

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's government is enacting high-drama in the name of HYDRAA. Why is the government demolishing constructed houses? Revanth Reddy is giving the impression that he is acting stiffly towards illegal constructions. We have the list of Revanth as to what he is doing. Revanth is like a cat having milk closing his eyes. Revanth Reddy...don't think that you are sincere. It is good for Revanth Reddy.

- Eatala Rajender, BJP MP

P3

Mamata leads protest rally in Kolkata, demands justice

FROM AKOLA'S QUIET STREETS TO HYDERABAD'S ARCHITECTURAL HEIGHTS

Hari Hara Veera Mallu team begins shooting epic WAR SCENE

DON'T MISS...

No door-to-door waste...

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has ordered to stop door-to-door garbage collection in apartments as Swachh Auto Tipper (SAT) vehicles are facing difficulties in the city. An environmentalist who has been working in Hyderabad, welcomed the move by saying citizens need to change first, as many already dump garbage on roads to avoid paying garbage staff. Earlier this week, GHMC Commissioner Amrapali Kata held a conference with officials of the GHMC and understood that residents in the apartments...

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'Wherever strong message...

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra Friday said atrocities against women in West Bengal, Bihar, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh have shaken the country, and asserted that repeated leniency in cases, political protection to accused and granting of bail or parole to convicts let down women. When government statistics show 86 rapes taking place every day, from whom should women expect protection? she posed in a post in Hindi on 'X'. Atrocities against women in Kolkata...

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B'luru Airport to receive ACI's...

Kempegowda International Airport operated by Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) has marked a significant milestone by becoming the first airport in Asia to receive Airports Council International's (ACI) the highest Level five accreditation, officials said on Friday. Bangalore Airport has made a remarkable 95.6 per cent reduction in Scope 1 and 2 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, attaining the highest emission elimination by an Indian airport, achieved seven years ahead of the initial target of 2030 ...

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Horse riding, Bharatnatyam...

Her shooting hand bruised by repeated pistol recoils during unrelenting training, Manu Bhaker will take a well deserved three month break. But it will be no vacation. The double Olympic medalist will continue her other routines including yoga and waking up at 6 am — which she hates. And oh yes. She also plans to catch up on her hobbies — horse riding, skating, Bharatnatyam and violin practice to name a few. The 22-year-old, who won bronze medals in the 10m air pistol and...

-SPORTS

CM pitches Fourth City for Foxconn

Assures Chairman Young Liu of full support, necessary permits and incentives

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Foxconn Chairman Young Liu said that Hyderabad has the potential to develop in all sectors and that the city has immense growth potential.

During a meeting with Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy at his official residence in New Delhi on Friday, Liu announced plans to visit Hyderabad with his team shortly.

The Foxconn delegation, led by Liu, was briefed by the CM on Hyderabad's history, industrial prospects and favourable climatic conditions.

The Chief Minister emphasised Hyderabad's industrial progress over the years which remains unhampered by changes in governments. The Chief Minister explained the phase-wise development of the three cities in Hyderabad, whose foundation stone was laid 430 years ago.



He outlined the development of the Fourth City, which will focus on multifaceted growth in sectors like education, medicine, sports, electronics, electrical industries and skill development.

The CM highlighted the establishment of the Young India Skill Development University, a

key component of the Fourth City project on the outskirts of Hyderabad. He said that eminent industrialists are involved in designing the syllabus to provide the necessary skills and human resources which will equip youth with modern industry skills.

Top industrialist Anand Mahindra has been appointed as

the chairman of the Skill University and another industrialist Srinivasa Raju has been appointed the vice chairman, the CM said.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy explained to them the plus points of Hyderabad including its International Airport, the Outer Ring Road (ORR) and the

Regional Ring Road (RRR).

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy assured Foxconn of full support, including all necessary permits and incentives for setting up factories in the Fourth City.

Continued on Page 5



Hyd has immense potential for growth, says Foxconn Chairman

3-phase JK polls from Sep 18-Oct 1, Haryana in single phase on Oct 1



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir will be held in three phases from September 18 while Haryana will go to polls in a single phase on October 1, the Election Commission announced on Friday.

Voting will take place for 90 seats in Jammu and Kashmir on September 18, September 25 and October 1, the EC said.

Votes will be counted on October 4 for both the assemblies, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar told a press conference.

The last assembly elections were held in Jammu and Kashmir in November-December 2014 and these will be the first assembly elections in the erstwhile state since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019.

Medic rape-murder: IMA announces 24-hour closure of non-emergency services



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Medical Association has announced a 24-hour nationwide withdrawal of non-emergency services from 6 am on August 17 to protest against the alleged rape and murder of a trainee woman doctor at the state-run R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata and the subsequent vandalism at the facility.

Essential services will be maintained and casualty wards operational, the medical body said in a statement issued late on Thursday night.

Out-patient departments (OPD) will not function and elective surgeries will not be conducted. The withdrawal is across all sectors wherever modern medicine doctors are providing services, the IMA said.

"Subsequent to the brutal crime in R G Kar Medical College, Kolkata, and the hooliganism unleashed on the protesting students on the eve of Independence Day (Wednesday night), the Indian Medical Association declares nationwide withdrawal of services by doctors of modern medicine from 6 am on Saturday 17.08.2024 to 6 am Sunday 18.08.2024 for 24 hours," the statement said.

BRS vows to rename RGI Airport, remove Rajiv statue from Sectt

NAVEENA GHANATE
naveena.ghanate@gmail.com
■ HYDERABAD

Lashing out at the Congress BRS Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) said that if the BRS returns to power, it will rename the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) and replace the Rajiv Gandhi statue currently being installed in front of the Secretariat with a statue of Telangana Talli.

He questioned the contribution of Rajiv Gandhi to Telangana and expressed dissatisfaction with the Congress's decision to install Rajiv Gandhi's statue in place of Telangana Talli.

"During our tenure, we never



renamed the airport or Arogyasri. But the Congress is putting up a statue of Rajiv Gandhi in place of the Telangana Talli. If we come to power, we will rename the airport after PV Narasimha Rao or Professor Jayashankar or name it after any son of the soil of Telangana.

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MAUD chief Dana Kishore inspects water-logging points in the city



P3

COUNTER TO PM'S REMARKS ON UCC

BJP neither secular nor civil: Sibal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's strong pitch for a "secular civil code", Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal on Friday alleged that the BJP has been neither secular nor civil in the last 10 years.

A "secular and civil country is the need of the hour", the Independent Rajya Sabha MP and former Union minister said in a post on X.

Modi said in his Independence Day address that a "secular civil code" is the need of the hour for the country. He also described the existing set of laws as a "communal civil code" and termed them discriminatory. Referring to Modi's remarks,



Sibal posted on X, "PM: 'Need of the hour... a Secular Civil Code in this country... spent 75 years under the Communal Civil Code'. My take: Need of the hour: A secular and civil country. In the last 10 years, the BJP

has neither been 'secular' nor 'civil.'"

Addressing a press conference later in the morning, Sibal said the prime minister in his speech from the Red Fort spoke of a Uniform Civil Code but did not specify which laws he was talking about.

India's Constitution says it is a secular country and the BJP must embrace secularism not just in its speeches but also in actions, he noted.

The UCC is not an issue without which the country cannot progress, Sibal said and added that the nation will progress when one takes every-one along.

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KTR challenges CM on farm loan waiver

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS working president KT Rama Rao issued a challenge to Revanth Reddy regarding the farm loan waiver scheme at a press conference held at the Telangana Bhavan on Friday.

KTR questioned the authenticity of Revanth Reddy's claims and invited him to visit Kodangal along with the media.

"If even one farmer claims that a complete loan waiver was done, I will quit politics," KTR declared.

He accused Revanth of deceiving farmers with false promises of a loan waiver and challenged the CM to accept his challenge if he had the



courage. He criticized the CM as a "Cutting Master," who left 60% of farmers without any relief. KTR also remarked that if Revanth Reddy walked among the public without security, people

5

ROW OVER 'REVANTH BROS'

They have no post in govt, says Chief Minister

My relatives have been staying in the US for several years. I have seven brothers. My brothers have not been given responsibilities in the government. Should my brothers sit at home saying that I have become the CM? The opposition is politicking when my brothers go abroad," Revanth said

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Countering BRS working president KT Rama Rao's criticism about the alleged involvement of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's brothers in government matters, the Chief Minister said that his brothers have no posts in the government.

No brother is enjoying protocol, the CM clarified and asked BRS leaders to explain why they are getting troubled when his brothers go abroad spending their own money.

"My relatives have been staying in the US for several years. I have seven brothers. My brothers have not been given responsibilities in the government. Should my brothers sit at home saying that I have become the CM? The opposition is politicking when my brothers go abroad on their own," Revanth Reddy said.

During a chat with journalists at New Delhi on Friday, the CM said, "Not a single scheme has been halted and the Congress government is giving salaries on the first of every month. Earlier, KCR used to give money only to contractors. I implemented the farm loan waiver

scheme as per my priorities. I am welcoming Abhishek Manu Singhvi. I don't care about the BRS's criticism saying that the Congress is giving Rajya Sabha seats to Delhiwals. Why do BRS leaders come to Delhi if they get eye or tooth problems? Are there no doctors in Hyderabad? Whom did KCR give the special representative post in New Delhi and the media advisor post in New Delhi?"

The CM said that the selection of new TPCC president is not in his hands. "We have to move forward as per the High Command's decision. I told my opinion to the high command much before. There is no loyal leader like V. Hanumantha Rao in the Congress," he said.

The CM said that states treat the Prime Minister as a 'big brother' and that Telangana requested the funds it needed. He said that the Telangana Congress sticks to the categorisation of SC reservations. However, the Centre is not clear regarding the creamy layer in SC reservations, he said.

Revanth said the Congress government implemented a loan waiver scheme as per the Warangal Declaration.

TV channel's bid to dramatise admin accountability goes awry

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Taking media trial to the next level, the crew of a TV channel which recently aired a series of reports against the alleged hiring of unqualified or under-qualified personnel and other malpractices by pharmacy chains on Friday confronted a senior bureaucrat and DCA director-general VB Kamalasan Reddy and virtually bullied him to "resign forthwith accepting responsibility" for alleged wrongdoings of some medical shops. The TV channel has been running a series on erring medical shops. Central to their litany of allegations is the charge that pharmacists who are not qualified are working in retail outlets. Besides, it has been alleged that medicines are



VB Kamalasan Reddy

being sold without prescription. The self-righteous and high-handed behavior of the TV channel crew at the DCA's office on Friday has raised eyebrows in administrative circles.

A source asked: "What if another channel gains entry into the

Chief Minister's chambers tomorrow and holds him accountable then and there. Will they tolerate it?". They pointed what happens if a TV channel's reporter barges into CM's office and demands his resignation on some irregularities in the state. Senior journalists pointed: "What does this mean to the government? We know where the buck stops. But is this the way to nail it? What prompts the media to arrogate to themselves such undesired authority?"

When contacted by a correspondent of *The Pioneer*, Kamalasan Reddy, DCA director-general, said: "She (the reporting team member) approached me by asking about Dhoolpet drugs.

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Group I (Mains) exam from October 20 to 27

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Public Service Commission (TGPSC) will conduct the Group I Mains exams in Hyderabad from 2 pm to 5 pm. The tests will be held from October 20 to 27.

The TGPSC released a press note saying that the General English (Qualifying test) exam would be conducted on October 21, General Essay (Paper- I) on October 22, History, Culture, and Geography (Paper II) on October 23, Indian society, Constitution and Governance (Part III) on October 24, Economy and Development (Paper IV) on October 25.

The exam on Science & Technology and Data Interpretation (Paper V) will be

held on October 26 and the Telangana movement and state formation on October 27.

For candidates' convenience, the sample answer booklets for all seven papers will be made available from August 17 onwards at https://www.tspsc.gov.in. So, the candidates can read all the instructions printed on the answer booklets and follow them scrupulously. Candidates are advised to download the Sample Answer Booklets and practice writing.

"The Instructions printed on the Hall Ticket are also made available to candidates on the Commission's website. Candidates are advised to go through the instructions carefully, and follow them while attending the examination," a press note said.

'Seculars': the enemies of women's equality

Secularism implies the principle of separation of the state from religious institutions. In the context of typical western polity, secularism means the separation of Church and State, with Church subsuming religion or religious institutions. Thus, the government of a secular state does not have a religion of its own and does not concern itself with the religion of its citizens when dealing with them. All citizens, irrespective of their faith or lack thereof, are equal in the eyes of such a government. The opposite of a secular state is a theocratic state. Theocracy means "Government by God". Of course, whose God or which God (or Gods or Goddesses) depends on the religion of the State. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are two examples of theocracies with Islam as the government's religion.

The Partition in 1947 created a theocratic Pakistan and a secular India. Former PM Indira Gandhi even amended the Constitution to include 'secular' in the Preamble to emphasise this. Laws are the rules that governments use in their dealings with their citizens. Every law must conform to the Constitution, which defines the fundamental law of the land. Yet, our Civil and Criminal laws, 74 years after adopting the secular Constitution, have denied equal rights to our Muslim sisters.

Take, for example, the laws concerning marriage. Though our laws recognise gender, they treat men and women as equals and prohibit both of them from marrying more than one spouse simultaneously. In a society that considered monogamy as an ideal but never legally restricted polygamy, our laws

The real issue is not that our laws discriminate between Muslim men and women but that they discriminate between Muslim women and women of other religions. While the state protects Hindu and Christian women against polygamy, it does not treat Muslim women as their equals and denies this protection to Muslim women. Marriage is not an exception. The same unequal treatment pervades divorce and post-divorce maintenance.

strive to, and if necessary, include positive discrimination to achieve broad equality between men and women. While the marriage laws protect women of every religion against polygamy, which they consider a social evil, they do not extend the same protection to Muslim women.

The real issue is not that our laws discriminate between Muslim men and women but that they discriminate between Muslim women and women of other religions. While it protects, for example, Hindu and

Christian women against polygamy, it does not treat Muslim women as their equals and denies protection to Muslim women. Marriage is not an exception. The same unequal treatment extends in cases of divorce and post-divorce maintenance - while the might of the State protects a Hindu woman's interests through its courts, the laws deny the same to Muslim women. As the Shah Bano case proves, the Indian state does not just deny but actively acts to keep this discrimination in



KISHORE POREDDY

place. What boggles the mind even more than our secular state denying equal rights to all women irrespective of their religion is that even those who claim to be champions of secularism expend every effort not to end the discrimination but to continue it. These self-certified champions of secularism are

also the same ones who make loud claims of fighting patriarchy, religious dogma, regressive social practices and more, yet the same ones who call themselves feminists, rationalists, leftists, and communists unabashedly oppose those who fight for equal rights for Muslim women. The irony is that those who fight to continue discrimination based on religion call themselves secularists and brand those who fight to eliminate this discrimination as communalists. Those who talk of intersectionality and intersectional or multiple forms of discrimination, such as the same person being the victim of racism and sexism, are also the ones who quote the Sachar Committee Report to claim Muslims are socially disadvantaged. Yet, for some mysterious reasons, they never apply the same intersectional discrimination logic to

Muslim women and fight for their equal rights. Another significant demographic that had fought for women's rights had been the Western-educated elite of Indian society that also fought for our Independence from the British. While the Hindu elite of this category was pushing for reforms and the abolition of discriminatory practices like Sati, child marriage, Devadasi system, temple entry, the abolition and criminalisation of dowry, polygamy and other such practices that discriminate against their women; the highly educated, especially Western-educated Muslim elite, unfortunately, went the other way. From yesterday's Jinnah to today's Asaduddin Owaisi, both Barristers-at-Law have fought to preserve the discrimination rather than eliminate it. While Jinnah fought to create an Islamic theocracy, Asaduddin Owaisi

fought against legislation aimed at providing reservations for women in our legislative bodies and eliminating the practice of instant triple talaq. While it is true that the entire ecosystem of leftists, communists, progressives, feminists and religious fundamentalists have ganged up to treat Muslim women unequally to their sisters from other religions, the real seculars and progressives in our society need to take steps and end this inequality. The Prime Minister's Independence Day speech regarding the need to revamp and replace our communal civil laws with secular and uniform laws is a ray of hope. No woman, solely based on her faith, should be denied equality and the equal protection of our secular State.

(The author is BJP TS spokesperson.)

BRS blasts Congress over farm loan waiver

Claims over 1.11 lakh complaints received

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former Minister Singireddy Niranjan Reddy lambasted the Congress government's handling of the farm loan waiver scheme at a press conference held at the Telangana Bhavan. BRS leaders highlighted the discrepancies between Congress's promises and the reality of their implementation revealing that the BRS call centre had received around 1,11,027 complaints from distressed farmers regarding the issue.

Niranjan opened the press conference by drawing a parallel between the Congress's claims and fictional tales stating, "The situation is akin to saying planes are being sold in



Dilsukh Nagar or the Bhakra Nangal Dam is in Telangana. It's that far from the truth." He pointed out that during the 2023 Assembly election campaign, the Congress had repeatedly promised to waive the loans of all farmers, but their actions post-election have been severely lacking. He said that Chief Minister

Revanth Reddy had made several commitments during the election period and beyond. "Revanth announced on December 9 that the farm loan waiver scheme would be implemented and on January 6 he reiterated on a TV channel that the waiver would be completed within one or two months. On July 18, he promised that the Rs 31,000 crore waiver would be completed by August. However, on August 15, the government announced a waiver of only Rs 17,869 crore," he said and asked how the waiver could be considered complete with such a big shortfall.

Criticising the Congress's approach, Niranjan highlighted the discrepancy in the num-

ber of beneficiaries. "Of the 70 lakh farmers in the state, 60 lakh have taken loans. But the government claims to have waived the loans of only 44 lakh farmers. What about the remaining 16 lakh farmers? The Congress needs to explain why only a section of farmers have benefited from this waiver," he said. The BRS leaders accused the Congress government of spending excessively on media announcements rather than delivering on promises. "The Congress has reportedly spent Rs 300 crore just on announcements connected to the farm loan waiver. Instead of focusing on implementation, they are more concerned with media optics," Niranjan said.

Centre sanctions 66.97 km of roads for tribal villages

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Centre has responded positively to Minister Seethakka's appeal for the construction of roads in remote tribal habitations under the PM Janman Scheme. The Ministry of Rural Development has granted administrative approvals for constructing 66.97 km of roads across 28 tribal habitations in the first phase. The approval was communicated through a letter to the State Panchayat Raj Department, signalling the start of the road works soon. Minister Seethakka had met Union Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh on June 22 and submitted a request for funds to build roads in these remote villages under the PM Janman Scheme. Following her appeal, the Ministry approved the necessary administrative permissions for the project.

At last Kodandaram & Amer Ali Khan sworn in as MLCs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

After a prolonged hiatus, Telangana Jana Samithi (TJS) President Prof. M. Kodandaram Reddy and Amer Ali Khan, the News Editor of the Urdu newspaper 'The Siasat Daily', took oath on Friday as Governor Quota MLCs. Legislative Council Chairman Gutha Sukhender Reddy conducted the oath-taking ceremony. Ministers Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and Ponnambrahbar and others attended the function. Later, speaking to the media, Prof. Kodandaram said that Telangana activists are happy at him becoming an MLC. He thanked Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for giving him a chance to become an MLC. He said that he thinks that becoming an MLC is an additional responsibility and that he will work for the fulfilment of the hopes of Telangana activists and



New MLCs Amer Ali Khan and Prof. Kodandaram with Legislative Council Chairman Gutha Sukhender Reddy after taking oath on the premises of the Council

Telangana martyrs. He said that he became an MLC due to the sacrifices of many people. Amer Ali Khan said that he would raise public issues in the Council and thanked Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for allowing him to become an MLC. Later, both MLCs paid floral tributes at the Telangana Martyrs' statue at Gun Park. It may be recalled that the Supreme Court had granted a stay on

the Telangana High Court verdict delivered on March 7, 2024, regarding the appointment of Governor Quota MLCs. The BRS government had recommended to the Governor BRS leaders Dasoji Sravan Kumar and Kurra Sathyanarayana for appointment as MLCs in the Governor Quota. However, the then Governor rejected the recommendations of the BRS government in July 2023.

BRS to study other regional parties in Sept

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

From wanting to become a national party an year ago, now BRS working president KT Rama Rao announced that BRS leaders, including himself, will embark on a study tour in September to examine the functioning of regional parties in other states. This initiative is part of BRS's efforts to strengthen its position and learn from successful strategies implemented by other regional parties across the country. KTR emphasised that this is the first time the BRS is playing the role of the Opposition, having previously functioned as a movement party. BRS is now planning to



reinvent itself and also plans to study from other opposition parties in the country like DMK, TMC and BJP, KTR said on Friday. When asked if they will learn from parties in Andhra Pradesh too, KTR said they will learn from TDP and YSRCP too. He said that to learn from them, they need not go elsewhere as they are in Hyderabad too. He also said a team from former chief minister K Chandrababhan Naidu would, next month visit Tamil Nadu to meet some political parties in the southern State, followed by other places.

Telangana govt pushes for faster LRS processing

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Government of Telangana has provided an opportunity for applicants under the "Regularisation of Unapproved and Illegal Layout Rules 2020" (LRS-2020) to upload shortfall documents through the LRS portal.

The rules were initially issued in August 2020, with amendments in September 2020 and July 2023, for plots sold through registered deeds on or before August 26, 2020. The last date for submitting applications was October 15, 2020. Despite the issuance of the Government Order (GO) in

2020, the processing of LRS applications could only commence in January 2024. Since then, 4,28,832 applications have been processed, with 60,213 applications receiving approval, and Rs 96.60 crore collected as a result. However, it has been observed that over 75% of the applications have deficiencies

in documentation leading to delays in processing. The government decided to allow applicants to upload documents directly on the LRS portal without waiting for a formal shortfall letter from the respective Municipality, Corporation, or Urban Development Authorities (UDAs).

Revanth invites Kharge for Rajiv statue unveiling

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy met with AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge in New Delhi and extended an invitation to attend the unveiling ceremony of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi's statue near the Secretariat on August 20. Revanth Reddy, who arrived in New Delhi early Friday morning, along with Industries Minister Sridhar Babu met with Kharge to discuss party matters and formally invited him to the event, which coincides with Rajiv Gandhi's birth anniversary. The Chief Minister also had a separate meeting with AICC general secretary KC Venugopal,

during which he briefed him on the upcoming unveiling ceremony scheduled for August 20. Initially, the Congress leaders had intended to invite Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi to the statue unveiling. There were also plans to organise a public meeting in Warangal, where Rahul Gandhi had previously made the farmers' declaration. The Chief Minister had been eager to hold a thanks-giving event in Warangal on the same day to celebrate the successful implementation of the farm loan waiver promise by the Congress government. However, according to sources, the Warangal meeting may not take place as planned.



TODAY ALMANAC
Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha
Month: Dvadashti: Aug 16 09:39 AM to Aug 17 08:06 AM
Trayodashi: Aug 17 08:06 AM to Aug 18 05:51 AM
Chaturdash: Aug 18 05:51 AM to Aug 19 03:05 AM
Nakshatram: Purva Ashadha: Aug 16 12:43 PM to Aug 17 11:48 AM
Uttara Ashadha: Aug 17 11:48 AM to Aug 18 10:14 AM
Rahukalam: 9:11 AM to 10:45 AM
Yamagandam: 1:54 PM to 3:28 PM
Varjyam: 07:17 PM to 08:47 PM
Gulika: 6:03 AM to 7:37 AM
Amritkalam: 07:11 AM to 08:44 AM, 04:16 AM to 05:45 AM
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:55 AM to 12:45 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER
Forecast: Thunderstorm
Temp: 31°C
Humidity: 77%
Sunrise: 6:00 AM
Sunset: 6:40 PM
Updated: August 16, 2024 5:00 PM

Strategic allegations of BJP, Congress regarding BRS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's sudden remarks in New Delhi saying that the BRS will certainly merge with the BJP have raised the eyebrows of political observers. The observers said that CM Revanth Reddy's comments are a strategy to mount pressure on the BRS as the expected merger of the BRSLP with the CLP is not taking place yet. The main objective for the

CM Revanth Reddy's comments is to demoralise the growing BJP in Telangana, according to Delhi sources. It is learnt that the Chief Minister made these comments as a strategy to demoralise the BJP in the state because the CM is under pressure after the BJP won 8 LS seats on par with the ruling Congress in the state. The political observers also said that CM Revanth Reddy might have made these comments against the BRS sus-

pecting that the BRS may enter into a secret pact with the BJP to weaken the Congress government and party in Telangana. One of the analysts on condition of anonymity commented that the Congress is expecting merger of the BRSLP with the CLP as soon as possible, however, it is not taking place and so the CM has been strategically mounting pressure on the BRS as well as the BJP to weaken mainly BJP.

US Deputy Secretary of State Verma to visit India today

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Richard R. Verma will visit India from August 17 to advance and support a prosperous, secure, and resilient future for both countries, the US state department has announced. Verma, a top Indian-American diplomat, will

lead a US delegation to India between August 17 and 22 to meet senior government officials, climate leaders, aerospace academics and industry representatives to advance the US-Indian partnership on a full range of issues, including economic development, clean energy and climate action, and STEM education, the statement said.

Timely action by cops saves family from car mishap

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a remarkable display of quick thinking and prompt action, the Vanasthalipuram traffic police saved a family from a potentially fatal accident on Friday. Jilla Vinod, a resident of Hayat Nagar, was travelling with his wife and three children towards LB Nagar when their car lost control due to heavy rain and veered into a rainwater drain near

Vanasthalipuram. The incident occurred during heavy rainfall, which caused severe flooding in the area. Vanasthalipuram Traffic Circle Inspector (CI) Venkateswarlu, along with constables Saidu and Srinivasa Rao, who were on duty nearby, noticed the car plunge into the canal. Without hesitation, the officers rushed to the scene and successfully rescued the entire family, including the three children, from the sink-

ing vehicle. The officers acted as if they were rescuing their own relatives, showcasing their dedication and bravery. Following the incident, the traffic police officers received appreciation for their prompt response and commitment to public safety. They were also instructed to take necessary measures to prevent traffic disruptions in such adverse weather conditions. Once the floodwaters receded, CI Venkateswarlu and another



officer, Srinivas Reddy, coordinated efforts to retrieve the car from the canal with the help of a heavy crane, ensuring the area was cleared and traffic could resume without further delays.

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CITY EVENTS

CIDSCON 2024

By the Clinical Infections Diseases Society

Venue

HICC, Hall A, Hall 3, Madhapur
Date: Saturday, August 17
Time: 11 am

CONVOCATION CEREMONY

NELSON BUSINESS SCHOOL Chief guest: Jayesh Ranjan, Special Chief Secretary (I&C) and (IT) Telangana government

Venue

Hotel Taj Deccan, Banjara Hills, Hyd
Panel discussion on "Is online mainline education?"
Time (Panel Discussion): 10.15 am;
Time (Convocation): 11 am;
Saturday, August 17

Rejuvenated Bakshikunta Lake

Phenom, as part of their CSR initiatives, completed an environmental restoration project. This significant environmental restoration was guided by 'Lake Man of India' Anand Malligavay Chief Guest: Arekapudi Gandhi, MLA, Serilingampally

Venue

Bakshikunta Lake, Ameenpur, BHEL, Hyderabad
Date: August 17, 2024 (Saturday)
Time: 10:30 am

Monopoly Moves

KING's latest album, on KING's Monopoly Moves Listening Party Tour.

Venue

Air live, Gachibowli, Hyderabad
Date: Friday, August 30, 2024
Time: 7 pm onwards

City Pioneer



HYDERABAD SATURDAY | AUGUST 17, 2024 **03**

Colony-wise plan to curb mosquito menace



PNS ■ HYDERABAD
Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Commissioner Amrapali Kata ordered the officials to prepare a colony-wise schedule on anti-larvae and fogging operations to prevent mosquitoes in the city. She held a teleconference with Zonal Commissioners and Additional Commissioners on Friday.

Eatala opposes HYDRAA, but Konda welcomes it



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Though the BJP did not express its stand on Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Monitoring and Protection (HYDRAA) officially, the party's two MPs have expressed contradictory opinions on it. Malkajgiri MP Eatala Rajender opposed HYDRAA but Chevella MP Konda Vishweshwar Reddy welcomed it and showered praise on it. Rajender alleged that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's government is enacting high-drama in the name of HYDRA. Why is the government demolishing the constructed houses? The government should give alternative lands to the people who have patta lands in FTL. The government should make arrangements to see that water should not come into the FTL area. He asked the government to see that the constructions should not take place in the FTL area, if it is sincere.

Eatala said, "CM Revanth Reddy is giving an impression that he is acting stiffly towards illegal constructions. We have the list of Revanth Reddy as to what he is doing. Revanth Reddy is like a cat having milk closing eyes. It is good for Revanth Reddy stopped enacting dramas." However, Chevella MP Konda Vishweshwar Reddy welcomed HYDRAA and showered praise on it. He expressed his opinion on HYDRA on his Twitter handle. Konda said, "If the ruling party does something good, appreciate it. If they do something wrong, criticise and protest. Good to see the BJP leader appreciating the TG Congress govt's demolition of illegal constructions, to save the lakes. At the same time, protesting against the false promises of the Congress, I appreciate HYDRA's action in demolishing the illegal construction to save the lakes. I hope they continue to do the same. @BJP4Telangana@INCTelangana"

CLINICAL ESTABLISHMENT ACT ENSURES SAFETY OF DOCTORS

Provide security to doctors, medical staff in TG: Health Min

The Minister demanded that strict action should be taken against the accused who committed such an atrocity in Kolkata. A fast track court should be set up and steps should be taken to ensure that the culprit is punished severely



Telangana Health Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha holds a meeting with Health Secretary Christina Z Chongthu in Hyderabad on Friday

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

State Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha has expressed his solidarity with the protest of the doctors across the country over the rape of a female doctor in Kolkata. He has conducted a meeting with Medical and Health officials in Telangana and ordered that superintendents in government hospitals of Telangana must provide security to the doctors on duty. The Minister demanded that strict action should be taken against the accused who committed such an atrocity in Kolkata. A fast track court should be set up and steps should be taken to ensure that the culprit is punished severely. Minister Raja Narasimha directed the authorities to take measures for the safety of doctors, nurses, medical and health department staff so that such incidents do not occur. The Minister said that under Telangana State government's Clinical Establishment Act, they have incorporated aspects related to the safety and care of doctors, nurses and medical staff. As part of the appeal made by the Telangana Junior Doctors Association, the Minister revealed that the government is committed to the issues to be taken for the safety of women doctors in the work stations.

TG junior docs to join IMA protest call today

Telangana Junior Doctors Association (T-JUDA) has announced to hold a major protest joining Indian Medical Association (IMA) announcement to shut down medical services nationwide starting from 6 am on Saturday. The IMA said that it has declared 24-hour withdrawal of services by all the doctors of the country, irrespective of the sector and place of work. "Emergencies

and casualties will function. No OPDs. No elective surgeries. The withdrawal commences at 6 am on Saturday and ends at 6 am on Sunday," said release. Dr Vamsy from Gandhi Hospital informed The Pioneer, "As on Saturday, we are planning to have a mega strike at Dharna Chowk near Indira Park. We will be starting at 10 am and continue till 2 pm. This includes everybody

from IMA, TJUDA and NIMS. Doctors from OP and elective duties are boycotting. Emergency duties are running as usual." The junior doctors have begun their protest and boycotting duties from Wednesday in Telangana. They have put forth various demands of security for female doctors in government hospitals of Telangana.

ENVIRONMENTALIST WELCOMES MOVE

No door-to-door waste collection

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has ordered to stop door-to-door garbage collection in apartments as Swachh Auto Tipper (SAT) vehicles are facing difficulties in the city.

An environmentalist who has been working in Hyderabad, welcomed the move by saying citizens need to change first, as many already dump garbage on roads to avoid paying garbage staff.

Earlier this week, GHMC Commissioner Amrapali Kata held a conference with officials



of the GHMC and understood that residents in the apartments are reluctant to clear garbage leading to Swachh Auto Tipper (SAT) vehicles unable to collect it in time. Comparing the on-ground

situation, Madhulika Choudary from Dhruvansh, an NGO environment protection and lake restoration, explained to The Pioneer, "It is a good idea. GHMC must put two bins, one for dry and other for wet waste. The rest is

apartment people must do by themselves. I support this decision as I have seen citizens don't care about clearing garbage. Many citizens do not want to pay Rs 50 or Rs 100 to garbage pickers and throw garbage in open areas. In such circumstances, a bin is better." The citizens prefer to throw waste either in lakes or the road-side. They are not interested in segregation. Whatever awareness one does, citizens are not ready to change. Having bins will let societies decide exclusively their own garbage waste disposal model with no government intervention, she added.

Eight people arrested; 620 gms heroin seized

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Madhapur Special Operation Team (SOT) and Raidurgam Police of Cyberabad Commission nabbed three drug suppliers and five consumers and recovered Rs 4.65 crore worth of 620 grams of heroin paste, one four-wheeler and seven smartphones. The arrested consumers are Nithin Gurjar, Prakash Choudary, Jaivatram Vasnaram Dewasi, Prakash Choudary and Banaram Choudary. Sub-suppliers are Mangalaram Choudary, Dinesh

Choudary and Ganesh Choudary, but the main drugs supplier Rajasthan resident Savar Jhat is absconding. Dinesh Choudary and Mangalaram ordered heroin paste from Savar Jhat for Rs 48,000. Savar Jhat came to Hyderabad by his car on August 7 and handed over 620 grams of paste to them. They decided to set up a team to dispose of the drug to consumers. Later, Dinesh, Ganesh, Prakash and Mangalaram proceeded to Gachibowli Light Store which belongs to Prakash Choudary to hide the drugs in a car.

City sees downpour; yellow alert clamped

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The city experienced heavy rain for the second day on Friday, which waterlogged the roads and caused major traffic problems.

Due to the rain and traffic, many people had to use the Metro in the evening, which became very crowded. As a result, some had to skip two or three Metro rides because the trains were also too full, causing inconvenience. Traffic jams were seen everywhere in the water-logged areas, and many employees complained that Ola and Uber cabs were

unavailable. According to the Telangana Planning and Development Society (TGDPDS) by 7 pm on Friday, Patancheru recorded a significant 61.5 mm of rainfall, followed by Quthbullapur at 45.8 mm and Golconda at 42.8 mm.

IMD has issued a yellow alert until August 18 for heavy rain, which is likely to occur at isolated places in Karimnagar, Rajanna Sircilla, Medak, Kamareddy, Siddipet, Jayashankar-Bhupalpally, Mulugu, Adilabad, Komaram Bheem Asifabad, Mancherial, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Jagital,



Peddapalli, Mahabubnagar, Nagarkurnool, Wanaparthy, Narayanpet and Jogulamba Gadwal districts. There is also a chance of thunderstorms

with lightning and gusty winds of 30-40 km/h in all districts of Telangana.

Hyderabad Weather Department Officer Sravani stated that a low-pressure area has formed over north interior Karnataka, causing moderate to heavy rains in Telangana. She said that Nagarkurnool received 8 cm of rainfall, and Hyderabad, which was humid all day, saw heavy rainfall of 7 cm. Sravani mentioned that the rainy weather will continue for the next two days.

The city has also been issued a yellow alert for a generally cloudy sky.



Municipal Administration and Urban Development Principal Secretary M Dana Kishore inspecting water-logging points and roads in city on Friday

MAUD chief Dana Kishore inspects water-logging points in the city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Municipal Administration and Urban Development Principal Secretary M Dana Kishore inspected various places in the city. During his inspection at Journalist Colony, he ordered the zonal commissioner to locate the water-logging point and find a suitable area for constructing a rainwater holding.

The government decided to construct storage sumps at the water-logging points to avoid traffic problems in the city during the rainy season. There are a total of 140 water-logging points, but it has been decided to identify the areas with heavy traffic and take up these structures at suitable locations.

As part of it, the government is constructing sumps at 11 areas with a capacity of 10 lakh litres in Khairatabad Zone and Jubilee Hills circles at an estimated cost of Rs 20

crore. During his inspection at Journalist Colony, he expressed anger over the officials for not doing patch works on the roads at Palapitta circle.

He inspected garbage vulnerable points (GVP) at Jubilee Hills Road No. 45, Road No. 70, Gautam Nagar Basti, Deen Dayal Nagar Basti and Film Nagar.

He spoke to the Sanitation Field Assistants (SFA), who are working on the fields. If there are any problems at the field level, the workers are told to inform the superiors.

He said that workers must wear uniform and gloves during working hours and follow protective measures. Khairatabad Zonal Commissioner Anurag Jayanthi, Executive Engineer Vijay Kumar, Water Board General Manager Harishankar and others participated in the inspection.

NOTABLE RISE IN LEISURE, SPIRITUAL AND SOLO TRAVEL

Women's bus bookings soar 50%

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bookings from women increased by 50 per cent, as per the report released by Abhibus, one of India's leading bus booking platforms on Friday.

This period also saw a rise in the number of female travellers, with bookings from women increasing by 50 per cent. Also, there is 37 per cent uptick in female solo travellers. Overall, solo travel saw an increase of 38 per cent contributing to the

overall surge in travel bookings.

The report also highlighted 54 per cent Year of Year (YoY) increase in bookings. It highlights how travellers took advantage of the extended break.

Over the weekend, several leisure destinations saw a rise in searches. Puducherry recorded a 74 per cent boost followed by Dehradun experienced a 72 per cent increase, Manali, a popular hill station,



reported a 41 per cent uptick and Goa saw a 29 per cent rise.

Alongside leisure travel, spiritual hotspots also saw a notable demand during the long weekend as travellers took the opportunity to visit religious and wellness destinations.

Ayodhya witnessed over 600 per cent surge, Banaras 173 per cent, Tirupati saw a 25 per cent increase in travellers, while Rishikesh recorded 15 per cent growth.

Rohit Sharma, COO, AbhiBus, said, "It is exciting to see how Indians are actively choosing buses as their mode of travel, specifically for the long weekend.

The growing interest in popular leisure destinations like Goa, Manali and Puducherry, alongside spiritual hubs like Ayodhya, Banaras and Tirupati, highlights a diverse trend where Indians are exploring adventure and spirituality with equal enthusiasm."

Task Force to oversee UG, PG admissions

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Health Department constituted a Task Force Committee to oversee and prepare a report on the admission process for Under-Graduate and Post-Graduate seats among other medical care facilities in Telangana.

The order said, the government has decided to streamline the administration of medical education to improve the performance of the private and government medical col-

leges and to improve the other public medical care facilities in the State.

"The government constituted a Task Force Committee to monitor the admission process for UG and PG Seats and to improve the other public medical care facilities such as Aadhaar-Enabled Biometric Attendance System (AEBAS), OP/IP, Maternal and New Born Child Health, Family Adoption Programme and Cadavers - Forensic Medicine."

The members of the Committee are Director of Medical Education-Member Convener, Director of Medical Education (Academic)-Member, Registrar, KNR University of Health Sciences-Member, Principal of Osmania Medical College-Member, Principal, Gandhi Medical College-Member.

The Committee will monitor the above issues and submit detailed recommendations to the government, added the order.

Assault on staff nurse triggers tension at Shadanagar

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Tension erupted at the Shadnagar Government Community Hospital when a staff nurse, Asha, was attacked by a patient's relative. The incident occurred when a woman from the town, who had come to the hospital for vaccination, allegedly assaulted the nurse without provocation.



Community Hospital staff staging a protest at Shadnagar on Friday

In response to the attack, the hospital's medical staff staged a protest in front of the hospital, boycotting their duties. The protesting staff members demanded immediate action against the assailant, emphasising the need for strict measures to protect healthcare workers from such assaults while on duty.

Union leaders expressed their deep concern over the incident, condemning the attack on government employees. They highlighted the growing risk faced by healthcare workers and called for

stronger protections and swift legal action against those who obstruct government duties and engage in violence against medical personnel.

The union leaders are preparing to file a formal complaint with the police, urging them to take strict action against the woman involved in the attack. The incident raised concerns among healthcare professionals, who are demanding increased security and support from the government to ensure their safety.

TORTURE OF DALIT WOMAN

SC/ ST Act invoked against Inspector, four policemen

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act has been invoked against Shadnagar Inspector of Police and four constables in connection with alleged tortured of Dalit woman in Shadnagar police station.

The incident, which sparked outrage and led to widespread criticism, resulted in the suspension of five police personnel.

The case was registered based on a complaint by a Dalit woman on August 11, alleging that Shadnagar Inspector of Police A Rami Reddy and policemen brutally tortured her to extract a confession from her in a theft case.

The incident reportedly occurred on July 30, when Ramireddy and four policemen took the Dalit



A Rami Reddy

woman and her husband into custody for questioning in connection

with a burglary. During the interrogation, the woman's husband was allegedly beaten by the officers. The situation escalated when the woman was reportedly stripped of her clothes and brutally assaulted. The police allegedly threatened to burn her with petrol if she did not tell the truth.

The victim further claimed that she became unconscious until 2 am and also subjected her son to physical abuse. As the story was reported by the media, there was an outpouring of criticism, prompting the government to take action against those involved.

In addition to the criminal charges, a petition had been filed with the National Human Rights Commission, demanding strict punishment for Ramireddy and the four constables.

Congress leaders, activists protest KTR's 'remarks' on women

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Congress Party leaders and activists at Nandigam in the district staged a protest on Friday, burning an effigy of former Minister KT Rama Rao to condemn his controversial remarks on women. The protest took place on Nandigam Old Road and was led by Nandigam Congress party mandal unit president Janga Narasimhulu Yadav, former MPTCs, and other senior party leaders.

The effigy burning was a reaction to comments made by KTR at a recent event at Navbharat. The Congress leaders described KTR's remarks on women inappropriate and



Congress leaders and activists burning BRS working president KR Rama Rao's effigy at Nandigam in Rangareddy district on Friday

derogatory. The protest saw the participation of several prominent Congress leaders, including former MPTCs Kommu Krishna and Chandrapal Reddy, as well as senior leaders Jillela Bal Reddy, Pittala Ramulu, and Bomмага Narasimha,

among others. The demonstrators expressed their outrage, demanding an apology from KTR and calling for greater respect and sensitivity in public discourse. The incident added to the growing tension between political parties in the region.

AFTER ATTACK ON DAD

Teenager dies of shock

PNS ■ SURYAPETA

A 14-year-old girl died from shock while witnessing three assailants attacking her father with sticks and stones at D. Kottapalli under Nagaram mandal in Suryapeta district.

The girl who was witness to the gory crime begged the assailants not kill her father with tears in her eyes. But the assailants did not show mercy.

The deceased was identified as Kasam Pavani, daughter of Kasam Somaiah, who had enmity with Kadari Saidulu, Kadari Somaiah and Kasam Kalongam. The old rivalry flared up on Friday with the



trio cornering Kasam Somaiah armed with sticks and boulders, the police said.

The police registered cases against the trio and took steps to send the body of the girl to hospital for an autopsy.

Call for unity among BC advocates to achieve goal

PNS ■ WARANGAL

ILPA state president Ponnamb Devaraj Goud has called upon the advocates belonging to Backward Classes communities to take initiative to achieve the BC's share in all spheres of activity in tune with its proportion in the population.

Telangana state-level BC advocates' convention to be held in Hyderabad on August 25 to involve them in the movement to achieve the rights of the BCs. He appealed to them to make the convention a grand success.

Addressing the members of the Hanamkonda Bar Association held at Hanamkonda, near here, on Friday, he observed that justice was still not done to the BCs, who constituted more than 60 per cent of the total population, even 75 years after the country became independent.

After the caste census done during the British rule, so far the caste-based census did not take place in the country. Rahul Gandhi has been demanding the conduct of caste-based census in parliament but the caste census in



Advocates belonging to Backward Classes assembling at the Bar Association in Hanamkonda

Telangana is being not conducted in spite of Congress ruling Telangana, he observed.

Hanamkonda Bar Association General Secretary Lade Ramesh presided the meeting.

Several advocates, including Lade Ramesh, Puli Satyanarayana, Dayala Sudhakar, Janga Swapna, Ramadevi, Ranjit Goud, shared the view of several injustices being done to the BCs in legal, political and financial spheres.

In the fight for social justice, the lawyers should take initiative by virtue of their knowledge of the statute and law of the land, they said, exhorting Hanamkonda lawyers to take initiative in making the August 25 state level event a grand success.

Karnan: Mandate dry day on Fridays

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Telangana State Health and Medical Commissioner RV Karnan has expressed concern over increasing dengue cases in rural as well as urban areas and called for observing dry day on Fridays without fail to check the breeding of mosquitoes. He also suggested undertaking fever survey on a regular basis.

Reviewing the activities of the medical and health department along with collector Muzammel Khan and other government officials here on Friday, the local bodies along with the medical and health department officials should take remedial measures to check the growing dengue cases. He suggested increasing the conduct of diagnostic tests in areas where people tested positive for dengue.

Teams of officials of concerned government officials should visit the villages, wards and undertake door-to-door visits to create awareness among the people.

Prevention of water stagnation and undertaking anti-larval operations should be taken up. He asked the officials to remain alert for the next two or three months.

An exclusive ward for dengue patients should be set up in district headquarters government hospital. A medical officer should be available for patients round the clock in the



State Medical and Health Commissioner RV Karnan holding review meeting in Khammam on Friday

ward. Samples of blood collected from government hospitals should be sent to T-Hub, while the samples collected from private hospitals should be sent to IDSP lab. The myths among the people about platelet counts should be dispelled and suitable treatment should be extended to patients. He wanted the officials to pay attention to improve sanitation in villages. Further, he asked the officials to place the indent for the requirement of medicines.

Earlier, the health commissioner paid surprise visit to the PHC at Kusumanchi and checked the referral, ambulance and delivery registers. He enquired about the regular lab tests and sought information on the number of patients visiting the Ayush OP on daily basis.

He suggested increasing the insti-

tutional deliveries in government hospitals and conduct regular health checkup for pregnant women. They should be provided better services and the government hospitals should win the trust of pregnant women.

He suggested establishing medical camps and increase awareness among the people on sanitation and personal hygiene to check the seasonal diseases.

Later, he along with the collector inspected district headquarters government hospital here. He checked the radiology department and sought details of the number of mammography cases handled. He visited the T-hub at the hospital and sought information from there about the dengue diagnostic tests done. He sought information on the samples of blood received from PHCs and what diagnostic tests have been prescribed by doctors there.

Later, he visited the Danavagudem and visited door to door there. He asked the people to follow personal hygiene and maintain hygienic surroundings. He wanted the people to give no scope for breeding of mosquitoes. The local bodies should take steps to prevent seasonal diseases. The collector said that Fridays are being observed as dry days strictly. He suggested arranging special medical camps in slums and implementing special sanitation drives there.



Hindu organisations taking out a procession in Komram Bheem Asifabad district on Friday

PROTEST AGAINST ATTACKS ON HINDUS IN BANGLADESH

Shutdown call by Hindu organisation total

PNS ■ KOMARAM BHEEM ASIFABAD

In response to a call given by Bajrang Dal and other Hindu organisations to observe a bandh on Friday protesting against the attacks on the Hindus in Bangladesh, shopkeepers downed their shutters voluntarily taking part in the shutdown.

The shutdown was total not only in Asifabad but also in Kagaznagar.

The protestors took out a rally, which commenced at 10 am, through the thoroughfares of Asifabad condemning the attacks. They raised slogans in support of unity among the Hindus and zero tolerance policy towards the attacks on the Hindus.

The local MLA Kova Lakshmi demanded UNO to intervene to check the growing attacks on the Hindus in the troubled nation. Even Muslim minorities took part in the protest and expressed

their solidarity with the Hindus of the Bangladesh.

The BJP leader and former ZPTC ArigelaNageswar Rao, Bhongir Satish Babu, VishanKhandre, Congress Assembly constituency in-charge Shyam Nayak, former MPP Mallikarjun, Jago Hindu committee president Akula Santosh and others took part in the rally.

The police beefed up security all along the route of the rally to prevent any untoward incident taking place as part of the rally taken out under the aegis of several like-minded Hindu organisations.

During the course of the rally, MLA Kova Lakshmi developed dizziness. However, the doctors present there treated her and gave her ORS and helped her recover immediately.

Besides Bajrang Dal, activists of Hindu Vahini and members of the joint action committee of the Hindu organisations took part in the event.

Awareness programme held on drugs for college students

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

One-TWAM Inspector Uday Kumar and TGANB inspector Ramu have appealed to youth not to destroy their lives by getting addicted to narcotics and alcohol.

They were participating in an awareness programme held at ASR Junior College in Khammam on Friday on the ill-effects of use of narcotics.

As part of the exercise, seminars and conventions were held in the college.

The students should not get addicted to narcotics and prevent others from getting addicted. Drugs not only destroy lives and also future. Therefore, the youth should not get addicted to drugs, they cautioned.

They have expressed concern over the spread of consumption of drugs rather silently.

They called for undertaking joint efforts by the police department and the college management to check the spread of the narcotics.

PG student ends life after tiff with grandma

PNS ■ HANAMKONDA

Family feud over a petty dispute has led to a woman committing suicide in Hanamkonda district.

The deceased was identified as Nikhita, 22, who has been pursuing a postgraduate course in Kakatiya University and working part-time in a private company in Madikonda.

She was reportedly heartbroken when her maternal grandmother stopped talking with Nikhita.

Marpati Mahender Reddy, resident of Bheemadevarapally in Hanamkonda district, took his wife Sumati's younger sister's daughter Nikhita, 22, to his home. Nikhita was fond of her grandmother ParupalliVenkatamma, who

lives in Huzurabad, and used to share everything with her.

However, recently Venkatamma and Mahender Reddy developed differences over family matters. Therefore,

Venkatamma is not visiting Bheemadevarapally. She did not visit Mahender Reddy's place and also stopped speaking with Nikhita.

On August 14, she appeared for the examination in the university and played with her sister Priyadarsini's son till 10 pm.

Later, she went to her room to retire for the day. She did not get up even after 9 am.

When Mahender Reddy and Priyadarsini knocked on the door of her room there was no response. Later, she was found dead in the room.

Mathematician gets Bharat Seva Puraskar-2024

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Renowned mathematician Dr Adluru Narasimha Murthy received Bharat Seva Puraskar 2024, presented by a Bangalore-based civil society organisation, from Hanamkonda Collector P Pravinna on Friday. He was presented a citation and a trophy as part of the award in recognition of his meritorious services to mathematics.

Jaladhi Ganita Vignana Peetham, founded by Adluru Narasimha Murthy, members, his lecturer colleagues, Red Cross society members, retired officials, his gurus, fellow lecturers, literary friends, well-wishers and others congratulated him on winning the Bharat Seva Puraskar.

The young teachers should emulate Dr Adluru Narasimha Murthy, who achieved academic excellence in his chosen field of mathematics. He also spent lakhs of rupees for the benefit of students.

He founded the Association of Maths teachers in 2007 while he was working as a maths lecturer in Government Junior college at Torru. He paid tuition fees of 65 students to promote admissions in maths group. He was instrumental in getting



Hanamkonda Collector P Pravinna presenting Bharat Seva Puraskar award to Dr Adluru Narasimha Murthy in Hanamkonda on Friday

Goddess Sarawati statue installed on the premises of the college. The Medha Charitable Trust, Hyderabad, presented him laptop for helping preparation of study material for Intermediate students. He distributed Sparsha series of solutions in mathematics study material among thousands of students free of cost. Upon posting in Warangal on transfer, he founded JaladhiGanitaVignanaPeetham and started mini maths library and mobile laboratory.

He delivered several lectures on mathematics. He authored four books on mathematics for students and distributed them free of cost.

SCR runs eight special trains to clear heavy rush

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In order to facilitate the passengers, South Central Railway will be operating eight Independence Day or Weekend holidays special trains.

Train No 07175 (Narsapur-Secunderabad) will be departed on August 18 at 6 pm and will arrive at Secunderabad at 5 am on August 19 while Train No 07176 (Secunderabad - Narsapur) will be departed on August 19 at 6:20 pm and will arrive at Secunderabad at 5 am on August 20.

These special trains will also stop at Palakollu, Bhimavaram Town, Akividu, Kaikalur, Gudivada, Vijayawada, Guntur, Sattenapalli, Piduguralla, Nadikudi, Miryalguda and Nalgonda stations in both the directions.

Train No 07177 (Kakinada

Town - Secunderabad) will depart from Kakinada Town on August 17 and 19 at 9 pm and will arrive at Secunderabad at 9:05 am on August 18 and 20 while Train No 07178 (Secunderabad - Kakinada Town) will depart from Secunderabad on August 18 and 20 at 6:20 pm and will arrive at Kakinada Town at 6:30 am on August 18 and 20.

These special trains will also stop at Samalkot, Rajahmundry, Nidadavolu, Tanuku, Bhimavaram Town, Akividu, Kaikalur, Gudivada, Vijayawada, Guntur, Sattenapalli, Piduguralla, Nadikudi, Miryalguda and Nalgonda stations in both the directions.

Train No 07455 (Kacheguda - Tirupati) will depart from Kacheguda on August 16 at 10:30 pm and will arrive at Tirupati at 10:25 pm on August 17 while



Train No 07456 (Tirupati-Kacheguda) will depart from Tirupati on August 17 at 7:50 pm and will arrive at Kacheguda at 9:30 am.

These special trains will also stop at Umdanagar, Shadnagar,

Jadcherla, Mahbubnagar, Wanaparthy Road, Gadwal, Kurnool City, Dhone, Gooty, Yerraguntla, Cuddapah and Renigunta stations in both the directions.

Train No 07187 (Kakinada

Town - Secunderabad) will depart from Kakinada Town on August 18 at 6:30 pm and will arrive at Secunderabad at 6 am on August 19 while Train No 07188 (Secunderabad - Kakinada Town) will depart from Secunderabad on August 19 at 9 pm and will arrive at Kakinada Town at 8 am on August 20.

Train No. 07187 special train will stop at Samalkot, Rajahmundry, Nidadavolu, Tadepalligudem, Eluru, Rayanapadu, Khammam, Mahbubabad, Warangal and Kazipet stations.

In the return direction Train No. 07188 special train will stop at Jangaon, Kazipet, Warangal, Mahbubabad, Khammam, Rayanapadu, Gudivada, Kaikalur, Akividu, Bhimavaram Town, Tanuku, Rajahmundry and Samalkot stations.

ACROSS THE STATES



Man clambers up two floors, films woman taking bath

The Navi Mumbai police have registered a case against a man for allegedly filming a woman while she was taking a bath, an official said on Friday. Accused Varprasad Ratnaraj Katikadla, who lives in Morbe in Panvel taluka, allegedly committed the crime on August 7 but the woman learnt about it only on Thursday. She then filed a police complaint, he said. According to the FIR, the accused climbed through a duct and took a video of the woman bathing in her second-floor home. Katikadla has been booked under Section 77 (voyeurism) of the Bharatiya Nayaya Sanhita, said the station house officer of Panvel taluka police station.



Downpour in Rajasthan, Bundi's Hindoli records 220 mm rain

Heavy rain lashed parts of Rajasthan, including Hindoli in the Bundi district where the rainfall levels exceeded the 200-mm mark. Some places in Jaipur, Dausa, Baran, Nagaur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Pali and Sawai Madhopur districts witnessed heavy rainfall. Meanwhile, extremely heavy rain was recorded at some places in Ajmer and Bundi districts during the last 24 hours. The highest rainfall in eastern Rajasthan has been recorded in Hindoli in Bundi district at 220 mm and in Bikaner's Kolayat in the western region saw 172 mm of rain from yesterday till 8.30 am today. During this period, several areas recorded light to moderate rainfall, according to the Met department. Light to moderate rainfall lashed some places in Alwar, Sikar, Karauli, Kota, Bhilwara, Tonk, Jaisalmer and Barmer districts of the state. "The circulation system formed over north-eastern Rajasthan is now slowly moving towards the western region."

TV channel's bid to dramatise admin..

Continued from page 1

She came with a vested interest. After asking a few questions, she slowly turned the conversation to the (retail shops) issue. I replied her that some shops have violated rules, and told her 'We won't leave them'. Although I had replied to her regarding the case, she was again and again asking the same question. We have inspected many medical shops in the last two days and given notice to the erring. I told her that there is a procedure which we have to follow. We collected samples and sent them to labs. If we find any violations, we will take action based on Drugs and Cosmetics Act. She went out and came again to my office. When she came very close to me, I called security. She was almost touching me and when she demanded to resign me I sought help of my security people", he explained. Bureaucrats in the state are in shock after coming to know of the incident in which media persons barged into the chambers of the senior officer and demanded his resignation on a report they had carried in their channel. "Some media houses want to run the administration directly. If the government allows this, no officer could work peacefully anymore," a senior officer pointed out.

Medic rape-murder: IMA announces..

Continued from page 1

"Doctors, especially women, are vulnerable to violence because of the nature of the profession. It is for authorities to provide for the safety of doctors inside hospitals and campuses. Both physical assaults and crimes are a result of indifference and insensitivity of the authorities concerned to the needs of doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers," it said. The call for the nationwide withdrawal of non-emergency medical services was taken after a meeting with state branches of the IMA. The IMA on Thursday condemned the vandalism at the Kolkata hospital where doctors have been protesting since August 9 evening following the alleged rape and murder of the woman medic. Earlier in the day, the medical association said, "Authorities, who by



MVA MEET ON UNSEATING THE BJP-LED MAHAYUTI COALITION IN THE STATE

Uddhav Thackeray insists on freezing CM candidate first

Pawar, Patole bat for change in govt

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray on Friday insisted that MVA decide its chief ministerial face first rather than going by the logic of which party wins most seats, asserting that he would back any candidate announced by the Congress and NCP (SP). His Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) allies Sharad Pawar, who heads NCP(SP), and Congress pitched for focussing on unseating the BJP-led Mahayuti coalition in the state. Addressing party workers of the opposition bloc MVA here, Thackeray said if the Lok Sabha polls were to protect democracy and the Constitution, then the assembly polls are a fight to preserve Maharashtra's self-respect. Elections to the 288-member Maharashtra assembly are likely to be held in October or November.

Pawar stressed the need for a single-point agenda to change the government in Maharashtra if the situation

had to improve in the state. He told the MVA cadres that the three partners will take along the Left outfits, Peasants and Workers Party of India (PWP) and the Samajwadi Party by giving them due respect, and present a united face before the people of the state. The Sena (UBT) chief insisted that the chief ministerial candidate must be decided first, rather than by the logic of the party that wins the most seats in the elections. Thackeray said the experience he had during his alliance with the BJP was that whoever

had the numbers would get the CM's post. But this policy was detrimental as this would lead to one party trying to defeat the other's candidate to maintain an upper hand in the alliance, he said. "First, decide (the CM's face) and then go ahead but do not go by this policy (those having the most seats will get the CM's post). Uddhav Thackeray will back any candidate announced by Congress and NCP (SP) as the CM face of MVA. I don't have the feeling that I am fighting for myself but it is for the rights of Maharashtra," he said.

Almost clear Marathas won't get quota: Jarange

PNS ■ CHHATRAPATI SAMBAHAJINAGAR

It is "almost clear now" the Maharashtra government will not give reservations to the Maratha community as it is only listening to the OBC groups, activist Manoj Jarange alleged on Friday. Speaking to reporters in his

native Antarwali Sarati in Jalna, some 60 kilometres from here, he said the Eknath Shinde government is disrespecting the Maratha community. "The state government is listening to and giving time to only Other Backward Classes leaders. The Maratha community is disrespected. It is almost clear now the Maratha community will not be given reservation by the Maharashtra government. Therefore, we need to remove them (government)," Jarange claimed.

HC Vandalism in RG Kar Hospital absolute failure of state machinery

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Observing that the mob violence in R G Kar Medical College and Hospital was an absolute failure of state machinery, the Calcutta High Court on Friday directed the police and the hospital authority to file affidavits on the situation there. A division bench presided by Chief Justice T S Sivagnanam said it was hard to believe that the police intelligence did not have information about the gathering of 7,000 people, when the state's lawyer told the court that a mob of such a number



had assembled at the hospital in the early hours of Thursday. After knowing that there was some renovation work on one floor of the hospital after the body of a woman doctor, who was allegedly raped and murdered, was found, the Chief Justice said the court can order closing down the medical establishment.

The bench directed the police and the administrator of the hospital to file separate affidavits narrating the "true state of affairs" at the hospital and all connected matters on August 21 when the matter will be heard again.

Mamata leads protest rally in Kolkata, demands justice



PNS ■ KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday led a protest rally from Moulali to Dorina crossing in Kolkata, demanding justice for a woman doctor, who was allegedly raped and murdered at a state-run hospital last week. TMC activists, who accompanied Banerjee, shouted slogans for capital punishment for the accused, a demand that the chief minister has already made. The woman post-graduate trainee doctor was allegedly raped and murdered in the seminar room of the RG Kar

Medical College and Hospital on August 9. A civic volunteer has been arrested in connection with the crime the next day. A group of around 40 people entered the hospital and vandalised the emergency department, nursing unit and medicine store in the early hours of Thursday. The mob also damaged CCTV cameras at the state-run health facility and ransacked a stage where junior doctors had been demonstrating against the alleged rape and murder of the woman doctor there and demanding security at their workplace.

BJP stages statewide protests; seeks Mamata's resignation

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The BJP staged rallies and sits across West Bengal on Friday, demanding the resignation of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee following the recent murder of a woman doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital here. Party workers, carrying posters demanding Banerjee's resignation and raising slogans against the Trinamool Congress (TMC) government, described the state's condition as worse than failed democra-

cies like Pakistan and Afghanistan, accusing the administration of failing to resolve the crisis. The party alleged that their planned rally at Shyambazar Five Point Crossing in Kolkata was thwarted by police. A stage set up for the rally was dismantled, and several BJP workers were detained and taken to the central lock-up at Lalbazar police headquarters. The party condemned these actions, labeling them as attempts to stifle public dissent.

'Wherever strong message on women's safety needed, efforts made to save accused'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra Friday said atrocities against women in West Bengal, Bihar, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh have shaken the country, and asserted that repeated leniency in cases, political protection to accused and granting of bail or parole to convicts let down women. When government statistics show 86 rapes taking place

"Atrocities against women in Kolkata, Bihar, Uttarakhand and UP have shaken the entire country. At this time, women across the country are in grief and anger," Priyanka Gandhi said on X



every day, from whom should women expect protection? she posed in a post in Hindi on X. "Atrocities against women in Kolkata, Bihar, Uttarakhand and UP have shaken the entire country. At this time, women across the country are in grief and anger," Priyanka Gandhi said on X. The Congress general secretary's remarks come amid nationwide outrage over the rape and murder of a woman

trainee doctor in the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata last week.

CM pitches Fourth City..

Continued from page 1

The CM invited Foxconn to invest in the Fourth City. IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu also briefed Liu on the government's pro-industrial policies, incentives and international collaborations aimed at boosting industrial development. D. Sridhar Babu told Chairman Yang Liu about the steps being taken by the government led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for industrial development, the incentives provided and the discussions and agreements made by his team led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy during his recent visit to the US and South Korea. Young Liu commended on Revanth Reddy's visionary approach and said

that Foxconn is eager to explore investment opportunities in Hyderabad. He announced plans for an initial visit by a team led by Chief Campus Operations Officer Kathy Yang and India representative V. Lee, with a follow-up visit by Liu himself. Yang Liu, chairman of Foxconn, said that he was very impressed by the Chief Minister's words and pro-industrial policies in the design of the Fourth City. Liu congratulated Chief Minister Revanth Reddy saying that the CM's pro-industrial policies and the Fourth City are excellent. He said that he would visit Hyderabad as soon as possible. The meeting also saw the presence of many high-ranking officials from both the Telangana government and

Foxconn, signalling the beginning of a significant partnership for Hyderabad's industrial development. Principal Secretary (IT, Electronics and Communications) Jayesh Ranjan, the Special Secretary of Investment Promotion and External Engagement, Dr Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, the Chief Minister's Special Secretary Ajith Reddy and the Electronics, Semiconductors and Energy Storage Director, Dr SK Sharma were present at the meeting. Foxconn President, SBG, Bob Chen, CBG GM JH Wu, Chief Campus Operations Officer Kathy Yang, CSBG Deputy GM Hsu Shou-kuo, C-Group Manager Simon Song, the Foxconn representative in India, V. Lee, were also present at the meeting.

BRS vows to rename RGI Airport..

Continued from page 1

We will move the Rajiv Gandhi statue away from the secretariat and install a statue of the Telangana Talli as the place is meant for that," KTR said. The Rajiv Canal of the Sitarama Project which was inaugurated by Revanth on Thursday is also likely to be

renamed. Meanwhile, Ministers Ponnam Prabhakar and Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, along with Chief Minister's Advisor Vem Narender Reddy and MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud, inspected the work on the Rajiv Gandhi statue that is to be unveiled in front of the Secretariat. With the statue's installation

completed, they reviewed the pending landscaping and other related work and asked officials to speed up the process ahead of the statue's unveiling on August 20, the birth anniversary of the former Prime Minister. The ministers also reviewed the map of the statue's precincts and made several suggestions.

BJP neither secular..

Continued from page 1

"The sad thing is that if you look at prime ministers over the years, no PM has given such controversial speeches as he (Modi) has. You would remember that in the past (he has spoken about) 'shamshankabristan', love jihad, 'ghuspetiye' etc. His CM in Assam talks about 'flood jihad'," Sibal said. "They talk of security of Hindus... we all want it. But the

would be secular. The other word is civil the meaning of which has to be understood... (when) there is no row over what one wears or eats only then can there be civility," he said. Sibal also referred to eatery owners along the Kanwar Yatra route in Uttar Pradesh being asked to display their names. "You indulge in such controversial things and then talk big from the Red Fort. People will listen and say what the PM is saying is fine, it should happen, but then they will see what is happening on the ground which is the opposite," he added.

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KTR challenges CM on farm loan..

Continued from page 1

He also called Revanth Reddy's loan waiver promise the "biggest joke of the century" and accused the Congress of carrying out the "biggest scam in independent India's history." KTR said the Congress had cheated farmers by not even waiving loans for half of the eligible beneficiaries. Referring to the Rs 2 lakh loan waiver promise made by Revanth Reddy, KTR questioned the calculations and stated that even the Eenadu newspaper reported that Rs 35,000 crore was needed for a total loan waiver. He criticized the CM for later reducing the estimate to Rs 31,000 crore through a Cabinet resolution. KTR highlighted the plight of farmers across the state who were still waiting for their loans to be waived and accused the government of misleading them with false promises.

KTR expressed frustration with Revanth Reddy's continuous "cheap propaganda" and questioned how Rs 17,000 crore could be sufficient for the Rs 2 lakh loan waiver. He asserted that this was just another example of how the Congress had cheated farmers. In contrast, KTR emphasized that the BRS government had provided nearly Rs 1 lakh crore for initiatives like Rythu Bandhu and loan waivers. He pointed out that the government failed to deliver the Rythu Bharosa during the monsoon, even though August had already passed. KTR also mentioned that some posters claiming that the loan waiver had been completed were put up by "cheap people." He challenged Revanth Reddy to prove that the loan waiver had been executed as promised. KTR warned that if the full loan waiver wasn't implemented, they would take the matter to

court. He also pointed out the contradictions in the government's statements, citing the discrepancies between the budget allocation and the actual amount disbursed for the loan waiver. "Even though Rs 26,000 crore was allocated in the budget, only Rs 17,934 crore was disbursed to 22 lakh farmers," KTR noted. KTR didn't hold back in his criticism of Revanth Reddy and accused him of making "frustrated and irrational" statements. He suggested that Revanth Reddy's family should take note of his deteriorating mental state as his comments were becoming increasingly erratic. He concluded by stating that the BRS would continue to expose the failures of the Congress in all constituencies across the state and that the party would take necessary actions including the going to court if required.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

PM roots for women safety

PM calls for strictest punishment for crimes against women amidst protests over rape and murder of resident doctor

The streets of Kolkata have erupted in widespread protests following the heinous rape and murder of a young resident doctor, a crime that has left the entire nation in shock and sorrow. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has expressed his firm stance on the issue, calling for the strictest possible punishment for those involved in crimes against women. The victim, a 28-year-old resident doctor at a prominent Kolkata hospital, was found murdered under gruesome circumstances after being raped. The brutal crime has triggered widespread anger, as doctors, students, and activists have taken to the streets to demand swift and severe action against the perpetrators. Placards reading "Justice for our sister" and "Stop violence against women" are being carried by hundreds of protesters across the city, while candlelight vigils continue to spread across the nation. The medical community, in particular, has expressed its fury, with many health professionals going on strike, calling for stronger protection and justice for female healthcare workers, who often face threats and harassment in the course of their duties.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in response to the national outrage, has unequivocally condemned the horrific crime. In his address to the nation on Independence Day, he emphasised the government's commitment to ensuring the safety of women in the country. Modi reiterated his stance that there must be zero tolerance for crimes against women, and perpetrators should face the most stringent punishment under the law. But it is not that we do not have strict laws for crime against women but the problem is their execution. The new amendments to criminal laws have additional features to expedite such cases. The new provisions include the death penalty for rape, video recording of crime scenes, and a witness protection program, etc. all of which could prove to help resolve such cases. However, only time will reveal how effectively these measures will be implemented on the ground and the guilty punished speedily. Women's safety has been a recurring concern in India, and incidents like this continue to raise questions about the effectiveness of existing laws and preventive measures. The Prime Minister's call for the strictest punishment has been widely welcomed, but it remains to be seen how these words will translate into concrete legal reforms. However, having laws is one thing and reforming the society is quite another. The attitude of society towards women must change. Most cases go unreported as the victims are often blamed by society; questions like 'why were you there?', 'what were you wearing?' and so on are posed to her to hold her responsible. The process becomes punishment and the victim has to live with the stigma for the rest of her life. The nation now awaits justice—not just for one young doctor, but for all the women who have suffered in silence.

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PICTALK



Artists perform at Sawai Mansingh Stadium on Independence Day in Jaipur

Terrorism resurges amid shifts in strategy



SUDHIR HINDWAN

With militants shifting their focus to Jammu and adopting more aggressive strategies, concerns over national security are once again at the forefront

The recent terrorist attack on Army Captain Deepak Singh, tragically killed a day before India's 78th Independence Day, must be condemned unequivocally. This act of violence, along with the discovery that at least three terrorists were hiding in the Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), underscores the persistence of militant activities in the region. Unfortunately, this incident is not an isolated one but a continuation of the long-standing saga of terrorism in J&K. Recent attacks in Jammu indicate a significant shift in terrorist activities due to several factors.



Firstly, terrorists want to send a message that despite the abrogation of Article 370 and the central government's commendable efforts, the situation in J&K remains unstable. Secondly, Jammu's vast forest areas provide an ideal base for militants to launch guerrilla attacks and evade security forces. Thirdly, the improved law and order situation in Kashmir has led to a shift in insurgent focus toward Jammu. Lastly, while terrorism in the region had been suppressed for a time, it has not been eradicated, and militants are now re-emerging with increased vigor.

Today's terrorists are far more organized and professional than those from a decade ago. Although new security measures have been implemented, the threat remains unpredictable. The region's geography provides an ideal base for guerrilla activities, and the militants have become more sophisticated in their strategies, acquiring advanced weapons from across the border. Their use of automatic weapons, grenades, and low-intensity bombs demonstrates meticulous planning and execution. This modern breed of terrorists no longer hides in the

shadows. They openly attack, targeting financial hubs and other vital locations, as seen in recent global terror incidents. Terrorists exploit advancements in transportation and weaponry to expand their networks. Suicide squads, in particular, have shocked the security apparatus with their boldness and brutality. Terrorists meticulously plan their attacks, aiming to inspire fear and manipulate the public to achieve their objectives. In his famous work, "Why Men Rebel," Ted Robert Gurr argues that people driven by intense motivation toward a goal often resort to violence. This is evident in modern terrorism, where militants see their acts as justified sacrifices for a cause. William Henry also noted that some politically motivated acts of terrorism are so deeply rooted in commitment that no sanctions can deter them. International experts like Professor Yonah Alexander have analyzed the evolution of terrorism. Modern terrorists differ from their predecessors in their use of technology and tactics. Small, sophisticated groups now employ increasingly violent methods to create a psychological impact, aiming to instill fear in the public and force governments to react. The ultimate goal of terrorism is psychological, not practical. Terrorists seek to alter behavior and bring about societal or



THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF TERRORISM IS PSYCHOLOGICAL. TERRORISTS SEEK TO ALTER BEHAVIOR AND BRING ABOUT SOCIETAL OR GOVERNMENTAL CHANGES THROUGH FEAR

governmental changes through fear. There is an urgent need for preventive measures to address the grievances fueling terrorism, improved security strategies, and an understanding of the social and cultural factors driving people to insurgency. Effective counter-terrorism efforts require not just government action but also community involvement. Citizens can play a critical role in improving security by cooperating with law enforcement agencies. Beyond strict anti-terrorism laws, programs aimed at addressing the root causes of terrorism, such as poverty and lack of education, are essential. Several nations have taken steps to combat state-sponsored terrorism, including economic sanctions, but consensus remains elusive at both the national and international levels. The nexus between drug smuggling and terrorism further complicates matters. To address this, judicial procedures must be streamlined to ensure speedy trials for those involved in drug trafficking and terrorism. India, in particular, can learn valuable lessons from the counter-terrorism efforts of other nations, such as the United States, which has effectively prevented major terrorist attacks since 9/11. (The author, a recipient of the Bharat Gaurav award, is a professor and expert on strategic affairs; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TUNGABHADRA DAM BREACHED

Madam — Tungabhadra dam crest gate has swept away in the water after its chain link snapped. The ancient name of the river Tungabhadra was Pampa. In the epic Ramayana also, this river was called by name Pampa. Construction of the dam started in 1949 and completed in 1953 is said to be irrigating 12 lakh acres of land. It is more than 70 years since the dam was dedicated to the nation. The fall of 19th crest gate has led to the release of over 1 lakh cusecs of water into the river. By the time the new gate is fixed, much more water will be lost to the river. It is said that the water level has to be brought down to 60 cmft for installing new gate.

This incident must open the eyes of all the riparian states to inspect the dams which have been built decades ago. It goes without saying that like any other national asset, the dams have also their own life. Dams always face water pressure and it would be too high during the rainy season when the rivers carry unprecedented quantity of water. Any laxity shown in the proper maintenance of dams reduces the life of dams. It is said that the crest gate swept away during midnight.

Had it happened during day time, there would have been the possibility of people and animals falling victims to the sudden gushing of water. Former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai has blamed the state government for ignoring the recommendations of the dam committee that came from centre. If it is true that the state government has not taken seriously the recommendations of the committee, the state government must accept the blame.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

DISAPPOINTING VERDICT

Madam— It is both sad and disappointing that the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has dismissed Vinesh Phogat's appeal to be declared a joint silver medalist, despite her convincing vic-

Independence Day pledge



The editorial, 'Happy independence day' (15-8-24) presents a positive note and it is welcome. India has marched ahead from a scrap level to the level of this day. Right from the day the country got freedom a lot of committed efforts have been put in by successive governments. There is no scope for any individual or a particular party to claim credit. However, independence day is a day to identify the important tasks and

commit to achieve them with all sincerity and nationalist spirit. The crucial task before the country is not owning a space station but providing employment to the educated youth who are longing for a job, providing a viable livelihood for the 81.35 crore poor who are depending on free rations, provide easy access to the poor quality education and healthcare. If these tasks are attended to the rest of the developments will happen on their own.

The development we are trying to glorify now is creating billionaires on one hand and forcing the poor mass and the middle class sections to keep on tightening their belts. Continuing this trend carries the potential of landing the country in a social and economic crisis. On this day we should also take pledge to improve the country's ranking in global indexes like hunger index, malnutrition, freedom of expression etc.

A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

performance and the fact that her disqualification was a result of an unfair rule.

Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

RESPECT THE NATIONAL FLAG

Madam — On August 15, all Indians celebrate by singing patriotic songs, posting quotations on social media, and staging emotional plays to instill patriotism in young minds. However, the enthusiasm often wanes the next day. Selling flags made of paper and plastic, only to have them treated disrespectfully, is wrong. This disrespect must cease. Our focus should shift to the country's needs beyond just one-day celebrations and songs. Though an individual can't change the entire system, collective efforts can. After so many sacrifices by our great leaders, we must question if we're truly an independent nation or only in name.

Md Imadaullah | Muzaffarpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

How to make disaster relief truly effective

While people across the nation have come together to help, challenge remains in ensuring that assistance truly reaches those in need

The jury is still out on whether the recent landslides in Wayanad is a result of human callousness or nature's own waywardness. Two weeks after the deluge, there is still no confirmed count of lives lost. Survivors and search teams are continuing to sift through the debris to find remains of those swept away. With everything lost, scores are staring at the challenge of finding some means to take life forward. Monsoon doesn't evoke tender sentiments of love and romance any longer. It now denotes death and destruction. It shows how hapless man is before fate and it also bears testimony to human resilience in the face of catastrophe.



to perishables that cannot be used optimally. A social media post showed volunteers grappling with heaps of material that reflected collective compassion and magnanimity, but also underlined the difficulty of harnessing people's largesse effectively. An appeal was made to the public to avoid sending vegetables and bread, and chiefly clothes, and instead dispatch other essentials. It was misconstrued by a segment of people and sent wrong signals that the hundreds who had taken shelter in relief camps did not need help anymore as much of it was languishing in the collection centres. Nothing could be further from the

truth. Whether in the tragic instances of natural calamity or in war-ravaged parts of the world where people have had to flee and seek refuge in makeshift camps, there is a colossal need for human kindness and generosity. But we often make mistakes in the way we express and extend this willingness to help and save people from aftermaths of misfortunes. The first thing that comes to our common mind when we talk of aid is heaps of clothes that we dump in collection centres. Although the amount of second-hand wear that people dispose in the name of charity has decreased with awareness campaigns, there still is a huge dearth of information and knowledge regarding the kind of assistance people in relief camps need - be it after a natural calamity or in strife-ridden communities.

There is also scepticism with regard to monetary help: trust is lacking and not many believe that the funds are allocated rightly and to the needy because there are no means to trace the money

trail. That a lot of cash gets siphoned off is the public perception. Given this, how do good-natured people who are willing to lend a helping hand to the afflicted make a contribution? What is a trusted channel? It is hard to say with certainty, but the only choice we have is to trust the people who take up such endeavours or be part of volunteer groups that initiates such action.

It is indeed a shame that some devious minds take advantage of this opportunity to make a quick buck and instances of wrongdoing are not unheard of. But at the end of the day, it is one person's misery meeting another person's magnanimity. Creating safe and guaranteed channels of help and support will make more people come forward to restore the lives of those affected. The onus of winning public trust through transparency lies with community leaders, politicians and philanthropists. Even the kindest thoughts and action can go to waste if they are not done with discretion.

(The author is a Dubai-based columnist writing coach; views are personal)



ASHA IYER KUMAR



FIRST COLUMN

THE DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD OF ARROGANCE

Arrogance can lead to both greatness and self-destruction. The key lies in mastering it



RAVI VALLURI

Our mythology (particularly The Ramayana and The Mahabharata) is brimming with several well-stocked illustrations in respect of characters plagued with hubris, hurtling them down to their nemesis. We are aware of the conceited Ravana and the unbridled ambitions of Duryodhana. An angry and arrogant mind gets blurred and smudges the vision of an individual. Consequently, he behaves in a groundless manner, which has calamitous and baleful consequences for the person and those in his companionship. Is it possible to associate with such individuals who are prone to filibustering and arrogance?

The answer is an emphatic NO since there is no dialogue, only a monologue or a harangue by the self-conceited person. This drains our energy levels, a situation we would like to circumvent to save ourselves and our minds. The human mind assumes unnatural patterns and behaves in a volatile manner. A volcano of anger and arrogance erupts unexpectedly. Such individuals are veritable prisoners of their image, which is conceited and egotist. Mike Tyson, who earned epithets like Iron Mike, the Baddest Man on the Planet and Kid Dynamite outside the Ring, was convicted of rape and consuming marijuana and suffered from bipolar disorder.

He has had several brushes with the law. Tyson strongly felt that he was stigmatised by American society and that US society has not been constructed on the principles of justice, but on rape, grime, slavery, and injustice. He married thrice, besides various dalliances and philandering. He underwent reformation. He was proselytised and sought refuge in 'Allah'.



He converted the raw energy of anger and arrogance in the boxing ring where he was extremely successful. The mythological figures mentioned earlier, who were victims of anger and arrogance, bore bruised egos resulting from bruised feelings and emotions, alongside a deep sense of hurt and resentment. Ravana lusted after Sita and felt slighted that his sister Surpanakha was cold-shouldered and disfigured by Lakshmana. All his life Karna bore the cross of being called a shudra, his many talents, and abilities notwithstanding. Duryodhana remained perpetually infantile, given to juvenile behaviour.

Besides, he was under the delusion that the powers that be of Hastinapur would have never agreed to his accession after his father Dhritarashtra abdicated the throne. The feelings of hurt, playing a victim, jealousy, and injury, get metamorphosed in such personalities into deep-seated vexation and anger, leading to false bravado and arrogance.

The anger and arrogance get vitiated into negative thoughts, leading to self-destruction under the strain of self-delusion. However strange it may appear, there is a flip side at the end of the spectrum, where individuals have deployed emotions of anger and arrogance to become achievers. "Anybody can become angry—that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose and in the right way—that is not within everybody's power and is not easy," wrote Aristotle.

Who does not miss the swagger of Vivian Richards, and the ferocity of the pace of Dennis Lillee and Thomson? Several politicians, industrialists, writers, artists, kings and monarchs could channelise this energy of anger and arrogance to become highly victorious and triumphant. "To be a tennis champion, you must be inflexible, you must be stubborn, you must be arrogant, and you must be selfish and self-absorbed. Kind of tunnel vision almost," says Chris Evert. Therefore, arrogance is a double-edged sword. Often it subsumes the personalities to self-destruction as they lack the power of self-discrimination and self-examination, thus becoming victims of guilt and persecution complex.

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)

Afghanistan's struggle after the US withdrawal



NILANTHA LANGAMUWA

As Afghanistan observes the third anniversary of the contentious US withdrawal, the country continues to face upheaval, struggling with a severe humanitarian crisis under Taliban

Experts from the United Nations have issued a statement regarding the situation in Afghanistan, commemorating three years since the United States and its allies' shameless and disgraceful withdrawal, betraying the Afghan people. Based on historical patterns, this represents yet another instance of a nation being abandoned, leaving its people in a dire state while the US and its proxies maintain indirect control. The irony is striking: the very group once branded as terrorists by the West is now, paradoxically, expected to govern, despite having been considered freedom fighters not long ago. The UN experts express grave concern over ongoing human rights violations under the Taliban regime, highlighting systemic discrimination, segregation, and severe marginalisation of women and girls.

As we confront three years of this precarious status quo, it is evident that isolationism is inadequate. The international community must seek effective engagement strategies to address the complex realities in Afghanistan, moving beyond mere diplomatic or punitive measures. In this context, it is crucial to reassess Afghanistan's historical trajectory, where the land has been used as an instrument by powerful actors, often at the expense of one of the most vibrant and resilient human communities. In the aftermath of the September 2001 attacks, the world bore a heavy cost as the United States' 'war on terror' led to the deaths of over a million unarmed civilians in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, ostensibly in pursuit of justice for the three thousand lost lives. This tragic toll exposes the brutal reality of US foreign policy, which relies on organised violence against perceived threats to its dominance, highlighting the need for a significant realignment. The disgraceful withdrawal from Afghanistan, marked by the abandonment of billions of dollars worth of weapons, exemplifies the catastrophic failure of this approach.

Meanwhile, a recent UNICEF report reveals the severe mental health crisis afflicting Afghan children, with over 24 per cent suffering from anxiety—ten times the global average—and 15 per cent battling depression, underscoring the profound psychological trauma inflicted by the ongoing conflict. Western civilisation often positions itself as the pinnacle of human development, a hubris that has led to immense destruction. The US's quest for global dominance sowed the seeds of terrorism; groups now labelled as terrorists, such as the Afghan Mujahideen, were initially supported by the US through covert operations like Operation Cyclone, with British intelligence aiding in what became one of the most costly US operations. During the Cold War, the US, in its zeal to counter Soviet influence, allied with any force against the USSR, turning a blind eye to human rights and legal norms. While seeking to replicate the Soviet Union's Vietnam misstep, the US supported the Mujahideen in Afghanistan via Pakistan. In 1987, President Reagan praised Mujahideen's progress and promised ongoing support for a free Afghanistan.

Yet, subsequent US actions revealed stark hypocrisy and a readiness to use ruthless tactics for political advantage. The Afghan crisis offers crucial insights into global power dynamics. Understanding the Soviet invasion requires recognising its complex



DURING THE COLD WAR, THE US, IN ITS ZEAL TO COUNTER SOVIET INFLUENCE, ALLIED WITH ANY FORCE AGAINST THE USSR, TURNING A BLIND EYE TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND LEGAL NORMS

background and the rise and fall of Afghanistan's communist regime from 1978 to 1989. The communist ideology, as practised under Stalin, evolved into a form of tribal feudalism, which some in Afghanistan found more appealing than Western market economies. This alignment facilitated political power for those who exploited socialism for their ends, illustrating how political ideologies can be distorted to serve specific interests, ultimately leading to their downfall. The introduction of communism into Afghanistan profoundly impacted its social structure. Afghanistan, a fragmented region with diverse tribal groups and a mountainous terrain, was ill-suited for a unitary political system. Federalism might have been more effective, but this reality was often overlooked, leading to ongoing violence that the Taliban would inherit. In the 20th century, reformist movements emerged, bringing communist ideologies to Afghanistan. Abdulrahman Mahmudi, an early communist figure, founded the newspaper Nida'-yi-Khalq (Voice of the People) and the Hezb-e Khalq (People's Party) in the late 1940s. Although imprisoned and later dying in 1963, Mahmudi's legacy continued through his family until the 1970s, eventually evolving into a Maoist movement. Prominent leftists like Mir Muhammad Siddique Farhan and Noor Muhammad Taraki also played significant roles, with Taraki becoming a key communist leader after returning from India. The Afghan monarchy, led by Mohammad Zahir Shah, was overthrown in a coup by his cousin General Mohammad Dawood Khan on July 17, 1973. Dawood established the Republic of

Afghanistan but was ousted in 1978 by leftist leaders Noor Mohammad Taraki, Babrak Karmal, and Hafizullah Amin, following the assassination of Mir Akbar Khyber. Taraki's presidency and Amin's prime ministership attempted significant social reforms, but their rapid implementation in a culturally resistant society led to widespread protests. The political struggle culminated in a coup by Amin, who ousted Taraki, later reported as dying of an "unknown illness" but suffocated by guards. Key figures in pre-Taliban Afghan politics included Mohammad Zahir Shah, Mohammad Dawood Khan, Mir Akbar Khyber, Noor Mohammad Taraki, and Hafizullah Amin. Mohammad Zahir Shah, king of Afghanistan from 1933 to 1973, oversaw significant social reforms and modernisation efforts. Educated in Kabul and France, Zahir Shah returned to Afghanistan at age 19 and took on various roles within the monarchy. By the early 1960s, he was a respected ruler who embraced democratic principles and established a new parliament, working to modernise Afghanistan and improve living standards. Many nostalgic images of pre-Taliban Afghanistan reflect the successes of his administration. In 1973, while Zahir Shah was in Italy for eye surgery, his cousin Mohammad Dawood Khan overthrew the government and established a new regime. Zahir Shah spent decades in Italy, during which Afghanistan's progress towards democracy was undone. Dawood's regime, followed by the leadership of Noor Mohammad Taraki and Hafizullah Amin, marked a shift towards Cold War-era conflicts. The assassination of Mir Akbar Khyber, whose killer remains debat-

ed, facilitated Taraki and Amin's rise to power. Taraki's government, which came to power in April 1978, was seen as a new dawn but soon became mired in violence and discord. The administration's failure to address the needs of Afghan refugees and internal dissent led to widespread dissatisfaction. Taraki's efforts to implement rapid social reforms, aimed at expediting the revolution, only intensified internal strife and fuelled extremist opposition, further destabilising the country. In August 1978, Noor Mohammad Taraki, addressing the growing Islamic protest movement, remarked: "From the moment our party assumed power, capitalist and reactionary forces have sought to undermine us using religion as a weapon against our progressive agenda. This tactic is outdated and flawed. These forces, driven by imperialistic agendas, aim to overthrow our government, believing they can succeed swiftly. But we are resilient, and their conspiracies are merely remnants of failed efforts against progressive movements." Taraki's statement reflects the early resistance he faced, which he struggled to address effectively.

Internal strife within his party, particularly with Hafizullah Amin, compounded his challenges. Taraki, who once praised Amin's ambition, soon discovered Amin's dangerous intentions. Despite Taraki's belief that Soviet support would safeguard his power, his political naivety and disregard for social realities created a fertile ground for extremist groups nurtured by Pakistan. This eventually led to Amin's rise and the Soviet intervention. To be continued
(The writer is a journalist and author. Views expressed are personal)

Brutality against female doctors raises questions on safety in govt hospitals

The brutal assault on a resident doctor in Kolkata has sent shockwaves across the nation raising questions about systemic negligence

In 1973, Aruna Shanbaug, a 25-year-old nurse at Mumbai's KEM Hospital, was brutally assaulted—raped and strangled with a metal dog chain—which left her in a vegetative state for the next 43 years. Five decades later, history has repeated itself with the horrific rape and murder of a 31-year-old resident doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College. Both crimes occurred within hospital premises, underscoring the vulnerability of female medical staff in supposedly secure environments. The question is inevitable: has the state failed these women—and society—yet again? The recent murder of the Kolkata doctor has sparked outrage across the nation. Protests by junior doctors have



RAHUL KAMBLE

disrupted medical services, as they demand justice and action. While a "civic volunteer" was arrested, there is growing suspicion that more individuals were involved in this gruesome crime. What's particularly alarming is that the assailant may have been a regular visitor to the hospital, raising the likelihood that he had prior interactions with the victim. The nature of her injuries, as revealed by the

post-mortem report, suggests that this was not only an act of sexual violence but also one of intense personal vengeance. Crimes of this brutality—especially those involving rape—are not isolated incidents in India. In 2022, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reported an average of 90 rapes per day. However, authorities acknowledge that the actual number could be much higher, as many rapes go unreported due to societal taboos. Unofficial estimates suggest that over 100 rapes occur daily in India, with a staggering 80% of them classified as brutal. Despite the shocking frequency of such attacks, society and the state have failed to address the root causes effectively. The 1973 case of Aruna

Shanbaug was a grim precursor to today's epidemic of violence against women. After being raped and left for dead by a ward boy, she remained in a coma for 43 years, lovingly cared for by her colleagues. Her assailant, however, served only seven years in jail. Aruna's case remained in the media spotlight for decades, yet no sweeping reforms were made to improve the safety of female medical staff. Hospitals like RG Kar Medical College continue to lack basic security protocols, leaving women vulnerable to heinous acts of violence. Despite the public outcry that followed Aruna's case, and the more recent protests in Kolkata, most state-run hospitals have not implemented adequate safety measures. The issue of relying on "civic



volunteers" instead of trained security personnel has long been a problem in government-run hospitals. These volunteers are often paid meager wages and supplement their income through unofficial means. Many have political affiliations, which give them a degree of immunity from disciplinary action. Year after year, issues related to hospital safety—such as malfunctioning CCTV cameras, poorly lit areas, and inadequate

security staff—are flagged but seldom addressed. These failures have made doctors, especially women, increasingly vulnerable to attacks. The horrific gang rape of a young woman in Delhi in 2012 led to promises of reforms, yet most of these remain unfulfilled. The Nirbhaya Fund, created in the aftermath of that tragedy to improve women's safety, remains largely underutilized. Between 2013 and 2022, less than half of its allocation was spent. The gap between intention and outcome remains wide, and women continue to pay the price for this failure. The implementation of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act of 2013 has been halfhearted at best. Women in the

medical profession are especially vulnerable—not only to sexual assault but also to intimidation and violence from patients, hospital staff, colleagues, and even senior faculty. In many government hospitals, security is virtually nonexistent in certain sections, leaving female staff, including doctors and nurses, at the mercy of anyone who wishes them harm. There is a pressing need for the government to regulate security protocols in medical institutions across the country. Promises on paper are insufficient; action must follow. Hospitals must invest in safe lodging for female doctors, and legislation protecting doctors from violence must be passed without delay. The Supreme Court of India, in May 2023,

criticized authorities for failing to ensure a secure workplace for women. Such failures are not just administrative oversights—they are a direct threat to the lives of women in the medical profession. The case in Kolkata, where the city ironically ranked as the safest in India in 2024 according to NCRB data, exposes a troubling disconnect between official statistics and the grim reality on the ground. The tragic deaths of women like Aruna Shanbaug and the young doctor in Kolkata serve as stark reminders that much remains to be done to protect women in India. Their stories should not just be a cause for temporary outrage but a call to action for systemic change.
(The author is a freelance writer; views are personal)

IN BRIEF



India's forex reserves drop USD 4.8 bn to USD 670.11 bn

India's forex reserves dropped by USD 4.8 billion to USD 670.11 billion for the week ended August 9, the Reserve Bank of India said on Friday. In the previous reporting week, the kitty jumped by USD 7.533 billion to an all-time high of USD 674.919 billion. For the week ended August 9, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, decreased by USD 4.079 billion to USD 587.96 billion, the data released on Friday showed. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. Gold reserves declined by USD 860 million to USD 59.239 billion during the week, the RBI said. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up by USD 121 million to USD 18.282 billion, the apex bank said.



Ashok Leyland sees high enquiry from fleet operators

Commercial vehicle maker Ashok Leyland has been seeing a high number of enquiries from fleet operators amid the segment going through a consolidation phase, the company has said. The company is also expecting the medium and heavy commercial vehicle (MHCV) segment to grow in a single-digit this fiscal as against earlier estimates of a flat growth. Sanjeev Kumar, President for MHCV, Ashok Leyland said on Friday here. Ashok Leyland is hosting a two-day 'Mini Expo' in Navi Mumbai, showcasing its diverse line-up of vehicles, including trucks and buses, in its MHCV portfolio as well as products. Mumbai is among the 11 exclusive locations across India selected for this expo. The MHCV segment comprises multi-axle rigid trucks, haulage trucks, tippers and trailers. Prior to Covid, the mix between the fleet and retail customers would be in the 40:60 ratio, which has been changing now, said Prasad.



RBI tightens norms for P2P lending platforms

The Reserve Bank on Friday tightened norms for Non-Banking Financial Company - Peer to Peer Lending Platforms (NBFC-P2P Lending Platform) to improve transparency and compliance. As per the revised master direction issued by the RBI, a P2P platform should not promote peer-to-peer lending as an investment product with features like tenure-linked assured minimum returns, liquidity options, etc. Non-Banking Financial Company - Peer to Peer Lending Platform (NBFC-P2P Lending Platform) should not cross-sell any insurance product also, which is in the nature of credit enhancement or credit guarantee, it said. No loan should be disbursed unless the lenders and the borrowers have been matched/mapped as per the board-approved policy framed, it added. The RBI issued guidelines for P2P lending in 2017. Such a platform acts as an intermediary providing an online marketplace/platform to the participants involved in peer-to-peer lending.

FDI in food processing sector down 30% to Rs 5,037 cr in '24

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign direct investment (FDI) in India's food processing sector declined 30 per cent in the last fiscal to Rs 5,037.06 crore, according to official data.

The FDI in the food processing sector stood at Rs 7,194.13 crore in 2022-23.

According to the data presented by the Food Processing Industries Ministry in Lok Sabha, the FDI in food processing sector stood at Rs 5,290.27 crore in 2021-22 and Rs 2934.12 crore in 2020-21.

FDI was Rs 6,414.67 crore in 2019-20; Rs 4430.44 crore in 2018-19; Rs 5,835.62 crore in 2017-18; Rs 4,865.85 crore in 2016-17; and Rs 3,312 crore in 2015-16 in the food processing sector.

In order to enhance foreign investment in the food processing sector, the ministry has taken various measures, including 100 per cent FDI permitted through automatic route for the food processing sector subject to sectoral regulations.

It has allowed 100 per cent FDI, under the government approval route, for trading including through e-commerce, in respect of food products manufactured or produced in India. The government has exempted all processed food items from the purview of licensing under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951.

There is a lower GST for raw and processed products. More than 71.7 per cent of food



products under various chapter heads/sub-heads are covered in lower tax slabs of 0 per cent and 5 per cent. The export of processed foods declined 17 per cent to USD 10,881.81 million in 2023-24 from USD 13,078.3 million in the preceding fiscal.

For the development of this sector, the ministry is implementing the Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY) and Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry (PLISFPI) and Prime Minister

Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) schemes.

All these three schemes are demand-driven and implemented across the country.

These schemes are aimed at creation of modern infrastructure with efficient supply chain management from farm gate to retail outlet, and to help in providing better returns to farmers, creation of employment opportunities, reducing wastage, increasing the processing level and enhancing the export of processed foods.

The export of processed foods declined 17 per cent to USD 10,881.81 million in 2023-24 from USD 13,078.3 million in the preceding fiscal



CHECKING BACKGROUND OF THOSE AVAILING PMMY LOAN

NITI Aayog calls for guidelines, E-KYC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government think tank NITI Aayog has pitched for a set of guidelines for assessing the creditworthiness and background verification for those availing loans under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY).

The Aayog in a report titled 'Impact Assessment of PMMY' suggested encouraging E-KYC authentication for loan underwriting. This will enhance the effectiveness of assessment checks.

"A set of guidelines for assessing the creditworthiness and background verification must be enlisted to provide a security net to the banks, considering the loans are collateral free and a proper risk check and assessment has a critical role to play in the sustainability of results and success of the scheme," it said in the report posted on its website.

The majority of borrowers under PMMY are small entrepreneurs who have very limited documents and this makes it difficult for the banks to run verification checks as it

requires more staffing and employees.

The Aayog also suggested that a proper reward mechanism is needed for different banks based on their scale of operation and performance.

It noted that a portal enabling real-time upload of beneficiary data will help streamline the beneficiary data collection.

PMMY, since its inception in 2015 has provided credit support of Rs 18.39 lakh crore to 34.93 crore accounts.

According to the report, compared to the pre-pandemic, the credit disbursements to MSMEs have doubled across segments indicating support for the increasing credit demand by the industry, while the number of NPA accounts and the amount have been increasing year after year with a CAGR of 22.51 per cent and 36.61 per cent respectively from FY 2017.

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector plays a defining role for entrepreneurs and is a key driver of socio-economic development in India.

DEE Development Engineers posts Rs 3.19 cr profit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

DEE Development Engineers Ltd on Friday reported profit after tax at Rs 3.19 crore for the quarter ended June 30, 2024.

However, the company had posted a loss of Rs 4.58 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal, DEE Development Engineers Ltd (DEEL) said in a statement. The total income of the company in the first quarter rose to Rs 188.17 crore over Rs 159.46 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal.

The total order book of the company as on June 30, 2024, stands at Rs 803 crore.

REVISD BALANCE SHEET FOR FY 14-18 IFIN reports cumulative loss of Rs 5,654 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IL&FS Financial Services (IFIN), a group company of debt-ridden IL&FS Ltd, has incurred a cumulative loss of Rs 5,654 crore for the five-consecutive fiscals -- from FY14 to FY18, according to the revised balance sheet of the firm undergoing resolution process.

However, as per the original balance sheet, the company had earned a total profit of Rs 1,015 crore during the five-year period.

Following the recast, the company is exploring the option of seeking a refund of income tax paid from the Income Tax for these years. In June this year, the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) asked the The restated account reflected that the company had actually reported

a loss of Rs 3,322 crore in the financial year ended March 2018. However, the previous management had reported a profit of Rs 100 crore in the said financial year. Similarly, it had booked a loss of Rs 1,315 crore during FY17 against a profit of Rs 209 crore recorded originally. On January 1, 2019, the NCLT passed an order permitting reopening and recasting of the financial accounts of three IL&FS group companies -- IL&FS Transportation, IL&FS Financial Services and IL&FS Engineering.

The order was passed over an application moved by the central government, which had suspended the board of debt-ridden Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) and appointed a six-member panel. IL&FS is settling its over Rs 90,000-

crore debt through asset resolution. So far, IL&FS has discharged a total debt of Rs 35,650 crore as on September 30, 2023, and maintains an overall debt resolution target of Rs 61,000 crore.

It is resolving debts through monetisation and termination/settlement of payments by its group entities from concessioning authorities and counter-party to the relevant contract.

On October 1, 2018, NCLAT superseded the existing board of IL&FS on the recommendation of the Centre after the mega-crisis in IL&FS, which shook the finance industry.

A new board for IL&FS, which had a debt burden of Rs 94,000 crore, was appointed to take charge of the affairs and NCLAT conceived a framework for resolution of the crisis-hit group.



NCRTC invites bids for co-branding rights for its five stations

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The national capital region transport corporation (NCRTC) has invited bids for exclusive semi-naming and co-branding rights for its five stations on the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS corridor, a statement said on Friday.

The five stations for which the semi-naming/co-branding rights are available are Duhai, Murad Nagar, Modi Nagar South, Modi Nagar North and Meerut South, it said. This initiative aims to enhance passenger experience and convenience while generating Non-Fare Box Revenue to support the operational costs of the RRTS Corridor. Brands awarded these rights will have the opportunity to prefix or suffix their names to station names, incorporate their brand colours on station walls, hoardings and entry/exit points, and utilise both bare and built-up retail spaces, the statement said.

Rupee settles flat at 83.94 against US dollar

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The rupee stayed in a narrow range and settled flat at 83.94 (provisional) against the American currency on Friday, as the support from a rally in domestic equities and weak greenback was negated by foreign fund outflows amid geopolitical tensions in the Middle East.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 83.93 and touched the intraday low of 83.96 against the greenback during the session. The local unit finally settled flat at 83.94 (provisional)

against the dollar.

On Wednesday, the rupee settled 3 paise higher at 83.94 against the US dollar.

Forex markets were closed on Thursday on account of Independence Day.

Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, said the positive tone in the domestic markets supported the rupee at lower levels.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias on...geopolitical tension in the Middle East between Israel and Iran.

"Traders may take cues from



US consumer confidence and housing data today. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.75 to Rs 84.25," he added.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.14 per cent at 102.66.

New South Wales eyes double digit growth in footfalls from India

PNS ■ MUMBAI

With more direct air connectivity between Sydney and India and seamless visa approval through e-visa application process, New South Wales (NSW) is eyeing double digit growth in tourist arrivals from India this calendar year.

"We are witnessing a steady growth in international tourist arrivals. In the calendar year 2023, we welcomed 1,81,600 tourists from India. Looking at the current trend coupled with more direct flights connecting India with Sydney, rise in disposable income, and easy e-visa application process, we are expecting to

boost our tourism and the footfalls are likely to grow in double digit." Destination NSW Country Manager Samar Chokshi said. NSW welcomed 3.4 million international visitors, a 104 per cent increase compared to 2019, which is pre-Covid time, he noted. Quoting data from International Visitor Survey, Tourism Research Australia, Chokshi said, in 2023 Indian visitors stayed a total of 7 million nights in NSW, contributing AUD 482.2 million to the state's economy, marking a 109 per cent increase in expenditure compared to 2019.

FIRST IN ASIA

B'loru Airport to receive ACI's level five accreditation

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Kempegowda International Airport operated by Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) has marked a significant milestone by becoming the first airport in Asia to receive Airports Council International's (ACI) the highest Level five accreditation, officials said on Friday.

Bangalore Airport has made a remarkable 95.6 per cent reduction in Scope 1 and 2 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, attaining the highest emission elimination by an Indian airport, achieved seven

years ahead of the initial target of 2030, they said.

The accreditation comes into effect from May 5, 2024.

"BLR Airport has made significant strides in its decarbonisation journey and set new benchmarks by transitioning to 100 per cent renewable electricity and implementing initiatives focusing on sustainable mobility and green infrastructure.

To offset its residual emissions, BLR Airport has procured Airports Council International (ACI) approved carbon units from verified carbon removal projects. Looking



This accomplishment not only sets a new benchmark for us but also reinforces our dedication to creating a greener future for all," Hari Marar, Managing Director and CEO of BIAL said.

ahead towards 2030, BLR Airport has committed to offsetting residual emissions through in-house green landscape projects, further demonstrating its dedication to build a sustainable future," BIAL said in a statement.

"We are delighted to be the first airport in Asia to attain ACI's Level five accreditation and to lead the way with the highest emission elimination by an Indian airport. Achieving Net Zero Greenhouse Gas Emissions seven years ahead of our target is a testament to BLR Airport's unwavering commitment to sustainability.

This accomplishment not only sets a new benchmark for us but also reinforces our dedication to creating a greener future for all," Hari Marar, Managing Director and CEO of BIAL said.

Sensex, Nifty jump nearly 2% to hit over two-week highs on rally

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex spurted by 1,330 points to close at a more than two-week high while Nifty rallied 397 points to settle above the 24,500 level following buying in IT shares and Reliance Industries and a sharp global stocks rally.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 1,330.96 points or 1.68 per cent to settle at 80,436.84, marking its best single-day gains in more than two months. During the day, it zoomed 1,412.33 points or 1.78 per cent to 80,518.21.

HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER
East Wing, 7th Floor, Sakinaka Jayarami Commercial Complex, Anantapur, HYDERABAD-500038.
e-Procurement Tender Notice
NIT No. HMDA/DEV/EO/2024-25 Date: 08.08.2024
Tenders are invited on e-procurement from valid Registered Contractors for the work of "Supply, Delivery, Assembly, Testing, Commissioning of Additional Floating Trash Collectors 2 Nos Big including 2 years comprehensive Operation and Maintenance".
The last date of submission of the bids is on 28.08.2024 up to 3.00 PM. For further details visit: <https://tender.telangana.gov.in>
Sd/-
R.O. No. - 334-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2024-25 Chief Engineer(Ac), HMDA

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
DEPARTMENT FOR EMPowerMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, SENIOR CITIZENS & TRANSGENDER PERSONS: HYDERABAD
NOTIFICATION
Notification No.S1/1799/2024 Dated: 14/08/2024
The Government is intended to establish a Drug De-addiction centre in the O/o Director, Dept for Juvenile Welfare, Correction Services and Welfare of Street Children, Saidabad, Hyderabad. For the establishment of the De-addiction centers, there is need of engaging the positions to run this centre. Accordingly, the Director, Dept for Empowerment of PwDs, Senior Citizens & Transgender persons, Hyderabad is inviting applications from eligible candidates to work in the De-addiction centres. The application form and details can be downloaded from www.wdsc.telangana.gov.in website. The interested candidates may submit their applications along with relevant educational qualification certificates in the O/o Director, Dept for Empowerment of PwDs, Senior Citizens & Transgender persons, Naigonda X Roads, Malakpet, Hyderabad within (10) days from the date of publication of this notification. For any further details contact 040-245590480 during working office hours. The Director, DEPWd, SCATGP, TG, Hyderabad has the right to cancel or modify the notification.
Place: Hyderabad, Date: 14/08/2024
Sd/- SMT B.SHARAJA DIRECTOR

FROM AKOLA'S QUIET STREETS TO HYDERABAD'S ARCHITECTURAL HEIGHTS

AARTI SREENATH

Hyderabad, a symphony of ancient echoes and modern rhythms, found its architect-poet in Shreya Rathi. She is a seasoned design professional with over 18 years of experience shaping Hyderabad's skyline.

A graduate of architecture from Maharashtra University in 2007, she has cultivated a thriving practice specialising in luxury villas, apartments, farmhouses and high-end commercial spaces.

Her journey with Hyderabad began in 2005, when she married Vivek Rathi. At the age of 21, she moved to this city, which she had known only as India's IT hub, largely shaped by the vision of the then Chief Minister Chandra Babu Naidu. Leaving behind her hometown of Akola, a small town near Amravati Maharashtra, she stepped into a bustling metropolis that was rapidly becoming one of India's most significant urban centers.

"I had never visited Hyderabad before my marriage," she shares. "But I knew I was coming to a city already on the global map, known for its cleanliness, safety and high literacy rate." This initial impression was soon overshadowed by a deeper connection as she began to build her life and career in this dynamic environment. The transition from a small town to a large city was challenging; her determination helped her navigate this new chapter successfully.

Hyderabad has been instrumental in shaping her career and personal growth. The city provided her with a platform to achieve recognition and fame. She started her career here, establishing herself in a male-dominated industry. "Architecture, especially in the realm of exteriors and interiors, has always been challenging for women, but Hyderabad has been the perfect stage for me to showcase my skills and break barriers."

With her firm, based in Sonajiguda, she has built a reputation for delivering

high-end, bespoke designs for luxury villas, apartments, commercial spaces and retail showrooms. Her client list includes some of the most influential figures in Hyderabad. She explains, "Each project is an opportunity to learn and evolve and that continuous learning drives me to push boundaries and achieve greater heights in my career."

Over nearly two decades, she has witnessed Hyderabad's remarkable transformation. When she first arrived in 2005, the city was already on an upward trajectory. Today, it exceeds even her highest expectations. "The city has expanded beyond 50 kilometers in diameter and it's amazing to see people from every corner of the country living here." Despite its rapid growth, Hyderabad has maintained its cleanliness and charm. "Hyderabad remains one of the least polluted metropolises in India," she states.

The Outer Ring Road (ORR), a 144-kilometer stretch connecting the city's outer regions, exemplifies Hyderabad's visionary urban planning. "It's a perfect example of how Hyderabad has balanced growth with accessibility, ensuring the city remains connected yet spacious."

The contrast between her hometown of Akola and Hyderabad is stark. While small-town life is simple and close to nature, city life in Hyderabad offers its own set of challenges and opportunities.

"In a city like Hyderabad, everything is more assembled and elevated," she explains. "State-of-the-art facilities and services make daily living easier and more enjoyable." She particularly appreciates the city's infrastructure, including the ORR. "The ORR is a perfect example of Hyderabad's visionary approach to urban planning," she says.

Among her many memories in Hyderabad, one that stands out especially to Shreya is the birth of her daughter, Shravi, in 2012. "It was a moment of pure joy," she recalls. "And the city of Hyderabad will always be intertwined with that happiness. This city has given me so much, both professionally and per-

sonally, and I feel a deep sense of gratitude for everything it has offered me."

Professionally, Hyderabad has been a dream come true for her. "The city has given me the platform to showcase my talents and earn the recognition I have always aspired for," she says. "I believe in constantly learning and evolving. This continuous learning is what drives me to push boundaries and achieve greater heights in my career." She has witnessed Hyderabad's commitment to maintaining a healthy environment.

"Hyderabad is the cleanest metropolis in India," she states. "Despite its massive expansion, it has managed to maintain a high standard of living for its residents." The city's health infrastructure is robust, with well-maintained parks, clean water, efficient drainage systems and excellent roads that make commuting a breeze.

However, she feels that to keep up with global standards, the city needs to continue enhancing its facilities.

When asked about what she loves most about Hyderabad, she is enthusiastic. "I love everything about this city—the climate, the people, the infrastructure and the overall vibe," she says.

"Hyderabad is a place where you can live comfortably without any language barriers, and the peaceful attitude of the people here is something I truly appreciate. The city is green, clean and well-maintained, with no littering on the roads, thanks to the government initiatives."

However, she feels that traffic sense needs improvement. "The driving sense among the people of Hyderabad is something that needs serious attention," she points out. "Traffic sense is lacking, and it's something that needs to be taught to every individual. People don't seem to value the beautiful roads and infrastructure we have, and this needs to change."

She enjoys hosting friends and family from out of town, showing them around Hyderabad based on their interests. "Whether it's a trendy restaurant, a shopping mall, or a temple, Hyderabad has something for everyone," she says. "The city is also one of the most reasonably priced metros in India, whether it's in terms of living space, food, or shopping." For her, sharing the beauty of Hyderabad with her loved ones is a way of celebrating the city that has given her so much. "Hyderabad is a city that leaves

a lasting impression on anyone who visits. It's a place where modernity meets tradition and there's a unique charm in the way the city balances the two."

Reflecting on her journey, she sums up her feelings for Hyderabad succinctly: "Hyderabad, for me, is a dream come true."

This city has been the backdrop to my life's most significant moments, both personal and professional. It's where my dreams have come to life and for that, I am forever grateful." In Hyderabad, Shreya discovered more than just a place to live; she found a space to visualise her aspirations. With each new undertaking, she puts her distinctive mark on the city's constantly changing narrative, making a lasting impact on the community that has provided her with so much.



Hailing from Amravati, Maharashtra, Shreya Rathi found her calling in Hyderabad, creating her mark in the architectural scene. She speaks of her formative journey and her allure for the city, exclusively for our special segment.

Bridging classical grace and pop innovation

TEJAL SINHA

Sneha Astunkar, mentored by ghazal legend Talat Aziz, has risen to fame in the music world by blending classic musical genres with modern influences.

After captivating the audience with her mesmerising voice and poetic imagination with songs like *Rehna Tu Kareeb*, *Meherbaan* and *Bas Yun Hi*, Mumbai-based musician Sneha Astunkar has released her latest monsoon special, *Mohabbat Baaki*.

With lyrics by Priya Saraiya and composed by Hriday Gattani, it was no less than a rewarding experience. Being a collab, Sneha shares, *Mohabbat Baaki* allowed her to learn, discover and experience different styles of composing something soulful while at the same time being modern and contemporary. "Working with Hriday and Priya has enhanced my understanding of looking at a common expression of a song from a unique perspective," she begins in a chat with *The Pioneer*. "Mohabbat Baaki is

all about love that's never complete. Even if it's in your life as a whole, something always remains incomplete about love. The song speaks about two people trying to tell each other how much it would mean to complete it in some way if they reconnect with each other."

A lot of emotions have influenced the lyrics of the song. She's one of those who tries to give meaning to things and situations. "I try to make sense out of a lot of things that happen around me because I

early childhood and gifted me the opportunity to choose to learn and grow with music from an early age. I could do my academic masters in Hindustani classical music and learn music full-time," shares the talented singer, as she began doing shows while learning and eventually travelled to Mumbai, where she found her way towards independent music."

Having always admired, respected and loved the grace that Indian classical music carries, her natural musical language had become that. Having said that, "I have also loved the pop culture that evolved in the 90's in the music industry and I started listening to more of it. That is when I discovered that I am inclined towards playback and playback is more about how experimental your sound can be. That's when I started trying to blend my natural taste in music with pop."

Just like any music lover who enjoys the good old-era songs, Sneha finds her musical influences in Shobha Gurtu, Shobha Mudgal, Begum Akhtar, Mehdi Hassan, Ghulam Ali, Talat Aziz, Hariharan and Shreya Ghosal and she enthuses, "When I used to be a kid and sing in an orchestra, I used to sing Kishore Kumar, Mohammad Rafi and Manna Dey Ji's songs solo. I used to prefer singing Mohammed Rafi Ji's songs over Lata Ji's songs." In the future, she will perform a lovely song created by the highly skilled music composer and producer Sagar Dhote, with whom she started her solo music career. She has also recorded a lovely ghazal written by Talat Aziz, which will be released soon and is also involved in some exciting music projects for certain production companies.

believe that there's always a reason for every single thing that happens to you or around you. The emotions around this particular song are a collective feeling of thoughts that revolve around love, people and situations."

Explaining the precise reasoning behind the phrase *Mohabbat Baaki* proved to be difficult for her. In order to conquer the issue, Sneha began by clarifying her thoughts and creating a clear expectation of the result.

Though not from a 'musical family' background, she comes from a family with music lovers, thus bringing the best of the support. "My parents gauged my inclination towards music in my

Creating a niche for herself in the musical world, Sneha Astunkar has been blending classical music with modern influences. In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, she speaks about her latest *Mohabbat Baaki* track and her musical influences



Through lens of humanity

PNSJ HYDERABAD

On August 15, 2024, the State Gallery of Art in Hyderabad became a stage for the revealing of "Everyday India," an evocative photography exhibition by Ramesh Babu. Marking Independence Day, this exhibition offered a poignant exploration of the ordinary moments that defined the nation. The show will remain open to the public until World Photography Day on August 19, 2024.

As evening approached, the gallery was abuzz with anticipation. The preview event was attended by a distinguished assembly of guests, including human rights activist Prof. Haragopal, Telangana Jana Samithi President Prof. M. Kodandaram and the chief guest, Brigadier (Retd.) Pogula Ganesham, President of Palle Srujana. Guests of honour included Leela Laxma Reddy, President of the Council for Green Revolution and Sri Allu Govinda Reddy, Chairman of Greenspace. The master of ceremonies was Sri Appi Reddy, Chairman of MIC TV and serial entrepreneur.

Brigadier Ganesham reflected on the significance of the exhibition. "This is an extraordinary event that provokes thought regardless of one's background," he said. "What we see here is not just normal situations, but normal people. Ramesh Babu's photography offers a unique perspective that makes

us humble. His static images, devoid of audio or video, speak volumes. Every one of us, including ordinary people, should experience these photographs. They could even be displayed in assemblies and parliaments to remind those in power of the reality outside their offices."

Prof. Haragopal shared his admiration for his work. "Ramesh Babu's photographs are an incredible experience," he stated. "Each image communicates with a language of its own. For example, one powerful photo -



Samanyashastram, is dedicated to portraying the lives of common people with both simplicity and depth. His work captures the struggles and joys of everyday life with exceptional dedication." When asked about the central theme of his show, Ramesh Babu offered a reflective insight. "We often view India as something we revere from a distance," he explained. "But in reality, it's not about grandeur; it's about us, the people. We tend to look

outward when discussing nationality rather than looking inward. My work brings focus to what truly makes a country—its soil and its people. My first picture is of soil, and my last is of a man. The country is not defined by religion or politics but by the land and its people. This is the core of my work. Even after 87 years of independence, many still struggle with basic necessities, revealing a suffering India. 'Everyday India' is not a celebration of political achievements but a humanitarian reflection. Through my pictures, despite vibrant colors, the underlying despair and misery are evident, reflecting the inescapable reality of life for many." The inauguration and subsequent viewing of his well-captured photographs offered a profound portrayal of real Indian life, showcasing poverty, misery and the essence of Indian soil. The event unfolded with a sense of purpose and connection, leaving a lasting impression on all who attended.

graph contrasts children from affluent backgrounds with child laborers, starkly highlighting the disparity. The scale, colours and angles from which these photos are taken create a unique and profound experience."

Artist Hema Nalini, a long-time admirer of his work, added her insights. "I've known Ramesh for five years and his dedication to his art is truly inspiring. As a hobbyist photographer myself, I am deeply moved by his professional approach. His gallery,

EVENT COVERAGE

what's brewing?

Shriti Ladda

Janny

Bindu

Purvi

Palak

PARTY

Photos by - SV Charly

Habibs Salon announced the opening of the new state-of-the-art salon in Serilingampally. The founder of Habibs salon Ahmed Habib and Aman Habib inaugurated this salon along with master franchise for Telangana and Andhra Pradesh Gautam Manghnani, among other guests.

Balaji Gold & Diamond Jewellers announced the opening of its first store, at Film Nagar in Hyderabad. The inauguration will be held on August 19, 2024. The pre-launch event set the stage for an opulent preview of Balaji Gold & Diamond Jewellers' latest offerings. The highlight of the event was a stunning fashion show featuring top models adorned in the brand's exquisite gold and diamond pieces.



Film actors Vijaya Devarakonda and Anand Devarakonda launched the Seven Oak Pets Indo-American Hospital, at Jubilee Hills Road No. 44. This hospital offers a variety of medical services related to pets. Among these services such as routine medical check-ups, surgeries, vaccinations, grooming and boarding have been made available at one place.

Volta announced its strategic collaboration with OHM Automotive Pvt. Ltd. This partnership marks a significant step towards providing luxury, comfortable and eco-friendly transportation options that are affordable for everyone.

The Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI) celebrated the 78th Independence Day of India with great enthusiasm and patriotism at its building in Red Hills, Hyderabad. Suresh Kumar Singhal, the President of FTCCI, hoisted the National flag in the presence of FTCCI members, past presidents who have assembled in large numbers.

FUN

ARCHIE

EVER THOUGHT OF BEING A DOCTOR AND WORKING IN THE FIELD OF MEDICINE?

I THOUGHT THEY WORKED IN OFFICES!

I DON'T THINK I'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A SURGEON!

HOW COME?

HENRY BOGART'S GOING BOLOMAN

I'VE NEVER BEEN GOOD ABOUT PUTTING THINGS BACK WHERE I FOUND 'EM!

CALVIN AND HOBBS

WOW! I CAN'T BELIEVE WE FOUND A DINOSAUR SKULL ON OUR VERY FIRST ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG!

IT'S COMPLETELY INTACT, TOO! WHAT A DISCOVERY!

MAYBE THE REST OF THE SKELETON IS NEARBY!

YEAH! IF WE CAN FIND THE WHOLE THING, WE'LL BE WORLD FAMOUS!

WITH THE GRANT MONEY WE'LL GET, WE CAN BUY A FORSCHE!

HOW WILL THIS LOOK ON THE COVER OF NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC?

GARFIELD

I HAVEN'T SEEN A MOUSE ALL WEEK. GOOD JOB, GARFIELD!

HOW WAS THE VACATION?

GREAT!

BUT IT'S ALWAYS GOOD TO GET BACK HOME

REALITY CHECK

MY VOICE WAH WAH KEEPS CHANGING BETWEEN MY WAH WAH KID VOICE AND WAH WAH MY ADULT VOICE. GOOD WAH WAH!

CHARLIE BROWN HITS PUBERTY

SPEED BUMP

TODAY ON RESIGNING FROM POLITICAL OFFICE TO SPEND MORE TIME WITH MY SANITY.

CROSSWORD

NANCY

READING SOCIAL MEDIA ALL DAY IS MAKING ME GRUMPY

WHY DON'T YOU GO OUTSIDE?

FINE

NOW THERE'S GLARE ON MY SCREEN!!!

SUDOKU

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

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

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

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: ★★☆☆☆

ACROSS

- 6 An old record-player
- 8 Set fire to
- 10 Has a conversation
- 13 A very rich person
- 14 Someone who cares for the sick and injured
- 17 Part of a flower
- 19 Not willing to be friends

DOWN

- 11 Not asleep
- 12 Say "yes" with your head
- 15 A flat squarish thing used like a boat
- 16 Wicked
- 17 Mix red and white to make this colour
- 18 Story

SOLUTION

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



HARISH SHANKAR: THERE'S NEVER A DAY I DON'T LISTEN TO MUSIC

K. RAMYA SREE

Mass Maharaja Ravi Teja and mass director Harish Shankar's highly anticipated film *Mr. Bachchan* is creating a huge buzz with all its commercial elements. Produced by T.G. Vishwaprasad under People Media Factory banner, the movie features Bhagyashree Borse alongside Ravi Teja. *Mr. Bachchan* hit the theatres on Thursday. Although the film didn't perform up to the audiences' expectations, Harish Shankar shared, "In the lives of honest individuals, there is fun, romance and love. The authenticity in his love and his fight scenes are central to the film. Everything comes from the point of authenticity. 'Ride' was a bit serious, with the first and second halves sharing a single backdrop, which might stress the audience. We

Filmmaker and scriptwriter Harish Shankar, whose latest release *Mr. Bachchan* has opened to rave reviews, shares insights about bringing authenticity with the film, *Big B's* influence on him and more

avoided that in this film." Even when we did a 'Dil Se' interview with the director earlier, he stressed on the influence he had of Amitabh Bachchan on him and even now, sharing about the influence on him to follow this kind of a commercial film template, he said, "My father is a big Amitabh Bachchan fan. When I was in intermediate school, he realised I had a passion for films. From a young age, I have loved Telugu and Hindi literature and movies. I was very influenced by the dialogues in films by *Jandhyala, Babu* and *Ramana*. I was also attracted to the films of E.V.V. Satyanarayana." Continuing about his love for literature, he shared, "I have loved literature since childhood. There might be days I don't watch movies, but there's never a day I don't listen to music. There's no inspiration like a good line. Music is a therapy for me.

I am accustomed to listening to lyrics carefully and getting inspired. I aim to create songs that are memorable for their lyrics. Kasarla Shyam, Vanamali, Bhaskara Bhatla and Sahithi have written beautiful lyrics for this film. This story is set in the days of cassette recording centers. Back then, posters were put up in a grand manner for cassette records. To remind us of that time, we included posters of Amitabh Bachchan and Chiranjeevi in the lyrical video." Lastly, heaping praises for his producer, he said, "Without Vishwaprasad, this film wouldn't have come out so grandly or been released on the 15th. He gave more than we asked for, regardless of market and financial equations. When Kalyan was busy with elections during *Ustaad Bhagat Singh*, we set a target to finish the film by the time results came in. With a hero like Ravi

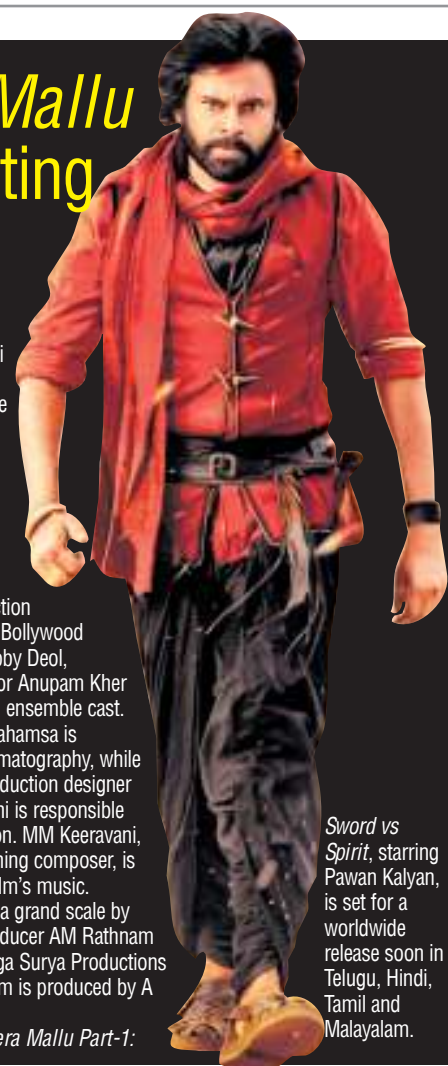


tollywood

Hari Hara Veera Mallu team begins shooting epic war scene

Power Star Pawan Kalyan's upcoming epic action saga, *Hari Hara Veera Mallu*, has resumed updates after a necessary hiatus due to unforeseen circumstances. The team is thrilled to announce a major development for fans and movie enthusiasts. Regular shooting for *Hari Hara Veera Mallu Part-1* officially commenced on August 14. On Friday, they began filming a grand war sequence, choreographed by renowned action director Stunt Silva. This massive battle scene features over 400-500 fighters and junior artists. Pawan Kalyan will join the shoot for this sequence shortly, as he is currently occupied with his political responsibilities. The production house has meticulously planned an extravagant schedule to capture this war scene, which will showcase Pawan Kalyan in a dynamic and unprecedented avatar. Portraying a historical warrior outlaw for the first time in his career, Pawan Kalyan is set to deliver an exhilarating performance with *Hari Hara Veera Mallu Part-1: Sword vs Spirit*.

The teaser, following director Jyothi Krishna's takeover of the project, has generated immense excitement among fans and movie-goers. This prestigious action saga features Bollywood sensation Bobby Deol, legendary actor Anupam Kher and a talented ensemble cast. Manoj Paramahansa is handling cinematography, while legendary production designer Thotha Tharani is responsible for art direction. MM Keeravani, an Oscar-winning composer, is creating the film's music. Presented on a grand scale by legendary producer AM Rathnam under his Mega Surya Productions banner, the film is produced by A Dayakar Rao. *Hari Hara Veera Mallu Part-1: Sword vs Spirit*.

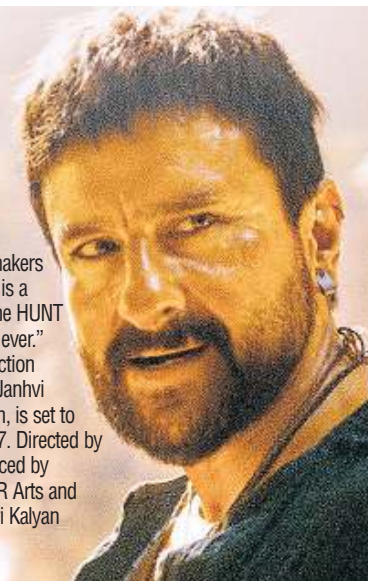


Sword vs Spirit, starring Pawan Kalyan, is set for a worldwide release soon in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil and Malayalam.

Saif brings celebration of havoc as 'Bhaira' in *Devara*

To celebrate actor Saif Ali Khan's birthday, the makers of *Devara* released a thrilling glimpse of his character, Bhaira. The 52-second action-packed video showcases the actor in two intense avatars. From a packed wrestling arena to a relentless chase through dense forests, Saif's portrayal is raw and commanding. Fans, eagerly awaiting a peek into Saif's role, were not disappointed. This new video offers a glimpse of a side to the actor we've never seen before - fierce, ruthless and

undeniably captivating. Sharing the video, the makers declared, "His Presence is a Celebration of Havoc. The HUNT will be more brutal than ever." *Devara*, a high-octane action thriller starring Jr NTR, Janhvi Kapoor and Saif Ali Khan, is set to release on September 27. Directed by Koratala Siva and produced by Yuvasudha Arts and NTR Arts and presented by Nandamuri Kalyan Ram.



Horror thriller *Demonte Colony 2* to release on August 23

The highly anticipated sequel *Demonte Colony 2* is set for its grand Telugu release on August

23rd. This follow-up to the successful *Demonte Colony* stars Arulnithi and Priya Bhavani Shankar, with key roles played by Antti Jaskelainen, Tsering Dorjee and Arun Pandian. Produced by Raj Varma Entertainment, Shree Balaji Films, Gnanamuthu Pattarai and White Knights Entertainment, the film is directed by Ajay R Gnanamuthu, with Vijaya Subrahmaniam and RC Rajkumar serving as producers. *Demonte Colony 2* premiered in Tamil on August 15 and has received positive feedback, even holding its own against major releases like *Thangalaan*. As it prepares for its Telugu release, the film's popularity is expected to grow further. The Telugu trailer has already sparked significant interest, and the team is hopeful for a strong response from local audiences who enjoy horror thrillers.



'Working with Vikram is an experience I will cherish forever,' exclaims Malavika

Malavika Mohanan has created a buzz with the release of her upcoming Tamil film, *Thangalaan*. In her role as Aarathi, she has captivated audiences with her compelling performance. The film has garnered a warm

reception from both viewers and critics and fans are eagerly anticipating its release in Hindi. Reflecting on the Tamil release, Malavika shared her excitement and anticipation for the film's Hindi debut on August 30. She said, "Today is incredibly special for me. *Thangalaan* (Tamil) has been released and I'm eagerly looking forward to the Hindi audience experiencing it. Working with Vikram and the entire *Thangalaan* team has been a remarkable journey, one I will always cherish. I feel fortunate to work alongside such a talented co-star like Vikram, whom I have long admired. Portraying a unique and powerful character in this exceptional story has been thrilling. I can't wait for everyone to see the dedication and passion that went into making this film." With *Thangalaan* now out in Tamil, it is set to win the hearts of Hindi-speaking audiences when it releases soon.



Brahmanandam's first look from *Brahma Anandam* is here

Hasya Brahma and Padma Shri Brahmanandam, along with his son Raja Goutham, will be featured as a grandfather and grandson in the upcoming entertainer *Brahma Anandam*. Directed by debutant RVS Swadharm Entertainment, with Smt. Savithri and Sri Umesh Yadav presenting, the film promises to be a delightful experience. The timeless joy of Brahmanandam is beautifully captured in his first look from *Brahma Anandam*. The actor makes a charming appearance in traditional attire, radiating a warm and engaging smile. The first look poster has already created a positive buzz and the film's initial glimpse is set to be unveiled on August 19, as confirmed by the makers.

Given the success of previous films from the banner, such as *Malli Rava*, *Agent Sai Srinivasa Athreya*, and *Masooda*, expectations for *Brahma Anandam* are high. The story revolves around Brahma, a self-centered and sarcastic grandson who exploits everyone around him, and Anand Ram Murthy, a kind-hearted grandfather who tries to be benevolent to all. Despite their contrasting personalities, the duo embarks on a journey together, leading to a narrative filled with humour, joy, challenges, and new beginnings. Priya Vadlamani and Aishwarya Holakkal star as the female leads, while Vennela Kishore takes on a significant role. Sampath and Rajeev Kanakala also feature prominently. Sandilya Pisapati is responsible for the music, Mitesh Parvathaneni handles the cinematography and Prasanna is the editor.



Cinematic excellence crowned: Aattam, Kantara and Ponniyin Selvan lead charge!

AARTI SREENATH

The 70th National Film Awards, held at the illustrious National Media Center in New Delhi, unfolded as a night to remember, a grand tribute to the brilliance and diversity of Indian cinema in 2022. Amidst the glittering lights and a tapestry of cinematic artistry, the Malayalam-language drama *Aattam* ascended to the pinnacle, clinching the coveted Best Feature Film award, a reflection onto the power of storytelling that transcends language. In a symphony of accolades, the name of Oscar-winner A.R. Rahman resonated like a timeless melody. The maestro once again for the seventh time enchanted the nation, winning the National Film Award for Best Music Director (Background Score) for his work in Mani Ratnam's epic *Ponniyin Selvan: Part 1*. This Tamil masterpiece not only captivated audiences but also claimed four prestigious awards, leading the night's honors and etching its name into the annals of cinematic history. Vikram, reflecting on the film's triumph, poignantly wrote, "Blessed that *PS1* is crowned with national recognition, propelled by the love of the audience. Tamil history, literature, culture and cinema marching triumphantly

together from the past to the present!! Congratulations Mani Sir, @LycraProductions, @arrahman, and @dop_ravivarma #Nationalawards." The Telugu industry witnessed a triumphant surprise with *Karthikeya 2*, a mystery action-adventure with devotional undertones, helmed by Chandoo Mondeti. Emerging as a sleeper hit, the film's success transcended linguistic boundaries, resonating deeply even in the Hindi belt. This cinematic gem, featuring Nikhil, Anupama Parameswaran, and Anupam Kher, was honored with the National Award for Best Regional Film (Telugu). An elated Nikhil expressed, "I'm thrilled that *Karthikeya 2* won the national award," his words echoing

the joy of a journey fulfilled. In the realm of Kannada cinema, Rishab Shetty stood tall, winning the Best Actor award for his spellbinding performance in *Kantara*. Overwhelmed and deeply moved, Shetty dedicated the honor to his roots, saying, "I am truly overwhelmed by the honor of this National Award for *Kantara*. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has been part of this journey—the incredible team of artists, technicians, and especially Hombale Films. The audiences have made this film what it is, and their support fills me with a deep sense of responsibility. I am committed to working even harder to bring an even better film to our viewers. With utmost respect, I dedicate this award to our Kannada audience, the Daiva Nartakas, and Appu sir. I thank the divine as we have reached this moment through the blessings of the Daivas."

The night shimmered with shared glories as the Best Actress award was jointly bestowed upon Nithya Menen for *Thiruchitrambalam* and Manasi Parekh for *The Kutch Express*, celebrating the dynamic range and depth of female performances in Indian cinema. Sooraj Barjatya's directorial triumph, *Uunchai*, earned him the Best Director award, a fitting tribute to his heartwarming narrative that touched the soul of the nation. *Kantara* did not just win hearts but also accolades, as it was named the Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment. Hombale Films, the powerhouse behind *Kantara* and *KGF Chapter 2*, basked in the glory of four awards, cementing their legacy in the annals of Kannada cinema. Prashanth Neel, the visionary behind *KGF Chapter 2*, expressed his gratitude, saying, "I am truly honored by this National Award for *KGF Chapter 2*. My deepest gratitude

goes to Yash for his extraordinary performance and to the entire team and crew for their relentless dedication. A heartfelt thank you to our audience for their unwavering support and to the media for their vital role in this journey. Congratulations to Rishab Shetty and Hombale Films for their well-deserved recognition with *Kantara*. This achievement is a shining moment for Kannada cinema, and I'm grateful to everyone who made this possible." The cinematic tapestry of the night was further enriched by Ayan Mukerji's *Brahmastra: Part One - Shiva*, which dazzled with three National Film Awards. Mukerji, brimming with gratitude, shared, "It's a special day for us. I am deeply grateful for the recognition *Brahmastra: Part One - Shiva* has received at the National Awards. The music of the film holds a special place in all our hearts. Pritam Da's compositions, coupled with Amitabh's lyrics and Arijit's voice, are

something I feel so proud and grateful for. From the music to the visual effects, we poured a lot of love into making this film, and I thank the entire team for this fantastic collaborative effort, which continues to give us so much love." As the night drew to a close, the National Film Awards stood as a testament to the rich and diverse landscape of Indian cinema. Films like *Saudi Velakka CC.225/2009*, awarded Best Malayalam Film and *Karthikeya 2*, honored as Best Telugu Film, highlighted the vast spectrum of stories that continue to captivate and inspire audiences across the nation. Each award, each speech, was a reminder of the profound impact that cinema has on our collective imagination, a symbol of creativity that will continue to shine brightly in the years to come.



Horse riding, bharatnatyam and skating on Manu's mind during break from shooting

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Her shooting hand bruised by repeated pistol recoils during unrelenting training, Manu Bhaker will take a well deserved three month break. But it will be no vacation. The double Olympic medallist will continue her other routines including yoga and waking up at 6 am — which she hates. And oh yes. She also plans to catch up on her hobbies — horse riding, skating, Bharatnatyam and violin practice to name a few. The 22-year-old, who won bronze medals in the 10m air pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team (partnering Sarabjot Singh), was at PTI headquarters on Friday along with her coach and shooting great Jaspal Rana for a freewheeling interaction with its editors. Proudly flaunting her medals, the vivacious youngster from Haryana's Jhajjar spoke about

her Paris preparations, how the Tokyo setback was nothing more than a distant memory now, and also her plans to indulge in everything that she put on hold for her Olympic dreams. "Now, I have some time off and I can probably do that (martial arts) again," said Bhaker, a karate kid in her teens before a change of heart led her to shooting. "I was not able to get that kind of time to invest myself into that (martial arts). Finally, I can take time off for my hobbies, and I have many, many hobbies. Horse riding... Personally, I love horse riding, skating, I can still manage on the roads, then fitness, I really enjoy working out. "Then, I have dance (as a hobby) also, I am learning Bharatnatyam. I love the dance forms. I was training in France, I wasn't able to get time, not able to cope up with the (Bharatnatyam) classes," said Bhaker, whose trainer is from

Tamil Nadu. "She takes my classes personally and then I have violin also," she added. As she revealed her bucket list for the "holiday", Rana had a faint smile on his face and he also made it a point to shake his head in disapproval at the very mention of horse riding. "...Then she has to come back in one piece," Rana said, drawing a laugh from Bhaker. "Skating and horse riding are something she should not be doing and she'll be responsible for whatever happens. Who rides a horse thinking that they will fall?" he wondered aloud. A bemused Bhaker was not going to back down easily, their banter also being a reflection of the easy equation between one of the most talked about coach-player combinations in Indian sports right now. "I have been learning horse riding for sometime now," she retorted immediately, asserting that she would be responsible



if anything goes haywire. "I was waiting that after the Olympic, I will do horse riding. And so many other things I want to do like skydiving, scuba diving. I've waited for so long," she said, inviting another shake of the head from Rana. On his part, Rana was clear that the break was to ensure that the youngster's shooting hand gets back to full fitness. "This (pointing to her injured hand) is the reason we are making her rest for three months. Because this (injury) has been for the last eight months and it has not healed till now," Rana said. "So rest is mandatory for the hand, and we had decided much before the World Cup (Final was awarded to New Delhi)... Our decision to stop for three months was before that," he added. "It will not be very easy but this break is required. It's not something we'll enjoy. It's only the shooting part which will

not be there but her mental (training) waking up in the morning for yoga, everything will be as per what we were doing. Because that's the lifestyle she has to follow." Bhaker will not compete in the season-ending prestigious ISSF World Cup Final for elite shooters from across the world in October in Delhi, and also likely skip the national championships and the camps that will follow to tend to her injured hand. Bhaker had done a rendition of the national anthem on a violin, gifted to her by her brother, and a video of it went viral after her Paris performance. "Yes, I was able to manage something on the violin, but I'm only on the basics," said the champion shooter. "Indian classical is my preference, but I'm only like beginning to learn it, so I'm not at the advanced level. I'm just one month into it... Just the basics."



Have to prepare mentally to transition from player to coach: Sreejesh

PTI ■ KOCHI

Indian hockey's goalkeeping stalwart P R Sreejesh, who was given a grand welcome on his arrival at the international airport here, said he will be spending the next 2-3 months to mentally prepare himself to transition from a player to a coach. With regard to the enthusiastic welcome given to him, including a roadshow from the airport to Palairavattom here, he said it was like the "cherry on top of the cake". "Working hard for the country, sacrificing a lot and then winning a medal, it is not just for me, but for the country. So, to be a part of this happiness, the welcome organised by everyone, is like the cherry on top of the cake. The pleasure is doubled," he said, speaking to reporters outside the airport. Regarding the next step of his career, Sreejesh said that he knows what he has to do as a player.

"But, as a coach, what all I should do or the transition from a player to a coach, I have to mentally prepare for that. So, I will spend the next 2-3 months on that," he said. A big crowd, including several MLAs, welcomed Sreejesh at the airport. People holding up placards with his photo cheered him on as he came out of the airport. Thereafter, the hockey player held a roadshow from the airport in an open-top jeep. Along the route of his roadshow, people waved and cheered him on, some handed him flowers and bouquets and others walked up to his vehicle to shake his hand and congratulate him, according to visuals shown on TV channels. Sreejesh bid adieu to the game following his starring role in the country's second consecutive Olympic bronze at the just-concluded Paris Games. He is now going to be the team coach of the junior Indian hockey team.

Australia's Minjee Lee leads rain-delayed Women's Scottish Open with opening 67

AP ■ IRVINE (SCOTLAND)

Two-time major champion Minjee Lee of Australia managed a strong wind and caught a break with rare sunshine in a wet Scottish summer with a 5-under 67 for a one-shot lead in the ISPS Handa Women's Scottish Open before play was stopped for the day. Lydia Ko, coming off her Olympic gold medal that put her into the LPGA Hall of Fame, faced the worst of the weather at Dundonald Links and made five birdies in her round of 69. Former U.S. Women's Open champion A Lim Kim and American Megan Khang were at 68. The opening round was suspended by bad weather and a water-logged course. Lily May Humphreys of England was at 4 under with six holes to play. Play was



halted at the start for about an hour because of rain, and there was another weather delay of 2 hours, 20 minutes. Lee is coming off a disappointing Olympics outside Paris when she was never in the hunt and wound up finishing in a tie for 22nd. She played bogey-free on a tough course, picking up birdies on both

par 5s on the back nine. "Always a happy girl after a bogey-free round," Lee said. "I feel like I played smart golf, I'd say. I gave myself a lot of opportunities for birdie. I feel like when I was in trouble, I kind of missed it in the right spots and could get up-and-down, so that was good." Lee figures she caught a break not having to deal with the brunt of the rain, although there was no escaping the fierce wind. Ko got the worst of both, describing the weather as so chaotic that she was too busy dealing with it to get overly stressed. "If it's just windy, it's fine. But it was windy and rain," Ko said. "It's hard when you have to hold the umbrella sideways and not up. I'm pretty sure it was built for you to hold it like vertically. So it's just very difficult out there."



Smith eyes IPL comeback after stellar show in MLC

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Boostered by his strong show at the Major League Cricket, veteran Australian batter Steve Smith is hopeful of making a return in the Indian Premier League next year. The 35-year-old, who was ignored for the T20 World Cup and the upcoming tour of Scotland and England, guided the Washington Freedom to their maiden MLC title, finishing the T20 tournament as the franchise's equal leading run-scorer with 336 runs at a strike rate of 148.67. Smith made a 52-ball 88 against a bowling attack that featured Australian captain Pat Cummins and Pakistan quick Haris Rauf in the final against the San Francisco Unicorns and was adjudged the player-of-the-match. "I'd certainly love another opportunity at IPL. I'll be throwing my name in the hat, and we'll see how we go," Smith was quoted as saying by FOX Cricket. "I feel like in every opportunity I've had in T20 cricket recently and franchise stuff, I've played

quite nicely. So hopefully I just keep putting my name up there and enjoying it." Smith has not featured in the IPL since 2021, having gone unsold in the previous two auctions. With the national selectors preferring youngsters, the veteran also opened up on his axing and said he would go about his business trying to get better. "In terms of international T20s, I don't know what's going on there," Smith said. "They've obviously got some people they want to bring in, and that's fine. "I understood the way that they wanted to stack up for the World Cup, with all the strong guys that smack it miles. I understood that. "I'm not that fussed. I'll just go about my business, keep trying to improve and get better." Asked about giving a shot at winning gold at the Los Angeles Olympics in 2028, Smith said: "That's still a while away as well, so we'll wait and see. Never say never. "I did watch quite a bit (of the Paris Olympics). I quite enjoyed it."

Grand chess tour: Nothing changes for Praggnanandhaa, Firouzja leads

PTI ■ SAINT LOUIS (USA)

Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa could not really change his fortunes for the better and remained in last spot going into the final day of the Saint Louis Rapid and Blitz chess tournament here. Before that, he won a couple of games in the blitz section. Praggnanandhaa scored two wins at the expense of present favourites Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia and Hikaru Nakamura of Russia besides a lone draw with tournament leader Alireza Firouzja of France but lost the remaining six games in the first leg of blitz that kept him on the



bottom of the tables with only nine rounds remaining in the blitz section. Alireza Firouzja made most of his opportunities count to shoot into sole lead on 17.5 points and now enjoys 1.5 points lead over Wesley So of United States, who happened to score the most (7/9) in the blitz section, and Nepomniachtchi. The other leader Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France slipped to fourth spot on 15.5 point, a half point clear of wild card Armenian-turned-American Levon Aronian. Nakamura, who started off as a favourite in the blitz section, is in sixth spot on 13.5 points, ahead of tour leader and compatriot Fabiano Caruana who has 13 points. American Lenier Dominguez on 12 points is eighth at this point ahead of Nodirbek

Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan who has 10 points in all. Praggnanandhaa remains a distant last on 6.5 points, looking for a change in fortunes on the final day. Wesley So was the surprising star of the day winning six, drawing two and losing just one game against Firouzja in nine rounds of blitz. The result propelled the American to joint second spot. However, Firouzja still remains set to win the crown given his 1.5 points lead and if that happens he can even overtake Caruana as the leader of the tour with just one event remaining in form of Sinquefeld cup set to begin from August 18.

Increased participation should be our goal in new Olympic cycle: Chef de Mission Narang

PTI ■ PARIS

Chef de Mission Gagan Narang hailed India's performance in the just-concluded Paris Olympics and said it's time to chalk out a strategic roadmap ahead of the new Olympic cycle to increase the participation in the 2028 Games in Los Angeles. A total of 117 Indian athletes participated across 16 disciplines at the Paris Games and India ended their campaign with six medals - one silver and five bronze. "Firstly, I congratulate the medal winners. A total of 6 medals (1 Silver, 5 Bronze) is a commendable effort," said Narang ahead of his return from the French capital. "Though, personally, I feel we could have finished with a few more medals, it is worth mentioning the near-misses. There were at least six 4th place finishes and quite a few of our athletes finished in the finals of their respective events. "This is encouraging, and we should take heart from these results, introspect on the fine margins and how we can better these performances," he added. Narang, who had won a bronze in shooting at the London Olympics, said the National Sports Federations (NSFs) should chart out a roadmap to



increase participation in the next Games. "We must find ways to build a strong sports culture and increase the number of participations from India. That should be our goal for this new Olympic cycle," he said. "Also, most importantly I feel whilst we are teaching our athletes how to win, we must also teach them how to accept defeat and come back with a bang." There were six fourth place finishes in Paris and Narang said it is important to take lessons from the near misses and move ahead. "There are many learnings and

take away from these performances in Paris. From what I saw at this Olympics, it's only the small margins that we need to close in now to elevate this performance," he said. "I will be submitting my observations in an extensive report to the IOA and Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. While India has come a long way in the past decade, and we had a fully equipped medical team at the village with Dinshaw Pardiwala as CMO. "We will grow from strength to strength to compete with the USA and China in the future in sport science backup as well." "NEED TO CREATE A PATHWAY FOR ATHLETES": Narang said collective efforts must be made to chart an athlete's career trajectory, which also includes long-term financial literacy and utilising the athlete's experience by absorbing them into the system. "To further the growth, collective efforts are being made and should be strengthened further to chart our athlete's career. We need to plan life after sport for an athlete so that their approach is long term," he said. "Financial literacy, absorbing them into the system and utilizing their knowledge and experience, creating job opportunities in district, state and national sports organizations as administrators and coaches should be a priority." Narang said such steps will help athletes to pursue their events with confidence. "Only then will parents and the athletes feel secure to pursue sport professionally and invest their time and efforts in it. We must also focus on athlete's mental well-being, this is extremely critical for athletes to feel assured and that they are cared for," he noted.

SA20 season three player auction to be held on October 1

PTI ■ DURBAN

The player auction ahead of the third season of the SA20 will take place in Cape Town on October 1 with a total of 13 slots left to be filled, announced Graeme Smith, the league commissioner. The upcoming edition of the SA20 is scheduled to be held from January 9 to February 8 next year. Following the conclusion of the pre-signing and retention window, the teams will have to pick up 13 more players from the auction. Retired India wicketkeeper batter Dinesh Karthik recently joined Paarl Royals, becoming the first player from the country to join the South African league. In addition to this, each franchise will also need to select their 'Season 3 Rookie', while three of the franchises still have a wildcard to announce before December 30. Apart from Karthik, international stars like Ben Stokes, Kane Williamson, Joe Root, Trent Boult, Johnny Bairstow, Devon Conway, Zak Crawley, Rashid Khan and Rahmanullah Gurbaz will also be seen in action in the league. "To have the calibre of international players joining local heroes like Aiden Markram, KG (Kagiso Rabada) and Heinrich (Klaasen) sets up an explosive season," Smith stated in a release.



"We are also incredibly proud of all the domestic players who have been retained by the teams, including the majority of the rookies who have been incorporated as fully-contracted players for Season 3," he added. **SQUADS AS THEY STAND AHEAD OF SEASON 3 AUCTION:** **DURBAN'S SUPER GIANTS:** Brandon King, Quinton De Kock, Naveen Ul Haq, Kane Williamson, Chris Woakes, Preenlan Subrayen, Dwayne Pretorius, Keshav Maharaj, Noor Ahmed, Heinrich Klaasen, Jon-Jon Smuts, Wiaan Mulder, Junior Dala, Bryce Parsons, Matthew Breetzke, Jason Smith, Marcus Stoinis. **JOBURG SUPER KINGS:** Faf du Plessis, Moeen Ali, Jonny Bairstow, Maheesh Theekshana, Devon Conway, Gerald Coetzee, David Wiese, Leus Du

Plooy, Lizaad Williams, Nandre Burger, Donavon Ferreira, Imran Tahir, Sibonelo Makhanya, Tabraiz Shamsi. **MI CAPE TOWN:** Rashid Khan, Ben Stokes, Kagiso Rabada, Trent Boult, Azmatullah Omarzai, Dawald Brevis, Ryan Rickelton, George Linde, Nuwan Thushara, Connor Esterhuizen, Delano Potgieter, Rassie Van Der Dussen, Thomas Kaber, Chris Benjamin. **PRETORIA CAPITALS:** Anrich Nortje, Jimmy Neesham, Will Jacks, Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Will Smeed, Migael Pretorius, Rilee Rossouw, Eathan Bosch, Wayne Parnell, Senuran Muthusamy, Kyle Verreynne, Daryn Dupavillon, Steve Stolk, Tiaan van Vuuren. **PAARL ROYALS:** David Miller, Mujeeb Ur-Rahman, Sam Hain, Joe Root, Dinesh Karthik, Kwena Maphaka, Lhuan-dre Pretorius, Bjorn Fortuin, Lungi Ngidi, Mitchell Van Buuren, Keith Dudgeon, Nqaba Peter, Andile Phehlukwayo, Codi Yusuf, John Turner, Dayaana Galim, Jacob Bethell. **SUNRISERS EASTERN CAPE:** Aiden Markram, Zak Crawley, Roelof van der Merwe, Liam Dawson, Ottneil Baartman, Marco Jansen, Beyers Swanepoel, Caleb Seleka, Tristan Stubbs, Jordan Hermann, Patrick Kruger, Craig Overton, Tom Abell, Simon Harmer, Andile Simelane, David Bedingham.