

the pioneer

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India-Nepal discuss ways to improve bilateral ties & economic cooperation

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NOTHING MORE FOR GOVT TO ADD



8

Dubbing dynamite: RCM Raju's 'Rakaa' Roars with unique TELUGU TWISTS



P11

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The pioneer

If KTR's relatives come to invest in Telangana, we will welcome them too. BRS leaders have to stop spreading lies about investments. Amara Raja will be given the support it needs from the state government. BRS leaders are trying to throw mud at Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's foreign tour. BRS leaders should pull up the government if we have committed mistakes but should not engage in mudslinging.



-Kiran Kumar Reddy, Bhongir MP Chamala, Telangana

P2

DON'T MISS...

Govt schools face closure due...

Students of rented government schools are facing several issues as they don't have proper playgrounds, sports equipment, lack of classrooms and other facilities due to lack of funds from the government for the past four years. These schools are being run in residential buildings, unlike other government schools in Hyderabad. Apart from students, the faculty is facing severe crisis as they are unable to pay rent, thereby forcing the owners to shut down the schools. As per the...

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'India' scripts history in...

India's quest for gold at the Paris Olympics 2024 came to an end after Neeraj Chopra had to settle for a silver in the javelin throw event final. But, in a surprising twist, 'India' made history in the sport of Break Dancing. The country's name echoed through the arena, but as the dust settled, a surprising revelation came to light. The Dutch athlete, competing under the stage name 'India', defeated refugee team member B-girl Talash in the opening match of the women's Break Dance event...

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Major domestic appliances...

The market of major domestic appliances saw an 18 per cent value-based growth in the first half of 2024, helped by a strong demand for essential household items, according to a report from GfK. The growth in MDA (major domestic appliances) market was led by Key categories such as air-conditioners and refrigerators, which reported a growth of 30 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively. "This growth is 3X of growth in 2023 over the previous year," said the report from GfK, which is now an NIQ Company...

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High hopes, disappointing...

The Indian boxing contingent, that featured two reigning world champions in Nikhat Zareen and Lovlina Borgohain, entered the Olympics hoping for an unprecedented medal haul, only to crumble under pressure, leaving behind a trail of disappointment in a medal-less campaign. Boxing became a medal hope for India after Vijender Singh's historic bronze at the 2008 Beijing Games. MC Mary Kom added a women's bronze to it in 2012. Although the 2016 Rio Games saw the boxers return without a...

-SPORTS

NBFC DEPOSITS Depositors can take back entire amount within 3 months



The Reserve Bank on Monday said non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) will pay 100 per cent of deposit amount within the first three months of accepting the fund, if the depositor seeks an withdrawal citing an emergency.

Continued on Page 5

DISQUALIFICATION AT PARIS OLYMPICS

Will it be a silver lining for Vinesh?

India awaits verdict on appeal today

PNS ■ PARIS

India's sports fraternity waited with bated breath as the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), having heard arguments of all parties, got ready to deliver its verdict on wrestler Vinesh Phogat's appeal against her disqualification at the Paris Olympics, on Tuesday. Vinesh, who stormed into the final of the women's 50kg freestyle event with three convincing wins, including against wrestling royalty Yui Susaki of Japan last Tuesday, was debarred from the gold medal bout against eventual winner Sarah Hildebrandt of the United States as she was found 100gm above the prescribed limit in the customary morning weigh-in. In addition to the Mega Test Centre, the HMIE is also planning to expand its existing engineering centre in Hyderabad. This expansion will involve the renovation and modernisation of the current facility, boosting employment opportunities not only in Telangana but also

across the Asia Pacific region. "India is a critical market for us, and we are committed to developing products and technologies that set benchmarks in the industry," HMIE officials remarked, expressing their gratitude to the Telangana government for its support.

The Chief Minister's visit to South Korea also included a pitch for investments in Telangana's textile sector. At a business roundtable organised by the Korea Federation of Textile Industry (KOFOTI), Revanth presented the Mega Textile Park in Warangal as an ideal investment destination.



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Team Revanth's USP works

South Korean firm Hyundai to establish Mega Test Centre in TG

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyundai Motor Company, a global leader in the automotive industry, is establishing a Mega Test Centre in Telangana, marking a significant milestone in the state's efforts to attract foreign investments.

The announcement was made after a meeting between Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Hyundai officials in Seoul on Monday. The proposed centre will not only feature an advanced automotive test track but will also include a state-of-the-art electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing facility.

Revanth, accompanied by IT and Industries Minister Sridhar Babu, emphasised Telangana's commitment to fostering a business-friendly environment.

"The Telangana government is focusing on creating a conducive ecosystem for global giants like Hyundai. Our industry-friendly policies have made Telangana an ideal destination for investments," Revanth said during the meeting.

The new Mega Test Centre of the Hyundai Motor India Engineering Pvt Ltd (HMIE), a subsidiary of



"The Telangana government is focusing on creating a conducive ecosystem for global giants like Hyundai. Our industry-friendly policies have made Telangana an ideal destination for investments," Revanth said during the meeting.

Hyundai, is expected to become a hub for automotive innovation in India.

The facility will not only cater to Hyundai's testing needs but is also likely to attract many affiliates and suppliers, thereby creating significant employment opportunities in

the region. This development is in line with Telangana's broader strategy to position itself as a leading destination for automotive and manufacturing investments.

5

Hyundai facility will have an automotive test track and a state-of-the-art EV manufacturing unit

HMIE plans to modernise its existing engineering centre, creating more jobs

Warangal Mega Textile Park introduced to Korean textile industry leaders

Task force comprising Industries Minister Sridhar Babu, officials to follow up on investment proposals

OU improves; IITH, Nalsar retain NIRF rankings



P3

'SLBC tunnel to be completed in 2 yrs'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Komatireddy Venkat Reddy has announced that the SLBC tunnel designed to check the fluoride menace in Nalgonda district and to provide irrigation to four lakh acres of farmland while simultaneously meeting Hyderabad's drinking water needs will be completed in the next two years, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy said.

Speaking from Ohio in the US, Venkat, who is currently on a visit to



the US, visited the Robbins Tunnel Boring Machinery Manufacturing

Company along with its CEO, Locke Home.

Continued on Page 5

SUNKISHALA MISHAP

'Why govt silent on MEIL'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Although around 10 days have passed after the Sunkishala wall mishap, no action has been taken against Megha Engineering & Infrastructure Limited (MEIL), KTR said on X.

He asked why the Congress government is hushing up the incident and going soft on the company involved.

He pointed out the glaring inaction despite the severity of the incident, raising concerns about the government's apparent reluctance to hold MEIL accountable.

He addressed Rahul Gandhi directly, asking for an explanation, "Any answers on why your govern-



ment is hushing up and going soft on the agency, Rahul Gandhi Ji?" he said.

KTR's comments sparked a debate over the accountability of those responsible for the mishap and the government's role in ensuring justice.

'Cheonggyecheon inspires us to clean Musi'

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, during a late-night stroll along the Cheonggyecheon stream in Seoul, shared his vision for a world-class waterfront along the rejuvenated Musi River in Hyderabad. He emphasized the importance of transforming the river into

a landmark that enhances the city's global standing. "How will Hyderabad look after we rejuvenate the Musi River and build a world-class waterfront? Exploring solutions and brainstorming possibilities, my team and I found lots of ideas and insights during our visit," Revanth said.

Why Rahul not responding to genocide in Bangla: Bandi

Says Cong divided India into sects, religions

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Declaring that the Congress divided the country into various sects and religions, the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, asked the Leader of the Opposition (LOP), Rahul Gandhi, why he is not responding to the genocide taking place in Bangladesh. Rahul is speaking uncle Sam Pitroda's language and following pro-China policies and their directions, he added. Sanjay said the Centre is keen-



ly observing the developments in Bangladesh and that the Bangladesh crisis will not have any impact here.

Sanjay was attending a Tiranga rally in Karimnagar on Monday. He said that lakhs of people lost their lives due to the irrational policies of former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and that the Congress transformed the freedom that India got to benefit the Nehru dynasty.

5

Will approach HC if govt doesn't act against MEIL: Alleti

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Declaring that the Congress government is helping Megha Engineering & Infrastructure Limited (MEIL) for the sake of commissions instead of black-listing it, BJLP leader Alleti Maheshwar Reddy said the BJP will approach the High Court if the government does not take immediate action against MEIL.

He asked the government to explain why it is not taking action

"Telangana has become 'food' for contractors. MEIL is controlling the party in power in Telangana. Thousands of crores of public money are going into the pockets of contractors," he said.

against MEIL although the HMWSSB said that MEIL is responsible for the Sunkishala incident.

"Telangana has become 'food' for contractors. MEIL is controlling the party in power in Telangana. Thousands of crores of public money are going into the pockets of contractors," he said.

Maheshwar said the CM is supporting MEIL to get funds for Assembly election campaigns in Maharashtra, Haryana and Jharkhand. That's why the CM is avoiding action against MEIL despite the partial collapse of the project due to shoddy work.

5

Restaurants launch hygiene drive after CFS raids

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

With the Commissioner of Food Safety (CFS) intensifying raids on restaurants across the city, compliance with food safety standards has come under increased scrutiny.

Highly placed sources said restaurant owners have expressed concern about the potential damage to their reputation if their establishments are publicly named.

While they support the raids they have reportedly requested the CFS to refrain from disclosing the names of non-compliant restaurants. This request was brought to the attention of the Health Minister during a recent meeting, but officials remained firm in their stance and refused to accept the demands of hoteliers.

Responding to the growing focus on food safety, some food chains are taking proactive steps to demon-



strate their commitment to hygiene. Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) recently organised an exclusive 'Open Kitchen Tour' in the city, inviting media representatives and influencers to witness first-hand the stringent safety and quality measures in place in their kitchens.

This initiative is part of KFC's broader effort to reassure customers about the quality of their food and the rigorous standards that define their brand. KFC, a popular chain that has been serving chicken lovers in India for over two decades, has built a strong reputation for its

While they support the raids they have reportedly requested the CFS to refrain from disclosing the names of non-compliant restaurants. This request was brought to the attention of the Health Minister during a recent meeting, but officials remained firm in their stance and refused to accept the demands of hoteliers.

iconic offerings, such as the Hot & Crispy Bucket, Zinger Burger and Popcorn Chicken.

5

'Strong action will be taken against Hindenburg'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister Giriraj Singh on Monday said Hindenburg Research has defamed the country in alliance with Congress and the "strictest action" will be taken against the US short-seller.

Hindenburg on Saturday launched a broadside against markets regulator Sebi chairperson Madhabi Buch, alleging she and her husband Dhaval had stakes in the alleged Adani money siphoning scandal. The duo has denied the allegations as baseless and asserted their finances are an open book.

The Adani Group termed the latest allegations malicious and based on manipulation of select public information. The company said it



has no commercial relationship with the Sebi chairperson or her husband.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of an event here, Singh, the Union Minister for Textiles, also came down heavily on Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Jairam Ramesh.

5

'MNCs are queuing up to invest in TG'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Declaring that after the visit of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to the US, foreign companies are 'queuing up' to invest in the state, TPCC spokesperson Gana Sundar said that the loans of farmers are being waived as promised by the CM.

"Due to mistakes in the names of some farmers, their loans were not waived. The government is now correcting that and action has been taken against the officials responsible," he said.

He said the state has plenty of water for cultivation and drinking. Sunder said that the government is celebrating agriculture and that the CM is now trying to provide other jobs along with agriculture.

Speaking to the media at the Gandhi Bhavan on



TPCC official spokesperson Gana Sundar addressing the media at Gandhi Bhavan

Monday, Gana Sundar praised the CM as a visionary.

He said that panchayats were not funded during BRS rule and asked the BRS to stop criticising and cooperate with the Congress government.

Gana Sundar said that the BRS can't block Revanth and that the CM will have an important role in TG politics for another 20 years.

CM introduced a new Telangana to US: Adi Srinivas

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy introduced a new Telangana to the US, Government Whip Adi Srinivas said. He said the Congress government is turning Telangana into a 'paradise' for investors and that the BRS is unable to stomach the suc-

cess of the CM's visit to the US. Speaking to the media on Monday at the CLP Media Hall, Adi Srinivas asked BRS Working President KT Rama Rao to reveal how many companies he had brought to Telangana after going to Davos wearing a suit.

"All companies that signed MoUs with KTR moved to other states. The BRS government did not provide proper facilities to those companies and BRS social media warriors are struggling to play down Revanth's success," he said.

Asian elephants facing extinction, warns Surekha

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Minister for Forests and Environment, Konda Surekha, said that everyone should realise that the earth is not only a habitat for human beings but for all living beings and that they have the right to live on this land.

The Minister was speaking at the 'International Conference on Human-Elephant Conflict Management' held in Bengaluru on Monday on the occasion of World Elephant Day. She said that it is commendable that the Karnataka Government organised the conference to celebrate Elephant Day for a meaningful discussion on the conflict between elephants and humans, their conservation and management.

If KTR's relatives invest in TG, we will welcome them: Kiran

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Bhongir Congress MP, Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, said that BRS leaders are trying to throw mud at Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's foreign tour and asked BRS leaders to point out the government's mistakes and not to engage in mudslinging.

He said that Telangana suffered family rule for 10 years unlike any other state in India. A single family bagged all posts and now they are using social media against the Congress with the money they earned illegally, he said.

"If KTR's relatives come to invest in Telangana we will welcome them. However, BRS leaders must stop spreading lies. Amara Raja will be given



all the support it needs from the government. The government will also examine whether some people are spreading lies. We will support all companies operating in the state," Kiran Kumar Reddy said.

The Chief Minister went on two foreign tours in the last eight months. Everybody

knows the BRS government's errors. The Chief Minister waived the loans of farmers as he had promised. But BRS leaders are engaging in a campaign of lies against the Congress government. Can the Congress government do within eight months what the BRS did not do in 10 years," he asked.

Cong's claims about Sitarama Project merits Nobel Prize for lies: Harish



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS MLA Harish Rao launched a scathing attack on the Congress government during a press conference regarding the Sitarama Project and sarcastically suggested that the Congress should be awarded a Nobel Prize for its exaggerated claims about the project.

He criticised Congress Ministers for scrambling to take credit for the project, which he stated was initiated and almost completed under KCR's leadership.

"They are spending time inaugurating flyovers we built, launching buses we brought in, and distributing cheques for schemes we implemented," Harish said.

He accused the Congress of filing cases to block the Sitarama Project but noted that the BRS government,

under KCR's guidance, overcame all challenges and brought the project to near completion.

"Now that the Congress has the chance to cut the ribbon, they are trying to claim credit for the BRS government's hard work," he said.

He went on to liken their behaviour to that of parasites feeding off others' achievements and emphasised, "Those who boast that others' achievements are their own are parasites."

Harish also asked whether the Congress truly believed they could complete the project in just seven months when it took years for its design, land acquisition and approvals.

He mocked their exaggerated claims stating, "Claiming to irrigate 1,50,000 acres with Rs 75 crore should earn you a Nobel Prize."

'CM's US visit yielded only investments of Rs 3,720 crore'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BRS has questioned the Congress's claim regarding investment in Telangana. According to a post by the official Telangana Chief Minister's Office (CMO) on social media, the government had announced investments totalling Rs 5,540 crore. However, the BRS said that one of these investments is linked to a company that is a proxy of Revanth Reddy and that another is a fake company.

The BRS said that of this amount, the Rs 1,000 crore announced by Swachh Bio

and the Rs 820 crore by Walsh-Karra Holdings are linked to fake companies. The BRS said that these two investments amounting to Rs 1820 crore, should be excluded, leaving the actual investment figure at Rs 3,720 crore.

After discounting these two investments, the actual investment figure stands at Rs 3,720 crore, the BRS said.

The BRS asked the Congress to explain how it arrived at the figure of investments worth Rs 5,540 crore and asked it to clarify this issue to the people of Telangana or admit that they are misleading the public once again.

Uttam in Delhi seeking 6 more months to vacate his MP quarters

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy went to New Delhi on Monday to get an extension of six more months to vacate his MP quarters. However, he failed to meet Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla as he was not available. Uttam may meet Om Birla on Tuesday and request him to extend his occupation of MP quarters.

Meanwhile, rumours spread in Hyderabad that Uttam is attending the meeting of PCC presidents and AICC in-charge general sec-



retaries scheduled on August 13, that is, on Tuesday. However, Uttam told the New Delhi media that he did not come to New Delhi to attend

that meeting. He said that he had come to New Delhi regarding his MP quarters and that no one had invited him to that meeting in place of TPCC President Revanth Reddy, who is in South Korea.

Uttam has not vacated his MP quarters in New Delhi although his tenure as an MP ended with the Lok Sabha elections.

Before that Uttam had resigned his MP post as he had got elected as an MLA from Huzurnagar and had got a slot in Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's Cabinet.

ISRO to launch its latest earth observation satellite on August 16

PNS ■ BENGALURU

ISRO on Monday said its latest earth observation satellite EOS-08 will now be launched onboard the third and final developmental flight of its Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV)-D3 on August 16.

The space agency had earlier announced that the launch will be on August 15. ISRO did not cite any reason for the delay.

The primary objectives of the EOS-08 mission include designing and developing a microsatellite, creating payload instruments compatible with the microsatellite bus and incorporating new technologies required for future operational satellites, the Bengaluru-headquartered national space agency said. "SSLV-D3/EOS-08 Mission: The launch of the third developmental flight of SSLV is

scheduled for August 16, 2024, in a launch window of one hour starting at 09:17 Hrs. IST," ISRO posted on social media platform X.

The launch is from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. The mission completes the SSLV Development Project and enables operational missions by Indian industry and NewSpace India Limited (NSIL). Built on the Microsat/IMS-

1 bus, EOS-08 carries three payloads: Electro Optical Infrared Payload (EOIR), Global Navigation Satellite System-Reflectometry payload (GNSS-R), and SiC UV Dosimeter.

The spacecraft has a mission life of one year. It has a mass of approximately 175.5 kg and generates power of around 420 W. The satellite interfaces with the SSLV-D3/IBL-358 launch vehicle, ISRO said.

The EOIR payload is designed to capture images in the Mid-Wave IR (MIR) and Long-Wave IR (LWIR) bands, both during the day and night, for applications such as satellite-based surveillance, disaster monitoring, environmental monitoring, fire detection, volcanic activity observation, and industrial and power plant disaster monitoring, according to the space agency.

BRS seeks insights from DMK on party organisation

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a strategic move to strengthen the BRS's organisational framework, BRS leader Balka Suman visited the DMK office at Anna Arivalayam in Chennai on Monday.

During his visit, Suman engaged in detailed discussions with DMK leaders, including the party's organisation secretary, RS Bharati, as well as former MLA Shekhar.

The primary focus of the interaction was to gain insights into the DMK's organisational structure and operational strategies.

The discussions were aimed at understanding how the DMK has effectively managed its party activities and sustained its political influence over the years.

Balka Suman was accompanied by Anjaneya Goud, Ravindar Reddy, and Tunga Balu, who also participated in the discussions.

Injustice done to women while picking candidates for nominated posts: Sunitha

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Mahila Congress President Sunitha Rao turned emotional on Monday and said that she did not get due respect in the party.

She said that AICC in-charge General Secretary Deepa Das Munshi had said that she would attend the Mahila Congress Executive Committee meeting only if they changed the Telangana Mahila Congress President.

She said that women were meted out injustice while deciding nominated posts. She said the party had declared that no post would

be given to leaders who were given MLA and MP tickets. However, the party gave corporate posts even to defeated leaders.

She said the party gave nominated posts to leaders who joined the BRS and re-joined the Congress. But no one got a nominated post in the Mahila Congress, she said.

During a chat with journalists on Monday, Sunitha made it clear that she will work for the party without any post. She questioned what happened to Rahul Gandhi's Nari Nyay slogan?

Sunitha said that there is no priority for the Mahila

Congress in Telangana. However, she added that she had performed her role well by organising 241 programmes.

The party gave Goshamahal MLA ticket to her believing in her even though she had refused the ticket, Sunitha said. No one from the party had worked in the constituency but Women Congress leaders worked hard, she said.

She said that she had won morally although she lost the election. Sunitha said that Women Welfare Minister Seethakka is taking action in cases of atrocities against women in the state.

'People should not back those detrimental to peace in J-K'

PNS ■ JAMMU

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has urged the people of Jammu and Kashmir not to support those who were detrimental to peace and development in the Union Territory.

Describing the abrogations of Article 370 and Article 35A as a historic change, he also claimed half the population would have continued to be denied their rights without this move.

"I want to tell the people not to empower or strengthen elements that are detrimental to peace and development," Sinha told PTI Videos in an interview on Sunday.

Sinha was responding to a question about his message to the people in light of criticism from some political parties regarding jailed leader Engineer Rashid's concerns that it could lead to increased separatism in



democratic politics.

"It is true that such elements have reached Parliament. The country knows them and we know them too. I urge voters, who have total freedom in a democracy, to make decisions with national interest in mind," he said.

Rashid was sworn in as a member of the 18th Lok Sabha following his victory from the Baramulla constituency, where he defeated National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah by more than two lakh votes.

'Mitra Shakti': India-Sri Lanka joint military exercise begins

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A joint exercise between the militaries of India and Sri Lanka got underway in the island nation on Monday to facilitate interoperability and sharing of best practices, the defence ministry said.

The 10th edition of the India-Sri Lanka Joint Military Exercise 'Mitra Shakti' at the Army Training School, Maduru Oya, will be

conducted from August 12-25. It will enhance the joint military capability to undertake counter-insurgency operations in a sub-conventional scenario under the UN mandate, the ministry said.

Joint exercise 'Mitra Shakti' is an annual training event conducted alternatively in India and Sri Lanka. Its last edition was conducted in Pune in November 2023.

Hasina's stay in India will not hurt bilateral relations: B'desh

PNS ■ DHAKA

A top adviser of Bangladesh's interim government on Monday said that deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina's stay in India will not hurt bilateral relations and Dhaka will always try to maintain good relations with New Delhi.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain made the comments when he was asked whether bilateral ties with India will be affected if Hasina's stay in India gets prolonged, the United News of Bangladesh news agency reported.

"This is a hypothetical question. If someone stays in a country why the relations with that particular country will be affected? There is no reason for that," he said, emphasising that bilateral relations are a big matter.

Hasina, 76, resigned and fled to India



last week following widespread protests against her government over a controversial quota system in jobs.

Hossain said bilateral relations are a relation of interest and friendship is also

of interest. "Friendship does not exist if the interest is hurt."

He said the two sides - Bangladesh and India - have interests and they will follow those interests.

Hossain said they will "always try to maintain good relations" with India.

Earlier, he briefed the diplomats stationed in Dhaka, including Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma, on the situation in Bangladesh and sought their support.

"We believe that all our friends and partners in the international community would continue to stand by the interim government and our people as we embark on charting a new future for Bangladesh," Hossain told the diplomats. Hossain also said they are not abandoning any commitment with any country as those commitments were made by Bangladesh.

TODAY
ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha
Tithi: Ashtami: Aug 12 07:55 AM to Aug 13 09:31 AM
Navami: Aug 13 09:31 AM to Aug 14 10:24 AM

Nakshatram:
Vishaka: Aug 12 08:33 AM to Aug 13 10:44 AM
Anuradha: Aug 13 10:44 AM to Aug 14 12:12 PM
Rahukalam: 3:30 PM to 5:04 PM
Yamagandam: 9:11 AM to 10:46 AM
Varjyam: 02:59 PM to 04:41 PM
Gulika: 12:20 PM to 1:55 PM
Amritkalam: 01:10 AM to 02:52 AM
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:55 AM to 12:46 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER
Forecast: Mostly Cloudy
Temp: 31°C
Humidity: 72%
Sunrise: 5:59 AM
Sunset: 6:43 PM
Updated: August 12, 2024 5:00 PM



BLOOD DONATION DRIVE

Phoenix Foundation, in association with Chiranjeevi Blood Bank to organise blood donation drive on the occasion of its Founder's Day, Late Chukkappalli Sankara Rao is its founder and guiding force.

Venue

Phoenix Aquila (Tower-B), Gym Area (Ground Floor), Adjacent to Continental Hospitals, Road No 1, Financial District, Nanakramguda.

Balance & Bliss: Integrating Beauty and Wellness

Ridhi Jain Chairperson of Young FICCI Ladies Organization (YFLO) Speakers Mira Kapoor Co-founder, Akind Beauty Vasudha Rai Author, Podcaster, Columnist - Beauty & Wellness Dr Pooja Talera Aesthetic Physician, Director - KOSA Wellbeing

Venue

The Park Hotel, Somajiguda, Hyderabad Time: 2.45 pm; Date: August 13, 2024

TCS InQuizitive

TCS' flagship inter-school quiz competition Hyderabad Regional Final Round Details

Venue

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Auditorium, 5-9-1105, Kulapati Munshi Sadan, King Koti Rd, Basheer Bagh, Hyderabad, Date: August 14, 2024 Time: 11:30 am onwards

HIMTEX, IPEC, and ECO Sustain Expo

Venue

Hitex, Madhapur simultaneously from August 16 to 19

Out of Tune - A musical comedy show

Rohit Swain is back with a new comedy special following his previous corporate-themed special, 'Hello Saar.'

Venue

THE COMEDY THEATRE 126, 4th floor, Plot No. 25, Above Tony and Guy, Vinayak Nagar, Indira Nagar, Gachibowli, Hyderabad FROM August 15TH to September 28th

City Pioneer



HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | AUGUST 13, 2024

03

OU improves; IITH, Nalsar retain NIRF rankings

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras remained on the top spot in the National Institute Ranking Framework, 2024, for the sixth consecutive year, which were released on Monday by Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan while the Indian Institute of Science (IISc),

Bengaluru, ranked as the best university for the ninth year in a row, according to the Ministry of Education.

In regards to Telangana, the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IITH) secured third rank in innovation category but it secured 14th rank overall as per the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF). The varsity has secured eighth rank in

Engineering institutions, thereby maintaining the same place as in the 2023 NIRF rankings.

Other varsities such as the National Institute of Warangal (NIT) secured 21st rank as per NIRF 2024 ranking under engineering category followed by International Institute of Information Technology Hyderabad (IIITH) secures 55th rank and Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University - 83 rd rank.

In regards to Universities category, University of Hyderabad slipped down from 10th rank in 2023 to 17th rank. The varsity also bagged 71st rank in Engineering colleges category. In regards to State public univer-

sities, -Osmania University ranked sixth in 2024 showcasing its improvement from 36th rank in 2023 while for law, the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru followed by the NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad retained third spot.

In pharmacy, the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, Hyderabad slipped to the second rank followed by BITS Pilani with

third position in the category.

For 2024, the ranking exercise maintains the practice of providing a comprehensive 'overall' rank, alongside distinct rankings in categories -- Universities, Research Institutions, Degree Colleges and Innovation as well as discipline-specific rankings in Engineering, Management, Pharmacy, Law, Medical, Dental, Architecture and Planning, Agriculture and Allied sectors.

OU retains its rankings from 36th rank in 2023 to sixth rank in 2024 under State public universities. IITH maintains its rank while NALSAR University of Law retains its third place under law varisties

UoH slips from 10th rank in 2023 to 17th rank in 2024. NIPER slips to second rank in 2024 under Pharmacy



HCA inaugural Women's T10 League kicked off

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) has started the inaugural Women's T10 League for female cricketers for the first time in its association history, said its president Arshanapalli Jagannathan Rao. Jagannathan Rao was the chief guest in the Women's League opening ceremony held at Uppal Stadium on Monday. He said 450 women cricketers will play in this league which will be held for 15 days at Hyderabad. This league schedule has been designed in which every team will play at least one match in Uppal international



stadium for motivation. He said that the league was conceived with the hope of producing great cricketers like the former captain of the Indian team and legendary Hyderabad cricketer Mithali Raj. He said that their goal is

to make Telangana girls play for Team India and WPL in the future. Jagannathan Rao also said that he will discuss with his fellow Apex Council members to establish a women's cricket academy with all facilities in Hyderabad.

Ethical focus on wealth creation important: Prof

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Ethical focus on wealth creation is important to understand how the economy grows, said Professor KV Subramanian, former economic advisor to the Government of India, while launching his book India @100: Envisioning tomorrow's Economic powerhouse.

With the tagline of A \$55 Trillion Economy in 2047: Audacious or Achievable, the Professor posed bold questions predicting India's GDP to be less than half that size at \$26 trillion by 2047.

On Monday, Professor Subramanian explained to those present at Indian School of Business that each researcher at the institute will eventually join the private sector for jobs. So, both the organisation and individuals must understand the creation of wealth to further know how the economy grows.

Along with Subramanian, were Professor Madan Pillutla, Dean, ISB and Sai D Prasad, Chairman, CII, Telangana State Council, at the

Hyderabad campus of the Indian School of Business (ISB).

Addressing the questions on how did Subramanian expect India can be a \$55 trillion economy, he said that everybody must not believe in what he has to say instead read the book which has data explanation and then think on the questions.

"India is at an inflection point that cannot be ignored. The country can grow at 8 per cent annually by reforming the economy and doubling down on the sound policies implemented post 2014. Since 2007, when its GDP per capita was equal to India's current level, China had exploited its demographic dividend to grow at about 8 per cent for about two decades. Similar growth for the next two decades will make India a \$55 trillion economy by 2047."

Professor Subramanian explored four key pillars such as macroeconomic emphasis on growth, microeconomic focus on social and economic inclusion, a vision of ethical wealth creation and a strategy of a virtuous cycle triggered by investment.



GHMC receives 150 grievances

PRAJAVANI

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) on Monday received 57 grievances at head office and 93 petitions were received in the six zones of the GHMC during the Prajavani programme.

Out of 57 complaints in the head office, 36 are related to the Town Planning department, 7 are related to Housing, five complaints to Revenue department, four complaints to Chief medical officer of Health (CMOH) and two complaints to lakes department.



A total of 93 applications were received in six zones under the GHMC.

Out of them, 52 appeals were received in Kukatpally zone, 17 in Secunderabad zone, 17 in Serilingampally zone, four in LB Nagar zone, two in Charminar zone and one in Khairatabad zone.

City Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi, GHMC Commissioner Amrapali Kata, Additional Commissioner Satyana rayana, Chief City Planner (CCP) Srinivas, Additional CCP Gangadhar, CMOH Dr Padmaja, Deputy CE KS Reddy, Irrigation SE Shankar Rao and Valuation Officer Mahesh Kulkarni participated in the programme.

Govt schools face closure due to lack of funds

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Students of rented government schools are facing several issues as they don't have proper playgrounds, sports equipment, lack of classrooms and other facilities due to lack of funds from

the government for the past four years. These schools are being run in residential buildings, unlike other government schools in Hyderabad. Apart from students, the faculty is facing severe crisis as they are unable to pay rent, thereby forcing the owners to shut down the schools.

As per the official sources, in November last Rs 3.39 crore

was sanctioned to Hyderabad and Rs 9.12,804 to Mahabubnagar for the financially Year 2023-24, 2023-22 and 2022-21. However, it was not cleared as till date these rented schools are waiting for approval from the finance department.

Speaking to the Pioneer correspondent, a school official said, "Maintenance of schools is taken up with Amma Adarsha Pathasala Committee (AAPC) for government buildings only while in the case of rented buildings, they are not maintaining the schools properly due to non-payment of rents. Many owners are forced to shut down the schools. The



headmasters of the schools are unable to manage the owners' wrath. Due to this, there is continuous conflict between headmasters and owners of

the school buildings. If the State government releases sufficient funds in time, these schools will function properly. An amount of Rs 3.49 crore has

not been allocated to owners of private buildings occupied by the government primary and secondary schools in the city for the past four years."

He also said that 105 schools, including 87 government primary and 18 high schools in the city are functioning in rented buildings and maximum of them are located in the Old City localities of Bahadurpura, Charminar, Asif Nagar, Tolichowki and Golkonda.

One of the school owners said, "We have planned to close the school Rs 5 lakh is pending since four years. I am unable bear the school's expenses."

MLA Danam Nagender among two others booked in trespassing case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress MLA Danam Nagender has been booked by the Jubilee Hills Police in a case of trespassing in Nandagiri Nagar, Jubilee Hills on August 10.

According to an FIR accessed by The Pioneer, the incident occurred on August 10 and a complaint was filed by V Papaiah, in charge of the Enforcement department at Buddha Bhavan, Hyderabad, with Jubilee Hills Police.

The complainant alleged that unidentified persons ille-



gally demolished a compound wall at Nandagiri Hills, Jubilee Hills. The wall, located on government land (GHMC property), was part of a layout with some local residents from Guru Brahma Nagar trespass-

ing and tearing down the wall. It was alleged that MLA Nagender was present during the incident and provoked the individuals involved, including Gopal Naik and Ramchander, two others accused.

The demolition caused an estimated financial loss of around Rs 10 lakh, said the complainant.

Sub-Inspector B Harishwar Reddy registered a case invoking Sections 189(3), 329(3), 324(4) r/w 190 BNS & Section 3 of the PDP Act. The investigation has been entrusted to SI K Govardhan Reddy.



Cultural troupes to highlight I-Day fete at Golkonda Fort

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

This year's Independence Day celebrations at Golkonda Fort will be marked by the grand participation of cultural troupes, showcasing the State's rich and diverse heritage. Over 1,000 artistes representing various art forms such as Gussadi, Kommu Koya, Lambadi, Dappulu, Oggu dollu, Kolatam, Bonalu Kolatam, Bhaindla Jamidikal, Chindu Yakshaganam, Karrassaamu, Kuchipudi, Bharatnatyam, Perni and Nagara Bheri will perform during the event, according to Director of Culture Harikrishna.

Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari, who visited the fort on Monday to inspect the preparations, emphasised the need for foolproof arrangements to ensure a dignified and seamless event. She also directed officials to include school children in the celebrations to kindle the spirit of patriotism among them.

Santhi Kumari instructed the police department to ensure proper security and traffic management to prevent inconvenience to the public. She urged all line departments to work in close coordination for the successful execution of the event.

DGP Jitender, Special Chief Secretary Vikas Raj, Director Protocol Venkat Rao, CIPR Hanumantha Rao, and other officials were present during the inspection.

Girl ends life after assault by four security guards

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Gitanjali Barik, 21, committed suicide on Thursday last after four security guards allegedly molested and assaulted her. She was a resident of Odisha.

According to the FIR, she was working at the Korukonda coaching centre. She was the only girl at the coaching centre who stayed at the premises when the incident occurred.

Police said that the accused are Ashish Kumar Mandal (21), Goutham Kumar Mandal (21), Shankar Takur (21) and Midhun Kumar Mandal (30). Miyapur police said that the accused persons molested and assaulted the girl, due to which she committed suicide. "She hanged herself to death," the police said.

Mother of the deceased Rajani Mani Behera filed a case against the accused and it was registered under 74,75, 79, 108, 3(5) and 49 BNS. On Monday, the accused persons were arrested and produced before the court for judicial remand.

639 people treated in de-addiction centres

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A total of 639 people were treated in 11 de-addiction centres in Telangana from April to July, 2024.

On Monday, the TGANB mentioned that in Khammam 29 persons were treated, in Nalgonda 48 persons, Rangareddy (LB Nagar) 46 persons, Vikarabad 48 persons, Medak 90 persons, Amangal 46 persons, Kothur 55 persons, Medchal 45 persons, Warangal 92 persons, Ashok Nagar (Karimnagar) 90 persons and Adilabad 50 persons were treated in three-and-a-half months.

It would be of great help if 12 panel drug testing kits are available in the 26 hospitals where drug de-addiction centres are established to help in early identification of drug abusers.

Police said, "Liquor, ganja and adulterated toddy are the problems that we need to address urgently."

Only an integrated approach will help realise the dream of "drug-free Telangana."

Plans afoot for legislators to visit a tourist centre a month: Bhatti

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka on Monday said that State government is committed to developing tourism in Telangana. He said, "District Ministers and MLAs to give publicity to the tourist places and attract tourists. To facilitate this, every month, Ministers and MLAs should visit one tourist centre with their family and stay there, as designed by Tourism Minister." The government is firm on giving wide publicity to the places of tourist interest in Telangana and securing a place for the state in world tourism map.

He, along with Tourism and Excise Minister Jupally Krishna Rao, Revenue and Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, Lok Sabha Member from Khammam Raghuram Krishna Rao visited Buddhist stupa in Mujjugudem village of Nelakondapalli mandal of Khammam district on Monday.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, he said that there was no shortage of funds for the construction of the tallest stupa in south India. The construction of the stupa would take place according to a plan. He asked the Tourism Department to invite pracharaks of Buddhist religion for the inaugural ceremony. The Buddhist places of interest should find suitable plan on world tourism map, he said.

He also suggested organising Buddhist festivals in Nelakondapalli inviting the Buddhist pracharaks world-



Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, along with Ministers Jupally Krishna Rao, Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy and others, visiting a tourist centre in Khammam district on Monday

The government is firm on giving wide publicity to the places of tourist interest in Telangana and securing a place for the state in world tourism map

wide. So far, Rs 10 crore have been released for the project and asked the authorities to initiate works and bring problems, if any, to his notice. He called for improving the road network in the region.

Srinivasa Reddy said that the Buddhist stupa dated back to

first century BC and the largest stupa in south India, spreading over an area of eight acres. The region would transform into a great tourist attraction if the stupa were to be developed, he opined. Suggesting to set up a Buddhist museum here, he asked the officials to prepare a comprehensive report for development of the region. He suggested transforming the region into a great tourist attraction in the country.

Further, he recalled that Nelakondapalli is the place where Bhakta Ramdas had taken birth. The Bhakta Ramdas temple should also be developed into a museum providing all tourist attractions there. Development of Palair reser-

voir, Bhaktaramadas museum and Buddhist stupa would help develop tourism in the region, he said.

Jupally Krishna Rao said that Tourism Department would take steps to invite Buddhists from other nations. A comprehensive report would be prepared on tourism development works to be taken up in the area like construction of the Buddhist stupa.

Collector Muzammel Khan, police commissioner Sunil Dutt, Telangana Government Warehousing Corporation chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao, Telangana state Tourism Development Corporation Chairman Ramesh Reddy, district officials, tourism department officials and others took part in the event.

132th National Librarians' Day celebrations at KITSW

PNS ■ WARANGAL

National Librarians' Day is observed on August 12 every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of Dr SR Ranganathan, who was considered the father of library science in India. Dr. Ranganathan was a lecturer in mathematics in Chennai. He also dedicated his entire life to the library profession in India leaving a rich legacy. Today, on the 132th birth anniversary of Dr Ranganathan, the Central Library of Kakatiya Institute of Technology and Science Warangal (KITSW) celebrated National Librarians' Day said by the principal Prof. K. Ashoka Reddy.

Dean academic affairs Prof K Venumdhav, Library committee chairperson Prof M. Srilatha and librarian Dr K Indrasena Reddy with all library staff of KITSW participated in the programme. The programme was initiated by the dean academic affairs and Registrar Prof M Komal Reddy with floral tribute to proud India, Dr Ranganathan, father of library science. All the staff members of Central Library paid homage and tribute to illustrious Dr Ranganathan on this auspicious occasion.

On this occasion the guest, dean academic affairs, Prof K Venumdhav said that the library is the temple of learning and skilling. It is a knowledge resource center.



Women staging protest against ethanol factory in Nirmal district

ETHANOL FACTORY

Farmers worried over adverse impact

PNS ■ NIRMAL

With an ethanol plant in Dilawaru mandal in the district, people, particularly the farmers, have expressed fears over the impact on their farms and irrigation tanks, besides borewells.

The construction of the ethanol plant is now progressing at a brisk pace post-Lok Sabha elections. The construction of the plant was halted till the Lok Sabha elections were over. The villagers expressed anger over some influential people supporting the ethanol plant coming up amidst agriculture fields.

The management of the plant, however, assured the farmers that it would not pollute agriculture fields or irrigation tanks.

The plant would create employment for local people.

Experts, however, said that the plant would not only pollute water sources but also it would have an impact on the agriculture fields. It may cause irritation of the eyes, skin and respiratory tract, it is feared. Ethanol production releases volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and other pollutants into the air, which can lead to respiratory issues and other health problems for residents in surrounding villages, according to experts.

Farmers have resorted to relay hunger strike and women have been staging protests day after day against the plant. The people threaten to intensify agitation if the construction of the plant is not stopped.

Kalyana Lakshmi, Shaadi Mubarak cheques distributed

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar distributed Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak cheques worth Rs 34 lakhs to 34 beneficiaries in Nandigama Mandal. The distribution event took place at the Shadnagar MLA camp office on Monday.

The beneficiaries, hailing from various villages, including Veerlapally, Nandigama, Chegur, Bandoni Guda, Narsappaguda, Mekagudem, Pittalaguda, Rangapur, Srinivasulu Guda, Buggani Guda, Bandoni Guda, and Venkammaguda, each received



Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar distributing Kalyana Lakshmi cheques to beneficiaries in Shadnagar on Monday

Rs. 1,16,000 under the schemes.

Addressing the gathering, Shankar emphasised the commitment of the Congress government to the welfare of the

girl child.

He praised the swift implementation of the loan waiver programme by spending Rs 30,000 crores. The government

delivered on its promise within six months of the government coming to power, a task previously deemed impossible over the past ten years. The MLA also pointed out that the Congress government has introduced a free bus service for women, ensuring safe and cost-free travel over long distances.

The event saw the participation of notable figures including former MPP Sivashankar Goud, President Janga Narasimhu Yadav, and local leaders such as Narsappaguda Krishna, Naveen Goud, Srihari Goud, and Anwar, among others.

Seven suffer dog bites in Nizamabad dist

PNS ■ NIZAMABAD

At least seven people suffered dog bites at Chepur village un Armoor mandal in the district on Sunday.

According to reports reaching here, a dog went on the

rampage and attacked pedestrians and injured them. The injured were administered anti-rabies vaccine at the Areas Hospital in Armoor.

The stray dog attacks have increased considerably of late in the state. In a tragic

incident recently, a newborn was found abandoned on the premises of MGM Hospital in Warangal. The baby, who had reportedly been attacked by stray dogs, was discovered outside the casualties ward.

Banana vendor, social activist arrested for peddling marijuana

PNS ■ NIRMAL

A roadside banana vendor and social activists were arrested here on Monday on a charge of smuggling marijuana. One-and-half kg of marijuana, the police said, was seized from the duo's possession. Nirmal Deputy Superintendent of Police Ganga Reddy told the media persons that the arrested are Abdul Muktar, a social activist, and Syed Ahmed, a banana vendor. They were caught while peddling marijuana.

Ahmed was caught red-handed when he was selling marijuana to a customer near the Agriculture Market Committee. The police laid a trap after receiving a tip-off. The Deputy Superintendent of Police said that Ahmed, during interrogation, confessed to the crime. He told the police that he had pro-



Nirmal Deputy Superintendent of Police Ganga Reddy briefing the press on the arrest of drug peddlers in Nirmal on Monday

ceeded the contraband from Muktar. Nearly 500 grams of narcotics were seized from him. Muktar was nabbed at Nirmal bus station. The police officers said that he had confessed to the crime. Muktar had resorted to peddling narcotics to earn easy money. He used to buy marijuana

from a person in Maharashtra.

He claimed that he did not know the identity of the person who used to sell contraband to him. District Superintendent of Police Janaki Sharmila appreciated the good work done by the police led by Ganga Reddy.

Ponguleti warns panchayat secretaries of action against laxity

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Minister for Revenue Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy has warned Panchayat Secretaries of action if they failed to mend their ways.

Participating in a review meeting held at a private function hall at Satyanarayanapuram in Khammam rural mandal on Monday, he directed the Secretaries to reside at headquarters in which they are posted. They are supposed to be available for officials duty.

He said that he received many complaints against Panchayat Secretaries, but no action would be taken for now. If they failed to mend their ways, the Minister warned



Minister for Revenue Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy speaking at a meeting in Khammam on Monday

them of severe action.

Moreover, there are no transfers for the Panchayat Secretaries. So, only option left with authorities is to take departmental action. Similarly, Agriculture Extension Officers should reside in the cluster of their posting. Those who reside in one village but work in other village or mandal should immediately go back to their

place of posting. District Panchayat Officer has been asked to implement it in one week.

The Minister, who reviewed Vanakalam cultivation, sanitation and development works, enquired the panchayat secretaries about the main problems in their villages. He directed the officials to find solutions to these problems.

He asked the government officials to bring the problems to his notice so that he will be able to solve them on an urgent basis. He asked the district officials to identify liquor shops within a radius of 200 meters for whom the permission was given by some Excise officials after taking bribes, and take action against such liquor shops.

Further, he asked the officials to identify those who are eligible to receive physically challenged, old age and widow pensions. To prevent outbreak of seasonal diseases, the Revenue Department should coordinate with Anganwadi workers and ASHA workers. He offered to provide RO Mineral water plants to all villages.

Man electrocuted while speaking over mobile phone

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

A coconut vendor from Andhra Pradesh, a resident in Khammam, died from electrocution on Sunday night.

He was identified as Donepudi Mahesh Babu, 40, a resident of the city near Hanuman Temple on the banks of the canal. He is survived by wife Durgadevi and two daughters. They have been weep-

ing inconsolably for their dear ones.

On Sunday night, he decided to bathe his pet dog with hot water. On one hand he switched on the immersion heater and on the other, he was speaking over the mobile phone. Instead of putting the heater in water, he put it under his arm by mistake and suffered electric shock and fell down.

Noticing her father falling down suddenly, his nine-year-old daughter raised an alarm

attracting the attention of others. His wife Durgadevi and the locals rushed him to a private hospital where doctors declared him dead.

The incident serves as a lesson to those who indulge in multi-tasks while speaking on mobile phone. The police have registered a case and are investigating it.



Mahesh



YouTuber booked for making video featuring 'peacock curry' recipe

PNS ■ RAJANNA SIRCILLA

A case has been registered against a YouTuber, Kopdam Pranay, for allegedly uploading a video on "peacock curry recipe" on his channel, in Rajanna Sircilla district.

The YouTuber, apparently to garner more views for his channel resorted to the act, a forest official said based on preliminary investigation.

Upon receiving information that a man posted a video on his channel on how to cook peacock curry, a team of forest officials reached Tangallapalli village and recovered chicken curry from the man's house. However, the curry sample has been sent to a lab for forensic analysis and investigation was on. A case was registered against the man on Sunday. After animal rights activists raised the issue the video was also taken down.

MODEL SCHOOLS IN RR DISTRICT

Teaching, non-teaching staff await salaries for months

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Teachers and non-teaching staff across 18 model schools in the undivided Rangareddy district and Vikarabad have found themselves in severe financial difficulties because of non-payment of salaries. Outsourced workers in these school are in dire straits.

Not less than 500 employees, including 224 regular teachers, 80 hourly-based educators, 72 outsourced staff, 36 vocational teachers, and 90 hostel employees have been awaiting unpaid salaries. According to sources, t outsourced staff have gone without pay for five months, hostel employees for four months, and regular teachers and hourly-based educators



for three months.

The teaching and non-teaching staff is unable to repay debts and equated monthly instalments (EMIs) for several months.

The model schools, spread across Shabad, Shankarpally, Maheshwaram, Parigi, Vikarabad, and Pedemul mandals, have been providing quality education to hundreds of students.

The hostels attached to these schools accommodate girl students studying in Intermediate. Those in Intermediate classes

teachers and staff expressing their frustration and concern over the government's inaction. Despite repeated demands for timely payments through treasury system, which would ensure salaries are disbursed on the first of each month, the government has yet to implement this measure. The current system requires approval from the Finance Department every three months, leading to frequent delays and financial uncertainty for the staff.

In addition to their grievances over unpaid wages, many teachers have been working in the same location for over 11 years without transfers. They are now demanding immediate transfers, citing the need for change and relief from financial

distress.

The situation has become so dire that the livelihoods of many staff members are at risk. They are calling on the government to address the issue urgently and ensure that all pending wages are paid without further delay. The staff of Model School Inter-Hostels, in particular, are deeply concerned about the impact of these delays on their ability to provide for their families and maintain the standards of care for the students under their supervision. As the crisis deepens, the affected employees are hoping that the government will finally take the necessary steps to rectify the situation and ensure that they receive their rightful salaries on time, every month.

Officials asked to resolve Prajavani representations in a week

PNS ■ KAMAREDDY

Collector Ashis Sangwan has directed officials of various government departments to go through the Prajavani representations and dispose them of in one week.

He received representations from people during PrajaVaani programme held at the conference hall of

Integrated offices' complex here on Monday.

Out of the 170 petitions received, 86 pertained to the revenue department.

He asked the district officials to register the complaints online and advised them against the pendency of the representations.

He enquired from the officials about the pendency of the

applications in each department. Further, he asked them to clear the pending representations within a week.

He asked the district officials to pay special attention in disposing of the representations. DRDO Surendra, ZP CEO Chandar Naik, CPO Rajaram, DPO Srinivasa Rao, collector AP Masur Ahmed and others were present.

Authorities told to resolve grievances

PNS ■ MEDAK

Collector Rahul Raj on Monday appealed to the people to participate in PrajaVaani programmes held on Mondays to resolve their problems.

During the public grievances redressal programme held here on Monday, he received a total of 221 representations from people from

the district. He directed the officials to resolve the problems pertaining to their departments.

Of the total representations received, 63 related to land problems in Dharani, 10 related to 2 BHK houses, 35 related to Asara pensions, 16 related to loan waiver and 05 related to seeking employment, while 83 representations pertained to other problems.

ACROSS THE STATES



Meghalaya CM briefs Shah about security situation

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma met Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday and briefed him about the situation at the India-Bangladesh border in the state. Shah was also briefed about the night curfew imposed along the border to prevent attempts of illegal immigration. Sangma was accompanied by Deputy CM Prestone Tynsong during the meeting in Delhi. "Today we had a meeting with the Union home minister to review the overall situation along the border areas, keeping in mind the current situation in Bangladesh," said Sangma. He said he told Shah that the BSF was strictly monitoring the border along with the Army. "The Meghalaya Police are also on high alert, and we have informed him that a night curfew has been imposed to further strengthen the overall security in the border zone," he added. Sangma said Shah assured him that the Centre would not allow illegal immigration and that all measures were being taken to ensure the border is guarded.

India-Nepal discuss ways to improve bilateral ties & economic cooperation

PNS ■ KATHMANDU

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Monday held wide-ranging discussions with his Nepalese counterpart Sewa Lamsal and the two top diplomats reviewed the progress made in various bilateral initiatives and developmental projects and discussed opportunities for further collaboration.

Misri's two-day visit is the first by the Indian foreign secretary to Nepal after the formation of the new government led by Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli last month.

"Their wide-ranging discussions covered various aspects of the multi-faceted cooperation between India and Nepal," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement.

It said both foreign secretaries reviewed the progress made in various bilateral initiatives and developmental projects and discussed opportunities for further collaboration.

"Both sides committed to deepening bilateral cooperation and addressing shared challenges," the Nepalese Foreign Ministry wrote in a post on X.

A statement issued by the Nepalese Foreign Ministry said the two sides reviewed the overall aspects of Nepal and India relations, including coop-



eration between the two countries in the areas of energy and power sector, physical and digital connectivity, agriculture, tourism trade and transit, and people-to-people relations.

The two foreign secretaries agreed to continue advance engagements between the two sides, including through regular bilateral mechanisms,

it said. Misri also called on Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Urban Development Prakash Man Singh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Bishnu Prasad Paudel, Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak and Foreign Minister Dr Arzu Rana Deuba.

'India' scripts history in Break Dancing at Paris Olympics

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's quest for gold at the Paris Olympics 2024 came to an end after Neeraj Chopra had to settle for a silver in the javelin throw event final. But, in a surprising twist, 'India' made history in the sport of Break Dancing. The country's name echoed through the arena, but as the dust settled, a surprising revelation came to light. The Dutch athlete, competing under the stage name 'India,' defeated refugee team member B-girl Talash in the opening match of the women's Break Dance event.

India did not field any athletes in the Break Dance event at the 2024 Olympics. Instead, the B-girl 'India,' who made headlines, is India Sardjoe, 18, from The Hague in The Netherlands. The Dutch athlete, competing

under the stage name 'India,' defeated refugee team member B-girl Talash in the opening match of the women's Break Dance event. She was then grouped with athletes from China, the United States, and Portugal in Group A.

Unlike most B-girls and B-boys, India Sardjoe prefers using her real name as stage name. She made history by becoming the first-ever winner of a Break Dance battle at the Olympics.

Ms India started playing football as a child before switching to hip-hop and later changed over to Break Dancing. When she was just 10 years old, she won the Dutch national championship in the Under 12 category. She became the Dutch, European, and world champion in just six months in 2022.



BSF prevents major infiltration bid by Bangladeshis in Tripura

A "major" infiltration bid by a group of Bangladeshi nationals was thwarted after BSF troops fired one round of non-lethal ammunition in the forward area of Khowai district in Tripura on Monday, a spokesperson said. He said a group of 12-15 Bangladeshi nationals was trying to take advantage of inclement weather and poor visibility in the area during the day and tried to cross over from the area of the district's Pahamura border post. "On being challenged by BSF (Border Security Force) troops, they tried to negotiate the border fencing forcefully. To prevent the infiltration attempt, one round of pump action gun was fired following which the group of Bangladeshis fled towards Bangladeshi territory," the spokesperson for the force's Tripura frontier said. "The alertness of BSF troops managed to prevent a major incident of infiltration," the spokesperson added. Keeping in mind the ongoing unrest and law and order situation in Bangladesh, the BSF has intensified surveillance and domination along the border, he further said.



Tiger crushed to death by train in Maharashtra's Gondia

A tigress was run over by a goods train on Monday on the Gondia-Ballarsha railway route here, a forest department official said. The big cat was killed in Arjuni Morgaon-Wadsa section near compartment 97, the official said, adding it may have not been able to spot the approaching train due to the dense undergrowth at the site of the incident. "The driver of the goods train applied emergency brakes after the incident and informed railway officials. After being alerted, a forest department team, including a representative of the National Tiger Conservation Authority and personnel from Rapid Response Team, reached the spot," he said. The carcass was consigned to flames as per NTCA guidelines in Wadsa, he added. Wildlife Warden Sawan Bahekar said an underpass should be constructed at the site and fences must be put in place along specific areas on the route to ensure such incidents don't recur.

Why Rahul...

Continued from page 1

It also tried to distort history, Sanjay said. "The Centre launched the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' programme to make future generations know about the history of great persons and their sacrifices. The Congress did not do that all these days," Sanjay said.

He appealed to the people to keep the national flag and freedom fighters as display pictures on their social media accounts and to hoist the national flag on their homes on August 15.

Sanjay said that Prime Minister Modi's government takes inspiration from Babasaheb Ambedkar and that the abolition of Article 370 is the best example for it.

'SLBC tunnel to be completed...

Continued from page 1

During the visit, the CEO displayed advanced construction machinery used for tunnel excavation and explained their performance to the Minister.

In a subsequent meeting with Locke Home, Venkat emphasised the urgency of procuring bearings and other cutting spare parts necessary for tunnel excavation.

He reiterated that the SLBC tunnel project, which would supply water to 3 lakh acres through gravity without any pumping and irrigation to some more acres through the Brahmanavellam Project under Udayasamudram, has been delayed due to issues with bear-

SC concerned over non-implementation of central law

Asks Centre, states to ensure compliance by October 12

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Concerned over non-implementation of a 2021 central law on allied professions in the field of health care, the Supreme Court on Monday asked the Centre, states and the UTs to ensure compliance of the Act by October 12 or be ready to face coercive action.

The top court, which had issued notices to the Centre, all state governments and union territories on a PIL in September last year, was irked over the non-implementation of the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions (NCAHP) Act, 2021.

The NCAHP Act provides for "regulation and maintenance of standards of education and services by allied and health care professionals, assessment of institutions, maintenance of a Central Register and State Register" of allied

health care professions in the country.

The law mandates setting up of regulatory bodies and state-level councils for all allied health care professions which are not governed and covered by the National Medical Commission, Dental Council of India and other regulatory bodies till 2021.

The Act includes health care professions and professionals of medical laboratory and life sciences, trauma, burn care, and surgical/ anaesthesia-related technology, Physio-therapy etc.



'Low conviction rate in money laundering cases'

SC asks ED to focus on quality of prosecution

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Citing low conviction rate in money laundering cases, the Supreme Court on Wednesday asked the Enforcement Directorate to focus on quality of prosecution and evidence.

Referring to a statement made in Parliament, a three-judge bench of Justices Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta, and Ujjal Bhuyan said the ED should do some scientific investigation to increase the conviction rate.

Union Ministry of Home Affairs informed the Lok Sabha on Tuesday that a total of 5,297

cases were lodged under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) by the ED between 2014 and 2024 while conviction was secured in 40 cases. The top court was hearing a bail plea filed by a Chhattisgarh-based businessman, who was arrested in connection with a money laundering case involving illegal levy on coal transportation.

"You need to concentrate on the quality of prosecution and evidence. All the cases where you are satisfied that a prima facie case is made out, you need to establish those cases in the court."

"In this case, you are harping on the statements given by some witnesses, affidavits.

This kind of oral evidence... this type of oral evidence, tomorrow, God knows that person will stand by it or not. You should do some scientific investigation," the bench told Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, appearing for the ED.

Will it be a...

Continued from page 1

This list of sports personalities backing Vinesh included famous Japanese Olympic champion Rei Higuchi, who suffered a similar fate in the Tokyo edition three years ago before claiming a gold in Paris and legendary American freestyle wrestler Jordan Burroughs, who went to the extent of asking the IOC to give Vinesh a silver medal.

Cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar, who also was of the opinion that Vinesh should have been awarded a silver at least, champion shooter Abhinav Bindra, double Olympic medalist superstar javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra and celebrated hockey player PR Sreejesh also offered their support to Vinesh and reminded the country of her contributions in the sport.

On the eve of the verdict, 2008 Beijing Olympics bronze medalist boxer Vijender Singh also extended his support to Vinesh.

"Bhan @Phogat_Vinesh aap ke sath pehle bhi ab bhi hai or aage bhi rahenge (Sister, I was with you earlier, with you now, and will be with you in future too)," Vijender tweeted. Meanwhile, International Olympic Committee (IOC)

president Thomas Bach, while being sympathetic to Vinesh's situation, wondered where would one draw the line after allowing small concessions in certain situations but United World Wrestling (UWW) chief Nenad Lalovic remained doubtful that there would be any change in the results as they were only following the rules. "I must say, I have a certain understanding for the wrestler; it's clearly a human touch," Bach had said on Friday. "Now, it's (appeal) in CAS. We will, at the end, follow the CAS decision. But, again, the international (wrestling) federation, they have to apply their interpretation, their rules. This is their responsibility."

Lalovic added, "I am so sorry for what happened, but no matter the size of your country, athletes are athletes. This weigh-in was public, everyone saw what happened. How can we allow someone to compete when we all saw what happened."

"We don't have any other choice but to follow our rules," Lalovic had said.

The Games concluded on Sunday with a ceremony at Stade de France, which was the venue for track and field events.

Team Revanth's USP...

Continued from page 1

In addition to the Mega Test Centre, the HMEI is also planning to expand its existing engineering centre in Hyderabad. This expansion will involve the renovation and modernisation of the current facility, boosting employment opportunities not only in Telangana but also across the Asia Pacific region.

"India is a critical market for us, and we are committed to developing products and tech-

nologies that set benchmarks in the industry," HMEI officials remarked, expressing their gratitude to the Telangana government for its support.

The Chief Minister's visit to South Korea also included a pitch for investments in Telangana's textile sector. At a business roundtable organised by the Korea Federation of Textile Industry (KOFOTI), Revanth presented the Mega Textile Park in Warangal as an ideal investment destination.

The event, attended by key

figures from 25 major Korean textile companies, including Youngone Chairman Kihak Sung and KOFOTI Executive Vice-Chairman Soyoung Joo, generated considerable interest.

Industries Minister Sridhar Babu, along with state officials, will now lead a task force to ensure the swift realization of these investment opportunities. As Telangana continues to attract global interest, the state is poised to become a key player in both the automotive and textile industries.

Restaurants launch hygiene...

Continued from page 1

The chain's menu also features items tailored to local tastes like the KFC Chizza, Rice Bowlz and a range of recently launched rolls with flavours like Thai Spicy, Korean Tangy and Indian Tandoori.

During the 'Open Kitchen Tour', participants were given a detailed overview of KFC's food preparation process. The tour highlighted the use of high-quality ingredients with a focus on fresh chicken sourced from local suppliers who meet international safety standards.

Attendees were shown how each piece of chicken undergoes a 34-step quality check, followed by meticulous marinating, breading, and frying process that ensures the signature KFC taste.

The event also emphasized KFC's adherence to the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) guidelines.

All food items are prepared in compliance with FSSAI-approved standards and the chain follows a strict cleaning and sanitation regimen.

In an attempt to maintain the highest levels of food safety, KFC ensures that all vegetarian and non-vegetarian items are prepared separately, with distinct utensils, ingredients and even different uniforms are designated for staffers.

Depositors can take back...

Continued from page 1

In its review of regulations governing NBFCs, the central bank said no interest will be paid for such premature withdrawals and added that these changes will be in force from January 1, 2025.

"The definition of 'critical illness' set by insurance regulator IRDI will guide on whether a request qualifies under the category, the central bank said.

"...in cases of critical illness, hundred per cent of the amount of the principal sum of deposit may be prematurely paid to

individual depositors at the request of the depositors, before the expiry of three months from the date of acceptance of such deposits, without interest," the central bank said.

It specified expenses of an emergent nature include a medical emergency or expenses due to natural calamities or a disaster as notified by the government, it said.

If the money is not sought for an emergency and a premature withdrawal is sought within three months, NBFCs can pay up to 50 per cent of the deposit without paying any interest.

SC seeks...

Continued from page 1

Contending that she was entitled to bail, Rohatgi referred to the apex court's verdict and order passed on the pleas filed by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Manish Sisodia.

The top court had granted interim bail to Kejriwal in the money laundering case linked to the alleged scam. Sisodia was granted bail in both the corruption and money laundering cases linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam. Rohatgi said Kavitha's case was covered by these orders of the top court. "We will issue notice," the bench said. "May I pray for interim bail," Rohatgi said.

The bench observed, "Not without hearing them (CBI and ED)". The bench then issued notices to the CBI and the ED seeking their responses on Kavitha's pleas and posted the matter for hearing on August 20.

The high court had on July 1 dismissed Kavitha's bail pleas in both the cases, saying she was prima facie one of the main conspirators in the criminal conspiracy related to the formation and implementation of the now-scrapped Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22.

'Strong...

Continued from page 1

"This is a gang to defame the country, Rahul (Gandhi) and Jairam Ramesh. Hindenburg defames us. We will not tolerate this insult to the nation. These people are enemies of the country. Now strictest action will be taken against Hindenburg," Singh said.

Calling Gandhi 'Bade Baap Ka Beta', the minister said: "Rahul does not know anything about the state and direction of the nation", and cautioned that the countrymen should "beware" of such people who try to create confusion and fear.

Will approach...

Continued from page 1

Speaking to the media at the Assembly Media Hall on Monday, Maheshwar said that the MEIL has become a 'Kamadhenuvu' for the Congress. He said the Congress government is more bothered about 'commissions' instead of the public.

"Why is Chief Minister Revanth who had made serious allegations against MEIL earlier maintaining silence now? Why is the government ignoring the opposition's demand to blacklist MEIL? KCR, Revanth Reddy and MEIL are looting the state. The government should take action against MEIL and

blacklist it. A Central agency National High Way Authority India (NHAI) issued a show-cause notice to MEIL for its inferior works but why is the TG government not issuing a show-cause notice? We will fight against the government till it takes action against MEIL," Maheshwar said.

He said the state government allotted the Amrut Scheme to MEIL and that there is a possibility that the government may allot the Kodangal Lift Irrigation Project also to MEIL.

He asked why the Congress government is still giving projects to MEIL without blacklisting it as it is doing shoddy jobs.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Capital of monsoon misery

Thee national capital grapples with waterlogging and a host of issues that accompany the rains

TS Eliot wrote, "April is the cruellest month..." in his famous poem *The Waste Land*. He was, of course, speaking of a different context and place, but one might wonder if he would have felt the same had he experienced Delhi in August. This year has brought a good monsoon, but for Delhiites, heavy downpours rarely bring good news. They must brace themselves for waterlogging, traffic snarls, a host of diseases, unclean water, power failures, and what have you. Streets turned into rivers, traffic reached a standstill, and daily life was thrown into disarray. The scene is all too familiar, a recurring nightmare that haunts the city every monsoon. But why does Delhi, with its sprawling infrastructure and resources, continue to grapple with such chaos year after year? More importantly, what can be done to mitigate this annual misery? Heavy rainfall over the past 24 hours has left several key areas in Delhi, including Connaught Place, Minto Road, and the Ring Road, severely waterlogged. Commuters faced long hours in traffic jams, and pedestrians struggled to navigate the flooded streets. The drainage system, overwhelmed by the sheer volume of water, failed to cope, leading to a cascading series of problems: halted public transport and power outages.



The residents of low-lying areas are the worst hit, with water entering homes and causing significant damage to property and belongings. Unfortunately, it's an annual ritual: heavy monsoon showers overwhelm the infrastructure, bringing the city to a standstill. The blame game ensues, followed by knee-jerk responses and funds allocated for improvements. Yet, by the next year, those efforts are washed away, leaving the city again

at the mercy of the weather gods. It is not rocket science to find the root cause of the problem and even fix it. Surely, the authorities would know that but the execution plan is missing. Despite being a metropolitan hub, Delhi's drainage system is outdated and poorly maintained. Besides, rapid and often haphazard urban development has led to the encroachment of natural water bodies and green spaces. These areas, which once absorbed excess rainwater, have been replaced by concrete structures, exacerbating the problem of water runoff. There is an urgent need to remove those encroachments and upgrade the drainage system. But unfortunately, urban planning in Delhi often happens in silos, with little coordination between different departments. This lack of an integrated approach has led to a situation where roads are built without adequate drainage. Delhi needs a multifaceted approach that addresses both the immediate challenges and long-term vulnerabilities: Utilising smart city technologies, such as real-time monitoring of drainage systems and predictive weather modelling, can help in better preparedness and response to heavy rains. While heavy rains are a natural phenomenon, the resulting waterlogging and disruption are largely man-made problems. To tackle this issue, concrete measures and decisive actions must be taken immediately.

PICTALK



Devotees carry a Lord Ganesha idol for the Ganesh Chaturthi festival, in Mumbai

Progress depends on retentiveness

Today, as political discord echoes through our democracy, I find myself reflecting on those dark days of Emergency and the enduring wounds inflicted on our nation's soul



J S RAJPUT

It was only in 1956 that I got some idea of how the Constitution of India was framed, and who were the major personalities that constituted the historic Constituent Assembly. The teacher who introduced me to it was a great admirer of Mahatma Gandhi and adored Pandit Nehru and Neta Ji Subhash Chandra Bose. The library had a copy of the constitution of India having the signatures of all of the members of the Constituent Assembly and also images representing Indian culture and heritage. We learnt the Preamble by heart. This teacher-created interest amongst students interested in dramatics, and after hectic preparation of a couple of weeks, a mock Constituent Assembly was enacted in the presence of a huge gathering.

This young teacher was also confident that the ancient Indian culture now be resurrected, and the entire world would know how advanced Indians were in 'thought and deed'. In 1975, I read the constitution in all seriousness, and witnessed how it was being mercilessly mutilated! After nearly five decades, as one peruses the print and electronic media, one witnesses a slugfest between the union government and the opposition, it makes one reflect on the emergency days, and one just can't avoid reflecting on the 18 months of democratic darkness that shattered the lives of millions of the people. It ruined the credibility of Indian democracy internationally.

No apology could erase the wound inflicted on the constitution and the humiliation of the stalwarts who created the constitution of India. Was it not a shameful humiliation inflicted on Baba Sahib Bhim Rao Ambedkar? He had repeatedly opposed the inclusion of the term 'secular in the Preamble of the Constitution. How could any active and alert citizen forget the fact that the 44th Constitution Amendment Act was passed by a Parliament that was in its arbitrarily-extended sixth year? Practically all of the opposition stalwarts were in jail! Today, any voice that says 'I want my



original Preamble back' should be deciphered in the spirit it deserves to be comprehended in its objectivity. It could certainly be a great tribute to Dr Baba Sahib Ambedkar! This correction would offer a healing touch to persons like me who had witnessed the emergency and also - to a great extent - to those who had suffered damages of an irreversible nature. Let me narrate a personal experience.

One senior academic was appointed head of a regional institute in Bhopal in December 1974. In August 1975, he was asked to report to report to his central office New Delhi next day 'for consultations'. I was number two in the institutional hierarchy and had become a full Professor just a year back in August 1974. I assisted him in preparing certain project proposals he would carry that evening for obtaining sanction from New Delhi. The next morning, I received a 'lightening call' to take over as Head of the institution immediately, as the incumbent stood removed from his position. It was shocking, and I was just not ready to comply. I was advised by all my well-wishers including those from senior bureaucracy and police services to quietly 'take over', without in any way indicating unwillingness.



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On return, the summarily sacked academic described the ordeal he suffered. As he was to reach the designated office, a peon was waiting with a letter that he swiftly handed over, obtained his signatures on the peon book, and vanished!

I got instructions to ensure that no one even meets him! I insisted that the head of an academic institution should not be humiliated before his students. A lady bureaucrat from the New Delhi office reposed faith in me, but told me that only I, and I alone, would be responsible for any mishap that may occur, and its consequences.

The academic who was humiliated and removed never got justice during his remaining lifetime of around two decades.

Those who would not like even a mention of emergency could recall how strongly India was proud of the persona of that great intellectual and jurist Nani Palakivala. He had refused the brief from Mrs Indira Gandhi and fought for the constitution in draconian conditions.

His reflections on emergency shall remain ever-relevant: "No period in the history of our republic is of more educational value than 1975 to 1977. George Santayana said, 'Progress far from consisting

in change, depends on retentiveness... Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. If our basic freedoms are to survive, it is of vital importance that we remember the happenings during emergency when the freedoms were suspended'. Is it necessary to 'fight facts' to negate the truth? What we witness all around us in the world of the current-day average politicians was envisioned by Sri Aurobindo in his lifetime: "The modern politician in my part of the world does not represent the soul of a people or its aspirations. What he does usually represent is all the average pettiness, selfishness, egoism, self-deception that is about him and these he represents well enough as well as a great deal of mental incompetence and moral conventionalty, timidity and pretence".

What he does usually represent is all the average pettiness, selfishness, egoism, self-deception that is about him and these he represents well enough as well as a great deal of mental incompetence and moral conventionalty, timidity and pretence". The adults and elders must realize what the young of India are getting from them in the years of their growing up!

(Professor Rajput works in education, social cohesion and religious amity; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT REMEMBERED

Madam — Mahatma Gandhi's relentless efforts were instrumental in India's journey to independence. From the 1930 Dandi March to the 1942 Quit India Movement, Gandhi's leadership was pivotal in challenging British rule. On August 9, 1942, India embarked on a crucial new phase in its fight for freedom—a mass uprising against colonial rule that heralded the imminent end of the British Empire in India. Although Gandhi and the Congress leadership were imprisoned on August 8, the call to "Quit India" ignited a nationwide movement. With the leaders behind bars, the people took to the streets, driven by Gandhi's urgent call to action. Their resolve and sacrifice laid the groundwork for India's eventual independence, a testament to their undying commitment to freedom and self-determination.

Jayanthi Subramaniam | Mumbai

PM VISIT REASSURES WAYANAD

Madam — On Saturday, the Prime Minister visited Wayanad, a region recently struck by an unprecedented disaster that claimed around 400 lives and forced thousands into relief camps. His visit uplifted the spirits of the disillusioned and distressed and fostered the hopes. Their eyes were filled with tears emotionally as they recounted their ordeals to him. The visit also expedited the rehabilitation process, with authorities working tirelessly to restore normalcy, as the Prime Minister promised to provide all possible assistance. This gesture has won the hearts of the people, and such initiatives are now expected in the future. In the aftermath of the Prime Minister's visit, the people of Wayanad find themselves not only comforted by his empathy but also reassured by his commitment to their recovery. The renewed hope in their eyes speaks to the power of genuine leadership in times of crisis. As the region begins to rebuild, the memory of this visit will linger, a reminder that in the face of

Bangladesh on boil



This is in response to the news article, "Bangladesh: Uncertainty and Chaos Grip the Nation" (August 10). The recent vio-

lence in Bangladesh has tragically impacted hundreds of Hindus. The growing relationship between Bangladesh and India under Sheikh Hasina's leadership has become intolerable to Islamic fundamentalists in the region. Targeting Hindus as part of the anti-national movement in Bangladesh could backfire on the newly elected interim government led by Mohammad Yunus.

This unrest is likely to have negative repercussions on the yarn trade between India and Bangladesh. Unfortunately, international human rights organizations have remained silent in the face of these atrocities against minorities. It is imperative to take immediate action to stop the violence against Hindus in Bangladesh. The call for Hindu unity is resonating strongly both within the country and abroad.

Yugal Kishore Sharma | Faridabad

adversity, they are not alone.

Jakir Hussain | Kanpur

RAHUL GANDHI'S EVOLUTION

Madam — Apropos the article, "The Evolution of Rahul Gandhi," published on August 8, this is my response. Rahul Gandhi, once mocked by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his supporters as "Pappu" and an "entitled dynast," staged a remarkable comeback in the 2024 general elections. He became the central figure of an alliance that successfully penetrated BJP strongholds, particularly in Uttar Pradesh. As the heir to India's renowned Nehru-Gandhi political dynasty, Rahul Gandhi led two nationwide marches against what he termed Modi's politics of hate and fear, revitalizing his Congress party and redefining his own public image. Rahul Gandhi has repeatedly emphasized that his fight against Modi's BJP is not merely about seizing power but about challenging the party's and the RSS's "Hindu-first" ideology, which contradicts India's secular principles as outlined in

the Constitution. The results of the last general election significantly boosted Rahul Gandhi's morale, prompting people to view him more positively and take him seriously as a leader. They have come to recognize him as a leader focused on real-life issues—such as unemployment, women's safety, the violence in Manipur, NEET exam paper leaks, rising prices of gas cylinders, petrol, and diesel, and caste-related issues. Most importantly, he is seen as the one who will uphold the spirit of secularism in the nation. These factors have collectively reshaped public perception of Rahul Gandhi.

Now, having emerged stronger and as the Leader of the Opposition with substantial support from Opposition MPs in Parliament, Rahul Gandhi, known for his oratory skills, is poised to present significant challenges to Mr. Modi and his party in the days ahead on various issues facing the country.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Revamping the English literature curriculum

Once a cornerstone of intellectual pursuit, English literature studies are now facing a troubling decline in popularity among students in India

Once a most demanding course among youngsters, English literature studies has seen a significant decline in the past decade. In many colleges in India seats of B.Literature remain vacant despite its huge potential in this digital age. The policymakers and academicians should brainstorm the reasons and come out with concrete plans to overcome this dilemma. In India, many students see STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) as a subject of intellect and opportunities, compared to humanities.

Emerging fields like data science, artificial intelligence, and digital marketing are gaining popularity among students due to their perceived relevance and lucrative opportunities. This trend reduces the appeal of traditional literary studies. The perception that a degree in English offers limited career options and lower earning potential can deter students from pursuing it. This view is compounded by a lack of clear and well-promoted career pathways specifically tied to English studies. Many



English literature programs may have curricula that have not been updated to reflect contemporary literary trends and regional and global issues. The stress on Shakespearean and other literary works doesn't get connected to present-day society. Shakespearean plays and other classical works were written in very different historical and cultural contexts. The social norms, political structures, and everyday concerns of ancient times may seem foreign to modern readers.

This historical gap can make it hard for students to see how the themes and issues of these works relate to their own lives. A focus on classic literature without integrating contemporary and diverse voices may alienate students who are more interested in

modern and global literary trends. The rise of digital media and alternative forms of entertainment, such as social media, video games, and streaming platforms, has altered reading habits. Students may be less inclined to engage with traditional literature due to these competing interests. Though science education reformations forms part of national policies, literature education rarely finds its place in national policies, though NEP stresses the need to undertake literary studies.

To make literature more relatable and engaging, integrate a diverse range of texts. Include contemporary works from different cultures, genres, and perspectives. For instance, introducing novels, short stories, and poetry from emerging voices around the world, alongside regional literature, can provide students with a broader view of the literary landscape. Academicians should link literature with other fields such as history, psychology, sociology, and environmental studies. For instance, studying dystopian novels alongside discussions of climate sci-

ence and environmental issues can provide students with a deeper understanding of both the literature and the real-world issues it reflects.

Thrust should be given to include components that prepare students for the job market, such as resume writing, interview skills, and networking opportunities. Connecting literature studies with science and other relevant fields will enhance career prospects. In the age of bots, literature students should be taught the fundamentals of computer programming. Revitalising the literary syllabus necessitates a deliberate strategy that incorporates current issues, embraces digital and multimedia resources, fosters interdisciplinary linkages, and emphasises practical skills. Educational institutions can establish a literary program that is relevant and exciting for 21st-century students by using a variety of texts, utilising technology, and regularly updating the curriculum.

(The writer is the Academic affairs, GCU and adjunct faculty at NIAS, Bengaluru; views are personal)



BIJU DHARMAPALAN



FIRST COLUMN

CELEBRATING WORLD LEFT-HANDERS DAY

This day honours the 13 percent who navigate a world designed for the right-handed



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

The 13th of August is commemorated as World Left-Handers Day, a day dedicated to the 13% of the world's population who make do in a world that wasn't meant for them. To many of us, left-handedness is just a fascinating statistic, something we mention in passing or wonder at during a discussion. However, for those of us who lean left, this is a quiet, everyday rebellion against a world that expects us to fit in when we don't quite belong. From the moment we grip our first crayon, left-handers are thrust into a world where ease can be transformed into hand-to-hand combat.

Scissors bite painfully; pens spill over the paper; spiral notebooks are a tangle of discomfort. It's completely out of tune, like music played in a different key. However, this dissonance does not weaken us, but rather it strengthens us. In a world designed for right-handers, left-handers learn to improvise, create, and, eventually, prosper. This kind of adaptability lends itself to creativity, which is sometimes cited as a virtue among lefties. To us, however, creativity is more than just an artistic talent; it is a survival ability. Being left-handed means seeing the world from a different perspective and approaching difficulties with a different mindset.

Our brains are wired to think beyond the box because, honestly, the box was never meant for us in the first place. It is no surprise that left-handers such as Leonardo da Vinci, Nikola Tesla, and Marie Curie are among history's most recognised thinkers. They did not think differently; they saw differently, creating visions that changed our per-



ception of what is possible. However, it is not only about inventiveness. Being left-handed entails a quiet fortitude, borne of years of adjusting to a world that frequently forgets to include you. Each southpaw has a story to tell: awkward contortions in class, struggles with right-handed instruments, and ink-stained palms. However, these events do not diminish us; rather, they define us. They teach us how to be resourceful, to face challenges with fortitude, and to see beauty in the unexpected. Being rare has a mystical quality about it. Being left-handed means standing out in a crowd, but more significantly, in life. It represents the fact that normalcy can be overvalued while the difference is powerful.

The left-handed intellect does not only accomplish what most others avoid; it frequently forges a new path where none previously existed. In art, science, sports, or leadership, a left-hander will do things differently, deviate from the norm, and transform the ordinary into remarkable. As we commemorate World Left-Handers Day, let us remember that being left-handed is much more than a biological quirk; it is a way of life, a sign of creativity, perseverance, and inventiveness that stems from a worldview that sees things not as they are, but as they could be.

Left-handers, living in a right-handed society, remind us that magic sometimes happens in the opposite direction. Here's to the lefties—the visionaries who prove that being different is not only acceptable but also remarkable. In celebrating World Left-Handers Day, we honor more than just a minority group—we recognize a testament to human adaptability and creativity. Left-handers remind us that thriving often means forging our own path, embracing differences, and finding strength in what sets us apart.

As we acknowledge the challenges lefties face, we also celebrate the unique perspective they bring to the world. Here's to the left-handers, whose quiet resilience and innovative spirit show us that being different isn't just okay—it's extraordinary.

(The writer is a freelance writer; views are personal)

Can Muhammad Yunus micro manage Bangladesh



NILANTHA LANGAMUWA

As the world watches, the implications of this power shift resonate far beyond Dhaka's borders; the once peaceful country has plunged into anarchy

South Asia's youngest nation has been thrust into a new era following a four-day power vacuum, decisively crossing a point of no return. A new messiah has emerged to rule over 171 million people, arriving from Paris in a full-circle moment. Had Hasina remained in power, he would have been sentenced to life for corruption on the very day Hasina fled the country she had ruled for over 15 years. Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus has assumed the role of head of the interim government. A 14-member interim government including a Hindu psychiatrist and a Buddhist human rights activist led by Prof. Yunus has taken charge.

Alarming, most of these members are heads of Western-funded NGOs, exposing the true manipulators behind the scenes. It was a nightmare for them to run their NGOs during Hasina's tenure, with many facing harassment, intimidation, and even imprisonment. Now, they have set their yardstick. Nobel laureate Prof. Yunus, who has received the Congressional Gold Medal and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honours in the United States, illustrates the adage that, as Americans say, there's no such thing as a free lunch. The coming months will reveal how Dhaka's political shifts will reverberate across borders. Nearly 300 people have been killed in the post-Hasina period, with rampant looting, attacks on minorities, and intimidation of state institutions. Images show disturbing violence, including the burning of Hindu temples. The riots go beyond protests against the Awami League, revealing deeper conflicts. Simultaneously, one should not overlook the deep-rooted anti-India sentiments in Bangladesh and its diaspora, exacerbated by the India Out campaign. Unfortunately, Delhi policymakers may have underestimated this sentiment and placed undue trust in Hasina.

It was a bloodbath, and the incidents that unfolded suggest it was a well-planned political scheme, executed promptly to overthrow Hasina—a time-tested leader, though surrounded by controversies. The humiliating destruction of Bangabandhu's statue starkly echoes the fall of Saddam Hussein's statue in Baghdad. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, known as Bangabandhu, laid the foundation of Bangladesh with his political ideology and dedication during the struggle for independence. Despite overcoming initial challenges, fear has once again taken hold in the country. The chaotic situation exemplifies a state of total anarchy. This is not a revolution; revolutions are meant to improve the lives of people, not to indulge in bloodlust against unarmed citizens with opposing political viewpoints or religious beliefs. However, given the nation's violent history even before its inception, it seems to be passing through yet another despicable period.

Is this merely a student uprising, or is someone manipulating them behind the scenes to exploit the situation? When the political intelligentsia abstains from protests, reducing them to mere emotional outbursts, it fosters an environment ripe for the creation of new, equally monstrous situations. This cycle will inevitably doom us to repeat the same failures. The harrowing video of an unemployed youth wearing a black t-shirt being shot by a policeman only deepened the unrest. Hasina bears blood on her hands; whether direct-



DESPITE OVERCOMING INITIAL CHALLENGES, FEAR HAS ONCE AGAIN TAKEN HOLD IN THE COUNTRY. THE CHAOTIC SITUATION EXEMPLIFIES A STATE OF TOTAL ANARCHY. THIS IS NOT A REVOLUTION. REVOLUTIONS ARE MEANT TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF PEOPLE, NOT TO INDULGE IN BLOODLUST AGAINST UNARMED CITIZENS

ly or through those who ordered lethal force against protesters, accountability is imperative. Thanks to India, Hasina narrowly escaped a fate akin to Muammar Gaddafi's. In the January elections, she set a trap with her abuse of power and legislative misogyny, even denying medical treatment to opponents. Her opponents seized on the quota issue as the tipping point. Although she addressed it, she failed to recognise it was merely a façade. Her inability to understand that 15 years is too long for any democracy to be managed alone highlights a grim historical lesson. However, history teaches us a valuable lesson: despite Ferdinand Marcos' ousting, his family's influence persisted, and in 2021, his son made a notable comeback in the Philippines. That's the nature of politics. Consequently, whoever comes to power next will face a challenging situation.

The manipulations behind these shocking events, which unfolded within a month while the Prime Minister was in China, may be revealed in the future, much like how America tried to obscure the genocide in Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) during the early 60s, with Henry Kissinger maintaining a political alliance with General Yahya Khan of Pakistan as a secret route to engage with China. Commenting on the situation, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, reflecting his country's global ambitions, urged the Bangladeshi people to ensure that 'any decisions made by the interim government need to respect democratic principles, uphold the rule of law, and reflect the will of the people.' This statement came shortly after the arrival of F-16 fighter jets in Ukraine, continued arms supplies to Israel, and the brutal killing of

Black woman Sonya Massey by law enforcement in her own home—just a few examples that highlight the contradictions in America's respect for the rule of law and international norms. Ironically, many have started comparing the situation in Bangladesh with Sri Lanka. However, there are significant differences between the unprecedented exit of the Bangladeshi Prime Minister this week and the relinquishment of power by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in Sri Lanka two years ago. One key factor was India's attitude, which was drastically different in these cases.

Reliable sources with knowledge of the events in Sri Lanka have asserted that India believed Gotabaya Rajapaksa should not resign but should stay in power. This stance resulted in no airlift facilities being provided for a safe exit, forcing the then-President to flee to the Maldives in an over-50-year-old Air Force plane. In contrast, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh received swift support from India. Second, Gotabaya Rajapaksa came to power through free and fair elections with a significant majority, whereas Sheikh Hasina was re-elected after a series of repressions against opposition political parties. Her handling of the elections reflected growing public displeasure. Winning over regional powers and maintaining their support certainly made her powerful and influential.

Her development projects offered to India, China, Russia, and Japan highlighted bold decisions in her foreign policy. She effectively balanced both India and China, showcasing her capability more effectively than any other South Asian leader in contemporary political history. However, a com-

mon trait between these two leaders is their stance on China. Despite unprecedented pressure from the West, both leaders continued to work harmoniously with China. For instance, when Mike Pompeo, then Secretary of State and former CIA Director, criticised China during his visit to Colombo, President Rajapaksa directly told him that "the opinion held by America against China in Sri Lanka is factually wrong." Since then, Rajapaksa's politics began to crumble, pointing to the decisions he made and the protests that followed.

Similarly, after successfully concluding a visit to India right after Modi's re-election, Hasina flew to China to initiate more Chinese-funded development projects. By then, her fate at home was already sealed. In this context, Elon Musk's recent comment on Venezuela is apt: 'We will coup whoever we want! Deal with it.' Amidst the social media spectacle dominated by profit-driven motives and emotionally manipulative politics, the unemployed youth who ignited change in Bangladesh may soon face this harsh reality. Western ambitions in unstable countries often focus on destruction and manipulation through proxies rather than genuine improvements in livelihoods. The new interim government may well understand this realpolitik. With Hasina's downfall, the direction of the interim government's foreign policy and its approach towards the Global South, including BRICS, remains uncertain. While it may be premature to fully assess this interim arrangement, the situation poses a significant challenge for India, China, and Asia as a whole.

(The writer is a journalist and author. Views expressed are personal)

Pushpanjali Medicon 2024: Top doctors share insights on health and wellness

This unique medical conference covered topics ranging from liver health to the often-overlooked connection between sex and wellness

It's not every day that you see India's top medical professionals gathering under one roof to discuss various health conditions and offer advice on leading a healthy life. This rare opportunity drew people of all ages in large numbers to the capital, eager to hear the insights and wisdom of these renowned doctors.



VIVEK SHUKLA

This significant event was made possible through the tireless efforts of Dr. Vinay Aggarwal, the Past National President of the Indian Medical Association, and his dedicated team, who organized the Pushpanjali Medicon 2024 conference. The conference was meticulously planned to cover a wide range of topics, including Pregnancy-Related

Acute Kidney Injury, Headache Management, the Mystery of Dizziness, Suicide Prevention, Fatty Liver, and issues of reproductive health. The event saw the participation of leading doctors from the capital and various states such as Mumbai, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and beyond. One of the most anticipated sessions was led by Dr. Shiv

Kumar Sarin, a distinguished clinician and gastroenterologist, who captivated the audience with his talk on maintaining liver health. Dr. Sarin emphasised the liver's critical role as the controller and fulcrum of our metabolic well-being, comparing it to a chartered accountant that keeps a meticulous record of our body's intake and expenditure. He highlighted how any surplus, whether from genetic factors or excessive calorie consumption, can lead to fatty liver disease.

This condition forces the pancreas to produce more insulin, which can eventually result in diabetes. Moreover, the excess fat in the liver doesn't just stay there; it circulates through-

out the body, potentially leading to complications such as gallstones. Another notable speaker, Dr. Rajeev Sood, the newly appointed Vice-Chancellor of Baba Farid University of Health Sciences and former Dean of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital and PGIMER in Delhi, shared his expertise on managing prostate health. His session provided valuable insights into a topic that is often overlooked but crucial for men's health, particularly as they age.

One of the most engaging sessions was on the topic "Sex Has No Expiry Date," delivered by Dr. Deepak Juman, a Mumbai-based expert in sexual health. Dr. Juman spoke with remarkable eloquence on a subject



that is rarely discussed openly, especially in such forums. He stressed the undeniable link between sex and overall health, arguing that sexual activity is one of the

most vital biological functions, essential for a fulfilling life. Addressing a packed audience, Dr. Juman asserted that sexual pleasure is both a personal business

and a fundamental right, emphasizing that all sexual dysfunctions can be managed, allowing individuals of all ages to lead a sexually satisfying life. The success of this unique health conference, where top doctors interacted with both medical professionals and the general public, is indeed a great achievement. The importance of conferences like Pushpanjali Medicon 2024 cannot be overstated. Similar events must be held across the country. Dr. Aggarwal argues that such gatherings are vital for fostering closer ties between doctors, patients, and medical professionals. Healthcare conferences like Pushpanjali Medicon are

more than just formal events; they are epicenters of innovation and collaboration within the medical field. These gatherings offer invaluable networking opportunities with industry peers, critical for both personal and professional growth. They also provide continuing Medical Education (CME) sessions that are essential for staying updated with the latest advancements in healthcare. Beyond the educational value, these conferences are inspiring and refreshing, offering a chance to recharge while gaining new insights and connections. *(The writer is an author and a columnist; views are personal)*

IN BRIEF



India's industrial output grows 4.2 pc in June

India's industrial production grew 4.2 per cent in June this year, mainly due to a good show by the mining and power sectors, according to official data released on Monday. The factory output, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) witnessed a growth of 4 per cent in June 2023. India's Index of Industrial Production increased by 4.2 per cent in June 2024, an official statement said. The data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) showed that the manufacturing sector's output grew 2.6 per cent in June 2024 against 3.5 per cent in the year-ago month. In June this year, mining production rose 10.3 per cent, and power output increased 8.6 per cent. In the April-June quarter of this fiscal, the IIP grew 5.2 per cent compared to 4.7 per cent in the year-ago period.



Gold rises Rs 200, silver rallies Rs 1,000 per kg

Gold prices rose by Rs 200 to Rs 72,350 per 10 grams while silver prices rallied by Rs 1,000 per kg in the local market here on Monday amid firm global trends. In the previous session, the yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed lower at Rs 72,150 per 10 grams on Saturday, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Silver prices jumped by Rs 1,000 to Rs 83,500 per kg from Rs 82,500 per kg in the previous close. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also climbed by Rs 200 to Rs 72,000 per 10 grams. In the previous trade, it had ended at Rs 71,800 per 10 grams on Saturday. Traders attributed the rise in gold prices to increased demand from local jewellers and a strong trend in the overseas markets. "Gold prices rose on Monday as persisting geopolitical concerns about Middle Eastern crises boosted the safe-haven demand for precious metal," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.



Panasonic Energy India profit grows to Rs 4 cr in April-June

Panasonic Energy India Company Ltd (PECIN) on Monday reported a profit after tax of Rs 4.14 crore in June quarter, up from Rs 2.59 crore in the year-ago period. The company's total income fell to Rs 64.18 crore in the first quarter of this fiscal from Rs 77.48 crore in the April-June period of preceding 2023-24 financial year, Panasonic Energy India said in an exchange filing. During the reporting quarter, the company reduced expenses to Rs 58.55 crore from Rs 74.02 crore in the three-month period a year ago. In a separate statement, Akinori Isomura, Chairman and Managing Director, PECIN, said, "Last two years have charted a turnaround story for company's operations and we have been reporting a consistent growth in profit. The slight dip in revenue this quarter is on account of a large B2B one time order that we won last year, so if we look at the overall sales growth in insolation of this order, we have recorded a 7 per cent growth."

Nothing more for govt to add

DEA Secretary on Hindenburg report on Sebi Chief

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry on Monday said it has nothing more to add to the statements given by the Securities and Exchange Board of India and its chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch regarding Hindenburg's latest report. US-based short-seller Hindenburg Research on Saturday launched a broadside against the Sebi's chairperson, alleging she and her husband had stakes in obscure offshore funds allegedly used in investments in the Adani companies.

"Sebi has made the statement. The chairperson has also made a statement. There is nothing further to be added by the government," Economic Affairs Secretary in the Finance Ministry Ajay Seth told reporters here. Hindenburg, in its latest report, alleged that Sebi Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch and her husband had undisclosed investments in obscure offshore funds in Bermuda and Mauritius, the same entities allegedly used by Vinod Adani - the elder brother of group chairman Gautam Adani - to round-trip funds and inflate stock prices.

Madhabi Puri Buch and her husband Dhaval Buch, in a joint statement, strongly denied the "baseless allegations and insinuations made in the report", saying the charges were "devoid of any truth". Sebi also defended its chairperson. In a two-page statement, the regulator said Buch had made relevant disclosures from time to time, and she "had also recused herself in matters involving potential conflicts of interest".



Sebi chief gets backing of REIT, industry bodies

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Industry bodies representing the Real estate Investments trusts (REITs) and alternate capital on Monday came in support of embattled Sebi chief Madhabi Puri Buch facing allegations by US short-seller Hindenburg Research of having stakes in obscure offshore funds linked to Adani group. Indian REITs Association (IRA) said that claims made by the US-based short-seller suggesting that the REIT framework made by markets regulator Sebi serves the interests of a select few are "baseless and misleading". In fact, the association has commended Sebi and its leadership for crafting a "rigorous regulatory environment" that includes comprehensive periodic reporting requirements, mandatory independent valuations, and strict governance

standards. "Developed in consultation with all market participants, this framework ensures the highest levels of investor protection for both -- domestic and international institutional investors, as well as retail investors," it said. The Indian Venture and Alternate Capital Association (IVCA) also said it stands firmly behind Buch in the "challenging times" and added that the markets regulator has shown an "unwavering commitment to market integrity, regulatory governance, and investor protection". The support from the two bodies comes a day after mutual fund lobby grouping Amfi (Association of Mutual Funds in India) on Sunday backed Buch, saying the short-seller's report is an attempt to undermine Buch's contribution to the Indian capital market and the country's economic progress.

PUBG, BGMI-maker plans to set up R&D unit in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

PUBG and BGMI-maker KRAFTON intends to set up an R&D facility in India by next year to develop games suited to the Indian culture, company's India business head Sean Hyunil Sohn said.

KRAFTON India CEO Sohn said that the details of the facility are yet to be finalised, but the top location choices are Bangalore and Pune. "We will continue to launch new games for the Indian market, either sourcing from outside or from India. We will do our best to set up a good quality development team based in India and develop quality games based on Indian culture," he said on the sidelines of IDGS Gaming Conclave.

Sohn had earlier said that India was among the top three markets for the company in terms of user base.

"India has a huge demand for digital entertainment content, including gaming. We have seen a very fast pace of growth on a year-on-year basis but I think there's a lack of top-quality talent supply into the ecosystem, which has many factors behind that sort of situation."

Govt approves 20 pc premium for gas from new wells for ONGC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has approved a 20 per cent premium over the regulated or APM price for any natural gas that ONGC will produce from new wells, the company said on Monday.

Currently, two pricing regimes govern the majority of the domestic production of natural gas, which is used to generate electricity, produce fertiliser, turn into CNG for running automobiles and piped to households for cooking.

Gas produced from legacy or fields given to state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd, on nomination basis, is priced at 10 per cent of the prevailing price of crude oil that India imports.

This price, subject to a cap price of USD 6.5 per million British thermal units, is called regulated or APM price. So, at the current Indian basket price of USD 77 per barrel, the APM

price for gas produced from ONGC's Mumbai High and Bassin fields in the western offshore should come to USD 7.7 per mmBtu, but it is paid the cap price of USD 6.5.

Gas produced from difficult fields, such as those in the deep sea, is governed by a different formula and paid a higher rate because of the higher cost involved in its production. That price for six months starting April 1 is USD 9.87 per mmBtu.

When these formulas were adopted last year, it was decided that gas produced from new wells, even in legacy fields, would be paid a premium of 20 per cent over the APM price. Now, that has been notified.

"As per guidelines for domestic gas pricing, domestic natural gas price (APM price) was fixed at 10 per cent of the Indian crude basket price as announced by Petroleum Planning and Analysis (PPAC) on a monthly basis."

RBI penalises CSB Bank, Union Bank of India, others

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India on Monday imposed penalties on five entities, including CSB Bank, Union Bank of India and Muthoot Housing Finance for contravention of various regulatory norms.

A penalty of Rs 1.86 crore has been imposed on CSB Bank for non-compliance with certain directions issued by the RBI on 'Guidelines on Managing Risks and Code of Conduct in Outsourcing of Financial Services by banks' and 'Master Circular on Branch Authorisation'.

In another statement, the RBI said a penalty of Rs 1.06 crore has been imposed on Union Bank of India for non-compliance with certain norms on 'Creation of a Central Repository of Large Common Exposures-Across Banks' and 'Know Your Customer (KYC)'.

A fine of 5 lakh has been imposed on Muthoot Housing Finance Company for non-compliance with certain provisions of the 'Non-



Retail inflation slips to 5-yr low of 3.54 pc

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Retail inflation declined to a five-year low of 3.54 per cent in July mainly on account of subdued prices of food items, and base effect, according to official data released on Monday.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based retail inflation was 5.08 per cent in June 2024 and 7.44 per cent in July 2023.

Retail inflation slipped below the median target of 4 per cent of the Reserve Bank for the first time since September 2019 when it was at 3.99 per cent. The government has tasked the RBI to ensure inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side. Inflation has remained below 6 per cent since September 2023.

According to the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), the annual inflation in 'milk and milk products' was 2.99 per cent, 'oils and fats' (-) 1.17, fruits 3.84 per cent, and spices (-) 1.43 per cent.

The rate of price rise was 6.83 per cent in the vegetable basket and 8.14 per cent in 'cereals and products', NSO said. The CPI Inflation in the food basket was 5.42 per cent in July, down from 9.36 per cent in June, and 11.51 a year ago. Inflation in the 'fuel and light' segment was in negative at 5.48 per cent.

The NSO data further showed that inflation was more than the national average in rural India at 4.1 per cent while in urban areas it was 2.98 per cent.

IIP growth slows to 5-month low

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's industrial production slowed to a five-month low of 4.2 per cent in June 2024, mainly due to poor performance of the manufacturing sector, though power and mining sectors continue to perform well, as per official data released on Monday.

The factory output growth, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), was 6.2 per cent in May, 5 per cent in April, 5.5 per cent in March, 5.6 per cent in February

and 4.2 per cent in January 2024. During the April-June period this fiscal, the IIP growth was 5.2 per cent against 4.7 per cent in the same period of the preceding financial year.

India's Index of Industrial Production grew by 4 per cent in June 2023, according to a statement by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation.

As per the data, the mining output growth accelerated to 10.3 per cent in June against a 7.6 per cent expansion in the year-ago month.

HINDENBURG-SEBI-ADANI ROW Stock markets close lower

Pvt banks lend support

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Stock markets closed marginally lower in highly volatile trade on Monday as gains in private banks helped benchmark Sensex recoup some of the early losses inflicted by allegations against Sebi chief Madhabi Puri Buch and her husband by the US short-seller Hindenburg Research.

The 30-share Sensex closed lower by 56.99 points or 0.07 per cent at 79,648.92 with 18 of its constituents ending with losses and 12 with gains. The index had declined by 479.78 points or 0.60 per cent to a low of 79,226.13 in morning trade due to losses in Adani group shares and blue-chips like Reliance Industries. The benchmark later staged a sharp recovery climbing around 880 points from the day's low to hit a high of 80,106.18. But at the day-end, the BSE benchmark slipped into the negative territory and closed lower.

The NSE Nifty dipped 20.50 points or 0.08 per cent to 24,347. Intra-day, it hit a low of 24,212.10 and a high of 24,472.80.

"The Indian market concluded relatively flat, with its initial path being eclipsed by the continuation of the Adani-Hindenburg-SEBI saga. However, the market tried to brush away these noises, taking positive cues from global markets," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

From 30 Sensex firms, Adani Ports, NTPC, Power Grid, State Bank of India, Nestle, Mahindra & Mahindra, Reliance Industries and Tata Consultancy Services were the biggest laggards.

Axis Bank, Infosys, JSW Steel, Tata Motors, HDFC Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank were among the gainers from the blue-chip pack.

SUNIL MITTAL ON BHARTI'S STAKE ACQUISITION IN BT 'Attractive buy, good long-term investment'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bharti Enterprises Chairman Sunil Mittal on Monday said the conglomerate's decision to acquire a 24.5 per cent stake in BT Group marks a "good, long-term investment" and an "attractive buy", citing the British company's strong portfolio of home broadband, fibre, mobile and enterprise offerings.

Mittal, a telecom industry stalwart, exuded confidence about the investment and business prospects of BT and indicated that while the priority, for now, is to understand the com-

pany and the UK market in-depth, "if there are more opportunities in Europe, we will certainly be open to it in future".

On Bharti's decision to buy a 24.5 per cent stake in BT Group - a move that would make it the single largest shareholder in Britain's largest broadband and mobile company - Mittal said: "I think this is a very attractive buy... the UK and European telecom companies are trading at low multiples... so given the cash flow expectations of BT, we believe this is going to be a good investment, and it is a long-

term investment. Earlier on Monday, Bharti Global, the international investment arm of Bharti Enterprises, announced it will acquire about 24.5 per cent stake in BT Group from Altice UK. Although Bharti did not divulge the size of the transaction, the deal is estimated to be the ballpark figure of USD 4 billion.

Sunil Mittal's son Shrawin Bharti Mittal, Managing Director of Bharti Global, highlighted that this was a "rare opportunity to buy a stake this size".

"BT is exciting for a couple

of reasons. It has a perfect combination of a stable cash flow profile from its consumer business, BT business and growth coming through 'Openreach', and our expectation is that there is enough clarity that the management is delivering, there is clarity of vision and clarity on execution, and it is the right time to enter as an investor in BT."

"Our belief is that in the coming years, we will see a significant expansion of the cash flow profile, and the timing was rightly suited for us, at the international arm for this investment," he added.

Major domestic appliances market sees 18% growth

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The market of major domestic appliances saw an 18 per cent value-based growth in the first half of 2024, helped by a strong demand for essential household items, according to a report from GfK.

The growth in MDA (major domestic appliances) market was led by Key categories such as air-conditioners and refrigerators, which reported a growth of 30 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively.

"This growth is 3X of growth in 2023 over the previous year," said the report from GfK, which is now an NIQ Company, a leading global market and consumer intelligence firm.

The small domestic appliances market recorded a 29 per cent increase in value, reflecting heightened consumer interest in home convenience products, according to the report.

The report also added that customers are now looking for feature-rich and premium products, which is fuelling the value growth in the appliance segment.

Now washing machines with capacities of 9kg or above have recorded an "impressive growth rate of 30 per cent", which is driven by consumers seeking enhanced performance and innovative features.

Similarly, the air-conditioner segment is benefiting from



similar trends, where demand for energy-efficient and high-performance models has grown by 59 per cent in the split inverter and 5-star segments.

"Cooling appliances (refrigerator) have seen an 11 per cent increase in the side-by-side, French door, and 3/4

door segments," it said.

The report also suggests that despite such gains, the relatively low penetration of these products presents significant opportunities for industry expansion.

The smartphone and mobile phones segment had a 6 per cent reduction in volume, it

was offset by a substantial 10 per cent increase in overall value.

"In particular, the smartphone segment registered a 12 per cent increase in value," it said.

The report further stated that India has emerged as "the fastest growing market for consumer tech and durables market" and this growth trajectory is underscored by a strong PMI (Purchasing Managers' Index) reading and declining inflation rates.

"The middle class in India is set to outspend the upper class by 2030, with half of the world's population expected to belong to the middle class, predominantly driven by growth in Asia," it said.

BHARATMALA PARIYOJANA

Phase-I likely to be completed by 2027-28: MoRTH

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Modi government's flagship Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase-I, which has overshoot the expenditure limit, is expected to be completed by 2027-28, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) said in its annual report.

The ministry, in its annual report 2023-24, said a revised financial proposal for the Bharatmala Pariyojana is under process for approval.

OSMANIA UNIVERSITY
Office of the Executive Engineer, University Buildings Division
'E' PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
e.NIT. No. 317/EE/UBD/2024. Dt: 12.08.2024.
Name of Work: Re-Construction of damaged compound wall between Directorate of P.G. Admissions and Manikeshwar Nagar on the O.U. Campus. Last date / time of time for closing of Bids : On 28.08.2024 up to 05.00 p.m. ECW: Rs. 8,97,853/- Name & address: Executive Engineer, Buildings Division, O.U. Hyd-7. Ph. No. 9393353224. Further details can be seen at 'e' procurement market at www.tender.telangana.gov.in after Dt: 13.08.2024 time 12.00 p.m. Sd/- Executive Engineer, I.O.No: 276/PPCLAD/DTM/2024-25, Dt: 12-08-2024

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
QUOTATION NOTICE
Quotation No. 12/EE/CIR-20/SLP2/GHMC/2024-25 Date: 12.08.2024
Quotation No. 12/EE/CIR-20/SLP2/GHMC/2024-25, Date: 12.08.2024 for the 'Applying paint in artistic theme/illustrative/graffiti/sports theme and any thematic with anti-carbonation as per Engineer-in-charge instructions theme in Serilingampally, Circle-20, SLP2, GHMC. The details can be obtained from the office of the Executive Engineer, Serilingampally circle-20 office. The date of events is detailed below:
Start Date of submission of quotation : 12.08.2024 @ 3.30 PM
Last Date of submission of quotations : 13.08.2024 @ 3.30 PM
Price Bid Opening Date : 13.08.2024 @ 04.00 PM
Address of the office concerned: The Executive Engineer, Serilingampally Circle-20, Serilingampally Zone, GHMC, Near Mandal Revenue office, Serilingampally. Further details can be seen at website: www.ghmc.gov.in
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Circle-20, CHMC
I.O.No: 276/PPCLAD/DTM/2024-25, Dt: 12-08-2024



'Female comics should mean a safe community that's funny and fabulous'

Sumukhi Suresh is certainly that person who hones the tough times into rib-tickling movements with her wit and humour. With her much-acclaimed show *Hoemonal* going international, she speaks to *The Pioneer* about her comedy, the show and a lot more about her prowess

TEJAL SINHA

Comedy is viewed as a form of art and recognised as a potent means of conveying the truth to authority. Sumukhi Suresh has given us multiple reasons to laugh and wonder in this world of hilarious satires. Donning multiple hats as an actor, writer, comedian and entrepreneur, her journey has been nothing less than fulfilling and exciting. With each of these skills being dynamic, there is something new to learn every day. "I think they are interconnected in so many ways that help in the overall growth of me as an artist," shares the multi-faceted artist, who is all excited for her upcoming show, *Hoemonal*, going international. But hey, wait! Excited, she says, would be an understatement. "This show has been one of my favourite pieces to write and perform. A global audience will validate the fact that the core concept of *Hoemonal* is relatable and interesting." Since entering adolescence, the gagster has been experiencing hormonal issues and dealing with PCOS. The ongoing hormonal problem initially made her feel less confident because of her body image and physical discomfort, but eventually she learned to find humour in her struggles. With *Hoemonal*, she says, "It is all about the struggles of trying to date and explore

when you've been raised conservatively while dealing with hormone imbalance, PCOS, terrible metabolism and the pressure to not die alone. I sometimes wonder if it's really bad to die alone since you spend time with yourself the most and also, doesn't everyone die alone eventually?" Well, all in all, it's a fun show, says Sumukhi. Content, body-over-mind positivity and a dash of humour, how does she bring it all together so well? We ask her. With great enthusiasm, she says it's all about being honest in her storytelling, writing and acting. "I don't like being preached to, so I try not to do it. With body positivity, I am a work in progress. It's also different for different people. So now I take my time and allow mistakes and moments of anger and sadness. And try not to punish my body." Speaking of her inspiration, she says that many would feel relatable too, which is "The chaos of hormones, the lack of mainstream information and research about female reproductive health. Not just this, the journey of being a feminist and wanting an equal relationship or none at all and the dream of finding the best gynecologist has been the inspiration behind *Hoemonal*." Well, we get you, Sumukhi! In the end, these encounters influenced her thinking and led her to embrace life with humour, as her immediate response to

adversity is to laugh. Despite the numerous successful women comedians like Prashasti Singh, Gurleen Panu, Kaneez Surkha and Jamie Lever, many artists prefer to be recognised solely as artists without being defined by their gender. Having been tagged as a 'female comic', she has her own take on it: "I understand the tag and if it gets more girls to do open mics and try comedy, then it's a great tag. Female comics shouldn't mean that we are pitted against each other and fight for the "top position." Female comics should be a safe community that is funny and fabulous." She is heading to the *Edinburgh Fringe Fest* with *Hoemonal* now. "I am doing an India and US tour after that. It might be the last leg for *Hoemonal*. I've acted in a show for a leading OTT and am so excited about its release. I've written dialogue for Vikramaditya Motwane's next project, a milestone for me because I have wanted to work with him since I started writing. I've written Tushar Hiranandani's next and here's hoping it goes on floors soon." Motormouth is also developing some fun comedies. As we come to an end, Sumukhi, with great enthusiasm, shares, "I would love to have more hours in a day, but for 24 hours. Also, my studio has some amazing writers working towards reducing my work! As a comic, it's great to do as many things as possible to be exposed to multiple perspectives."

FROM CONSTRUCTING EQUATIONS TO CHARACTERS

Pallav Singh finds solace in acting

AARTI SREENATH

In the labyrinth alleys of Mirzapur, where chaos reigns and loyalties are fleeting, one figure has etched his name into the diaspora of Indian web series with verses as sharp as his wit. Pallav Singh, who breathed life into the enigmatic character Shayar Raheem in *Mirzapur 3*, is far from a conventional actor. His journey is as compelling as the character he plays, an engineer turned artist whose words have the power to linger long after they're spoken. His portrayal of Shayar Raheem was not merely about delivering lines; it was about the rhythm and cadence that transformed those lines into something unforgettable. "You gave me the cue to answer the question," he says, almost instinctively. "The lines were impactful intrinsically. I just had to step away from their way." For him, *shayari* is more than just poetry; it's a medium that compresses emotions into metered verses, leaving just enough space for the audience to project their imaginations. "What we fill in is always more powerful," he adds, highlighting the art of saying more with less. But before the world of *shayari* and cinema beckoned, he was entrenched in the logical world of engineering at the Manipal Institute of Technology. His transition from constructing equations to constructing characters might seem like a leap, but for him, it was a natural progression. "Engineering is equational and logical. You have to put one brick after another in the best proportions to build a stable structure," he reflects. It's this methodical approach that he carried into acting, where each layer of a character is meticulously crafted. "The most important lesson I've learned is that we need a good mix of intensity and consistency." The depth of Raheem's roles speaks volumes about his dedication. From playing a Down Syndrome patient in *Mai* to a homosexual man in *Taj: Divided By Blood*, he's drawn to characters that challenge him and push him to explore the unfamiliar. "The extraterrestrial nature of these characters compared to my personality compelled me to explore more about their lives, the differences and the similarities with myself," he shares. This desire to delve into the unknown, to stretch the limits of his own experiences, is what makes his performances resonate so deeply with audiences. Being part of a historical drama like *Taj* presented a unique challenge. He found himself navigating not just physical, mental and psychological spaces but a new, 'historical' space as well. "One has to be careful not to play into the clichéd mould of historical portrayals," he warns. Yet, the experience was markedly different from his work on *Mirzapur*. "The difference is that *Taj* didn't have the flowery abuses Raheem has and if I had killed Lala in the *Taj* era, I would've been paid in gold coins," he quips with a smile. His influences are as diverse as his roles. From Kader Khan to Hugh Grant, from Olivia Coleman to Tabu, his list of inspirations is both eclectic and extensive. "From each, I learn something different—flamboyance from some, craft from others and wildness from the rest," he notes. It's this amalgamation of styles and influences that has shaped his own unique approach to acting. Balancing the emotional intensity of his roles with his personal life is no easy feat, but he has found his own way. "Diving into the emotionality of a character has some rub-off into personal life," he admits. After a long day on set, it's his close circle of friends who help him disconnect and return to himself. "They make a fuss and humiliate the hell out of the character, like all friends do. They're the mad hatters I need," he laughs. His journey through *Mirzapur* has been filled with both intense moments and lighter ones. He recalls the feeling of leaving a part of himself behind after wrapping up his last shot for *Mirzapur 3*. "It strangely felt saddening. But when the bank account got credited, I felt happy again," he says with a grin, perfectly encapsulating the bittersweet nature of his work. Navigating the digital space as an actor comes with its own set of challenges, but he is determined to remain authentic. "I still don't have very stark boundaries between my personal and professional life on social media," he confesses. But he's optimistic about maintaining a light-footed, candid approach to the digital world, trusting that his audience will allow him the space to evolve. Looking to the future, he is eager to explore genres that blend realism with fantasy, drawing from his love for stylised, escapist cinema. "I was drawn to cinema by escapist, stylised, fantastical and action films, whether it be Karan Johar Sir's films or those by Tarkovsky and Almodóvar," he says. He envisions a future where Indian cinema is recognised as the best and most potent form of entertainment, both creatively and financially.

Pallav Singh, the breakthrough star of *Mirzapur 3*, talks candidly about his incredible journey from the realm of engineering to the big screen in an exclusive interview with *The Pioneer*. Pallav is well-known for his eerie depiction of Shayar Raheem



Eczema care for newborns

Every new parent knows that the arrival of a newborn into their home entails massive changes. For example, the house would have to be baby-proofed, with every corner padded and every socket sealed. It's also important to keep the environment calm, without loud noises or bright lights that could bother their baby's sensitive eyes and ears.

Likewise, your baby's skin is equally sensitive and needs special care. In fact, during this time, newborns are susceptible to conditions like eczema. As a new parent, it can be really stressful to see your little one uncomfortable. But don't worry - while it might seem scary at first, eczema is manageable. It might take some trial and error, but together, you can figure out what works best for your baby.

What is Eczema?

The primary symptoms of eczema include dry, itchy skin, redness, and inflammation. Sometimes, the affected skin may become cracked and scaly or develop small, fluid-filled blisters. There is much debate about the exact cause of this disease, but the common understanding is that it may be genetic or triggered by the environment. For example, certain soaps, detergents, fabrics or food items may cause these symptoms to appear in your baby. Irrespective of its severity, it can cause discomfort and irritation. The inability to help the baby in spite of their best intention can overwhelm parents and lead to a desperate search for help. The good news is that plant-derived, toxin-free products are available in the market to help manage the situation.

What type of products can help deal With Eczema?

The number one rule in managing eczema in newborns is to keep their skin moisturised and hydrated. Baby lotions and moisturisers may help, especially those containing nourishing ingredients with hydration effects. Take, for example, Pentavitin. This extract, derived from corn kernels, closely mimics the skin's own moisturising properties. Thus, it has the potential to provide instant hydration and prevent the skin from drying out.

Saffron may also help reduce redness and make the skin brighter and smoother. Natural butters nourish and protect the baby's delicate skin. For example, ghee or

clarified butter is rich in fatty acids and Vitamins A and E help maintain the skin's moisture balance. Shea butter offers antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits, while mango butter is known for its hydrating ability. Moreover, natural oils derived from almonds, hemp seeds, and pomegranate seeds can aid in combating skin issues.

What more can be done to help your baby?

In addition to using products comprising the mentioned ingredients, you can help your baby by identifying the triggers of their eczema and eliminating them. Exclusive breastfeeding till six months of age can significantly reduce the appearance of eczema in babies with high risk. Consuming probiotics during the later stages of pregnancy can also help strengthen the child's immune system and prevent disease development.

It is also advised to remove all chemical-containing products such as soaps and shampoos from your baby's hygiene routine. Replace them with products that are safer and toxin free. After a bath, pat dry your baby using a soft cloth to prevent water getting trapped in the skin folds. Make sure that you don't rub or irritate the skin.

You can also make your child wear mittens and clip their nails carefully, so that they don't hurt themselves while scratching. If the baby gets too uncomfortable, consult a professional and get help.

Eczema can be frustrating for both babies and their parents. And it's completely normal to feel worried when you see your child experiencing such discomfort. However, with a little help and research, you can find the right products made of natural ingredients to ease their symptoms and manage the condition better. It is also a good idea to read the product label and check for certifications from international bodies like EWG and Ecocert before making a purchase decision. Moreover, available in the market are solutions that are cellularly proven, which means that the products are tested at the cellular level for safety and efficacy. So, with patience, research, and the right products, moms can help their children navigate through the frustrations of eczema and provide them with the comfort and care they deserve.

(The author, Taru Mayur, is the Co founder of AroVeda.)

what's brewing?



Tollywood actress and Bigg Boss fame Ashwini Sree, along with organisers Somnath Bowmik and Abhijit Shaw, inaugurated the Silk of India Handloom Expo 2024 at Classic Gardens in Secunderabad. The expo promised to be a vibrant showcase of artisanal craftsmanship and cultural heritage.

● Ashwini Sree

● Padmavathi

● Sailaja

● Abhijit, Ashwini Sree and Somanath



Hi-life exhibition is all set to present an exciting display, which will kickstart from August 24 to 26, at HICC-Novotel inHITEC City. The expo will showcase various creative fashion, lifestyle, bridal, designer wear and more.

● Nishat

● Greeshma

● Vrinda

● Koushika

● Aashi

● Shivani

PARTY

Photos by- SV Chatry



Srinivas Marri, Managing Director of Kalaraj Media, along with social media influencers, released the logo of the upcoming Social Media Star Festival (SMSF 2024) in T-Hub, Hyderabad.

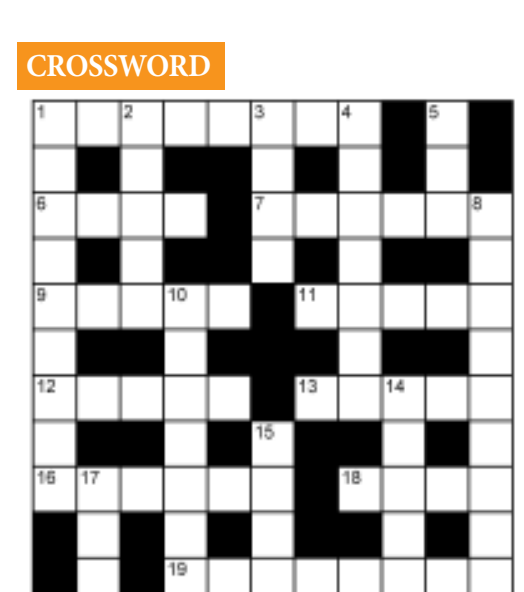
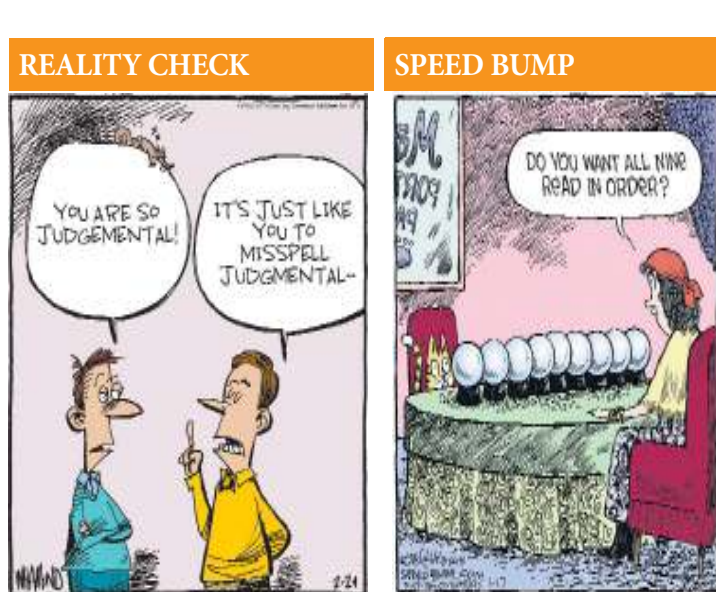


Arcserve marked its 10-year anniversary with Zilla Parishad High School at Manikonda by celebrating the achievements of top students and supporting local educational initiatives. Since adopting Manikonda Zilla Parishad High School in 2022, Arcserve's CSR efforts have positively impacted over 1,473 children.



Ajay Mishra, chairman of Red Cross and former additional chief secretary Telangana, launched the song *E-Shakti Aapaalethu*, composed by JV Rao. With lyrics by Dr. Mounasri Mallik and vocals by Hymath Mohammed, the song brings an essence to the background of many great achievements of India's independence.

FUN



SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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.

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- A fight using words
- Rip
- A root vegetable
- Group of eight
- Not ever
- A fruit with pipe
- A hot drink
- Extreme fear
- Grow weary
- A large animal
- Glide over snow
- Not temporary
- Make bigger
- A large country in Asia
- Costing nothing
- A large bird

DOWN

- Someone in a spaceship
- A huge person
- Chews up and swallows
- An underwater missile for attacking a ship

SOLUTION

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



DUBBING DYNAMITE: RCM RAJU'S 'RAKAA' ROARS WITH UNIQUE TELUGU TWISTS

AARTI SREENATH

A Nandi Award-winning dubbing artist with a career spanning over two decades, RCM Raju has brought countless characters to life across various genres and languages. His recent role as Rakaa in Disney's *Kingdom of the Planet of the Apes* has once again highlighted his exceptional talent and creative prowess. We had the pleasure of delving into Raju's experiences and insights about this unique project.

"Rakaa is a truly remarkable character," the *Rangasthalam* voice artist begins. "I'd like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Disney for entrusting me with this role. Dubbing Rakaa was an extraordinary experience, particularly due to the unconventional approach required for this character."

Raju explains that the primary challenge was adapting to a form of Telugu that deviated from grammatical norms. "The direction I received was to use a non-standard, almost haphazard form of Telugu. This was a departure from my usual practice, where I adhere to proper grammatical structures. Breaking these rules and delivering Rakaa's dialogue in a fragmented, less formal style was both a challenge

Dubbing artist RCM Raju, known for his impeccable performances be it in *Kalki 2898 AD* or the latest *Kingdom of the Planet of the Apes* speaks to *The Pioneer* about voicing for character of Rakaa, the challenge of being the voice of an ape and more.

and a novel experience for me." The complexity of Rakaa's character, he says, extends beyond his dialogue. "In typical dubbing roles, my focus is on 'Savika Abhinayam', which involves subtle emotional expressions as per *Natya Shastra*. For Rakaa, synchronising these expressions was particularly challenging because he is an ape, not a human. This required a different approach, adding an extra layer of dif-



iculty to the dubbing process. But despite the challenges, it was a highly rewarding experience."

When discussing his preparation for Rakaa, he reflects on the distinctiveness of the role. "My usual roles often involve villains who are aggressive and intense. Rakaa, however, is a character defined by his helpfulness and wisdom. He supports Caesar's ideology and embodies a blend of seriousness and humour. For example, there's a humorous scene where Rakaa contrasts human and ape attributes in a light-hearted way."

The man behind Ashwathama's voice notes that Rakaa's character was both inspiring and emotionally complex.

"One of the most poignant scenes is when Rakaa sacrifices himself to save the heroine. This act of bravery and selflessness was deeply moving. Rakaa is a character who believes in the greater good, and his sacrifice at the waterfall scene reflects his unwavering commitment to this principle."

The integration of digital effects and voice acting presents its own set of challenges. He provides insight into how he balanced his performance with the film's visual elements. "In high-tech films like *Kingdom of the Planet of the Apes*, the visuals are often completed after the voice work. This means that I had to adapt my performance to align with the final animation. Even though the visuals were not fully rendered during my dubbing sessions, I had to ensure my voice matched the character's movements and emotions."

His extensive experience in dubbing has equipped him with the skills to navigate such challenges. "Having worked on over a thousand films, I'm accustomed to adapting my performance based on the visual context. The final animation and emotional depth added by the graphics were critical in shaping my vocal delivery."

He reflects on some of his favourite moments as Rakaa. "One scene that stands out is Rakaa's sacrifice to save the heroine. It's a powerful, emotional moment that highlights his bravery and selflessness. I also enjoyed the sequence

where Rakaa humorously comments on human and ape traits while sitting on a horse. These moments made Rakaa a deeply impactful character."

He further expresses, "I would love to play Rakaa again if the opportunity arises. The role was a significant and fulfilling part of my career and I'm eager to explore more such impactful characters. The blend of digital effects and human performances in this film has set a high bar and I'm excited about the possibility of contributing to similar innovative projects in the future."

Going ahead in this chat, he shared his reflections on his career, including that of his role in *Kalki 2898 AD*, where he voiced the character of Ashwatama. "It was an honour to lend my voice to such a prominent character, especially given that Amitabh Bachchan also voiced a character in the film. Playing Ashwathama was a significant opportunity for me and receiving feedback that my performance was comparable to Bachchan's was a tremendous compliment."

He concludes with a broader perspective on his work. "Voice acting is a deeply immersive experience for me. I approach each role with the mindset of 'If I were the character,' which helps me bring authenticity to my performances. Whether it's for a digital character like Rakaa or a mythological figure like Ashwathama, my goal is always to create a performance that resonates with the audience."

Suriya makes furious entry in Pan India!

Kanguva, made under the banner of Studio Green, is undoubtedly one of the biggest films of 2024. With its tantalisingly thrilling posters and the absolutely amazing *Fire Song*, the excitement for the film is continuously rising to a fever pitch. Now, after a long wait, the trailer of *Kanguva* has finally been released and it's indeed extraordinary and out of this world, with *Kanguva* looking like it's going to rule the box office.

The trailer of *Kanguva* showcases that the South Indian film industry is leaving no stone unturned in creating something out of the box. After *Kalki 2898 AD*, *Kanguva* is yet another example of amazing content from the South. Suriya's character is portrayed as a ferocious daredevil and the superstar is making a ravishing entry into the Pan-India market. It's fair to say that the trailer is Suriya's lion's roar across India. The trailer beautifully depicts both prehistoric humans and future. With the trailer release, the makers wished the director Siva as he celebrates his birthday. They further jotted down the caption: "Wishing the master storyteller and the maestro of cinematic experiences a birthday as unforgettable as his films Here's to a blockbuster year and abundant success for our #DirectorSiva Sir Wishes from Team #Kanguva #HBD Siva"

Kanguva is the biggest and most expensive film of this year. With an estimated budget of over 350 crore, it's bigger than the likes of *Pushpa*, *Singham* and several other big films. Moreover, the film has been shot across seven different countries on various continents of India. The makers had a very specific look in mind, as this is a very unique film showing the prehistoric period. The makers hired experts from Hollywood for the technical departments like action and cinematography. The film has one of the biggest war sequences, featuring over 10,000 people. Studio Green has signed up with top distribution houses to release the film on a massive scale across the globe on October 10, 2024.



Vidaamuyarchi: Regina shares her startling first look!

Regina Cassandra has enthralled her fans with her powerful character portrayals in *Rocket Boys*, *Naanbaaz Hindustan Ke* and *Farzi*. Now, the actress is all set to take on a unique role in *Vidaamuyarchi*. The film also features Ajith Kumar, Trisha Krishnan and Arjun Sarja amongst others.

Sharing the first glimpse of her character, Regina posted her first look on social media, expressing, "Efforts never fail! Quick stop by on the gram to let you all know that I am on a new journey called #Vidaamuyarchi and giving all my efforts to this one lately! Super thrilled and excited for you all to witness this and I am grateful to have a wonderful team to support me through it!" The first look has already received a lot of love from fans, who are eagerly anticipating Regina's role in *Vidaamuyarchi*.

Balakrishna and Bobby rain down action in Rajasthan

Nandamuri Balakrishna and filmmaker Bobby have collaborated on an untitled action film, which wrapped up its lengthy production cycle in Rajasthan. The team has returned to Hyderabad.

Director Bobby announced the completion of the Rajasthan filming on social media by posting a selfie with Balakrishna in an airport lounge.

The shooting was cut short as it began to rain. However, the crew was able to complete the intended sequences. Nandamuri Balakrishna, Shraddha Srinath and other actors took part in this hectic program. The film stars three heroines: Urvashi Rautela, Shraddha Srinath and Pragya Jaiswal. The film's title has not yet been announced. Bobby announced the upcoming release of the title teaser. Naga Vamsi, of Sithara Entertainment, is producing the film.



Daniel Caltagirone recalls working with Pa Ranjith

British actor Daniel Caltagirone, known for his roles in films like *The Pianist* (2000) and *Tomb Raider* (2018), plays the antagonist in Pa Ranjith's *Thangalaan*.

In a recent interview, British actor Daniel Caltagirone shared insights into his experience working on the much anticipated Tamil film *Thangalaan*. Caltagirone, who plays the role of Lord Clement, revealed his initial expectations and the profound impact Ranjith's direction had on him.

"I assumed there would be dancing and singing. Ranjith is one of the best social commentators around!" When the actor's agency initially told him about the chance to work with an Indian director, he expressed interest in the director's use of the camera and his ability to push his actors.

Drawing parallels between Ranjith and other celebrated Hollywood directors, Caltagirone further added, "His style reminded me of Spike Lee, there is a tiny element of (Quentin) Tarantino as well." When asked about the expectations Caltagirone had for Lord Clement's character going into the film, he said, "I thought I'd be portrayed as the cliché English character who plays an out-and-out bad guy and then dis-

appears. But Ranjith wanted me to be the co-star with Vikram. I didn't know who Vikram was at that point, but I assumed he was a big Indian star. Ranjith said, 'I don't want to go black-and-white with you. This will be a fleshed out character.'"

Daniel Caltagirone noted their discussions on social issues and Ranjith's commitment to addressing them through his

films, which in turn helped him understand the Indian caste system better. "Ranjith would talk to me about breaking the final chains of the caste system. We spoke about how it's subtle in the West and that's why we have no right to say that the West is ahead of others. It'd be easier for Ranjith to become this wealthy filmmaker, who does glossy films, but he has always made films about people who lead difficult lives," he concluded.

Thangalaan is going to be yet another cinematic spectacle from the South. It is a real story of Kolar Gold Fields (KGF) when KGF was discovered by the British who exploited and looted it for their own purpose. The film is going to take ahead the spree of the South industry of bringing unique concepts to the audience. It's yet another film from the South with an unusual concept!



KANNAPPA: SAMPATH BHILLU INTRODUCED AS FEARSOME 'CHANDUDU'

The Manchu family is poised to make a significant mark in the film industry with their highly anticipated project, *Kannappa*. This grand production, with an impressive budget of approximately Rs. 100 crores, is being spearheaded by the Manchu Mohan Babu, often referred to as the "Collection King" of Telugu cinema.

The film features Manchu Vishnu in a prominent lead role and it is generating considerable excitement due to its ambitious scope and high-profile cast. Set against a historical backdrop, *Kannappa* is expected to be a cinematic spectacle, drawing interest from fans across various film industries. The film's cast includes notable stars such as Prabhas, along with other top names from Bollywood and Kollywood, promising a diverse and star-studded ensemble. The directorial reins are held by Mukesh Kumar Singh, who has garnered acclaim for his work on the *Mahabharata* serial, ensuring that the film will have a strong narrative and visual appeal. As the film progresses through its production phase, which is currently moving at a rapid

pace, the makers are gearing up for a planned release in December. In the lead-up to the release, the team has been progressively revealing details about the cast and their respective roles, heightening the anticipation surrounding the project.

The latest revelation from the *Kannappa* team is the casting of actor Sampath Ram Bhillu as Jati Dora Chandudu. This character is depicted as the fierce leader of the Bhilla tribe, a group known for their formidable presence and traditional stone axes. The tribe is portrayed as a menacing force, with their reputation for terror underscored by their fearsome practices. The newly released poster introduces Chandudu with the striking tagline, "Abhishekam



with the blood of enemies," emphasising the intense and dramatic nature of his role. With its substantial budget, star-studded cast, and historical setting, *Kannappa* is set to be a landmark film for the Manchu family and is eagerly awaited by audiences. The combination of a high-profile production team and a compelling narrative promises to make this film a major event in the coming months.

The President of India, Draupadi Murmu, has extended an invitation to Sandhya Raju, the Kuchipudi dancer and critically acclaimed Telugu actress, to attend the prestigious "At Home" reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan, Delhi, on the occasion of the 78th Independence Day celebrations in 2024!

STANDALONE



New Zealand pick 5 spin options for Tests against Afghanistan, Lanka

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

New Zealand on Monday named a strong squad, which includes five spin bowling options, for next month's one-off Test against Afghanistan and the ensuing two-match rubber against Sri Lanka.

While the one-off Test against Afghanistan will be played in Greater Noida, India, from September 9-13, the Black Caps will fly to Sri Lanka for the two ICC World Test Championship matches, starting September 18 and 26, respectively.

Veteran pacer Tim Southee will lead the side which includes the likes of Kane Williamson, Devon Conway, Glenn Phillips and Rachin Ravindra, while Tom Latham continues to be the vice-captain.

However, head coach Gary Stead hinted that if conditions call for a different balance, the skipper too may have to sit out for a game or two.

"Test tours to the sub-continent can ask some really tough questions of pace bowlers due to the nature of the pitches and the heat and humidity," Stead said.

"While we're going over with an open mind around conditions, there is an understanding that all our bowling options may be needed across the different Tests."

"Tim and I have discussed this, and the need during these overseas tours to balance the work-loads of the pace



bowlers, including himself, to ensure the team is best served," he added. Spin bowling all-rounder

Michael Bracewell returned to the squad for the first time in 18 months after an Achilles injury, which was followed by a

broken finger in February, had kept him out of action. Bracewell will shoulder the spin duties alongside left-

armers Mitchell Santner, Ajaz Patel and part-timers Glenn Phillips and Ravindra. "Michael had to show plenty of

resilience to rehabilitate from his injuries and force his way back into the BLACKCAPS across all three formats," Stead

said. "His all-round skills, and ability to take the ball away from the left-hander make him

a great asset, especially on what we expect will be turning wickets in India and Sri Lanka," he added.

Pacers Will O'Rourke and Ben Sears have been rewarded with maiden overseas Test call-ups. The 23-year-old O'Rourke claimed 11 wickets in his first two Test outings, including the best match-figures by a New Zealander on Test debut (nine for 93 v South Africa in February) before a groin injury ruled him out of the second Test against Australia.

Sears, on the other hand, debuted in the second Test against Australia in March, claiming four for 90 in the second innings.

New Zealand currently occupy the third spot in the ICC WTC points table behind last edition's finalists, Australia and India.

"We know how important the points in Sri Lanka will be to our chances of pushing for a final spot in England next year. We managed one win from the two Test series in challenging conditions in Bangladesh last December and are keen to build on that."

"The whole squad is looking forward to test their skills in the longest form of the game in the sub-continent," he said.

SQUAD:

Tim Southee (captain), Tom Blundell, Michael Bracewell, Devon Conway, Matt Henry, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell, Will O'Rourke, Ajaz Patel, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell Santner, Ben Sears, Kane Williamson, Will Young.

Duleep Trophy first round match shifted to Bengaluru; stars barring Ashwin, Bumrah to play



PTI ■ BENGALURU

With some of the India regulars, except pacer Jasprit Bumrah and senior spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, likely to appear in the first round of the Duleep Trophy, the BCCI has decided to shift one of the opening matches from Anantapur to Bengaluru. Senior batters Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma also might get an exemption, and the choice of appearing in the tournament is entirely on them.

The Duleep Trophy was earlier scheduled to kick-off with two sets of first round matches at Anantapur in Andhra Pradesh from September 5, but now one of those games has been shifted to the M Chinnaswamy Stadium here to reduce the

logistical inconveniences. Anantapur is approximately 230 kms away from Bengaluru and the city is not connected via flight.

"The decision has been made to accommodate some of the top players, so that they get a feel of the red-ball cricket ahead of the (Test) series against Bangladesh," a source close to the development told PTI. India are slated to play two Test matches against Bangladesh - from September 19 at Chennai and from September 27 at Kanpur.

While it is up to Rohit and Kohli to play in the event, some other prominent players such as Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, KL Rahul, Shubman Gill, Shreyas Iyer, Kuldeep Yadav etc are expected to be available for this tournament fully or

partially. However, Bumrah and Ashwin are unlikely to take part in the tournament at any stage as they are expected to join the India squad directly ahead of the Bangladesh series.

The selectors are also deciding on giving a go to Rishabh Pant in the Duleep Trophy, and if it happens then this will be his first red-ball assignment after coming back from that horrific car accident in 2022.

Since his return, Pant has been a part of India's white-ball setup and the wicketkeeper batter also donned the national jersey in the T20 World Cup. Mohammed Shami, who has been recuperating from a surgery, will not feature in the tournament.

However, the availability of the top players will also be subject to the dates of the preparatory camp that the team management is mulling to hold in Chennai ahead of the Tests against Bangladesh.

But the decision to shift the match also aligns with the shared vision of the BCCI and the team management that the top players should feature in domestic cricket competitions whenever they are free from national duty. It may be recalled that India's T20I skipper Suryakumar Yadav (Mumbai) and out-of-favour wicketkeeper batsman Ishan Kishan (Jharkhand) have made themselves available to play the Buchi Babu Trophy, starting from August 15.

Graham Thorpe took his own life after battling with depression and anxiety, reveals wife

PTI ■ LONDON

Former England cricketer Graham Thorpe took his own life after a struggle with depression and anxiety fuelled by his failing health in the last two years, his wife Amanda has revealed.

The 55-year-old passed away on August 5. Thorpe's demise was announced by the England and Wales Cricket Board and now his wife has revealed in an interview to former England captain Michael Atherton that he had a long mental and physical battle with himself before he took his own life. "Despite having a wife and two daughters whom he loved and who loved him, he did not get better," Thorpe's wife was quoted as saying by "The Times". "He was so unwell in recent times and he really did believe that we would be better off without him and we are devastated that he acted on that and took his own life."

A ceremony was held before the start of a match between the Farnham Cricket Club and the Chipstead Cricket Club last Saturday in memory of Thorpe, which was attended by his wife and their daughters Kitty (22) and Emma (19).

"For the past couple of years, Graham had been suffering from major depression and anxiety. This led him to make a serious attempt on his life in May 2022, which resulted in a prolonged stay in an intensive care



unit," she said. His wife revealed that despite his work assignments, Thorpe continued to suffer. "Despite glimpses of hope and of the old Graham, he continued to suffer from depression and anxiety, which at times got very severe. We supported him as a family and he tried many, many treatments but unfortunately none of them really seemed to work," she said.

The report added that the family is now considering starting a foundation in his name. Thorpe's daughter Kitty said he was "not the same person" after a point and that he "could not see a way out". "He had loved life and he loved us but he just couldn't see a way out. It was heartbreaking to see how withdrawn he had become," she said.

"It was strange to see this person trapped in the body of Dad. That's why we've been so happy that the many reflections have been about his life before this illness took over. "I am glad that's how everyone does remember him, rightly so, as the complete character he was," Kitty added.



South Africa and West Indies settle for a draw in rain-hit 1st test

AP ■ PORT OF SPAIN (TRINIDAD)

Both South Africa and West Indies had hopes of winning the rain-hit first Test before having to settle for a draw.

South Africa set West Indies a target of 298 runs on the fifth and final day at Queen's Park Oval, with Alick Athanaze leading the hosts' chase with 92.

West Indies finished on 201-5 in its second innings as each team started to run out of overs to get the required runs or wickets amid light checks in the evening session.

South Africa had earlier resumed on 30-0 from five overs in its second innings - an overall lead of 154 - and declared at 173-3 from 29

overs. Tristan Stubbs hit 68 and was bowled by Kumar Roach on the last ball before the declaration, which came in the morning session.

Rain had affected every day so far - only 15 overs were bowled on the first day - and lunch was called five minutes early Sunday with West Indies 11-1. The start of the afternoon session was also delayed and, despite Athanaze reaching his half-century, a draw still seemed the likeliest result with West Indies 121-3 at tea. The hosts needed 177 more runs in a maximum of 34 overs remaining.

West Indies quickly lost Kavem Hodge, caught behind for 29 in a wicket maiden for left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj.

Jason Holder came out to join Athanaze at 127-4 and the pair shared a 65-run partnership before Maharaj effectively ended the chase having Athanaze caught for 92 after top-edging to Ryan Rickelton.

With no more than 10 overs left and West Indies at 192-5, still 106 runs from victory, the hosts proceeded to score only three runs in the next three overs.

The draw was agreed after Holder (31 not out) smashed a six to lift the West Indies to 201-5.

Maharaj took 4-88 in 26.2 overs.

South Africa scored 357 in its first innings and West Indies 233.

The second and final Test starts on Thursday at Providence, Guyana.

High hopes, disappointing show: Indian boxers come a cropper at Paris

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian boxing contingent, that featured two reigning world champions in Nikhat Zareen and Lovlina Borgohain, entered the Olympics hoping for an unprecedented medal haul, only to crumble under pressure, leaving behind a trail of disappointment in a medal-less campaign.

Boxing became a medal hope for India after Vijender Singh's historic bronze at the 2008 Beijing Games. MC Mary Kom added a women's bronze to it in 2012.

Although the 2016 Rio Games saw the boxers return without a medal, Borgohain clinched a bronze at the Tokyo Olympics to revitalise the sport.

Expectations were high from Paris and observers of the game felt at least one, if not two medals, could be expected from the six boxers who qualified.

Two-time world champion Zareen (50kg), Borgohain (75kg), and 2023 world champion bronze-

medallist Nishant Dev (71kg) were all seen as strong podium contenders.

POOR SHOW: But when it came to actual competition, the Indians never seemed to have the momentum needed to go deep into the tournament.

With the exception of Nishant, who was denied a podium finish after a contentious result in his quarterfinal, the rest struggled with Borgohain and Zareen unable to overcome formidable opponents, and Amit Panghal (51kg) failing to match his previous form.

Borgohain, Panghal and Nishant needed just two wins to secure medals.

Although Borgohain and Zareen were handed challenging draws, with both encountering formidable opponents in their second rounds. However, given that they entered as reigning world champions, the two were expected to overcome such challenges or, at the very least, put up a resilient fight. However, they succumbed rather meekly to their Chinese counterparts.



Zareen, who was considered a potential gold medallist, was markedly off-colour in the second round and later revealed that she had been taking some extreme measures to stay inside the prescribed weight limit, that left her exhausted for actual competition.

She opened her campaign with a scrappy win and then lost to Wu Yu in the second round. Borgohain once again fell to old foe Li Qian, who seems to have the Indian's number, having defeated her in three of their four meetings. Among the men, Panghal looked a pale shadow of his



sharp and aggressive self against Zambia's Patrick Chinyemba, who lost in the very next round. Jaismine Lamboria, who came in after dropping down to 57kg weight class from her more comfortable 60kg division, expectedly lost to Tokyo Olympics silver-medallist

Nesthy Petecio. Nevertheless, Preeti Pawar (54kg) delivered a commendable performance in her bout against reigning world silver-medallist Yeni Marcela Arias. **GOVERNMENT FUNDING:** A total of 17 national camps and 23 foreign exposure trips

were conducted in the build-up to the Paris Olympics for nine core TOPS (Target Olympic Podium Scheme) boxers and 20 development pugilists. Sports Ministry spent Rs 60.93 crore on this.

Significant funds were also allocated to individual athletes, most notably Rs 91.71 lakh for Zareen, Rs 81.76 lakh for Borgohain, Rs 65.90 lakh for Panghal, and Rs 65.86 lakh for Nishant.

COACHING INSTABILITY AND SELECTION POLICY: The Boxing Federation of India's inability to provide a stable environment was a key issue in the build-up to the Games. Since the Tokyo Games, coaches have come and gone, denying the boxers the stability that is crucial to an Olympic campaign.

Women's High Performance Director Raffaele Bergamasco was the first to depart right after Tokyo followed by men's HPD Santiago Nieva in May 2022. Narendra Rana succeeded CA Kuttapa as the men's head coach, only for Kuttapa to be

reinstated later.

Bhaskar Bhatt was briefly appointed as the women's head coach before he quit the position in June 2023 while HPD Bernard Dunne, who was appointed in October 2022, stepped down from his post four months before the Olympics, leaving Indian boxing in a lurch. Foreign coach Dmitriy Dmitruk was the last coach appointed in February last year.

The new selection policy that replaced the trial system was also a talking point. Panghal remained out of the national team until the last qualifier with Deepak Bhorja getting the nod based on the assessment system that relied on camp performance as well as competitive results to evaluate the boxers. However, Panghal was sent to the final qualifier, and while he secured a quota, the Haryana boxer struggled to shake off the rustiness after being away from international competition for an extended period.