

"In the US, every State has a motto. So far, I have been to New York, New Jersey, Washington DC and Texas and now we are here in California. The New York State's motto is Out Of Many, One. Texas is known as the Lone Star State. California's motto is Eureka. In India, we don't have a motto for a state. But I will now like to give my state - Telangana - a motto. My state Telangana can be called 'The Future State'," the statement quoted him as saying.

- A. Revanth Reddy, Chief Minister

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Panel to monitor situation along Indo-Bangla border:
Shah

AVIATION
 MINISTER VOWS TO TACKLE RISING AIRFARE, STRIKE A BALANCE

Seerat signs a film for People Media
FACTORY?

DON'T MISS...

City's rapid transformation...

The second phase of the CREDAI Property Show was inaugurated at Shree Convention Centre, Kompally, on Friday. Organised by the Confederation of Real Estate Developers Associations of India (CREDAI), this event follows the success of first property show at Hitec. The Kompally event, running from August 9 to 11, 2024, showcases a wide range of properties, including apartments, villas, plots, and commercial spaces in areas like Balanagar, Kompally, Shamirpet, Medchal, Alwal and Patancheru. President of CREDAI Hyderabad...

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Concern over mounting...

There are allegations that the Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) has been using the modern technology to earn thousands of crores as profit but failing to provide security to coal miners. On account of several security defects, series of coal mining accidents have been taking place causing death to the SCCL workers. Because of the accidents taking place in coal mines, several workers have been sustaining injuries. The coal miners have been apprehensive over their safety...

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Walkaroo ropes in Varun Dhawan...

Leading footwear brand Walkaroo has roped in Bollywood actor Varun Dhawan as its brand ambassador and will launch an integrated marketing campaign showcasing Walkaroo's extensive product portfolio, the company said on Friday. The appointment of Dhawan as brand ambassador reinforces Walkaroo's brand presence and appeal to the younger generation and fashion-conscious consumers across the country, the company said. "We are very happy to have Varun Dhawan join us in..."

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Legendary athlete on field, a...

Neeraj Chopra is all about greatness without pretensions. A fierce competitor, a superstar of Indian sports, a humble human being who would make no bones about his limitations or desires, the double Olympic medalist from India, is all rolled into one. He may want the top prize for himself but would not be envious if the rival pips him. He would tell himself to accept what he got, and work harder to achieve what he desires. He would not pretend that he does not care for brand endorsement. He certainly wants...

-SPORTS

Spurt in political attacks on BRS workers after Cong took over: KTR

NAVEENA GHANATE naveena.ghanate@gmail.com HYDERABAD

A staggering number of political attacks and police cases against BRS workers have been recorded across Telangana. As per data submitted by KTR in the Assembly, nearly 182 incidents of politically motivated attacks were committed against BRS cadres from December 13, 2023, to July 27, 2024. The data is from a collection of news clippings underscoring the fact that no part of the state remained untouched by the wave of attacks. The attacks have been widespread affecting all districts indicating a significant rise in political vio-

Place of incident - Cases

Hyderabad-	24
Nalgonda -	18
Khammam -	11
Karimnagar -	11
Mahabubnagar -	9

As per the data submitted by KTR, Hyderabad witnessed the highest number of attacks, with 24 incidents reported during this period.

lence in the state. As per the data submitted by KTR, Hyderabad witnessed the highest number of attacks, with 24 incidents reported during this period. Following closely, Nalgonda recorded 18 incidents, while Khammam and Karimnagar each saw 11 attacks on BRS workers.

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TORRENT OF WORDS OVER SUNKISHALA PROJECT RETAINING WALL COLLAPSE

Cong and BRS trade charges

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtia Samithi (BRS) leader KT Rama Rao (KTR) blasted Chief Minister Revanth Reddy over the collapse of the wall at the Sunkishala Project site near Nagarjuna Sagar reservoir.

Addressing a press meet at the Telangana Bhavan, KTR squarely blamed the Municipal Department for the accident which occurred on August 2 during the Assembly session and questioned the government's decision to keep the incident secret for a week.

"If the government is not at fault, why was the incident concealed during the Assembly session?" KTR asked, pointing to what he described as a lack of transparency and accountability.

He accused the government of hastily launching the project without adequate consultation with officials leading to the installation of

KT Rama Rao, BRS MLA: "This is 100% failure of the Chief Minister. If the government is not at fault, why was this issue hidden for a week? Blacklist the contracting agency. BRS will visit the site. We demand judicial inquiry"

"Had this happened during working hours, the loss of life could have been catastrophic," KTR warned.

-



"If the government is not at fault, why was the incident concealed during the Assembly session?" KTR asked

faulty gates causing the incident.

"Had this happened during working hours, the loss of life could have been catastrophic," KTR warned.

He said the Congress administration tends to take credit for successes but shirks responsibility when things go wrong.

He drew comparisons with the Kaleshwaram Project, which despite severe flooding remained intact, a testament according to KTR to the BRS government's 'sound' water management policies.

KTR demanded a judicial inquiry into the Sunkishala incident and

Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy "Government knew about Sunkishala incident from Social Media. The incident was minor, and the damage is minimal. The contractor will bear the full cost of repairs, and there is no loss to the public or the government. Once CM returns, will discuss and take action"

-

SC grants bail to Sisodia

Rejects ED/CBI plea to restrain him from attending Delhi Secretariat and CMO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The right to speedy trial and liberty are "sacrosanct", and prolonged incarceration before being pronounced guilty of an offence should not be permitted to become "punishment without trial", the Supreme Court said on Friday. While granting bail to senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Manish Sisodia in the corruption and money laundering cases linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam,

Continued on Page 5

'Citizens can't be made to run from pillar to post'

Citizens cannot be made to run from pillar to post in matters pertaining to life and liberty which is one of the most sacrosanct rights guaranteed by the Constitution, the Supreme Court said on Friday.

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Kavitha loses 11 kgs over 147 days in Tihar Jail

- She is facing other problems, including hypertension and gynaecological
- KTR hopeful she will get bail next in 'Delhi liquor scam' case; family worried

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



BRS MLC Kavitha who has been arrested in connection with the Delhi liquor scam, has reportedly lost 11 kg and is facing many medical problems, including hypertension and

gynaecological concerns. The Kalvakuntla family is counting the days that Kavitha has been away from home, with KTR saying that it's been 147 days since his sister has been jailed.

KTR shared details about Kavitha during a chit-chat. As a concerned brother, KTR said that Kavitha is currently sharing a three-member cell that faces a forested area where

she has encountered insects she had never seen before.

He also noted that Tihar Jail, with a capacity of 13,000, is currently housing around 30,000 prisoners making it a difficult place to survive. He said that cleanliness is very poor in the jail and that the family has been going through a tough phase. KTR addressed concerns regarding his recent visits to New Delhi, stating that his trips were motivated by his role as a concerned family member supporting his sister, Kavitha, who has been in Tihar Jail since March 2024.

KTR noted that Tihar Jail, with a capacity of 13,000, is currently housing around 30,000 prisoners making it a difficult place to survive.

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TG's tagline now 'The future State'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has boldly declared Telangana as 'The Future State' during an AI business roundtable with CEOs of leading tech unicorns at Palo Alto in California, US.

Addressing the gathering on Thursday, the Chief Minister said that he wanted Telangana to be recognised globally for its forward-thinking initiatives and cutting-edge developments. "In the US, every State has a motto. So far, I have been to New York, New Jersey, Washington DC and Texas and now we are here in California. The New



York State's motto is Out Of Many, One. Texas is known as the Lone Star State. California's motto is Eureka. In India, we don't have a motto for a

state. But I will now like to give my state - Telangana - a motto.

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'Rythu Bharosa only for cultivating farmers'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress government's aim is to provide Rythu Bharosa benefits to farmers who actually cultivate the land, Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageshwara Rao said.

He made it clear that the Congress government will not repeat the mistakes committed by the BRS government.

The Minister said the government will deposit Rythu Bharosa money in farmers' bank accounts immediately after collecting farmers' opinions about Rythu Bharosa in four more districts. Speaking to the

media at Kodad on Friday along with local MLA Uttam Padmavathi Reddy, Tummala said that farmers should look at crops which give more income than paddy.

He said that the third phase of farm loan waiver money will be released on August 15. Later, the government will collect the names of eligible farmers who did not get their loans waived, correct mistakes after August 15 and waive their loans too. He said that a bonus of Rs 500 would be given to farmers who cultivate a fine variety of paddy and added that farmers should try to reduce the use of urea and pesticides.



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SC dismisses plea seeking postponement of NEET-PG



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday rejected a plea seeking postponement of the NEET-PG examination, scheduled for August 11, which claimed that candidates have been allocated cities that are highly inconvenient for them to reach. A bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said it can't put the careers of two lakh students in jeopardy for five students.

Continued on Page 5

Rulers dividing people on caste, religious lines: Jagga

Face-off between Dhankhar and Jaya in RS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar and actor-politician Jaya Bachchan were involved in a face-off on Friday after Bachchan raised objection to his "tone" while giving her floor to speak and the former asserting that even a celebrity like her needs to follow decorum.

Opposition parties also staged a walkout following the exchanges between Dhankhar and Bachchan, a Samajwadi Party MP. Later, while talking to reporters in the parliament complex, Bachchan



Opposition parties also staged a walkout following the exchanges between Dhankhar and Jaya, a Samajwadi Party MP.

when he stood up to speak in the House. The trouble started when the SP member wanted to make a point on an ongoing heated discussion between Opposition parties and the Chairman in the Rajya Sabha over certain remarks made by BJP MP Ghanshyam Tiwari on

Kharge a few days ago. Dhankhar allowed her saying, "Jaya Amitabh Bachchan" make your point.

Bachchan rose to say: "I Jaya Amitabh Bachchan want to say, I am an artist. I understand body language and expressions. Forgive me but your tone is not acceptable."

Continued on Page 5

Amaravati: Giving proper shape to reflect dreams of people

How does a city, including the one designated as the capital of a State, evolve and develop? What are the key parameters that ensure its continuous and constant progress and development? From providing the basic amenities to fulfilling the aspirational goals of people, several aspects need to be addressed in the process. Nothing should be lacking if it is to be called a progressive and evolving capital city.

In modern days, building a new capital city is a Herculean task. It requires a holistic vision and thinking that is comprehensive enough to encompass everything that is important

from the standpoint of growth now as well as in the future. We haven't seen any capital city being built before our very eyes. All the capital cities of states and the national capital region of Delhi are ones that have been in existence for long and which over time got modernised with the advent of technology, following migration of people from various parts of the nation. As renowned poet Gurugada Apparao said, "Nation means people, not mere physical structures". Whenever we talk of any city, we also envision the culture and traditions of the people and the facilities available there for ease of living and

Whenever we talk of any city, we also envision the culture and traditions of the people and the facilities available there for ease of living and chances of easier ways of finding employment opportunities.

chances of easier ways of finding employment opportunities. So, it means it is people's vigorous participation from wider sections of society that makes any city, including the capital city, attractive with all-encompassing infrastructure and endowments. As wants are

insatiable, development needs to be continuous process with nourishing influences. One should go on doing it as and when needs and requirements arise while accommodating new ideas and initiating innovations wherever and whenever possible.



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With all the modern technology and human expertise at hand and with the availability

of requisite material in abundance, building a new capital city that reflects the aspirations, hopes, as well as dreams of people and provides for future developmental needs requires dogged pursuit and unyielding political will and persistence.

In this context, the prestigious capital of Andhra Pradesh, Amaravati, has the potential to become an aspirational city though it has to be built from a scratch. For, the state now has leadership with the required political will and support of people who want it to be a world-class one. Just as entering a house already built is different from entering a

customized house that satisfies our requirements, hopes, and aspirations; Amaravati has everything so that it can be built as a city that reflects modernity without compromising on its traditional diversity.

From New York to Hyderabad and from Mumbai to Delhi, development has been possible with the migration of people. That happens only when every facility is provided for ease of living and business. Then only the city becomes an economic force. Although it may take time for Amaravati to be such a city, it need not be a distant dream as development is intuition-

based and it can happen naturally as the government of the day goes on providing facilities and facilitates people's wider participation. It needs to be chiselled as the capital city that reflects and resonates with the hopes of the people of the state.

After taking over the reins of the state, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has started giving definite shape to Andhra Pradesh's capital in a way that it reflects the changing moods and desires of the people.

The hectic activity going on in Amaravati indicates that the dream is about to come true soon.

Rulers dividing people on caste, religious lines: Jagga

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Alleging that those who 'opposed' the Quit India Movement are ruling the nation now, TPCC Working President T. Jagga Reddy said, "Just like the British, today's rulers are dividing people on caste, religion and community lines."

He said that the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, had launched the Bharat Jodo Yatra to ensure that all people are 'treated as brothers.'

Addressing the gathering after hoisting the national flag in connection with Quit India Movement Day celebrations at the Gandhi Bhavan on Friday,



Jagga Reddy said that Prime Minister Modi tried to eliminate the Nehru family from politics, however, the people made Rahul Gandhi the Leader of the Opposition in the

LS.

He said that the people who made Rahul Gandhi the LoP will 'make him the Prime Minister' in the next elections. He called upon Congress

cadres to walk in the path of Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and Mallikarjuna Kharge.

Jagga said that Rahul Gandhi is following Mahatma Gandhi's path of non-violence. The Nehru family has a history of 'sacrificing' their assets for the sake of the people. However, Modi has been hatching conspiracies against that family, he said and added that Rahul Gandhi has been trying to end Modi's rule.

TPCC Senior Vice-President G. Niranjan, former TPCC Working President Jetti Kusuma Kumar, Kumar Rao and Seva Dal chairman Jithender attended the function.

1,000 Udala Marri area of Nirmal will be made tourist spot: Maheshwar



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bharatiya Janata Legislative Party (BJLP) leader Alleti Maheshwar Reddy said that everything will be done to develop the '1000 Udala Marri (Banyan Tree)' area in Nirmal as a tourist spot.

Participating in the World Adivasi Day celebrations organised by the District Tribal Welfare Department at Nirmal on Friday, Maheshwar said that he will strive for the development of Adivasis in Nirmal district by completing the development projects they need.

Eradicating unemployment in Old City priority: Uttam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a significant move aimed at the development of Hyderabad Old City, Civil Supplies and Irrigation Minister Capt. N Uttam Kumar Reddy announced that the Congress Government is committed to eradicating unemployment in the area by revitalising the Society for Employment Promotion & Training (SETWIN) and other institutions in the Twin Cities.

Uttam and Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha attended N. Girdhar Reddy's swearing-in ceremony as the Chairman of SETWIN.

Speaking to the media, Uttam and Damodar said the Congress government is determined to fulfil its promise to develop the Old City.

"Revitalising SETWIN and skill development training as well as transforming the Quli Qutub Shah Urban Development Authority (QSUUDA) to improve infrastructure in the Old City were among the major promises made in the Minority Declaration released by the



Congress in the last Assembly elections," Uttam said.

He pointed out that the unemployment rate in the Old City of Hyderabad stood at an alarming 21% with rates soaring to 45% among those aged 20 to 24.

He said that SETWIN was established on August 15, 1978, under the patronage of its chairman former Chief Minister Dr. Marri Channa Reddy and IAS officer Khader Ali Khan who was its MD.

However, the institution was neglected during TDP and BRS rule. Uttam criticised the BRS admin for neglecting Old City, saying that former Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu who was the Chairman of

SETWIN never held a meeting to review its functioning. Moreover, he added that KCR did not visit the Old City even once during his 10-year tenure.

Uttam emphasised that SETWIN had made significant contributions to promoting skills among Old City youth. However, its progress was hampered by the neglect it experienced during TDP and BRS rule.

He said that SETWIN's goals included preventing school and college dropouts, making youth self-reliant and generating employment for educated unemployed youth, women and physically handicapped individuals from minority communities.

IRRIGATION PROJECTS Cabinet panel reviews desilting

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The cabinet sub-committee on the desilting of irrigation projects met at the Secretariat under the chairmanship of Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy.

The sub-committee members, Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao and Excise Minister Jupally Krishna Rao attended the meeting.

Irrigation Secretary Rahul Bojja, Assistant Secretary Prashanth Jeevan Patil, Irrigation Advisor Aditya Das, Mines and Geology Secretary Surendra Mohan, Director Sushil Kumar, Engineer-in-Chief Anil Kumar and Deputy Engineer-in-Chief K. Srinivas were also present.

The Centre has granted permissions for desilting irrigation projects and has clarified that environmental clearances were not necessary at the time of approval.

The committee emphasised that desilting must be done without damaging the projects. They also discussed the

need for collaboration between the Irrigation and the Mines & Geology departments to finalise a comprehensive report on desilting by August 14.

The committee stressed the importance of restoring the irrigation projects to their original condition through desilting which would increase water storage capacity.

The fertile soil obtained through desilting should be offered free of cost to farmers and farmers should bear the cost of transportation, it said. Sand obtained through desilting should be used for constructing other projects and the soil should be promptly cleared, the committee said.

It also recommended studying desilting projects underway in other states to guide future operations.

Aruna, Asaduddin in JPC Waqf panel

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP's Mahbubnagar MP, DK Aruna and the AIMIM MP from Hyderabad, Asaduddin Owaisi, are members of the 31-member JPC panel which will examine the Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024. The panel includes 21 members from the Lok Sabha and 10 from the Rajya Sabha and will submit its final report during the next Parliament session. The following are members: Jagdambika Pal (BJP), Nishikant Dubey (BJP), Tejasvi Surya (BJP), Aparajita Sarangi (BJP), Sanjay Jaiswal (BJP), Dilip Saikia (BJP), Abhikhit Gangopadhyay (BJP), DK Aruna (BJP), Gaurav Gogoi (Cong), Imran Masood (Cong), Mohd Jawed (Cong), Maulana Mohibullah (SP), Kalyan Banerjee (TMC), A Raja (DMK), Lavu Sri Krishnadevarayalu (TDP), Dileshwar Kamait (JDU), Arvind Sawant (Shiv Sena - UBT), Suresh Mhatre (NCP-Sharad Pawar), Naresh Mhaske (Shiv Sena), Arun Bharti (Lok Janshakti Party-Ram Vilas), Asaduddin Owaisi (AIMIM).

Farmers approach KTR

Accuse CM of forcibly taking over their lands for pharma firms

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Farmers from the Daultabad Mandal of Kodangal met BRS Working President KT Rama Rao at the Telangana Bhavan on Friday, complaining about pressure from Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to surrender their lands to pharma companies. They said that nearly 3,000 acres in Hakimpet, Polepally and Lakcharla villages of Dudyala Mandal are being taken over forcibly.

The farmers, accompanied by former Kodangal MLA Patnam Narendar Reddy, Mahipal Mudraj, and other leaders, voiced their concern about the environmental pollution that the pharma companies would bring.

Despite their objections, they said that the CM's brother, Tirupati Reddy, is threaten-



'KTR responsible for Sunkishala wall collapse'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress' Nagarkurnool MP, Mallu Ravi, said that BRS working President and former Minister KT Rama Rao is responsible for the damage suffered by the Sunkishala Project.

He said KTR had laid the foundation stone for the project in 2021 at Sunkishala and that Megha Engineering was given the contract for its construction. He said that KTR is the 'Karthi, Karma and Kriya' of the Sunkishala Project.

Addressing the media in New Delhi on Friday, Mallu

Ravi said that the BRS government had started Sunkishala Project work in 2021 and completed it in 2023. However, they kept some work pending, Mallu Ravi said, recalling that tenders, work and the hiking of project costs took place during BRS rule. He said the BRS government started the Sunkishala Project work with an estimation of Rs 1,400 crore and later hiked it to Rs 2000 crore.

He said the retaining wall collapsed as water collected in it after the recent rains and that Telangana suffered losses due to the poor quality of construction in many projects.

Gourevelli reservoir works approved

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Government of Telangana has granted revised administrative approval for the balance works of the SRSP-IFFC Package No.7, which includes earthwork, excavation, and various construction components essential for the Gourevelli Reservoir. The project, estimated at Rs. 431.30 crore with SSR 2023-24, will cover the irrigation of 1,06,000 acres of ayacut in the drought-prone areas of Husnabad and Station Ghanpur constituencies. This decision follows a thorough examination of the Engineer-in-Chief's recommendation.

SC stays Mumbai college circular banning 'hijab, burqa, cap and naqab'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday stayed a Mumbai college's decision banning 'hijab, burqa, cap and naqab' on the campus and said girl students must have the freedom to choose what they wear.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Sanjay Kumar came down heavily on the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Education Society, which runs the N G Acharya and D K Marathe College' for issuing such a circular and asked whether it would ban 'bindi' and 'tilak' also.

During the hearing, Justice Kumar asked senior advocate Madhavi Divan,

appearing for the society, how was the college empowering the girl students by issuing such a circular. "How are you empowering the women by telling them what to wear? I think it's less said the better. Where is the freedom of choice for the women?"



Where is freedom of choice of what to wear to the girl students? Educational institutions should not force their decisions on the girl students on what to wear," said Justice Kumar.

TG's tagline now...

Continued from page 1

My state Telangana can be called 'The Future State', the statement quoted him as saying.

"I invite you to Telangana. I invite you to the future. Together, let us make the future," he said.

The meeting, hosted by the Indian Consulate General in California, served as a platform for Revanth Reddy to showcase Telangana's potential as a top investment destination.

The Minister for Industries, Commerce and IT, D. Sridhar Babu, who accompanied the Chief Minister, presented key highlights of Telangana's policies and the inherent strengths that make it attractive for global investors, particularly in the tech sector.

Continuing his outreach, Revanth Reddy, along with Sridhar Babu, addressed the IT Serve Alliance in Dallas, Texas and urged the Indian tech diaspora to invest in Hyderabad and Telangana.

The IT Serve Alliance, the largest association of IT ser-

vices organisations in the US, extended an invitation to their annual flagship event in Las Vegas later this year.

During his speech, Revanth Reddy emphasised the importance of the Indian tech diaspora in the state's development.

"We have built Hyderabad, Secunderabad and Cyberabad over the years. Now, let us all join in making a world-class fourth city, the Future City. When you invest in Hyderabad now, you are investing in the future," he said.

Sridhar Babu elaborated on the projects aimed at reimagining Hyderabad, including the Future City, the extension of the Metro, and the Musi River rejuvenation project.

Meanwhile, biotech giant Amgen announced plans to open a new technology and innovation centre in Hyderabad.

The site, known as Amgen India, will accelerate digital capabilities across the global organization and is expected to be operational by the fourth quarter of 2024.

AI-powered, green data centre soon

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Aurum Equity Partners has decided to establish an AI-powered, green data centre in Hyderabad involving an investment of USD 400 million after a meeting with Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu at Palo Alto in California. This decision is in addition to their initial plan to invest USD 50 million announced last year.

The company has now decided to establish a 100 MW cutting-edge AI-powered data centre designed to cater to both hyperscalers and enterprises with a total investment of USD 400 million.

Speaking after the meeting, Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy said, "We are happy that Aurum has decided to build an AI-powered, Green Data Centre which will create many new jobs in Hyderabad." Venkat Bussa, the CEO and

Chairman of Aurum Equity Partners, said, "Our next-generation data centre framework is designed to bridge the digital divide between rural and urban India. This initiative will make government services like e-Seva, e-Payment, and e-Education accessible to all, supporting our mission to connect every corner of the nation."

This investment underscores Aurum Equity Partners' commitment to improving India's digital infrastructure ensuring that both urban and rural areas have equal access to essential government services.

Reacting after the successful meeting, Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu said, "We are happy with the development. It underscores the significant rise of Hyderabad as a data centre hub. The stress and accent is clearly on AI-powered initiatives and green energy."

Behind the scenes at KFC

Venue
KFC, RK Cineplex, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad
Date: Monday, 12th August 2024
Time: 11:30 am

Book launch

'India @100: Envisioning Tomorrow's Economic Powerhouse' by Professor KV Subramanian
Venue
ISB, Hyderabad Campus
Date: August 12, 2024
Time: 3:30 pm

Nizami Chowki

Discover the culinary legacy of the Asafiya dynasty through a dining experience
Venue
Novotel, Hyderabad Airport
From August 3 to 31, every Saturday, 7pm to 11 pm

Joyalukas Diamond Jewellery show

Venue
Miyapur Road, Kondapur
August 9 to 24

8th edition of HIMTEX

The Hyderabad International Machine Tool and Engineering Expo will showcase over 300 exhibitors presenting cutting-edge advancements
Venue
HITEX Exhibition Centre
August 16 to 19

Manthan school holds Future Pathways fest

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Manthan School organized the Future Pathways Festival, a global university festival on Friday. The event witnessed participation of over 100 universities from India, US, UK, Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

The festival hosted various interactive sessions that attracted both school parents and students who benefited from engaging in discussions with university representatives. Fairina Siddiqui, the College & Career Counsellor at Manthan, said, "The festival has empowered our student community to make informed decisions."

City Pioneer



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Railways uses AI to ease routine tasks

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Indian Railways has deployed Artificial Intelligence (AI) to improve efficiency of railway services. Kesinini Sivanathi, Member of Lok Sabha, has raised a question on whether the government is using Artificial Intelligence to improve the efficiency of railway services for which Union Minister for Railways Ashwini Vaishnav gave the information.

CREDAI PROPERTY SHOW

City's rapid transformation into a global hub emphasised

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The second phase of the CREDAI Property Show was inaugurated at Shree Convention Centre, Kompally, on Friday. Organised by the Confederation of Real Estate Developers Associations of India (CREDAI), this event follows the success of first property show at Hitex. The Kompally event, running from August 9 to 11, 2024, showcases a wide range of properties, including apartments, villas, plots, and commercial spaces in areas like Balanagar, Kompally, Shamirpet, Medchal, Alwal and Patancheru.

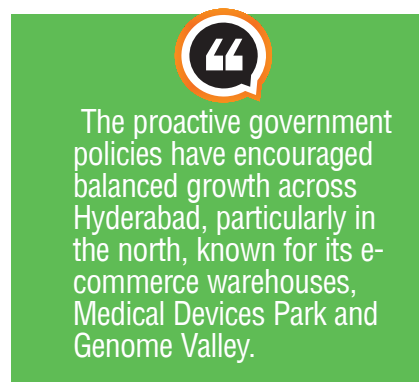
President of CREDAI Hyderabad, V Rajashekar Reddy highlighted Hyderabad's booming real estate market, with a 29% annual growth in unit sales value from H1-CY19 to H1-CY24. The city saw a 257% increase in the value of units sold and a 148% rise in housing unit sales in H1-CY24 compared to H1-

CY19. He emphasised the city's rapid transformation into a global hub, driven by infrastructure projects like new roads, expanded metro and MMTS networks, and the Musi Riverfront initiative.

Reddy also noted that proactive government policies have encouraged balanced growth across Hyderabad, particularly in the north, known for its e-commerce warehouses, Medical Devices Park, and Genome Valley. The CREDAIability-themed property show aims to spotlight this region's real estate potential.

The President-elect of CREDAI Hyderabad, Jaideep Reddy and B. Jagannath Rao, Secretary of CREDAI Hyderabad, also spoke about the city's real estate growth, attributing it to government policies and the development of industrial corridors. Jagannath assured to increase 360-degree growth across the city along with industrial corridors spread across

Core Urban Region (CUR) of Hyderabad, where North corridor has already benefited from it. Jaideep encouraged homebuyers to take advantage of the rising demand and property values in North Hyderabad.



President of CREDAI Hyderabad, V Rajashekar Reddy seen inaugurating the second phase of the CREDAI Property Show at Shree Convention Centre, Kompally on Friday.

WORLD ADIVASI DAY

Minister Seethakka assures all help to tribals

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

State Panchayat Raj, Rural Development and Women and Child Welfare Minister Dr. Dhanasari Anasuya (Seethakka) clarified that her government is working for the development of tribals. She said Rs 17,000 crore has been allocated for the welfare of STs in the budget like never before. Unlike the previous government, she assured that the budget funds allotted to the tribals will be spent for their development.

On the occasion of World Adivasi Day, Assembly Speaker Prasad Kumar, along with Minister Seethakka, attended a meeting organised by the Tribal Welfare department at Komaram Bheem Adivasi Building in Banjara Hills.

Artists welcomed the Minister with traditional adivasi instruments and dances. She saw the exhibition of tribal art organised there and paid tributes to the tribal warriors Kumaram Bheem and Ranji with flowers.

First generation freedom fighter Aradyam Ranji Gond unveiled a huge portrait of Adivasis. The tribal students who

showed exceptional talent in the NEET examinations were specially honoured. The students who showed their skills in sports were felicitated. Small traders doing business under the name of Adivasi Foods were also honoured.

Minister Seethakka explained the injustices done to the tribals by the previous government and the welfare programmes undertaken by her government for the tribals.

She said that it is commendable that the adivasis who live somewhere in the corners of the hills and at the bends of the streams have risen to the level of discussing their rights in cities like Hyderabad.

The Minister said that the tribes have not developed to the expected level. The oppression of ethnic groups continued for generations.

Seethakka expressed displeasure that the Agency areas remained far from development due to the negligent attitude of the BRS in the last 10 years. She said that every rupee allocated in the budget will be spent in the agency areas and tribal villages to support the development of the tribal people.



Minister Seethakka blows the tribal bugle to mark the World Adivasi Day in Hyderabad on Friday.

First generation freedom fighter Aradyam Ranji Gond unveiled a huge portrait of Adivasis

NO CLASSROOMS IN MASAB TANK SCHOOL

Students of govt school forced to sit in the open

RASHMI BHUMIREDDY ■ HYDERABAD

Students of the Government Girls Primary and High School (Red Cross), Masab Tank, are forced to sit in the open sky due to lack of classrooms.

When the Pioneer Correspondent visited the school, she was witness to students sitting in the open as there was a single classroom that was fully packed, with four students sitting on a single bench and there was hardly any space to stand. The students narrated their hardships, especially during their language classes, by stating, "If the Telugu class is taking place inside the classroom, the Hindi and Urdu students will have to sit outside. It's really hectic for us to shuffle as per the classes."

The officials said, "Due to lack of classrooms, students of different classes are seen sitting in a single classroom or out in the open. On the ground floor, a classroom was locked and it has been a year since it has been like



that. We urged the government to give us permission to use the locked classroom. The school has a capacity of 300 students but due to lack of classrooms, they are forced to sit outside for their classes. We need four to five classrooms to tackle this issue." Despite the fact that the school receives funds under Mana Ooru Mana Badi, several works related to infrastructure are not up to the mark. It still needs renovation, such as fixing non-functional toilets, classrooms that look a bit untidy and there is need for more benches and chairs. Due to lack of sanitary workers, the school premises and washrooms are unhygienic. With regards to meals, breakfast and meals were stopped as the school has not been selected in phase one round while midday meals are being continued.

GREAT APPSEC HACKATHON 2024

TG Cyber Bureau refunds Rs 90 cr to 56% of IT professionals in State

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Drawing attention to the significant amount of Rs 90 crore refunded to cyber crime victims in thousands of cyber crime cases by the Telangana Cyber Security Bureau team, Director General of Police Dr Jitender appreciated the Cyber Security Bureau for the proactive response to the cyber crime in the State. He was the chief guest at the inauguration of the Great AppSec Hackathon 2024 at the ICCC Telangana State Police Command and Control Centre on Friday.

The Telangana Cyber Security Bureau, in collaboration with the Cyber Security Centre of Excellence (CCOE) and the Data Security Council of India (DSCIC), launched the Great AppSec Hackathon 2024. This event will see participation from 10,000 people from across 29 Indian states and over 20 countries, emphasising



DGP Shikha Goel addressing the Great AppSec Hackathon meet in Hyderabad on Friday

the importance of cyber security in today's world.

Addressing the inaugural, Jitender highlighted that the Telangana Cyber Security Bureau is unique, as it's the only one of its kind in any Indian state. The Bureau is proactive in ensuring the safety and security of citizens, responding effectively to cyber crimes. He mentioned that in the past year, the Bureau has

saved over Rs 150 crore, which were frozen in various banks due to the efforts of the Cyber Security team. Jitender appreciated the Director of the Telangana Cyber Security Bureau, DGP Shikha Goel, for the Cyber Security team's quick responses to cyber crime cases, reinforcing public confidence in the police. He also called the hackathon an outstanding initiative, engaging young minds in real-world problem-solving.

Speaking on the occasion, DGP Shikha Goel said that several researchers from across the globe highlighted that there is significant relation to education and vulnerability, which is not true in cyber crime, as 70% of cybercrime victims are educated, with 56% being IT professionals and software engineers. She expressed hope that solutions from the hackathon would significantly impact cybersecurity in the State and the country.

PHONE-TAPPING CASE

Court denies bail to accused

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Nampally court had rejected the bail petitions of former DSP Praneeth Rao and former DCP (Task Force) Radhakishan Rao on Friday. This was the first bail petition after filing the chargesheet in the phone-tapping case. During the bail petition arguments, both the counsels cited various superior court judgements.

The counsel for the State said that the police are on the way to get the red corner notice from Interpol agency through the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). However, other two accused are absconding and the case is at a crucial stage. So, Public Prosecutor Samba Shiva Reddy requested the court not to grant bail to the accused.

PRAJAVANI

Pleas galore, elusive solutions

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Despite their issues being unresolved, people attended Prajavani with the hope that their issues will be solved on Friday. A majority of petitioners filed applications with problems ranging from double-bedroom houses, six schemes or guarantees, to personal issues related to home, land and finances. In all, 502 applications were received in the Prajavani programme organised at Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Praja Bhavan.

Out of the 502 applications, 112 applications were related to revenue issues, 71 related to minority welfare, 69 related to Civil Supplies department, 42 related to Panchayat Raj and Rural Development department, 35 related to Municipal department and 173 applications related to other departments. Telangana State



Planning Commission Vice-President Dr Chinna Reddy, along with Public Administration Special Officer Divya received the applications.

Speaking to the Pioneer correspondent, Thotapalli Ravikumar from Khammam district said, "I have filed an application on not receiving zero electricity bill and no gas subsidy. Despite the fact that I have related documents for them such as white ration card, electricity bill, Aadhaar card and documents for gas booking, the authorities concerned assured did not offer me a solution." Another petitioner, Vignesh said, "We are the residents of Sri Vigneshwara Double Bedroom Beneficiaries Social Welfare Association, Cheralapally. In our colony, about 340 families live. Though we have three borewells, only one borewell is working. Due to this, we are facing a lot of issues related to water."

2 months on, Tri-Commissionerate websites off

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Police have not restored three urban police commissionerate's websites pertaining to Hyderabad, Rachakonda and Cyberabad since a consecutive data compromise of several websites or applications of the police.

The TSCOP, Hawk Eye and other services of Telangana Police were allegedly hacked by a hacker named Jatin two months back. After coming to know about this, the State police stopped the services of three urban commissionerates' websites along with Telangana State police website. After filing a complaint on hacking the

official websites, Telangana Cyber Security Bureau (TGCSB) arrested the accused on June 8.

The accused had applied for bail around two times, but the court always rejected his bail. Meanwhile, when The Pioneer asked a TGCSB official about the three commissionerate websites' restoration, he said that he can't comment on it.

The three commissionerate websites are useful for the people to get to know about the police stations of the respective commissionerates and contact numbers of the police personnel. It is learnt that the police have not detected the bug yet.



That may be the reason to not restore those official websites. "The probe is going on to identify if any additional accomplices are involved in this case", DGP office stated on Friday. So far, the police reportedly have not arrested any other person in this case. The case was registered on June 3, following the detection of a data breach involving the Hawk Eye application, with subsequent leaks concerning

TSCOP and SMS services. "Acting swiftly, the TGCSB investigators travelled to Delhi, where they identified and arrested the hacker, who had claimed to have posted the compromised data on a public platform for a price", police said.

In July, the counsel for the accused told the court during his bail plea that the accused has been falsely implicated in the case.

In the counter, the counsel for the police said that he was selling fake CBI files and Aadhaar data on a website. He was browsing many government websites, particularly police websites.

2024 sees record 46,000 homes registered in Hyd

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad saw a record number of home registrations in 2024, with over 46,000 homes registered, leading to a 40% surge in revenue, according to Knight Frank India.

The city registered 7,124 units in July alone, marking a 28% year-on-year increase. Since January 2024, the total number of home registrations has reached 46,368, a 17% rise compared to the same period last year.

According to the report, the State's revenue from stamp duty

between January and June 2024 also grew by 40%, reaching Rs 28,578 crore.

The Hyderabad residential market, which covers four districts of Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajigiri, Rangareddy and Sangareddy, saw a shift towards higher-value properties.

In July 2024, properties priced at Rs 1 crore and above accounted for 13% of all registrations, up from 9% the previous year.

There was also a notable increase in demand for larger homes (over 2,000 sq ft), with registrations rising to 14% from 11% in July 2023.

The city registered 7,124 units in July alone, marking a 28% year-on-year increase. Since Jan, total number of home registrations has reached 46,368, a 17% rise compared to the same period last year



Pumping Godavari water to Kalleshwaram project begins

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

The pumping of Godavari River water into Mallanna Sagar and Kondapochamma Sagar, which are parts of the Kaleshwaram Project, began on Thursday.

Using four pumps of the Mallanna Pump House, Godavari water is being pumped into Mallanna Sagar reservoir. Prior to pumping water, the storage of water in Mallanna Sagar reservoir reads as 8.543 tmc. Daily 5200 cusecs of water gets pumped using four pumpsets, which translates to 0.45 tmc.

Since 2020, 41.35 tmc of water is pumped into the Mallanna Sagar Reservoir. A trial run was conducted releasing water from Mallanna Sagar into Kondapochamma reservoir via Akkaram and Markuk pump house. From Friday onwards, pumping of water into Kondapochamma Sagar commenced using a lone pump. On Saturday, another pump will commence pumping water into Kondapochamma Sagar, according to Kaleshwaram project SE

Venu.

The water stored in Kondapochamma Sagar is measured as 4 tmc.

During the current rainy season, the siddipet district received deficient rainfall, leading to tanks and ponds remaining unfilled. The farmers have been expressing concern over deficiency of water for kharif and rabi seasons.

The officials took the matter to the notice of the government leading to commencement of pumping of water from Godavari River into Mallanna Sagar and Kondapochamma Sagar.

The farmers are of the view that releasing water into tanks and check-dams through Ramayampeta, Sangareddy, Gajwel and Gandhamala main canals will solve the irrigation problem for kharif and rabi.

The Mallannasagar and Kondapochamma Sagar reservoirs irrigate several lands in Siddipet, Medak, Sangareddy, Alair, Janagan and Bhongir districts besides quenching the thirst of the people in the villages.

Concern over mounting mishaps in SCCL

MODERN TECH FOR PROFITS, BUT NO SAFETY FOR MEASURES FOR WORKERS

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI

There are allegations that the Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) has been using the modern technology to earn thousands of crores as profit but failing to provide security to coal miners.

On account of several security defects, series of coal mining accidents have been taking place causing death to the SCCL workers.

Because of the accidents taking place in coal mines, several workers have been sustaining injuries. The coal miners have been apprehensive over their safety, according to reports.

A section of the SCCL workers has been breathing fire on the SCCL management, which time and again rises the slogan "One family-One objective."

Series of accidents taking place in SCCL industry show official dereliction to duty to provide safety of industrial workers.

In January this year, in the mishap that took place in GDK-2 incline mine in Ramagundam area, mining Sardar Samireddy sus-



Miners excavating coal at on of the SCCL mines

It has become rather routine for the industrial workers to either die or sustain injuries. The series of accidents has affected the confidence of the SCCL workers. The accidents are being blamed for officials not taking precautions at work place. The SCCL management and representative trade unions are accused of being a mute spectator to the industrial accidents taking place in coal mines.

There were instances of the management placing a worker under suspension for minor lapses. There were allegations of management not taking action against officials. A section of the trade unions has been demanding the SCCL management to make public the reports of the director general of mines safety on accidents.

tained grievous injuries and later succumbed to them. In May, in the accident triggered by technical snag in incline-11 mine, operator Prapat died on the spot. Similarly, in another accident that took place on June 17 in the open cast project-2 of the

Ramagundam area, earth caved in killing workers Venakteswarlu and Vidyasagar. The accident left two more workers injured. In the GDK-2 coal mine, the roof of a coal mine caved in causing serious injuries to the workers.

Alcoholic son puts his mother to death

PNS ■ MEDAK

In a shameful incident, a cruel and alcohol-addicted son put to death his mother by hanging at their house in Nizampet on the intervening night between Thursday and Friday. The deceased was identified as Durgava, 75.

Her son Ramachandram demanded her to give him her pension amount. As she refused to part with the money, he took the extreme step. Ramachandram who has fallen into a bad company was not engaged in any worthwhile work.

On a complaint lodged with the Ramayampeta police by the deceased's daughter Nagulu, Ramayampeta CI Venkata Raja Goud and SI Srinivas Reddy reached the crime scene and arranged to send her body to Government Hospital at Ramayampeta for post-mortem.

Thugs on motorbikes target Nirmal women

PNS ■ NIRMAL

Chain-snatchers are on the rampage in Nirmal district. Motorcycle-borne thugs are striking at will and women fear for their safety.

The police are yet to hit the chain-snatcher in full force. The thugs keep going on the rampage in towns and also in villages. Chain-snatching incidents are on the rise. The chain-snatchers have become a constant challenge for the police.

The thugs target women in isolated places and snatch away their mangalsutra, which is considered auspicious. Women are fuming at the thugs targeting them at will.

A month ago, a woman from Jagtial district was alone on the national highway near the rural police station in Nirmal town, when chain-snatchers pulled her mangalsutra and ran away in full public view. Within five minutes of the incident,

one more gold chain was stolen in Nirmal town's Shantinagar Colony.

It is suspected that gangs from Bihar and Maharashtra could have been operating in the district. The police are yet to respond to the chain-snatching incidents which are on the rise. It is reported that all the incidents are recorded in the CCTV cameras.



BRS MP seeks more funds for Bhadrachalam

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

BRS MP in Rajya Sabha Vaddiraju Ravichandra has demanded the Union government to allocate more funds for the comprehensive development of Bhadrachalam pilgrimage centre.

He said that the allocation of Rs 50 crore was not sufficient for comprehensive development of the temple town of Bhadrachalam.

Taking part in a face-to-face programme arranged by the Confederation of Indian Industry at Delhi with Union Minister G Kishan Reddy on Thursday night, he said that Bhadrachalam is the most important pilgrimage centre after Ayodhya as far as Lord Sri Rama is concerned. He sought higher allocations to the pilgrimage centre.

Vaddiraju felt happy at Kishan Reddy of Telangana becoming the Minister for Steel and Mines. The SCCL, which is described as the boon of Telangana, is jointly owned by the State and Central governments. "It is the responsibility of one and all to prevent its privatisation," he remarked.

He appealed to Kishan Reddy to take steps to set up a steel factory at Bayyaram and suggested accessing the iron ore needed for the steel plant from neighbouring Chhattisgarh.

Rowdy-sheeter shot dead

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

In a shocking incident late Thursday night, a 35-year-old rowdy-sheeter, Mohd Riyaz, was shot dead by unknown assailants at Balapur. The victim, a resident of Kanchanbagh, was riding a motorcycle when a car reportedly rammed into him, throwing him out of the vehicle.

According to witnesses, the assailants, who were inside the car, came out of the car and attacked Riyaz, fatally shooting him with a country-made weapon. The attackers



Rachakonda Commissioner of Police G Sudheer Babu

then fled the scene, leaving the victim dead on the road. The incident prompted an immediate response from the local

authorities. The Balapur police, along with senior officers, rushed to the scene to begin their investigation. Rachakonda Commissioner of Police G Sudheer Babu also visited the scene of crime and directed the formation of special teams to apprehend the culprits.

The Special Operations Team (SOT) and Technical teams have joined forces with local police in a coordinated effort to track down the assailants, who remain at large. The investigation is ongoing, with authorities vowing to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Rally on World Adivasi Day

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Collector Muzameel Khan has laid emphasis on education for the people to occupy top positions in society. He remarked saying, "Education grooms the future of the people." In connection with World Adivasi Day on Friday, he flagged off a rally from local Pavilion to ZP Center.

Addressing a gathering, Collector said that education helps people scale any dizzy heights. From the traditions of Adivasi culture, people can learn anything, he said.

Stress on outcome-based, skill-oriented education

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Technical institutions have to implement outcome based skill-oriented education for the benefit of the student community.

It is the need of the hour in the present technological advancement, said Manager-IP and Technology Transfer, AICTE-SCR, Dr Inja Naga Bheema Lingeshwar Reddy.

He was speaking as the chief guest at the AICTE Innovation Centre Technology Transfer meet organized by the Centre for Innovation Incubation Research and Entrepreneurship (C-IZRE) and Institutions Innovation Council (IIC), Kakatiya Institute of Technology & Science (KITS), Warangal

in association with Innovation Cell, Ministry of Education (MoE), Government of India. It was held at Silver Jubilee Seminar Hall, Block-IV, KITS, Warangal campus on Friday, said Principal, Prof. K. Ashoka Reddy.

Lingeshwar Reddy concluded that the faculty must be trained on trend setting technologies for real world problems for the benefit of present society.

According to Hyderabad Founder lab, CEO, Sakuntala Kasaragadda, the factors affecting effective leadership are self-confidence, responsibility, energy, creative thinking, ability to solve critical problems and communication. On this occasion

Principal Prof. Ashoka Reddy said that the objective of C-IZRE is to promote innovation and entrepreneurship culture by organising technical workshops, conferences, hackathons and interactive sessions with successful entrepreneurs.

Head, C-IZRE, Prof. K Raja Narendar Reddy, Head of the department of CSM, Prof. S Narsimha Reddy, MSME Coordinator Dr A Devaraju, AICTE Ideal lab Co-coordinator Dr V Raju Reddy, IIC-president Dr P Vijay Kumar, Student Alliance for Innovation Leadership (SAIL) President Ridhima, student representatives Abhinay Nayak, Vigna Varadh and Mokshith were among those present.

Revenue department to conduct survey of defence, govt lands

PNS ■ MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI

The district administration has set its sights on conducting surveys under a pilot project to safeguard the government lands as a pilot project. The officials have been conducting an exercise to include the survey results in KML Map (Google).

Collector Gautam Potru on Friday reviewed the issue with revenue officials along with additional collector Vijayender.

He directed the revenue officials to conduct a pucca survey with specific standards as per the government rules to safeguard the prohibited lands, lands belonging to defence department, forest department, ceiling lands, assigned lands and those belonging to the central and state governments. The survey details will be fed into Keyhole Markup Language Map of the Google.

Those who applied for regularisation of the layouts under the LRS and for securing approvals for construction through TG-bPASS, the KML

Those who applied for regularisation of the layouts under the LRS and for securing approvals for construction will make it easy for authorities to give approval

map specifications will make it easy for authorities to give approval. Moreover, the district revenue authorities have tightened their belts to fix outer boundaries for the defence and forest departments' lands and safeguard the lands.

ACB registers DA case against TG official

PNS ■ NIZAMABAD

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) of Telangana on Friday said it has seized properties worth about Rs six crore in a disproportionate assets (DA) case during searches carried out at the house of an official working in the Municipal Corporation Office in Nizamabad district and other places. The case was registered against a Superintendent in-charge Revenue Officer after he allegedly acquired assets disproportionate to his known sources of income by indulging in corrupt practices and dubious means of earning income during his service, an ACB release said.

As this is an offence punishable under the Prevention of Corruption Act, ACB Nizamabad Range registered an FIR and conducted searches at his house and various other places, the ACB said. During the search operation, net cash of Rs 2.93 crore besides bank balance in the name of the accused officer, his wife and mother totalling 1.10 crore, gold worth Rs six lakh and 17 immovable properties worth Rs 1.98 crore, all worth Rs 6.07 crore, were seized.

STRAY DOGS SCARE IN RANGAREDDY DISTRICT

Two children die dog bite

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

A series of tragic incidents involving stray dog attacks has caused concerns about public safety in Rangareddy district. Two separate attacks resulted in the death of young children, underscoring the severe threat posed by stray dogs in the region.

In Ibrahimpatnam mandal, a 4-year-old boy from Raipol village, Udugula Keyansh Goud, succumbed to injuries sustained when a stray dog attacked him 20 days ago. While returning home from school, Keyansh was attacked by stray dogs, and he suffered severe injuries to his face and body. Despite immediate medical attention and a transfer to Niloufer Hospital in Hyderabad; Keyansh passed

away while undergoing treatment. This incident alarmed local residents and people are too scared to send their children to schools.

In a separate and equally distressing event, a 7-year-old disabled boy in Kokapet, Sabita Nagar, was viciously attacked by a stray dog while sleeping in a hut. The dog bit off the boy's genitalia, and his cries alerted nearby residents. The dog was killed by the locals, who then rushed the boy to the hospital for emergency care. The severity of the injuries left the boy's family and the community devastated. This incident further heightened concerns about stray dogs in Kokapet, with residents demanding swift action from authorities to address the growing menace.



Govt committed to strengthen self-help groups: Ponguleti



Minister for Revenue Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy participating in various developmental programmes in Kothagudem on Friday

PNS ■ BHADRACHALAM

Minister for Revenue Pongileti Srinivas Reddy participated in various developmental programmes in the district along with local legislators Koonanneni Sambasivarao and District Collector Jitesh V Patil District.

The Minister laid the founda-

tion stone for the construction of side canals to be constructed at a cost of Rs 1.50 crore at Ashok Nagar Colony under Lakshmi Devi Palli mandal. Also, under the auspices of the Forest Department, saplings were planted in Lakshmi Devi Palli mandal.

The Forest Department officials were advised to adopt

friendly attitude towards tribal people. The Revenue Minister said that house plot would be distributed to the family members of Forest Ranger Srinivas who died in a tribal attack last year.

A synthetic tennis court constructed with international standards was constructed at a cost Rs 5 lakhs in Palvancha mandal. The Minister inaugurated the court.

The Minister inaugurated the Indra Mahila Shakti Canteen funded by Rs 5 lakh bank loan under the Urban Poverty Alleviation Organization (MOPMA).

Speaking on the occasion, Srinivas Reddy said that a plan has been prepared to strengthen all self-help groups in the State government and provide credit facilities to them. He said that the government would provide necessary incentives to rural women to enable them to become entrepreneurs.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
TENDER NOTICE
NIT No. 17/EE-08/CR2/GHMC/2024-25, Dt. 06.08.2024
Scope/Description of Work: Invitation for Sealed quotations for Conceptual / Theme Oriented artistic painting with acrylic or any higher grade of exterior paint of 1st quality, designs developed by the artists professionally experienced in street art painting on the wall/surface (for flyovers, under passes, RUBs, compound walls etc) with approved brand paints, materials, brushes, rollers etc including cost and conveyance of all materials, cleaning the wall and labour charges, fixing and removing scaffolding etc. complete as directed by the Engineer in charge. Quotation excluding taxes (Rs per sq ft): Sealed quotations (per sq ft), Quotation submission Start Date: 09/08/2024 @ 3.00 PM, Quotation submission End Date: 13/08/2024 @ 3.00 PM. Name & Address Office Ph No.: Executive Engineer-08, CHARMINAR ZONE, GHMC, Ph: 7993727669. Further details can be seen at @ http://www.ghmc.gov.in in tender notifications and Notice board of this office. Sd/- Executive Engineer-08 Charminar Zone, GHMC
R.O.No: 271-PP/CL/MOV/11/2024-25, Dt. 06-08-2024

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
ROADS & BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT
CORRIEGRAM
Subj: Construction of HLB across Godavari river in between Manthani to Shivaram in Peddapally District.
Ref.: 1. Chief Engineer (R&B), State Roads & CRN e-NIT No.03/SE(D&P)/EE-II/00E-4/AE-10/2024-25, Dt: 31.07.2024.
The following CorrieGRAM is issued to the NIT wide reference cited. The other terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

Sl.No	For	Read as						
1	Executed the following minimum quantities of works as a prime contract in any one year during the last 10 financial years i.e., from 2014-15 to 2023-2024.	Executed the following minimum quantities of works as a prime contract in any one year during the last 10 financial years i.e., from 2014-15 to 2023-2024.						
	Item	Estimated Qty	UOM	Minimum Required Qty	Item	Estimated Qty	UOM	Minimum Required Qty
	VRCC M35 Bored cast-in-Situ piles	12328	Rm	3662	Bored Cast-in-Situ piles	12328	Rm	3662
	HYSD steel for bridges Sub structure	2151	MT	537.75	HYSD steel for bridges Sub structure and foundation	2151	MT	537.75

R.O.No: 274-PP/CL/ADT/11/2024-25, Dt. 03-08-2024
Sd/- Chief Engineer (R&B), (SR & CRN)

ACROSS THE STATES



Mizoram, Assam hold border talks after 20 months

Mizoram and Assam discussed the border issues on Friday, twenty months after the two northeastern neighbours held a meeting to find an amicable solution to the inter-state boundary dispute, an official said. The meeting between delegations of both states is being held in Aizawl. The two states held the last round of talks in November 2022 in Guwahati. During Friday's meeting, the Assam delegation is led by Border Protection and Development Minister Atul Bora while the Mizoram side is headed by Home Minister K Sapdanga, the official said. This is the fourth ministerial-level talks between the two neighbouring states since August 2021 and the first meeting after the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) came to power in December last year. Three Mizoram districts - Aizawl, Kolisab and Mamit - share a 164.6 km border with Assam's Cachar, Karmganj and Hailankandi districts. The dispute mainly stemmed from two colonial demarcations - 1875 and 1933.



Odisha plans to set up university for visually challenged persons

The Odisha government is planning to set up a dedicated international university for visually challenged persons, making it the first such initiative in the country, a senior official said. Bishnupada Sethi, Principal Secretary to the Department of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) on Thursday said the Odisha government has discussed the matter with a Japanese delegation that visited the state for the meeting. SSEPD Deputy Secretary Sanyasi Behera, who is himself a visually challenged person, said, "The university will cater to the needs of visually challenged persons in education and training." Sethi said Odisha is contemplating opening a campus for imparting education to visually challenged students from India and abroad. He said the institute will provide a vocational course on policy research, and technical courses on acupuncture and physiotherapy.



Students strip-searched in Indore school for mobile phone

The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Friday issued a notice to the state government in connection with an incident in a school in Indore where some students were allegedly strip-searched by a teacher to find out who among them brought a mobile phone to class. Justices Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari and Duppala Venkata Ramana of the Indore bench of MP HC issued notice to the state government on a PIL filed by social activist Chinmoy Mishra. The notice sought a report within a week from the state government on the steps taken in connection with the alleged incident. During the hearing, Mishra's lawyer Abhinav Dhanodkar claimed Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act provisions have not been complied with in the case as yet, though parents filed a police complaint on August 2. The PIL sought that compliance of POCSO Act be ensured in the case as well as appropriate directions be issued for quick action in such incidents.

SC grants bail to...

Continued from page 1

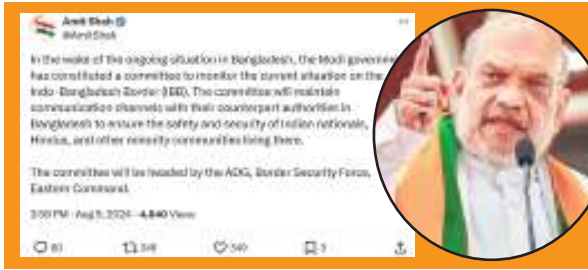
the apex court said he has been deprived of his right to speedy justice as he is incarcerated for around 17 months and trial has not yet started. "As observed by this court, the right to speedy trial and the right to liberty are sacrosanct rights," a bench of Justices B R Gavai and K V Viswanathan said. "We find that on account of a long period of incarceration running for around 17 months and the trial even not having been commenced, the appellant (Sisodia) has been deprived of his right to speedy trial," the bench said



Panel to monitor situation along Indo-Bangla border: Shah

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Narendra Modi government on Friday constituted a high-level committee, headed by a top Border Security Force (BSF) official, to monitor the situation along the Indo-Bangladesh border in wake of the ongoing state of affairs in the neighbouring country, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said. Shah said the committee would be in touch with counterpart authorities in Bangladesh to ensure the safety and security of Indian nationals, Hindus and other minority communities living there. "In the wake of the ongoing situation in Bangladesh, the Modi government has consti-



tuted a committee to monitor the current situation on the Indo-Bangladesh Border (IBB). The committee will maintain communication channels with their counterpart authorities in Bangladesh to ensure the safety and security of Indian nationals, Hindus, and other minority communities living there. The committee will be

headed by the ADG (Additional Director General), Border Security Force, Eastern Command," Shah said in a post on X. Apart from the BSF ADG, the four other members of the committee are the BSF's Inspector General of Police (IGP) for the South Bengal frontier, the IGP for the

Tripura frontier, member (planning and development) of the Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI), and secretary of the LPAI.

While extending greetings to Muhammad Yunus, who took oath as the head of an interim government in Bangladesh on Thursday, Prime Minister Modi express hope for early return of normalcy and sought safety of Hindus and other minority communities in that country. Bangladesh witnessed deadly unrest in recent weeks. More than 500 people, including police personnel, were killed in the anti-government demonstration that started with an anti-reservation protest by students.

BSF foils Bangladeshi infiltration bid at Bengal's Cooch Behar border

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Tension prevailed at the Sitalkuchi fenced land border area of Cooch Behar district in West Bengal on Friday morning after panicked Bangladeshi nationals, numbering over a hundred, assembled on the other side of the fence in their bid to cross over to India.

The attempt was, however, foiled by the BSF which maintained a strict vigil at the border. The Bangladeshis were later taken away from the spot by the Border Guards Bangladesh personnel, the Border Security Force confirmed.

The crowd, allegedly comprising mostly Bangladeshi Hindus, assembled some 400 metres away from the fence alongside a water body at the Genduguri and Doikhawa villages in the Lalmonirhat district of Bangladesh.

Heavy deployment of the 157 Battalion of the BSF at the Pathantuli village, maintaining vigil on automobiles and on foot, made the infiltration bid of the foreigners impossible.



'Indian govt should take steps to protect minorities in Bangladesh'

PNS ■ JAIPUR

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has urged the government of India to take every possible step to protect Hindus and other minority communities in Bangladesh.

India cannot turn a blind eye to what is happening to Hindus in Bangladesh, VHP regional secretary Suresh Upadhyay said.

He said that it is the responsibility of the global community to take effective action to protect the minority communities

in Bangladesh and their rights. Several Hindu temples, households and businesses have been vandalised in violence in Bangladesh since Monday when prime minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled to India, leaving the country in turmoil following deadly protests against her government over a controversial quota system in jobs. Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus took oath as the head of the interim government of Bangladesh on Thursday, replacing Hasina.

Gujarat govt school teacher remains on payroll despite settling in US in 2016

PNS ■ PALANPUR

The Gujarat government has ordered a probe against a government school teacher who allegedly continues to be on the payroll despite settling in the US and remaining absent from duty for nearly eight years, an official said on Friday.

The in-charge principal of a primary school in Panchha village in Banaskantha district claimed the teacher, Bhavna Patel, has been on the school's payroll despite reporting to duty only for a month every year and going on unauthorised leave as she lives in the US.

On learning about the principal's allegations, Gujarat Education Minister Kuber Dindor ordered a probe.



Talking to reporters, Dindor said, "I have ordered an inquiry and sought a report from district officials. We do not allow such practice. If found guilty of unauthorised absence, we will

punish the teacher and recover the salary she was paid." Minister of State for Education Praful Pansheriya asserted that the teacher had not been paid since January.

"She is one of 11 teachers in Danta taluka of Banaskantha. As per a primary report submitted by officials, she has been taking leaves at regular intervals. However, the report clearly stated that she has not been paid a single rupee since January. We will take action if she is found guilty of availing any other benefits despite living abroad," Pansheriya said.

Face-off between...

Continued from page 1

We are colleagues, Sir. You may be sitting in the Chair, and I remember when I went to school..."

On this, a visibly angry Dhankhar interrupted, saying "Enough of it".

"You may be anybody, you may be a celebrity, you have to understand the decorum, no, nothing doing...Never carry an impression that only you build reputations...we live up to reputations, nothing doing," he said. When an Opposition party member raised an objection to how Dhankhar could call Bachchan a celebrity when she was a senior Member of Parliament, the Chairman retorted: "(Does) a senior member of Parliament has a licence to run down the reputation of the Chair... to ques-

tion the tone and tenor?"

The Chairman further said he has the highest respect for all members as Kharge tried to make a point.

Dhankhar further said he cannot be a party to the House being converted into an "epicentre of disturbance".

Talking to reporters in the parliament complex, the SP leader said she "objected" to the tone used by the Chair.

"We are not school children, some of us are senior citizens. I was upset with the tone and specially when Leader of Opposition stood up to speak he had switched off the mic. How can you do this? This is against the tradition. You have to allow the leader," she said.

She also alleged that members sitting in the Treasury benches use unparliamentary words.

Silver for...

Continued from page 1

Thorildsen was watching the proceedings from the stands, along with three-time Olympic champion and world record (98.48m) holder Jan Zelensky of Czech Republic.

Grenada's Anderson Peters grabbed the last podium place with an effort of 88.54m while Czech Republic's Yakub Vadlejch finished fourth (88.50m) and was followed by Kenya's Julius Yego (SB 87.72).

As many as seven athletes went beyond the 86m mark as the competitive field saw three seasons' best and an Olympic record.

Keshorn Walcott (86.16) from Trinidad and Tobago also celebrated his season's best show to finish seventh in the 12-man field.

Govt issues clarification on documents needed for citizenship under CAA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has expanded the ambit of the rules issued under the citizenship law CAA through which Indian nationality will be given to persecuted minorities coming from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan.

The Union home ministry announced that "any document" issued by the central or state governments or quasi-judicial body in India proving that either of the parents, grandparents or great-grandparents is or had been a citizen of one of the three countries will be acceptable.

The clarification of the home ministry came after many applicants seeking



Indian nationality under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 were reported to be facing difficulties due to a particular clause of the Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2024.

"Any document that shows that either of the parents or

grandparents or great-grandparents of the applicant is or had been a citizen of one of the three countries i.e. of Afghanistan or Bangladesh or Pakistan," the earlier clause of the Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2024 says.

Spurt in political...

Continued from page 1

"The government is a continuous phenomenon. You cannot victimise and go on a witch hunt even after you have assumed office. It is absurd. If we wanted to do it, during the last 10 years we would have found every other Congress leader doing some harakiri. But we didn't do that. We focussed on governance. If they want to engage in this, dig dirt and continue to harass us, even go to the extent of putting people in jail etc it will boomerang and hurt them more," he said.

Vikarabad, Siricilla, Aswaraopet, Shadnagar, Parakala, Huzurabad, Yellareddypet, Zaheerabad and Narketpally reported one incident each, KTR said.

Other districts like Warangal, Suryapet, Nagarkurnool, Bhadradi and Jogulamba saw four incidents each indicating the widespread nature of these attacks. Several places like Hanmakonda, Komaram Bheem, Mulugu, Mancherial, Kodangal, Korutla, Jagtial, Rangareddy, Nizamabad, and Siddipet reported three incidents each. Meanwhile, Adilabad, Narayanpet, Wanaparthy, Yadadri, Sangareddy and Cyberabad witnessed two attacks each.

The districts of Gajwel, Rajanna Siricilla, Aswaraopet, Shadnagar, Parakala, Huzurabad, Yellareddypet, Zaheerabad and Narketpally reported one incident each, KTR said.

SC dismisses...

Continued from page 1

"How can we postpone such an exam. Mr Sanjay Hegde, nowadays people just come asking to postpone the exam. It's not a perfect world. We are not academic experts.

"As a matter of principle, we will not reschedule the exam. There are two lakh students and four lakh parents who will weep over the weekend if we postpone it. We cannot put the careers of so many candidates in jeopardy. We do not know who is behind these petitions," the bench said.

Senior advocate Sanjay Hegde, appearing for the petitioners, submitted that rescheduling the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Postgraduate) (NEET-PG) is needed because there is one exam in the morning and one in the afternoon.

'Citizens can't...

Continued from page 1

The apex court rejected the preliminary objection raised by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) that AAP leader Manish Sisodia cannot be permitted to file second set of special leave petitions to challenge the Delhi High Court's May 21 verdict which denied him bail in the excise policy cases. While granting bail to Sisodia in the corruption and money laundering cases linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam, the top court noted the counsel appearing for probe agencies had argued that he should be relegated to approach the trial court afresh for seeking relief.

Cong and BRS...

Continued from page 1

He criticized the BRS government for ignoring expert advice, particularly in the construction of the Medigadda Barrage, where pillars sank due to what he described as the arrogance and poor decision-making by former Chief Minister KCR.

Meanwhile, Telangana Legislative Council Chairman Gutta Sukhender Reddy along with Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy and Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao visited the Sunkishala site. Irrigation Minister Uttam downplayed the incident, describing it as minor with minimal damage, and assured that the contractor would bear

the full cost of repairs. He emphasised that the project was incomplete and that a delay of one or two months was expected.

Uttam also criticized the BRS government for not completing the SLBC project and assured that the Congress government would finish it, along with the Dindi lift irrigation scheme. He said that once the CM returns they will decide and take action. Nalgonda District in-charge Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao reiterated the government's commitment to completing the Sunkishala project and expressed regret over the incident, assuring that all necessary precautions would be taken in future.

Kavitha loses 11 kgs over...

Continued from page 1

He emphasised that it was natural for him to visit New Delhi to be there for his sister during these difficult times. "If my sister is in New Delhi, will I not go as a concerned family member?" he asked, adding that he had met lawyers who handled Kavitha's case.

The lawyer arguing the case is from Chandigarh, and KTR pointed out the necessity of these visits as part of the legal process.

"We need to visit. Is it wrong to go to Delhi?" he asked. KTR expressed the hope that Kavitha would be granted bail soon, especially after the recent bail granted to Manish Sisodia, who was also implicated in the same case.

KTR said that he is following up on multiple legal matters in New Delhi, including cases related to defection, Kavitha, and Sravan, and defended his visits as necessary for these ongoing legal issues.

A legal team filed an appeal for Kavitha's bail and the hearing is expected to take place on Monday or Tuesday.

It is also learnt that KCR is deeply affected by all this and wants to be an active opposition leader attending Assembly sessions after Kavitha is granted bail. Meanwhile, highly placed sources acknowledged that what KTR said is true and that Kavitha has indeed lost 11 kg weight.

"No one cares about her health. Moreover, there is dengue and viral fever in Tihar

Jail. Kavitha was unwell for some time. She is taking BP tablets twice a day. She is not kept in a prison meant for elected representatives but in a normal prison," the sources said.

Meanwhile, MLC Kavitha approached the Supreme Court for bail in both the ED and CBI cases regarding the Delhi liquor scam. The hearing on Kavitha's petition in the Supreme Court is scheduled for Monday.

A bench of Justice BR Gavai and Justice KV Viswanathan will hear MLC Kavitha's petition. KTR is hopeful that she will get bail in a week. Highly placed sources also acknowledged that the merits of the case are strong and she might get bail.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Reaching out

PM Modi congratulates Muhammad Yunus, expresses concerns over the plight of minorities in Bangladesh

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reached out to Muhammad Yunus, the Nobel Laureate from Bangladesh, to congratulate him on heading the interim government of Bangladesh. PM Modi took to X, to express concerns over the situation of Hindus and other Minorities in Bangladesh amidst the ongoing political turmoil. Muhammad Yunus, on his part has emphasised his commitment to restore law and order. Meanwhile, the Indian government, through various channels has reiterated its concerns about the situation of minorities for regional stability. Hundreds of people trying to cross over to India but have been sent back by the Border Security Force. The situation in Bangladesh is rather fluid as the students, the initial protesters have been overshadowed by the rogue elements who are taking advantage of the situation and indulging in looting and arson while attacking minorities to garner popular support. Slowly but surely the political tension has also exacerbated communal tensions within Bangladesh. The Hindu minority,



which makes up about 8-10% of the population are worst hit. Recent reports have indicated a surge in attacks on Hindu temples, businesses, and homes, triggering fear and insecurity within the community. Prime Minister Modi's outreach to Yunus can be seen as a calculated move to engage with a respected figure in Bangladesh who has international credibility and influence. By engaging with Yunus, Modi may be signalling India's support for democratic values and human rights in Bangladesh, while also voicing concerns about the security and well-being of the Hindu community. India is at the moment in a quandary. It has all along supported Sheikh Hasina and continues to do so but

things have changed drastically. Sheikh Hasina is now unpopular while her opponents are all powerful. She may be called to join the investigation against her which may put India in dilemma. The silver lining is that Yunus is now in command, and he is widely regarded as an honorable man with an impeccable track record, even though he is an outsider in the corridors of power. He is India's best bet as China and Pakistan who have allegedly supported the movement to oust Hasina would like to subvert Indo Bangladesh relationship. He could be persuaded to be neutral. The political instability and potential for communal violence could lead to a refugee crisis, with many Hindus and other minorities seeking asylum in India. This could complicate India's domestic political landscape, especially in the bordering states of West Bengal and Assam. Meanwhile, the trade with Bangladesh has already nose-dived and the refugee crisis is growing. Bangladesh is a key partner in maintaining security in the Bay of Bengal region. This is a time for serious diplomacy. Prime Minister Modi would do well to engage with Muhammad Yunus at the earliest opportunity. While Twitter diplomacy is a good starting point, it needs to be followed up with direct engagement. A lot is at stake for India in Bangladesh's future direction.

Gender rights and reality: Bridging the gap



GURDEEP KAOUR

Gender equality in India remains a distant dream, as deep-rooted gender norms continue to impede the nation's progress towards women emancipation

Gender equality is not just a fundamental human right but a crucial component of a peaceful, cohesive, and sustainable world. It demands equal opportunities, treatment, and access to resources for all individuals, regardless of gender. Historically, women have faced discrimination on multiple fronts, from limited educational opportunities to restricted participation in decision-making processes. However, after years of struggle, women today have made significant strides, becoming prominent members of the workforce and key decision-makers in various fields. This progress aligns with the goals set by 193 countries that signed the Beijing Platform for Action, the most comprehensive global plan to eliminate systemic barriers and achieve women's human rights across social, economic, political, and environmental domains. Since the adoption of the Beijing Platform, much has been achieved. Women now serve as heads of state, entrepreneurs, educators, scientists, judges, and administrators, excelling in many unconventional careers. This paints a promising picture of the progress toward gender equality. However, a closer examination of statistics from government reports, non-governmental organizations, and local surveys reveals a grim reality: significant challenges remain. This is particularly true in India, a country where women have historically been revered as goddesses and have played crucial roles as scholars, rulers, and warriors. Despite this rich history, modern India continues to struggle with deeply entrenched gender inequalities. India, in the 21st century, is a country with progressive laws and robust institutions rooted in its Constitution. The Indian Constitution, one of the world's finest legal documents, guarantees equal rights for men and women. Rights such as personal liberty, freedom of speech and expression, free movement and association, and the freedom to choose one's residence and occupation all imply that Indian women, like



men, have the right to make decisions about their personal and professional lives. However, these constitutional rights do not always translate into practice, especially in rural areas, where customary and religious laws often override legal protections. In rural India, where a significant percentage of the population resides, gender equality remains elusive. Here, rigid customary practices contribute to a skewed sex ratio, early marriages, and limited educational opportunities for women. Women are often married off at a young age, without receiving proper education or being informed about their rights. Even when they are aware of their rights, they frequently lack access to opportunities for personal and professional growth. Legislation like the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PNBT) Act has helped improve the sex ratio in India, but the harsh reality remains that many women face discrimination in basic survival needs. In many families, women and girls eat last and least, while boys and men are given nutritionally rich diets. Women who cook for their families often do not cook for themselves, and from a young age, they are conditioned to prioritize the needs and preferences of men. The average age at which an Indian woman



ONE OF THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF PERSONAL FREEDOM IS THE ABILITY TO EXERCISE CONTROL OVER ONE'S BODY AND SEXUALITY. SADLY, THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHOICES ABOUT INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS, WHETHER OR WHEN TO HAVE A CHILD, AND THE USE OF CONTRACEPTION IS STILL DENIED TO MANY WOMEN IN INDIA

has her first child is 22 years, but in rural areas, this age is often much lower, with many girls married off before they turn 18. These young women are not physically or mentally prepared to handle the responsibilities of marriage and family life, making them vulnerable to physical, sexual, and verbal abuse for perceived failures in their duties. In urban households, gender stereotypes are beginning to shift, with men taking on more household chores. However, they are not held to the same standards of diligence and regularity as women. Most women, regardless of age, class, caste, or community, remain vulnerable to domestic violence for reasons as trivial as poorly prepared meals or wearing a dress of their choice—issues that men rarely face. One of the most fundamental aspects of personal freedom is the ability to exercise control over one's body and sexuality. Sadly, the right to make choices about intimate relationships, whether or when to have a child, and the use of contraception is still denied to many women in India. According to a survey, a significant percentage of women aged 18-49 have experienced forced sex or sexual abuse at least once in their lives. This gendered expression of power has severe consequences for the mental

and emotional well-being of women, who are often reluctant to share their ordeals. Despite advancements in healthcare, many Indian women do not enjoy the right to health. In conservative settings, cultural norms discourage men from addressing the health needs of their female family members, and women themselves often do not recognize or report health issues. The presence of male doctors in rural areas further restricts women from undergoing necessary examinations and checkups. The literacy gap between men and women in India remains significant, particularly in rural areas where deeply entrenched gender norms discourage girls from pursuing education. Girls are often pushed into work at a much earlier age than boys, with little or no control over their earnings. Even in urban settings, working women are often not financially independent, either bearing the burden of family expenses or having no say in how their money is spent. Achieving gender equality in India requires a fundamental shift in attitudes among both men and women. Only through such changes can the goal of true gender equality be realized. (The writer is assistant professor at Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, DU; views are personal)

PICTALK



Military aircrafts during the multinational air exercise 'Tarang Shakti 2024', in Sullur

PTI

The role of technology in driving financial literacy



YUVRAJ A THAKKAR

With the power to democratise financial literacy, it can bring people from every stratum of society onto a level playing field

Financial literacy is no longer just a useful skill. It is now essential knowledge required to traverse the modern economic landscape. Studies have shown financially literate individuals can use their money wisely to plan for a secure future.



Today, technology is an important enabler of access to resources required to cultivate financial literacy, democratise the sector, and empower people to improve their lives. However, despite the increasing penetration of the Internet and technology, a 2021 survey found only 27% of Indians are financially literate. Furthermore, only 16.7% of students have a general understanding of finances. With India projected to become one of, if not the leading, global economies by 2030, our society must be educated on the best practices for handling funds and making smart financial decisions. Online platforms such as YouTube, Skillshare, Udemy, and others are invaluable tools in the pursuit of

knowledge. YouTube has tutorials and explanations for practically every subject under the sun. Not only does it boast a vast catalogue, but everything on the site is free to access. This is a critical requirement in India where the common man is looking to save as much money as possible. Channels such as Khan Academy are great starting points for everyone's financial literacy journey. It's not just about breaking down complex information. While the concepts should be easy to understand, the modules must also be presented engagingly to retain the person's interest. No one enjoys being lectured with a barrage of information

in a boring manner. Social media and digital channels have also made it easier for educators and financial experts to share information. Instagram, TikTok, and X are now filled with financial gurus offering their opinions on the latest economic trends, up-and-coming investment opportunities, and the state of the global economy. Keep in mind that advice from such channels shouldn't be taken at face value. But they do offer a macro perspective of the economy and break down complex information into easily digestible pieces. Advancing technology also allows financial institutions such as banks and NBFCs to offer financial literacy directly to their customers. Bank apps can utilise push notifications, pop-ups, bank representatives, and even AI avatars to offer pertinent and timely advice. NBFCs can leverage subscription services to reach out to their customers via messengers to advise them on how to manage funds effectively. Artificial intelligence is going to significantly

improve access to and delivery of financial literacy. With just a smartphone, one can access tools such as ChatGPT to help answer common questions regarding finances. While it should not be used to gain investment advice, the current models of AI tools can offer practical knowledge regarding financial literacy and point the curious reader towards additional sources to gain more knowledge. It's no wonder that AI in BFSI is expected to hit a whopping \$100 billion by 2032. Technology is a powerful tool in the hands of those with an understanding of how to use it. With the power to democratise financial literacy, it can bring people from every stratum of society onto a level playing field. However, as technology evolves, so must we to enjoy the benefits of its advancement. This is a crucial step not just for society but also for our personal and financial well-being. (The writer is a MD at StoxBox; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A COURT IS A COURT

Madam — The special feature of Indian judiciary is the relative non-interference in its functioning from either the executive or the legislature. Also, the hierarchical system of judiciary has ensured that no litigant goes unsatisfied with a particular court's verdict. The Supreme Court has time and again reiterated that no court in the country is above another. Besides, the SC has made it clear that although its judgments are binding on every court in India under Article 141 of the Constitution, the High Courts are in no way inferior to it because the former's administrative control is independent of the top court. SC has consistently refused to direct High Courts to clear cases in a time bound manner for the same reason. Justice Abhay Oka of the SC, during the course of a hearing, had succinctly remarked that "a court is a court". Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, in 2022, had decried the tendency to refer to the district courts as subordinate judiciary because there was no definition of the word "subordinate" although the world is frequently used in the Constitution.

Ganpathi Bhat | Kola

VINESH PHOGAT HAS BEEN WRONGED

Madam — In an unfortunate turn of events, Vinesh was disqualified from a crucial Olympic match due to a minor weight discrepancy, sparking outrage and disappointment across the nation. This incident, which resulted in the loss of a potential medal for India, raises serious questions about the handling and management of the situation by the coaches and officials. Vinesh Phogat, who had successfully won three bouts in a single day, found herself disqualified just 24 hours after her semi-final victory. The controversy stems from the fact that it is highly improbable for an experienced athlete like Vinesh to gain 100 grams of weight in such a short period, leading many to suspect foul play. This suspicion casts a shadow over the transparency and fairness of the Olympic Games, prompting Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Economics should not be politicised



This refers to the editorial "Finance Minister yields" (Aug 8). Facing a backlash from the people, Members within NDA and the Opposition over changes to the property transaction taxation, the Finance Minister has given some concession to home owners, by way of two options. The tax payers can now choose to calculate their tax on long term capital gains either at 12.5% without indexation under the new scheme or at 20% with indexation under the old scheme. This is akin to income tax options. She

also stated in her speech on reduction in the income tax on annual income of Rs. 15 lakh. But the budget is not only taxes, it deals with development of the people as well as the country. People are burdened with high GST rates and fuel prices, no relief in them as they have cascading effect on overall inflation, which affects the poor most. On one hand government provides free ration & electricity to poor, on the other hand they are burdened with high taxes which nullify the former. FM did not mention about decreasing the fiscal deficit, decreasing the borrowings, increasing foreign investment in the country, boosting employment generation, rationalizing the subsidies & subsidies that are affecting economy etc. which are equally important components of a budget. Development of the country should be the high priority in the budget and it should not be compromised by keeping people happy.

Dr O Prasad Rao | Hyderabad

to urge the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President, P.T. Usha, to explore every possible avenue to ensure that justice is served for Vinesh. There is also a need to investigate whether Vinesh was unknowingly given a weight-gain substance during the 24 hours between the semi-final and the final weigh-in, as a similar incident reportedly happened to another wrestler from a different country. These concerns raise serious questions about the integrity and transparency of the Olympic Games' management. While human error is possible in such a vast sporting event, the circumstances surrounding Vinesh Phogat's disqualification do not appear to fall into the category of innocent mistakes. If it is determined that Vinesh was wronged, India should strongly consider appealing the decision

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

BANGLADESH: A WARNING FOR INDIA

Madam — Bangladesh, which had seemed politically stable for the past 15 years under Sheikh Hasina's leadership, is now showing signs of distress. Hasina's extended

tenure, while initially successful, has led to growing concerns about her increasingly autocratic behavior. This shift has resulted in the imprisonment of political opponents and numerous legal battles against figures like Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, who gained significant popularity for his work with Grameen Bank. Could similar public discontent emerge in India? The government's actions, particularly over the past two terms, have shown tendencies toward authoritarianism. This has been evident in the public backlash against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), prolonged farmer protests against agricultural reforms, and discontent among youth over the Agniveer recruitment scheme. Rising inflation, unemployment, and corruption, coupled with selective legal actions against opposition members, contribute to a growing sense of frustration.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

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FIRST COLUMN

DO NOT LET SKY BE YOUR LIMIT

Stay resilient in the face of adversity, and you'll find that there's no limit to what you can achieve



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

In the realm of corporate success, there is a fundamental truth: the sky is not your limit, but merely the starting point. With a powerful drive and unwavering determination, ambition propels you to surpass all perceived boundaries. Just like a high-performance engine, achieving your dreams requires proper focus and direction. Today, we all have unique goals and dreams, both in our personal lives and careers. Nevertheless, the journey from having a vision to making it a reality can be challenging and draining. It calls for unwavering dedication, relentless effort, and occasionally, the need to ignore those who doubt you. In our business environment, having a strong drive and steadfast determination is not just a cliché, but a crucial factor in setting ambitious goals and relentlessly striving for excellence. We must connect these grand aspirations to careful planning, unwavering commitment, and consistent hard work. Only then will the aspiration reveal its magic. Many times, the biggest obstacles we face are a result of the actions of others.

There will always be those who view our dreams as unattainable or doubt our abilities. It's crucial to remember that our potentials are not defined by external voices. Throughout history, countless individuals have faced ridicule and scepticism, only to prove their doubters wrong ultimately. The proper environment can truly make a difference in our pursuit of success. It is an environment that fosters growth by providing opportunities to use our skills and allow-



ing for energetic and unwelcome ambition, which drives change and advancement. Surround yourself with mentors and peers who share your vision and are there to support you on your journey. Embrace growth opportunities and always value the feedback of others to refine your approach. Equally crucial is the art of expressing our goals. Make sure to communicate your goals and progress with both supervisors and colleagues. It's important to keep everyone in the loop and stay motivated.

When you openly express your aspirations and the steps you're taking to achieve them, not only do you attract valuable encouragement, but you also establish a sense of personal responsibility. However, the true basis of ambition stems from the constant trust within oneself. It is important to have a strong belief in your abilities and to acknowledge the unique qualities that you bring to the table. Recognising and celebrating the small victories along your journey to greater success is crucial. Embrace challenges as chances to grow and learn.

Stay resilient in the face of setbacks. Ambition is a potent force. When properly harnessed, it has the potential to unlock remarkable outcomes. Despite facing obstacles and encountering negativity, you will always choose to embrace a positive mindset. And getting encouragement from prominent individuals will help you hugely achieve your goals.

After all, everyone deserves a chance to shine. So set the bar high, work, and let the ambition catapult you to new heights. The sky is not the limit in the corporate world; it is just the beginning of your journey toward success.

(The author is a freelance writer and a motivator; views are personal)

Bangladesh: Uncertainty and chaos grip the nation



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

As the nation grapples with a rising wave of Islamist extremism and escalating violence, the future of its democracy and regional stability hangs in the balance



The turmoil in Bangladesh, which led to Sheikh Hasina's resignation as prime minister and departure to India, raises two questions. Why should she not prevent it? What lies ahead for Bangladesh and India? She should have reached out to the students-trying to win over the bulk of them who are moderates, and isolating the Islamist fundamentalist extremists—before their Anti-Discrimination Students' Movement (ADSM), had snowballed. She could have argued that her government did away with 30 per cent reservation for the descendants of the freedom fighters of the 1971 liberation war in 2018, which was their demand to start with. Bangladesh's High Court restored it following a petition by several descendants. Indeed, her government had appealed to the Supreme Court against the High Court's order.

In fact, the appellate division of the Supreme Court had, on July 21, 2024, ordered the allocation of 93% of government jobs on the basis of merit, reserving five per cent for freedom fighters and their descendants, and one per cent each for tribes, the differentially abled and sexual minorities. There could have been two reasons for the agitation continuing even after that. First, the rancour created by the government's harsh response to the agitation, which had led to a large number of deaths of students and others, was too great for the students to call a halt. They now wanted Sheikh Hasina's resignation. Second, Islamist terrorist organisations like Ansar al-Islam, linked to Al-Qaeda in the Indian Sub-continent (AQIS) and Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), as well as the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami (BJeI) and its students' wing, Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir (BICS), closely tied to them, had joined the movement and tried to steer it to serve their own agenda—ousting Hasina and the Awami League Government, and installing a fundamentalist Islamist and pathologically anti-India dispensation in its place.

Sheikh Hasina knew all this, and should also have known the convulsive impact students' movement has in Bangladesh on at least four occasions. The first was the language



STUDENTS ALSO PLAYED A PROMINENT ROLE IN THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE AGAINST PAKISTAN'S COLONIAL RULE, WHICH EXPLAINS THE PAKISTAN ARMY'S SAVAGE ATTACKS ON THE CAMPUS AND HOSTELS OF DHAKA AND OTHER UNIVERSITIES ON THE NIGHT OF ITS NOTORIOUS CRACKDOWN

movement which demanded that Bengali along with Urdu, and not the latter alone, should become Pakistan's official language, and not Urdu alone, which Pakistan's ruling establishment, based in West Pakistan, wanted. Defying police repression, the movement peaked on February, 21, 1952, when there was a country-wide general strike. Police firing led to the deaths of four students, whose names—Rafiq, Barkat, Jabbar and Salam—shine prominently in Bangladesh's martyrs' pantheon. The movement continued to swell and compelled Pakistan's acceptance of both Bengali and Urdu as the country's official language. Again, students were at the forefront of the movement against General Ayub Khan's coup in 1958 and establishment of a military dictatorship, whose character could not be disguised by the fraudulent representative government introduced on March 23, 1962.

Students also played a prominent role in the liberation struggle against Pakistan's colonial rule, which explains the Pakistan Army's savage attacks on the campus and hostels of Dhaka and other universities on the night of its notorious crackdown, codenamed Operation Searchlight, killing hundreds of students, on the night of March 25, 1971. Finally, there was the massive Shahbag Square movement in Dhaka (February-May 2013) demanding death penalty to the war criminals of 1971. The government agreed to move the International Crimes Tribunal, set up by an amendment in 2009 to the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973, to investigate and prosecute personnel of the Pakistan Army and Razakars, Al-Badr and Al-Shams, accused of committing genocide during the 1971 liberation war.

Given all this, Hasina should have

tried to diffuse the latest movement at the beginning. Be that as it may, what now in Bangladesh? What should India do now? Things do not look good. Hindu temples, including the emblematic Dhakeshwari temple, from which Dhaka derives its name, have been attacked and vandalised. Hindus shops, business establishments and homes, have been attacked, a Hindu municipal councillor aligned with the Awami League, has been killed. Many have been injured. Women have been assaulted.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's statues have been pulled down and/or vandalised. Awami League ministers, leaders and activists are under attack, as are many of their homes and establishments. In Khulna, three persons, including an Awami League functionary, Mohsin Reza, have been lynched. Film producer Selim Khan, who made a movie on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's life, has been murdered along with his son, Shanto Khan. A hotel owned by an Awami League politician was set ablaze, causing 24 deaths, in Jashore. The house of Mashrafe Mortaza, Awami League MP and former Bangladesh test cricketer, has been destroyed.

These are just a few instances indicating the kind of open season that has been declared on the minorities, supporters of the Awami League and civil society elements opposed to Islamist fundamentalists. The question is whether things will improve or become worse. Much would depend on whether the interim government, headed by Nobel laureate, Muhammad Yunus, is able to establish order, or whether supporters of the BJeI, BICS and Ansar al-Islam, who are behind the current violence along with sections of Begum Khaleda Zia-led Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), are contained or allowed to escalate their campaign of vio-

lence and terror.

Yunus is neither a fundamentalist nor known for his pathological hatred for India. The backgrounds of some of his colleagues, however, raise questions. The Army's role is of critical importance. The report that it is being purged of those perceived to be pro-Sheikh Hasina, should worry those who want a peaceful, democratic and tolerant Bangladesh. Looking beyond the interim government, of critical importance is how free and fair are the parliamentary elections, that would have to be held now that Bangladesh's national parliament has been dissolved. New Delhi is rightly watchful. The BNP-Jamaat-led coalition government ruling Bangladesh from 2001 to 2006, was pathologically hostile to India and actively sheltered and armed the secessionist groups active in the north-eastern parts of this country. A hostile Bangladesh, engaged in a repeat performance, is not what New Delhi wants.

Meanwhile, External Affairs' Minister, S. Jaishankar, has said that he does not rule out the machinations of a foreign hand behind the Bangladesh developments. Given his official position, he has to be circumspect with his words. But it is prima facie clear that Pakistan's ISI, and perhaps even China, have been involved.

Pakistan, which is having serious problems with the Taliban which it had once wet-nursed, and China, which has its troubles with Islamists, should remember William S. Baring-Gould's limerick, "There was a young lady of Riga/ Who went for a ride on a tiger/ They returned from the ride/ With the lady inside/ And a smile on the face of the tiger."

(The author is Consulting Editor, The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal)

Integrative health approaches for mental wellbeing

The road to mental well being doesn't have to be paved with pills alone; sometimes, it is as simple as finding our breath and practicing Yoga

There is enough scientific evidence to validate that the mind, body, and soul are interconnected on a subtle level. This connection influences our thoughts and emotions, hence, our physical reality and our physical state impact our mental health and processes.



ISHAN SHIVANAND

True health is signified by a harmonious balance between mind and body. Even a minor imbalance can lead to a range of issues, from physical illnesses and mental health challenges to a sense of unfulfillment with oneself and life. As per the WHO, nearly 80% of mental health cases arise in low- and middle-income countries. Conditions like depression and anxiety affect approximately 9% of the world's pop-

ulation and account for over 10% of years lived with disabilities. The Drawbacks of Traditional Approaches Pharmaceutical treatments have long been a cornerstone of mental healthcare, aiding in the management of severe cases and stabilisation. These targeted therapies address specific disease mechanisms based on biomarkers, leading to more personalised treat-

ment. Medical technology advancements enhance the efficacy of these treatments and improve patient outcomes. However, the reliance on medication alone often overlooks the holistic nature of mental well-being.

Embracing Integrative Health Approaches

Integrative health approaches, particularly those rooted in Indian Knowledge Systems such as yogic modalities, offer a promising complement to traditional pharmaceutical treatments.

A combination of breathwork and meditative protocols helps individuals penetrate a heightened state of non-judgemental awareness. They enable a physiological state of rest and digestion or relaxation, which is opposite to the flight-or-flight

stress response. This interruption in the stress response helps foster a sense of balance and union between the mind and body.

Yogic practices are also underpinned by a few principles: The human body is a holistic entity comprising various interrelated dimensions inseparable from one another. The health or illness of any one dimension affects the others. Secondly, every individual's needs are unique and must be approached with tailored practices that acknowledge this individuality.

Yogic modalities empower individuals: to be their healers, actively engaging in their journey toward health, and fostering autonomy. Also, the quality and state of an individual's mind are crucial to heal-



ing. A positive mind-state accelerates healing, while a negative mind-state can prolong it.

The Science Behind the Practice: A consistent yogic practice has been shown to alleviate depression, leading to significant increases in serotonin levels and decreases in monoamine oxidase, an enzyme that breaks down neurotransmitters and cortisol. Yoga-based interventions also

help manage depressive disorders, stress, and anxiety by inhibiting the sympathetic area of the hypothalamus. This inhibition optimizes the body's responses to stressful stimuli and restores autonomic regulatory reflex mechanisms associated with stress. Moreover, yogic practices inhibit areas responsible for fear, aggressiveness, and rage, while stimulating the pleasure centres in the brain, resulting in a state of bliss and reduced anxiety. Regular practitioners of yoga and meditation experience lower heart rates, respiratory rates, blood pressure, and cardiac output.

Broader Health Benefits: Beyond mental well-being, yogic protocols improve cardiorespiratory performance, psychological profiles, and

plasma melatonin levels. It significantly reduces systolic and diastolic blood pressure, mean arterial pressure, and orthostatic tolerance. Yoga also enhances cardiovascular efficiency and homeostatic control, leading to better autonomic balance, respiratory performance, and overall well-being. Studies have shown that yoga-based lifestyle modifications can even aid in the regression of coronary lesions and improve myocardial perfusion in patients with coronary artery disease (CAD).

Integrating Yoga into Modern Healthcare: An integrated approach to mental health care leverages insights from traditional Indian knowledge systems, combining pharmaceutical treatments with non-pharmaceutical medita-

tive practices. This synergy not only addresses the immediate symptoms but also promotes long-term recovery and well-being. As we navigate the complexities of modern life, it's crucial to embrace the wisdom of ancient practices. By integrating yoga and other non-invasive approaches into our mental health toolkit, we can achieve a balanced state where the mind and body work in harmony. The road to mental well-being doesn't have to be paved with pills alone; sometimes, it's as simple as finding our breath and grounding ourselves in practices that connect us to our core.

(The writer is mental health researcher and the founder of Yoga of Immortals (YOI) meditative program; views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS



Inox Wind reports Rs 50 crore PAT in Q1

Inox Wind Limited (IWL) on Friday posted a Rs 50 crore profit after tax during the June quarter on account of a surge in income. It had reported a loss of Rs 65 crore in the April-June quarter of the preceding financial year, the company said in an exchange filing. The company's total revenue surged 85 per cent to Rs 651 crore from Rs 352 crore in the year-ago period. Devansh Jain, Executive Director, INOXGFL Group, said "The hard work of last several years has started to yield results. Also, IWL's parent, IWEL has infused Rs 900 crore recently, making the company net cash positive and strengthening the balance sheet to capitalise on the multidecadal opportunity in the Indian wind sector." The company has an orderbook of around 2.9 gigawatt. IWL CEO Kailash Tarachandani said adding the company won orders of 611 MW in the ongoing FY25. Part of USD 9 billion INOXGFL Group, Inox Wind Limited (IWL) is India's leading wind energy solutions provider servicing IPPs (independent power producers), utilities, PSUs (public sector units) and corporate investors

Aviation Minister vows to tackle rising airfare, strike a balance

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu outlined the government's commitment to making air travel more affordable and accessible, highlighting the need for a balanced approach that protected both passengers and airlines.

Moving the Bhartiya Vayun Vidheyak Bill, 2024, for passage in the Lok Sabha, Naidu explained that airfare was influenced by a variety of factors, including market demand, that were beyond the airlines merely setting their own prices.

"We must ensure that the airlines are not under so much pressure that they cannot operate. So a balanced approach is needed," he said.

The minister emphasised the importance of a regulatory environment that prevented exploitation while ensuring that the airlines remained financially viable.

He assured the Lower House that making airfare affordable was a top priority for the government.

ment.

"One of my top priorities is to make airfare affordable for the common man," he said, drawing attention to the significant shift in India's civil aviation sector since 2014.

He contrasted the situation before and after 2014, saying, "Until 2014, civil aviation was like 'civilised aviation' but after Prime Minister Narendra Modi, it is considered 'civilian aviation', which reflects our commitment."

"We are not exploited by unnecessary airfare hikes," he said.

This initiative is part of the ministry's proactive stance on ensuring fair pricing

In response to the issue of rising airfare, the minister announced plans to establish an online grievance redress mechanism.

"We are considering setting up an online mechanism to handle grievances, with a dedicated team to ensure passengers are not exploited by unnecessary airfare hikes," he said.

"We will address this and we may re-bid the route and restart the scheme," he said, indicating that the government was exploring options to maintain the momentum generated by RCS.

Naidu also highlighted the critical role of airport infrastructure in the development of states and emphasised the need for immediate action.

"If we don't address the problem today, it will become a huge problem in the future," he warned, discussing the collaborative approach between the central and state governments in land acquisition for airport development.



Sebi focuses on improving quality of info given to investors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sebi is looking to set up two new institutions -- Performance Validation Agency and Data Benchmarking Institution -- to improve the quality of information provided to investors in the securities market.

The first institution, Performance Validation Agency, will validate the claims of performance related to services offered by Investment Advisors (IAs), Research Analysts (RAs) and Algo providers.

Data Benchmarking Institution will provide a central repository of standardised and comparable data related to various asset classes.

Both institutions are aimed at improving the quality of information provided to investors in the securities market, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in its annual report for 2023-24.

Additionally, the regulator has proposed to create a closed



ecosystem for fee collection by registered IAs and RAs through a separate mechanism to help investors ensure that their payments are reaching only registered IAs and RAs and help them identify, isolate and avoid unregistered entities, who would be unable to access this closed ecosystem.

For the year 2024-25, Sebi said that one of its focus areas is capital formation for real estate and infrastructure sectors, and regulations may need to be customised to facilitate the growth of infrastructure and real estate in our country.

Air India, Vistara get DGCA nod

Integrating aircraft line maintenance ops

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Aviation regulator DGCA has approved integrating the aircraft line maintenance operations of Air India and Vistara as the two airlines move close to their merger.

In a release on Friday, Air India said the integration will help in optimising resources to enhance operational performance and reduce aircraft turnaround times to bolster on-time performance.

"With a unified maintenance team and resources, Air India will be better positioned to service a mixed fleet of wide body and narrow body aircraft, enhancing schedule integrity and reliability of operations," it added. The two airlines, part of



the Tata Group, have secured the CAR (Civil Aviation Requirement) 145 approval from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to integrate their aircraft line maintenance operations.

Vistara is a joint venture between Tata and Singapore Airlines. So far, Air India has

in-house line maintenance at 12 stations in the country.

"Enhanced synergy of the combined resources will also ensure real-time availability of records of all activities for fast diagnosis and troubleshooting of technical issues by tracing and correcting of the systems involved.

Air India suspends Tel Aviv flights till further notice

Air India on Friday announced suspension of flights to and from Tel Aviv till further notice amid escalating tensions between Israel and Iran. The Tata Group-owned carrier had suspended services from the national capital to Tel Aviv till August 8.

passengers with confirmed bookings for travel to and from Tel Aviv. Tensions continue to remain high in the Middle East amid conflict between Israel and various terror groups, including Hamas. Earlier this year also, Air India had briefly suspended flights to Tel Aviv at different points of time due to the Middle East tensions. After nearly five months, the carrier had recommenced the services to the Israeli city on March 3. Air India had suspended flights to and from Tel Aviv starting on October 7, 2023, after the Hamas group's attack on the Israeli city.

Goa CM reviews working of skill development centre

PNS ■ PANAJI

Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Friday visited the head office of the state's directorate of skill development and entrepreneurship during which he interacted with staffers, an official said. Sawant also directed the authorities at the directorate to bring about requisite changes to increase its efficiency and to strengthen ground level working, the CMO official told PTI.

"The CM is in the process of taking ground level review of various departments to strengthen their working to ensure better service delivery to the people," the official said.



Tata Chemicals plans to raise Rs 1,700 cr through NCDs

Tata Chemicals plans to raise Rs 1,700 crore through the issue of non-convertible debentures to investors on a private placement basis. In a regulatory filing, the company informed that an internal committee, constituted by the board of directors, has, at its meeting held on Friday, finalised the terms of the issue of NCDs (non-convertible debentures). The company proposes to issue 1,70,000 NCDs of face value Rs 1 lakh each, aggregating to Rs 1,700 crore, on a private placement basis to eligible investors. The NCDs are proposed to be listed on the debt segment of the NSE. The company proposes to make allotment on August 20, 2024, while the date of maturity is 3 years from the date of allotment.

Bartronics partners with Augmont to enhance gold and silver accessibility

PNS ■ MUMBAI

In a significant move to boost the Indian precious metals market, Bartronics India, a leading IT services and business solutions provider, has announced a strategic partnership with Augmont Goldtech.

This five-year collaboration aims to enhance the accessibility and distribution of gold and silver across the country, leveraging Bartronics' extensive financial inclusion networks and broad distribution channels across India.

This partnership will allow Bartronics to market Augmont's gold and silver bullion and jewellery through its vast network, including the use of the Bartronics Portal, which will provide consumers with direct access to Augmont's premium products. The collaboration promises mutual benefits, enabling Bartronics to diversify its product offerings while ensuring that Augmont's products reach a larger customer base. Both companies are optimistic about the growth potential of this partnership.

Vidhya Sagar Reddy, Managing Director of Bartronics India, said, "We are excited to partner with Augmont Goldtech to bring high-quality gold and silver products through our network and distribution channels to customers across India. This agreement aligns with our strategic vision to diversify our product offerings and leverage our robust distribution channels. We believe this collaboration will not only enhance our market presence but also provide customers with greater access to trusted precious metal products."

Consumers are expected to benefit significantly from this partnership, as the Bartronics portal will offer a convenient and reliable way to purchase Augmont's products, potentially at more competitive prices and with better availability than ever before. The initiative will further enhance the purchasing experience for a wide range of customers across India.



Sensex bounces back on global stocks rally

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded 1 per cent each on Friday following buying in blue-chips such as Reliance and Infosys amid a rally in global equity markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex bounced back 819.69 points or 1.04 per cent to settle at 79,705.91 with 28 of its constituents closing in green and two in red. The index opened higher amid gains in Asian markets and later surged 1,098.02 points or 1.39 per cent to hit a high of 79,984.24.

The NSE Nifty soared 250.50 points or 1.04 per cent



to 24,367.50. During the day, it rallied 302.75 points or 1.25 per cent to 24,419.75.

"Positive US jobless claims data eased the fears of recession and provided a favourable broader market reaction," Vinod Nair, Head of Research,

Geojit Financial Services said. Most of the Sensex firms settled in the positive territory. Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Motors, Tech Mahindra, JSW Steel, State Bank of India, HCL Technologies, Reliance Industries and Infosys were the

biggest gainers. Kotak Mahindra Bank and Maruti were the laggards.

"The markets started strong, gaining over a per cent, buoyed by positive global cues," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 1.21 per cent and smallcap index climbed 0.79 per cent.

All the indices ended in the positive territory, with IT surging 1.59 per cent, consumer discretionary by 1.57 per cent, realty by 1.56 per cent, auto by 1.51 per cent, tech by 1.41 per cent and capital goods by 1.37 per cent.

Walkaroo ropes in Varun Dhawan as Brand Ambassador

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Leading footwear brand Walkaroo has roped in Bollywood actor Varun Dhawan as its brand ambassador and will launch an integrated marketing campaign showcasing Walkaroo's extensive product portfolio, the company said on Friday.

The appointment of Dhawan as brand ambassador reinforces Walkaroo's brand presence and appeal to the younger generation and fashion-conscious consumers across the country, the company said.

"We are very happy to have Varun Dhawan

join us in our commitment towards promoting a healthier and active lifestyle through walking. His youthful energy and stylish persona resonate perfectly with our brand image," Walkaroo International Pvt Ltd Managing Director V Noushad said.

"Varun's strong appeal among the younger generation and his ability to connect with a diverse audience will enable us to broader our reach and achieve new milestones," he said in a release on Friday.

"This brand resonates with individuals across all age groups and is a renowned household name. With its campaign, 'Walk, Walk, Walk; Walk with Walkaroo', the brand encourages people to adopt walking as a simple remedy to stay active and healthy," Dhawan said on his appointment.

In FY2023-24, Walkaroo achieved a turnover of Rs 2,140 crore. It has 700 dealer network and has more than one lakh retail outlets countrywide.



Govt committed to reduce logistics constraints

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Friday said it is committed to reduce logistics constraints that obstruct efficient coal transportation.

The coal ministry is working closely with the Ministry of Railways, states and various agencies to address and resolve issues that affect the timely progress of infrastructure projects. To increase the country's evacuation infrastructure, the coal ministry has announced a comprehensive strategy aimed at fast-tracking the development of critical logistics projects, the coal ministry said in a statement. This initiative is in alignment with the PM Narendra Modi's vision.

STOCKS REBOUND

Investors' wealth swells by Rs 4.46 lakh cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Market investors became richer by Rs 4.46 lakh crore on Friday as stocks made a smart comeback after the previous day's decline, driven by a rally in global peers.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 819.69 points or 1.04 per cent to settle at 79,705.91. The benchmark surged



1,098.02 points or 1.39 per cent to hit the day's high of 79,984.24.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms went up by Rs 4,46,308.99 crore to Rs 4,50,21,816.11 crore (USD 5.37 trillion).

"Strong global market cues provided a major impetus to local shares as Sensex surged more than 1,000 points in

intra-day trade on all-round buying support. Despite volatility in foreign fund flows this year, capital infusion by domestic institutions have been robust over the past year or so, which is giving local markets a major succour in times of volatile phase," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research) at Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL OFFICER, PANCHAYATH RAJ MAHABUBNAGAR
TENDER NOTICE
NIT No. TO/Tender/32 to 123/2024-25 Dt. 08.08.2024
No. of works (38) Calling the works under DMFT, XIV Finance Commission, CDP 2023-24, FDR, PAUGSY, MRRO/FDR, STDF & M-M Grants in Mahabubnagar, Narsyrapet, Wanaparthy & Nagarnandol Districts. Estimate Cost Rs.1699.83 Lakhs. Tenders Schedule can be had from e-procurement portal from 13.08.2024 to 21.08.2024 for each tender with minimum 151 working days to participate from date of upload. Other details can be had from e-procurement portal @ https://tenders.telanganagov.in; email id: se_gr_mbr@tshoo.co.in Further details can be had from the office of the Superintending Engineer/Regional Office PR Circle Mahabubnagar. S.O.No: 2761-PP/LADNT/12024-25, Dt. 08-08-2024 Sd/- Regional Officer, PR Mahabubnagar

Healing 'city of pearls'

TEJAL SINHA

Healthcare facilities are essential for a city's development, guaranteeing its inhabitants' well-being and efficiency. Hyderabad, a vibrant city renowned for its cultural past and swift progress, is no exception. With the city's growth, there is an increasing need for top-notch healthcare services.

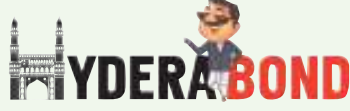
Among the top health professionals, we have Dr. Rupa Banerjee, a senior consultant gastroenterologist in the department of Gastroenterology and the director of the Inflammatory Bowel Diseases (IBD) center at the Asian Institute of Gastroenterology, Hyderabad, India. She is also director of research with the Asian Healthcare Foundation, Hyderabad and a member of the

International Organisation of IBD (IOIBD). Dr. Rupa established the first dedicated IBD center of excellence in India in 2004. Her primary focus has been optimal and affordable multidisciplinary care for IBD. Dr. Rupa is actively involved in research on inflammatory bowel disease in the Asian region, focusing on the epidemiology, microbiota and genetic profile of this population. The center today has a 10,000-patient database and biorepository, as well as a dedicated microbiome lab.

So what better than having the healthcare provider on board for our special segment of Hyderabad, taking us through her association with 'The City of Nizams', which dates back over two decades now?

A Hyderabadi now but a Bengali by blood, she has been all over the country, be it for her education or practices, as well as in the US and the UK. "I came to Hyderabad and joined the AIG Hospitals," shares the medical healthcare professional on an exclusive note for our special segment. "Ever since I have been here in Hyderabad, I have seen rapid development in healthcare, and professionally, I am over-

Back with another alluring tale for Hyderabad, *The Pioneer* connects with Dr. Rupa Banerjee, a senior consultant gastroenterologist at AIG Hospitals from the city, for our special segment of Hyderabad.



whelmed to see the city providing world-class facilities. I have been to so many places and Hyderabad has been par excellence."

Ever since she has been here in Hyderabad, she shares that she has come across patients, who come from all across Asia. Not just this, "There are also trainees coming up from different places and countries coming up and doing their training here. We have so many of them doing their training in endoscopy and gastroenterology at our hospital. This shows a truly different level of healthcare."

This brings in a different level of satisfaction, she says, about how they utilise the time and aim at providing quick healthcare services. "In many countries, getting an appointment with a gastroenterologist has been a task,



which is not the same case here. I would say the Indian medical healthcare system is very good and Hyderabad, to be specific, is such a progressive, growing city."

Hyderabad, she says, is a perfect balance of various things, including rights from the different bazaars, museums, palace and its history. Hyderabad, beyond any doubt, is a T-hub, so that really gives a perfect blend. "Hyderabad, now, if you see, we have technology, 5-star hotels, and one of the best airports in the country and it's becoming cosmopolitan because of being a tech-hub. And trust me, I've never felt like I'm a non-local here."

One thing she's very proud of about being here in Hyderabad is that the city has been making the country proud with its developments. "The number of healthcare sectors and pharmacies in Hyderabad has been growing. I am very proud of what we did during COVID with the vaccines. We had provided 3-4 types of vaccines. There was a major pharma shift here."

The entire healthcare system here is becoming world-class. The biotechnology industry here has also grown. I personally feel that Hyderabad, slow and studious, is making India proud," shares Dr. Rupa, adding, "Well, one can just not forget about the cuisine."

As we ask her about what she actually dislikes about Hyderabad, we are sure many of you would agree—the traffic. She humorously says, "I hope we do not become another Bangalore. My primary dislike is getting stuck in the traffic during the downpours; especially for us as doctors, it makes a lot of difference."

The overall Hyderabad, she believes, is more like a family, a compact place where people are aware of the happenings of the localities.

As we head towards the end of the chat, she shares with great enthusiasm, "Hyderabad is my *Karmabhoomi*. I have worked here and I'm grateful for all that the city has provided. I have friends here; my daughter has grown up here and now it's a home for me."



Snacks that damage your teeth

Ever wondered how food choices might be affecting our oral health? The truth is, if we are staunch on taking care of our teeth, regular brushing and flossing alone cannot help. What we eat also largely matters. Every time we indulge in our favourite candy, cookies, or even that favourite soda, we are exposing our teeth to harm. While it may satisfy our cravings, it may also invite dental decay and cavities.

like white bread, white rice, and certain starchy foods, such as potato chips, may harm our oral health. The bacteria in our mouth can quickly turn the sugars in these foods into acid, which can erode enamel and damage our teeth. Even though these snacks don't taste sweet, their high refined sugar content can be just as damaging as sugary treats and are among the foods that cause cavities.



To keep teeth healthy, it is good to limit the consumption of starchy snacks. Additionally, pay extra attention while flossing to remove any food particles that may get stuck between the teeth causing plaque buildup.

H2: Sugary and Sticky Snacks: The sweet danger

Among the top foods that cause tooth decay are sugary and sticky snacks. Candies, canned fruit juices, or chocolates can often be tempting to eat, but it is important to understand why they pose a threat. While they are tasty, here is why they are harmful. Sugary and sticky snacks may stay stuck to teeth for a long time, providing a perfect breeding ground for the bacteria in our mouths. These bacteria causes cavities and tooth decay by feeding on sugars and, in turn, produce acids that can attack tooth enamel.

H2: Acidic Foods: A threat to enamel

Enjoying a glass of lemonade or a tangy tomato salad might be refreshing, but these foods are acidic and can cause harm to our tooth enamel. Prolonged consumption of acidic foods leads to the wearing down of the enamel layer and exposes the teeth to problems like tooth sensitivity to hot or cold food and tooth decay. While these foods that cause cavities can offer nutritional benefits, their acidic nature can be taken into careful consideration if we are serious about oral health.

Citrus fruits and juices are also known to irritate mouth sores, if having any. What can be done is to add acidic foods to meals rather than eating them alone throughout the day. Also, make sure to drink plenty of water after consuming them.

H2: Carbonated Beverages: Skip the soda

For many of us, carbonated beverages like soda are a go-to refreshment. However, these drinks can have adverse effects on our overall health. When it comes to dental health, drinking carbonated drinks can often raise concerns. Firstly, sodas contain sugar, which feeds bacteria in our mouth, leading to plaque formation and, eventually, tooth decay. Secondly, sodas are acidic, which means they can demineralize or wear down tooth enamel over time.

The best choice is to replace carbonated drinks with plain water.

H2: All dried fruits are not tooth-friendly

While many pick dried fruits as a healthy snack, it may not be a good choice for our oral health. Dried fruits like raisins, prunes, and figs are gummy. They can damage our teeth since they tend to stay stuck on our teeth longer than other types of food. Since they are also concentrated forms of natural sugar, they are one of the foods that cause tooth decay.

If craving for fruits, grab fresh fruits like apples or a handful of grapes instead of dried fruits, as they contain water and fibre that help cleanse teeth. However, if consuming dried fruits, make sure to rinse the mouth with water afterwards and brush and floss carefully.

H2: Starchy Snacks: Beware of refined sugars

Feeling sleepy, and the first thing we grab is a bag of potato chips! However, snacking on refined carbs

Centered on crafting opulent experiences!

AARTI SREENATH

Manoj Adlakhia is a visionary leader whose journey through the business world spans over three decades of transformative impact. With a foundation as a Chartered Accountant and a BCom Honors degree from SRCC, he sharpened his leadership instincts at Duke University's Executive Leadership Program. His career is a tapestry woven with strategic brilliance, where he has consistently turned challenges into opportunities and ideas into thriving realities. From his early days in the industry, his innovative spirit and customer-first philosophy have set him apart, driving success in every role he has undertaken. Now, as the founder and CEO of RedBeryl, he channels his wealth of experience into creating unparalleled luxury experiences and steering the company towards new horizons.

In a candid conversation, the founder shared insights from his extensive career in financial services, including stints at American Express, Yes Bank and Visa and his transition into the luxury lifestyle sector. Reflecting on his early days at American Express, he expressed his gratitude for the opportunities to work across various business lines. "I've been fortunate to work in three or four different lines of business, gaining insights into financial services. American Express taught me a lot about customer ethos, which was foundational in shaping my approach," he said. His time at Visa was equally formative, where he focused on the corporate card business. Manoj highlighted the importance of scale, a lesson he carried with him throughout his career. "Visa taught me the significance of scale. If you don't build scale, you lose relevance," he noted. This understanding became central to his strategy when he returned to American Express, where he led efforts to double the corporate card business's scale in just a few years. During his leadership, the number of merchants accepting American Express cards in India grew from 100,000 to 1.5 million. This expansion was achieved through strategic partnerships and a focus on scaling operations. His tenure at American Express culminated in his role as CEO for India from 2014 to 2022. During this period, he was instrumental in launching premium products, including the highly aspirational Centurion Card. "The luxury market is vast and our success was a testament to understanding customer needs, delivering consistent service, and building the right team," he shared. The kind of luxury market India had in store attracted him deeply and



Manoj Adlakhia, the founder and CEO of RedBeryl, discusses his incredible career path—which included holding executive positions at American Express, Visa and Yes Bank and founding the premium lifestyle industry—in an exclusive conversation with *The Pioneer* at Park Hyatt. Manoj describes how his commitment and strategic vision have shaped his career and are currently leading RedBeryl's creative path.

compelled him to start RedBeryl. After a successful eight-year stint as CEO, he felt it was time for a new challenge. The decision to pivot to the luxury lifestyle sector was driven by his recognition of the growing market in India. "In 2023, the luxury market in India was worth \$30 billion, with projections to reach \$100 trillion in the next few years. This growth, coupled with the increasing number of billionaires in India, made it clear that there was a significant opportunity to address this market with world-class service," he explained. Manoj embarked on a new venture by founding RedBeryl, a luxury lifestyle company. This move was inspired by the burgeoning luxury market in India, which is projected to grow significantly in the coming years. Thus, RedBeryl was born. Launched on August 5, 2023, with just a small team in Delhi, it has grown rapidly, now operating in seven to eight cities across India. His vision goes beyond traditional concierge services. "We're not just a concierge company; we're offering unique, innovative products and services. Whether it's securing a rare 1965 Mustang for a customer within 72 hours or arranging a Michelin-starred meal in Paris, we're all about creating unforgettable experiences," he said. He emphasised the importance of building strong networks and alliances to scale the business.

"Scale is built through partnerships. We've collaborated with brands like Rolls Royce and Ferrari and we pride ourselves on delivering authentic, high-quality service," he noted. Despite the rapid growth, he remains committed to maintaining a high level of personalisation for each client. "For HNIs and ultra HNIs, personalisation is key. If there's no level of customisation, you lose the customer. We thrive on constructive feedback and we're always looking to improve," he said. When asked about his decision to transition from financial services to a luxury lifestyle, he explained that it was a logical next step given the market's potential.

"The luxury market in India is poised for tremendous growth and I saw an opportunity to offer something unique. By focusing on providing world-class service and building strong customer relationships, we're creating a brand that resonates with our target audience," he said.

In terms of unwinding and staying energised, he is an early riser who enjoys sports and music. "I'm up by 4 a.m. and I start my day with a to-do list. I also love interacting with customers and creating value for them, which keeps me excited about my work," he shared. Manoj's passion for music is evident in his love for Bruce Springsteen, whom he recently saw perform in London

and his admiration for bands like The Police. He also likes listening to retro Bollywood and is an ardent admirer of Kishore Kumar. Travel is another aspect of Manoj's life that he cherishes. While his professional trips are often short, he enjoys spending time in the Maldives, London, and Goa. "Goa is a favourite getaway for my wife and me. We visit every three months, even if it's just for a short break," he said. Most of his trips are short due to his work, yet he chooses to spend time with family and his sons, who are in the US. Another favourite pastime of his is spending time with his dogs and "If someone were to write a book about me, I imagine the title would reflect my essence as a relentless dreamer and an unyielding optimist. As an Aquarian, dreaming is second nature to me and I truly believe that nothing is impossible. *Sab kuch ho sakta hai* (everything is achievable) if you put your heart, energy and dedication into it."

"I'm drawn to people with passion, high energy and a hunger to do more. These are the traits I value, whether in my own team or in any organisation. Loyalty, too, is non-negotiable, just as we expect loyalty from our friends, customers, and employees. I don't believe in rigid hierarchies; I expect transparency and involvement at every level and I love rolling up my sleeves and getting

my hands dirty." People with zeal and optimism who learn from their mistakes and move on from them quickly are people they would want to be surrounded by.

"When it comes to leadership, I see myself as approachable, adaptable, and authentic. Integrity is crucial to me and I have zero tolerance for dishonesty or misconduct. I don't mind if someone has a bad day, but anything that goes against our values is unacceptable. I believe in rewarding performance, not tenure. If someone is performing well, they should move forward, regardless of how long they've been in a role. It's about potential backed by performance, which is key to retaining talent and avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy." He advocates transparency and hands-on involvement, often rolling up his sleeves to work alongside his team. His leadership philosophy values performance and potential over hierarchy, fostering an environment where talent is recognized and rewarded based on merit. Reflecting on his career, Manoj acknowledges the challenges he faced, particularly during the early stages of his entrepreneurial journey. One notable challenge was a failed business venture where he invested his life savings and trusted the wrong people. This experience taught him valuable lessons about business models, risk management, and the importance of having a backup plan. "I started my own company, investing all my life savings into it. Unfortunately, I trusted people I shouldn't have, and the business model didn't take off. I learned the hard way about the importance of having a backup plan, but I made sure to settle all my dues because I didn't want any burden on my conscience. This experience taught me about the true nature of people, the importance of learning from mistakes, and the value of resilience." This experience taught him valuable lessons about business models, risk management and the importance of having a backup plan. My advice to aspiring entrepreneurs is to always have a robust business model and never chase valuations blindly. You become accountable to everyone in your organisation, and you mustn't play with people's careers. Surround yourself with achievers, ambitious people and dreamers. Always think big but be prepared with plans B and C."

His vision for the future includes a desire to contribute to social causes, such as improving living conditions for the underprivileged and ensuring access to education for all children. His determination to make a positive impact extends beyond his professional endeavours, and he believes in making this world a better place.

what's brewing?

RL Tours and Travels celebrated its 2nd anniversary with pomp and festivities to mark the occasion in Hyderabad. It provides air ticketing, customised group packages, VISAs, forex, travel insurance and more.

● Anuradha chetti

● Geetha Madhuri

● Rajiv Kanakala and Suma

● Sunitha

● Raj Allada

Shop late and save big

Inorbit Mall Cyberabad is setting the stage for **#InorbitNightout**, its much awaited midnight sale, which will end on August 11. Shoppers can explore exclusive offers from their favourite brands with discounts of up to 70% while enjoying extended hours until 12:30 am. Not just this, the mall has also organised a lineup of entertaining events to go with the shopping extravaganza! **Freedom Offer (Online):** Starting from 6th August, guests can enjoy an exclusive "Buy 2 Get 1 Free" ticket deal when they book online. This limited-time offer is available for visits between August 15 to August 19, 2024. **Freedom Offer (Offline):** Guests can enjoy an exclusive "Buy 3, Get 1 Free" ticket deal when they book offline at the park ticket counters before 11 AM. This limited-time offer is available for visits till August 31 at Bangalore and Hyderabad parks only.

Etude's first event at Hyderabad with Tira Beauty

Korean beauty sensation, Etude, made a dazzling debut in Hyderabad with its first-ever event. The event, held at the trendy Tira Store in Sarath City Mall, was a vibrant celebration of beauty and innovation. From the best-selling Dear Darling Water Tint to the heart-fluttering Heart Pop Blusher, the curl-defining Curl Fix Mascara and the versatile Play Color Eyes Palette, this event showcased the versatility of Etude's products.

Boult's Klarity series

Boult, a pioneer in audio technology, proudly announced the launch of its tailor made TWS Klarity 1 & 3, setting new benchmarks in design and audio tech. The Klarity series represents a perfect blend of luxury, functionality and iconic design, setting new standards in audio excellence. The latest Klarity 3 true wireless earbuds are set to revolutionise your audio experience with state-of-the-art features.

Celebrate I-Day with exciting offer at Wonderla!

Wonderla Holidays unveiled a special Freedom Offer for the upcoming Independence Day celebration starting from 6th August across all their parks, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Bhubaneswar and Kochi. As part of Wonderla's commitment to providing exceptional value, visitors can enjoy the following discount:

Essilor launches new campaign with Virat Kohli

Essilor has launched their new campaign featuring the India brand face, Virat Kohli. The campaign aims to strengthen the brand's positioning and connect the audience with Essilor's superior product offerings that provide solutions for vision correction needs. The first phase of the campaign spotlights Eyezen, the single vision lenses from Essilor, for people who have prolonged exposure to digital devices.

AUTOMATION EXPO 2024 from August 21 to 24

IED Communications Ltd., the organiser of Automation Expo, is excited to announce Automation Expo 2024, the 17th International Exhibition and Conference. This landmark event will take place from August 21 to 24 in Hall 1 and 2 at BEC, Nesco, Mumbai. With over 500 stalls and more than 1,000 companies spread across an impressive 30,000 square meters, this year's expo represents a significant milestone in its 22-year history, showcasing the growth and success of the Indian industry.

Federal Bank celebrated a momentous milestone—50 years of its presence in the dynamic city of Hyderabad. Looking ahead, Federal Bank is poised for further expansion. The Bank plans to open 10 to 12 new branches this year, followed by a similar number next year.

Meridian School Madhapur hosted the 9th edition of its prestigious Model United Nations Conference at their campus. A Model United Nations Conference is a simulation of a United Nations Assembly consisting of various committees and curated by the International Press. Arjun Puri, Dean of Admissions at Aga Khan Academy Hyderabad, was the chief guest for the opening ceremony.

The Future Pathways Festival, hosted by Manthan School, drew attendees from more than 100 universities worldwide. Universities from India, the US, the UK, Canada, New Zealand and Australia participated in the event. The festival was a huge success, drawing parents and students from high schools who got a lot of talking to university officials at the table fair.

The Duolingo English Test (DET) organised a first-of-its-kind Study Abroad Fest with Duolingo English Test at Le Meridien, Hyderabad. The event brought over 800 students together, where they got deep insights into the entire journey of studying abroad, from identifying courses to preparing applications to planning finances for living abroad. The event featured India's leading key opinion leaders in the field.

Helios—The Watch Store by Titan Company Limited inaugurated two of its outlets, located in Himayathnagar and Somajiguda, with a refreshing new look. The expansive brand outlets were inaugurated in the presence of Rahul Shukla, CSMO (Chief Sales & Marketing Officer), Titan Company Ltd., and Javed KM, Retail Head, Titan Company Ltd.

FUN

ARCHIE

YOU LOOK WORSE THAN USUAL!
I AM! I'M EXHAUSTED!
I WALKED TO SCHOOL, THEN HAD TO RUN ALL THE WAY BACK HOME, AND THEN I RAN ALL THE WAY BACK TO SCHOOL!
WHY DID YOU RUN BACK HOME?
I FORGOT TO TAKE MY VITAMINS!

CALVIN AND HOBBS

MOM, WAS I EVER A GRUB?
A WHAT?
YOU KNOW, A LARVA. DID I REALLY PUPATE AT AGE TWO?
DON'T BE DISGUSTING! OF COURSE NOT! WHERE DID YOU EVER GET THAT AWFUL IDEA?!

GARFIELD

WILD BEAR!
YAAAAAH!!!
HE GETS A KICK OUT OF THAT

REALITY CHECK

HELLO! DO YOU HAVE A FEW MINUTES TO TALK ABOUT DOGS?
WELL, ASK YOU TO READ OUR LITERATURE BUT WE ARE IT...

SPEED BUMP

BOB RETIRED FROM THE CLONING LAB, AND NOW HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH HIMSELF.

CROSSWORD

1	2		3	4	5
			6		
7			8		
	9				
10					
11				12	
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					

NANCY

KIDS THESE DAYS DON'T KNOW HOW TO MAIL LETTERS OR WRITE CHECKS
EXCEPT WITH AN AIR OF IRONIC DETACHMENT
YOU HOOLIGANS! BE EARNEST, DANG IT!
NAH

SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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.

GINGER MEGGS

HI, GINGE! HOW WAS YOUR HOLIDAY? I DIDN'T SEE YOU ONCE!
WELL, THAT'S 'CAUSE I WAS WORKIN' AT ME NEW JOB!
THAT'S GREAT! DOES THAT MEAN YOU HAVE MONEY TO TAKE ME TO THE MOVIES?
WELL, UM... NOT REALLY.
NEVER STAND NEXT TO A SNEERING DRAGON.
BUT D'YOU LIKE GUMMY BEARS?

ACROSS

- A clasp on a belt
- Hint
- A foot covering
- Small glass ball
- Very angry
- Borrow books here
- A large shed for an aeroplane
- Leg joint
- Decays
- Dislike very strongly

DOWN

- Finest
- A prickly plant
- Part of the ear
- Cricket team number

SOLUTION

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

REEL READS

MIND AND WILDERNESS COLLIDE IN *SIMBAA*

AARTI SREENATH

Plot: *Simbaa* embarks on a gripping journey that intertwines the seemingly ordinary lives of three individuals—a respected teacher, a dedicated investigative journalist and a compassionate environmentalist. Their peaceful routines are abruptly shattered when they inexplicably begin committing brutal murders, each victim linked by a mysterious thread. As the narrative unfolds, the bewildered characters, now detained by the authorities, struggle to comprehend their horrifying actions.

Highlights: For those who thrive on fast-paced thrillers, *Simbaa* delivers a roller-coaster of suspense. The film is a unique blend of environmental advocacy and complex medical concepts, making it both an intellectually stimulating and emotionally charged experience. It delves into the psychological and medical conditions that could ensnare even the most upright individuals, offering a chilling exploration of the human mind.

Jagapathi Babu, as expected, delivers an intense and compelling performance. His portrayal of an environmental activist is not just fierce but also layered with a subtle innocence that adds depth to his character. Anasuya Bharadwaj shines in her multifaceted role, balancing the strength of a complex personality with moments of vulnerability. Srinath Maganti's natural performance, especially in the action sequences, brings a sense of realism to the screen. Even the smaller roles, though brief, are executed with precision and contribute significantly to the overall narrative.

Directed by: Murali Manohar Reddy

Produced by: MS Kumar, Sampath Nandi, Rajender Reddy

Cinematography: Krishna Prasad

Music Director: Krishna Saurabh

Cast: Anasuya Bharadwaj, Divi Vadthya, Jagapathi Babu, Vashishtha N. Simha, Ramesh Konbhatla, Kabir Gulshan Singh, Gautami

Rating: 2.5/5

What sets this movie apart?

Simbaa isn't just another revenge drama; it's a wild, untamed tale of retribution, enriched with the fascinating concept of cellular and biological memory. The film's environmental message—emphasising the critical importance of planting trees—adds a profound layer to the story. The narrative captivates the audience, especially as it delves into the question of why good people commit heinous acts, a question that is answered in a truly unexpected manner.

Anasuya's role is one of the film's standout elements! Her portrayal of a dedicated teacher who transforms into a relentless force is both convincing and exhilarating. The supporting cast, including Divi, Aneesh Kuruvilla, Gautami, and Kasturi, all deliver strong performances



that bolster the film's emotional and narrative core.

The true genius of the film emerges in its second half, where a psychological twist unravels the enigma behind these killings, leading to a revelation that not only justifies the movie's title but also leaves the audience in awe.

Drawbacks: Despite its intriguing premise, *Simbaa* has its flaws. The film's pacing is uneven, with some scenes dragging, particularly in the first half. The revenge story, while compelling, sometimes feels bogged down by conventional treatment and a lack of innovative character develop-

ment. The transformation of the characters could have been portrayed with greater depth and conviction, making their motivations clearer and more impactful. Additionally, while the environmental message is laudable, its delivery sometimes borders on being preachy, which may detract from the film's emotional intensity. The flashback sequences, although crucial to the plot, feel overly extended and at times, illogical, diluting the film's overall impact.

Technical aspects: Cinematographer Krishna Prasad's work stands out, partic-

ularly in the way he uses manual techniques to enhance the film's gritty realism. Each frame is meticulously crafted, paying attention to the smallest details. However, while the lighting remains consistent, it lacks the mood-enhancing qualities that could have elevated certain scenes. Some of the more challenging shots, especially those filmed from above or within dense forests, showcase the cinematographer's skill but also highlight areas where the film could have benefited from a more polished execution. The visual storytelling, especially in the opening and closing sequences, effectively heightens the suspense and emotional stakes. However, the narrative flow occasionally falters, with abrupt shifts in the storyline that might confuse the audience. The editing is competent but could have been tighter to maintain the film's pace and intensity.

Verdict: *Simbaa—The Forest Man* offers a fresh take on the revenge drama genre, blending intense action, medical intrigue and environmental advocacy into a compelling narrative. Director Murali Manohar Reddy's ambitious attempt to weave together diverse genres—drama, thriller, crime and social commentary—results in a film that is as thought-provoking as it is emotionally resonant. The exploration of biological memory as a driver for revenge, coupled with the urgent environmental message, adds layers of complexity to the story. However, the film's slow pacing, conventional narrative choices and occasional lapses in logic prevent it from reaching its full potential. Despite these shortcomings, *Simbaa* offers a rich viewing experience that is both engaging and enlightening.

'Pagal Vs Kaadal connects with all lovers'

Actor Vijay Shankar, known for his roles in films like *Devarakonda lo Vijay Prema Katha* and *Focus*, is back in the spotlight with his new film *Pagal Vs Kaadal*. Vishika stars as the heroine, while the film is produced by Manmath Rao under the Shivathri Films banner and directed by Rajesh Mudunuri. The romantic comedy entertainer hit theaters on August 9.



Reflecting on the movie, Vijay Shankar shared his thoughts, revealing that when director Rajesh Mudunuri first presented the story of *Pagal Vs Kaadal*, it struck him as unique. "It's a subject that resonates with every common audience," Vijay explained. "The film gives the feeling that we have seen such situations and characters in our own lives. In *Pagal Vs Kaadal*, I play Karthik, a software employee with an innocent demeanor who falls in love with a girl of a different personality. The evolution of their relationship, given their contrasting personalities, will be both entertaining and romantically engaging."

Vijay also believes that the movie's story will deeply connect with modern lovers. "It will evoke a sense that they have encountered similar situations in their own lives," he said. "We chose the title *Pagal Vs Kaadal* because it perfectly captures the essence of our story. The film features situational comedy that adds to its charm."

The film also highlights the contributions of Brahmaji and Shakalaka Shankar, who play crucial roles. Vijay praised their involvement, noting, "Brahmaji and Shakalaka Shankar narrate the story from start to finish. Despite his fame, Brahmaji was incredibly supportive and friendly throughout the project."

Regarding his co-star, Vishika, Vijay expressed confidence that she would receive considerable praise for her performance. "Vishika, who plays my love interest, has delivered an impressive portrayal that will make viewers question whether she is acting or genuinely real," he said, adding, "Director Rajesh Mudunuri has crafted *Pagal Vs Kaadal* into an engaging entertainer and I am confident he will gain a strong reputation

as a talented director."

On the technical front, Vijay assured that the film boasts high-quality production. "The editing by Shyam Kumar, cinematography by Navadeer, and music by Praveen Sangadala all contribute to the film's appeal. The production values from Shivathri Films complement the story well," he noted.

Vijay also spoke about his admiration for Mega Power Star Ram Charan and the support for young talent in Tollywood. Hailing from Srikakulam, Vijay recounted his journey into the industry. "I entered the industry without any support, initially thinking I would complete one film offer and then leave," he admitted, further sharing, "However, opportunities kept coming my way and I continue to work on films. My movies are being released in theaters and are also available on OTT platforms. This is highly encouraging for me as a young hero. The opportunities I receive are due to the trust placed in me by producers and directors."

Looking ahead, Vijay shared his satisfaction with his career progress. "I am content with how things are going," he said. "I've completed 9 films, including a big-budget project titled *Raajakikam*, which is being made with a budget of around 10 crores. My goal is to earn the appreciation of Telugu audiences and make my parents and my people proud."

Seerat signs a film for People Media Factory?

Seerat Kapoor, a rising star in Tollywood, has been making headlines with her recent successes, including *Manamey*, *BhamaKalapam 2* and *Save The Tigers 2*. Known for her versatility, Kapoor continues to captivate audiences with her diverse roles.

Recently, Kapoor was seen outside the offices of the leading production house, People Media Production. Having previously collaborated with them on *Manamey* under Sriram Aditya's direction, there's now speculation that she is set to star in another major project.

A source close to the production team has confirmed that "Seerat is signed on for a mass pan-Indian film. The details are finalised and the first schedule of the film is ready to commence. It will be a comedy-drama." This news has generated considerable excitement in the industry, marking a significant milestone in Kapoor's career. As anticipation grows, fans and industry insiders alike are eagerly awaiting the official announcement from People Media Production, which promises to usher in an exciting new phase for Seerat Kapoor.



Jr NTR, Prashanth Neel's *NTR31* set for January 2026 release

Jr NTR and director Prashanth Neel, who announced their collaboration in 2022, have unveiled an exciting update about their much-anticipated film. On August 9, it was confirmed that their project, tentatively titled *NTR31*, is scheduled to hit theatres on January 9, 2026.

The official X handle of Mythri Movie Makers, the film's production house, announced the release date along with a new poster. The post read, "This time, the earth will tremble under his reign! #NTRNeel

will step onto the soil on January 9th, 2026. MAN OF MASSES @tarak9999 #PrashanthNeel @MythriOfficial @NTRArtsOfficial (sic)."

Originally announced several years ago, the film faced delays due to the busy schedules of Jr NTR and Prashanth Neel. Full-fledged shooting for *NTR31* is expected to commence in September 2024. Jr NTR, currently occupied with his project *Devara*, is anticipated to join the set a bit later. Further details about the

cast, crew and shooting schedules will be revealed on the film's launch day.

Speculation suggests that the film might be titled *Dragon*. With pre-production work ongoing for several months, the film is expected to be a high-octane commercial entertainer.

In the meantime, Jr NTR's upcoming film *Devara: Part One*, directed by Koratala Siva and co-starring Janhvi Kapoor, is set to release in September.



Thangalaan is more than just a historical drama: Director Pa Ranjith

PNS HYDERABAD

At a recent event, director Pa Ranjith shed light on the making of his highly anticipated pan-India film *Thangalaan*, revealing that the film's climax had to be reshoot after the initial completion. Ranjith explained that although the actors had moved on to their subsequent projects, they were called back to reshoot the climax because he was dissatisfied with the original footage.

During the event, Ranjith addressed actor Vikram's challenging experience on set, particularly with the numerous fight sequences. Vikram sustained severe rib injuries that required surgery and Ranjith acknowledged his own role in the demanding conditions on set. "I was so focused on capturing the essence of the scene that I neglected to check on the actors' well-being," Ranjith admitted. "I viewed them purely as their characters—Vikram as Thangalaan and Daniel Caltagirone as Lord Clement. My intense focus led me to be more demanding and at times, outright harsh."

Ranjith expressed his gratitude to those who support his cinematic vision, emphasising the social themes

explored in *Thangalaan*. "I am thankful to everyone who supports my ideas and perspectives expressed through cinema," he said, adding, "Oppression and inequality still persist in our country, lingering in our society for many years. I chose film as a medium to address these issues. I am pleased to be in Hyderabad for the *Thangalaan* event, as the Telugu audience has always embraced my films. I hope you will appreciate this movie as well."

He elaborated on the film's significance, noting that *Thangalaan* is more than just a historical drama. "This story is not just about a quest for gold but a struggle for freedom and rights," Ranjith explained. "These struggles continue in society today. Through cinema, I have expressed my views. Vikram has deeply understood the story, the character and the emotions of *Thangalaan*. We are fortunate to have an actor like Vikram. Gnanavel Raja supported this film with great faith and commitment. He was impressed by *Thangalaan*, and we are confident it will be a success."

Ranjith also highlighted the film's role in the broader landscape of South Indian cinema. *Thangalaan* is set to continue the trend of bringing unique and compelling stories to the audience. "We are witnessing a trend where good movies are gaining popularity nationwide," he said. "We hope *Thangalaan* will be well-received as well." *Thangalaan*, directed by Pa. Ranjith and starring Chiyaan Vikram and Malavika Mohanan in prominent roles, is scheduled for a worldwide release on August 15, 2024. The film will be available in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam. The music for the film is composed by G.V. Prakash Kumar.



Sathish Babu's *Jathara* promises fresh take amidst formulaic trends

As audiences grow weary of conventional, formulaic films, there is a growing demand for movies with innovative storylines. In this evolving landscape, Sathish Babu introduces a distinctive film titled *Jathara*. Not only does Sathish Babu write and direct the movie, but he also takes on the lead role.

Presented by Galla Manjunath and produced by Radhakrishna Reddy and Siva Shankar Reddy under Radhakrishna Production Company in association with Movieteck LLC, *Jathara* has launched its promotional campaign with the release of its first look poster. The poster showcases Sathish Babu in a dramatic and intense pose, wielding a sword with a menacing expression. His long hair and piercing eyes contribute to a fierce and captivating presence, designed to draw atten-

tion and stir excitement for the film.

Set in the drought-stricken district of Chittoor, *Jathara* revolves around a black stone revered as the goddess Paleti Gangamma, which offers hope to the local villagers. The story unfolds with the construction of a temple and the celebration of a grand festival led by landlord Venkatarreddy. However, the plot takes a dramatic turn following his death, underscoring themes of faith and resilience in the face of adversity.

The film stars Deeya Raj as the leading lady, with R.K. Pinnapala, Gopal Reddy, Mahaboob Basha and Sai Vikranth in supporting roles. K.V. Prasad handles cinematography and Sreejith Edavana provides the music. A glimpse of the film will be released soon to further pique curiosity and anticipation.

Top technicians roped in for YVS Chowdary's film with NTR



Nandamuri Taraka Ramarao, the great-grandson of the legendary NTR, grandson of the esteemed Hari Krishna, and son of the late Janaki Ram, is set to make a significant impact in Telugu cinema. This new film marks a notable addition to the Nandamuri family's illustrious legacy. Directed by the acclaimed YVS Chowdary and produced by Yalamanchili Geetha under the banner "New Talent Roars @," the project promises to be a major cinematic event. Ramesh Attili will serve as the Executive Producer.

YVS Chowdary has unveiled an exciting array of talent for the film. Veenah Rao, an enchanting Kuchipudi dancer and Telugu actress, will star as the lead heroine alongside Nandamuri Taraka Ramarao.

The film boasts a stellar musical team, with music composed by Oscar-winning MM Keeravani and

lyrics penned by the celebrated Oscar-winning lyricist Chandrabose. Additionally, Sai Madhav Burra, known for his impactful dialogue writing on numerous high-profile projects, will craft the dialogues for this much-anticipated film.

To prepare for his debut, Nandamuri Taraka Ramarao has undergone extensive training to hone his skills for the lead role. YVS Chowdary, renowned for launching numerous stars throughout his distinguished career, is entrusted with the task of introducing Nandamuri Taraka Ramarao in this compelling project.

Crafted by YVS Chowdary, the film's story and screenplay are designed to showcase Nandamuri Taraka Ramarao's versatile abilities, promising a captivating experience for Telugu film enthusiasts. Further details about the film's genre and key elements will be revealed soon.

LEGENDARY ATHLETE ON FIELD, A SUPERSTAR SANS PRETENSIONS

PTI ■ PARIS

Neeraj Chopra is all about greatness without pretensions. A fierce competitor, a superstar of Indian sports, a humble human being who would make no bones about his limitations or desires, the double Olympic medalist from India, is all rolled into one. He may want the top prize for himself but would not be envious if the rival pips him. He would tell himself to accept what he got, and work harder to achieve what he desires. He would not pretend that he does not care for brand endorsement. He certainly wants it, money matters, but would not compromise on his training for that. The 17-minute interaction with the Indian media after winning a silver medal in the Paris Olympics was more than just a routine question-answer session. "Your first throw was foul then in the second..." the scribe had not even completed his question before Chopra quipped, "Saari throw fouls hi thi sir sirf doosri hi theek thi (All throws were foul, except the second one)," he said, chuckling, and the 50-strong group joined him in laughter.

It was not a great deal for him to say he fouled five of his six attempts. The long Q and A session was largely in Hindi with Indian and Pakistani journalists asking questions, but when the volunteer requested an answer in English for the benefit of few foreign scribes, Chopra laid bare his simplicity. "Now I need to motivate myself to speak in English, the way I motivate myself for competition," he said with a smile, as the gathered group burst out in laughter. "Can you describe the competition between you and Nadeem, India and Pakistan," the foreign scribe asked again, requesting the answer in English. Well, he explained pretty well, effortlessly. "It was a really great competition. Maybe one of the greatest competitions in history. Arshad threw really well. I was also in good shape. But I don't know. My runway was not that good today," he responded quickly, without having to think much. It was inevitable that he would be asked about the missed competitions in the 2024 season, leading up to the Paris Games. It led to speculations whether he was carrying injury into the Paris Games.



NEERAJ CHOPRA

He had skipped the Paris Diamond League in July, just before the Games, though he later clarified that the event was not part of his competition calendar. He revealed how difficult it becomes for him to say no to the organisers despite fitness concerns. With a wide grin, he said, "Of course I need to play more but then I send those carefully drafted messages that I have suffered a strain and I won't compete. "In few competitions I have played just for the sake of organisers so that they don't feel bad. I keep thinking that I have entered the competition and if I don't go, they will say I am making excuses. Personally I love to compete as much as possible. "I make plans but then you tell your team, let's draft a good message, saying sorry for pulling out," he said, laughing, but the pain of missing the event was writ large. "No happiness is greater than playing. You work hard to compete only. Whatever strength God has given me I do." Then came a tricky one. He was asked about the pressure of sponsors in the Olympic cycle. How he finds that balance

between brand endorsements, obligations and training? Again, he came up with an honest answer. "I put my game on top priority after Tokyo and after Tokyo Games only I got the opportunity to get associated with brands. It is difficult for us that brands come after you, and if you get it, why will you leave that opportunity. Just do it," he said, with all honesty. "It also opens the way for kids (next generation), 'nahi to shreer hi tootega khel khel key, last mein kuch nah rahega.' How many athletes say that so openly? "So I balance it. Priority is sport. This was an Olympic year, so whatever commitments I had, I fulfilled in the first half. "You have seen I have been training outside since Tokyo." He could be upset inside for not being able to defend his title but accepted that Thursday was Nadeem's day. Lastly, volunteers did their best to push him out of the mixed zone but he would keep coming back either to sign autographs or honour the request for selfies. After all, he knows how to find a balance between different things and saying no is the most difficult thing for him.

Sreejesh to join Bhaker as India's flag-bearer in closing ceremony

PTI ■ PARIS

Celebrated hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh will join star shooter Manu Bhaker as the flag-bearer of the Indian contingent in the closing ceremony of the Olympic Games here on Sunday, a fitting honour and recognition for his contributions to the team. Before homing in on Sreejesh, Indian Olympic Association (IOA) chief PT Usha spoke with Neeraj Chopra, and she said even the superstar javelin thrower wanted to see the retiring legend as flag-bearer. Chopra claimed a silver here to become the first Indian track and field athlete to win two Olympic medals. He won a historic gold in the Tokyo edition three years ago.



"I spoke with Neeraj Chopra and appreciate the spontaneity and grace with which he agreed that Sreejesh should be the flag-bearer at the Closing Ceremony," Usha said in a statement. "He told me 'Ma'am, even if you had not asked me, I would have suggested

Sree bhai's name'. It is reflective of the immense respect Neeraj has for Sreejesh and his contribution to Indian sport," she revealed. Usha said Sreejesh was "both an emotional and popular choice" within the IOA leadership, including Chef-de-Mission Gagan Narang, and the entire Indian contingent. The legendary Sreejesh retired from the game after India's bronze medal-winning feat at the ongoing Games, bringing to an end a glorious career spanning 18 years. "The Indian Olympic Association is delighted to announce the nomination of hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh as the joint flag-bearer with pistol shooter Manu Bhaker at the Closing Ceremony of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games," the IOA said in a

statement. The 2-1 triumph over Spain, in the bronze medal playoff match here on Thursday, was a fitting farewell for the 36-year-old custodian who has served the team with distinction for so long. "Sreejesh has served Indian hockey in particular and Indian sport in general admirably through more than two decades," Usha said. Sreejesh was also the flag-bearer in the closing ceremony of the Hangzhou Asian Games last year. The IOA had earlier named Bhaker as the female flag-bearer after she became the first Indian athlete post Independence to win multiple medals in a single Olympic Games. She won bronze medals in the women's 10m air pistol and the 10m air pistol mixed team (with Sarabjot Singh).



AP ■ PARIS

Algerian boxer Imane Khelif is one victory away from wrapping up her tumultuous Paris Olympics with a gold medal around her neck - a potential prize that she has called the best response to a cascade of online abuse she has endured over misconceptions about her sex. Khelif fights Yang Liu of China on Friday night in the final of the women's welterweight division at Roland Garros. Khelif has yet to lose one round on a judge's scorecard in her first three fights in Paris, going on the most dominant run of her boxing career while facing an extraordinary amount of scrutiny. It stems from Khelif and fellow two-time Olympian Li Yu-ting of Taiwan getting disqualified from last year's world championships by the Russian-dominated International Boxing Association, which claims both fighters failed a murky eligibility test for women's competition. The International Olympic Committee took the unprecedented step last year of permanently banning the IBA from the Olympics following

Boxer Imane fights for Gold to cap Olympics filled with misinformed scrutiny

years of concerns about its governance, competitive fairness and financial transparency. The IOC has called the arbitrary sex tests that the sport's governing body imposed on the two boxers irretrievably flawed. The IBA did nothing to help its argument this week at a shambolic news conference in which its leadership contradicted itself about the tests and declined to answer basic questions about them, citing privacy concerns from the Olympic committees of Algeria and Taiwan. The IOC repeatedly reaffirmed the two boxers' right to compete in Paris, with President Thomas Bach personally defending Khelif and Lin while calling the criticism "hate speech." "We have two boxers who are born as women, who have been raised as women, who have a passport as a woman and have competed for many



but cheers during their bouts. A huge contingent of flag-waving Algeria fans greeted and serenaded Khelif throughout her semifinal victory Tuesday night, and she's become a hometown hero in her North African country. Khelif has already secured Algeria's first Olympic medal in women's boxing. She will attempt to become only her country's second boxing gold medalist, joining Hocine Soltani (1996). The gold medal fight is the culmination of Khelif's nine-day run through an Olympic tournament that began with a bizarre event. Khelif's first opponent, Angela Carini of Italy, abandoned their bout after just 46 seconds, saying she was in too much pain from Khelif's punches. An already brewing story suddenly became major international news, with the likes of former US President Donald Trump and "Harry Potter" author JK Rowling

weighing in with criticism and false speculation about men competing with women in sports. Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni personally visited with Carini to share her condolences and to cast doubt on Khelif's eligibility. Carini later said she regretted her actions and wished to apologize to Khelif. The Italian newspaper La Stampa detailed Carini's mindset in the days leading up to the bout, describing pressure from both inside and outside her team to avoid the fight amid the growing speculation over Khelif's status. The IBA later offered to pay winner's bonuses to Carini and the Italian Boxing Federation despite Carini's abandonment of the bout. The Italian federation and Carini rejected the money from the IBA, which volunteered the payments to all Paris winners and their teams despite having nothing to do with the Olympics. Lin also fights for a gold medal on Saturday on the final card of the Olympics. She takes on Julia Szeremeta of Poland with a chance to win Taiwan's first boxing gold.

COVID-hit Lyles misses out on a double

AP ■ PARIS

Sprinter Noah Lyles revealed he had COVID-19 after missing out on another gold medal for the United States at the Paris Olympics. Elsewhere, French basketball star Victor Wembanyama moved closer to his dream of a first gold after helping Les Bleus beat Germany to set up a dream final against the U.S. Team after the Americans edged Serbia 95-91. On the same Stade de France track where he won the historically close 100 meters by five thousandths of a second, Lyles was third behind gold medalist Letsile Tebogo of Botswana and U.S. Teammate Kenneth Bednarek. Medics tended to a tired-looking Lyles and took him off in a wheelchair. Wearing a mask as he spoke with reporters, Lyles later said he had COVID. "It definitely affected my

performance," said Lyles, adding that he tested positive early Tuesday morning but was cleared to compete. The U.S. Track federation said it and the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee adhered to all Olympic and Centers for Disease Control guidelines. Over at Bercy Arena, with former NBA stars Dirk Nowitzki and Tony Parker watching their respective countrymen, France held on to win 73-69. Wembanyama, the NBA rookie of the year, clenched his fists at the buzzer and teammate Evan Fournier jubilantly threw the ball into the crowd. The 20-year-old star didn't play three years ago in Tokyo, when the French lost the final to the U.S. They meet again Saturday, when Wembanyama hopes to give France its first Olympic gold in men's or women's basketball.

Letsile makes a case for African sprinters with thrilling victory in 200 metres

AP ■ PARIS

Letsile Tebogo is from Botswana in southern Africa, a continent with a rich history of producing world-class runners. Just not like the kind Tebogo does for a living. He's brought 20 seconds of greatness - check 19.46 seconds of greatness - might change that. The 21-year-old pulled off a stunner (sort of) in the men's 200 meters at the Paris Olympics on Thursday night, producing the first-ever Olympic gold by an African runner in the distance. American Kenneth Bednarek got out to an early lead, but Tebogo said he was confident he had more than enough to track him down. By the middle of the stretch, Tebogo was in front and waited for a challenge from American star Noah Lyles that never came - perhaps in

part because Lyles is dealing with COVID-19 - to win going away. "When I saw Kenny fade I knew Noah was far, far, far away behind us," Tebogo said. "So, that means I'm the Olympic champion." One who is also a three-time world champion. Lost amid the chaos of Lyles collapsing briefly on the track in the aftermath and his revelation that he tested positive for COVID-19 on Tuesday was this: Tebogo's time was the fastest by anyone in the world this year. Lyles included. Heady territory for an athlete who gets himself amped up before a race by playing traditional songs he learned growing up in Kanye, Botswana, not far from the landlocked nation's border with South Africa. The ritual allows Tebogo to relax, drawing a stark contrast between him and the relentlessly amped

Lyles. While Lyles roared onto the purple track at Stade de France preening, Tebogo was one lane to Lyles' right mentally preparing for the race of his life. And when Tebogo ran it, he draped the blue, white and black flag of his country over his shoulders, hung his orange cleats around his neck presented his right shoe to a nearby camera to reveal a tribute to his mother, Elizabeth Seratiwa, who died in May. "She always dreamed of making it to here," Tebogo said. So did his younger sister, who was somewhere in the sea of seats that roared during the race, a roar that grew louder when it became obvious Lyles wasn't going to track Tebogo down the way he had to just about everyone since Tokyo in his signature event.



Not this time. While there may not be an official rivalry between Tebogo and Lyles, the seeds may have been planted somewhere between Lyles' preening and Tebogo's decisive victory. Asked afterwards if he envisions himself becoming one of the standard bearers in sprinting, Tebogo threw a dash of shade in his answer. "I can't be the face of athletics because I'm not an arrogant or a loud person like Noah (Lyles)," he said. Maybe. Tebogo's biography in the official Olympics media program quotes him as saying he wants "to be remembered as one of the best athletes who ever lived." He's probably already there back home, a largely rural country of 2.63 million roughly the size of France that serves as a popular destination

for tourists going on African safaris. The pace of life in Kanye isn't typically hectic. Maybe that makes Tebogo's triumph of a young man in a hurry ironic in a way. Tebogo fought off a balking hamstring to win bronze in the 200 behind Lyles and his US teammate Erriyon Knighton in the 2023 athletics world championship. He finished ahead of Lyles in their 200 semifinal on Wednesday. Lyles' camp said he Lyles was fine afterwards, indicating he was saving himself for the final. Perhaps he was. Yet when Tebogo took off, Lyles saw only the bib on the back of Tebogo's race shirt. Lyles never saw the bib on the front. Not until the end anyway, when Tebogo unpinched it, grabbed each end and presented it for all the world to see. The people of Africa most of all.