from nearby areas. The quiz competition qualifying rounds were earlier held in Pune, Mumbai and Chennai with the finals to be held in New Delhi.

The winners - Sayed Mohammad Hashmi, Hussain Ahmed and Sayed Abdul Mannan answered a wide array of questions on the Nobel prizes and Sweden. They will represent the city at



the National Finals which will be held in New Delhi on October 31.

Alireza Javaheri, Counsellor, Embassy of Sweden handed out the prizes to the winners. Alireza Javaheri said, "2023 is a special year for us as we mark 75 years of Sweden-India diplomatic relations. The quiz is a great platform to celebrate the

strong bond between Sweden and India. It is encouraging to see that the enthusiasm for the quiz remains high even though it has returned after five years."

The prize for National Quiz Champions is a week-long trip to Sweden. The winners will get to visit the headquarters of some of the partnering companies, Swedish universities, and the Nobel Museum. All participants of the quiz got the certificates and many of them won prizes as well.

## Section 144 ahead of Intermediate, SSC exams

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Cyberabad Commissioner of Police M Stephen Raveendra on Monday imposed Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPc) ahead of Intermediate and SSC Telangana Open School Society (TOSS) exams.

The curfew will remain in place from October 16 to 26. It is to be noted that the exams will be conducted in two shifts. While the morning shift will be held from 9 am to 12 noon, the

afternoon shift will be held from 2 pm to 5 pm.

On duty police officials, home guards, military personnel, flying squads on invigilation duty and bonafide funeral processions are exempted from the curfew.

A gathering of four or more persons within 200 meters of the exam centres is prohibited during the mentioned timings. Raveendra reiterated that violation of the curfew is a punishable offence.



# Congress has not learnt from its previous flaws

The BJP figuring as the main rival in four of the five states that go to polls in November stands as a testimony how it is influencing the political consequences in the country.

To contain the BJP, the Congress has been making various false promises to the people in MP, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, like supply of LPG connection for only Rs 500 each, paying Rs 1500 to each woman, waiving of crop loans and providing free power up to 100 units.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is going about these states and making the promises. Even in Rajasthan, the Congress offers Rs 2,000 per month to women, 10 kg of rice free of cost to each family, free travel by RTC buses for women, unemployment allowance of Rs 3,000 pm for the unemployed and free supply of power up to 200 units a month and so on.

It made similar promises even in Chhattisgarh. The

Congress, which held power for over six decades in the country, is making such false promises at the national as well as the State level. Had these promises been implemented earlier, India would have become a heaven on earth.

The then PM Indira Gandhi gave the call Garibi Hatao. But, the Congress leaders filled up their coffers and became rich, the poor became poorer.

The regime of Rajiv Gandhi, who came to power with Mr Clean image, saw perpetration of the Bofors scandal. During the 10 year UPA rule, corruption was rampant. Therefore, the people buried the Congress in elections.

What happened in Karnataka five months ago? To come to power at any cost, the Congress included five major guarantees in its election manifesto and gave wide publicity to it. Now the Congress is finding it difficult

**KCR seems to have learnt the trick of making false promises. KCR who hitherto had not reduced the price of the LPG cylinder is now out offering to slash the price by at least Rs 500. He is promising pucca houses, life insurance cover for all, creation of 3 lakh jobs, unemployment allowance of Rs 3,000 per month. The million dollar question is who stopped KCR from implementing all these programmes during his 10-year tenure?**

to fulfil the promises. The government would have to spend 22 per cent of the budgeted income to implement the guarantees.

The Congress that came to power in Karnataka on the plank of supplying free power up to 200 units, soon after coming to power hiked the power tariff by more than 50%. It is facing a lot of difficulties to supply 10 kg of rice to each family. The Congress government promised free

buses ride for women, but there are no sufficient number of buses. The State government is yet to kick off its other scheme of paying unemployment allowance.

The Chhattisgarh government offered to give 10 lakh jobs and pay Rs 2,500 pm towards unemployment allowance. The State is going to polls again, but there was no trace of fulfilling the promises made.

In Rajasthan, a Rs 20-crore



Y SATYA KUMAR  
BJP National Secretary

scandal surfaced at tenders level in implementing Jal-Jeevan Mission. In IT sector, irregularities to the tune of another Rs 5,000 crore were reported. Large-scale corruption came to light in the mid-day meals scheme.

Now KCR seems to have learnt the trick of making false promises. KCR who hitherto had not reduced the price of the LPG cylinder is now out offering to slash the price by at least Rs 500. He is promis-

ing pucca houses, life insurance cover for all, creation of 3 lakh jobs, unemployment allowance of Rs 3,000 per month. The million dollar question is who stopped KCR from implementing all these programmes during his 10-year tenure?

Had he created jobs for the unemployed, why should a woman called Pravalika commit suicide?

Because of the inefficiency of the State government, question paper leaks have become a routine. Did anyone pay attention to the agitation of the unemployed in Telangana? Can KCR, who did not have the capacity to conduct the exams, release a White Paper on the status of his election promises made during 2014, 2018 and 2019?

Did KCR give relief to the people reducing the tax on petrol? Did anyone benefit in Telangana except KCR, his

family members and his camp followers?

KCR boasted of building 24 hospitals on a par with NIMS, announced special package of Rs 50,000 crore for Dalits, reviving the closed companies, developing an industrial corridor from Hyderabad to Warangal, creation of roads and drainages in all towns and villages, cleansing the River Musi and so on.

He created several useless corporations and borrowed money recklessly for them. The Hyderabad city, which should have become a global city, reminds us of a slum even if it experiences a minor shower.

The electricity department, which was caught in a mire of debts, is about to collapse. In fact, 20 per cent of the state's revenue is going to service the debts.

The BJP never makes false promises practising election

politics. The BJP is the only party that submits progress report card on the fulfilment of the promises made to the people. Ever since Modi came to power, he changed the culture of making false promises. The BJP prepares its election manifesto only after receiving feedback from the people.

During the past nine years of the BJP regime in the country, unprecedented infrastructure development projects have been implemented. Bharat, which emerged as the fifth largest economy in the world, is soon going to improve its rank by climbing up to the third position.

Of the total Rs 50 lakh crore foreign investments received, lion's share of the foreign investments went to the productive sector. The BJP's agenda is development, but nationalism is akin to the flag for the party.

The BJP is going to secure highest number of seats in the forthcoming elections as peo-

TRULY SPEAKING

## Harish skewers Revanth for 'comments' on BRS manifesto

The Minister for Finance said that the TPCC president is accused of collecting crores of rupees for issuing party tickets

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

Minister for Finance T Harish Rao took Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee president T Harish Rao on Monday to task for alleging that the manifesto released by Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) was a copy of six guarantees made by the Congress. "The leaders of the opposition parties became frustrated sensing their imminent defeat in the forthcoming elections. The BRS manifesto sent shivers down the spine of the opposition parties," he said and added that Congress party in fact copied the BRS government schemes and announced them as promises.

Speaking to the media here, The Minister recalled that the Congress leaders had accused Revanth Reddy of accepting 5 acres of land and crores of rupees for issuing tickets to aspirants. "Revanth Reddy is an accused in a note for vote case. He is now selling the party tickets," he pointed out. Protests erupted at Gandhi Bhavan, Dharna Chowk and in New Delhi against Revantha Reddy. He was notorious for note for vote scam. He has been facing heat and feeling frustrated, Harish Rao observed.

As far as BJP was con-



Minister for Finance T Harish Rao speaking to the media in Siddipet on Monday

cerned, the party always acted against the interests of the State. The saffron party leaders were spreading misinformation against the State government and Telangana. It was facing a dearth of candidates and was afraid of facing elections.

The people overwhelmingly supported the BRS manifesto and it frightened the leaders of the opposition par-

ties. Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao ushered in several welfare schemes. "KCR was the first Chief Minister to launch Rythu Bandh (input subsidy for farmers). Telangana is the pioneer of welfare schemes in the country," he said.

Harish Rao exuded confidence that the BRS was already ahead of the other parties. The BRS would score a hat-trick in

the elections. Harish Rao expressed confidence that BRS party is ahead in everything, in announcing the candidates, releasing the manifesto and similarly in victory tomorrow. At least one lakh people would attend the Chief Minister's meeting in Siddipet. The meeting will be held at 5.30 pm. As many as 20,000 students would take out a bike rally, he said.

## BRS manifesto practical, doable, says Kavitha

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The manifesto announced by the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) is very practical and doable, said party MLC K Kavitha on Monday.

The manifesto has caused consternation among the opposition parties. The six guarantees made by the Congress were "false promises," she said. She took TPCC president A Revanth Reddy to task for asking the BRS leader to take a pledge at the Martyrs Memorial. She blamed the Congress party for pushing the youth to sacrifice their lives for Telangana Statehood.

The Congress leaders have no knowledge of the state of affairs in the State. She advised the national Congress leaders to stop reading the script written by the party's local leaders. The BJP leaders became experts in lying through their teeth. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had deceived the people by promising to deposit Rs 15 lakh each in the accounts of people and create 2 crore jobs every year. She pointed out that the Telangana government had provided 2.21 lakh jobs in the government department and 30 lakh jobs in the private sector.

The government has shown great results in the power sec-



tor by providing quality power round-the-clock.

Raising social security pension amounts, increasing financial assistance given under the 'Rythu Bandhu' investment support scheme for farmers and providing LPG cylinders at Rs 400 each were some of the promises made by the ruling BRS for the upcoming assembly elections in Telangana.

"If the TPCC president calls the manifesto given by the Chief Minister a waste paper, then the poll guarantees given by Congress are a 'tissue paper' as the party does not know the fiscal situation of the state. The criticism should be issue-based, she said.

Referring to the suicide of a student, she appealed to the youth not to take extreme steps. The State government has already filled up vacancies. More opportunities would be provided to youth, she added.

## Police seize Rs 2.36 cr in Karimnagar

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Karimnagar Police on Monday seized Rs 2,36,48,494 the Circuit Rest House under the two town police station limits, according to Karimnagar Police Commissioner L Subbarayudu.

In a statement here, the Police Commissioner said that check-posts were set up in view of the elections to the Assembly. Vehicle checks were intensified to prevent the transport of money and liquor.

During the vehicle check operation, Inspector of Police Ramchander Rao intercepted a vehicle and found the money inside. The occupants of the vehicle could not produce any documents of proof. The police asked the occupants of the vehicle to submit documents.

So far, a total of Rs 2,84,67,452 was seized. He said that all necessary steps were taken to enforce the election rules. The Commissioner

of Police specially congratulated Inspector Ramchander Rao, sub-inspector China Naik, head constable Srinivas and Gnaneshwar and constable Ravinder Mallaiah for their efforts in seizing the large amount of cash.

Local Returning Officer (RDO) K Maheshwar, town ACP Gopati Narendar, Two Town Inspector K Ranchander Rao and other police personnel were present.

## BRS activist dies of heart attack at meeting

PNS ■ NALGONDA

A BRS activist died of a heart attack at Praja ashirvada Sabha at the government junior college ground at Bhongir on Monday. He was identified as Saththaiha. He hailed from Pochampally mandal in Yadadri Bhongir district.

He collapsed while complaining of pain in the chest. He was rushed to a nearby hospital where the doctors declared him brought dead.

## Barber stabbed to death in Kukatpally

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In an incident reported from Kukatpally on October 15, a barber was stabbed to death in his saloon.

The deceased identified as Ashok (42) owned a hair saloon named Harish Looks in Kukatpally. On Sunday night when Ashok did not return home, his family was worried.

They went to his shop on Monday looking for him and found his body in a pool of blood. The Kukatpally police reached the spot after being alerted. It was found that the assailants stabbed Ashok multiple times and damaged the CCTV cameras installed in the shop. A case was registered in the matter and the body was sent for autopsy.

## TSRTC officials are inert to increase buses: Activist

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Despite complaining several times with regard to the increase in the number of route number 229 buses that commute from Medchal to Secunderabad, Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) officials are not responding, said Hidayath Khan, a Hyderabad activist.

He said, "For the past one-and-a-half months, I have been facing a lot of difficulties in commuting from Medchal to Secunderabad due to less number of buses from 4 pm to 6 pm. They are also less during the morning hours. Due to this, students are foot-boarding as the buses are crowded. Some of my seniors have been facing this

issue for the last six to seven months." Thota Srinivas Rao, TSRTC Deputy Regional Manager said, "As per the time, we won't increase the number of buses from Medchal to Secunderabad as it has to undergo a long process for its implementation. The main reason for the overcrowding of buses from Medchal to Secunderabad is the number of college students is more than the number of seats in the buses. Though the buses are 10 minutes per frequency and are adequate as per the demand, we will solve the overcrowding issue by making batches for college students and others to board RTC buses. For instance, one batch at 3 pm to 3:30 pm, a second batch at 3:30 pm to 4 pm, and so on."

## Guv stresses need to train youth as job providers

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Governor Tamilisai Soundarajan inaugurated a three-day workshop organised by the BVR Mohan Reddy School of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (BVR SCIENT) as part of its Foundation Week Celebrations on Monday. The workshop will see participation from faculty and students from leading technology institutes from across India.

BVR SCIENT is a 30,000 sq feet building that is coming up at IIT Hyderabad Campus and is the brainchild of Cyient Foundation (the CSR arm of Cyient Ltd.) and the Shibodhi Foundation (the family foundation of BVR Mohan Reddy). It is a first-of-its-kind initiative in collaboration with IIT

Hyderabad, which aims to nurture and develop world-class innovation and entrepreneurial talent from India in light of the country's ambition to become Atma Nirbhar Bharat. Tamilisai Soundarajan said, "I am very happy to inaugurate this programme at the BVR School of Innovation and Entrepreneurship. The present generation of students is very talented, innovative, and technologically equipped. A school like this will play a crucial role in encouraging youngsters who want to become future entrepreneurs. I also would like the students of the country to be job providers and not job seekers. I believe BVR SCIENT will lead the path to create young and innovative entrepreneurs for our country."

## People will not trust BRS manifesto: Sridahar Babu

PNS ■ JAYASHANKAR BHUPALAPALLI

Telangana Congress Manifesto Committee chairman D Sridhar Babu on Monday said the BRS manifesto was a copy of six guarantees made by the Congress and as such the people would not repose trust in it.

Speaking at the Congress workers' meeting at Kataram, the Congress leader said that Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao did not promise not even one of the guarantees made by the Congress party. The BRS incorporated in its manifesto the six

guarantees after Congress announced them.

He recalled that the Chief Minister and Minister for Finance T Harish Rao ridiculed the Congress for announcing the guarantees it would not implement. Now, the BRS incorporated some of the promises the Congress had already made, he claimed.

The people were not in a position to repose trust in the promises the BRS made. The people were ready to give a mandate to the Congress because of their belief that the six guarantees given by Sonia Gandhi would be fulfilled, he said.



Telangana Congress Manifesto Committee chairman D Sridhar Babu speaking at the Congress workers' meeting at Kataram in Jayashankar Bhupalapalli district on Monday

INDIA CORNER

Woman accused of honey trapping paraded with footwear garland

A 38-year-old woman accused of extorting several men by honey trapping them, was allegedly physically assaulted and paraded with footwear garland by a group of angry villagers in Karnataka's Belagavi district, police said on Monday. The woman was later rescued by the police and admitted to a nearby hospital where she is undergoing treatment for her minor injuries, they said. The video of the Friday night incident in Ghataprabha village also went viral following which police registered a case and arrested 13 people. According to police, the woman has allegedly extorted several men by honey trapping them. Out of frustration, a group of people allegedly went to her house to confront her. They got into a fight and during altercation, they physically assaulted the woman and made her wear a footwear garland. Thereafter, they paraded her with the garland on the streets of her village.



Gas-leak threat in West Delhi's Naraina forces school evacuation

Students on Monday were evacuated from a school after a foul smell was reported emanating from a gas godown in west Delhi's Naraina area, police said. Teams from NDRF, Delhi Police, and Delhi Fire Service rushed to the spot and started the evacuation, they said. "PCR calls were received regarding a foul smell in the area of C-block, Naraina. After getting calls, the concerned agencies have responded to the situation and taken required precautionary measures," said the Deputy Commissioner of Police (west), Vichitra Veer. "We are examining the matter. Appropriate legal action will be initiated based on the facts," the DCP said. The DFS said that it got a call at 12.18 pm from a person saying that some gas or chemical is leaking from drums kept in a godown. "Immediately a fire tender were responded with leading fireman."



Govt accepts IIPS director's resignation, revokes suspension

The Centre has accepted the resignation of International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) Director K S James and revoked his suspension for alleged irregularities during his tenure, the health ministry said. James was suspended on July 28 after the ministry launched a probe into the alleged irregularities in appointments and recruitment of faculty and compliance to reservation rosters during his tenure. The IIPS is an institute functioning under the ministry's administrative control. The statistics division of the ministry issued an order on October 11, stating that the "competent authority on subsequent review is of the opinion that in view of material changes in the circumstances, the suspension of professor K S James may not be extended further". "Now, therefore, the president... revokes the suspension of Prof. James, Director and Senior Professor, IIPS, Mumbai, with immediate effect," the order read.



NITHARI SERIAL KILLINGS

Allahabad HC acquits Pandher, Koli; bars to continue for Koli

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ/NEW DELHI

The Allahabad High Court on Monday acquitted domestic help Surendra Koli and his employer Moninder Singh Pandher in the 2006 Nithari serial killings for lack of evidence, recalling for many the chilling crime targeting young girls that came to light with skeletal remains being found behind a Noida bungalow. A two-judge bench of Justices Ashwani Kumar Mishra and SHA Rizvi allowed the appeals filed by Koli and Pandher, who were challenging the death sentence given by a CBI court in Ghaziabad. The high court said the prosecution failed to prove its case beyond reasonable doubt. "The Allahabad High Court order may pave the way for Pandher to walk out of jail," the businessman's lawyer Manisha Bhandari told PTI over the phone. However, Koli is likely to remain behind bars. He

still faces life imprisonment in one case. A CBI official in New Delhi said the team was waiting for the judgment copy and would take a call on next steps after studying it. Koli, who is in a Ghaziabad prison, was sentenced to death in 12 cases being heard by the Allahabad High Court. His former employer Pandher, lodged in a Noida jail, faced death sentence in two cases. Both were charged with rape and murder and sentenced to

death in the killings that horrified the nation with the details on sexual assault, brutal murder and hints of possible cannibalism. In all, 19 cases had been lodged against Pandher and Koli in 2007. The CBI had filed closure reports in three of the 19 cases due to lack of evidence. In the remaining 16 cases, Koli was earlier acquitted in three cases and his death sentence in one case was commuted to life.

Justice denied: Victim's parents

PNS ■ NOIDA

As the media watches, Ram Kishan hurls a brick into the abandoned bungalow of Moninder Singh Pandher, anger and frustration reflecting on his face. The labourer's three-year-old son was one of the victims of the 2006 serial killings. Emotions overflowed as nearly two-decade-old wounds were opened again on Monday with an order of the Allahabad High Court that acquitted domestic help Surendra Koli and his employer Pandher in the case for lack of evidence.

Norms of collecting evidence violated: HC

prayagraj: Expressing "disappointment" with the Nithari killings probe, the Allahabad High Court on Monday acquitted accused Moninder Singh Pandher and Surendra Koli noting that the investigation was "botched up" and "basic norms of collecting evidence" were "brazenly violated". The failure of the prosecution was nothing short of a "betrayal of public trust" by responsible agencies, the high court said. Pandher was acquitted in two cases in which he was facing the death penalty while Koli was let off in 12 cases in which he was awarded capital punishment. "Upon evaluation of the evidence, on the touchstone of fair trial guaranteed to an accused, we hold that prosecution has failed to prove the guilt of the accused."

Delhi seeks 'sister city' agreement with Brisbane

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi wishes to become a 'sister city' with Brisbane, Mayor Shelly Oberoi said on Monday, asserting that she has conveyed this to her counterpart in the Australian city. The mayor, who represented the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) at the recently held Asia Pacific Cities Summit and Mayor's Forum in Brisbane, told PTI that she was impressed by the city's "sanitation and cleanliness management and preservation of built heritage". The urban summit took place from October 11-13 and was attended by over 1,000 delegates, including more than 100 mayors and deputy mayors. "During the Summit, I interacted with the Lord Mayor of Brisbane (Adrian Schrinner), and mayors and deputy mayors from several other cities," Oberoi said.

'DMK will get a fitting reply for remark on Sanatana Dharma'

PNS ■ COIMBATORE

Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Textiles Piyush Goyal on Monday said that the people of Tamil Nadu would give a fitting reply in the Lok Sabha election next year to the DMK and its Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin for his remark on Sanatana Dharma. Accusing the ruling DMK of "furthering only the first family's interests" Goyal claimed that whenever the Dravidian party faced corruption charges, it tried to divide the people on religious lines. "The DMK is the most corrupt party in the country. It became doubly corrupt after M K Stalin became the chief minister... Law and order is going back to worse and there's no development in the state," the minister said, while launching the third phase of state BJP President K Annamalai's 'En Mann, En Makkal (My Land, My People)' state-wide padayatra at Avinashi in Tiruppur district, here. The padayatra, which commenced six months ago, aims to



take Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'achievements' to the doorsteps of the people and also highlight the "failures" of the DMK. Annamalai resumed his yatra today after halting the scheduled programme on October 6 citing ill health. People in the state were suffering for want of amenities, including medical facilities particularly in Avinashi, Goyal said, adding, "The Prime Minister will bring a 100-bed ESI hospital here soon. If you give a chance to the BJP to serve you, then Tamil Nadu will witness numerous large projects including drinking water schemes." He later reviewed the progress of the construction of the upcoming ESI Hospital in Avinashi. The hospital would offer state-of-the-art facilities and high quality medical services to the public, the minister said in a post on social media platform X. "PM @NarendraModi ji's visionary leadership is truly transforming healthcare across the nation," he said. At the padayatra, he claimed the DMK was not interested in the welfare of the people, including farmers of Tamil Nadu, but was keen on perpetuating one family's interest as it banked on one family -- father, son and grandson. But he claimed that the BJP is different as its leaders assumed positions "purely based on their merit." "You need a vision to develop Tamil Nadu and to make it the number one state in the country. Only Modi ji has that vision and so does Annamalai who has been touring the state for the last six months," Goyal said at the meeting in which Union Minister L Murugan and Coimbatore South MLA Vanathi Srinivasan too participated.

Cong will continue its appeasement if elected again in Chhattisgarh: Amit Shah

PNS ■ RAJNANDGAON

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday alleged the Congress will continue to indulge in "appeasement" politics for a vote bank if it returns to power in Chhattisgarh after the Assembly polls next month. Addressing a rally in Rajnandgaon city, Shah said the Congress government has built a "corruption chain" up to Delhi like a food chain (of restaurants). "If BJP comes to power in Chhattisgarh, we will recover

every penny from the corrupt and they will be hanged upside down," he added. He also said undivided Madhya Pradesh-Chhattisgarh had remained a "BIMARU" (laggard) state during the Congress rule, but in 15 years after Raman Singh came to power (in 2003), it became a developed state. Shah attacked the Bhupesh Baghel government over communal violence in Biranpur village of Bemetara district in April and asked people whether they wanted Chhattisgarh to become a centre of communal riots again.

Khattar makes offer of dialogue to Mann on SYL

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has reached out to his Punjab counterpart on the Sutlej-Yamuna Link issue, making an offer of a dialogue to resolve "any hurdle or obstacles" hindering the canal construction. Haryana's offer comes, notwithstanding Punjab government's stand that it will not share a single drop of additional water with any other state at any cost. In his letter dated October 14, Khattar cited a Supreme Court order to say that "a comprehensive order on October 4, explicitly stating that the execution is not related to the allocation of water." The Supreme Court had on October 4 asked the Centre to survey the portion of land in Punjab which was allocated for the construction of part of the SYL canal in the state and make an estimate of the extent of construction carried out there. All political parties in Punjab asserted that the state does not have a single drop of additional water to share with any other state, though political outfits in Haryana welcomed the apex court

'OTTs should not cross line separating good from bad'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Digital Media Content Regulatory Council chairperson Justice (ret'd) Mukul Mudgal has asked the member OTT platforms to remain "disciplined" and not cross the line that separates good content from "unnecessary profanity". Speaking to representatives of the member OTT (over-the-top) channels during an interactive session recently, Mudgal noted that it was "very encouraging" that member OTT platforms of the Digital Media Content Regulatory Council (DMCRC) have been abiding

by the various regulations and the code of ethics. "There is a need for everyone to remain disciplined and not cross the line that separates good content from unnecessary profanity," DMCRC quoted Justice Mudgal as saying in a statement. The DMCRC is a self-regulatory body, and Disney+Hotstar, Zee5, SonyLiv, Jio Cinema, Voot, Manorama Max, Sun Nxt, Discovery+, Yupp TV, Net Stream and Fancode are its member OTT platforms. "The Digital Media Content Regulatory Council held an



interactive session with its member OTT platforms on October 13, 2023 in New Delhi. The meeting was chaired by Justice Mukul Mudgal," the statement said. Among other issues, matters relating to depiction of alleged obscenity, vulgarity, profanity

and violence in the content of OTT platforms were discussed and mitigating measures were also suggested during the interactive session, it added. Addressing the session, the DMCRC chairperson said, "What you show has a deep impact on society since you reach millions of viewers. You have a great responsibility in a diverse democracy like India." "It is natural that the platforms have the freedom to show online curated content after thorough due diligence. This is what content self-regulation is all about," he added. Justice Mudgal, who had

earlier chaired the non-news television content regulator Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC), said the efforts made in self-regulation "must continue without any letup." "The platforms have a robust grievance redressal mechanism for their content," Justice Mudgal said. The meeting also discussed issues related to implementation of the Rights of Person with Disabilities Act, 2016 and the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, 2003 on OTT platforms, the statement said.

'Will pray to Maa Durga to end graft in Bengal'

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday inaugurated a Durga Puja in Kolkata and said he would pray to the goddess that "corruption and atrocities" end soon in West Bengal. Shah, while emphasising that he wouldn't delve into political matters, pledged to continue his fight in the state until a political transformation takes place. "I

am not here to discuss politics, but I will keep coming to Bengal and continue my fight until we witness a change in the state's (political) landscape," he said during the Durga Puja inauguration at the renowned Santosh Mitra Square in north Kolkata. "I would pray for an end to corruption, crime and atrocities in the state at the earliest," the home minister said.

SC to deliver verdict on legal validation for same-sex marriage today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled to deliver its much anticipated judgement on Tuesday on pleas seeking legal validation for same-sex marriage. A five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud had on May 11 reserved its verdict on the pleas after a marathon hearing of 10 days. The other members of the bench are Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, S Ravindra Bhat, Hima Kohli and P S Narasimha. The judgement will be delivered on Tuesday and accord-



ingly, the information will be updated on the apex court website, sources said. During the arguments, the Centre had told the apex court that any constitutional declaration made by it on pleas seeking legal validation for same-sex marriage may not be a "correct course of action" as the court will not be able to foresee, envisage, comprehend and deal with its fallout. The Centre had also told the court it had received responses from seven states on the issue of same-sex marriage and the governments of Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Assam had opposed the petitioners' contention seeking legal endorsement for such wedlock. The apex court had commenced hearing arguments in the matter on April 18.

Planning to make AAP accused in Delhi excise policy cases: CBI, ED tell SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In more trouble for the city's ruling AAP, the CBI and the ED told the Supreme Court on Monday they are contemplating making the party an accused in the corruption and money laundering cases linked to the scrapped Delhi excise policy. Additional Solicitor General (ASG) S V Raju, representing the two probe agencies, told a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and SVN Bhatti he has instructions to state that the agencies are considering making AAP an accused, invoking legal provisions on "vicarious liability" under the anti-corruption law and section 70 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). "I want to make a statement I have received instructions to make. We are contemplating making the Aam Aadmi Party an accused and invoking offences of vicarious liability under the Prevention of Corruption Act and section 70 of the PMLA," Raju told the court. However, the bench asked Raju to clarify his stand on Tuesday on whether there will be separate charges against the AAP in the cases being probed

by the CBI and the ED. Raju said charges in corruption and money laundering cases will be different but for the same offence. "Be careful and take specific instructions and tell us tomorrow on whether there will be same charge or different charge with respect to these cases," Justice Khanna told Raju. The ASG made the statement while the bench was hearing the bail pleas of AAP leader and former Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia, who was arrested in the excise policy cases being probed by the CBI and ED. Senior AAP leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh has also been arrested in connection with the excise policy cases and is currently in jail. The bench also asked senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Sisodia, to answer legal questions on Tuesday on the CBI's allegation that change in excise policy led to a loss to the state exchequer. "We want you to answer on the allegation of the CBI that the changes in policy was done for unjust enrichment of A, B and C at state exchequer's expense and consumers were made to pay higher price," the bench told Singhvi.

1<sup>st</sup> State Edn Achievement Survey to be held on Nov 3

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The first State Education Achievement Survey will be conducted on November 3 by the national assessment regulator PARAKH and will cover 11 million students across the country, according to officials. The survey aimed at identifying areas requiring improvement in learning will be held across states, targeting school students up to the block level. It will be a precursor to the Education Ministry's annual National Achievement Survey (NAS), which is conducted at the district level. Officials familiar with the development told PTI that it will be the first survey conducted by the Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH), an organisation under the NCERT. It is tasked with bringing the school boards across the states and the Union territories on a common platform. Scheduled for November 3, SEAS (State Education Achievement Survey) 2023 has been designed to enhance the learning standards for students in Classes 3, 6 and 9. Operating

at the block level, this survey encompasses a comprehensive range of competencies, spanning the foundational, preparatory, and middle stages of education. According to the officials, SEAS will represent a distinctive and baseline assessment, marking a gradual shift from rote learning to competency-based education.



The adoption of competency-based learning holds the potential to foster the holistic development of students, they said, adding that these efforts are dedicated to nurturing the well-rounded growth of future generations. This survey will prove invaluable in realising this aspiration, the officials said. "At the heart of this endeavour is the belief that every child deserves a well-rounded education. Our competency-based assessment system aims to assess not just what students know but also how well they can apply that knowledge in real-world scenarios,"

head and CEO of PARAKH Indrani Bhaduri said. Bhaduri also heads the NAS cell at the NCERT which conducts the crucial national level large-scale assessment to obtain information about the learning achievement of students of Classes 3, 5, 8 and 10 studying in state government schools, government-aided schools, private unaided and central government schools. The ETS, which conducts key tests such as TOEFL and GRE, was chosen by the National Council for Education Research (NCERT) for setting up the regulatory platform.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Underdogs no more!

Buzkashi-playing Afghanistan has braved high odds to make a mark on world cricket, and how!

Ignoring long years of wars, conflicts and turmoil, Afghanistan's cricket team threw up the biggest upset in the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023, vanquishing defending champions England by a convincing margin of 69 runs. This victory marked only their second win in World Cup history. But it changes everything: Afghanistan's battle-hardened cricket team is now firmly established among the sport's elite. Of course, some credit is due to India, which has helped the Afghan team reach this position of strength. The journey of Afghan cricketers was shaped by their early training in Pakistan, with some even starting their crickering careers in refugee camps across the border. As they played in dusty and makeshift grounds, they harboured dreams of representing their country on the international stage. The team from this war-torn country made its T20 and ODI debuts against Pakistan. However, the turning point came when the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) stepped in to play a pivotal role in the swift ascension of the sport within the strife-ridden nation. In 2015, the Shaheed Vijay Singh Pathik Sports Complex in Greater Noida served as a temporary "home ground" for the Afghans. In the world of cricket, few stories are as captivating and inspirational as the meteoric rise of the Afghan team. Over the past two decades, its journey has been a testament to the indomitable spirit of the Afghans and their unrelenting pursuit of excellence. From its humble beginnings to becoming a formidable force, Afghanistan has not only earned the confidence and respect of major cricketing nations but also made a mark in history.

Its remarkable progress in cricket came through their participation in domestic and international tournaments, such as the World Cricket League. Under the guidance of coaches and mentors, Afghan players honed their skills and developed a unique brand of cricket. Their bowlers, known for their pace and spin prowess, have become a force to reckon with, while their batters have shown glimpses of brilliance. One of the defining moments for Afghanistan was gaining Full Member status from the International Cricket Council (ICC) in 2017. It meant they were granted the same status as giants like India, England and Australia. The emergence of the Afghanistan cricket team is a story of resilience and dedication. It has captured the hearts of cricket enthusiasts and earned the confidence and respect of their peers. The fear factor now associated with Afghanistan's spinners and batters is a testament to their remarkable journey. As Afghanistan continues to take impressive strides in international cricket, it is crucial to celebrate its success as a reminder of the power of sports to bring people together, regardless of their background or circumstances. Afghanistan's cricketering journey is a story of hope and inspiration, one that demonstrates how determination can lead to triumph in the most challenging circumstances. To rephrase Shah Rukh Khan's famous dialogue from a Hindi movie: "Don't underestimate the grit of a war-torn nation!"

### PICTALK



Artists perform during the annual presentation 'Shri Ram', a dance drama on Sampurna Ramayana, in New Delhi PTI

## Is it worth going to study in a foreign university?

Most students fall for the smart marketing tactics and the lure of getting good employment overseas, realising little that the jobs are scarce there

For the past few years, the craze for people from India to go abroad to gain admission to foreign colleges and settle there has been on the increase. According to the government, between 2016 and 2021, 26.44 lakh Indian students went abroad to study. The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) estimates show that in the year 2020, 4.5 lakh Indian students went abroad for education and they spent \$ 13.5 billion in this process. In the year 2022, this expenditure was 24 billion dollars that is, about 2 lakh crore rupees. According to the report of Redseer Strategy Consultant, by 2024 this expenditure may reach US\$ 80 billion, that is, 7 lakh crore rupees, when an estimated 20 lakh Indian students will go abroad to study. If we make a state-wise analysis, till the year 2021, among the students going to study abroad, 12 per cent were from Punjab and Andhra Pradesh each; and 8 per cent were from Gujarat. If seen in proportion to the total number of youth, then 7 out of



every thousand youth from Punjab, 4 out of every thousand youth from Andhra Pradesh and at least 2 out of every thousand youth from Gujarat are going to study abroad every year. If we take the cumulative numbers from 2016 to 2022, the situation looks quite alarming. This number is 50 per thousand in Punjab, 30 per thousand in Andhra Pradesh and 14 per thousand in Gujarat. The exponential increase in the number of students going abroad to study is a matter of concern for many reasons. The biggest concern is that these youth are migrating to foreign countries in search of education and employment and this migration is causing a shortage of labour for the economic activities in the country. There has been huge progress in the field of education in the country. If we

look at the admission of students in higher education, then in 1990-91, only 49.2 lakh students took admission in higher educational institutions; but this number reached 41.4 lakh in the year 2020-21. Broadly speaking, the number of students taking admission to higher education has increased more than 10 times in the last 30 years. If we talk about higher education institutions, we see that in the year 2021, there were 1113 universities and equivalent institutions, 43796 colleges and 11296 standalone educational institutions in the country. As far as the fee for admission into educational institutions is concerned, in most of the Indian educational institutions it's much lower than the fees in foreign institutions and most of the foreign institutions in which Indian youth are taking admission are of very low standard. So, the question arises why do Indian youth spend huge amounts of money and get admission to foreign educational institutions? The simple answer is that most of the students who go abroad to pursue higher education, actually don't go to

get a higher degree. The real intent of Indian students going to other countries including Australia, Canada, and European countries including the United Kingdom, is not too keen to get an education. Their real objective is to get employment there. But Indian youth fail to realise that there is a huge shortage of employment in these countries also. In many countries, incidents of violence by local people, against Indians and youth coming from other countries, generally from South Asia, are also being witnessed. Most of the young students leaving the country fail to get employment there and have to return home, due to which they are also facing frustration. The students are not able to realise that today in Canada, Australia and European countries, where they are taking admission to educational institutions, those educational institutions are giving easy admission to Indian students in their institutions, for profit. (The writer is a professor, at PGDAV college, University of Delhi, views are personal)



ASHWANI MAHAJAN

# The Israel-Hamas war in perspective



PRAFULL GORADIA

Religiosity woven into war has the automatic effect of rendering the ensuing bloodshed all the more bitter. The results are devastating

The world is used to the spectacle of scholars, academics and social and political activists propagating and conferring for global peace, but it is increasingly difficult to dismiss the notion that peace is little more than an uneasy halt between wars. While civilians somehow cling to some unreal hope, those in charge of the political destinies talk of peace, but actually build and sharpen the weaponry for the next bout.

In the land of origin of the three Abrahamic faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, peace is currently the biggest casualty. Virtually everyone is concerned about the Israel-Hamas war. One, however, does almost immediately ponder as to how Tel Aviv was caught by utter surprise. Needless to add, the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad has been reputed to be one of the most efficient in the world, possibly the best spy agency.

On balance, it appears that Hamas was conscious that there are groups within Israel that desire the Jewish homeland and country to further expand into a Greater Israel, as large and great as possible. Undoubtedly, the Hamas leaders themselves yearn to wipe the Jewish nation out of existence. Curiously, like in love, so in hate; such desires are mutual. With the help of friends and allies, it is likely that Hamas has been, for a long time planning to strike a 'grand slam' at their Jewish neighbour.

Just as the Israeli leaders would like to get rid of Hamas from the country's neighbourhood. All of this lays the grounds for a conflict before the end of which the other side would supposedly be wiped out. A wounded enemy is more dangerous than one who hasn't been wounded. A grand slam, so to say, might have been thought to be necessary. The question is whether Israel too sees the Hamas invasion and barbarity as a great opportunity for "setting things right" in the Middle East.

An organized state in Tel Aviv would certainly be functioning round the clock and would not give its adversaries any chance to destroy it. As luck would have it,



Hamas perceived that its Jewish neighbour was divided over the political divide over the issue of judicial powers enjoyed by the country's Supreme Court. They needed to be reduced or restrained so that the democratically elected Knesset or Parliament could assert its will more effectively.

While the members of the Knesset could not readily reach a settlement, the people of the country took over and protested through public meetings and processions. Such scenes had not been seen ever before and were being played out again and again, on the streets of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. When the adversary is divided, it is human nature for the other side to smell an opportunity. As we have discussed, the desire of Hamas has been intense. The images of an Israel divided in the streets of its cities would certainly have held out the temptation, to believe that this was the opportunity. A terrorist organization like Hamas is unlikely to be foresighted. In fact, terrorism per se can seldom win. For the simple reason that its adventures, however violent and apparently successful, do not



HAMAS HAS GIFTED ISRAEL WITH A JUSTIFICATION TO BLAME ANY COUNTRY OR ORGANISATION IT CHOOSES AS A PARTNER-IN-CRIME THAT EXPRESSES EVEN MINIMAL SYMPATHY FOR HAMAS

capture territory. And without territory, there is no lasting victory. And yet, terrorist after terrorist gives up his life, merely to temporarily devastate places and people. Evidently, such men or women cannot be far-sighted. To expect the Hamas to be, therefore, to have vision is to expect a bat to have eyesight. Regardless, the attacks launched by Hamas on October 7 Bloody Saturday were thoughtless, to say the least. The consequences from Sunday onwards were foreseeable and yet, were not seen by the terrorist fighters of Hamas. It is not impossible that their escape route may, in an eventuality, be the Mediterranean Sea.

On the other hand, Hamas has gifted Israel with a justification to blame any country or organisation it chooses as a partner-in-crime that expresses even minimal sympathy for Hamas. Israel would also, and not without reason, feel justified to heap destruction on not any the Hamas but also the palaces of Qatar (which reportedly funds Hamas to some extent) and Iran's nuclear toys, as well as bomb places in Syria, most of which are in ruins anyway because of the latter's civil war. Fortunately for

Israel, ammunition has begun flying in from the USA; if necessary, even weapons would flow in. When Israel's Prime Minister says that his country will change the Middle East, he isn't bluffing.

Unfortunately, Israel—and India too—has been battling enemies who look upon war as a religious duty. Religiosity woven into war has the automatic effect of rendering the ensuing bloodshed all the more bitter. Such religious beliefs hold the promise of an eternal heaven with unending gratification of one's natural lust, in the pursuit of which the adherents of those dogmas have little hesitation in unleashing hell on earth.

For India, tightening our security, internal and external, in the wake of the war in Gaza will be imperative, for Hamas' initial boldness could well embolden elements in Pakistan to try something similar. This time, the Arab states have not supported Hamas, as several of them are seeking better relations with Israel and a different future.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author, and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### INDIA'S DEPLORABLE HUNGER INDEX

Sir—It's shocking news that the Global Hunger Index for 2023 ranks India 111th out of 125 countries, categorizing the level of hunger as "serious." While the Union government has rejected this index as erroneous, it can't be completely dismissed, considering that India ranked 102nd out of 119 countries in 2022. Despite maintaining buffer stocks, people dying of starvation is a disgrace, especially for the world's fifth-largest economy, ranking lower than nations like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sub-Saharan African countries. Hoarding food grains while thousands starve is extreme callousness. Hollow government slogans claiming that nobody will die of starvation are contradicted. Furthermore, this alarming ranking on the Global Hunger Index points to a harsh reality: millions of our fellow citizens are struggling to access their daily bread, with their basic human rights being compromised. The fact that India, often celebrated for its rapid economic growth and technological advancements, ranks below countries in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa in terms of hunger is a stark contradiction. It highlights the persistent disparities that exist within the nation and the urgent need for comprehensive policy reform. The government's rejection of this index as erroneous should not serve as a shield to deflect from the pressing issues at hand. It's imperative for the authorities to take this wake-up call seriously and delve into the root causes of this hunger crisis. They must work towards a more equitable distribution of resources, food security, and social safety nets to protect the most vulnerable among us.

SK Khosla | Chandigarh

### INDIA TO HOST 2036 OLYMPIC GAMES

Sir—Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 141st session of the World Olympic Committee in Mumbai, announcing India's readiness to host the 2036 Olympic Games. If the World

### India beats Pakistan, again



An 8-0 verdict against Pakistan in World Cup matches has proven that the team from our neighborhood is not up to the challenge at this level. Even the Pakistan hockey team went

down tamely without a semblance of a fight in the Asian Games. The toss proved vital in the ODI games, and after losing it, the team was progressing at a slow pace. As the team across the border failed to accelerate the scoring, danger lurked. Once Babar, the star batsman, was out, the wickets started tumbling, and the end was in sight. Instead of boosting their scoring with pinch hitters to upset Indian spin bowling, the lower-order batsmen fell into the trap and perished. The Indian batting did not retreat against Afridi but instead wielded the willow with great effect, hitting fours and sixes, bringing the target within reach. Captain Rohit Sharma's batting and his ability to handle both bowlers and field placements received appreciation. In the end, Pakistan was soundly defeated. However, Pakistan has had a great tradition of cricket and this is not the end of it as they can and will bounce back to the height they once were.

Ck Ramani | Trichy

Olympic Organization accepts this demand, it will be a significant honor for India. India is rapidly emerging as a global superpower, rising from the tenth to the fifth largest economy in a few years. It is expected to be ranked third soon. Hosting the Olympics will introduce India's tourism to the world and be a source of pride for athletes. India's successful organization of the Asian Games and the inclusion of cricket in the World Olympic Games are positive developments. However, India's permanent membership in the UN Security Committee is still pending, which is crucial for maintaining world peace. The Olympics in India will be a momentous occasion with numerous benefits.

Shantaram Wagh | Pune

### GAZA'S WORSENING CONDITION

Sir—Gaza and the West Bank are becoming a new battleground as we saw in Bucha, Kyiv, and Donetsk region of

Ukraine at the start of 2023 when Russia invaded Ukraine. The condition of Gaza is dire after the Israeli Air Force occupation. The Iron Sword operation by Israel's defense ministry and the suffering of Palestinians paint a grim picture.

The world is marred by struggles for superiority and ethnic and religious tensions. Gaza has seen no peace for years, only shelling, tears, plight, fear, and anger. Wars persist without solutions, causing destruction and suffering. We must shift our mindset from war to peace, as India opposes the erasure of the Palestinian community. The world needs de-escalation, not war. We must focus on peace in conflict zones, or the world will continue fighting for unnecessary supremacy.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



## FIRST COLUMN MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS YOUR ATTENTION

Forbearance and endurance are paramount keys to achieving success



RAVI VALLURI

Anand was a mere mentee at a celebrated flautist's music school. The youngster was bewitched by a damsel who too was learning to play the flute under the expertise of the legendary musician.

Anand and Bhairavi were ensnared by craving; they were in a tearing hurry to achieve stardom through soulful renditions of the fabled Ananda Bhairavi raga. Their respected Master was however certainly not impressed at the proffer of his novitiates and admonished them.

"One needs enormous tapas to arrive at the world stage," he added.

**A Zen Story:** Years ago, a greenhorn was learning various nuances of breathing techniques and meditation at a temple of knowledge. After acquiring some basic skills, he approached his monk as to how soon he could graduate from the monastery and begin to spread the knowledge of Zen Buddhism. The impassioned monk was to say impassively, "It will take you ten more years."

"Master, I will practice twice the number of hours, then how long will it take me to become a suzerain of Buddhism?"

"Thirty years," was the bland reply.

**Learning to Learn:** Forbearance and endurance are paramount keys to achieving success. Tearing hurry and sheer desperation to climb the ladder to achieve fame in any field leads only to severe psychological problems.



**Psychotherapy:** The intent of a therapeutic approach is to upend the pyramid. It is to ensure the betterment of the victim's life. The therapy reinforces the client's resolve for mitigating distress leading to an improved lifestyle. By adopting a holistic line of treatment, the mind is blessed with positivity, becomes robust and develops the ability to eschew unwelcome habits.

There is astonishing progress in the victim who undergoes a mental transformation; the thinking pattern changes dramatically and becomes empowered to make mindful decisions on the voyage of rehabilitation. Gifted and trained psychotherapists combine their clinical insights and their mental GPS to zero in on suitable psychodynamic therapies.

**Dynamics of Rehabilitation and Recuperation:** Fundamentally, psychodynamic therapy cogitates that it is an intra-psychic conflict that is primarily responsible for the psychological malady. The fountainhead of the problem lies within the psyche of the individual. Research in the field opines that querulous desires of childhood and unmitigated childhood fears are essentially responsible for intra-psychic disorders. Keeping in mind the above two factors, psychotherapists deploy the technique of free association and eliciting information through visualisation, dreams, thoughts, and feelings to create a database. The cutting edge of the therapy is provided as the therapist glides and floats from the intellectual frame to an emotional plane. Psychodynamic therapy enfranchised the therapist to understand the mind of the patient and provide emotional succour.

Last but not least, the duration of treatment is of tremendous significance. The magnitude of the problem is obviously a key determinant of the span of treatment. However, around 15 to 20 vigorous sessions put the patient well on the road to renaissance.

### Alternative therapies

Unbridled ambition could also trigger alcoholism, bulimia, heavy smoking, and substance abuse among others. In such cases, alternative therapies such as practising the unique rhythmic breathing technique of Sudarshan Kriya, Vipassana, sessions of yoga and pranayama, and meditation techniques of Yoga Nidra, help in the relaxation of the mind and body immensely.

*(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd and is a faculty at the Art of Living. Views are personal)*

# Igniting the passion of traditional entrepreneurs



DINESH SOOD

'PM Vishwakarma' is an attempt to empower the self-employed traditional entrepreneurs who contribute to their communities and create employment



Many people strive to secure their dream job and are unwilling to risk becoming an entrepreneur. However, it is notable that professions such as blacksmiths, goldsmiths, potters, carpenters, sculptors, barbers, cobblers, and others are a significant part of India's workforce. These traditional tiny entrepreneurs work with their hands and tools and are usually self-employed individuals whose skills are passed down from generation to generation. This proves that entrepreneurs are born, not made. The culture in which these individuals are raised plays a significant role in shaping their entrepreneurial mindset. They witness the ups and downs of entrepreneurship and choose to live their lives similarly. Recently Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched the 'PM Vishwakarma' scheme worth Rs 13,000 crore to promote such traditional tiny entrepreneurs to create more employers than employees. The aim is to integrate traditional tiny entrepreneurs into the domestic and global value chains by providing skill upgradation and modernisation. This will help to enhance their already existing traditional skill sets and make them more relevant, thereby improving their socio-economic status and quality of life.

Successful entrepreneurs are not limited to those who inherit family businesses. An individual's mindset towards entrepreneurship is crucial and develops with age and experience. As people mature, they become aware of the advantages of entrepreneurship and often choose it as a career path. However, how can we motivate those who do not come from entrepreneurial backgrounds to become future employers and contribute to our sustainable econo-



SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURS ARE NOT LIMITED TO THOSE WHO INHERIT FAMILY BUSINESSES. AN INDIVIDUAL'S MINDSET TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP IS CRUCIAL AND DEVELOPS WITH AGE AND EXPERIENCE

*(The writer is a Co-Founder and MD of Orane International and a network member of India International Skill Centres. Views are personal)*

my? It is our responsibility to take the necessary steps to make this happen. Can't we start at least with these initial steps?

Home; the parents should start from the early school days of their young ones, read to them the stories of successful entrepreneurs, ones their young buds could relate to and get them acquainted with their day-to-day life attributes and the attributes and benefits they pass on to the society. Well, it is better to tell your bud to aim at making a hospital or hotel than just being a doctor or a chef, in the process, the young mind will keep his trajectory not confined to just being a doctor or a chef but keep his horizons much open and farther even after turning a successful super specialist doctor or a celebrity chef.

Schools; To fuel the entrepreneurship spirit among job seekers, multi-faceted efforts are needed to accelerate the creation of more job providers in the bustling industrial, services and tertiary sectors. Unfortunately, our education system did not focus on the development of essential entrepreneurial skills in school students, while entrepreneurial skill is the main pillar of job providers, intend to march forward.

Thus, to support the entrepreneurial spirit must give a nod to the Business Blaster Young Entrepreneur Programme in schools to encourage school children from class 11 to become entrepreneurs. Successful entrepre-

neurs and unicorns who bring with them years of entrepreneurial experience can play a vital role as mentors and can contribute the angel funding to build entrepreneurial orientation and mindset among the youths, especially school dropouts can be skilled and would equip their budding entrepreneurship to take charge as a job provider.

Colleges; there should be a structured curriculum with frequent seminars and workshops on entrepreneurship, emphasizing hands-on experience rather than just classroom learning. Encouraging idea sponsorships and mentorship from entrepreneurs would be beneficial. Additionally, students should be encouraged to visit actual facilities to better understand the entrepreneurial culture.

Business schools; should place equal emphasis on teaching entrepreneurship as they do on teaching business. Mock drills should be implemented, where students spend an equal amount of time shadowing an entrepreneur as they do during internships with organizations. Evaluations should hold equal weight in determining the student's level of business acumen and entrepreneurial spirit.

Skill Development Centres; we have some of the brightest minds who are driving change in skill development. These leaders should focus on imparting entrepreneurship skills with the same energy and dedication as employability skills. Entrepreneurship

Development Institutes; how many successful entrepreneurs have we connected with to mentor our future entrepreneurs? We don't need teachers to teach how to be an entrepreneur; if they knew, they would already be one. We need proven entrepreneurs to guide and support our future entrepreneurs and set them on the path to success. Providing resources is only part of the equation, providing expert guidance is equally important.

Lastly; successful entrepreneurs must step forward and make time in their busy schedules to mentor future entrepreneurs regularly. This can be done for a specific period until the mentee establishes their trajectory, after which the mentor can move on to the next aspiring entrepreneur. This would be a more effective and impactful form of corporate social responsibility.

Entrepreneurship is driven by aspirations that exceed available resources. Entrepreneurs do not start businesses because everything falls into place perfectly. Even the self-employed, or "Vishwakarma" in traditional terms, continue to hone their skills for personal fulfilment and to contribute to their communities. Society as a whole should come together to support these individuals and in doing so, benefit itself. The goal should be to create more employers than employees, and it is hoped that "PM Vishwakarma" will help make this a reality.

# Developing argumentative skills with Moot Courts

In a bid to improve the argumentative skills of budding lawyers, law colleges and schools across India are choosing 'Moot Court' competitions

The syllabus of the law universities features 'Moot Court' as a compulsory topic, the marks scored in it playing a crucial role in determining the grade with which the students pass out of the LLB degree examination. Persons outside the legal fraternity or law colleges may stare back when they are asked about Moot Court. "Though Moot Courts are as important and interesting as Mathematics Olympiad, they are yet to get the public recognition. For those interested in legal affairs, this is an event equal in status to the Mathematics Olympiad," said Prof V R Jayadevan, principal, of Government Law College, Thrissur, who successfully conducted an all-India Moot Court event in his college in



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

*(The writer is a special correspondent at The Pioneer; views expressed are personal)*

the last week of September. Though planned as a low-profile event the Thrissur Moot Court Competition drew 36 teams from all over India. The winners walked away with the Justice T Ramachandran Memorial Trophy. The event saw intense competition as participating undergraduates switched over from one section of the law to another section with elan and poise. If you ask a person without a legal background what moot court is about, chances are that you will get a grumpy look. No one can blame him/her because persons without knowledge of legal education are not at all familiar with the term. Moot Courts are simulated lessons held in law schools to make budding lawyers ready to face

real-life battles in courtrooms. It is an intellectual bout conceived to test the prowess of law students in their academic pursuits. The organisers take out subjects of national and international events, put them as a legal issue and ask the students to argue for and against the topic. Classrooms in law schools are converted into real-life courtrooms with all resplendent ambience. These bouts turn out future Jethmalanis, Servais, Narimans and Sorabjees! Those familiar with the nuances of law and legal codes are sure to take a liking to the event. "I always feel that Moot Courts resemble Kathakali, a pantomime of Kerala, which could be enjoyed only by the connoisseurs of art. For those

who are uninitiated about Kathakali, watching it is a futile exercise. There is a saying in Malayalam that watching the art form without knowing the story is a waste of time," said Parvathi Sreejith Valliathan, Assistant Professor, SRM Law School, Chennai. The Thrissur event was the 12th edition of the annual Moot Court competition held by the College. "This year we selected a topic right out of a real-life event. Dharmanchal, a State in the Union of India, enacted Dharmanchal Infrastructure Investment Fund Act 2001. The preamble of the Act states that it was expedient to constitute a fund for investment in infrastructure projects in the State. The Act was similar to the provisions of the

Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Act 1999," explained Prof Sonia K Das, the livewire of the event. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India took strong objections to the way the KIIFB was functioning and the availing of loans beyond the repaying capacity of the State. The Articles concerning the federal structure and the freedom of the States were used as weapons by the participants in simulated courtrooms which were presided over by judges who needed the counsels appearing for the petitioners and respondents with questions that went deep into the subject. The expressions on the faces of the audience spoke a lot. They too were taken to the hitherto undebated issues in the Indian

Constitution. "Our intention is to tone up the skills of advocacy," said Prof Jayadevan. The competition witnessed high-pitch arguments and counter-arguments. "Besides arguments, Moot Courts are the path for law students to have practical knowledge in drafting, pleading and conveyancing. The Moot Courts will intellectually stimulate students to develop skills that will be of great importance in future. The participants (addressed as Mooters) should possess sharp analytical skills to dissect complex legal issues, identify key arguments and develop logical frameworks," said Parvathi Kumar, who has more than a dozen Moot Court events to her credit. Moot Court also have a

number of participants performing various tasks like researching and drafting which are put to the Court for approval/consideration. The participants are hopeful that one day they will be able to compete in the Philip C Jessup International Law Moot Court hosted in Washington DC. Considering the fact that there is no empowered body to ask the global community of nations to follow the diktat of the International Court of Justice, it is for the Gen Next to come up with ideas and solutions that make the States obey the orders issued by it. The progress made in science and technology has brought together warring nations of Europe is a hopeful signature. Let the Moot Courts flourish in India.

MONEY MATTERS

### Federal Bank reports best-ever net profit as provisions decline sharply

Private sector lender Federal Bank on Monday reported a 36 per cent jump in its September quarter net profit at Rs 994 crore on a consolidated basis, as provisions declined sharply. On a standalone basis, the South-based lender reported a 36 per cent jump in its profit after tax at Rs 954 crore. Its core net interest income grew 17 per cent to Rs 2,056 crore for the quarter on the back of a 20 per cent growth in advances and a slight expansion in the net interest margin to 3.16 per cent. The other income came in at Rs 730 crore in the quarter under review, as against Rs 610 crore in the year-ago period, but was down when compared with the quarter ago period's Rs 732 crore. Its overall provisions decreased to Rs 43.9 crore on a standalone basis, compared to Rs 267.86 crore in the year-ago period, majorly on a heavy reduction in the money set aside for potential loan losses, which came down to Rs 61 crore, from Rs 205 crore.



### Mines ministry collects Rs 13.08L from disposal of scrap

The mines ministry on Monday said it has collected Rs 13.08 lakh through disposal of scrap as part of a special drive to weed out physical files. The exercise for eliminating physical files has resulted in freeing up of about 29,050 square feet office space. "Disposal of scrap has resulted in revenue of Rs 13,08,406 collected so far," the mines ministry said in a statement. Under its Special Campaign 3.0, the ministry has set targets for disposal of pending matters, including easing of rules/processes, records management, public grievances and elevating workplace experience in the offices under its control. "Special endeavour made for disposal of pending references have fetched 100 per cent achievement in redressing public grievances...and references received from state government. Besides, Ministry of Mines is close to attain 100 per cent achievement in PMO references too," the ministry said.



### Semen Station emerges top in quality parameters

NDDB Dairy Services-owned Rahuri Semen Station in Maharashtra has got highest mark among 55 such facilities across India in an audit report submitted by the government-constituted Central Monitoring Unit. National Dairy Development Board's (NDDB) arm NDS said in a statement that Rahuri Semen Station has emerged first on parameters ranging from quality, animal genetics to health and safety protocols. NDS is NDDB Dairy Services. Earlier this month, NDS said that the CMU has submitted a technical audit report of 55 semen stations across the country for 2022-23 to the Union government's Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development. In the audit report, Rahuri station was given a mark of 97 followed by 95 for Animal Breeding Centre Salon, a NDS station, in Uttar Pradesh. The CMU report accorded a total of nine semen stations a score of 90 and above under Grade A.



### Bank of Maharashtra shares climb over 1 pc after Q2 performance



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) on Monday climbed over 1 per cent after the company posted a 72 per cent jump in net profit for the September quarter. The stock advanced 1.26 per cent to settle at Rs 47.42 apiece on the BSE. During the day, it climbed 2.49 per cent to Rs 48. On the NSE, it gained 1.38 per cent to end at Rs 47.45 per piece. In volume terms, 48.35 lakh shares of the company were traded on the BSE and over 4.94 crore shares on the NSE during the day. Bank of Maharashtra on Monday posted a 72 per cent jump in net profit at Rs 920 crore for the September quarter, aided by a decline in bad loans and a rise in interest

income. The lender had reported a standalone profit of Rs 535 crore in the year-ago period. Total income increased to Rs 5,796 crore during the quarter under review, against Rs 4,317 crore in the same period last year, BoM said in a regulatory filing. The bank earned interest income of Rs 5,068 crore during the quarter, compared to Rs 3,815 crore in the same period a year ago. The bank was able to reduce gross Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) to 2.19 per cent of the gross loans by the end of September 2023, from 3.40 per cent a year ago. Likewise, net NPAs or bad loans came down to 0.23 per cent, from 0.68 per cent at the end of the second quarter of the previous fiscal.

## India expected to grow at 6.3% in FY24: Ficci survey

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's economic growth is expected at 6.3 per cent during 2023-24 on the back of good health of the financial sector and uptick in private investment even as downside risks remain, said a survey by industry body Ficci unveiled on Monday. The latest round of Ficci's Economic Outlook Survey pegs annual median gross domestic product (GDP) growth for 2023-24 at 6.3 per cent - with a minimum and maximum growth estimate of 6 per cent and 6.6 per cent, respectively, the chamber stated. The median growth forecast for agriculture and allied activities has been put at 2.7 per cent for 2023-24. This marks a moderation vis-a-vis growth of about 4 per cent reported in 2022-23. The El Nino effect has had an impact on the spatial distribution of rainfall this monsoon. Industry and services sector, on the other hand, are



anticipated to grow 5.6 per cent and 7.3 per cent, respectively in current fiscal year, the survey shows. Ficci said the survey was conducted in September 2023 and drew responses from leading economists representing industry, banking and financial services sector. "Persisting headwinds on account of geopolitical stress, slowing growth in China, lagged impact of monetary tightening and below normal monsoons pose downside risks to growth," it said. According to survey results, median GDP growth is esti-

mated to slow down to 6.1 per cent and 6 per cent in Q2 2023-24 and Q3 2023-24, respectively after posting a four-quarter high growth of 7.8 per cent in Q1 2023-24. Further, the chamber said the median forecast for CPI based inflation has been put at 5.5 per cent for 2023-24, with a minimum and maximum range of 5.3 per cent and 5.7 per cent, respectively. The survey participants opined that the course of inflation remains uncertain. "There was an unanimous view among the participants

that global growth is poised to slow in the current year vis-a-vis 2022, and this trend is expected to continue in the year 2024 as well," Ficci said, and added significant downside risks continue to remain on fore that could hamper the momentum in recovery. Back home, the survey said though India's economic performance has remained relatively steady amid recent challenges, the country has not been unscathed from the external shocks. Weak external demand is already reflecting in India's merchandise exports performance and is expected to be a drag on domestic growth, it added. "Nonetheless, growth in India is expected to hold ground on the back of good health of the financial sector, robust urban demand, uptick in private investment as a result of government's front-loading of capex, pick up in real estate/construction sector and the forthcoming festive season," the survey said.

### Experts see WPI inflation rising in 2nd half this fiscal

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) in India is likely to rise in the second half of the ongoing fiscal and a prolonged deflationary trend could impact growth, experts said on Monday. Wholesale inflation remained in the negative territory for the sixth straight month in September at (-) 0.26 per cent on easing prices of food items, especially vegetables. Deflation in WPI in September is primarily due to the fall in prices of chemicals and chemical products, mineral oils, textiles, basic metals, and food products as compared to the year-ago period, the commerce and industry ministry said on Monday. "In September, the WPI exhibited its sixth consecutive month of contraction, with a decline of 0.3 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y), lower than the previous month's contraction of 0.5



per cent," CareEdge Chief Economist Rajani Sinha said. "The continued contraction in WPI can be attributed to the deceleration in food prices, as well as the ongoing decline in fuel and manufactured product prices," Sinha said. She suggested that while the fading impact of a high base may lead to a "slight increase" in WPI in the second half of the fiscal year, the overall WPI inflation is expected to remain low. Elevated global crude oil prices and potential risks to kharif harvest due to uneven rainfall also pose upside risks to WPI inflation, Sinha said.

### Petrol, diesel sales fall ahead of start of festive season

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Petrol and diesel sales fell in the first half of October ahead of the start of festive season that is expected to boost consumption, preliminary data of state-owned firms showed. Last year, Durga Puja/Dussehra as well as Diwali fell in October. This year the festive season, when consumption picks up, starts in the second half of October. Petrol sales by three state-owned fuel retailers fell 9 per cent year-on-year, the first drop in two months. Diesel consumption dropped 3.2 per cent. The decline was largely because of the larger base of last year. Petrol sales dropped to 1.17 million tonnes during the first half of October from 1.29 million tonnes a year back. Sales dropped 9 per cent month-on-month as well. Consumption of diesel, the most consumed fuel in the country -- accounting for about two-fifths of the demand, dropped to 2.99 million tonnes during October 1 to 15 from 3.09 million tonnes a year back. Month-on-month sales were, however, up 9.6 per cent when compared with 2.73 million tonnes in the first



half of September. Diesel sales typically fall in monsoon months as rains lower demand in the agriculture sector which uses the fuel for irrigation, harvesting and transportation. Also, rains slow vehicular movements. This had led to a fall in diesel consumption in the last three months. And once the monsoon ended, consumption has risen month-on-month. Consumption of diesel had soared 6.7 per cent and 9.3 per cent in April and May, respectively, as agriculture demand picked up and cars yanked up air-conditioning to beat the summer heat. It started to taper in the second half of June after the monsoon set in. It has continued to fall since. Suppliers' group OPEC sees India's oil demand expanding on average by 2,20,000 barrels per day on the back of vigor-

ous economic growth. Consumption of petrol during October 1-15 was 12 per cent more than in the COVID-marred October 2021 and 21.7 per cent more than in pre-pandemic October 2019. Diesel consumption was up 23.4 per cent over October 1-15 in 2021 and 23.1 per cent compared to October 2019. With the continuing rise in passenger traffic at airports, jet fuel (ATF) demand rose 5.7 per cent to 2,95,200 tonnes during first fortnight of October against the same period last year. It was 36.5 per cent more than in October 1-15, 2021, but 6.6 per cent lower than pre-COVID October 2019. Month-on-month jet fuel sales were almost 2 per cent lower compared to 3,00,900 tonnes in September 1-15, 2023.

### JK Paper to acquire Manipal Utility Packaging Solutions for Rs 90 crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

JK Paper Ltd on Monday said it will fully acquire Manipal Utility Packaging Solutions Pvt Ltd for nearly Rs 90 crore. The company has entered into a share purchase agreement (SPA) for the acquisition of 100 per cent shares of Manipal Utility Packaging Solutions Pvt Ltd (MUPSPL). JK Paper said in a regulatory filing. Under the SPA, JK Paper will acquire 4.07 crore equity shares representing 100 per cent of capital of MUPSPL at Rs 21.80 per equity share of Rs 10 each, subject to adjustments as per terms of agreement, it added. The acquisition is expected to be completed within six weeks of execution of the SPA with the target entity and its promoters/shareholders, subject to fulfilment of conditions mentioned in the SPA, the company said. JK Paper Vice Chairman and Managing Director Harsh Pati Singhania said, "This acquisition is in line with the long-term strategic objective of the company in the packaging business and gives us an opportunity to offer combined solution to the customers with respect to secondary and tertiary packaging, improve operational efficiencies and ensure that MUPSPL grows and adds value to stakeholders."

### Delta Corp gets Rs 6,384-cr notice for short payment of GST

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In another blow to the company, Delta Corp has received a GST notice for short payment of tax to the tune of Rs 6,384 crore, taking the overall tax demand on the company to over Rs 23,000 crore. The company said that the tax demands are arbitrary and contrary to law, and added it will challenge them. DGGI (Directorate General of GST Intelligence) Kolkata on October 13, 2023 has served an intimation notice on Deltatech Gaming, a subsidiary of Delta Corp, seeking GST of Rs 6,236.8 crore for the period January 2018 to November 2022, the company said in a filing on



Saturday. For the period July 2017 to October 2022, another demand worth Rs 147.5 crore has been served, it said. "The notice advises Deltatech Gaming to pay the alleged tax shortfall along with interest and penalty failing which a show cause notice will be issued to the company..." it further said. It added: "The notice also states that the CEO and Executive Director of Deltatech Gaming Limited, being in charge of its day to day affairs, is liable for a penalty" under GST law. The amounts claimed

in the said notice are based on the gross bet value of all games played during the relevant period, according to Delta Corp. Demand of GST on gross bet value, rather than gross rake amount, has been an industry issue and various representations have already been made to the government at an industry level in relation to this issue, the company contended. "The company and its subsidiary have been legally advised that the above notice and the tax demands are arbitrary and contrary to law, and the company and its subsidiary will pursue all legal remedies available to them to challenge such tax demands and related proceedings," it said.

### Sidbi's growth accelerator drive for small NBFCs

PNS ■ MUMBAI

National development bank Sidbi on Monday announced a growth accelerator programme for small NBFCs to help them become eligible for bank funding. Under the initiative, being carried out in association with the global alliance for mass entrepreneurship and national NBFC lobby FIDC (Finance Industry Development Council), it has onboarded 18 small NBFCs as the first cohort of the programme. The five-month-long programme is designed to scale



mentorship from domain experts on risk, operations, governance, and technology and is structured to encourage and facilitate peer learning, reviews and networking through a blend of in-person, virtual and individualised sessions, Umesh Revankar, FIDC chairman and executive vice-chairman of Shriram Finance, said. Of the nearly 80 million small businesses, only 15 per cent get access to formal credit, showing the large addressable market for MSME (Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise) funding, Ramann said.

### 'Sales of apartments up 21% to 1,96L units'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sales of apartments during the Jan-Sept period went up 21% year-on-year to 1,96,227 units across seven major cities on better demand, according to property consultant JLL India. As many as 1,61,575 units were sold in the same period last year. Sales of apartments in Jan-Sept period of this year have already touched 91% of 2022 annual sales. "With the onset of the festive season, robust sales are expected in the upcoming quarter and as a result, annual sales in 2023 are expected to surpass sales of 215,000 units."

### Pfizer shares down due to decline in sale of Covid-19 products

PNS ■ NEW YORK

Shares of Pfizer are in retreat on the first day of trading after the drug company said sales of its COVID-19 vaccine and its coronavirus treatment are in less than expected and cut revenue expectations for the year by USD 9 billion. Falling sales of both clipped sales in the second quarter, but Pfizer said in August that it expected a rebound in the second half of 2023. Shares of Pfizer slid nearly 3 per cent before the opening bell Monday and Moderna, which makes a competing vaccine, slid as well. The company said Friday



that global usage of Paxlovid is trending slightly above last year, but that it's still below expectations. The fall vaccination period just began and the New York

City drugmaker said that it's too soon to get a handle on vaccination rates for the year. Full-year revenue for Paxlovid and Comirnaty is expected to be approximately

USD 12.5 billion, short USD 9 billion of what it had expected. Pfizer is lowering its full-year revenue expectations for Paxlovid by approximately

USD 7 billion. That number also accounts for delayed commercialization of the product, which was pushed to January 2024 from the company's previous expectation of commercialization in the second half of this year. Pfizer is also lowering its 2023 revenue expectations for Comirnaty by approximately USD 2 billion due to lower-than-expected vaccination rates. Pfizer Inc. now foresees 2023 revenue in a range of USD 58 billion to USD 61 billion, down from its prior forecast for USD 67 billion to USD 70 billion. It now projects full-year adjusted earnings between USD 1.45 and USD 1.65 per share due to

lower-than-anticipated revenue for COVID-19-related products and inventory write-offs. That is short of the full-year revenue of USD 63.61 billion and earnings of USD 2.77 per share that Wall Street was expecting, and far short of the company's previous projections of per-share earnings between USD 3.25 and USD 3.45. JPMorgan said the company's update solves an ongoing US Paxlovid inventory debate and it anticipates the company's bigger-than-expected cuts to its sales projections will help put a floor under per-share earnings expectations for next year.

### Markets fall for 3rd day on weak global equities, spike in Brent crude oil prices

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark equity indices ended lower on Monday, falling for the third day running, amid weak trends in global markets and spike in Brent crude oil prices due to geopolitical tension in the Middle East. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 115.81 points or 0.17 per cent to settle at 66,166.93. During the day, it fell 243.36 points or 0.36 per cent to 66,039.38. The Nifty slipped 19.30 points or 0.10 per cent to 19,731.75. From the Sensex pack, Nestle, Tata Consultancy Services, IndusInd Bank, Asian Paints, Bharti Airtel, Tech Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Hindustan Unilever were among



the major laggards. Tata Steel, JSW Steel, HCL Technologies, Axis Bank, Power Grid and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the gainers. "Markets continued to witness range-bound trend with a negative bias amid weak Asian cues as selective profit-taking was seen in banking, realty and IT stocks, whereas buying in metal, auto and consumer durable stocks helped markets curb losses.





## Vikrant diving something into more than just an exam

**SHIKHA DUGGAL**

In his next, Vikrant Massey is aspiring to be a civil aspirant, and oh my my, the swedges and competition he has shown in collaboration with Vidhu Vinod Chopra is something that we would like to define as implausible. Being directed by an imposing figure in this industry, Vikrant somewhere down the line felt sacred. *12th Fail* for Vikrant is one of his hallowed movies. He helped and urged detaching from so many misconceptions through his on-ground research from the movie.

Beginning with seeking that refuge under, as we mentioned earlier, t h e

helms of classics Vidhu, *Balika Vadhu* fame showcased, "I juiced him out. I feel we were meant to do a movie together. Like most of his fans, even I have admired his cinema all these years. He's a true blues filmmaker; at least I have never worked with anyone like him, even after so many films. His honesty is his selling point. I was told, Oh, he's a task master; he's temperamental. I would like to denounce this now as one of his actors. It's coming from a space of sheer moral correctness. He's someone who cannot mince words and allows himself to leave integrity in the back seat. Our industry is a make-believe world, and it's difficult to find honorable men like him. I would like to protect and fall in love with someone like him. And he's childlike too."

Based on a novel, Vikrant was asked to go through the whole novel, and he did. What did he derive from the next question imposed on him? The *Lootera* fame revealed how the book is well-read globally; the figure is nearing almost five crore readers. And

because this novel turned into an adaptation, what the actor really enjoyed on the sets of the movie was how he got to relive his college memories. He described to us in detail, "I interacted with so many of the civil aspirants. We shot at actual locations! These students are away from entertainment; they actually have a world view and a definition of success. Even in their daily routine, they are struggling. I so wanted to stay in their locality, but due to security reasons, I wasn't allowed to."

At the same time, in this film, there is somebody who breaks the myth that Chambal is equal to dacoity. To know how, let's hear it from the horse's mouth himself with a pinch of laughter: "All along the shoot, I was only hearing 'chambal ke daaku', move on guys. The dacoity culture is no longer alive! To begin with, there are so many successful civil aspirants coming from there, helping to run our very own country. They are not robbers or plunderers. Now Chambal is actually a ravine, so there is that certain

temperament, not just in its topography but even in the population's behavior. I saw them living a very tough life. With no means of agriculture and a scarcity of water, the villagers are already living a daunting life. My director chose Chambal for a reason, and it's going to be quite evident in the film."

Now Vikrant feels he may really not be able to stop the corruption going on in the country, but as a professional artist, through the fulfilling job that he does, he can at least raise awareness about it. Are we treading on the right path, readers? For example, he finds Vidhu Vinod Chopra, a high-profile man who is a naysayer. Kumar Mangalam Birla inspired Vikrant to make a change. Although he had his fair share of defeats too, as he conquers them all in the film, so does he in real life. He recalled, "I was very conscious about leaving the television industry and giving myself a lifetime of risk by entering movies. Will I succeed or not? Or sometimes when my movies don't work out! But such is life."

**I INTERACTED WITH SO MANY OF THE CIVIL ASPIRANTS. WE SHOT AT ACTUAL LOCATIONS! THESE STUDENTS ARE AWAY FROM ENTERTAINMENT; THEY ACTUALLY HAVE A WORLD VIEW AND A DEFINITION OF SUCCESS.**

**ACTOR VIKRANT MASSEY, WHO WILL NEXT BE SEEN IN VIDHU VINOD CHOPRA'S DIRECTORIAL *12TH FAIL*, SHARES HIS EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH SUCH AN IMPOSING FIGURE, RELIEVING HIS COLLEGE MEMORIES, AND MORE IN THIS EXCLUSIVE CHAT WITH *THE PIONEER*.**

## Finding 'Joy' in content-rich shows

K. RAMYA SREE

Joy Sengupta is an actor for whom content is the king. All his films, right from his debut movie, *Hazaar Chaurasi Ki Maa*, in 1998, were filled with content. The actor is always drawn to content-driven, independent, multilingual projects across different formats. This is why he is seen in Hindi, Bengali, and English cinema and continues to work in theater, radio, TV, and web shows.

Joy Sengupta is back with a *Kanyadaan*, which will telecast on October 29 on Airtel Theatre, Dish TV Rangmanch Active, and D2H Rangmanch Active.

The show is also available in Telugu. Like we said earlier, even this show of joy is a perfect amalgamation of art, ideas, and aesthetics and will appeal to audiences,

especially in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, because these regions have very vibrant literary, artistic, and dramatic traditions. "Most of Vijay Tendulkar's work, in any case, has universal relevance. In *Kanyadaan*, too, he has portrayed the complexities of a caste-ridden society and the psyche of a man who comes from a historically oppressed community. The play very astutely depicts just how prevalent patriarchy is in all strata of society. Audiences will also connect with a very relatable bond between a father and a daughter. And the way her relationship and subsequent marriage with Arun impact her entire family. This is a very nuanced story that shows that until we bring about fundamental changes in society, superficial solutions won't make a difference," said the actor in conversation with *The Pioneer*.

His character, Arun, carries the

historical baggage of systemic and often violent oppression within him. He shared, "He is a complicated character, and his past makes him volatile, pushes him towards self-harm, and also makes him mistreat his wife. As Nath, the character portrayed by Darshan Jariwala, puts it, he has knots of intergenerational trauma and anger within him. It was challenging to play him because I realized during the process that empathy for the downtrodden in society is one thing, but to live as them is totally different."

The actor has been seen in many teleplays in recent times. Asked for his take on this format, he responded, "Recorded performances have their own advantages. A teleplay not only archives theater, playwriting, and dramaturgy for posterity but also gives people an opportunity to enjoy plays even if they may

never have seen theater before. Teleplays also bring certain elements of theater and cinema together to create an interesting format for actors to explore. Through streaming apps, theater, one of the oldest living art forms, can now grow beyond just live performances and reach a wider audience across the world. What is interesting is the way teleplays capture the dramatic moments that a live play brings to life on stage. The shooting and editing process is such that it gives the audience the experience of a live stage performance. This trend is not recent, as in the 60s, BBC used to air recordings of plays by Royal Shakespeare societies. Today, the National Theatre also

airs plays, and it's an incredible experience."



## 'Duranga season 2 is a great face-off between two male actors for a change'

TEJAL SINHA

After a phenomenal season, get ready to enter the dark world of *Duranga*, which is all set to stream on Zee 5 on October 24.

The Indian adaptation of the South Korean drama *Flower of Evil* stars Drashti Dhami and Gulshan Devaiah, and now joining the cast is Amit Sadh.

Directed by Rohan Sippy, the upcoming season has been produced by Goldie Behl's Rose Audio Visuals. Ahead of enrapturing hearts yet again, the producer gets candid with *The Pioneer*, sharing some insights about the upcoming season.

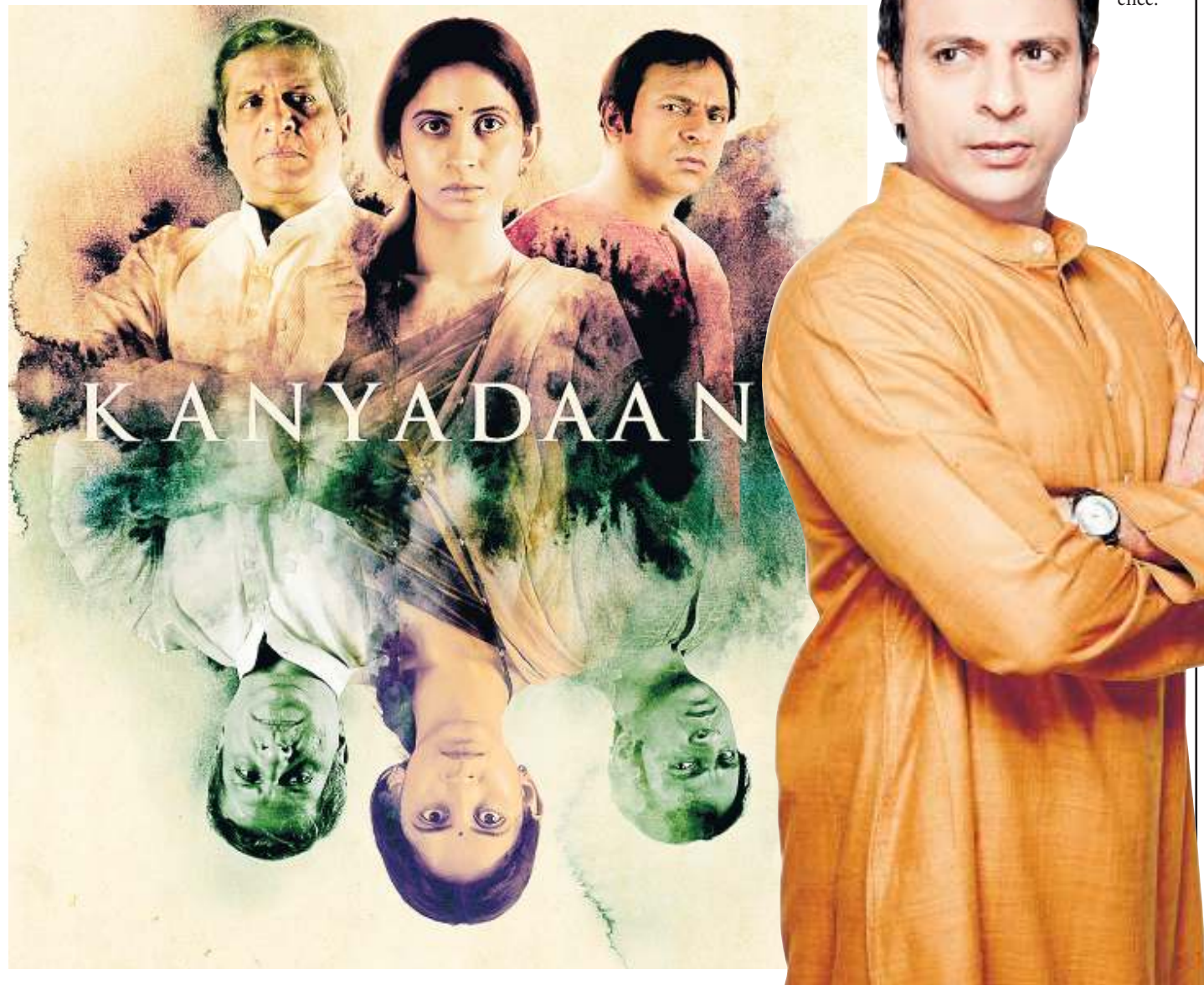
Basically, when he saw the original series, it really intrigued him enough to make a remake of it. "I wanted to explore the hidden, unkept secrets between a husband and wife. Does a relationship really require full disclosure? And if certain undisclosed things do not affect the current relationship, do they still need to be disclosed? That was the starting point from where we began with season one, and it's grown into this more exciting story about the husband's past catching up in so many ways, and whether his wife can live with those things or forgive him for those things

is the unraveling of the story."

According to a note from the makers, *Duranga Season 2* will witness the real Sammit Patel (played by Amit Sadh) wake up from a coma and go after Abhishek Banne (Devaiah), who has been living as Sammit Patel. With Amit Sadh being a prominent part of the second season, he shares, "Amit Sadh being a part of this season, there is far more excitement and some fantastic face-offs between Amit's character and Gulshan's character. The performances of these two leads have been sensational. It's a great face-off between two male actors for a change, and I'm very excited. Amit is in a very never-before-seen kind of role. He has always been the protector, but this time he is the attacker."

All of the main lead cast members, be it Gulshan, Drashti, or Amit, have been the first choice for their respective roles. "Gulshan was the very first choice for the role," shares Goldie, adding, "I mean, he is a fantastic actor. Along with Amit, we needed some sort of similarity between the way they looked and their personas. As you watch the series, you will understand why they have been cast. Drashti was also one of the initial choices, as she just brings a level of freshness. We have never seen Drashti like this before, so it is very exciting to see all three of them in these very roles that we have not seen them in before."

**ALL SET FOR ITS UPCOMING SEASON, *DURANGA* WILL STREAM ON ZEE 5 ON OCTOBER 24. FILMMAKER GOLDIE BEHL GETS CANDID WITH *THE PIONEER*, SHARING SOME EXCLUSIVE INSIGHTS ABOUT THE SERIES.**



# what's brewing?

**PARTY**

Bajaj Electronics launched its much-awaited India's Biggest Festive Offer Bumper Draw of a Rs. 1 crore cash prize and 30 Alto K10 cars. Actress Ashu Reddy, along with other tech enthusiasts, announced the launch of the most-awaited festive offer. The offer will be available from October 14, 2023, to January 3, 2024.

● Pooja ● Priya ● Sirisha ● Akhila ● Ashu Reddy

● Brundha ● Srilekha and Nikitha ● Sony and Anamika ● Ramya ● Jabilli ● Preeti Sundar

Hilife Exhibition is all set for an exquisite showcase to captivate Hyderabad shoppers just before the onset of the festive season. Hilife Exhibition will present its special exhibition, bringing in an exciting display of fashion, glamour, style, and luxury from October 21 to 23 at HICC-Novotel, Hi-Tech City, Hyderabad.

Tirumala Cooperative Urbank Bank Ltd opened its 2nd branch in Medipalli, Uppal. The branch was inaugurated by Sri Tridandi Chinna Jeeyar Swamiji and actor Suman.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds re-launched its store in Chandanagar, Hyderabad. Manjula Raghunath Reddy, Chandanagar Division Corporator, along with Raghunath Reddy, Chandanagar Division BRS Party President, and V. Sindu Adarsh Reddy, Bharati Nagar Division Corporator, Patancheru Constituency, marked its opening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Period Ricard India (P) Ltd., a fully owned subsidiary of Pernod Ricard SA, hosted a Cricket extravaganza for the diehard Cricket World Cup 2023 fans, today at the HITEX, Hyderabad. Chief guest and Bollywood diva Shriya Saran added to the frenzy with her presence at the venue.

Cure Foundation and Apollo Cancer Centres are hosting the 8th Biennial Cybercity Cancer Crusaders Golf Championship, a fund raiser and Cancer awareness initiative on November 25 and 26, 2023 at Hyderabad Golf Club. Bollywood Diva Kriti Shetty along with Dr P Vijay Anand Reddy, founder, Cure foundation and director, Apollo Cancer Hospital, Hyderabad, launched the Championship by putting the golf ball, at the Hyderabad Golf Club, Golconda, on Monday.

Manish Solanki, Sudha Jain, Vamshi Krishna, Miss Asia Lakshmi, Sandhya were the chief guests in the congratulatory function held on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of Krishna Beauty Center. All types of beauty products from hair pin to laser treatment have been supplied at wholesale prices to many beauty academies in Andhra Telangana regions for the past 10 years. Certificates and mementos were presented on the occasion to Krishna Beauty Duty Academies.

Photos by- SV Chary

## FUN

**ARCHIE**

GUESS WHO?  
UM... VERONICA?  
WHY ARE YOU MAD? I GOT IT RIGHT!  
YOU SOUNDED LIKE YOU HAD TO GUESS!

**CALVIN AND HOBBS**

IS THIS MY PLACE? CAN I SIT OVER THERE? I WANT TO SIT NEXT TO UNCLE MAX. CAN I? PLEASE? PLEASE?  
OK, GO AHEAD. MOVE YOUR CHAIR OVER.  
YOU SHOULD BE FLATTERED, MAX. CALVIN ASKED TO SIT BY YOU TONIGHT.  
HEY, THAT'S SWEET.  
THBBYTHBPT!

**GARFIELD**

DO YOU THINK I SHED TOO MUCH?  
ARLENE, IF ANYTHING, YOU DON'T SHED ENOUGH.  
CAT SWEET TALK

**REALITY CHECK**

SHELLEY, I'VE BEEN IN YOUR SHOES BEFORE.  
IT'S TRUE, YOUR FATHER DID GET A 4.0 IN HIGH SCHOOL.  
OF COURSE, THAT WAS ON THE ACT.

**SPEED BUMP**

**CROSSWORD**

**NANCY**

PHIL, IT'S A LITTLE COLD FOR A VALENTINE'S DAY WALK DOWN "MEMORY LANE."  
I MEAN... I LIKE OUR OLD HIGH SCHOOL, TOO... BUT...  
IT'S WHERE I FIRST FELL IN LOVE WITH YOU!  
IT HAD TO BE HERE, DARLING...

**SUDOKU**

Yesterday's solution

6	9	8	3	2	1	7	4	5
2	5	7	4	9	8	1	3	6
4	3	1	5	7	6	9	8	2
3	7	2	1	8	4	6	5	9
8	1	9	6	5	7	3	2	4
5	4	6	2	3	9	8	1	7
9	6	3	8	4	5	2	7	1
1	8	5	7	6	2	4	9	3
7	2	4	9	1	3	5	6	8

Rules

- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
- The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

**ACROSS**

- Pepper might make you do this
- Use needles and wool to make something
- Quick
- Spread this on bread
- Rich
- Injured
- Repaired
- Factual
- Utters
- A weight to stop a boat drifting

**DOWN**

- Not in danger
- Less difficult

**SOLUTION**

N	E	I	G	H	B	O	R		
W	H	A	R	E	A	C	T	O	R
F	L	I	N	G	E	R	S		
H	E	L	M	E	T	P	L	I	C
E	A	F	F	A	I	N			
D	O	V	E	T	L	A	M	B	
E	L	A	O						
A	R	G	E	N	T	I	N		

**GINGER MEGGS**

Q: What is the collective noun for beans?

A: TRASH IS STUFF YOU THROW AWAY. TRASH IS STUFF YOU KEEP.



## Dr. Rajasekhhar to play a key role in *Extra Ordinary Man*

Actor Nithiin's latest movie *Extra Ordinary Man* is being directed by writer-director Vakkant Vamshi is directing this movie. The movie is being made as an out and out entertainer. Most happening beauty Sreeleela is playing the female lead. The shooting of the film is progressing at a rapid pace.

Raj Shekhar has been a special surprise for the ordinary man by enthralling the audience with his many different characters. As a part of this, he entered the sets on Monday. Rajshekhar is spotted in a stylish look. With this sudden surprising announcement, the speculations on the film reached the next level. This film will have a grand release worldwide on December 8.



## Saindhav's teaser impresses big time with its intriguing elements

The makers of Victory Venkatesh's upcoming Pan India film *Saindhav* commenced the promotions by launching its teaser on Monday. Earlier, all the main characters of this Sailesh Kolanu directorial were unveiled.

The teaser shows two different aspects of the movie. While it starts as a family drama, the core point of the movie is revealed with the introduction of Nawazuddin Siddiqui as a frightful villain who takes up a big assignment from his boss, which is uncommensurate because of the protagonist. Nawazuddin Siddiqui looked brutal as the antagonist, who goes to any extent to accomplish his tasks. He hires young kids, trains them, and tries to use them for his anti-social work. This man calling Venkatesh a psycho (Saiko) indicates the violent nature of the protagonist. Venkatesh looks peaceful and emotional in the initial portions; he shows his ferocious attitude in the latter portions. The way he warns the opponents is just terrific.

Director Sailesh Kolanu proved his mettle in handling crime and thrilling subjects. This is a next-level subject, and there's more than what we saw in the teaser. His visionary approach is evident in every precisely crafted frame, transporting the audience into the world of *Saindhav*. The cinematography by S. Manikandan effortlessly weaves incredible landscapes with a gritty ambience, creating a visual spectacle that complements the storytelling experience. Music director Santosh Narayanan elevated every moment to new heights with his thundering score. Avinash Kolla's production design is one of the major assets, other than Garry BH's sharp editing. The movie was produced by Venkat Boyanapalli under the banner of Niharika Entertainment, and the production values looked grand all through.

The mission is accomplished as the teaser impresses big time with its intriguing set-up, gripping narrative, exceptional performances, and technical brilliance. Arya, Shraddha Srinath, Ruhani Sharma, Andrea Jeremiah, Baby Sara, and Jayaprakash are the other prominent cast of the movie. Kishore Thallur is the co-producer. *Saindhav* will be released in all south Indian languages and Hindi on January 13th for Sankranthi.

## Siddhu Jonnalagadda, Raashi Khanna, Srinidhi Shetty, Neeraja Kona to star in *Telusu Kada*

Star Boy Siddhu Jonnalagadda who is basking under the glory of consecutive hits and lined up some exciting projects has announced his new film on Monday. This will be a very special movie for its director and producers. While popular stylist Neeraja Kona is making her debut as a director with the movie, it marks the landmark 30th film for People Media Factory. TG Vishwa Prasad will produce the movie on a high budget and Vivek Kuchibhotla is the co-producer. The movie is titled *Telusu Kada* and the announcement video designates this one is going to offer a full-meal feast. The visuals looked grand, hinting at top-notch production and technical standards. It's indeed a unique and impressive concept to make the announcement.

Billed to be a soulful love story, the movie will present Siddhu in a new avatar. This subject deals with not only beautiful human emotions but also some very relevant social aspects and relationships. It's not just a story between a boy and a



girl, but a story of friendship, family, sacrifice, self-love, and more.

The movie stars Raashi Khanna and Srinidhi Shetty of *KGF* fame playing the heroines. It features music by the in-form composer Thaman S, cinematography by the skilled Yuvraj J, and editing by National Award-winning techni-

cian Sreekar Prasad. Avinash Kolla who is one of the busiest Production Designers is part of the movie for which Archana Rao designs costumes. *Telusu Kada* is poised to win the hearts of movie buffs with its refreshing storyline, and top-class technical standards. The shooting of the movie begins in the next few weeks.

Director Ohmkar, who impressed the audience with his horror comedy franchise *Raju Gari Gadhi*, is coming up with a new horror web series titled *Mansion 24*. The series was exclusively created for Disney Plus Hotstar. The character posters raised curiosity among the audience. *Mansion 24* stars Varalaxmi Sarath Kumar, Avika Gor, Bindu Madhavi, Nandu, Manas, Ayyappa P. Sharma, Rao Ramesh, and others in key roles. The makers of the horror thriller *Mansion 24* organised a pre-release press meet event held in Hyderabad.

Speaking on this occasion, actress Avika Gor said, "Working with Ohmkar feels like being with a family. In *Mansion 24*, I have done a different character,

which I have never done before. That's a character with a lot of depth. Ohmkar used to tell how every expression and look should be. It has a huge cast. Acting with all of them gave me a happy feeling. Ohmkar's working style and creativity as a director is impressive."

Meanwhile, director Ohmkar, who initially began his career from a small cable TV, shares that from then until the release of *Mansion 24* series, he has received immense support from the media, friends, family, and the audience. "Every project I do has been well supported. I thank you all for that. This is the first web series I have created. *Mansion 24* trailer got good response. Now the series will start streaming on Disney plus Hotstar from tonight. It will

be a good web series that you will enjoy watching with your whole family. Our art director, DOP, music director and artists all worked hard and we made a good product."

Actress Varalaxmi Sarath Kumar shared her excitement and said that she is happy to act with a great actor like Sathyaraj in the *Mansion 24* web series. This is my first web series. I watched all the episodes while dubbing. The series is very good. We don't watch horror movies at home at night. So I watch all the episodes in a day. I like to do roles that I find challenging. I got such a challenging role in *Mansion 24*. In this, I will be seen as a daughter who goes in search of her father. I acted naturally, like the girls we see outside."



## Deepavali starring Poo Ramu & Kali Venkat will release on November 11

The film has received praise from the audience and critics at the National and International film festivals, receiving standing ovation at the International Film Festival of India, Goa and the 20th Chennai International Film Festival where it won Best Film and Best Actor awards. Officially selected for Indian Panorama, Indian Film Festival Of Melbourne and the Jagran Film Festival, this film has been receiving recognition and acclaim for all sectors of audience across the world in the last six months.

Now, the film is dubbed into Telugu as *Deepavali* and preparations are in progress to release it in Telugu and Tamil on November 11th.

Sri Sravanthi Movies entered Tollywood with the movie *Ladies Tailor* in 1986. In this journey of 38 years, 'Sravanthi' Ravi Kishore has produced 38 films. He is one of the few producers who believes that content is the king in any film. Hence, all his movies have greater acceptance amongst audience. *Kida* is his 38th movie and the first Tamil film. In *Deepavali*, the story revolves around a grandfather, grandson and a goat and has a beautiful story enveloping the characters. Immediately liking the story written by director Ra. Venkat,

Ravi Kishore came forward to produce *Deepavali*, a film he believed was rich with wonderful emotions.

'Sravanthi' Ravi Kishore said, "When I went to Chennai, I heard the story of this movie for five minutes from a friend. I got connected immediately with content. I asked the director to record the entire story and send it to me. I really liked the story, so I decided to produce it. I gave complete freedom to the director with the belief that he can do it well and do justice to the story even though he is a debutant director. Whatever he has penned in the script, he brought it to the screen and we are releasing it on November 11th."

The film's director RA Venkat said, "A grandfather, a grandson, a kid and the emotions between these three characters is the main theme of *Deepavali*. *Deepavali* is celebrated in Tamil Nadu and I grew up with my grandparents in my childhood. This film was inspired by my childhood events. The story takes place in a village in Chittoor district on the border of Andhra and Tamil Nadu. Emotions connect to the audience of all languages. I am lucky to have a producer like 'Sravanthi' Ravi Kishore garu. He gave me complete freedom. He provided me what I wanted. Thanks a lot to Ravi Kishore sir. Most of the artists are newcomers in this film along with the director, music director, cinematographer. This is the first film for many people."

Poo Ramu, Kali Venkat, Deepan, Pandiyamma, Vijaya, Kamali and others.



## Prithviraj Sukumaran's rugged look from *Salaar* out now

Celebrated actor Prithviraj Sukumaran received a special gift from the makers of the upcoming Christmas release, *Salaar: Part 1 - Ceasefire*. They unveiled the first look of Prithviraj in his role as Vardharaja Mannaar, the king. The production company, Hombale Films, extended their birthday wishes to their lead actor through a post on Instagram, saying, "Wishing Vardharaja Mannar, The King @therealprithvi, a majestic birthday."

Prithviraj's character sports a rugged appearance, wearing a dusty t-shirt and a septum nose pin that adds a unique flair to his look. The look emanates a sense of intensity and controlled chaos, with a composed demeanour. The colour scheme in his attire revolves around black and grey. Prithviraj is also seen with a septum ring and a black tilak on his forehead, collectively contributing to his regal appearance.

Prithviraj Sukumaran had been on a brief hiatus due to a recent injury and knee surgery sustained during the filming of his next Malayalam film, *Vilayath Buddha*. This unfortunate incident required him to take a voluntary leave from his film commitments for a couple of months.

## Mimoh Chakraborty starrer *Nenekkadunna* in cinemas on Nov 17



Director Madhav Kodad said, "This is a suspense thriller which has both journalism and politics as its base. Both Sasha Chettri and Mimoh Chakraborty will be seen as journalists. Right from the beginning till end, the movie will be thrilling with twists beyond the imagination of the audience. This is a Female oriented movie that connects well with the women. Apart from this, we have shown in the film that how politics affect journalism."

The film's producer Maruti Shyam Prasad Reddy said, "The first copy of the film is ready. We recently finished sensor. We shot in Mumbai, Hyderabad and Bangalore. Story, music, visuals, direction are the core strength of our film. A special attraction is the pub song with Russian belly dancers choreographed by renowned choreographer Prem Rakshit." The film is releasing worldwide on November 17 in both Telugu and Hindi languages.

Senior Hindi hero Mithun Chakraborty's son Mimoh Chakraborty debuts in Tollywood with the movie *Nenekkadunna* directed by Madhav Kodad also a debutant. The movie is made in Telugu and Hindi languages. Airtel Ad fame Sasha Chettri plays the female lead role in this film which is Produced by Maruti Shyam Prasad Reddy under KBR presentation. The film will hit the theatres on November 17.

## Shivarajkumar's first pan-India film *Ghost* to have its Telugu release on Oct 27

Kannada actor Shivarajkumar's first pan-India flick is titled *Ghost*. The high-octane heist thriller will head to the theatres on October 19 in Kannada but not in Telugu. Earlier, a simultaneous pan-India release was planned.

However, *Ghost* hasn't found any takers in Telugu this Dasara. The distributors and exhibitors are busy wooing *Bhagavanth Kesari*, *Leo* and *Tiger Nageswara Rao*. Nandamuri Balakrishna, Thalapaty Vijay and Ravi Teja have ensured that *Ghost* is absent from the box-office.

The Telugu release of *Ghost* will happen on October 27. The lack of buzz for the action thriller in Telugu is telling. Directed by Srinu, *Ghost* is produced by Sandesh Nagraj. Arjun Janya is setting the songs to tune. Anupam Kher and Jayaram have key roles.

## 'I'VE BEEN TRYING TO BE AS REALISTIC AS POSSIBLE'

Sreeleela has a few high profile projects like Pawan Kalyan's *Ustaad Bhagat Singh*, Nithiin's *Extra Ordinary Man*, Vaissnav Tej's *Aadikeshava*, to name a few. Her upcoming film *Bhagavanth Kesari* with Balakrishna is releasing on October 19, 2023. Speaking to scribes, Sree Leela spoke about authenticity in her characters. She said, "What excites me as an actor is doing things differently. Another actress too can do the same role, but giving the part my own spin makes me authentic, and that's what I have been aiming for—try to be as realistic as possible."

In the upcoming film, *Bhagavanth Kesari* Sreeleela plays the character of Vijji Papa, Balakrishna's daughter. "The film also explores a father-daughter relationship. The depth and arc of my role was something I couldn't resist taking up. The role has several emotions and layers that are so challenging. People associate me with grooving but at the same time I also want to prove myself as an actor. This film gave me the opportunity to establish my acting and performance. Balakrishna's knowledge over various subject issues. And the energy he brings to the film sets is infectious. I am amazed to see his discipline and it was very inspiring."





# Zampa bags four wickets against Sri Lanka

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Leg-spinner Adam Zampa roared back to form with a four-wicket haul as Australia bowled out Sri Lanka for 209 in the World Cup here on Monday.

An out-of-form Kusal Perera (78) got some much-needed runs while Pathum Nissanka struck 61 for his second consecutive fifty.

Australia benefitted from the timely return to form of Zampa, who had been having an awful tournament. The wrist spinner enjoyed an excellent outing to help bundle out Sri Lanka in 43.3 overs.

Looking on course for a 300-plus score, the 1996 winners faced a bizarre batting collapse and went from 125 for no loss to 209 all out.

There were lots going on in the field as Mitchell Starc aborted his delivery stride thrice to warn Perera to not leave his crease early on at the non-striker's end.

Perera was also struck in the head by a Marcus Stoinis bouncer which caught the Sri Lankan off guard.

But the experienced south-paw didn't let the blow deter him and went on to send Stoinis' slower cutter down the ground to bring up his fifty.

With both openers piling on the runs, the Australian



bowlers looked clueless. But skipper Pat Cummins kept shuffling his bowlers in search of that first breakthrough.

Cummins, who has been far from his best with the ball, stood up at the opportune moment to give Australia the breakthrough they needed.

Cummins cramped Nissanka for room and the Sri Lankan hit it high and in front of square only for David Warner to run and complete a stunning catch.

Cummins bowled a peach of a delivery five overs later to clean up the other set batter in Perera, who picked the wrong line to swing his bat.

The dismissal marked the beginning of Australia's dominance as the Sri Lanka batting unravelling and the five-time champions grew in confidence.

Zampa got rid of the in-form Kusal Mendis. But the wicket belonged to Warner who ran across from deep midwicket, covering about 25ms to complete a spectacular diving catch.

Sadeera Samarawickrama, Chamika Karunaratne and Maheesh Theekshana were Zampa's other victims with Mitchell Starc pitching in with two wickets.

Apart from the openers and Charith Asalanka's 25, no other Sri Lankan batter reached double digits.



# Cricket is included in 2028 Olympics

PTI ■ BENGALURU

For long, cricket remained a statistical global sport sans a true global footing. A solid fan base of 2.5 billion and an ever-swelling TV revenue formed its axis to be labelled as a sport with a worldwide appeal, second only to football.

However, in reality, all of it is parked in the Commonwealth countries and even among them India alone helm around 70 percent, if not more, of those numbers.

But now, all this could change as cricket, in its T20 avatar has made its re-entry into the Olympic fold through the 2028 edition at Los Angeles, and it is a mutually beneficial association from sporting and commercial angles.

From a sporting perspective, the Olympics provides an unmatched platform for cricket, perhaps even bigger than a World Cup.

Standing on the podium wearing an Olympic medal around the neck is an unmatched feeling for any sportsman, as it is a reverentially warm handshake with history that dates back to 1896.

"It is an excellent piece of news for cricket to be part of the Olympics. It will certainly add to the global image of cricket," says Keith Joseph, president of the Caribbean Association of National Olympic Committees (CANOC), who gave a strong backing to ICC's efforts to get cricket included in the LA Olympics.

"T20 provides an excellent platform too in terms of duration and connection with younger audiences. That USA will be co-hosting the T20 World Cup in 2024 will also work as a very good precursor to cricket ahead of the Olympics," he points out.

However, expecting cricket to match the universal appeal of football, something the sport always cherished, just because of an Olympic appearance is quite naïve.

Sample this: The ICC men's T20 ranking list features 87 nations in the men's section and 66 in the women's segment. But the FIFA ranking list touches 207 men's teams and 186 women's outfits, the numbers reveal the vast gulf between the two sports.

Of course, this is not to deny that the T20 format has helped cricket to reach some hitherto

unexplored corners of Africa, Europe and Latin America.

"Yes, it is a good first step to take cricket to a global audience. As the USA is a big market and there is a strong presence of sub-continent crowd. But as of now, it has been included only in Los Angeles, and hopefully it will figure in Brisbane as well (in 2032).

"It is important because Australia is a traditional cricketing nation, and being able to play there will be a big boost to the sport. It may even open doors to cricket being a permanent Olympic sport," opines a veteran BCCI administrator.

However, cricket had to leap over several self-imposed hurdles to make its return to the Olympics.

Both the officials and players did not want to follow several clauses, especially the one pertaining to their whereabouts that is mandatory for random dope testing, laid out by the IOC, IOA, WADA etc.

England, the champion side when cricket was last staged in the Olympics in 1900, was another country which was initially reluctant to take this plunge.

"Yes, there were some difficulties in reaching an understanding for some time over certain issues such as the whereabouts clause.

"However, most importantly, the BCCI and ICC and few other boards have found a common ground to take cricket to a global stage," said the administrator.

Beyond the sporting field, the IOA also might have thought about the crowd-pulling power of cricket, especially in the USA, a country with a large Asian diaspora.

An industry insider, whom PTI contacted, said the million eyeballs that cricket ensures will have a massive influence on the purchase of broadcasting rights of the LA Olympics.

"It is great news (cricket in Olympics) if you are a businessperson. America has a large section of Asian expats, who are crazy about cricket and they will fill the stadium and of course will follow the game on TV or streaming apps.

"Since cricket is in LA, our estimate is that the selling price of broadcasting rights might see at least a 20-30 percent jump from the existing one, which is huge for a single edition," the expert said.

# South Africa looks strong against Netherlands



PTI ■ DHARAMSALA

South Africa are making quite a statement at the World Cup, playing entertaining cricket and plundering tons of runs as they steamroll rival teams.

As the Proteas take on the Netherlands in this hilly paradise on Tuesday, the perennial under-performers and 'chokers' have shown in the last two games their determination to go the distance in the tournament.

Their 102-run win against Sri Lanka in the opener in New Delhi after putting a record 428/5 on the board, followed by 134-run victory against five-time champions Australia in Lucknow, have made South Africa the team to beat in the competition.

From staying under the radar in the lead-up to the ODI showcase to becoming high-flyers, the Proteas have started playing to potential and will be firm favourites against the Dutch.

Unlike the Australian and England cricket teams, whose patchy performance so far has left a lot to be desired, the South Africans have come

out with full combat capabilities -with the likes of wicket-keeping stalwart Quinton de Kock, top-order batter Rassie van der Dussen and Aiden Markram making a massive impact here.

The trio smashed a century each against Sri Lanka to pile up a mountain of runs with Heinrich Klaasen and David Miller playing useful cameos in the 428-run total.

Though their bowlers did take a beating from the Sri Lankans, they hit back with full force against the Australians in the next match.

A second consecutive century by De Kock and a massively improved performance from tall pace bowler Marco Jansen and Kagiso Rabada floored Pat Cummins' side.

The 177-run loss for the five-time champions following the humiliating loss to India in the opener has put the Kangaroos on the mat.

The Proteas would look to attack with even more firepower against the Netherlands, a side that has very few recognisable faces in mainstream cricket. But they have posed a challenge occasionally, like the huge upset they made during the 2009 T20 World Cup, defeating England at Lord's.

Last year, the Dutch eliminated the Proteas, handing them a shocking 13-run defeat in the Super 12 stage of the T20 World Cup in Australia. The Scott Edwards-led side will certainly take inspiration from that victory, though T20 and 50-over formats are like chalk and cheese.

But, on a cricket field, where miracles happen, the Dutch too would want to aim for a victory for the ages after seeing Afghanistan over-run defending champions England on Sunday night in New Delhi.

The Proteas, once bitten twice shy, would be looking to opener De Kock, Rassie van der Dussen and Aiden Markram to once again set the stage on fire and then give their bowlers a big total to defend.

# England have to show resilience: Buttler

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

England will have to play some of their "best cricket" to come out of the hole they find themselves in following their shock defeat to Afghanistan in the ODI World Cup.

England suffered a shock 69-run defeat to the Hashmatullah Shahidi-led side with the defending champions faltering in their chase of the 285-run target at the Ferozshah Kotla on Sunday.

The win was Afghanistan's second-ever in a World Cup match and lifted them to sixth position on the points table behind England.

On whether it was premature to say that England's World Cup defence was under threat, Buttler, whose team is yet to face India, Australia and South Africa, said, "Yeah. As I mentioned just before, it's not been the way we wanted to start the competition, but this is the situation we find ourselves in and we're going to have to play some of our best cricket moving forward."

The skipper said he had full faith in his team to pull through this crisis.

"Yeah, it's a big setback obviously. Before the tournament starts you have a different idea of how the first three games would pan out. We've got to show a lot of character, a lot of



resilience within the team and most of all a lot of belief. There was a lot of excellent players in there and we haven't played well enough today but we must keep that belief," said Buttler.

Afghanistan were helped on their way to their second-highest World Cup total by a fine 80-run innings from Rahmanullah Gurbaz at the start and a superb 28-run cameo by Mujeeb Ur Rahman in the final overs.

Afghanistan didn't lose a wicket till they had crossed the century mark. England, on the other hand, were 91/4 at one stage.

Asked if he could pinpoint where things started going wrong for England, Buttler said, "No, we didn't, no we started poorly, first ball of the game I missed one and it sort of set the tone for that first 10 overs, we didn't hit the areas that we wanted to and credit to Gurbaz (80 runs) as he put us under a lot of pressure, played some

good shots, but maybe a few too many easy boundaries in there."

England's aggressive style of batting, called 'Bazball', has come to epitomise their cricket in all three formats, more so in Tests under coach Brendon McCullum.

Asked if the team could not "execute properly" the style he wanted it to play, Buttler said, "We always want to play positive and be aggressive and some days you don't play as well as you want to. Though Afghanistan built good pressure on us, maybe the wicket didn't play exactly how we thought it would play and maybe the dew didn't come in as much as we thought as well."

England have played their best cricket when their backs are to the wall of late, with the fight-back during the Ashes this year being fresh in the mind.

Asked if the two losses in three World Cup matches will sharpen the team's focus a little bit more, Buttler added, "We've played some good cricket in all scenarios, whether we've been on top and frontrunners and fancied or whether we've had our backs against the wall. It's a position you find yourselves in, it's not the position you wanted to be in three games ago but the character is excellent as I've mentioned, there'll always be belief and we'll dust ourselves down and go again."

## OTHER SPORTS

### Jordan Thompson upsets Zverev in first round



AP ■ TOKYO

Jordan Thompson upset ninth-ranked Alexander Zverev 6-3, 6-4 in the opening round of the Japan Open on Monday for his second win over a top-10 opponent this season.

The 29-year-old Australian saved four of the five break points he faced to claim his first career win over Zverev after losing their only previous meeting six years ago. He also beat seventh-ranked Stefanos Tsitsipas at Indian Wells in March.

"I fought off 0-40 first game and I really got into the match after that," the 60th-ranked Thompson said. "But I held on, I was playing an unpredictable style of tennis, and I think he didn't handle it that well in the first set and adapted in the second. But I somehow hung around."

Thompson will next play either Shanghai Masters semifinalist Ben Shelton or qualifier Taro Daniel.

The other three Australians in action Monday all lost as

eighth-seeded Felix Auger-Aliassime defeated Aleksander Vukic 7-6 (3), 6-7 (2), 6-2, while Mackenzie McDonald beat Max Purcell 7-5, 6-4 and Sebastian Ofner outlasted Christopher O'Connell 6-7 (2), 7-6 (5), 7-5.

Fifth-seeded Tommy Paul plays Daniel Altmaier in a late match. Top-seeded Taylor Fritz plays his first-round match against Cameron Norrie on Tuesday, while second-seeded Casper Ruud meets wild-card entry Yosuke Watanuki.

Shanghai Masters winner Hubert Hurkacz is also in the draw. He opens against Zhang Zhizhen on Wednesday.

### JIANGXI OPEN

Tour veteran Vera Zvonareva beat Arianne Hatano 6-1, 6-2 in her opening match of the Jiangxi Open.

The 39-year-old Zvonareva, who made her tour debut in 2000, broke her 166th-ranked opponent's serve six times as she cruised to victory in 61 minutes. Zvonareva next plays fifth-seeded Zhu Lin or Diana Shnaider.

Also, eighth-seeded Sara Sorribes Tormo beat wild-card entry Jiang Xinyu 6-4, 6-0. The Spaniard will next play Camila Osorio, who beat Ma Ye-Xin 6-1, 6-0.

### Injured Prannoy withdraws from Denmark and French Open

PTI ■ ODENSE (DENMARK)

Star Indian shuttler HS Prannoy has pulled out of the Denmark Open Super 750 tournament due to a back injury that troubled him during his maiden bronze medal-winning run at the recently-concluded Asian Games.

The 31-year-old Indian had battled excruciating back pain to secure India's first medal in men's singles in 41 years at Hangzhou but now he will have to sit out for two to three weeks due to the injury.

"We are not looking at playing any tournament this month. Something also came up in the MRI as well, so I will have to be out for 2-3 weeks, so I will not be able to play Denmark and France," Prannoy told PTI.

"I will need to rest and then start with rehab."

In his absence, India's charge will be led by Lakshya Sen, who will be back on the court after playing a vital role in India's first-ever silver medal in men's team event at the Asian Games.

World No. 15 Sen, who remained unbeaten at the Asian Games, will open against Thailand's Kantaphon Wangcharoen and is likely to meet sixth seed Shi Yuqi of China in the second round.

Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu too will look for a good outing after a semifinal finish at the Arctic Open last week. She will be up against



Scotland's Kirsty Gilmour. World No. 20 Kidambi Srikanth, who is also desperately looking to accumulate ranking points to make the cut for the Paris Olympics, will take on China's Weng Hong Yang in his opening game.

It is going to be a tricky affair for the former world No. 1, who has blown hot and cold throughout the season.

Priyanshu Rajawat, currently ranked No. 30 in the world, will also have his task cut out as he faces world No. 14 Lee Zhi Jia, who is brimming with confidence following his title-winning run in the Arctic Open.

Newly-crowned world No. 1 pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who claimed an epic gold at Hangzhou, is pitted against Malaysia's

Ong Yew Sin and Teo Ee Yi. MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila will also miss out after the former suffered a back injury at Hangzhou.

The women's pairing of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand, however, will be back on the court after the Asian Games and will take on Thailand's Benyapa Aimsaard and Nuntakarn Aimsaard.