

The Government got a report that 41,78,892 farmers took loans from bankers which amounts to Rs 31,000 crore. Small and marginal farmers majorly have loans under Rs 2 lakh; so, we decided to clear off those loans first. We are working closely with banks and local authorities to ensure that every farmer who is eligible receives the benefit of the loan waiver.

- Tummala Nageshwar Rao, Agriculture Minister



Poland visit will add momentum to bilateral friendship:
PM

'INDIA, AFRICA MUST TARGET \$200 BN TRADE IN NEXT 7 YEARS'

Mahesh to lend his voice for 'Mufasa' in The Lion KING TELUGU

DON'T MISS...

TG SEC sets Sept 21 for final...

The Telangana State Election Commission, under the guidance of State Election Commissioner C Partha Sarathi, has officially set September 21, 2024, as the date for the final publication of the Gram Panchayat Photo Electoral Rolls. According to the notification, the preparation of the draft electoral rolls will begin on September 6, 2024, with the rolls to be displayed at gram panchayat and mandal parishad offices. The rolls will include detailed ward division information. The notification also specifies that a series of meetings will...

-PAGE: 3

Women sports envoy figures...

Chief Minister of Telangana A Revanth Reddy has decided to frame the Telangana sports policy so that every student from the remotest school level can participate in at least one sport. Accordingly, the State-level committee meeting was held on Wednesday at Hyderabad Tourism Plaza to draft a strong sports policy to prepare and encourage talented athletes who will bring recognition to the State at the national and international level. The draft was read out to the participants...

-PAGE: 3

72% of employers plan to hire...

With gradual improvement in the job market, a report on Wednesday has revealed that 72 per cent of employers interviewed intend to hire freshers in the second half (July-December) of this year. The 72 per cent hiring intent represents a 4 per cent increase from the first half of this year and a 7 per cent rise compared to the second half of 2023, suggesting a gradually improving employment landscape for fresh talent. TeamLease EdTech's 'Career Outlook Report HY2' (July-December)...

-PAGE: 8

Border Gavaskar Trophy on par...

Australia pace ace Mitchell Starc believes that with the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy against India becoming a five-Test affair for the first time in over three decades, it would be "right on par" with the esteemed Ashes series for his team. The marquee series between India and Australia, set to begin in November, was extended by a match this year for the first time since the 1991-92 season. "Being five matches now it's probably right on par with an Ashes series," Starc told Wide World of Sports...

-SPORTS

Revant, Bandi among five Telangana leaders facing cases

Sitting MPs and MLAs in Telangana are facing criminal cases related to crimes against women, according to a report based on analysis of recent affidavits of elected representatives by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and the National Election Watch (NEW). The report identified five sitting lawmakers in Telangana who have declared cases related to crimes against women. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has been charged under IPC Section 509, which pertains to words, gestures, or acts intended to insult the modesty of a woman.

These cases involve a range of serious offences under the Indian Penal Code, including rape and other crimes against women. The involvement of prominent figures like the Chief Minister and senior MPs in such cases raises serious concerns about the ethical standards prevailing in the state's politics.

Madhavaneni Raghunandan Rao, BJP MP from Medak, is another key figure with a declared case related to rape. Additionally, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, a BJP MP from Karimnagar,

and Arvind Dharmapuri, a BJP MP from Nizamabad, are also mentioned in the report for their involvement in serious offences. Vemula Veeresham, an MLA from Nakrekal, is the fifth representative from Telangana with such charges.

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-5-

RRR LAND ACQUISITION NEARING COMPLETION

Major boost for TG roads

NH-65 works approved • Minister stresses importance of infrastructure

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Minister for Roads & Buildings and Cinematography, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, emphasised the significance of roads in Telangana's development, drawing a parallel to former US President John F Kennedy's famous quote, "American roads are good not because America is rich, but America is rich because American roads are good."

He asserted that just as roads have played a pivotal role in America's development, they will similarly be instrumental in Telangana's progress.

Speaking to the media from his



office at the Secretariat, Venkat Reddy provided updates on the status of various national and State highway projects. He highlighted that the land acquisition for the northern segment of the Regional Ring Road (RRR), a prestigious project for the State government, is

nearly complete. The remaining acquisition will be completed by September 15, after which the proposal will be forwarded to the Central government for the tender notification.

"Our priority is to develop roads that enhance the living standards of the people," he said, stressing the importance of infrastructure in the State's growth. He also assured that farmers would receive compensation without any detriment.

-5-

CM orders daily review of RRR progress P2

OFFSHOOT OF RIVAL CLAIMS OVER BENEFITS TO FARMERS

Showdown over loan waiver



NAVEENA GHANATE naveena.ghanate@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD

The ruling Congress government in Telangana and the opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) are headed for a showdown over conflicting claims relating to the implementation of the loan waiver scheme for farmers.

During a press meet at the Telangana Bhavan here on Wednesday, BRS working president KT Rama Rao launched a scathing

BRS to stage dharna today

Cong avers BRS' protest won't attract support of farmers

Dy CM Bhatti Vikramarka says BRS credited Rs 1 lakh loan waiver in four installments, while Congress implemented Rs2 lakh loan waiver in one go

Tummala concedes that all farmers did not get loan waiver as the government had prioritised small and marginal farmers

KTR accuses Congress of misleading farmers, considering that only a fraction (Rs 7,500 crore) of the promised Rs 40,000 crore has been released



KTR pointed to significant discrepancies in the government's narrative, highlighting that the Chief Minister had declared the "completion of the loan waiver process", while ongoing protests by farmers mirrored a different story altogether. He criticized the reduction in the originally promised Rs. 40,000 crore funds towards loan waiver to a mere Rs. 7,500 crore, due to which most farmers had been left high and dry without the promised relief.

-5-

Demolitions raise political dust

WHAT IS A FACT AND WHAT ARE THE RULES?

For the last few weeks, the demolitions of illegal constructions have caused heartburn to many political leaders. The crux of the issue is whether the structures per se are legal or prohibited and whether rules were followed while giving permissions. Meanwhile, the razing of alleged illegal constructions has become a contentious issue. The opposition BRS working president KT Rama Rao has challenged the government to raze the Janwada farmhouse if it is illegal and to take down all illegal constructions. Amid allegations and counter-allegations galore relating to illegal constructions, what are facts and what are violations of rules will see the light of the day only when a thorough probe is ordered. Until then, the demolitions will certainly raise a lot of political dust.

Raze Janwada farmhouse if it is against rules: KTR

- Maintains the property he has 'leased' from a friend is legally built
- Asks govt to take down all illegal constructions in one go, including those of CM Revant and other Cong leaders

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Turning the tables on the state government with regard to its handling of 'illegal' constructions, BRS working president KT Rama Rao (KTR) has challenged the authorities to take immediate action against farmhouses situated within buffer zones, including those allegedly owned by Chief Minister Revant Reddy and other prominent Congress leaders. KTR has clarified that he does not own the Janwada farmhouse in question and that he has only leased the property from a friend.



Continued on Page 5

Money-making scheme for Maha elections: Bandi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay has alleged that the recent demolitions carried out under the aegis of HYDRAA are part of a larger money-making scheme aimed at funding the upcoming elections in Haryana and Maharashtra. Speaking at a BJP membership drive event in Secunderabad, Sanjay accused the Congress government and the opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi of orchestrating these demolitions to generate funds through questionable means.



Selective demolitions: Alleti

Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Alleti Maheshwar Reddy has sought to know whether Chief Minister Revant Reddy is following in the footsteps of former chief minister K Chandrababoo Naidu or committed to tackling illegal constructions in Hyderabad in an authentic manner.



Continued on Page 5

CM to lead protest against Adani

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) will join a major protest on Thursday at 10:00 am, in response to the call given by the All India Congress Committee (AICC). Accordingly, a rally will be taken out from the Gun Park in front of the Assembly of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) office, culminating in a massive dharna outside the ED office.

TPCC president and Chief Minister Revant Reddy, AICC Incharge Deepa Das Munshi, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, along with Ministers, MPs, MLCs, MLAs, and other party leaders, will participate in this event.

The protest will highlight the Congress party's demand for an investigation into the Adani mega scam, formation of a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) to investigate irregularities allegedly committed by the SEBI Chairman, resignation of the SEBI Chairman, and legal action against those found guilty.

Explosion claims 20 lives in Vizag SEZ

Outcry over safety lapses



PNS ■ ATCHUTAPURAM

At least 20 workers died and over 40 others sustained severe injuries after an explosion and subsequent fire in a reactor at the Escientia pharmaceutical unit in Atchutapuram Special Economic Zone (SEZ) on Wednesday. Authorities and medical experts anticipate that the death toll may rise as rescue operations progress. The explosion, which happened around 2 PM, sent thick

black smoke into the sky, obstructing rescue efforts. Hundreds of workers were present at the site when the blast occurred, resulting in numerous injuries, with several individuals in critical condition. "The situation is dire," stated an official from the Atchutapuram Police Station. "The thick smoke is making it difficult for our teams to access and control the blaze."

-5-

KALESHWARAM PROJECT Justice Ghose grills ex-ENC Muralidhar



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Justice PC Ghose questioned ex-Engineer-in-Chief C. Muralidhar intensively for two hours regarding various aspects of the Kaleshwaram project based on the affidavit filed by him. The inquiry focused on the Detailed Project Report (DPR), required permissions, role of the Central Water Commission (CWC) as well as the design and implementation phases. Further scrutiny was placed on modifications, including additions and deletions, along with the tender process, quality control, funding, and the handling of receipts.

Muralidhar defended his actions by stating that he adhered to all the required rules. He acknowledged, however, that there could be issues at lower levels concerning quality and receipts.

CM orders daily review of RRR progress

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has directed senior officials to conduct daily reviews of the progress of the Regional Ring Road (RRR) projects...



Revanth Reddy instructed district collectors representing areas covered by the RRR to report daily to the Chief Secretary on land acquisition progress and other related issues.

The Chief Secretary, Infrastructure and Projects Advisor Srinivasa Raju, Chief Minister's OSD Shah Nawaz Qasim, district collectors, and R&B officials, to ensure real-time updates on the project's progress.

re the northern part, Revanth Reddy stressed the need to commence similar efforts in the southern section. He

advised officials coordinating with the central government to address any technical or other challenges that might arise during the road development process...

a comprehensive report on the suggested changes. Furthermore, the Chief Minister provided guidance on the construction of radial roads in the proposed Future City.

TG SEC sets Sept 21 for final gram panchayat electoral rolls

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

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According to the notification, the preparation of the draft electoral rolls will begin on September 6, 2024, with the rolls to be displayed at gram panchayat and mandal parishad offices...

Court orders to issue notice to CM in a defamation case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Nampally Judicial Special First Class Magistrate on Wednesday passed an order to issue notices to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy before September 25 in a defamation case.



cases at Hyderabad said that notice to Revanth Reddy should be issued under Section 204 of CRPC, Section 499 (defamation) and 125 of People's Representation Act.

tions campaign, the accused made illegal and baseless allegations against the complainant and the party. Accused made a statement that the BJP government will abolish all SC, ST, BC reservations as soon as it forms government after the 2024 elections.

MP warns of action against officers for illegal constructions

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

MP Chamala Kirankumar has issued a stern warning regarding the demolition of illegal structures in HYDRABA, asserting that not only will these constructions be razed, but action will also be taken against the officers who granted them permission.

how officers could have allowed such permissions "with their eyes closed" and assured that all illegal constructions would be demolished to prevent future losses.

Rahul should clear Congress' stand on Article 370: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking aim at Rahul Gandhi's visit to Jammu and Kashmir, the BJP on Wednesday asked the Congress leader to clear his party's stand on the Article 370 and Article 35A.

Indian astronaut likely to fly to ISS by April next year: Jitendra Singh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

An Indian astronaut is likely to fly to the International Space Station by April next year as part of the NASA-ISRO collaborative initiative, Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh said on Wednesday.

The landing of Vikram lander on the Moon on August 23 last year. The theme for the National Space Day is 'Touching Lives while Touching the Moon: India's Space Saga'.

'Need for law to prevent attacks on medics'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The IMA has written to Union Health Minister J P Nadda, highlighting the urgent need for bringing a central law to deal with attacks on medics and healthcare establishments...



The Indian Medical Association (IMA) held consultations with its state presidents and secretaries as well as with resident doctors' associations on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Why have institutions like CCI 'remained passive' asks Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday questioned the Competition Commission of India over its approval of all acquisitions by the Adani Group, asking why such institutions "remained passive" as the conglomerate built "monopolies" in critical infrastructure sectors...

CM Revanth likely to attend crucial AICC meeting

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy is scheduled to travel to Delhi on Thursday evening to participate in an important meeting with All India Congress Committee (AICC) leaders.

Govts, parties must brainstorm on steps to ensure safety for women: Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the wake of the Badlapur sexual assault incident, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi Wednesday said "forces us to think where are we heading as a society". He also said all governments and parties need to brainstorm on what steps should be taken to provide a safe environment for women.

Govts, parties must brainstorm on steps to ensure safety for women: Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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Bihar, the shameful crimes against daughters in Maharashtra also force us to think where are we heading as a society? After the crime against two innocents in Badlapur, the first step to give them justice was not taken until the public came out on the streets demanding justice.

TODAY ALMANAC section with dates, times, and weather forecast for Hyderabad.

Dosa, butter chicken, street food attract Polish foodies at Indian restaurants in Poland

PNS ■ WARSAW

Dosa, butter chicken and mango lassi, an unlikely combo for some perhaps but topping the list of favourites for Polish diners who say the dishes remind them of their travels to the country.

India ready to take advantage of fourth industrial revolution: Murmu

PNS ■ FARIDABAD

President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday said India is ready to face the challenges posed by the fourth industrial revolution and take advantage of the opportunities that arise from it.

India ready to take advantage of fourth industrial revolution: Murmu

PNS ■ FARIDABAD

President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday said India is ready to face the challenges posed by the fourth industrial revolution and take advantage of the opportunities that arise from it.



and Technology will be very important, she noted. The president noted that the university has entered into agreements with many industrial and academic institutions over the past few years.

If removed as minister for acting in films, will consider myself 'saved': Suresh Gopi

PNS ■ KOCHI

Actor-cum-politician Suresh Gopi said on Wednesday that if he is removed as Union Minister of State for acting in films while holding his ministerial post, he would consider himself "saved".

When he sought permission from Union Home Minister Amit Shah to act in the films, he was asked how many. I said around 22. On hearing that, Amit Shah set aside my request letter. But he said permission will be given.

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work.

CITY EVENTS

Akshayakalpa Farm

Experience the Good Food Journey Walk, Food & More

Venue

Akshayakalpa Organic / Regenerative Farming - R&D Facility - Hyderabad August 24 | 9:30am -

Journey of Rhythms

Presented by Shivansh and Tatvaa Arts

Venue

Global Peace Auditorium, Gachibowli, Hyderabad August 31, 6.30 pm onwards

Jewellery World Exhibition

Venue

Hotel Taj Krishna, Hyderabad, from August 23rd to 25th, for an unforgettable experience. 10 am to 8 pm daily

DIGITAL ART DIGITAL CULTURE

"Fantasy" showcases some of Bakkali's masterpieces through print, augmented reality and immersive art

Venue

Alliance Francaise library, Hyderabad Till August 31 11 am to 4.30 pm (Tue- Fri)

Raahat

Crisis centre for domestic violence and abuse. British Deputy High Commissioner to India, Christina Scott will be the chief guest for the inaugural event, while British Deputy High Commissioner to Telangana and AP, Gareth Wynn Owen will be the guest of honour.

Venue

Conference Hall, Dr LJP Block, Adj. Fernandez Hospital, Bogulkunta, Hyderabad. 11 am, Thursday, August 22.

Reema Rawat bags Young Innovator Award

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Federation of Asian Biotech Associations (FABA) has announced that Reema Rawat from UPES has been awarded the Natco Pharma-sponsored Dr Yellapragada Subba Rao FABA Young Innovator Award on Wednesday.

This honour recognises her groundbreaking development of a portable cervical cancer screening device, a significant advancement in the accessibility and effectiveness of cancer diagnostics. This device revolutionises the early detection of cervical cancer, particularly targeting HPV-16, a key biomarker. This device has shown strong correlation with clinical data during trials, indicating its reliability and potential to significantly lower cervical cancer mortality rates by facilitating early and non-invasive testing. The award was presented by Dr Jitendra Kumar, Managing Director of Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council, in the presence of Dr Pavan Bhat from Natco Pharma.

City Pioneer

the pioneer

HYDERABAD THURSDAY | AUGUST 22, 2024

03

DEEPIKA PASHAM
deepikapasham2015@gmail.com
■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister of Telangana A Revanth Reddy has decided to frame the Telangana sports policy so that every student from the remotest school level can participate in at least one sport.

Accordingly, the State-level committee meeting was held on Wednesday at Hyderabad Tourism Plaza to draft a strong sports policy to prepare and encourage talented athletes who will bring recognition to the State at the national and international level.

The draft was read out to the participants and then the floor was welcome to the feedback. The members have discussed that this draft policy will be presented to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and he will introduce the sports policy in Telangana.

The sports policy would have nine pillars, namely Government and Organisation, Financial Support, Sports Facilities/ Training Institution, Infra Development, Long-term athlete development (L TAD), Sporting Competitions, Sports Inclusivity, Sports Research Innovation and Data Management, Athlete education, Employment and Awareness and finally Incentives, Facilities and Felicitation.

In Governance - A Telangana State Sports Development Advisory Committee will be formed.

Then the importance was the appointment of women sports ambassadors in different regions.

The meeting on Wednesday revealed that the Draft Policy proposal was framed

looking at insights from neighbouring states of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, UK and the USA, among others.

The details of the Draft Policy are that a dedicated fund known as Development Fund was proposed in it. Creation and upgradation of infrastructure through PPP mode and a focus sports for the State so that the training is in terms of its institutions. Setting up of sports schools, sports academies and sports science centres in districts was also mooted.

Much of the discussion was on long-term athletic development, which must

Discussion was on long-term athletic development, which must have active start and fundamentals. This should be learning to train, train to compete and train to win

have active start and fundamentals. This should be learning to train, train to compete and train to win.

On the age groups suggested are sports nurseries may have 4 years to 8 years, sports schools can have 8 years to 15 years to help talent identification.

The members have requested that the government should sign MoU's with glob-

NINE PILLARS IN SPORTS POLICY

Women sports envoy figures in draft policy



Sports Advisor to Government AP, Jithender Reddy, State Sports Authority Chairman K. Shiva Sena Reddy, State Youth Services, Culture and Sports Department Principal Secretary Vani Prasad, Sports Authority of Telangana Vice Chairman & MD Soni Baladevi at the meeting on sports policy

al sports facilitators and academics training for encouraging the sports youngsters. There should be a competition at mandal, district, State, national and international for both athletes and para-athletes every year.

It was elaborated that awards and incentives are a must.

Felicitation to sportspersons, coaches and then conducting award shows every year in the sports category. It was suggested to collaborate with sports startups from T-Hub.

The members and officials who attended and collected the feedback on Wednesday, assured that the sports policy will be out very soon.

● The members have requested that the government should sign MoUs with global sports facilitators and academics training for encouraging the sports youngsters

FTCCI MEET

Capital gains law made more complex, say experts



FTCCI members seen in a panel discussion at FTCCI headquarters in Hyderabad on Wednesday

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Discussing that in the name of simplification, the tax law concerning capital gains is made more complex, a programme on capital gains under income tax was held by the Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI) on Wednesday.

The event focused on recent

changes in capital gains taxation presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Union Budget 2024-25.

President of FTCCI Suresh Kumar Singhal noted that despite attempts to simplify the tax laws, recent amendments have made them more complex. This complexity has caused confusion among those dealing with land, property,

shares and mutual funds. The programme aimed to clarify these changes and provide updates on the latest amendments.

The technical session featured Chartered Accountants P Samba Murthy and T Rajendra Prasad, who discussed key topics like the definition and types of capital assets, short-term versus long-term gains,

The event focused on recent changes in capital gains taxation presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Union Budget 2024-25

indexation benefits and exemptions under capital gains.

The panel discussion, moderated by Ritesh Mittal, included awareness from tax experts, including retired IRS officer R Mohan Kumar. The session highlighted the challenges of understanding the new laws, while aimed at simplification, have resulted in increase of complexity, requiring ongoing learning by professionals. The event was attended by FTCCI leaders and over 50 participants.



CSIR-NGRI scientist bags National Geoscience Award

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Dr Bantu Prasanta Kumar Patro, Chief Scientist at the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)-National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), Hyderabad, has been bestowed upon the National Geoscience Award 2023 in the category of Geophysics/Applied Geophysics by President of India Droupadi Murmu, in recognition of his remarkable contributions in the field of Geoscience.

Dr Patro has been lauded for his groundbreaking work in unravelling the 3D electrical sub-surface structure beneath critical geological segments of the Indian shield. His research

has provided significant insights into the subsurface complexities of India's geological landscape, advancing the understanding of the country's natural resources and tectonic framework. One of his most notable contributions is in resolving the long-standing mystery of the subtrapezian lithology of the Deccan Traps.

Using advanced geophysical techniques, he successfully mapped the underlying geological structures. His contributions have not only deepened our knowledge of the Earth's subsurface but also have important implications for mineral exploration, natural hazard assessment and ground-water management.

3,000-year-old iron age monument endangered

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Archaeologist and CEO of Pleach India Foundation, Dr Sivanagi Reddy stated that an iron age burial structure at Rahmantapur in Gundlapalli mandal, Nalgonda district is in the state of near extinction.

He explored the iron age site and noticed signs of a few burial structures called dolmens out of which only one survived the vandalism of irrational quarrying by the local people, unaware of the archaeological significance of the remains. A huge structure raised on a 5.0 ft high masonry wall with a capstone measuring 24.0 ft in length, 18.0 ft in width and 1.5 ft in thickness having entrance on one side facilitating periodical rituals is threatened by quarrying activity.

The archaeologist revealed that similar dol-



mens are noticed at Jupally by Dr. Dyawanapalli Satyanarayana, historian and Menhirs at Irwin noticed by Sriramou Haragopal, Convenor, Kotha Telangana Charitra Brindam, are also in the state of pathetic neglect and cry for protection. He sensitised the villagers present at the site on the historical importance of the rare structure and appealed to them to preserve it for posterity as a signature heritage icon of the village.

Foolproof arrangements for Ganesh fest: Rachakonda CP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Rachakonda Commissioner of Police Sudheer Babu on Wednesday held a coordination meeting with Rachakonda DCPs, Additional DCPs, ACPs and other officials at the Commissioner's office, Neredmet, regarding the security arrangements for the forthcoming Ganesh festival. The Commissioner directed the authorities to take safety measures to ensure that the celebrations are held in a peaceful atmosphere without any untoward incident. He also instructed the officials to coordinate with the other concerned government departments in the respective areas related to the management and security of the upcoming Ganesh and



Navratri celebrations.

He advised the staff to be polite with the devotees who come for immersion and to be vigilant in matters of peace and security. Dial 100 calls should be given special attention and focus on CCTV's besides giving utmost priority to visible policing. As per the orders of the Supreme Court, loud speakers should be used only till 10 pm. The management should ensure that at least two volun-

teers must be present in the Ganesh mandapam through out the day and only good quality wires are used to avoid short circuit in the mandaps.

Further, he instructed the officials to ensure arrangement of flexi with the details and phone numbers of Ganesh mandap organisers, committee details and phone numbers of those in charge of the mandaps. A point book must be arranged at every Ganesh mandapam, and the police officials will sign it when they come for inspection.

Preventive measures need to be taken to avoid clashes near nayayaka mandapams and if there are problematic areas, security should be increased and special pickets should be arranged.

TSPCB releases posters of clay Ganesh idols

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

To create awareness on the environment, Telangana State Pollution Control Board (TSPCB) posters of clay Ganesh idols were unveiled at the Secretariat in the presence of Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari on Wednesday.

The Chief Secretary said that idols made of plaster of Paris and chemicals pose a danger to the environment and it is the responsibility of

all of us to protect the environment by replacing them with clay idols. The TSPCB will conduct largescale awareness programmes on environment through print and electronic media, including displaying environment Ganesh posters across the State along with environmental messages on autotrolleys.

Quiz programmes will also be organised in colleges and training artisans in making clay idols.





Siddipet bus station cries for parking facility

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

The most modern TGS TC bus station at Siddipet has no proper parking facility. The parking facility at the bus station has not been improved with the growing population of the town. People escorting their families to the bus station on festival days have to struggle a lot to find space to park their vehicles.

The people have been questioning the RTC authorities for making the parking on either side of entrance to the bus station as commercial parking.

With the introduction of Mahila Sakti Scheme, the number of people commute by RTC buses has increased, but the amenities at the bus station are apparently inadequate. The people have been taking the RTC employees task for not allowing entry of bikes into the bus station.

The traffic police personnel have been imposing fines on those who parked their vehicles on the premises of the bus stand during emergency situations. If the bikes are parked in front of the bus station entries, the vehicles are being towed away by the police vehicles. There were instances of the people visiting the bus station arguing with the RTC personnel and the police authorities over the parking of their vehicles.

The people have been questioning the rationale behind not providing parking facility at the most modern bus station at Siddipet. The police department personnel have been displaying no parking boards near the bus station entrance and collecting fines if anyone were to violate the rule.

When questioned depot manager Sukhender Reddy, he admitted that there is parking problem in the bus station. There is no scope for parking vehicles. He said that the police imposing fines on vehicles parked near the bus station added that he would speak to the police.

A paid parking facility may be provided on either side of the entrance to the RTC bus station as part of the revenue-generating activities, he said.

Residents of the town have been demanding that the authorities provide parking facility at the bus station by resolving the problem for the benefit of people thronging the bus station.

Maoists 'kill' female member on suspicion of being informer

PNS ■ BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

Hyderabad and joined the rebels in 2017 and went underground. She is suspected to have been strangled to death and a post-mortem is yet to be done, they said.

In a letter purportedly written by the Maoists which was found on the woman's body, she was accused of being an informer of the police. "The decision was taken by the naxals committee to eliminate her," it stated.

A 24-year-old woman Maoist cadre was allegedly killed by the ultras on suspicion of being a police informer and her body was found in Bhadradri Kothagudem district of Telangana on Wednesday, according to Superintendent of Police Rohit Raju.

The body was dumped on the road in Chennapuram village, bordering Chhattisgarh,



Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy inaugurating free coaching centre in Khammam on Wednesday

Ponguleti derides BRS, BJP for spreading 'falsehood' against govt

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy has criticised the main opposition parties BRS and BJP without naming them that these parties have been spreading falsehood because they are jealous of the success achieved by the Congress government.

He, along with Khammam MP Ramasahayam Raghuram Reddy, inaugurated the Ponguleti Seenanna free coaching camp, held under the aegis of the organisation called Right Choice, at Rameela Function held here on Wednesday.

He addressed the hundreds of the unemployed candidates and the party rank and file on the occasion. The people voted Congress to power as they sought change of leadership in the state, he said, adding that the Congress would live up to the expectations of the people.

Within 90 days of coming to power, the Congress regime filled 31,000 jobs. The TSPSC has been cleared within 45 days of coming to power to win the trust of the unemployed. The loan waiver scheme is being implemented at a cost of Rs 31,000 crore to benefit the farmers.

The Congress government is committed to the welfare of the unemployed, he said, alleging that the BRS and another opposition party which is hand-in-glove with the BRS have been trying to provoke the unemployed by getting the competitive exams. A skill development center has been set up in Hyderabad. The persons trained here would be able to show employment to at least 100. He said that skill development branches are going to be set up in the district.

MP Raghuram Reddy, lauding the help being extended by Srinivas Reddy, said that it is very rare to find a person who provides assistance to the unemployed.



Superintendent of Police Rohit Raju

they said.

The woman was working as an Area Committee Member and carrying a reward of Rs four lakh on her head.

The deceased hailed from

A case was registered and further investigation was on. Asked about the offences the woman was involved in, the officials said they are investigating.

Health Minister launches Indira Mahila Sakti scheme

PNS ■ MEDAK

Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha, along with Minister for Forests, on Wednesday launched Indira Mahila Sakti at a programme held at Sangareddy Collectorate on Wednesday and inaugurated a canteen started by women's groups. Later, he distributed Indira Mahila Sakti loans to beneficiaries.

Later, Damodar Raja Narasimha and Konda Surekha reviewed implementation of six guarantees and the working of various government departments.

Addressing the officials on the occasion, Health Minister said that there was delay in implementation of the welfare and development schemes as the new government had to face LS elections within seven months of coming to power.

The government gave superior powers to mining, irrigation, excise, revenue, electricity and other departments so that these departments provide corruption-free administration and generate revenue for the government.

The Telangana government will deal with illegal mining with a heavy hand, he said exhorting the officials to discharge their duties responsibly.

The Minister reviewed the progress of implementation of six guarantees, activities of departments of medical and health, municipal, excise, panchayat raj, education, drinking water, loan waiver, distribution of new crop loans, Gruha Jyoti scheme, problems of weavers, RTC bus services, municipal-land Mission Bhagiradha scheme. He also reviewed Vana Mahotsavam scheme and land acquisition for NIMZ.

He asked the officials to work in the direction of ensuring that the fruits of various welfare and development schemes, implemented in the state by seven-month-old Congress regime, trickle down to the people.

To implement the six guar-



Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha and Konda Surekha holding a review meeting in Medak on Wednesday

antees, the officials should review the progress on monthly or bi-monthly basis to prepare notes on what should be done to the people and implement the guarantees.

A task force committee has been constituted in the district to take stern action against illegal mining activity. He wanted the officials to take action against encroachment of government lands.

He suggested closely monitoring of the working of the medical and health department personnel to rule out any inconvenience to the patients.

Minister Konda Surekha suggested to officials to take steps to plant saplings that are useful to temples in temple lands as part of Vana Mahotsavam. She called for surveying of endowment lands and fix boundaries to prevent encroachment of the temple lands by vested interests.

It is the duty of the officials to take government schemes to the masses, she said exhorting them to ensure that the benefits of the govt schemes are extended to the eligible persons without misusing the funds.

TGIDC chairman Nirmala Jaggarreddy, MPs Raghunandan Rao and Suresh Shetkar, MLC Yadava Reddy, MLAs ChintaManik Rao and Sanjiva Reddy, DCCB president Chitti Devender Reddy, Additional Collector Chandrasekhar and others were present.

MLA keeps his word to people on free sand

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI

In an unprecedented move, local MLA Chintakunta Ramana Rao has fulfilled his promise to provide sand free so that the house construction should not become a burden on people belonging to the poor and middle-classes.

The MLA held a meeting with tractor owners and drivers of Maneru catchment area in Sultanabad town of Peddapalli district on Wednesday.

In tune with the promises made to the people, the sand lorries have been regulated, the MLA claimed.

The BRS regime created sand reaches and transported sand through lorries to far off places like Hyderabad and earned money. The sand tax burden on the people, he added.

As part of implementing the sand tax policy, the SROs gave permissions recklessly for transportation of sand and minted gold, he said adding that he assured the people that free sand would be given to the people in the event of Congress coming to power.

The collector sought a letter from tractor owners that they now onwards would not indulge in illegal transportation of sand, the MLA said.

In the presence of Peddapalli RDO Gangaiah, the MLA gave the letter in the presence of the tractor owners. The officials have decided to transport sand from 6 am to 6 pm. RDO Gangaiah, mines and geology assistant director, CI, Tahsildar, SI and tractor owners took part in the event.

Tribal welfare hostel for boys inaugurated

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Warangal West legislator Nayini Rajender Reddy, along with Hanamkonda Collector P Pravinia inaugurated the tribal welfare hostel for boys in Ashok Colony of Hanamkonda on Wednesday.

The hostel, which provides accommodation to 250 boys, was built at a cost of Rs 2.15 crore. With the construction of the hostel, the number of hostels for boys increased to 4.

Tribal Welfare officer Premalata, local corporator Nalla Swarupa Rani and others were present.

Prostitution racket busted in Mancherial

PNS ■ MANCHERIAL

A racket dragging women into flesh trade on the pretext of making short films has been nabbed.

The police raided a house in the heart of the town where a high-tech sex racket is being operated clandestinely for the past several years and took into custody seven customers, recovered Rs 12,000 from them and seven mobile phones.

Disclosing this to the media here on Wednesday, ACP Prakash said that the sex racket has been operating clandestinely from a house close to LIC office for over a long time. The ACP said that the detained would be presented before the court.

Mancherial CI Bansilal along with his staff raided tactfully on the house and took some males from the house.

According to information furnished by Bansilal, a person called Karunakar of Bhattiwada in the town trapped several women who had been facing financial difficulties on the pretext of making short films and initiated them into prostitution.

Karunakar appointed a person from Bellampalli as his manager and shared the images of women through WhatsApp and running the prostitution racket.

8 take ill after consuming 'adulterated' today

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Eight individuals from Peerampally village in Vikarabad district fell ill on Tuesday after consuming suspected adulterated toddy. Those who took ill were swiftly ferried to a nearby hospital, where they received medical treatment.

Local residents suspect that the toddy was contaminated due to impure water used during its preparation. Authorities responded to the incident by registering a case, and an investigation is currently underway to determine the exact cause of the adulteration.

Sexually abused women urged to make use of Bharosa Centre

PNS ■ ASIFABAD

District superintendent of police DV Srinivas Rao on Wednesday called upon the girls and women, who are victims of sexual assault, should make good use of the Bharosa centre services.

At a programme held at District police headquarters here on Wednesday, the Superintendent of Police handed over a TV set and mobile phones to Bharosa Centre under the aegis of women safety wing of the police department.

The Bharosa centre was inaugurated in February 2024 to provide police, counselling, medical and legal services to victims. The victims will receive compensation with the cooperation of the district legal services authority.

So far, police counselling, medical and legal assistance has been extended in nine cases, he said, exhorting the



Asifabad Superintendent of Police DV Srinivas Rao handing over TV set to Bharosa Centre in Asifabad on Wednesday

people of sexual assault to contact the Bharosa centre on mobile phone No. 8712670561 so that the police personnel would visit the homes of the victim to counsel them then and there.

Information about the victims would be kept a closely-guarded secret, he said.

Therefore, women encountering sexual assault at work place or at any other places should avail the services of the Bharosa center services.

Tirumala, who assumed the office of the SI in Bharosa Centre, called on the SP and greeted him by presenting him with a bouquet.

DMHO pays surprise visit to PHCs

PNS ■ WARANGAL

District Medical and Health Officer Dr Kazipeta Venkata Ramana has called upon the people and medical and health staff to remain alert on seasonal diseases occurring in rainy season.

He paid a surprise visit to PHCs at Kasibugga and Desaipeta on Wednesday and asked the personnel there to be punctual to their duties and extend better medical and health services to the patients.

He visited the house of a malaria patient under the limits of PHC at Desaipeta and inspected the health camp there. He directed the health personnel to undertake fever survey and run blood tests on them and provide better medicare.

He wanted the people to maintain personal hygiene and protect themselves from water-borne and mosquito-borne diseases. Every Friday should be observed as a dry day. Spraying of anti-larvicide at places where water gets stagnated.

Currently, seasonal diseases are under control in the district. The people should not panic on contracting viral fevers and should get diagnostic tests run at the PHC and receive treatment.

Discussion on draft RoR Act

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Collector Muzammil Khan on Thursday said that a discussion on draft RoR Act would be conducted at collectorate here on Thursday at 10.30 am.

In a release here, he appealed to intelligentsia, elected people's representatives, lawyers and farmers would

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA REVENUE (LA) DEPARTMENT FORM - VI
(See Sub-Rule(1) of Rule-19 and Section-11(1) of the Act-30(2013))
or
District Collector (LA), Mahabubabad

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION
MAHABUBABAD DISTRICT GAZETTE No. 41 (MAHABUBABAD) 2024, DATED: 30.07.2024
No. : G19010003/2023 DATED: 30.07.2024

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana/Collector that a total to an extent of Ac.0.08 % Gts. land is required in the Maddivancha Village, Garla Mandal of Mahabubabad District for public purpose, namely for construction of approach roads for UP & DN lines of Railway Under Bridge.

Therefore, it is notified that for the above said project in the Maddivancha Village, Garla Mandal of Mahabubabad District a piece of land measuring, more or less Ac.0.08 % Gts. of standard measurement, whose detail description is as following, is under acquisition:

SCHEDULE							
Village: Maddivancha; Mandal: Garla; District: Mahabubabad							
Sl. No.	Area Under Acquisition (in Ac. Gts.)	Type of Land	Type of Title	Name of the Interested person	Extent in Ac. Gts.	Structures, Trees etc., if any	Boundaries
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1				Md. Hyrard Pasha Basu Mya	0.06	-NIL-	E: 116 W: 116
2	0.08 %	Govt. Land	Dry	PII Venkatesh S/o. Mallesh	0.02	-NIL-	N: Railway Line S: 116
3				Road	0.00	-NIL-	
Total					0.08%		

This notification is made under the provisions of Section-11(1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Act No. 30(2013)), to all whom it may concern.

A Plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the District Collector, Mahabubabad & Revenue Divisional Officer, Mahabubabad on any working day during the working hours. The Government of Telangana/Collector-cum-Appropriate Government is pleased to authorize Officer, Revenue Divisional Officer, Mahabubabad and his staff to enter upon and survey land, take levels of any land, dig or bore into the sub-soil & do all other acts required for the proper execution of their work as provided and specified in Section-12 of the said Act.

Under Section 11(4) of the Act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of land (i.e., sale/purchase, etc., or create any encumbrances on such land from the date of publication of such notification without prior approval of the Collector.

Objections to the acquisition if any, may be filed by the person interested within 60 (Sixty) days from the date of publication of this notification as provided under Section-15 of the Act before the District Collector, Mahabubabad/Revenue Divisional Officer, Mahabubabad.

Sd/- Land Acquisition Officer & Collector, Mahabubabad.
Revenue Divisional Officer, Mahabubabad.
DIPR No. 196/LA/PP-Pub/2024-25

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION QUOTATION NOTICE
No. SIEESRNR/GHMC/2024-25 Dt: 21-08-2024

Sealed quotations are invited from reputed firms, which should be received to undersigned on or before 24-08-2024 up to 11.00 A.M. and the same will be opened at 12.00 P.M. Other particulars can be obtained from the Executive Engineer, during the office hours.

Description of items: (1) Bespoke Panel Rolling featuring a theme (Sports) - Providing, detailing, composite fabricating members and similar structural steel members fabricated using M.S./FRP hollow tubular sections (Circular & Rectangular), conforming as per specifications and approved fabrication drawings (which are to be prepared by Contractor and got approved from Engineer), including Supply, installation and transportation of the same to site, erection of Structural steel members for all heights & at all levels, provision of necessary erection bolts, fixing bolts, nuts, washers, cleats, stiffeners, gussets, base plate and all necessary operations like preheating as per specifications, slaghammering, bending, cutting, drilling, grinding, machining if specified, welding, grinding and chemical wash and applying two coats of Premium Metallic spray paint after fabrication including touching up with spray painting after erection etc complete as directed by the engineer-in-charge. Unit: Item Set.

(2) Trance induction Art on the Rolling for the colorizers - The Surface shall be thoroughly cleaned of all dirt, dust, mortar dropping and other foreign matter, before paint is to be applied. Painting or varnishing new iron work in small areas or new wood with one coat (up to one sq. meter) of ready mixed priming paint and one coat of approved superior quality ready mix paint (2nd quality synthetic enamel paint of approved brand such as British paint, Shalimar, asian or equivalent as approved by EI) or Varnish including supply of all materials, labour, T & P etc., required for proper completion of the work. Unit: Item Set.

(3) Supply and fixing of Customized Artistic Dancing Swan design FRP weather proof concrete suitable for outdoor areas grey in color with natural cased in special form card frame for sooting including cost and conveyance of all labour and materials charges etc., Complete for finished item of work. Unit: Item Set.

(4) Supply and fixing of Customized Artistic Elephant and Human Sculpture design FRP weather proof concrete suitable for outdoor areas grey in color with natural cased in special form card frame for sooting including cost and conveyance of all labour and materials charges etc., Complete for finished item of work. Unit: Item Set.

(5) Supply and installation of customized illuminated Bird Sculpture Set Inclosed customized 3d Art design and evolving in descending height as per the design approved by engineer in charge fabricated with weather proof coating Material suitable for outdoor areas designed as per the following specification i.e., Color: Metallic Bronze blending shade, Design Type: To Be Customized, including footing/civil/working/ground prep work, transported by transport vehicles as directed by the engineer-in-charge. Unit: Item Set.

CONDITIONS: 1) The quotations should be received on or before 24-08-2024 upto 11.00 A.M. and the same will be opened at 12.00 P.M. in the O/o. Executive Engineer, Collector, Sarorumgar, GHMC. 2) The Executive Engineer, Sarorumgar has the reserve right to cancel the quotations without assigning any reason. Address of concerned officer: Sri Srinivas, K. Executive Engineer, Sarorumgar Circle-5, GHMC, Hyderabad.
Sd/- Executive Engineer, GHMC
R.O. No: 3195-PP/LA/VT/12024-25, Dt: 21.08.2024

ACROSS THE STATES



Panel on Waqf Bill to hold first meeting today

Parliament's Joint Committee on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill will hold its first meeting on Thursday and its members are scheduled to interact with representatives of the ministries of minority affairs, and law and justice. The 31-member committee, headed by BJP member Jagdambika Pal, has been tasked by the Lok Sabha to scrutinise the contentious bill, which has drawn protests from the opposition parties and Muslim organisations. The representatives from the minority affairs ministry are expected to brief the committee on the amendments proposed on the Bill, the Lok Sabha secretariat said. The Bill is the first major initiative from the BJP-led NDA government aimed at reforming the registration process for Waqf properties through a centralised portal. It proposes several reforms, including establishing a Central Waqf Council alongside state Waqf Boards with representation to the Muslim women and non-Muslim representatives.



Woman 'beats up' prosecutor on court premises

A case has been registered after a woman allegedly assaulted a special public prosecutor on the court premises in CBD Belapur area of Navi Mumbai, police said on Wednesday. No arrest has been made in the case yet. Shalini Veerbhadra Panda (39) allegedly abused and beat up special prosecutor Ravindra Jadhav on Tuesday afternoon. Panda, a resident of Seawoods area, was the complainant in a criminal case, and she was apparently angry with the prosecutor as the court acquitted the accused, said an official of CBD police station. The First Information Report was registered against her on Tuesday evening under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita sections 132 (assault or use of criminal force to deter a public servant from doing his duty) and 352 (intentional insult to provoke breach of peace). Further probe is underway.



Poland visit will add momentum to bilateral friendship: PM

PNS ■ WARSAW

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said his maiden visit to Poland will add momentum to the bilateral friendship and benefit the people of the two countries as he arrived here on the first leg of his two-nation visit during which he will also travel to the Ukrainian capital Kyiv.

Modi, who will meet Poland's President Andrzej Sebastian Duda and hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Donald Tusk, said he was looking forward to the various programmes in the Polish capital here.

"Landed in Poland. Looking forward to the various programmes here. This visit will add momentum to the India-Poland friendship and benefit the people of our nations," Modi said in a post on X soon after his arrival at the Warsaw military airport here.

Prime Minister Modi's visit to Poland is the first trip by an Indian Prime Minister to the country in the past 45 years.

The Indian community members in Poland gave a warm welcome to Prime Minister

Modi when he arrived at the hotel where Polish and Indian artists performed Gujarati traditional dance.

"My visit to Poland comes as



Prime Minister Modi's discussions with the Polish leadership during his two-day visit will allow the two sides to exchange views at the top level on a variety of subjects and it will be a kind of real "useful exchange" of views, Indian Ambassador to Poland Nagma Mohamed Mallick told here

we mark 70 years of our diplomatic relations. Poland is a key economic partner in Central Europe," Modi said in his departure statement earlier today.

"Our mutual commitment to democracy and pluralism further reinforces our relationship. I look forward to meeting my friend Prime Minister Donald Tusk and President Andrzej Duda to further advance our partnership," he said.

Prime Minister Modi's discussions with the Polish leader-

ship during his two-day visit will allow the two sides to exchange views at the top level on a variety of subjects and it will be a kind of real "useful exchange" of views, Indian Ambassador to Poland Nagma Mohamed Mallick told here.

From Warsaw, Modi will travel to Kyiv on the first visit by an Indian prime minister to Ukraine since the country became independent in 1991.

"From Poland, I will be visiting Ukraine at the invitation of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. This is the first-ever visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Ukraine," he said. "I look forward to the opportunity to build upon earlier conversations with President Zelenskyy on strengthening bilateral cooperation and share perspectives on peaceful resolution of the ongoing Ukraine conflict," he said.

"As a friend and partner, we hope for an early return of peace and stability in the region," he added.

Modi said he was confident that his visit to Warsaw and Kyiv "will serve as a natural continuation of extensive contacts with the two countries and help create the foundation for stronger and more vibrant relations in the years ahead".

The prime minister will travel to Kyiv from Poland in a 'Rail Force One' train that will take around 10 hours. The return trip will also be of the same duration.

Modi's visit to Kyiv comes nearly six weeks after his high-profile trip to Moscow which triggered criticism from the US and some of its Western allies.

India has not yet condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine and has been calling for resolution of the conflict through dialogue and diplomacy.

War of words breaks out between K'taka CM & Union Minister

PNS ■ BENGALURU

A war of words has broken out between Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy over the Lokayukta's Special

at Ganigera in Koppal district on Wednesday that he has not said anywhere that Kumaraswamy would be arrested in connection with the case.

But the Chief Minister added: "If there is a circum-



Investigation Team (SIT) seeking Governor's sanction to prosecute the latter in an alleged illegal mining lease case. Siddaramaiah told reporters

stance (in connection with the case) to arrest him, we will arrest him without any hesitation. Such a circumstance is not there now.

CISF deploys 150 personnel at Kolkata's RG hospital for security

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Around 150 personnel of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) are being deployed at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and Hospital following an order of the Supreme Court, official sources said on Wednesday.

A day after the apex court's order, the Union home ministry wrote to the West Bengal chief secretary seeking deployment of the CISF at the state-run hospital.

Subsequently, a decision has been taken for the deployment of the CISF, the sources said.

Earlier in the morning, a CISF team, led by a DIG-rank officer, surveyed the hospital complex where a 31-year-old trainee doctor was allegedly raped and murdered earlier this month.

The force is expected to

secure the resident doctors' hostel and other facilities, the sources said.

The medic's body was found in the hospital's seminar room on the morning of August 9. A civic volunteer, who was an outsider frequenting the hospital premises, was arrested the next day in connection with the case.

The incident has since triggered protests affecting medical services across the country, with hundreds of resident doctors on strike under different banners demanding safety of medics through a central law. The Supreme Court on Tuesday constituted a 10-member task force to formulate a national protocol to ensure safety and facilities for doctors. The task force will submit its interim report within three weeks and the final report within two months.



HYDRAA..

Continued on Page 1

HYDRAA and HMDA are coming over to his property and seeking to demolish his house consisting of ground floor plus first floor. They are claiming that the building was constructed in Osman Sagar lake Full Tank Level (FTL) area.

The petitioner submitted his sale deed and other documents to the court related to the land. While hearing the case, the court asked the Counsel of the State about the HYDRAA duties.

HYDRAA gets....

The complaint mentioned that there was a time when the water in the lake was used for drinking purposes. But now this place is filled with polluted water. As per the records, Thammidikunta lake consisted of 29.24 acres of land. Officers visited the place as in the previous regime, around 8 acres of land had been encroached. So, taking this as a serious issue, the HYDRAA may demolish illegal structures in FTL and buffer zone constructions in this lake.

Showdown over loan...

Continued on Page 1

Implementation of SC quota verdict urged. "The government's claims are not matching the ground reality. Farmers are still protesting because the promised relief has not materialized. This is a clear indication of the government's failure to honour its commitments," KTR stated. He condemned the government's decision to file non-bailable cases against protesting farmers in Adilabad district, labeling it as an attempt to criminalize the airing of genuine grievances of the farming community. "The BRS will hold protests in every village and mandal until the government fulfils its promises to the farmers. Before the protest, we will clean up the Telangana thalli statue and begin the protest," KTR declared, signaling a new phase of intensified agitation.

Infusing intercessory prayer in the political discourse, former Minister Harish Rao announced that he and other BRS leaders would visit the Yadadri temple to perform special prayers and seek divine intervention for the state's well-being and for expiation of the 'sins' of the Chief Minister.

"Chief Minister Revanth Reddy promised to waive all farmers' loans by August 15, but has failed to do so. We will pray that his broken promises do not bring misfortune upon the people of Telangana," Harish Rao expounded. He mentioned that he would participate in a protest rally in Aleru to demand accountability from the government.

State Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao, while addressing the media, sought to clarify the current status of the loan waiver scheme. He acknowledged that there were delays in the implementation of the scheme, but assured that the government was committed to waiving loans up to Rs. 2 lakh for all eligible farmers. "We got a report that 41,78,892 farmers took loans from bankers which amounts to Rs 31,000 crore. However, small and marginal farmers have loans under Rs2 lakh; so, we decided to clear off the loans. We are working closely with banks and local authorities to ensure that every farmer who is eligible receives the benefit of the loan waiver. Any mistakes or delays will be rectified immediately,"

Tummala said. He urged farmers to contact their local agriculture offices if they had not yet received their waiver and assured them that their cases would be addressed promptly.

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, during a meeting in his Madhira constituency, vehemently rejected KTR's allegations. He accused the BRS of spreading propaganda to discredit the Congress' efforts. Contrasting the present government's approach with that of the previous government, he claimed that under the BRS regime loans only up to Rs. 1 lakh were repaid in four installments over five years, requiring farmers to incur additional interest costs and hindering their ability to secure new loans. "The Congress government implemented the loan waiver within the first year of coming to power, despite the state's challenging financial situation. We have done what no other government in the country has dared to do," Bhatti asserted. He criticized the BRS for its "audacity" in questioning a government that had fulfilled its election promises so early in its term.

Minister Komatireddy VenkatReddy dismissed the BRS' proposed dharna, saying it would fail to garner support. Congress leaders, including Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar, sought to reassure farmers, urging them not to be swayed by BRS' "political stunts." Prabhakar emphasized that the Congress government had fulfilled its promise to waive loans for all eligible farmers and that any remaining grievances could be resolved through proper channels. "BRS is trying to mislead farmers with false protests. These are not genuine farmer protests, but political theatrics. Farmers should not participate in these events," Prabhakar observed. The Congress government had made unprecedented contributions to the agricultural sector, including paying crop insurance premiums on behalf of farmers and implementing the Rs. 72,000 crore allocation for agriculture in the state budget, he added. Prabhakar concluded by assuring that the Congress government was committed to the welfare of farmers and would continue to support them with additional initiatives in the coming days.

Major boost for...

Continued on Page 1

The Minister informed that orders have been issued to initiate land acquisition for the southern segment of the RRR. The alignment of this segment is being planned to meet future needs, as suggested by the Chief Minister and himself. He mentioned that the government is committed to ensuring transparency in the land acquisition process, and there will be

daily reviews of the RRR work for both the northern and southern segments. Venkat Reddy also shared that the Standing Finance Committee has approved the works for the Hyderabad-Vijayawada (NH-65) road, and tenders will be called within two months, with the construction starting by November. He noted that work on the Manneguda Expressway has already commenced, and he

personally inspected the Uppal Elevated Corridor alongside officials from the R&B department.

The existing contract for this project has been closed, and new work will soon begin. In the next few days, he plans to meet with Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, in New Delhi to seek further support for the ongoing national highway projects in the State.

Ensure prompt...
Continued on Page 1
to discuss the implementation of the Supreme Court's verdict on SC categorisation in Telangana. During the meeting, the legislators and Dalit intellectuals, as well as social activists from the Madiga community, urged Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha to take swift action to implement the Supreme Court's decision in the State. They requested that the Minister discuss the matter with Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to ensure prompt execution. Responding positively to the request, Minister Rajanarsimha assured them that he would bring the issue to the Chief Minister's attention and work towards implementing the Supreme Court's order on SC categorisation in the State. The meeting was also attended by notable Madiga intellectuals, including Professor Malleasham, Professor Khaseem, senior Congress leaders Kondeti Mallayya, Vijay Kumar Munjagalla.

Raze Janwada farmhouse...

Continued on Page 1

"If this property is in violation of any regulations, it should be demolished without hesitation," he asserted.

While talking to the media, KTR described the current drive against illegal constructions as a mere 'drama' under the garb of 'HYDRAA' (the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Monitoring and Protection Agency) operations. He demanded that the government demonstrate its commitment by taking down all illegal constructions in a single day, beginning with those owned by members of

the ruling party. KTR's pointed remarks have sparked significant reactions from opposition leaders across the political spectrum.

Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, speaking to the media on Wednesday, emphasized that HYDRAA's operation was a legitimate one aimed at demolishing constructions that violated regulations, including the Janwada farmhouse, should it be an illegal structure. He reiterated that there was no doubt about the legality of HYDRAA's actions. "If KTR's farmhouse is against the rules, it will be demolished without

Money-making...

Continued on Page 1

He questioned the targeting of select, small encroachments while leaving untouched larger illegal farmhouses owned by influential Congress leaders. He stated, "This is not about enforcing the law; it's about filling their coffers for the elections. Why are the big encroachments of Congress leaders being spared?"

Besides, Sanjay criticized the BRS party's decision not to contest the recent Rajya Sabha elections, despite having 38 MLAs. He suggested that this was part of a political collusion between BRS and Congress,

aimed at securing a seat for Congress candidate Abhishek Singhvi, who had previously represented BRS MLC Kavitha in court. Sanjay also claimed that around 10 Congress MLAs were in touch with KCR, indicating potential cross-voting and further collaboration between BRS and Congress. He described the ongoing alliance as a "match-fixing" scenario designed to mislead the public. He urged both parties to focus on real issues, such as the implementation of the six guarantees promised by the Congress government, instead of engaging in deceptive tactics.

Selective demolitions...

Continued on Page 1

Referring to the demolitions carried out as party of HYDRAA operations in the Gandipet FTL area, where over 20 buildings and boundary walls were razed, Maheshwar Reddy wondered why similar action was not being taken against illegal constructions in other areas, particularly those associated with prominent leaders. He recalled that when KCR first assumed office in 2014, he had initiated the demolition of illegal structures in Hyderabad's Madhapur and Ayyappa Society areas. However, those

actions were halted after a few days, coinciding with several TDP MLAs joining the BRS. Maheshwar Reddy expressed skepticism about whether the current government was serious about tackling illegal constructions or merely following the pattern set by KCR. Highlighting a report by officials, which noted that with regard to 134 lakes in Hyderabad, 8,718 constructions were found within the Full Tank Level (FTL) boundaries and 5,343 within the buffer zones, Maheshwar Reddy questioned whether the government would take action against all these violations.

Explosion claims...

Continued on Page 1

The scale of the disaster overwhelmed emergency services, and it took several hours for dozens of fire engines to bring the flames under control.

Anakapalli District Collector Vijaya Krishnan confirmed that the explosion happened during the afternoon shift when hundreds of workers were present. "Our priority is to ensure that all victims receive proper treatment and support during this tragic time," Krishnan said. The severely injured have been transported to hospitals in Visakhapatnam and

Anakapalli. Eyewitnesses described scenes of chaos and fear. "We saw people running in every direction. It was terrifying," one witness recounted. The locals are reeling from the shock, with fears escalating about the adequacy of safety measures in the SEZ.

Union leaders have condemned the incident, attributing it to severe lapses in safety protocols. "This tragedy is a direct consequence of the disregard for essential safety standards," declared a union spokesperson. The spokesperson also criticised the lack of regular safety audits and called for a comprehensive.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

The Govt steps back

The Government withdraws lateral entry into bureaucracy amid opposition from its allies

The government has decided to withdraw its initiative on lateral entry into the civil services. This decision comes in the wake of mounting opposition from its political allies, who raised concerns over the potential implications of such a policy shift. However, this withdrawal would put the clock back on the Government's desire to infuse the bureaucracy with fresh talent from the private sector and other domains, aiming to bring specialised skills and perspectives into the administration. Lateral entry, as a concept, was introduced to bridge the gap between the skills required for contemporary governance and the traditional expertise within the civil services. By allowing professionals from various fields—such as finance, technology, and social sciences—to enter the bureaucracy at senior levels, the government aimed to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public administration. This initiative was seen as a way to inject new ideas and innovation into a system often criticised for being slow, rigid, and out of touch with modern realities. But it was not well taken by the Opposition and the BJP allies alike.



Critics argued that lateral entry could undermine the foundational principles of the Indian civil services, which have historically emphasised neutrality, continuity, and a deep understanding of the country's socio-political landscape. This policy, they claimed, might lead to a dilution of these values, creating a disconnect between the administration and the people it serves. This is indeed a valid point as the professionals in the private sector do not have the training and mindset to serve the people, they are more focused on achieving targets and making profits. This does not go well

with the public office which has to be more sympathetic to people's aspirations even if the cost is high. Another major concern, and that is more pronounced in the Indian context, was that lateral entry could become a tool for political patronage. It was feared that the process could be manipulated to favour individuals with political connections, thus compromising the meritocratic nature of the civil services. Surely, it could lead to the politicisation of the bureaucracy, further eroding public trust in the system. Besides, bypassing the traditional recruitment process could create resentment among career bureaucrats. The decision to withdraw the lateral entry initiative reflects a pragmatic recognition of the political realities at play. While the government may have been convinced of the merits of the policy, the need to maintain a cohesive and supportive alliance outweighed the potential benefits of pushing forward with a contested reform. For now, the Government's retreat on lateral entry is a reminder of the delicate interplay between policy and politics. While the idea of bringing in fresh talent from outside the civil services is laudable, the concerns raised by political allies cannot be ignored. Moving forward, any attempt to reform the bureaucracy will need to address these concerns head-on, ensuring that innovation does not come at the cost of values.

J&K gears up for historic elections

For the first time since the revocation of Article 370 and the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019, the region is set to hold its Assembly elections



KALYANI SHANKAR

Jammu and Kashmir will have Assembly elections from September 18 to October 1 to elect 90 legislators, the first after the revocation of Article 370 and the state's bifurcation in August 2019. The delay in holding new elections has been a contention for years. However, a recent Supreme Court directive was crucial in setting the timeline. Now that the elections are announced, political parties of all shades welcomed it. Kashmir has been a significant source of conflict for long between India and Pakistan. Both countries claim Kashmir, although they only govern a part of it. Pakistan has even internationalised the issue, which has been brought to the United Nations. In 2019, mixed reactions followed Modi's decision to divide the state.

This decision led to Kashmir losing its flag, criminal code, and constitutional protections. Government job opportunities for Kashmiris decreased and are now open to non-residents. Despite challenges, the state has seen both positive and negative changes. The Prime Minister's initiatives have spurred development, and the growing interest of Gulf countries in investing in Jammu and Kashmir signals a promising future, bringing hope to the residents. The Ministry of Home Affairs reports decreased security force casualties from 80 in 2019 to 33 in 2023 and a drop in civilian deaths from 44 in 2019 to 12 in 2023. The last state elections were in 2014. The high voter turnout in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls has led to Assembly polls. In Kashmir, there was a historic 58.46% voter turnout in the recent parliamentary elections, a 30-point increase from the 2019 general election. The government completed a delimitation exercise after the 2019 revocation of Article 370 and the bifurcation. The assembly seats in Jammu and Kashmir increased from 87 to 114 after the 2022 delimitation, including 24 seats for Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). This increase in seats could potentially shift the balance of power and influence the strategies of political parties in the upcoming elec-



tions. The BJP claimed that the scrapping of Article 370 and their subsequent policies in Kashmir had developed the region for the better. The recently concluded Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir were a significant victory for Indian democracy. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the NC and PDP saw a resurgence. The election allowed them to revitalise their membership and bring long-standing issues to the forefront. Although the Congress did not secure any seats, the NC won two out of three, presenting a strong challenge for the third seat. Despite the region's history of terrorism and allegations of rigged elections, the polls were widely celebrated for the conduct of free and fair polls. The upcoming election will test the central government's efforts to integrate Jammu and Kashmir more fully into the Indian Union after revoking the region's special status under Article 370. It is also a test for the Election Commission to conduct polls without any violent incidents. The political parties have started preparing for the upcoming assembly elections, including campaign strategy, alliances, and candidate selection. The People's Conference, Congress,



THE UPCOMING ELECTION WILL TEST THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO INTEGRATE JAMMU AND KASHMIR MORE FULLY INTO THE INDIAN UNION AFTER REVOKING THE REGION'S SPECIAL STATUS UNDER ARTICLE 370

Peoples Democratic Party, and National Conference met to plan for the elections. The political parties have started preparing for the upcoming assembly elections, including campaign strategy, alliances, and candidate selection. The People's Conference, Congress, Peoples Democratic Party, and National Conference have all met at their party level to plan for the elections. If the assembly elections are held as scheduled, the Valley will see a contest between the NC and the PDP. Moreover, the polarisation and separatist narrative that gained traction during the Lok Sabha elections will only intensify and peak during the assembly elections.

The PDP leader and daughter of Mehboobha Mufti echoed the others. Other political parties, including the Congress, the BJP, the CPI(M) and the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP), welcomed the EC's announcement. In the 2014 Jammu and Kashmir elections, no party won a majority. Governor's Rule was imposed for 49 days until PDP's Mehbooba Mufti was appointed chief minister with BJP's support. 2018, the BJP withdrew from the ruling alliance, leading to the Governor's Rule again. The

assembly was dissolved in November 2018, and President's Rule was imposed in December 2018. Since then, the governor's Rule has been in the state. The government needs to decide whether to intervene in the Kashmir Valley to address soft separatism or consider a reorganisation plan before the elections. During the parliamentary elections, Congress and the NC allied. The NC contested three seats in Kashmir, while Congress contested in Jammu and Udhampur. PDP, part of the INDIA Alliance, was not accommodated and fielded candidates on three seats in Kashmir against the National Conference. For the upcoming Assembly polls, the scene is not explicit. Congress and NC might go together. Omar mentioned that allying with the PDP would be difficult because they ran against each other in the parliament elections. If the regional parties want to improve, they must unite, and the INDIA Bloc must collaborate. The Kashmir elections are crucial, and the entire country will observe a popular government's rise after a decade.

(The writer is a popular columnist; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT FOR RAPE

Madam — All eyes may be on Supreme Court hearings with respect to the Kolkata case but time shouldn't die down and the government can't be numb further on this issue. The pains undergone by the parents of the victim as well as the fear in the minds of the medics when they enter into a hospital for their work need to be realised by the law making authorities. It's time to burn the culprits and not the candles. The time has come for the government to pass a bill for capital punishment for rapists. When currency can be changed overnight, when special session can be called to increase the salary of politicians, when parliament can remain open all night for trust votes, wondering what is delaying to pass a stringent law against rape. The State of West Bengal must be taught a lesson by enforcing the President's role till the case gets cracked and culprits taken to task. Only drastic change like this will also become a lesson for other states to adhere caution and to protect the women from this society. The female MPs in the parliament must take this up as a cause of their own and today it may be somebody's and tomorrow this can happen at their own house can't be ruled out.

A.P. Thiruvadi | Chennai

REAL HERO

Madam— Amid the dance of death and destruction in Wayanad, humanity dawned. Darkness gets a relief when the sun softly touches it at dawn. Our pessimism and doubt in goodness in human beings similarly got a relief. It was when we read the report that some people on their own rushed to the danger zone in Wayanad and saved others at the cost of their lives. Sharath saw that the roof of his home had been blown away after landslides hit Chooramala on July 30. Immediately, he took his parents to a safer place. But he did not stop there. He rescued 18

Saga of champai Soren!



Sixty eight year-old Champai Soren, who was the Chief Minister of Jharkhand for a few weeks, is in the headlines of newspapers these days. Some are saying that he will join BJP, some are predicting that he will form a new party, some are assessing that he will join JDU. But three days have passed since this news break but it has not come to fruition yet. He is still silent, yes, his intention has definitely become clear that after four decades, the people of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, with whose help he became famous,

insulted him. He should remember very well what was the fate of Geeta Koda, Congress MP from Singhbhum parliamentary constituency, when she jumped to BJP at the last moment in the last Lok Sabha elections? She was neither here nor there. The mystery of Champai Soren's future is going on for a long time because he played the game of rebellion thinking that all the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha MLAs of Kolhan will come with him. But nothing like that happened. Nor is it going to happen in the future.

It is quite possible that he may lose the election from his constituency Saraikela as well. Because in the last assembly elections in the entire Kolhan, BJP was wiped out. Therefore, even though the people here call Champai the 'Tiger of Jharkhand', they will never tolerate rebellion against JMM. Therefore, for the time being, it seems that Champai Soren's political life has come to an end.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

SAFETY AT SCHOOLS

Madam — Schools are noble and honorable places where students learn humility, humanity, compassion, benevolence, respect for others, and how to abandon violence and corruption. They foster unity, peace, and a spirit of togetherness. Unfortunately, today, schools have become places of fear and distress. Instances of student suicides due to teachers' cruelty, conflicts among students, vandalism on campus, and incidents like the recent Udaipur stabbing have left parents frightened and apprehensive about sending their children to school. Why is this happening? Why aren't government schools especially peaceful anymore?

We heard a lot about shooting in the US schools and wondered why that happens but now it is happening in our own country. A close look is needed.

Jakir Hussain | Kanpur

Sujit De | Kolkata

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

PICTALK



People perform Shrivani Purnima rituals while taking bath in the Ganga river, in Varanasi



VIVEK SHUKLA

Raj Kapoor's deep bond with Delhi: A legacy of cinema

Raj Kapoor's relationship with the capital remains an enduring part of his legacy, etched in the memories of cinema halls and the city's cultural fabric

As fans gear up to celebrate the birth centenary of Bollywood's legendary showman Raj Kapoor on December 14th, it is essential to remember his deep-rooted connection with Delhi—a city that was almost like a second home to him. Kapoor's association with Delhi was profound, and this bond will be celebrated in a grand event in the capital on his birth anniversary. Raj Kapoor's final days were also tied to Delhi, where he passed away on June 2, 1988. Just a month before his death, on May 2nd, 1988, he was honored with the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award by then President R. Venkataraman at the Siri Fort auditorium. Unfortunately, his health deteriorated shortly after the ceremony, leading to severe breathing difficulties. He was admitted to AIIMS, where doctors, led by Dr. J.N. Pandey, tried their best to save him, but his condition did not improve, and he passed away due to complications from asthma. Delhi, the city that played such a significant role in his life, also became the place of his final farewell.



Kapoor had a special affinity for Delhi's iconic cinema halls, particularly Regal and Moti, where he preferred his films to be premiered. Regal, one of New Delhi's first cinema halls, held a special place in his heart. It was here that some of his most celebrated films, including "Sangam," "Mera Naam Joker," "Satyam Shivam Sundaram," "Boot Polish," and "Jis Desh Mein Ganga Behti Hai," were released. The RK Banner films consistently performed well in the capital, further cementing Kapoor's connection with the city. As Pandit J.P. Sharma "Tripathi," a close family friend, recalls, even Kapoor's father, Prithviraj Kapoor, had acted in plays at Regal, which showcased both English and Hindi productions in its early days. Sadly, Regal closed its doors

in 2017, with Moti following suit shortly after. Shashi Kapoor, Raj Kapoor's younger brother, fondly remembered his visits to Regal with his elder brother. For Shashi, Regal was more than just a cinema hall; it was a place filled with memories of Raj Kapoor. Raj Kapoor's connection with Delhi was not limited to cinema alone. His trust with the city began in 1957 when he produced the film "Ab Dilli Door Nahin." The film also marked one of the early appearances of a young Amjad Khan, who would later become famous as Gabbar Singh. "Ab Dilli Door Nahin" captured various iconic locations in Delhi, including the old iron bridge over the Yamuna, Daryaganj, and Connaught Place. Kapoor's relationship with Delhi deepened further in 1970 when his eldest daughter, Ritu, married Rajan Nanda, son of H.P. Nanda, the founder chairman of the Escorts Group. Raj Kapoor would often visit his daughter's home in Jor Bagh whenever he was in town, strengthening his bond with Delhi. The Kapoor family's connection with Delhi extended beyond Raj Kapoor. His younger brother, Shammi Kapoor, had a different association with the city's cinema culture. In the mid-1960s, Shammi Kapoor became a partner in Plaza Cinema in Connaught Place, along with film producer F.C. Mehra. While he later sold his stake, Shammi Kapoor remains the only member of the Kapoor clan to have held a stake in a cinema hall. Raj Kapoor's fondness for his younger brother Shashi was evident, with the former often treating the latter as a son. Shashi Kapoor's early film "Householder," directed by James Ivory and produced by Ismail Merchant, was primarily shot in a large house near Times House in Daryaganj. "Householder," written by Ruth Praver Jhabvala, featured two of Delhi's iconic landmarks, Jantar Mantar and Jama Masjid. The Kapoor family's connection with Delhi is deeply rooted, with their memories continuing to be cherished in the city. (The writer is a journalist and a columnist; views are personal)

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FIRST COLUMN

THE DIVINE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Aligning with this divine justice system is essential for realising true justice and harmony in life



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

Along with the Creation, God has set in place a perfect justice system. This is overseen by the Divine Authority under the superintendence of God. (The Bhagavad-Geeta 9.10) The Divine Authority is required to record all our acts by the mind, words and the body 24x7. Obviously, they have access to them. They are required by God to decide awards and punishments according to the guidelines given by Him. God does not interfere in this, and we keep on getting rewards and punishments as deserved life after life according to the 'Karmaphala Principle', which is: "what we sow we reap." Going into details, there are three parts of this.

There is 'prarabdha' (acts done earlier), 'kriyamana' (acts currently being done) and 'svabhava' (nature). What was done earlier including past lives, which has not been acted upon is carried forward till rewarded or punished. This process goes on eternally. The timing of rewards and punishments are decided by the Divine Authority. God knows what is being done, but does not interfere in it.

God gets into the act only if someone, mostly a devotee having God's consciousness, approaches Him for relief/pardon. If the request is found appropriate, God helps those approaching Him in order to deal with their punishments, i.e. makes them tolerable. (18.58) In this connection, it is necessary to point out that nature of all souls are also results of past karmas (deeds), as determined by the Divine Authority. It is very difficult to change one's nature by self-help. For example, if someone is lusty,



he or she will continue to be so during his entire life, unless God intervenes and helps in improving it. Again, we have to pray for it. These are the basics. Now let us see how it turns out practically. Take up a soul as an example. He has past karmas, which are due for rewards and punishments in this life. They manifest at their appointed times.

A man gets into an argument with his brother for his share in the paternal property. He decides to seek legal help. This is stage one of the justice system. Now it is 'Panchayat' at the village level or a court of justice. Such courts deliver justice based on man-made laws. These authorities deliver justice expeditiously, i.e. not taking too much time. But they must do justice, in which 'dharma' (highest religious principles) is the basis, wherever they have some latitude. Failing which, they create their faulty destiny; they just act as mediums. Whatever happens to a person has been decided long ago. That is how astrologers can predict what will happen to us.

At every stage of the legal process, rewards and punishments, as destined only, keep coming. If the person concerned is fated to get relief, it will happen in a higher court. Vice versa is also true. God has no pre-conceived or prejudiced notion towards anyone, except if someone takes His shelter, as mentioned earlier. Like all of us, nations have also destiny. This is a cumulative total of fate of all its residents. Let me take up India for example.

The 21st century is likely to be dominated by India. If it is true and India will become a developed nation by 2047, then, its judicial system has to be functioning smoothly. It must have been streamlined. There will be no delay in the delivery of judgements, i.e. there will be time-bound at every stage. Justice delayed is justice denied will be a thing of the past. There will be adequate judicial infrastructure with sufficient resources. But for this miracle to happen, some people in authority have to become mediums. For this, they will be rewarded personally according to the karmaphala principle. The divine justice system is foolproof. Are people in authority listening? It will be a shame if an opportunity like this is squandered; whatever is destined will surely happen. The question is: who would become mediums and get credit? This has been left to individuals.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher; views are personal)

Streamlining Punjab's administrative web



A S MITTAL

To unlock the State's true potential, there is an urgent need for structural reforms that prioritise smooth operations, accountability and stakeholder engagement

It's time for the complex web of multiple organisations of the Punjab government to take cues from the Indian Army's well-structured organisational hierarchy, which prioritises efficient command, control, and operational efficiency to maintain readiness. From a Havaldar leading a section, the smallest unit comprising ten soldiers, to the Chief of the Army Staff, the Army meticulously ensures cohesive functioning, distinct roles, and responsibilities, enabling the 14.55 lakh personnel to effectively fulfil defence and security roles. In contrast, the Punjab government's organisational structure (4.15 lakh personnel, including contractual and outsourced) requires an overhaul. In total, 50 parent departments and 163 affiliated organisations, each with its administrative head, aim for seamless result-oriented operations, which are below expectations. In the current government, the Chief Minister, who also oversees the industry sector, plays a pivotal role. However, the current structure, with around 20 administrative secretaries heading 17 departments, corporations, boards, and regulatory authorities, is not conducive to growth. By fostering a culture of collaboration, we can overcome these hurdles and drive efficiency and accountability towards a single goal of industrial growth, which has the potential to exceed the current stagnation of around 3% over the past 20 years in Punjab. Unfortunately, the complexity of multiple departments cannot achieve the single target of developing a fresh entrepreneurial class in the state. Rather, numerous channels breed corruption at various levels, and coercion can easily be gauged as the Punjab government scrapped 1498 mandatory compliances for industries three years ago. Therefore, it is high time to further ease the parent department as a single unique point, focusing on the singular target of developing a fresh entrepreneurial class in the state. It's impractical for any chief secretary to closely monitor 50 parent departments and their 163 affiliated organisations, which around 75 administrative secretaries head.

Assigning an Apex officer, preferably an additional chief secretary (ACS) level, is crucial to overseeing and synchronising each key sector. This officer will provide guidance, ensure alignment of goals and strategies, and streamline human resources operations effectively. Industries and other key sectors, such as Education, Health, urban development, Rural Development, and Agriculture, also need help navigating the complex web of 15 parent departments and their 69 affiliated organisations, which hampers good governance in Punjab. However, these challenges also present an opportunity for policymakers to reassess and reform, driving efficient and accountable human resources and paving the way for a vibrant Punjab. Industries: In Punjab industries are overseen by over 20 administrative secretaries who manage 17 departments and affiliated organizations. This large organizational structure, instead of collectively achieving the goal of growth, is currently engaged in assessing around 2000 compliances, posing a significant challenge for entrepreneurs. The need for an efficient and accountable administrative setup is urgent to create a conducive and thriving business environment. Initially, the Department of Punjab Industries and Commerce and its



IT'S IMPRACTICAL FOR ANY CHIEF SECRETARY TO CLOSELY MONITOR 50 PARENT DEPARTMENTS AND THEIR 163 AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS, WHICH AROUND 75 ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARIES HEAD

seven affiliated organisations oversee the industrial sector. However, three additional departments were later established - the Department of Investment Promotion, the Department of Employment Generation and Training, and the Department of Technical Education and Industrial Training - along with their ten organisations to fulfil the same objective. To fetch new investment, "Invest Punjab" was established under the Punjab Bureau of Investment Promotion (BPIP) as a single access point to streamline processes. It is claimed that this entity has been empowered to provide over 34 regulatory approvals, clearances, and compliances related to more than 30 organisations. This streamlined approach is crucial for existing industries, as they face challenges in directly dealing with 17 departments - the Punjab Industries & Commerce Department, Pollution Control Board, Chief Electrical Inspector, Labour Commissioner, Department of Factories, Department of Industries, Employment Generation and Training, Skill Development Mission, Punjab Bureau of Investment Promotion and Punjab State Industrial Development Corporation etc. This complex web of multiple departments is directionless and unfocused; enormous human resources can be utilised in a single merged service provider entity. In 2012, the idea of merging The Punjab State Industrial Development Corporation (PSIDC) and Punjab Financial Corporation (PFC) into the Punjab Small Industries and Export Corporation (PSIEC) was also

proposed but has yet to materialise. Punjab, with 99.7 per cent of MSMEs, is a promising hub for growth. However, the most significant roadblock for these enterprises is dealing with multiple departments and keeping track of their compliance. Despite the implementation of ten policies since the first industrial policy was formulated in 1978, the need for actionable governance reforms is still pressing. It is necessary to explore various measures to significantly improve services and make Punjab an attractive destination. Policymakers must urgently reimagine the state. Agriculture: In Punjab, agriculture is overseen by five distinct departments: the Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Fisheries, Department of Horticulture, and Department of Soil & Water Conservation. Eighteen additional organisations support these departments. Despite the involvement of multiple organisations, the state's agricultural growth has consistently declined, resting at around three per cent from 1990 to 2000 and further declining to less than two per cent from 2010 onwards. Education: The government greatly emphasises education and considers it a top priority. There is a critical need to revamp the administrative structure, as there are currently two separate departments, with six organisations and a school education board. The Department of Higher Education and Languages manages organisations in education and languages, while the Department of School Education oversees the six organisations. Despite these efforts,

it is essential to address that Punjab's secondary school dropout rate was 17.2% in 2022, exceeding the national average of 12.6%. The Way Forward: The reforms have the potential to significantly improve the functioning of key sectors in Punjab, creating a more accessible, transparent, efficient, responsive and accountable system to achieve a single goal collectively. Therefore two steps may be taken: First, Empowering Apex Officials: To achieve seamless collaboration among departments, empower at least five to six apex officers who will oversee the overall administration of their respective departments and have to report to the chief secretary. Each apex officer should have the support of five to six officers as direct reports. This approach aims to improve responsiveness, ensure transparency in decision-making processes, and hold apex officials accountable for their actions. Second, Stakeholder Engagement: The active participation of stakeholders is not just important, it's integral to the success of the proposed reforms. Encouraging stakeholder participation through feedback mechanisms and regular interactions to understand their needs and concerns is a key part of inclusive growth.

(The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika IITL Group, Vice-Chairman (Cabinet minister rank) of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council and President of Tractor and Mechanization Association (TMA). Views expressed are personal)

A bold leap towards 'Viksit Bharat' with historic push for education and skilling

This budget allocation of Rs 1.48 lakh crore for education and skilling along with digital learning will help build a robust, future-ready workforce

Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan hailed the 2024-25 budget as a pivotal milestone on India's path to becoming a developed nation by 2047. Prioritising education, skilling, employment generation, research and innovation like never before, #Budget for Viksit Bharat paves the way for strengthening Bharat's credentials. Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan posted on X. He noted that these are comprehensive and concrete measures taken up by Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman that will be a win-win for all stakeholders—students, academia, and industry. The budget allocation for Education, employment, and skilling has been increased by



REETU SRIVASTAVA

30% to Rs 1.48 lakh crore. India has the largest educational system with 265 million students in schools, 43 million in higher education and more than 10 million learners enrolled in skilling institutions. The Budget Allocation for 2024-25 of Rs 73,498 crores is the highest ever for the Department of School Education & Literacy. Autonomous bodies such as the Kendriya Vidyalaya

Sangathan and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti have also received their highest-ever allocations. The Flagship Schemes like Samagra Shiksha, POSHAN and PM-SHRI have got Rs 3,250 crores. The budget includes strengthening the skilling and apprenticeship ecosystem, skill development and internship opportunities for one crore youth by India's top companies, and providing employment-linked incentives to first-time employees across the sector. The government has introduced a revamped 'Model Skill Loans Scheme' from 1.5 lakhs to 7.5 lakhs to 25000 students annually and education loans up to 10 lakhs for pursuing education in higher domestic educational institutions to one lakh students every year with an annual interest subvention of 3%. The step will certainly promote enrolment in domestic institutions as well as reduce the financial burden on the students. In addition to this, the finance minister also outlined several initiatives for the Skill Development sector. These include the upgrading of 1,000 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in line with the skill requirements of the industry. The internship opportunities for one crore youth in 5 years by the government is a welcoming step, this will provide youths with an engagement and enhance employability and practical skills. In the scheme 'National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS)', an allocation of Rs 600 crore has been made. There has been an over-



all increase of Rs. 3525.15 crore (7.99%) in the budget allocation of the Department of Higher Education in this budget. Deemed Universities, IITs NITs, IISERs, and IISc have got hefty allocations, considerably high in comparison to the previous budget. In higher education, areas like Digital e-learning, Research and Innovation, teacher training, the Centre of

Excellence in Artificial Intelligence and some specific institutions have received higher allocations. Under Digital e-learning, the government is looking forward to tapping the potential of virtual learning and aligning it with the Academic Bank of Credits with the view of increasing portability and flexible study options. In the scheme 'National Mission in Education through ICT', an allocation of ₹480 crore has been made in 2024-25 and this is ₹80 crore more than the allocation in 2023-24. The increased budget for Research and Innovation is to focus on academic and research collaborations in science, engineering and technical education. To improve the quality of education being

imparted at the school level it requires a revamped pedagogical structure, so, the Teacher Training segment has got its due share. The scheme 'Establishment of 3 Centres of Excellence (CoEs) in Artificial Intelligence (AI) has got an allocation of ₹255 crore in the budget. The Major Schemes For Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) erstwhile known as Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)], the budget has been kept at Rs1814.94 crore An allocation of Rs 1800 crore has been allocated for Institutions of Eminence. In the scheme 'Multi disciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education EAP (MERITE)', an allocation of Rs 200 crore has been made and this is a 100% increase over the

last year's budget. The NEP 2020 says that the aim of the policy must be for India to have an education system by 2040 with equitable access to the highest-quality education for all learners regardless of social or economic background. Recognising the crucial role of education the government has designed an ambitious package for education for it to be growth-oriented, inclusive and progressive. However, the most important aspect is its implementation. The features of the budget meant for education will play a crucial role in guiding India towards becoming a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047 as stated by the Education Minister. (The writer is an educationist and a freelance writer; views expressed are personal)

IN BRIEF



Amul ranked as world's strongest food brand

Amul has been ranked as the world's strongest food brand by consultancy firm Brand Finance, UK. It has also retained the strongest dairy brand of the world for the fourth consecutive year. "Amul has been ranked as the world's strongest food brand and the strongest dairy brand as per Brand Finance, UK, world's leading brand consultancy, in its annual report titled 'Food & Drink 2024,'" the company said in a statement. The report lists the most valuable and strongest food, dairy and non-alcoholic drinks brands. As per the report, Amul has risen from second rank in 2023 to become the world's strongest food brand in 2024, with a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 91.0 out of 100 and an AAA+ rating. "Amul's brand strength is attributed to its strong performance in familiarity, consideration, and recommendation metrics," the statement said.



CCI flags concerns over Viacom 18-Star India deal

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has flagged possible anti-competitive concerns with respect to the proposed USD 8.5-billion Viacom 18-Star India merger and has sought detailed responses from the parties concerned, sources said. In case the regulator is not satisfied with the replies, it can go for public scrutiny of the deal, they added. After the companies filed an application with the CCI for deal approval in May this year, the watchdog had sought various clarifications and additional information from the parties. The sources said the parties have been served show cause notice asking why a detailed scrutiny of the deal should not be carried out as there are anti-competitive concerns in relation to certain business segments, including cricket broadcasting rights. Queries sent to CCI and Disney-Star did not elicit any response.



Exercise power judiciously: FM tells taxmen

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday asked tax officers to use simpler words in notices or letters they sent to taxpayers and exercise power bestowed upon them judiciously. Addressing the 165th Income Tax Day celebrations, Sitharaman said that after adopting the faceless regime, the tax officers must now aspire to be more "fair and friendly" in their dealings with taxpayers. The tax notices should not trigger a "sense of fear" among the taxpayers and instead, it should be simple and straightforward, she added. The notice should make it "crystal clear" to the assessee the reason for which a notice was being sent to him/her, the minister noted. Sitharaman also said there was room for improvement in issuing refunds faster. Asking taxmen to avoid "ham-handed ways" in dealing with taxpayers, the minister said that the action taken should be proportionate to the issue at hand. She also asked taxpayers to use enforcement measures only as a last resort, and the goal of the department should be to encourage voluntary compliance.

'India, Africa must target \$200 bn trade in next 7 years'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

There is a huge potential to increase economic cooperation between India and Africa as both regions can look at doubling two-way trade to USD 200 billion in the next seven years, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Wednesday.

Speaking at CII's India-Africa business conclave, Goyal said the main sectors where businesses of the two sides can collaborate include agriculture, pharmaceuticals, mining, tourism, auto, critical minerals, and renewable energy.

"I would like to suggest six areas for collaboration and cooperation as a way forward to take this relationship to the next level," he said, adding, "can we look at doubling our trade. So far we have only a few African countries who trade with India".

He said as many as 33 countries do not participate in the duty free tariff preference (DFTP) scheme of India.

"Can we look at getting more and more countries to enjoy the fruits of this partnership and set a benchmark to



opportunities are there in increasing collaborations in the IT sector as India can help African nations in infrastructure development, health, and financial inclusion needs

double this trade number from USD 100 billion to USD 200 billion between India and Africa. I think we should look at doing that in seven years," Goyal said.

He added that opportunities are there in increasing collaborations in the IT sector as India can help African nations in infrastructure development, health, and financial inclusion needs.

"There is a potential in the

entertainment sector also given our mutual strengths. Sports also, we can increase cooperation," he said, adding that mineral rich Africa can complement India's increasing needs for critical minerals, particularly for the EV sector.

Critical minerals, such as cobalt, copper, lithium, nickel and rare earths, play a crucial role in the production of clean energy technologies, from wind turbines to electric cars. Critical minerals are particularly in demand for the production of batteries for electric cars.

Markets extend gains on buying in FMCG

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed higher on Wednesday, helped by gains in FMCG, consumer durables and healthcare stocks amid strong buying support from domestic institutional investors.

However, foreign capital outflows amid a cautious trend in global equities ahead of the release of US Fed minutes restricted the gains in domestic markets, traders said.

In a range-bound trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex gained for the second day in a row, rising 102.44 points or 0.13 per cent to close at 80,905.30. During the day, it rose 149.97 points or 0.18 per cent to hit an intra-day high of 80,952.83. Rising for the fifth straight session, the NSE Nifty went up by 71.35 points or 0.29 per cent to end at 24,770.20.

The Indian market traded on a tight range with a positive bias supported by strong DII

flows. While defensive sector outperformed due to a continued shift in portfolio towards FMCG, consumer, commodities, and pharma.

"Global markets exhibited a mildly cautious tone ahead of the release of the FOMC minutes later today. Currently, the expectation of a rate cut remains high, given the fall in US inflation and moderation in overall growth," Vinod

Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

Among the Sensex firms, Titan, Asian Paints, ITC, Hindustan Unilever, Nestle India, Bajaj Finserv and Bharti Airtel were among the gainers. In contrast, UltraTech Cement, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel, Power Grid, HDFC Bank, HCL Technology, State Bank of India and ICICI Bank were the laggards. Shares of FSN E-Commerce Ventures, beauty and personal care brand Nykaa, bounced 9.42 per cent on Wednesday.

Review of IT Act to be completed in time: CBDT

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The task of reviewing the Income Tax Act of 1961 will be completed in the given timeframe of six months, CBDT Chairman Ravi Agrawal said on Wednesday.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in her Budget speech last month, had announced that the direct tax law of the country would be reviewed to make it simple and the task would be completed in six months.

"We have an important task on hand and that is the comprehensive review of the Income Tax Act, 1961. This exercise is aimed to reduce litigation and provide tax certainty to taxpayers," Agrawal said during an event held here to mark the 165th Year of Income Tax in India. He said that the board has taken up the assignment in mission mode and the task, though challenging and transformative, will be completed in the given timeframe.

Non-banks' asset growth to moderate, rise in NPAs likely: Icra

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The non-banking finance companies (NBFC) growth in assets under management will moderate in FY25, and the year will also witness an uptick in dud assets, a domestic rating agency said on Wednesday.

The NBFCs operating across various segments are estimated to show assets under management (AUM) growth of 13-15 per cent in FY25 from 18 per cent in FY24, largely impacted by regulatory measures on restricting bank lending to such

entities and also concerns over unsecured and top-up loans, Icra Ratings said.

The sector is also expected to witness a 0.30-0.50 per cent increase in delinquencies during the year, and the agency's group head Karthik Srinivasan told reporters that the "best days on delinquencies are behind us".

The non-performing assets (NPAs) will inch up due to factors like high growth in the last two years, some borrowers being over-leveraged and also sloppy assessment practices in some entities, the agency said.

The sector needs up to Rs 6 lakh crore in funding for sustaining the credit growth in FY25, Srinivasan said, adding that capital is not a constraint but companies will have to look at sources beyond the mainstream of bank funding for the liabilities.

Direct lending from banks will come up to Rs 1.8 lakh crore, while the rest will be from other routes like securitisations and issuing non-convertible debentures, among others, the agency said, adding that banks have an important role to play in the other two as well.

Shielding India's fiscal stability from disruptive strategies

In recent years, Hindenburg Research, a US investment firm focused on activist short selling, has garnered notoriety for its disruptive financial strategies. Since its inception in December 2017, Hindenburg has published around 70 reports targeting 63 companies. Many of its reports contain allegations that can trigger dramatic declines in stock prices and, in extreme cases, drive companies to bankruptcy. This pattern raises significant concerns about Hindenburg's practices and their broader implications for both individual companies and national economies.

A notable instance of Hindenburg's impact occurred in January 2023 when the firm released a controversial report on the Adani Group. The report alleged various financial malpractices and mismanagement within the Adani Group. The timing and nature of this report suggested an attempt to destabilize the Indian economy by targeting a significant entity. The aftermath was severe: the Adani Group faced substantial financial losses, sparking debates about the intentions behind Hindenburg's aggressive stance. Of course, the Adani Group vehemently refuted the allegations, and the public and investors too rallied behind the conglomerate. Yet, the substantial financial losses faced by the Adani Group due to Hindenburg's stance, raised questions about the impact of such reports on the stability of major economies.

In response to the allegations concerning the Adani group, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) had issued a notice to Hindenburg Research, following established legal procedures. This action was met with heightened hostility from Hindenburg, which retaliated by launching a campaign to malign SEBI Chief Madhabi Puri Buch with its fresh allegations. This has not only intensified tensions but has also provoked public discourse on the ethical standards of both Hindenburg Research and the regulatory frameworks governing financial markets.

Hindenburg's tactics have had devastating effects on other companies too. For example, in June 2020, the firm raised concerns about WINS Finance, a Chinese company, after an extraordinary surge in its share price. This led to the freezing of the company's assets by a Chinese court and a catastrophic collapse in its stock value. In May 2019, Hindenburg targeted Jumia Technologies, alleging inflated order numbers and misrepresentation, causing Jumia's stock price to plummet by over 50% and leading to a series of lawsuits. Nikola, an American electric vehicle manufacturer, was also a focus in September 2020, with Hindenburg accusing it of exaggerating its technological capabilities, leading to a dramatic stock price collapse. Other examples

include SCWorx, Lordstown Motors, Clover Health, HF Foods, and Pharma Cielo, each experiencing severe financial damage or bankruptcy as a result of Hindenburg's reports.

The Financial Services Commission (FSC) of Mauritius has clarified that the funds mentioned in Hindenburg's report, such as the 'IPE Plus Fund' and 'IPE Plus Fund 1', are not registered in Mauritius and fall outside its regulatory jurisdiction. The FSC has emphasized that Mauritius adheres to strict substance requirements under the Financial Services Act and complies with OECD standards, addressing claims linking these funds to Buch and her husband.

Despite the foregoing clarifications, the fresh allegations made by Hindenburg Research have ignited a significant debate about SEBI's integrity and the broader implications for India's financial regulatory framework. The persistent demand for a thorough investigation underscores the need for transparency and accountability in regulatory practices.

The ongoing controversy has significant implications for India's financial markets. In particular, SEBI's role as a regulatory authority is under intense scrutiny, and any confirmation of the allegations could result in a substantial loss of public trust and potentially disrupt the stability of the financial market. This situation highlights



DR. ARJA SHRIKANTH

the importance of maintaining high standards of transparency and accountability in regulatory oversight.

The Indian judiciary has also played a crucial role, with the Supreme Court reaffirming its confidence in SEBI while directing that the investigation be expedited. This reflects the judiciary's role in ensuring that regulatory bodies operate effectively and uphold principles of fairness and transparency in financial markets.

In conclusion, Hindenburg Research's actions exemplify a broader issue of financial manipulation and its impact on companies and economies. The firm's aggressive short selling and sensationalized reporting have had devastating consequences for many companies, raising serious ethical concerns. The recent allegations against SEBI Chief Madhabi Puri Buch have complicated the situation, highlighting the intersection of personal investments and professional integrity. As investigations continue, it is crucial for all stakeholders to prioritize ethical governance and transparency to uphold market regulations and investor confidence. The resolution of this situation will significantly influence the future of financial regulation in India and shape public trust in its institutions.

(The writer is former special secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh)

CIL pursuing acquisition of critical minerals in India, abroad: Chairman

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Coal India on Wednesday said it is actively pursuing acquisition of critical minerals, including lithium, in the domestic market and overseas and stressed that it would continue to take part in the auction of such blocks.

Critical minerals, including lithium, play a crucial role in the production of clean energy technologies, from wind turbines to electric cars. They are particularly in demand for the production of batteries for electric cars.

"With an objective to reduce the import dependence of critical minerals like lithium, cobalt, CIL is actively pursuing acquisition of these mineral assets in India and abroad," Coal India Ltd (CIL) Chairman P M Prasad said during 50th Annual General Meeting of the company.

CIL, he said, will continue to participate in e-auction of critical mineral blocks offered by the mines ministry.



CIL has successfully opened its account in domestic critical mineral asset, emerging as the preferred bidder for Khattali Chhotti graphite block in Alirajpur district of Madhya Pradesh, he said.

It would be the company's first ever non-coal mineral mining venture.

"The...feat was achieved under tranche-II forward auction held on July 9 by Ministry of Mines," he stated.

The vision of CIL, Prasad

said, is to ensure that there is no shortage of coal in the country and to make it self-reliant in terms of the dry fuel.

CIL spearheads the nation's coal production, contributing around 80 per cent to the entire coal output.

The company, he said, is committed to increasing the production and supplies of the quality coal to the mandated levels to ensure the country's citizens get power at just price

Possible for Indian economy to touch \$55 trillion by 2047

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Executive director at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Krishnamurthy Subramanian on Wednesday said that the size of the Indian economy has the potential to touch USD 55 trillion by 2047 if the growth rate in dollar terms remains at 12 per cent.

Speaking at a CII event here, Subramanian, the former chief economic advisor to the government from 2018 to 2021, said that inflation targeting since 2016 had helped the country average out the rate of



price rise to five per cent. Before 2016, the average rate of inflation was 7.5 per cent, he said.

With a real growth of eight per cent, the nominal growth is expected to be 13 per cent with five per cent inflation rate, the economist said.

"With rate of depreciation of the Indian currency to be less than one per cent vis-a-vis the dollar in the long run, the fundamentals of the economy will start to show up," he said.

In this context, Subramanian said that the real growth rate of India will be 12 per cent in dollar terms. According to him, then the size of the economy will double every six years.

72 pc of employers plan to hire freshers: Report

PNS ■ MUMBAI

With gradual improvement in the job market, a report on Wednesday has revealed that 72 per cent of employers interviewed intend to hire freshers in the second half (July-December) of this year.

The 72 per cent hiring intent represents a 4 per cent increase from the first half of this year and a 7 per cent rise compared to the second half of 2023, suggesting a gradually improving employment landscape for fresh talent.

Further, the report highlighted that e-commerce and technology start-ups, engineering and infrastructure, and retail are the top three industries showing intent to hire freshers in the second

half of this year. Geographically, Bengaluru leads with 74 per cent of employers intending to hire freshers, followed by Mumbai at 60 per cent and Chennai at 54 per cent, it added.

In terms of job roles, the report said full-stack developer, Search Engine Optimisation executive, digital sales associate, and User Interface/User Experience designer have emerged as the most in-demand positions for freshers.

Employers are particularly seeking candidates with skills in cybersecurity, cloud computing, data analytics, and search engine optimisation, it stated.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
WANAPARTHY MUNICIPALITY, WANAPARTHY DISTRICT
NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
 R.No. E1/07/Wanaparthi/JPR/Works/2024-25 Dt: 21-08-2024
 Expression of interest is invited in sealed covers from experienced (in similar type of works) consultants for Preparation of DPR's for Buildings and other Infrastructural Development works in Wanaparthi Municipality under any grants for one year. A Demand Draft of Rs: 5000/- have to be drawn in favor of Commissioner, Wanaparthi Municipality.
 Last date for the issuing of schedule: Dt: 24-08-2024, Time: 3:00 PM. Last date for submission of sealed expression of interest: Dt: 24-08-2024, Time: 3:00 PM.
 Conditions: (1) Conditions of EOI should be accepted. (2) Experience consultants in similar nature of works and eligibility criteria also be considered. (3) Should have worked not less than Rs.50.00 crores project in single US in Telangana State. (4) The firm should have Rs.3.00 Crores of average as financial turnover in last Five years. (5) The DPR should prepare in stipulated period and should get approved by the department. (6) The DPR's shall be prepared as per the guidelines and norms and all the information as per the check list raised by the department. (7) Commissioner, Wanaparthi Municipality all has all powers to accept or reject the sealed tenders. (8) E.O.I shall be submitted along with (individually) DD for Rs. -5000/- have drawn in favor of Commissioner, Wanaparthi Municipality. (9) The rate quoted by the consultants shall be in percentage (1% of total estimated cost. Any other details contact on engineering section Wanaparthi Municipality in Working hours. Contact Mobile No: Commissioner (9649926323), Municipal Engineer (9963549866).
 Sd/- Commissioner, Wanaparthi Municipality.
 R.O.No: 3086-PHCL/ADVT/1/2024-25, Dt: 21.08.2024

The Kolkata doctor's rape and murder case has shook the nation once again. While this was in the news, many cases had happened that people were not aware of. Yogita Bhayana has been working diligently to combat this heinous crime against women, providing assistance to the victims and their families through Pari Foundation and raising awareness about the urgent need for government support



Protesting her way towards protecting women from assaults

TEJAL SINHA

Yogita Bhayana has been actively involved with the Pari Foundation, standing resilient in the face of challenges. She has not only been advocating for justice for the victims but also pushing the nation's judiciary to wake up to prevent losing another daughter. Initially working in the airline industry as a young girl, deep down in her heart, there was a tiny bug that wanted her to do something around social reforms. While over time, she had worked on different causes, it was not until the Nirbhaya case happened that she took on the cause of helping the victims and their families. Though she did receive and attend a few sexual assault cases, Nirbhaya brought out her in-born anti-rape activism!

"Initially, I had attended cases where the girls were raped and helped them," begins Yogita, taking us through the beginnings of her part for a cause

that's much more than just an incident. Recalling the time that had a personal impact on her was the Nirbhaya case. Why? "I was also in the same mall on the same day. I could relate to this much more because I realised that it could have been me too. That feeling came in. I had gone to have dinner while she was there for a movie. When I heard this case the next day, I thought we may have crossed paths, and I must have seen her. Why did she have to suffer this brutality just because she took public transport?" This triggered her even more. Back then, she was assisting government agencies. "We are doing consultation, advocacy and policy intervention, but what is happening on the grounds was something very gruesome, so I decided to protest. Being a part of a body like the National Commission for Women (NCW), I was very active then, so I decided to go for a protest and from the protest, we felt so helpless that water cannons were used on us and lathi charges were done on us. What for? That made me more rebellious about what was happening."

Being just like a drop in the ocean, among the other protestors, while other protestors thought that Nirbhaya and her family had gotten justice after the arrest of the culprits, she fought and stood by the family until the culprits were hanged to death. But on the other hand, she knew that was not the end. It was rather a beginning. She started receiving many more sexual assault

and murder cases, which not many people are even aware of! "The Pari Foundation is not just one initiative. We have gone through so many discussions. We came to the conclusion that there had to be a series of efforts. You can't say that doing this will change the scenario. We do a lot of awareness programs around this, like talking to men as the main focus area and, of course, telling the girls to raise their voice and not suffer. It's sometimes demeaning to tell someone to protect themselves and learn defense. But that's unfortunately what we have to do. At the same time, we are trying to change the mindset of the people, including villages and panchayats. Explaining the girls about their legal rights and how they can approach the police is just one of the other options!"

In fact, she had also begun a campaign called *Nari Ke 2 Dinn*, which sought to create a special session of parliament on women's safety for a minimum of two days. "Safety or empowerment, they are all linked," she says, adding, "You cannot say a woman can be empowered when she is not safe. We want safety first and for that, we need discussions. We have come across so many cases where this heinous crime has happened to women, where they were raped and killed while they were coming from work."

Working for such a cause was no less than a challenge for her and, to date, the challenge goes on. "Basically, our legal

process is very slow, so getting justice to a victim is like the toughest thing in this country. The processes are so overwhelming that they get really exhausting. How much can we even give moral or financial support to a girl or family who lost their daughter? Not enough is good for them. They do not get much support from the government and hardly, the laws were made, the SOPs were made, but in reality, less has been done and more has been talked about."

Apart from this, she shares, "They do not get any kind of counselling or any hand-holding support. I have myself handled over 5 cases a while back, where the children have also been killed. They don't make it to the news! Even the local politicians just press it aside."

Through their initiatives, she shares they have been taking baby steps to make men understand and there has been an impact, but there is still a long way to go.

Through the foundation, she's also on a quest to make the government serious about the cause, implement policies and strategies, and certainly act on the cases. She signs off by sharing, "Laws are there, but implementation is poor. Even when the Hyderabad case happened, that was not judicial but was taken up by the cops. The process needs to be followed judicially and every criminal needs to know why they are being hanged."



Rasika Dugal on navigating nuances of bygone era in *Shekhar Home*

AARTI SREENATH

At a time where narratives are dominated by high-octane thrillers and sleek modern-day crime dramas, Rasika Dugal's decision to step into the world of the 1990s detective series *Shekhar Home* seems both nostalgic and refreshingly bold. The series, set against the backdrop of pre-cell phone India, offers a stark contrast to the digital age, where information is a click away and mystery often feels like a relic of the past.

For Rasika, however, this project was an exploration of the genres that shaped her love for storytelling, as well as an opportunity to add a new dimension to her already diverse filmography.

"There were a few things that influenced my decision," Rasika begins, reflecting on her first encounter with the script. "One was definitely the genre—a detective drama series was something I hadn't explored before and I've always been intrigued by it. As a child, I watched a lot of it, like Jeremy Brett's *Sherlock* series on Sundays and later, Benedict Cumberbatch's version became one of my favourites. I've also been a fan of the *Feluda* series, especially Satyajit Ray's *Sonar Kella*, which is one of my favourite films. So, the genre was a big draw for me."

Her excitement was further fuelled by the prospect of working alongside some of the finest actors in the industry. "I've been very fortunate to work with actors like Irrfan, Nawazuddin Siddiqui and Pankaj Tripathi," she notes. "When I heard that Kay Kay Menon was playing *Shekhar Home*, I was very excited to take on the role of Iravati. I hoped to add his name to the illustrious list of co-actors I've worked with."

The 1990s setting of *Shekhar Home* is as much of a character as the people within it. "It was a very intelligent decision to place it in the 90s. How can you make a detective series in today's post-cell phone era? It would be very hard to make it visually compelling because everything would be online and it would be very boring to watch. So, there was no option but to place it in a pre-cell phone era, or at least in an era where cell phones were just beginning to invade our lives."

Rasika's connection to the 90s goes beyond mere nostalgia. Growing up in Jamshedpur, a city close to Bengal, she was deeply influenced by the popular culture of the time. "I always feel very nostalgic about the time I grew up in, with all that was happening in popular culture, which was very much a part of my childhood and my memories. So, I was very happy to revisit that time and to be placed in Bengal because, as we know, with the *Feluda* series and *Byomkesh Bakshi*, it has a rich history of detectives. I grew up very close to Bengal and had always wanted to spend time in Shantiniketan but never had the opportunity. So, I'm very happy that with this series, I got to explore the smaller towns of Bengal and the 90s was an added bonus."

The portrayal of her character, Iravati, required Rasika to strike a delicate balance between maintaining the character's aura of mystery and ensuring that the suspense remained engaging for the audience. She explains, "As actors, we depend a lot on the director and the script, but of course, we have our creative inputs. I felt that Iravati as a character has a lot of mystique, mystery and an aura about

her. There were a couple of scenes in episode four where I felt she was there too much. I spoke to the director and the producer and suggested cutting out some scenes to maintain the mystery and aura that the character is known for. Fortunately, they agreed with me and they actually cut my scenes."

The chemistry between characters in a detective series often plays a crucial role in keeping the audience hooked. Rasika's rapport with her co-stars, particularly Kay Kay Menon and Ranvir Shorey, was instrumental in creating the essential on-screen dynamic. "I've worked with Ranvir before and we've known each other for many years, so we already had a rapport. With Kay Kay Menon, he's very easy to work with. Any good actor will always be present for you and Kay Kay, with so many years of experience, was phenomenally present as a co-actor. We didn't really have to work towards that chemistry—it was easily achieved. I liked the chemistry between Iravati and Shekhar; there's an understanding from Shekhar's side that she's the only one who can match his wits in this world and she knows that and plays accordingly."

Having traversed various genres in her career, The *Mirzapur* fame reflects on how her preparation differs when working on a contemporary drama like *Mirzapur* versus a period piece like *Shekhar Home*.

"With periods you're unfamiliar with, you need to do a lot of work to study things from that time to get a sense of what life was like. But with an era like the 90s, I was familiar with it because I grew up in that time, so it was easy breezy for this one. I've previously worked on a lot of projects set in India in the 1940s and 1950s. At one point, I felt like I lived in that era because I did 3-4 projects then. I started enjoying what I knew of that period so much that I felt like I was born in the wrong era."

As someone who has portrayed strong and often complicated women, she has gained insights into how women are represented in Indian cinema

and web series. "We can't say that there has been one representation—there have been good representations and cardboard cut-out ones as well. But I do think the intention is very right and there's much more to achieve than we already have. I feel that we are moving in the right direction with different roles for women that are not just checking a box for a 'women-centric film,' but are trying to explore the inner lives of women in our country."

With *Shekhar Home*, she not just found a project that resonates with her love for the detective genre but also allows her to bring a nuanced, layered character to life.



Actress Rasika Dugal, has been keen on getting an opportunity to explore the detective genre with *Shekhar Home*. She speaks to *The Pioneer* about her love for the genre, working on the project and more!

Combating fading vision with diabetic eye care

Diabetes is becoming increasingly common around the world, and India is no exception. With around 101 million diabetic patients currently and the number expected to increase to 124 million by 2045, India holds the title "Diabetes capital of the world" due to its staggering economic and medical burden. The prevalence of diabetes in India has been steadily rising, driven by factors such as urbanisation, sedentary lifestyles, dietary changes and genetic predisposition. Diabetes affects various systems and organs in the human body, causing both immediate and long-term complications.



Unseen threats

In India, while keen attention is given to the major health issues, diabetic eye care is significantly neglected. Diabetic retinopathy, a leading cause of blindness in diabetic patients, often goes undiagnosed and untreated. The reasons being, a pervasive lack of awareness among both the general population and healthcare providers about the importance of regular eye examinations for diabetic patients and a lack of access to specialized eye care services.

Eye health and diabetes

Diabetes is caused because of inadequate insulin production and secretion in the body, causing excess glucose in the bloodstream. This can damage blood vessels and nerves, including those in the eyes, resulting in a variety of eye problems and in severe cases, leads to loss of eyesight. To avoid this, it's best to recognise different presentations and effects of diabetes on the eyes

Long-standing, uncontrolled diabetes affects the eye in several ways

• Diabetic retinopathy

In India, diabetic retinopathy (DR) is one of the most commonly occurring microvascular ocular complications. It occurs when high blood sugar levels damage the blood vessels in the retina, the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye. Early stages of DR, patients do not have any symptoms and are detected only while routine fundus examinations are performed. However, in the late stages of the disease, it can cause blurred vision, floaters, double visions and eventually lead to vision loss if left untreated.

• Glaucoma

Glaucoma accounts for 5.5% of blindness in India and is characterised by damage to the optic nerves secondary to raised intraocular pressure which is either due to impaired drainage of aqueous humor, the fluid in the eye, or due to a blocked trabecular meshwork. Majority of cases do not show any symptoms until vision loss occurs, yet some symptoms include throbbing eye pain, redness, headache, blurry vision, halos around lights. Diabetic patients are at higher risk of developing glaucoma.

• Diabetic Macular Edema (DME)

Diabetic macular edema is identified by the swelling in the central part of the retina, called

the macula, which is responsible for the sharp, central vision. This is due to leakage from the abnormal blood vessels, that develop secondary to the damaged retina. It is marked by symptoms like blurry vision or double vision, difficulty in seeing when there is bright light and difficulty in color perception, noticing dark spots, floaters and seeing straight lines as bent or curved.

• Cataract

Cataract is one of the leading causes of blindness in India and is responsible for over 65% of treatable blindness. Cataracts are a common eye complication in diabetic patients. They tend to occur at a much earlier age and progress faster compared to non-diabetic individuals. The lens of the eye, which is normally clear, becomes cloudy due to the buildup of proteins caused by high blood sugar levels and protein breakdown. It is known to manifest through symptoms like cloudy, or blurry vision, faded colors, glare around lights, having double vision and experiencing difficulty seeing at night.

Treatment for diabetic eye disease ranges from prescribing eye drops to lasers, anti-VEGF eye injections, laser therapy, and in advanced stages, vitrectomy surgery

It is best to have preventive measures in place to overcome the risks of sight loss

- Get regular eye exams for early detection of these conditions.
- Manage diabetes effectively through medication, diet, and lifestyle changes.
- Ensure to keep blood sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure in control and take proper medication.
- Maintaining a healthy weight, exercising regularly and avoiding smoking and alcohol consumption can also help reduce the risk factors associated with these conditions

CONCLUSION

As diabetes numbers rise in India, it can pose significant risks to eye health, but with proactive management and regular eye care, you can protect your vision and reduce the likelihood of complications. Individuals can greatly reduce the impact of such conditions by adopting a healthy lifestyle.

(The author, Dr. M.L. Sujatha, is a Consultant - Cataract and cornea Refractive Surgeon at SPARSH Hospital.)

what's brewing?

Sowmya Janu

Tollywood Actress Sowmya Janu inaugurated the 5-day Hand to Hand, Handloom Expo at Kalinga Cultural Hall, Road no 12, Banjara Hills, which is organised by Jagdishwar Hastkala.

Supriya

Soma

Daliya

Sowmya Janu

PARTY

Photos by - SV Charly

Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Season 16 auditions in Hyderabad!

As one of the top entertainment channels in the Telugu industry, Zee Telugu also provides a platform for budding talent to grow. Zee Telugu is all set to launch the sixteenth season of the popular singing reality show - *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa - The Next Singing Youth Icon*. *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* has been Zee Telugu's premium reality show that has given the Indian Film Industry several talented artists.

20 bedded tropical disease casualty set up in mosque

A mosque in Shaheen Nagar, in collaboration with Helping Hand Foundation and AMPI -USA, a charity run by alumni of Osmania & Gandhi Medical college, have now set up a 20 bedded hospital for treatment of tropical & infectious diseases along with a 5 bedded Emergency Casualty that can even handle an acute MI/Heart attack. In view of the acute need for an inpatient facility to treat tropical & infectious diseases like typhoid, dengue, chikungunya, diarrhea which are endemic to this area due to poor sanitation, hygiene and access to clean drinking water. HHF & AMPI collaborated to set up this exclusive 2000 sq. ft state of the art facility on the first floor of the mosque.

MakeMyTrip partners with Ministry of Tourism

Recognising an enduring connection, MakeMyTrip, in collaboration with Ministry of Tourism, has launched a special campaign on the eve of India's 78th Independence Day, inviting Indians worldwide to rediscover their roots with 'India: The Homecoming'. As a central piece of the campaign, an online film is being unveiled that beautifully captures India's transformation, brought to life through the evocative words and voice of the legendary Gulzar Saab. As a central piece of the campaign, an online film is being unveiled that beautifully captures India's transformation, brought to life through the evocative words and voice of the legendary Gulzar Saab. The core message of the film is *Kitna hua hai inn dinon badlav toh dekho, tum apne ghar mein laut kar aao toh dekho*.

GRM Overseas welcomes Salman as brand ambassador

GRM Overseas is thrilled to announce the signing of Bollywood superstar Salman Khan as its brand ambassador for its basmati rice and wheat flour. Salman Khan's popularity, among people across GRM's target market geographies and demographics fit perfectly with 10X.

Canon India launches #CaptureWithCare

Don't Let That Breathtaking Shot Get Literal!—this line was at the forefront of Canon India's latest initiative, sparking curiosity and discussion. To commemorate World Photography Day, Canon India, a leader in digital imaging solutions, launched the #CaptureWithCare digital campaign, a thought-provoking effort aimed at reminding photographers that safety should always come first. Through this campaign, Canon India sought to educate the community on the importance of responsible practices, ensuring that the art of photography remains both beautiful and safe.

Gautam Adani presents Jai Bharat

On the occasion of 78th Indian Independence Day, businessman Gautam Adani dedicated a patriotic track titled *Jai Bharat*, towards the spirit of our great nation. This song celebrated the unwavering spirit of India and its citizens. Producer Mahaveer Jain expressed his admiration for this heartfelt initiative and praised Adani's dedication.

Combatting travel scams

As travellers start thinking about holidays for the remainder of the year, Airbnb has partnered with the International Association of Financial Crimes Investigators (IAFCI) to help consumers book safely online and avoid travel scams. This comes as new consumer research from YouGov shows Gen Z and Millennials are the most likely to admit to having fallen for a scam with victims losing on average INR 1,02,233. The research, which was commissioned by Airbnb, also uncovers that amid the rising cost of living, finding deals has become increasingly important with nearly half of the Indian travellers willing to be less vigilant when booking a holiday if it meant saving a significant amount of money, while over 40 percent would take a risk to save money, even if they think a deal is too good to be true.

Uppercase raises USD 9M series B round with Accel

Uppercase has raised \$9 million in its Series B round led by Accel. The funding will support business expansion, aiming to increase its customer base across India. It is currently selling its travel gear online and through 1800 multi-brand stores across India, aims to achieve its Rs 500 crore goal by adding 250 exclusive retail stores over the next three years.



In a significant medical breakthrough, Apollo Cancer Centre Hyderabad (ACC) has conducted 'Telangana and Andhra Pradesh' first Uniportal Robotic-Assisted Breast Surgery (URABS) for breast cancer. This innovative surgical technique, performed by Dr. Jagdishwar Goud, Senior Consultant, Surgical Oncology, Apollo Cancer Centre, Hyderabad and his team, offers a unique blend of precision and cosmetic benefits. This marks a new era in the treatment of breast cancers in the aforementioned states!



Nexus Hyderabad Mall announced the grand debut of DinoVerse, available till September 15, 2024. This immersive experience will transport guests back to a time when dinosaurs roamed the Earth, featuring awe-inspiring displays such as the Dino Fossil Museum, the Tallest Dino Limb, the Trail of Dinosaur Footsteps, and impressive Skeleton Displays. The exhibit will be open daily from 12 Noon to 9 PM.



Embarking on a new journey, Mithila Palkar has adorned the role of brand ambassador for Juleo. She really resonated with their campaign of helping people find real love via meeting fast! Seeking inspiration from traditional Indian matchmakers, they focus on fostering genuine, real-life meetings through an approach to making modern dating and matrimony more responsible and healthy.



ICI Lombard announced the launch of its revolutionary health insurance product, 'Elevate'. Designed to cater to the rapidly evolving ecosystem, it offers a suite of personalised customer-centric plans that prioritise comprehensive coverage and flexibility.

FUN

ARCHIE

1 I GUESS I'M JUST A PERFECTIONIST!
2 YOU'RE A PERFECTIONIST? AT WHAT?
3 YOU NEVER DO ANYTHING! YOU JUST SIT AROUND DOING NOTHING ALL DAY!
4 NOTHING'S PERFECT!
5 SORRY YOU HAD TO SEE THAT

CALVIN AND HOBBS

1 SEE THE DINOSAUR SKELETON WE DISCOVERED AND ASSEMBLED?
2 I'M GOING TO CALL THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM AND TELL THEM THEY CAN HAVE IT FOR TEN BILLION DOLLARS.
3 THOSE ARE JUMPECCULAR BONES.
4 DO YOU THINK I SHOULD ASK FOR MORE MONEY?
5 THAT'S NOT QUITE WHAT I MEANT.

GARFIELD

1 SOMEONE GAVE OPIE A TEDDY BEAR
2 SORRY YOU HAD TO SEE THAT

REALITY CHECK

1 IF IT WALKS LIKE A DUCK AND QUACKS LIKE A DUCK, EMBEZZLES LIKE A DUCK, LAUNDERS MONEY LIKE A DUCK, BRIBES LIKE A DUCK, IF HE TRACKETEER'S LIKE A...
2 OKAY, MR. LYMON, WE GET IT
3 WELL, HE COULD HAVE A WHITE COLLAR...

SPEED BUMP

1 WE'RE DRIFTWOOD BOGS. WE'RE SUPPOSED TO FEEL WASHED UP.

CROSSWORD

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

NANCY

1 I HAVE HIGH STANDARDS FOR MY CLASS
2 BUT IT'S ONLY BECAUSE I'M CONFIDENT YOU CAN RISE TO MEET THEM
3 HEIGHTS MAKE ME NAUSEOUS

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

SUDOKU

Yesterday's solution

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

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.

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

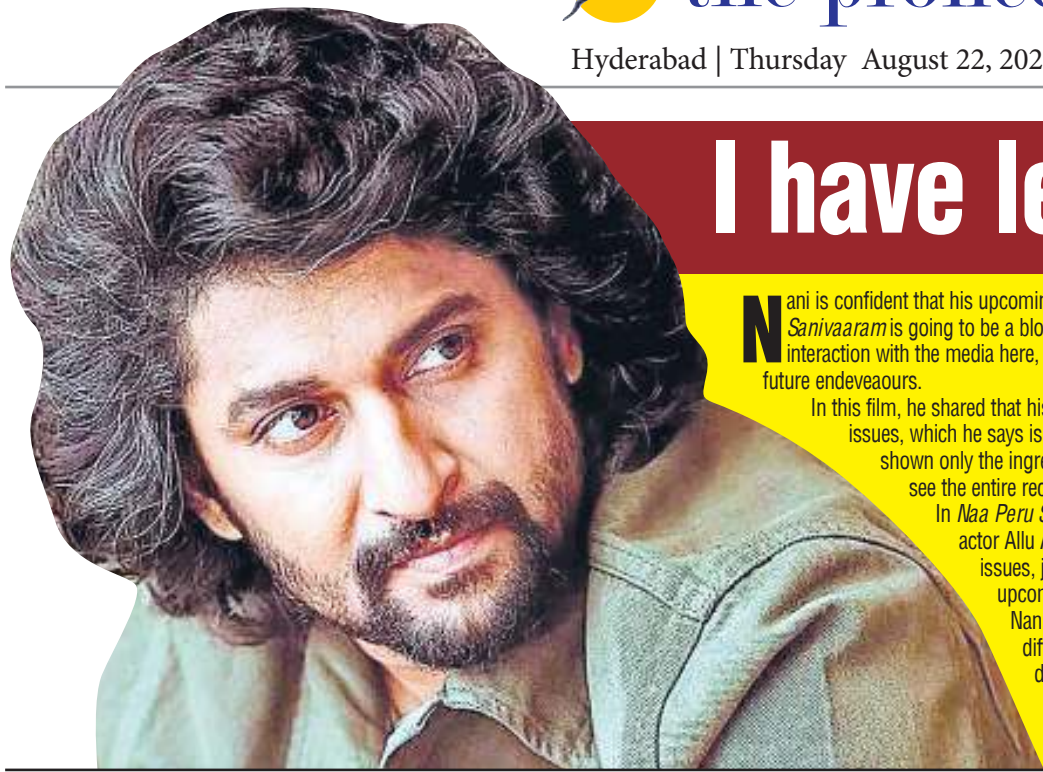
- Meat from a sheep
- Talk in a friendly way
- A sewed joint
- Wound someone
- Envious
- A green gemstone
- Cunning
- Moist
- Border
- Jail
- A region's weather conditions
- Save from danger
- Forever
- A long sharp animal tooth
- Twirl around

DOWN

- A face disguise
- Go on a journey
- Drag along
- Three times four
- Ask

SOLUTION

P	E	O	L	
E	L	F	E	
A	U	N	T	
S	E	E	T	
T	I	C	K	E
T	R	L	H	
C	H	A	S	E
W	A	R	E	
P	L	A	T	E



I have learned a lot from SJ Suryah: Nani

Nani is confident that his upcoming film *Saripodhaa Sanivaaram* is going to be a blockbuster. The actor, in an interaction with the media here, spoke about the film and his future endeavours.

In this film, he shared that his character has some anger issues, which he says is just a part of it. "We have shown only the ingredients of the film and you can see the entire recipe on August 29," says Nani.

In *Naa Peru Surya Naa Illu India*, its lead actor Allu Arjun also has the same anger issues, just as his character in this upcoming film. On the similarities, Nani replies that both of them are different. "My film is completely different and I am sure once my film is released, one can understand that it is another

subject," says Nani. He has been promoting this film like never before, even in other languages like Tamil Nadu and Kerala. "I promoted in those states to share some of the details about my film. It is not releasing in a big way in those states, as it gets a minimal release in Malayalam and Hindi! So, I just went there and said hello to all the people who are eagerly waiting to see my film," he says.

Nani also clarified about a film with *Balagam* fame director Venu. While many reports claimed that the film has been shelved, other reports claimed that Nani has rejected the film. Dismissing the talks, he says, the film is definitely there, but it may start after some time. "I like the film *Balagam* a lot and I have told it in many events. When I met producer Dil Raju Garu, I told him about the film and also appreciated director Venu. He is an extraordinary director. I told Raju Garu that I would like to work with him. I don't know how the news came out, but it disseminated. After that, Venu met me and we had a casual chat. I would like to work with him and definitely my film with Venu is there," Nani clarifies.

When asked about when he would start *Hit 3* with director Sailesh Kolanu, he says that he is busy with the promotions of this *Saripodhaa Sanivaaram* till the release of this film. He further went on to reveal that after one week, he will announce his next film. Meanwhile, in *Saripodhaa Sanivaaram*, Priyanka Mohan stars alongside Nani, to which he shares, "She is playing a constable and her role is very important for the story."

The film further has Tamil actor SJ Suryah playing the antagonist. "He is a very good actor and I have learned a lot from him. For every film I am doing I will learn something from co-actors and others," says Nani.

He was further praised by the music director Jakes Bijoy for his excellent songs and background score. "I still feel the haunt of those songs in my mind and after the release of this film, I will talk more about Bijoy and his music. People should definitely look out for him once the film releases," said Nani. The pre-release event of this film will be held on August 24.

GAME CHANGER PRODUCER CONFIRMS ITS RELEASE FOR CHRISTMAS

Here comes a major update regarding director Shankar and Ram Charan's film *Game Changer*. The film had kickstarted long-back and has also completed its shooting. Now, the film is in its post-production phase. The film is produced by Dil Raju, who has revealed a major update about the film. For all the people anticipating the release of the film, the producer has now confirmed it. "We are planning to release it for Christmas," says Dil Raju, the producer. With this, the Mega fans can celebrate that their actor's film is definitely releasing this year!

There are quite a few big films releasing this year that includes Jr NTR starrer *Devara* and Allu Arjun starrer

Pushpa 2. With Dil Raju announcing that his film is coming up on Christmas holidays, it seems the year is going to end on a big note. Shankar was supposed to complete this film long ago. However, he had to finish Kamal Haasan's *Indian* film first, hence the Telugu film was delayed.

Kiara Advani and Anjali are playing female leads and Ram Charan will be seen playing two different roles. One is in a flashback episode, which is a periodic look and the other one is the current look. He is playing an electoral officer in it. Srikanth, SJ Surya, Sunil, Samuthirakani, Prakash Raj and many other actors are playing key roles in the film.



Mahesh to lend his voice for 'Mufasa' in The Lion King Telugu



Superstar Mahesh Babu is going to be a part of the much-awaited film *Mufasa: The Lion King* which is releasing on December 20, this year. The makers are planning to release the film in Telugu in a big way and have roped in Mahesh Babu for the film. This announcement comes as good news for the Telugu audiences. The Telugu trailer will be launched on August 26 at 11:07 am, which will also have the voice of stalwarts like Brahmanandam as 'Pumba' and Ali as 'Timon'.

Talking about the phenomenal association, Superstar Mahesh Babu shares, "The character of Mufasa appeals to me not only as a loving father guiding his son but as the supreme king of the jungle taking care of his clan. My family means everything to me and this collaboration with Disney is personally very special as it is an experience I will cherish with my children! I am looking forward to when my family as well as my fans will be watching *Mufasa: The Lion King* in Telugu on the big screen on December 20!"

"Our aim always is to bring a deeper, more personal touch to storytelling and engage with audiences all over the country and for them to enjoy the cinematic experience with their families in a language of their choice. The iconic character of Mufasa has inspired generations, and we are thrilled to have Mahesh Babu Garu bring the voice of Mufasa to life in the Telugu version of *Mufasa: The Lion King!*" said Bikram Duggal, Head of Studios, Disney Star. The film is directed by Barry Jenkins.

OG glimpse on Pawan Kalyan's birthday



Coming September 2, Pawan Kalyan fans have a reason to celebrate. The actor turned politician will be celebrating his birthday for the first time after becoming the Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh! While it's definitely a big reason for his fans to celebrate, here comes another major update on his film front. DVV Danayya, the producer of his next film *OG* brings in a latest update. When asked if he is planning



something on September 2, on the occasion of Pawan Kalyan's birthday, he says, "Yes, we are planning to release a teaser or a glimpse from the film."

Pawan Kalyan is playing the lead actor in this action film directed by Sujith. Priyanka Mohan is the female lead and the film shooting is almost complete except for a few scenes. "We are also planning to shoot the film soon and we want to complete it as soon as possible," says producer Danayya.

Thaman is the music director of this film and he is very excited to see this film's release. He is giving updates about this film and also talking about the upcoming glimpse of the film, saying that it is going to be a blast video. He says in his social media 'twaralo kaluddam' (we will meet soon).



Allu Arjun congratulates Aay lead pair

Bunny Vas is the producer of the recently released film *Aay*. Jr. NTR's brother-in-law, Narne Nithin plays the lead character in it, while Nayan Sriika is the female lead. The film is presented by none other than Allu Aravind. The story set against the backdrop of the Godavari region, the film did remarkably well at the box office. It collected good money and the producer gets profits after the fourth day onwards. Anji K. Maniputhra made his directorial debut with this film, which was released on August 15th.

After its release, Jr. NTR called the *Aay* team and appreciated everyone who worked for the film. He praises his brother-in-law, Narne

Nithin for making another success with this film as an actor. Another big actor, Allu Arjun, called the team yesterday and congratulated everyone. He met with the *Aay* team to celebrate the film's success. Narne Nithin, producers Bunny Vas and Vidya Koppineedi, director Anji K. Maniputhra, lead actress Nayan Sarika, Ankith Koyya, Rajkumar Kasireddy and others were personally met with Allu Arjun.

The film's shows and screens are increasing consecutively due to strong word-of-mouth. Audiences are leaving theaters feeling satisfied with the film. The film unit is pleased with the support and positive response and movie collections are rising daily.

'Aho! Vikramarka' highlights bravery of Maharashtra Police

Dev Gill, known for his diverse roles and charismatic performances in several South Indian films, including the blockbuster *Magadheera*, stars in the pan-India film *Aho! Vikramarka*. The movie, produced by Dev Gill Productions, will be released on August 30 in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam. The film's trailer was unveiled on Wednesday.

The trailer reveals that the villain, named Asura, controls an area where people must obey him or face death. The police lack the courage to confront him. However, a powerful police officer arrives to challenge this menace. On this occasion, Dev Gill said, "With *Aho! Vikramarka*, we aim to highlight the bravery and dedication of the Maharashtra Police in a compelling manner. The film will be released pan-India on August 30. The audience, who have previously seen only one facet of my acting, will experience a new side of me on the silver screen."

Going ahead, director Peta Trikotli added, "Through *Aho! Vikramarka*, we strive to capture the essence of language, culture, heroism and sacrifice. We have meticulously crafted the film to showcase the power of the police and audiences will see a new side of Dev Gill."



SREELEELA LAUNCHES ORI MAYALODA

Young and talented actor Tejus Kancharla, known for his diverse role in *Husharu*, is now featured in *Uruku Patela*. With the tagline "Get Urukified," the film is directed by Vivek Reddy and produced by Kancharla Bala Bhanu. The previously released teaser and the song *Patnam Pilla* have already received a great response from audiences. The newly released lyrical song *Ori Mayaloda* was launched by star heroine Sreeleela! This song depicts the heroine's heartfelt expression of love for the hero. Praveen Lakkaraju composed the music and the song is sung by Srinivasa Mouli. The song will surely rule everyone's playlist. *Uruku Patela* is produced by Kancharla Bala Bhanu under the banner of Lead Edge Pictures.

Kantara Chapter 1 fourth schedule shooting to begin

Hombale Films *Kantara Chapter 1* is undoubtedly one of the most anticipated films that everyone is eagerly anticipating. After the release of its amazing first-look teaser featuring Rishabh Shetty in an extremely thrilling and intense never-before-seen look, the excitement has reached its peak. Amid the rising anticipation, we have learned that the 4th schedule of the film is about to commence in the upcoming week.

According to an independent industry source, "The 4th shooting schedule for *Kantara Chapter 1* is set to begin next week. This schedule will feature a massive action sequence shot on a grand scale, promising to elevate the film's visual and cinematic experience."

Remarkably, *Kantara* left a mark at 70th National Film Award for the year 2022 by winning the Award for Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment.

Moreover, get ready to enjoy a divine experience like never before with the highly anticipated *Kantara Chapter 1*.



Demonte Colony 3 is on the cards!

The audience had garnered tremendous love for the Tamil movie *Demonte Colony 2*. The movie, which came out on August 15, is a sequel of the 2015 film *Demonte Colony*. The movie, helmed by R. Ajay Gnanamuthu, starred actors Arulnithi and Priya Bhavani Shankar in the main roles. During a media interaction prior

to the premiere, actor Arulnithi stated that this horror film gained a lot of interest from viewers and was very successful. In order to maintain the tradition of the initial section, the subsequent section was created.

After seeing the first and second parts succeed, the director announced plans to begin working on the third part.

Director R. Ajay Gnanamuthu said, "After completion of my next film, I will start working on the third part of *Demonte Colony*." It should be noted that presently, the director is busy with a television series starring actress Pooja Hegde. The title of the series is yet to be announced by the makers.

BORDER GAVASKAR TROPHY ON PAR WITH ASHES FOR AUSTRALIA: STARC

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australia pace ace Mitchell Starc believes that with the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy against India becoming a five-Test affair for the first time in over three decades, it would be "right on par" with the esteemed Ashes series for his team.

The marquee series between India and Australia, set to begin in November, was extended by a match this year for the first time since the 1991-92 season.

"Being five matches now it's probably right on par with an Ashes series," Starc told World of Sports.

Since 2014-15, Australia have failed to lay their hands on the Border Gavsakar Trophy, with India winning four consecutive series including the historic triumphs Down Under in 2018-19 and 2020-21.

Starc is not only intent on reversing this trend but also harbours aspirations of a clean sweep, particularly as the series forms a crucial part of the World Test Championship. "We always want to win every



game at home and we know India are a very strong team," he said. Currently, India leads the World Test Championships table with Australia in second place. "As we're placed at the minute we're the top two teams on the Test ladder... So a very exciting series coming up for the fans and certainly the players.

"Hopefully when we're sitting there on the 8th of January we have that trophy back on our shores."

The 34-year-old is just 11 matches shy of reaching a milestone 100 Tests and has no plans to quit red-ball cricket. The left-arter said he is scaling back his white-ball commitments to prolong his

Test career for as long as possible.

"...Every time I get to wear the baggy green cap it feels very special. Hopefully it's five times through the summer with five wins and we can sing that song five times, then we move on from there.

"If it does come to a point where I'm lucky enough to get

past that 100 number then it's obviously going to be pretty special as well," he said.

Starc is scheduled to fly to England next month for a white-ball series following which the left-arter intends to play domestic cricket for New South Wales ahead of the Border Gavaskar Trophy.

"The Tests will always be taking precedence for me," he said.

"We've got seven Tests on the bounce with five against India and then two in Sri Lanka, so they sit top of the tree with what's coming up."

Alongside, Test and ODI skipper Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood, Starc will shoulder the pace duties across three formats.

"Pat is resting for this UK tour... We love playing all three formats but that could look different at different times over 12 months."

"There is certainly no end date on (our bowling careers). That will be an ongoing one. We'll see where (our) bodies are and the want to keep going, but at this stage it's all guns blazing for five Tests against India."

Arya leads South Delhi Superstarz to six-wicket win over Central Delhi Kings

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Priyansh Arya's scintillating 82 off 51 balls powered South Delhi Superstarz to a six-wicket win over Central Delhi Kings in the Delhi Premier League here.

Fifties from Dhruv Kaushik (56) and Yash Dhull (52) guided Central Delhi Kings to 176/7 after they were asked to bat on Tuesday.

However, South Delhi Superstarz chased down the target with five balls to spare, courtesy a solid 101-run partnership between Arya and Ayush Badoni (42). After the early loss of Sarthak Ray (0 off 1) in the first over, Badoni and Arya approached the run chase with composed batting.

By the end of the powerplay, they took the score to 45/1 and went on to consistently score more than 10 runs per over. Arya brought up his fifty in 32 balls, while Badoni contributed a vital 42 off 36 balls before being caught at mid-wicket, thus missing out on his half-century.

By the strategic timeout, SDS were firmly in control, thanks to the free-flowing stroke play of Arya and Tejaswi Dahiya.



Arya, who smashed seven sixes and three fours, was dismissed in the 17th over. Tejaswi followed in the next over, contributing 22 off 14.

Despite these quick wickets, the South Delhi Superstarz were still in a commanding position, needing just 17 runs from 16 balls.

Vision Panchal and Dhruv Singh then sealed the victory with two sixes and a four in the 19th over, securing the South Delhi Superstarz' second consecutive win of the tournament.

Earlier in the contest, Hiten Dalal (10 off 9) fell cheaply to

Divij Mehra in the third over. However, skipper Yash Dhull led from the front, keeping the scoreboard ticking alongside Dhruv Kaushik as they stitched together a solid 91-run partnership off 65 balls.

Kaushik was then dismissed in the following over after scoring 56 off 33 balls.

Brief Scores:
Central Delhi Kings: 176/7 in 20 overs (Dhruv Kaushik 56 off 34, Yash Dhull 52 off 44, Kuldeep Yadav 2/37)
South Delhi Superstarz: 177/4 in 19.1 overs (Priyansh Arya 82 off 51, Ayush Badoni 42 off 36, Money Grewal 2/22).

Conor joins Atletico Madrid from Chelsea as Joao moves in opposite direction

AP ■ MADRID

England midfielder Conor Gallagher finally completed his move to Atletico Madrid on Wednesday, ending a weeks-long saga that required a move by Joao Felix in the opposite direction to facilitate the deal.

Gallagher joined Atletico for a reported 36 million pounds (\$47 million) on a five-year deal. Hours later, Chelsea announced the signing of Felix, the Portugal forward, for a reported 45 million pounds (\$59 million).

Chelsea wanted to sell Gallagher, an academy product and the team's vice-captain last season, to help the club meet the Premier League's financial requirements that are being more strictly applied in recent seasons.

Chelsea and Atletico reached an agreement on his transfer but it was in jeopardy last week, reportedly because of



the collapse of a deal that would have seen Atletico striker Samu Omorodion move in the opposite direction.

That meant Gallagher had to return to Chelsea and train alone but a solution was reached, with Felix instead making the switch from Atletico to Chelsea.

Felix spent the second half of the 2022-23 season on loan at Chelsea, having previously become the third most expensive player of all time when Atletico triggered the 126 million euro (around \$140 million) buyout clause in

his contract in 2019 to sign him from Benfica.

"I'm really happy to be back at Chelsea and I can't wait to get started," he said. "I can see some familiar faces from the last time I was here, which is always nice."

"I loved my time here before and I told my friends and family that I'd love to return to the Premier League one day. To do that with Chelsea is a great feeling and I'm excited to be back."

Felix was on loan at Barcelona last season.

Gallagher played for England at the recent European Championship and was one of Chelsea's best players last season. He has played 95 times for a club he joined as a 6-year-old, scoring 10 goals in total.

It continues a frenzied summer of transfer activity for Chelsea, which continues to overhaul its squad under its American owners.

Unlucky to lose to Germany; back-to-back bronze a huge achievement: Harmanpreet

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

India hockey captain Harmanpreet Singh on Wednesday said that his side was unlucky to lose to Germany in the Paris Olympics semifinal despite creating several chances before calling the back-to-back bronze winning performance a "huge achievement".

India repeated their 2021 Tokyo Games performance in Paris, defeating Spain to win consecutive bronze medals

for the first time in 52 years. The keenly-contested semifinal earlier saw India going down to reigning world champions Germany 2-3 to set up a bronze-medal match with Spain.

"It (semifinal vs Germany) was a very close match. I think we created a lot of chances but you can say we were not lucky that day and some chances were off target," Harmanpreet told PTI. Videos during a felicitation ceremony organised by the Odisha

government. "But I think the bronze medal was very important. It was the last match of the tournament and feeling very happy after winning the match. Our effort was that we should fulfil our dream (of winning gold) but somehow we were unlucky."

"But, still, we had the bronze medal to play for. So, went into the match with that mindset that we will win. We've won back-to-back medals in hockey; it's a very big thing for us," he added.

Harmanpreet was left speechless with the reception given to the players, saying the team gets the same affection every time it comes to Odisha.

"And, this time, we are getting all the more affection. Whenever the team comes here, be it to play in a tournament or after winning a medal, it always feels nice... We get a lot of respect," added Harmanpreet. Harmanpreet also thanked the state government for sponsoring hockey.

Can see growth, especially in women's table tennis in India: Manika on UTT

PTI ■ CHENNAI



Indian table tennis is headed in the right direction thanks to the advent of the UTT tournament which attracts top players from across the world, feels Manika Batra, who is the most prominent face of the women's game in the country.

Manika and Sreeja Akula recently made history by becoming the first Indian table tennis players to reach the Olympics singles pre-quarterfinals in Paris.

Next, the 29-year-old Manika will represent Bengaluru Smashers in the eight-team Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) competition, which gets underway here on Thursday.

"Personally, it has helped me because the girls come for UTT from different countries, and we play against them, we play with them," Manika told reporters here on Wednesday.

"It's really fun, and we enjoy this. I can see the growth that's happening, especially in women's table tennis in India, how we all are performing internationally. We have improved a lot from UTT!"

Manika lost to Miu Hirano of Japan 0-3 in the women's singles pre-quarterfinals

in Paris. In the team event, India, who were represented by Manika, Sreeja and Archana Kamath, lost to Germany 1-3 in the quarterfinals.

In the UTT, one of Manika's most anticipated contests will be against world No. 13, Bernadette Szocs of Romania, who will play for Ahmedabad SG Pipers.

The two players also clashed during the pre-quarterfinals of the team event in Paris Olympics, with India winning the tie 3-2.

Bernadette said, "I love to play here; I love all the fans who are very big supporters of table tennis. And, of course, always when I come here, everything is perfect with good organisation."

Veteran Sharath Kamal, who will lead Chennai Lions in UTT, feels the performance graph of Indian players is going up gradually.

"This is the first time both Indian teams, men and women, qualified for the Olympic Games in the team event. The girls went further; they went on to play in the quarterfinals in the team event, and especially Manika and Sreeja got into the last 16 in the individual event," Sharath pointed out.

"So, performances like this have been constantly coming up, and India has

been constantly growing in the international arena, and we look forward to more growth."

Nigerian legend Quadri Aruna returns to the tournament, and his clash against Sharath is expected to be one of the highlights of the tournament.

"With huge spending on the sport of table tennis in India, we have seen huge growth. Indian players are already title contenders in most of the tournaments in the world. So, I think table tennis has improved a lot in India," expressed Aruna, who will be representing U Mumba TT.

UTT 2024 SQUADS:

Ahmedabad SG Pipers: Manush Shah, Bernadette Szocs (Romania), Lilian Bardet (France), Reeth Tension, Pritha Vartikar, Jash Modi.

Chennai Lions: Achanta Sharath Kamal, Sakura Mori (Japan), Jules Rolland (France), Poymantee Baisya, Mouma Das, Abhinandh PB.

Dabang Delhi TTC: Sathiyana G, Orawan Paranang (Thailand), Diya Chitale, Andreas Levenko (Austria), Yashansh Malik, Lakshita Narang.

Athead Goa Challengers: Harmeet Desai, Yangzi Liu (Australia), Yashaswini Ghoshpade, Sudhanshu Grover, Sayali Wani, Mihai Bobocica (Italy).

Jaipur Patriots: Cho Seungmin (South Korea), Suthasini Sawettabut (Thailand), Snehit SFR, Ronit Bhanja, Moumita Dutta, Nithyashree Mani.

PBG Bengaluru Smashers: Manika Batra, Alvaro Robles (Spain), Lily Zhang (USA), Jeet Chandra, Taneesha Kotecha, Amalraj Anthony.

Puneri Paltan Table Tennis: Ayhika Mukherjee, Natalia Bajor (Poland), Joao Monteiro (Portugal), Ankur Bhattacharjee, Anirban Ghosh, Yashini Sivashankar.

U Mumba TT: Manav Thakkar, Sutirtha Mukherjee, Aruna Quadri (Nigeria), Akash Pal, Kavyasree Baskar, Maria Xiao (Spain).

After silver at Olympics, Chopra takes field in Lausanne in bid for Diamond League title

PTI ■ LAUSANNE

Two weeks after winning his historic silver medal at the Paris Olympics, star Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra will resume action at the Lausanne Diamond League meeting on Thursday, seeking to reclaim the DL trophy at the season-ending finale next month.

Nursing a long-standing groin injury, Chopra claimed a silver in the Paris Olympics on August 8 with a 89.45m throw, having won a historic gold in the Tokyo edition of the Games three years ago.

The 26-year-old double Olympic medallist Indian on Saturday confirmed his participation at the Diamond League meeting in Lausanne, leaving a decision on a possible surgery after the end of the season.

Chopra was the Diamond League champion in 2022 and finished second behind Jakub Vadlejch of Czech Republic in the winner-takes-all DL final in Eugene, USA, last year.

This season's DL finals will be held in Brussels on September 14. He needs to finish in the top-six of the Diamond League meetings series standings to qualify for the season



finale. There is another DL meeting — in Zurich on September 5 — which has men's javelin throw event in its roster.

He is currently at fourth spot with seven points he has garnered after finishing second behind Vadlejch in the Doha Diamond League on May 10.

After a busy couple of days post the Olympic final on August 8, Chopra started training in Switzerland and is determined to finish the season on a high despite being restricted by the injury.

"I came to Switzerland for training ahead of the Diamond League. Luckily, I did not aggravate my injury as I took extra care of that."

"I thought of continuing my season like most other athletes. There is one month to go until the season ends. I will go to the doctors in my free time," he had said last week.

Chopra will be up against a top-class field in Lausanne with five of the top-six finishers in Paris Olympics final competing. Only Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who stunned the athletics world by winning the gold with an Olympic record throw of 92.97m, is missing.

Nadeem had finished fourth in the Paris Diamond League on July 7

with a throw of 84.21m. That was the only DL meeting — as well as the lone event apart from the Olympics — he had taken part this season.

He is currently at sixth spot in the standings with five points.

Having pushed to the fourth spot with a throw of 88.50m in Paris after winning a silver in Tokyo, Vadlejch would be looking to maintain his form in his bid to defend the DL title.

Two-time world champion Anderson Peters of Grenada, who took the bronze in the Paris Olympics with 88.54m, has been on the ascendancy after a poor last season, and he is capable of pulling off big throws, having already gone past the 90m mark in his career.

Chopra has been the most consistent javelin thrower in the last couple of seasons, before Nadeem pulled off the heist in Paris, and the Indian will start as favourite in Lausanne on Thursday.

He has been managing his groin injury since winning the gold in the Budapest World Championships last year.

"The final treatment will be after the season ends. I will try to take care of it as much as possible and consult the doctors later," he said.