

QUOTE OF THE DAY
 The buildings of leaders like Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Congress MLA Vivek, former MP KVP Ramachandra Rao, former MP Madhu Yashki Goud and Legislative Council Chairman Gutha Sukhender Reddy should be demolished first and then the buildings of commoners should also be demolished.
 - KT Rama Rao, BRS working president

Countless questions waiting for BJP in UP:
Akhilesh

'UNSPOKEN'
 BOND SHARED OVER CUP OF IRANI CHAI HAS BECOME REGULAR PART OF MY LIFE'

Ravi Teja undergoes **SURGERY**

DON'T MISS...

City to be a skill capital of...

Minister of IT, Electronics & Communications, Industries & Commerce Sridhar Babu stated that Telangana government aims to make Hyderabad as a skill capital of India and across the world, during the third edition of CREDAI Property Show organised by the Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Association of India (CREDAI), at Nagole on Friday. Minister Sridhar Babu, along with Malreddy Rangareddy, MLA Ibrahimpatnam, inaugurated the three-day event in the presence of CREDAI Hyderabad leadership team...

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President Murmu voices concern ...

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday voiced concern over increasing space debris as a result of numerous satellites being placed in orbit and lauded ISRO for setting itself a target to make future space missions debris free by 2030. Murmu was speaking at the maiden National Space Day celebrations to mark the first anniversary of the landing of India's Chandrayaan-3 project. "Space debris can cause problems for space missions," she said during the event at Bharat Mandapam ...

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India has maximum electrification ...

India is the country with maximum electrification for expansion of tracks, Mukul Saran Mathur, Additional Member, Commercial, Ministry of Railways, said in his inaugural address at the ASSOCHAM National Conference held on Friday in New Delhi. Eminent experts, stakeholders and senior government officials from the Railway ministry deliberated upon a range of issues and transformative technical solutions for 'Modernisation of Railway for Viksit Bharat'. Mathur, while focusing on the ...

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Gukesh, Pragganandhaa...

World Championship challenger D Gukesh enjoyed an advantageous position against tournament co-leader Alireza Firouzja of France but eventually settled for a draw in the fourth round of the Sinquefeld Cup, here. Gukesh, who is set to play the World championship match against Ding Liren of China next November, proved that he is made of sterner mettle as he made Firouzja's life tough. Grandmaster R Pragganandhaa also drew his game against Anish Giri of Holland and...

-SPORTS

PM MODI INVOKES MAHATMA GANDHI IN KYIV

Ukraine, Russia should sit together to end war 'India ready to play active role'

PNS ■ KYIV

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday conveyed to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that both Ukraine and Russia should sit together without wasting time to end the ongoing war and that India was ready to play an "active role" to restore peace in the region.

In his talks with Zelenskyy in Kyiv that came a day ahead of Ukraine's Independence Day, the prime minister said India was on the side of peace since the beginning of the conflict and he would even like to contribute personally for a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

Modi's nearly nine-hour visit to Ukraine, the first by an Indian prime minister since its independence in 1991, came six weeks after he held summit talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin that triggered anguish in some Western countries.

The prime minister reiterated the need for "sincere and practical" engagement between all stakeholders to develop innovative solutions that will have "broad acceptability" and contribute towards early restoration of peace in Ukraine, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said.



"I have come with a message of peace...I want to assure you and the entire global community that India is committed to respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity (of states) and it is of utmost importance to us," Modi told Zelenskyy at the talks.

The prime minister also asserted India's strong commitment towards respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states.

"I want to assure you and the entire global community that India is committed towards respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity (of states) and it is of utmost importance to us," he said.

5

Mahesh Kumar Goud new TPCC chief? Cong brass takes six names

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy said that the Congress high command took the opinions of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and his opinion separately regarding the new TPCC President and the four unfilled posts of Cabinet Ministers.

He said that they gave two names each as per the directions of the high command for the TPCC post and four names for the Cabinet berths. The new TPCC chief will be announced in a day or two.

Uttam said the high command had a joint meeting with everyone and discussed state politics. However, it is learnt that the CM is inclined towards the candidatures of Mahesh Kumar Goud and Adhuri Laxman Kumar for the TPCC chief's post. Meanwhile, Uttam and Bhatti recommended Sudarshan Reddy, Prem Sagar Rao and Vakiti Srihari for the Cabinet berths, it is learnt.



CHANDRAYAAN-3

ISRO releases scientific data for global researchers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The ISRO on Friday threw open its scientific data gathered from the Chandrayaan-3 mission for researchers across the world for analyses to mark the first anniversary of India landing a spacecraft on the Moon.

The space agency has granted access to over 55 gigabytes of data from the five payloads - three on the Pragyan rover - that created history on August 23 last year by making a soft landing near the unexplored south pole region of the Moon. "This data is not going to be confined with those scientists who have created those instruments,



but it will be made available to all the researchers of the country and the world for furthering the outcome of this," ISRO Chairman Somanath said at the National Space Day celebrations here.

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GOLDEN MOMENTS

A dazzling display of devotion at Tirumala

PNS ■ TIRUMALA



In a spectacle that glittered with divine opulence, devotees from Pune graced the sacred precincts of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) on Friday, adorned with an astonishing 25 kg of gold, valued at a whopping Rs 180 crore. The entourage, comprising two men, a woman, and a young boy, turned heads as they paraded through the temple gates draped in a multitude of gold chains, glittering sunglasses, intricate bangles, and a striking gold necklace embellished with the number '7'.

5

HC restrains parties or individuals from calling for 'Maharashtra bandh'

PNS ■ MUMBAI



The Bombay High Court on Friday restrained political parties or even individuals from calling for a Maharashtra bandh.

The opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance has called for a shut-down across the state on August 24 to protest against the alleged sexual assault of two kindergarten girls at a school in Badlapur in Thane district.

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SPEED to govern 19 projects

'Smart Proactive Efficient and Effective Delivery' initiative launched

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The state government has launched an initiative to speed up the execution of development projects. The initiative named SPEED (Smart Proactive Efficient and Effective Delivery) will see Chief Minister Revanth Reddy himself reviewing 19 important projects launched by the government.

A meeting will be held once a month with officials of the concerned departments. The Chief Minister has decided to complete all these projects efficiently within the stipulated period. Officials of the concerned departments were ordered to carry out the work as per the plan set by 'SPEED'.

SPEED is a unique initiative to

overcome hurdles between various sectors in creating quality infrastructure to facilitate economic growth. This programme will help the admin to take decisions directly at the Chief Minister's level without delay. SPEED focuses on development in all areas not just cities.

As part of SPEED, departments will prepare special plans for projects and works under their purview. It includes a fixed timeframe of how much work can be done within a given period. Estimates of what works will be

completed by when are prepared. The government has decided that all departments should follow a particular procedure to monitor the progress of SPEED projects.

Arrangements have also been made for regular performance review and monitoring. The Planning Department maintains a special online portal to keep track of SPEED projects. It includes updated data on how much work has been done on any given day.



5

'Release White Paper on farm loan waiver scheme'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Throwing a challenge at Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Ministers by declaring that he is ready to resign his MLA post or take political sanyas if it is proved that the loans of all farmers were waived, BJLP leader Alleti Maheshwar Reddy said that if not Revanth should tell us what he will do. He demanded that the government should release a white paper on the farm loan waiver scheme.

Participating in a Rythu Deeksha on Friday at Nirmal,

Maheshwar demanded that the government should waive the loans of remaining farmers by August 31 or else the BJP will launch an indefinite hunger strike at the Indira Park Dharna Chowk.

He also asked Revanth to apologise to farmers for deceiving them regarding the loan waiver scheme. He also demanded that the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Rythu Bharsa should frame guidelines and submit it to the government immediately. The government should convene the Assembly and finalise the guidelines after discussing it, he added.



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App to verify info about farmers now!

Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageshwara Rao said that a new app has been launched to collect information about the 4,24,873 farmers who do not have family verification to implement the farm loan waiver scheme. Inquiring about the steps taken towards resolving issues that arose at the field level regarding the loan waiver scheme with agriculture and cooperative officers on Friday, Tummala said the loans of all families who had loans less than Rs 2 lakh have been waived. He said that a new app has been introduced to collect information about 4,24,873 farmers who do not have family confirmation and whose loans are less than Rs 2 lakh. Agricultural officers themselves did not go to the houses of the farmers, but were available at farmers' platforms/offices and said that they were receiving complaints.



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IMPROVED RESERVOIR LEVELS ACROSS INDIA: CWC Southern region shows a more positive trend

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The overall water-storage levels across the country's major reservoirs have improved significantly compared to last year but certain areas, particularly in the northern region, are facing lower-than-normal storage levels, which could impact water availability in the coming months, according to official data.

The Central Water Commission (CWC) has released its latest report on the live storage status of 155 reservoirs across India, revealing that the overall water-storage levels have improved significantly compared to last year.

According to the bulletin released on Friday, the live storage available in these reservoirs is 130,800 billion cubic metres (BCM), which is 72 per cent of the total live storage capacity.



However, the report also notes that certain areas, particularly in the northern region, are facing lower-than-normal storage levels, which could impact water availability in the coming months.

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This marks a notable increase from the 114.657 BCM recorded during the same period last year, indicating that the current storage is 114 per cent of last year's level and

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Surging ahead

Kamala's socialism resonates with people while personal attacks by Trump diminish his chances in the US elections

As the United States gears up for another contentious election, the spotlight is once again on Vice President Kamala Harris. Her steadfast commitment to secularism has struck a chord with a diverse electorate that values the separation of church and state. In contrast, former President Donald Trump's attacks on Harris, aimed at undermining her credibility, may be backfiring, potentially diminishing his chances in the upcoming elections. As the political climate in the United States continues to evolve, Vice President Kamala Harris has emerged as a prominent advocate for policies rooted in democratic socialism. Her focus on social justice, economic equality, and government intervention to address systemic issues resonates with a growing segment of the American electorate. Meanwhile, former President Donald Trump's attacks on Harris appear to be weakening his appeal, potentially diminishing his chances in the upcoming elections. Kamala Harris's brand of socialism centres on creating a fairer society through progressive taxation expanded healthcare access, and stronger social safety nets. Her policies aim to address the widening wealth gap, ensure affordable education, and promote racial and gender equality. These ideas have gained traction, particularly among younger voters, minorities, and working-class Americans who feel left behind by the current economic system. Harris's commitment to these principles is seen as a response to the pressing needs of a diverse and economically stratified nation. By advocating for policies that prioritize the needs of the many over the interests of the few, Harris is tapping into a widespread desire for systemic change. In contrast, Donald Trump's strategy has often relied on personal attacks, attempting to discredit Harris by questioning her policies and character. However, these comments have not only failed to undermine Harris's growing support but may also be backfiring on Trump himself. Many voters perceive Trump's rhetoric as divisive and out of touch with the issues that matter most to them, such as healthcare, education, and economic justice. Moreover, Trump's focus on personal attacks rather than substantive policy debates could be alienating voters who are looking for solutions to real problems. As the electorate becomes increasingly concerned with issues like income inequality, climate change, and access to healthcare, Trump's attacks may come across as a distraction from the pressing issues at hand. Kamala Harris's approach, rooted in democratic socialism, offers a vision of an America where everyone has a fair shot at success. This vision is resonating with a growing number of voters who are frustrated with the status quo and are seeking leaders who will champion their interests. Meanwhile, Trump's jabs may be costing him the support of those who are tired of political mudslinging and are looking for a leader who can address their needs.



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PICTALK



A mahout bathes an elephant at Elephanti Orphanage in Pinnawala

Empowering Women: Mandatory self-defence training in schools

This proactive approach could provide women with the skills and confidence to fend off potential attackers, empowering them

The cauldron of public rage is boiling over in the aftermath of the rape and murder of a young resident doctor in Kolkata. It isn't the first time that the nation is witnessing such gruesomeness, and it won't be the last either unless something drastic happens at all levels — societal, legal and psychological. It isn't that there were no horrific instances of sexual assault on women before Nirbhaya. There were, but Nirbhaya's case brought the issue of women's safety (or the lack of it) front and centre, and it resulted in instituting legislation that offered women more protection and legal support. Stringent measures have been implemented, yet incidents keep happening across the country. It nearly feels like no external force can stem this rot, and it is time for women to take their protection into their own hands, literally. In light of the above, I am wondering if it wouldn't be more prudent and practical to arm our girls with self-defence tactics right from the beginning. Crimes against women have become so reg-



ASHA IYER KUMAR

ular, that attention must now turn towards finding means to empower women in a way that will give them confidence and security in different realms of their professional and private lives. The violations can probably be attributed to a deep-rooted patriarchal mindset that has been the bane of women (not just in India), but fixing the blame on society or its vagaries does not help us fight critical issues such as this. It's worse when women themselves are held responsible for the abuses they are subjected to. If society wants to pin the responsibility of safety on women, then there must be an action plan to arm women with the necessary armament. In simple words, why not

make martial arts and other self-defence lessons compulsory in the school curriculum? If there can be a sports or PT period, there can be a martial arts period too. The very idea of equipping our girls with the skills to fend off troublemakers makes me jubilant and offers hope that no legislation can offer. Widespread condemnation and demand for punitive action cannot pre-empt future instances. What can curb it is the general knowledge among errant men that the woman they have cornered is capable of packing a punch, a chop or a kick that will neutralise them. Martial arts has been an optional activity for girls in an urban setting, but only when it is introduced as a part of the curriculum from primary grades in every school and they must be genuinely emancipated from the dangers that lurk at every corner of their daily lives. It is encouraging to learn that the government is intent on its aim to ensure the safety of women in the country and hand out the severest punishment to perpetrators,

but these are steps taken post-incident. What is suggested in this piece is a plan to provide a pre-emptive measure, a way to forestall violent attacks against women by their defences. It can deter a good majority of men on the loose with vagrant ideas. Parents who are better informed enrol their daughters in self-defence programmes, but they are few and far between. The real difference will be seen only when every school-going child is taught the techniques to ward off an offender by dint of their physical prowess. If our women can win medals in the boxing and wrestling rings, if they can build enough brawns along with brains in school, if every man who casts a salacious glance at a woman remembers that his prospective victim is not a push-over, then there will be change. Let us empower our girls with the spunk to keep the marauders at bay. (The author is a columnist, author and writing coach based in Dubai; views are personal)

Violence against women: Unheeded cries

As public outrage grows, the challenge before the authorities is to provide safety and dignity of women across the country



RAJDEEP PATHAK

In a flashback all the past horrendous incidents of violence against women, particularly incidents of rape cross the mind. Here in our country, newspaper pages more than often bring out horrifying accounts of sexual violence — a 65-year-old grandmother assaulted in Kharagpur or a teenage girl, native of Uttar Pradesh, was gang-raped inside a government bus at the Dehradun Inter-State Bus Terminal (ISBT) in Uttarakhand on August 12, 2024, and the latest from Maharashtra, when on August 20, 2024, two minor girls, aged 4, studying in Nursery, were sexually assaulted by a school sweeper in the washroom of a well-known Adarsh Vidya Mandir in Badlapur school near Mumbai. These incidents happened within days when the entire nation was gripped by the horrors of the R G Kar Medical College and Hospital at Kolkata. And these are not isolated incidents — they are part of a grim reality where a rape is reported every 21 minutes. Yet, despite the horror these crimes evoke, they are quickly forgotten by all except the victims and their families, who are left to fight lonely, often futile battles for justice for years, which sometimes is only the ray of hope for them. India's response to sexual violence remains disturbingly inadequate. More than a decade has passed since the Nirbhaya case — a brutal gang rape that shocked the nation and led to the passage of new sexual assault laws. But the situation has barely improved. Nearly 50 years before Nirbhaya, the fearless, Aruna Shanbaug, a 25-year-old nurse, was viciously assaulted by a hospital cleaner in Mumbai. Sodomized, strangled with a metal chain, and left for dead, she survived — only to remain in a vegetative state for 41 years until her death. Her ordeal led to a landmark judgment on passive euthanasia in India, yet her suffering stands as a testament to the enduring failures of a society that continues to fail its women. The recent brutal rape and murder of a 31-year-old postgraduate trainee doctor in Kolkata serves as a grim reminder that little has changed. Female healthcare workers or



women workers per se, still fear for their safety even in supposed sanctuaries such as hospitals. This ongoing crisis underscores the dire need for real change — a change that goes beyond laws and addresses the deep-seated cultural and institutional failures that allow such atrocities to persist. This incident of R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital has shaken the conscience of West Bengal, and the ripple effects are being felt across the political landscape — and the entire nation. The public's reaction to this crime has been fierce and unforgiving. Protests have erupted across the state, with citizens demanding justice not only for the victim but also calling for broader reforms to ensure such incidents are not repeated. The political and social response to the incident has been equally chaotic. The decision for a swift call for a CBI investigation and capital punishment, alongside the rally for "Khela Hobe Divas," has been met with criticism for its timing and focus. Additionally, state actions, such as the transfer of doctors allegedly involved in protests and the use of social media to counter celebrity critiques (read singers), have further fueled debates about the handling of the case. The political implications of this incident



HIGH-PROFILE CASES OF ASSAULT, TRAFFICKING, AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HIGHLIGHT THE PERSISTENT VULNERABILITIES FACED BY WOMEN

could be far-reaching. But beyond politics, the safety of women and girls in India remains a critical concern, deeply rooted in societal norms, legal frameworks, and institutional practices. Despite advancements in legislation and public awareness, instances of violence and harassment against women are prevalent. High-profile cases of assault, trafficking, and domestic violence highlight the persistent vulnerabilities faced by women and girls. The legal system, while equipped with laws like the 'Protection of Human Rights Act' and the 'Criminal Law Amendment Act', or for that matter, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO of 2012), often struggles with implementation and enforcement. There are systemic delays in justice delivery and shortcomings in police response, which exacerbate the sense of insecurity. Protective measures, including the establishment of fast-track courts and specialized police units, aim to address these issues and provide some ray of light in this dark world for women. Further, societal attitudes towards women play a significant role in undermining these measures. Deep-seated patriarchal views and cultural practices continue to normalize gender-based violence,

making it difficult for protective laws to translate into tangible safety for women. The lack of comprehensive sexual education and community engagement further perpetuates harmful stereotypes and behaviours. Right education for the boys at home is another crucial area for intervention by the government and NGOs. The role of NGOs and grassroots movements has been pivotal in advocating for women's rights and safety. Effective safety measures must involve not only legal reforms but also significant shifts in overall attitudes and community involvement. The challenge before the authorities is not just one of governance but of moral leadership — a test that will define their legacy to guarantee safety to women and girl children. *Aami tomari maaitro konya, janoni bosundhara /Tobe aamar manobojanno keno bonchito kora... (I am no other, but the daughter of yours, O' motherland/Why deprive me of the legacy of my human life...)* Written in the year 1933 by Rabindranath Tagore, these lines echo far and wide and call for collective action. It is time to stand up to see where we stand and where we fail. (The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

VALID CONCERNS ON E-COMMERCE

Madam — Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, has raised valid concerns about the questionable practices of e-commerce companies, particularly regarding predatory pricing, cash burning, successive years of losses, and the use of FDI to cover these losses. His concerns emphasize the need for policymakers to ensure a level playing field for local businesses and industries. More troubling is the destination and intent behind the FDI in these companies. E-commerce companies consistently declare significant losses in their income tax returns, carrying them forward year after year to offset against future profits. This cycle continues with mergers, where the losses of merged companies are also carried forward. In contrast, local traders and entrepreneurs pay regular taxes on their incomes, while e-commerce companies avoid taxes through their accounting strategies. This tax advantage, along with the convenience and wide range of products offered by online trade, gives e-commerce companies a significant edge. Goyal suggests that cash burn by e-commerce companies should not be allowed as a deduction, and the period for carrying forward losses should be limited to a maximum of two years. The impact of e-commerce on local traders is already evident, with potential job losses on the horizon. Another concern is the shift of youth from traditional businesses and agriculture to delivery jobs, leading to their migration from rural areas to metro cities.

Vinod Johri | New Delhi

MODERN SLAVERY

Madam — "I freed a thousand slaves. I could have freed more if only they knew they were slaves". One need not look beyond these thought-provoking words of American abolitionist Harriet Tubman to decipher the evils of slavery. Though Tubman spoke at the end of the 19th century, her words hold true for modern slavery as well. Human trafficking, bonded

Lateral entries rolled back



propos to "The Govt steps back" published on 22nd August, it is my response. Efficient bureaucracy leads to good governance and with this good intention the gov-

ernment wanted to rope in 45 lateral entries into our civil services, which was not the first time, it has been happening since Nehru's days. But such is the compulsion of coalition politics that the government had to give in to the demands of its own allies. Prime Minister Modi had also rolled back critical three farm laws which were in the larger interest of the farmers. So now after this decision, it is going to boost opposition' morale to put Gol on the mat again in future, and it has given Modi's government a negative and weak government's image. Hopefully it will learn its lessons and take opposition and allies on board before rolling out any sensitive changes or policies in future. It is the most democratic thing to do anyway because what is democracy if it is not inclusive and does not reflect people's will.

Bal Govind | Noida

NO LIMITS FOR PARA PLAYERS

Madam — The season of Paralympics is all set to begin with Indian athletic contingent start reaching over there in the Game village of Paris. So far, the closing of Paris Olympics done, with India taking on six medals only, however some sports spectators and aficionados are setting the medal count limit with 12 medals at the Paralympics. India has successfully lifted 19 medals in Paralympics Tokyo edition of 2021, for all those are setting the bar before the real talent actually comes up, it is crucial to appreciate the talent and zeal of our para players. Let's don't set any specific boundary of medals that they have to win for the nation. Why just 12, our players have the capability of winning much more. May their competitive spirit and sportsmanship, let them conquer the sports laurels in a celebrated manner without any pressure.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola



FIRST COLUMN

THE ESSENCE OF BEING: BEYOND BODY AND MIND

The soul is envisioned as pure and tranquil, the mind remains latent and unmanifest.



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

It is now becoming something of a cliché in various circles of modern life—from religion to psychology to holistic medicine—to use the phrase “body-mind-soul” or “body-mind-spirit” when referring to our totality as human beings. So, what do we exactly mean when we ask, What is the body? What is the mind? What is the soul? and What is the spirit? It is often said that the real self is behind the mind or intellect. It is also said that we can experience and know the self when we go beyond the mind, which is like a sheath of the soul.

This is truly said, but it means something different than what is generally understood because to experience or perceive the soul, we do not have to cross the mind which is considered to be a subtle form of matter. No! Instead, we have to calm the ripples of the mind, stop it from being agitated by the outer world, and check its outward tendency. From a spiritual perspective, it should be understood that when the soul is in the soul-world, it is pure, calm, tranquil, and above all bondages or attributes.

There, the mind is unmanifest, and its abilities of volition, action, desire, understanding, ascertainment, etc., are not at play but at rest—not emerged but latent and merged. While in the soul-world, the soul is pinned, so to say, only on one thought, one consciousness, one feeling, one understanding, viz—‘I am a Soul, I am a Soul, I am a Soul’. That is all—nothing more. The turbulence, the vagrancy, the sportiveness of the mind is at rest, or you may say that, in a sense, it is in deep sleep. Therefore, when it is said that “If we want to experience the peace and tranquility



of the soul or have to know the self, we will have to go beyond the intellect and the mind.” it does not mean that we will penetrate, percolate through, tear away, or cross over to a material form as the mind is understood to be. No! It means that to know ourselves, we will have to concentrate our mind on the maxim: “I am a soul, a child of the Supreme Soul.”

We will have to make our intellect and mind one-pointed and disposed to understand the Self alone. We will have to lay all our memories, thoughts, feelings, etc., to rest. This is what would be ‘going beyond’ the mind. For this, there are so many methods that have been advocated, demonstrated, advised, and laid down by various spiritual and religious teachers. However, the all-knowing Almighty has offered His supreme advice that we should control the mind using the intellect. This means that we have to know the Self, the Supreme, etc., and using that, know the Self to calm ourselves. He has sermonized that it can be best done by pinning the mind on the name, form, attributes, and relation of the Supreme with the soul.

His sermon is, “Manmana Bhav,” i.e., concentrate your mind on me, your love, your faith in me. And I assure you that I will bless you with supreme sanctity, peace, and bliss, and you will attain me. I will purge you of all sins, rest assured. If we act as HE says, all our inner conflict will end, and we will work only as His divine instrument. By aligning ourselves with the Supreme, our mind will cease its endless wandering, and we will find ourselves centred and at peace. We will then be able to adjust ourselves easily and quickly in any situation. Having been freed from other psychological memories, except that of the Supreme and our duty, our energy potential will find no resistance and will be free for full performance. We will thus be able to attain excellence and experience peace and tranquillity without putting in much effort. This state of effortless being is what every soul seeks, whether knowingly or unknowingly. The Supreme guides us to this state of fulfillment, away from the darkness of ignorance. Now, it's up to us whether to listen to the Almighty or keep wandering in the darkness of ignorance.

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

Reject calls for extraditing Sheikh Hasina



HIARANMAY KARLEKAR

India must stand firm in its refusal to hand over a leader who has been a steadfast ally, particularly when such demands come from factions with anti-India sentiment

India must not pay the slightest heed to the demand by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party's secretary-general, Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, to extradite Sheikh Hasina to his country. From reports in Indian newspapers, he seems to have cited two grounds, both utterly laughable, for his demand. The first is that she should stand trial for the murder and other charges levelled against her. The question is: will she receive a fair trial under the conditions now prevailing in Bangladesh? The matter is important. Even if the charges levelled against her are true, and she has done terrible things, she has an inalienable right to a fair trial.

This, she will not get with large mobs literally baying for her blood, statues of her father, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the architect of the country's emergence from East Pakistan to sovereign Bangladesh, are being pulled down, the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum of 32 Dhanmondi, Dhaka, his erstwhile residence, ransacked and burnt, and the Liberation War Museum at Suhrawardy Udyan Dhaka, razed to the ground. Clearly, a section of people is trying to take advantage of the situation created by the Anti-Discrimination Students' Movement (ADSM), to target the symbols of Bangladesh's liberation struggle.

Undoing the country's independence and its re-unification with Pakistan is, of course, out of the question. But cultivating closer ties with Pakistan, pursuing a stridently hostile policy towards India, which such elements have never ceased hating for playing a decisive role in Bangladesh's independence by routing Pakistan in the 1971 war, and replacing Bangladesh's secular, democratic polity by one practicing fundamentalist Islam, has been a part of the agenda of the country's fundamentalist Islamist groups. It is no secret that the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh, recently re-incarnated as Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami (BJEI), its students' organization, Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir (BICS)—which was Islami Chhatra Sangha (ICS) in 1971—and allied organisations like al-Badr, al-Shams, Razakars, and Shanti Committee, had sided with Pakistan and committed despicable war crimes during the liberation war of 1971. A number of them have been punished, including some who have been executed, by the International Crimes Tribunal set by the Bangladesh Government in 2009 by an amendment to the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973, to investigate and prosecute personnel of the Pakistan Army and BJEI, Razakars, Al-Badr, Al-Shams, and Shanti Committee, accused of committing genocide during the 1971 liberation war.

The BJEI and the BICS, which have close links with Islamist terrorist organisations like Ansar al-Islam, linked to Al-Qaeda in the Indian Sub-continent (AQIS) and Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), clearly joined the ADSM to further their own agenda, which is transforming a secular and democratic Bangladesh into an Islamic emirate. To do this, they must eliminate from the political scene not only the Awami League and its leaders, particularly Sheikh Hasina, but all secular, democratic and humanist civil society organisations and leaders.



GIVEN THAT THE AWAMI LEAGUE HAS BEEN REDUCED TO SUCH STRAITS THAT IT COULD NOT EVEN OBSERVE THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE GRENADE ATTACKS ON AUGUST 21, 2004, IT COULD HARDLY BE IN A POSITION TO CONSPIRE TO DEFEAT THE STUDENTS' UPSURGE

Revealingly, circulating in Bangladesh in the wake of Sheikh Hasina's ouster, is a list of intellectuals, scholars, lawyers, academics, human rights social activists, who its shadowy authors want to “see.”

Included in the list of 50 or more were the Professor Abul Barakat (a well-known economist who had exposed the sources of the BJEI's phenomenal wealth), Rana Dasgupta (general secretary of the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council), AAMS Arefin Siddique, (former vice-chancellor, Dhaka University), and Professor Sadeka Halim (vice-chancellor, Jagannath University) and a number of journalists and film personalities. In these circumstances, Sheikh Hasina's life will be in danger if she is extradited to Bangladesh: nor can she be assured of a fair trial, particularly given the fact that judges will either be under tremendous pressure or will be pre-disposed to convict her as they have been appointed by the Interim Government and are hostile to her.

The second ground that, according to the reports, Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has cited for Sheikh Hasina's extradition, is that the Awami League and she were conspiring in New Delhi to falsify (sic) the victory that students and other citizens of Bangladesh have achieved. Nothing could be more ludicrous. Most Awami League leaders are in Bangladesh, busy defending themselves in courts

against charges brought against them, or in hiding. A number of them have been lynched. The homes and business establishments of many of them have been destroyed and set aflame.

In fact, the Awami League has been reduced to such straits that, unlike in the earlier years, it could not stage an event to observe the anniversary of the grenade attack on an Awami League rally in Dhaka on August 21, 2004, to protest against increasing terrorist attacks on its cadres and leaders. Perpetrated by the terrorist outfit Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh (HUJIB), it left at least 24 persons dead and over 300 injured. Among the wounded was Sheikh Hasina, whose hearing has been permanently impaired. Ivy Rahman, secretary of the Awami League's women's affairs wing and wife of its general-secretary, Zillur Rahman, who subsequently became Bangladesh's president, was also seriously hurt. She later died later in hospital.

Given that the Awami League has been reduced to such straits that it could not even observe the anniversary of the grenade attacks on August 21, 2004, it could hardly be in a position to conspire to defeat the students' upsurge. It may well be argued that Sheikh Hasina needs to be present in courts to stand trial and face cross-examination to establish the veracity of the charges levelled against her, or examine the complicity of others involved.

For that, the interim government or its successor must establish that a prima facie case exists against her and then request India to allow an emissary to question her in any facility that New Delhi may provide.

Meanwhile, there can be no question of extraditing her. The BNP-BJEL coalition government, in office from 2001 to 2006 with Begum Khaleda Zia as prime minister, made no bones about its hostility to India. Indeed, except those headed by Sheikh Hasina, all governments of Bangladesh since the murder of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975, have been hostile to India and pro-Pakistan.

To cite one example, under them, Bangladesh provided sanctuary, assistance and training to north-east India's secessionist rebel groups. On the other hand, Sheikh Hasina not only closed down their sanctuaries but handed over to India some of the leaders of these secessionist terrorist groups. In fact, India-Bangladesh relations were perhaps more cordial under her than even when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman headed the government in Dhaka.

Extraditing Sheikh Hasina would send the message round that even the most loyal friends of India cannot depend on it for support in times of distress. That is not something that New Delhi should want.

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

Lateral entry in bureaucracy: A double-edged sword of reform and controversy

The implementation of lateral entry has sparked serious concerns about social justice and the representation of marginalised groups in the Indian bureaucracy

The introduction of lateral appointments in India's bureaucracy has sparked intense debate, particularly due to the absence of reservations for Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC), and Economically Weaker Sections (EWS). The issue gained traction with a recent UPSC advertisement for 45 senior positions, which did not include the constitutionally mandated quotas, raising concerns about social justice and the representation of disadvantaged groups in high-level government roles. The lateral entry system, introduced by the Modi government in 2018, was intended to enhance transparency and efficiency, addressing the opaque practices of previous adminis-



K S TOMAR

trations. However, the lack of provisions for reservations in this system has led to widespread criticism. Rahul Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition, accused the NDA government of undermining the Constitution by excluding reservations from these appointments. He argued that this move was a direct attack on social justice, sidelining the underprivileged and diluting their representation in the

higher echelons of bureaucracy. In response, Arjun Meghwal pointed out the Congress's past practices, highlighting the appointments of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh as Finance Secretary in 1971 and Montek Ahluwalia as Planning Commission Chairman without transparent procedures. Since the inception of the lateral entry system in 2018, the government has received 6,077 applications, resulting in the appointment of 63 individuals to senior positions across various ministries, with approximately 35 from the private sector. While these appointments aim to bring in expertise and fresh perspectives, the exclusion of reservations has overshadowed the intended benefits. The backlog of vacancies

in proportion to these 63 officials can only be addressed if the government creates new posts specifically for candidates from SC, ST, OBC, and EWS categories. The delay in amending recruitment rules has already caused significant harm, as many eligible candidates may have crossed the age limit. The introduction of lateral appointments has been met with mixed reactions within the bureaucracy. While it brings in specialized knowledge and fresh perspectives, it also poses several risks to the traditional bureaucratic structure: **Demoralization of Bureaucrats:** Traditional bureaucrats, who have risen through the ranks, may feel demoralized seeing lateral entrants appointed to senior positions without undergoing the rigorous training and years of service they have endured. This could lead to a perception that meritocracy is being



undermined and create uncertainty regarding career progression. **Integration Challenges:** Lateral entrants may struggle to integrate into the established bureaucratic culture, leading to friction with traditional bureaucrats. **3rd. Potential Conflicts of Interest:** Lateral entrants from the private sector may face conflicts of interest, where their decisions could be influenced by their previous affiliations. This raises concerns about policy bias and the potential prioritization of private sector interests over the public good. **Accountability and Transparency Issues:** Unlike career bureaucrats, lateral entrants might not undergo the same level of public scruti-

ny and evaluation, leading to concerns about transparency in decision-making. Their lack of deep institutional knowledge could also affect the quality of their decisions, especially in complex policy areas. **Impact on Administrative Cohesion:** The introduction of lateral entrants at senior levels could fragment authority within the bureaucracy, leading to inefficiencies and delays. **Positive Takeaways:** Lateral entry into senior government positions offers several benefits: **Expertise Infusion:** Brings specialized knowledge from various sectors, enhancing policy-making. **Diverse Perspectives:** Introduces new viewpoints, fostering innovative solutions.

Increased Efficiency: Private sector professionals bring a focus on performance and efficiency. **Skill Gap Bridging:** Addresses deficiencies in areas like technology and finance. **Meritocracy Promotion:** Emphasizes skills over seniority, potentially improving leadership quality. **Governance Flexibility:** Allows for quick adaptation to new challenges with experienced professionals. **Public-Private Collaboration:** Strengthens ties between government and private sectors. (Writer has been ex chairperson of Standing Committee of All State Public Service Commissions in India and former chairman of HP Public Service Commission; views are personal)

IN BRIEF



Bikaji Foods' majority stake in Ariba Foods

Snacks manufacturer Bikaji Foods International on Friday said it has acquired majority stake in Ujjain-based Ariba Foods...



Gold prices decline by Rs 350, silver drops Rs 200

Gold prices declined by Rs 350 to Rs 73,800 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday...



Coca-Cola India appoints new market head for India

Beverages major Coca-Cola on Friday said Greishma Singh has been appointed as the new market head for India Southwest Asia (INSWA) Operating Unit...

India has maximum electrification for expansion of tracks: Railways

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is the country with maximum electrification for expansion of tracks, Mukul Saran Mathur, Additional Member, Commercial, Ministry of Railways...

Mathur, while focusing on the achievements of the railways, said the rail network has been increased to 68,000 km currently...

He added that more than 5,000 special trains have recently been operated to transport migrants.

Sanjay Bajpai, Co-chairman, the National Council on Logistics and Warehousing, ASSOCHAM and Executive Director, the Container Corporation of India Ltd...

Sharma said the initiative aims to transform the Indian Railways into a world class network that supports economic growth...

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Sebi asks CAs to be 'extra careful' while auditing listed SMEs

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Sebi's whole-time member Ashwani Bhatia on Friday asked chartered accountants to be more diligent while auditing companies listed on the SME exchange platforms...

Addressing an industry event of CAs, Bhatia said it is important to look at the listed SMEs (Small and medium-sized enterprises) in a more careful way because the same companies will grow to be a part of the main board in the future...

"We have seen some challenges there (SME platform). We request you to be extra careful as far as SME IPOs and fundraising are concerned because these small companies will become much, much bigger going forward..."

Bhatia expressed satisfaction with the progress of the SME platform, stating that Rs 14,000 crore has been raised by such entities, with Rs 6,000 crore being raised in FY24 alone...

as first-level regulators by ensuring orderly conduct of companies.

Bhatia said many Sebi investigations and orders, which take over a year to complete, may not be necessary at all if the CAs had done their work more diligently.

It can be noted that in March this year, Sebi chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch had flagged concerns around 'price manipulation' in the SME platform listings and trading...

Meanwhile, addressing CAs on Friday, Bhatia recalled the conduct of SEBI's past chairman R K Talwar and said that the strength of character of the leader helps create "great institutions"...

He also said that despite the regulator coming out with regulations to enable delisting, the experience has been the "reverse" with little interest on that front.

India steel market hit by unfair imports, dumping

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian steel market is hit by "unfair imports and dumping" amid a demand slump in China and the government needs to take action in a time-bound manner...

He also warned of the price realisations getting affected due to surging imports impacting the profitability of steel makers.

"To the extent the imports currently happening are unfair and there is dumping going on and the Indian government should certainly respond to them in a timeframe..."



the aim to become a global supplier of the commodity. Sinha said "...duty prayers for imposition of the duty are being considered at a longer timeframe for about a year and a half that is not going help industry at least give them a fair hearing."

On August 16, the government initiated an anti-dumping probe into the import of hot-rolled steel products from Vietnam following a complaint by a domestic industry.

The commerce ministry's investigation arm Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) is probing the alleged dumping of 'hot rolled flat products of alloy or non-alloy steel'.

According to the DGTR notification, Indian Steel Association has filed an application on behalf of domestic producers - JSW Steel Ltd and ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India Ltd - seeking initiation of an anti-dumping investigation on imports from Vietnam.

Stock markets marginally up in volatile trade

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex and Nifty edged up in volatile trade on Friday following buying in blue-chip stocks such as ICICI Bank and Bharti Airtel...

Rising for the fourth straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 33.02 points or 0.04 per cent higher at 81,086.21.

In early trade, the benchmark declined 169.93 points or 0.20 per cent to a low of 80,883.26.

India's forex reserves jump by \$4.546 bn

PNS ■ MUMBAI

India's forex reserves jumped by \$4.546 billion to \$674.664 billion during the week ended August 16, the RBI said on Friday.

In the previous week, the forex kitty had dropped by USD 4.8 billion to USD 670.119 billion.

On August 2, the overall reserves hit an all-time high of USD 674.919 billion. In the week ended August 16, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by USD 3.609 billion to USD 591.569 billion...

No credibility in MapmyIndia claims: Ola founder

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ola Co-Founder Bhavish Aggarwal has rejected claims of copying MapmyIndia, saying the map company was attempting to ride on Ola Electric's listing coat-tails.

The Chairman and Managing Director of Ola brand owner ANI Technologies said that the company has sent legal notice to MapmyIndia but has not received any reply from them.

"Empty vessels make more sound. These people woke up suddenly one day. Ola Electric is not even in the maps business. In the run-up to Ola electric IPO they just wanted to ride on its coat-tails. We have also given them legal notice, their reply has not come till date," Aggarwal said.

Ola Electric got listed on the bourses on August 9. The company raised Rs 5,500 crore from its initial public offering...



5,500 crore from its initial public offering...

MapmyIndia has questioned claims of Ola parent ANI Technologies on developing a navigational map of India and called the announcement a "gimmick"...

When contacted MapmyIndia to check the status of their legal notice, the company shared a transcript of its earnings call dated August 12 in which its CEO and ED Rohan Verma shared an update on legal notice sent to ANI Technologies.

"In 2015, Ola ANI Technologies got licensed and got access to our map data, which they continued to use. In 2021, Ola Electric licensed our APIs (application programming interface) and SDKs (software development kits) for their navigation in their vehicles and continued to use us. Because we have seen certain breaches of terms and conditions, we have started the legal process," Verma said.



Rupee rises 4 paise to close at 83.89 against US dollar

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The rupee traded in a narrow range and settled higher by 4 paise at 83.89 (provisional) against the American currency on Friday, as traders remained cautious ahead of Fed Chair Jerome Powell's speech at the Jackson Hole Symposium...

Forex traders said weak US Dollar, foreign fund inflows and a positive tone in the domestic markets supported the rupee. However, overnight gains in crude oil prices capped sharp gains.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened weak at 83.93 and touched an intraday high of 83.85 against the US dollar. The domestic currency finally settled at 83.89 (provisional), 4 paise higher from its previous close.

On Thursday, the rupee traded in a narrow range and settled lower by 3 paise at 83.93 against the American currency.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias as traders remain cautious ahead of Fed Chair Jerome Powell's speech at the Jackson Hole Symposium which could provide some cues on Fed's path to cut interest rates.

AMID SLUMP IN CHINA

India steel market hit by unfair imports, dumping

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER OFFICE, PR REGION MEDAK E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE... 22.08.2024

NORTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LIMITED Short Tender Notice No. 03/24-25 of DEE/JOP/NIZAMABAD... 23-08-2024



AARTI SREENATH

'UNSPOKEN BOND SHARED OVER CUP OF IRANI CHAI HAS BECOME REGULAR PART OF MY LIFE'

Anju Jain found a new beginning and a new home in the city of Hyderabad, a city where modernity and tradition coexist. The founder of Just Like That by Anju Jain, her journey took a significant turn when she arrived in this vibrant city. Although her roots were deeply entrenched in Ranchi, where she belongs, Hyderabad became the canvas upon which her dreams began to

take shape. When she first set foot in Hyderabad, she encountered a realm of possibilities tinged with uncertainty. "I remember my initial apprehensions about the language barrier and cultural differences. It felt like stepping into a world where I was both an outsider and an explorer." Yet, the transition was smoother than she had anticipated. The city's warm embrace and its people's welcoming nature made her feel at ease almost immediately. She recalls, "Hyderabad, with its unassuming charm, quickly made me feel at home. The city's warmth melted away my fears, allowing me to immerse myself in its essence."

Living in Hyderabad, she discovered a hidden gem within a well-loved book. As a visitor, one might marvel at the grandeur of landmarks like the Charminar, savour the legendary Hyderabad biryani, or explore the historical Golconda Fort. However, it is the daily rhythm of city life where the true spirit of Hyderabad reveals itself. "The vibrant bazaars, the age-old artisans and the unspoken bond shared over a cup of Irani chai have all become part of my life here. These are the elements that make Hyderabad more than just a backdrop; they make it a living, breathing part of my story."

Hyderabad's rich cultural and historical mosaics have provided her with endless inspiration. "The city's museums, with their vast collections of antiques and art, offer a window into a past that is both intriguing and influential. Every visit to these museums sparks new ideas for my designs. They provide a glimpse into the city's storied past, which I blend with contemporary flair in my work," she added. These moments of reflection have been pivotal in finding the creative spark that drives her fashion line.

The city's thriving fashion scene has been particularly nurturing for Jain. "Hyderabad's vibrant fashion landscape has allowed me to collaborate with an array of talented models, stylists, and craftsmen," she shares. Hyderabad's energy has infused Jain's work with a sense of dynamism and creativity that feels distinctly tied to the city. "My workshop, nestled in the heart of the city, has become a sanctuary where tradition meets innovation. It's a place where my designs come to life, influenced by the city's unique spirit."

Of course, no story is without its challenges. She acknowledges, "The city's traffic congestion can be quite over-

whelming. Yet, this minor inconvenience is more than compensated for by the city's many gifts, the warmth of its people, the richness of its culinary offerings and the lively cultural scene. Despite occasional frustrations, the positives far outweigh the negatives, making Hyderabad a city she cherishes deeply.

When her friends and family visit, they become part of the city's enchantment. "They relish the simple joys of home-cooked meals and love the opportunity to visit my workshop. It's become a tradition for them to pick out a bespoke piece from my collection as a keepsake of their visit. This personal touch adds a layer of meaning to their experience, making each visit special."

For her, Hyderabad is more than just a place of residence and work; it is an integral part of her identity. "Hyderabad is where my heart finds solace, where my family and business thrive," she concludes. "It's a city that has given me so much and in return, I have woven my dreams into its vibrant fabric." Every corner of Hyderabad holds a piece of her journey, and every stitch of her designs reflects the city's essence.

Hailing from the lands of exquisite handicrafts, Ranchi, to finding her new home in the city of pearls, fashion designer Anju Jain has been enjoying the warmth that she has received here. She speaks to us about her allure for the city



CANVASing his art from thought to reality

TEJAL SINHA

What initially began as a stress buster for Vikas Malani, by drawing during his school days, evolved into a love for colours, patterns and design. Even the simplicity of drawing a line or a dot was full of creativity for him.

As his passion for drawing deepened, it naturally transitioned into tattooing. "I chose tattooing as a way to explore my creativity because it allows my artwork to travel the world on my clients," begins the talented artist in an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*. Tattooing is a profound commitment and a form of self-expression. And so, "Our patrons' bodies are our canvas and from this concept, BodyCanvas was born. We transform their intangible thoughts into tangible realities."

It was a small symbol that he drew on his friend's nape, which was his first-ever tattoo work. Though nerve-racking, he says, it was still an exhilarating experience.

Having always been fascinated by the art and culture surrounding tattoos, the ability to permanently adorn one's body with meaningful designs and symbols deeply resonated with Vikas.

B-town's favourite tattoo artist, his habitué includes Arpita Khan, Remo D'Souza, John Abraham, Alok Nath,

Mumbai branch operates at the same level as our London studio. The challenges include standardising processes, consistently upgrading products and continuously learning new skills. Every client presents a unique challenge, pushing us to strive for a better balance in our work."

They have also done the look test and tattoos for many Bollywood projects such as John Abraham for *Pathaan*, Amir Khan for *Dhoom 3*, Anushka Sharma for *Matru ki Bijlee ka Mandola*, Priyanka Chopra for *Pyaar Impossible*, Fardeen Khan for *All the Best*, Anil Kapoor for *Tashan*, MS Dhoni for Max Oil TVC, Shahrukh Khan for Dish TV advertisement, and Sidharth Malhotra for the movie *Gentleman*. However, in the year 2023, Vikas and his team gained attention for being the creative force behind John Abraham's bold, inked look in the Bollywood blockbuster *Pathaan*, where his sexy, bad-boy role created quite a sensation!

Speaking of this experience, he shared with us that the tattoo symbolised a transformation from someone who once loved their country to someone who now stands against authority or rules they believe to be unjust. "It's a journey from patriotism to rebellion. In our first meet-

ing, we brought numerous references based on the character description provided. We were pleasantly surprised to find that John's team had also prepared a variety of options. Together, we collaborated to finalise a design that was unique and unlike anything seen before in a Bollywood movie."

Working with Bollywood celebrities for him has been a mix of amusing stories and wonderful experiences. "John Abraham is one of the most humble actors I've met; working with him felt like collaborating with a friend. He has a deep respect for artists and creativity. After *Pathaan* crossed 1000 crores, he personally visited the studio to thank the entire team for his tattoo look in the movie. On his first visit for the look test, he was well-spoken and proactive, sharing his ideas and views on the design. He built a strong connection with the team and spent nearly 10 hours at our Bandra studio. How 'awwww'dorable isn't it? Then there was Aditi Rao Hydari, another delightful personality he recalls. "On her birthday, she wanted to gift herself some piercings. Her kindness and hospitality were remarkable; she offered us breakfast at her home and had a warm conversation about her love for art and paintings."

form project. As we head towards the end of this captivating chat, he highlights the top five tips for getting a tattoo:

Research and planning: Take your time to find a design that resonates with you and ensure it's something you'll love for years to come.

Choose a reputable tattoo artist, tattoo studio and tattoo products (vegan ink): Look for an artist with experience who uses high-quality brands of ink and nee-



dles, has good reviews, and has a portfolio that aligns with your desired style.

Prepare for the process: Understand the time, cost and discomfort involved and plan accordingly.

Aftercare is crucial: Follow your artist's instructions to ensure proper healing and minimise the risk of complications. Take your time and don't fall for offers or discounts. Remember, a tattoo is a permanent mark; make sure you're ready and comfortable with the quality.

Vikas Malani, certainly a favourite tattooist of B-town celebs, speaks exclusively with *The Pioneer* about his passion for art, transitioning into the world of tattoos, creating wonders and more

Rapper Divine, Rhea Chakraborty, Shibani Dandekar, Shweta Tripathi Sharma, former Australian cricket team captain Michael Clarke, former CSK player, S. Badrinath, former Australian cricketer Michael Slater, Director Om Prakash Jha, Tina Ahuja, Nyaasa Devgan, Shaheen Bhatt, Krishna Jackie Shroff, Amruta Khanvilkar, Sneha Ullal, Aarya Babbar, Raghu & Rajiv of the *Roadies* fame, Debolina Bhattacharya aka 'Gopi Bahu', Disha Parmar, Dheeraj Dhoopar and his wife Vinny Arora, Ambika Anand, Instagram influencer Meethika Dwivedi, Ranveer Allahbadia (BEER BICEPS), acid attack survivor Laxmi Agarwal, and *Bigg Boss* fame Shiv Thakare, among many others.

"Working with high-profile people is more of a responsibility than a source of fame," shares the tattooist, adding, "We must consistently maintain high-quality standards, which is a continual process. There's pressure to perform and meet the expectations. Additionally, we adhere to European Union standards to ensure our

ing, we brought numerous references based on the character description provided. We were pleasantly surprised to find that John's team had also prepared a variety of options. Together, we collaborated to finalise a design that was unique and unlike anything seen before in a Bollywood movie."

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CELEBRATING THE BIRTH OF KANHA!



Janmashtami, the joyous celebration of Lord Krishna's birth, is a festival filled with devotion, colour, and festivity. Falling on August 26 this year, Janmashtami offers numerous ways to engage in the vibrant cultural and spiritual traditions associated with Krishna. Whether you're a devoted follower or simply wish to partake in the festivities, here are five unique ways to celebrate Janmashtami in 2024.

Experience Mathura and Vrindavan's spiritual vibe

Mathura, the birthplace of Lord Krishna, and Vrindavan, where he spent his childhood, are the epicenters of Janmashtami celebrations. These cities in Uttar Pradesh come alive with grand processions, devotional singing and dramatic reenactments of Krishna's life.

- **Mathura:** Visit the Krishna Janmabhoomi Temple, where thousands gather to offer prayers and witness the special midnight aarti marking Krishna's birth.

- **Vrindavan:** Participate in the vibrant celebrations at famous temples like Banke Bihari and ISKCON. Watch as devotees are showered with flower petals and scented water, and enjoy the sight of children dressed as little Krishnas with flutes in hand.

Join the dahi handi festivities in Maharashtra

Maharashtra, particularly Mumbai, is known for its thrilling Dahi Handi celebrations. Inspired by Krishna's love for butter, men form human pyramids to break a pot filled with curd, butter and milk hanging high above the ground.

Mumbai hotspots: Dadar and Lalbaug host some of the most competitive and lively Dahi Handi events. The atmosphere is electric with music, dance and cheering crowds as teams compete to reach the handi.

Attend Rajadhiraaj: Love Life Leela at NMACC

This year, make your Janmashtami unfor-

gettable by attending the grand musical *Rajadhiraaj: Love Life Leela* at the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre in Mumbai. This project, conceived and brought to fruition by Dhanraj Nathwani and Executive Producer Bhoomi Nathwani, is truly exceptional. This spectacular show, which will end on September 1, written by Praseon Joshi, brings Krishna's stories to life with stunning visuals and over 100 performers.

Directed by Shruti Sharma, with music by Sachin-Jigar, the production features a captivating blend of Indian classical and Western symphony. Omung Kumar's intricate set designs and Neeta Lulla's elaborate costumes will transport you to ancient India, immersing you in Krishna's world.

Engage in local celebrations and community festivities

If you can't travel to the main hubs of celebration, local events can offer equally enriching experiences. Communities across India host various activities, including parades, cultural performances and marketplaces selling traditional sweets and decorations. If you have kids, you can also dress them as Krishna or Radha and participate in local reenactments or dance performances. These events provide a wonderful opportunity to bond with your community and share in the festive spirit.

Transform Your Home with Festive Décor

If you wish to celebrate the festival at home, you can do so by adorning your living spaces and puja room with traditional decorations. Welcome guests with a vibrant rangoli at your entrance, using colorful patterns or simple floral designs. Fresh flowers like fragrant mogra can be used to decorate your home, adding both beauty and a pleasant aroma. Light up your home with diyas and candles for a warm, festive glow. Include a small swing as a nod to Krishna's childhood, placing an idol of Krishna on it, adorned with peacock feathers and fresh flowers. This not only beautifies your home but also creates a devotional ambience.

what's brewing?

Feeding India, a Zomato giveback (Feeding India), has announced the second edition of the **Zomato Feeding India Concert (ZFIC) 2024** on November 30, 2024 at MMRDA, BKC in Mumbai. This year, global pop powerhouse and multiple GRAMMY and BRIT Award winner, Dua Lipa, will headline the concert, set to take place on November 30, 2024 at MMRDA. Zomato Live will be organising the concert. Leading national artists, such as Jonita Gandhi, Talwinder among others will also be performing at ZFIC this year.



Varsha Reddy from Telangana has been crowned Mrs. South India 2024, presented by Alcazar Watches and DQUE Soap. The winner was crowned by Jebitha Ajit, MD of Pegasus Global Private Limited.



Telangana Handicraft Development Corporation Chairman, Naidu Satyanarayana, marked his presence at the launch of Sri Sai Weavers Cotton and Silks showroom weavers handwork exhibition, at NTR Stadium, Near Indira Park. The expo, which is organised by Kambhampati Padmaja will be available till September 29.



Sushila Bokadiya



The Jewellery World Exhibition returned to the magnificent Hotel Taj Krishna in Hyderabad promising to be one of the most beautiful events of the year. This much awaited occasion looked to be a magnificent celebration of luxury, innovation and jewellery workmanship. On August 23, the exhibition opened at 10 AM and welcomed jewellery enthusiasts, prospective brides and their families, professionals in the industry and connoisseurs to view an astounding array of jewellery designs. The event, organised by Sonia Chawla, gave attendees the chance to peruse a carefully chosen collection of modern and traditional jewellery made by some of the most well-known designers and businesses in the world.



Anika Khara



Namita



sonia chawla



Komal Baheti



Anchil

PARTY



The SAATVIK channel partner, BASHU ENERGY SYSTEMS, has launched in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Honouring Ajay Mishra, MD of TRECDO (TG government), Retd IAS, and vice chairman of N.JANAIAH and HYATT PLACE, next to GVK mall, Banjara Hills.

Photos by- SV Chary

Twenty-five US university representatives are in Hyderabad this week as guests of Career Mosaic which represents 450 US universities and over 900 prestigious international institutions. These universities focussed on sharing educational options about new courses, scholarships and post-study prospects with students on college campuses, college advisers and study abroad consultants from Andhra Pradesh (AP) and Telangana.



Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Ltd. announced that it has set a new Guinness World Record for building the largest brochure mosaic (logo) installation. This installation is part of its glycemic happiness awareness initiative for patients with Type 2 diabetes mellitus. The largest installation that entered the Guinness World Record stands at 162 square metres and consists of feedback from healthcare professionals across India on the 'Glycemic Happiness Scale'.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



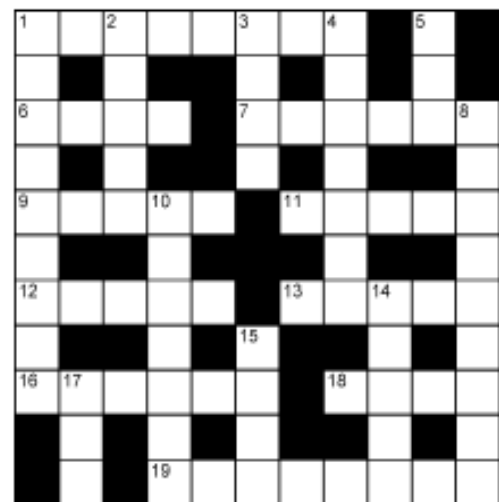
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution
 4 9 5 2 1 6 7 8 3
 7 6 8 9 4 3 5 1 2
 3 1 2 7 5 8 6 4 9
 8 7 3 4 6 1 9 2 5
 9 4 6 5 3 2 1 7 8
 5 2 1 8 7 9 4 3 6
 6 3 7 1 2 5 8 9 4
 1 5 9 3 8 4 2 6 7
 2 8 4 6 9 7 3 5 1

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

ACROSS
 1 Someone who keeps pestering you
 6 Became taller
 7 Sent by post
 9 To try a little piece of food to see if you like it
 11 Stood (3,2)
 12 A book of maps of countries
 13 Start a tennis game with this
 16 This covers your eye
 18 Baby goats
 19 Set free from captivity

DOWN
 1 A frightening dream
 2 Articles
 3 Not able to feel anything
 4 Part of a serial story
 5 Female sheep
 8 Feeling sad and fed up
 10 A fishing boat
 14 Train tracks
 15 A worshipped statue
 17 Up until now

SOLUTION

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| L | R | D | S | O | | | | | |
| A | E | C | Z | E | | | | | |
| A | T | I | N | A | T | | | | |
| P | A | N | A | L | E | | | | |
| U | N | C | O | N | S | C | I | O | |
| L | E | S | S | V | T | | | | |
| A | N | G | E | R | F | E | W | E | R |
| N | U | A | O | I | A | | | | |
| C | O | N | T | I | N | E | | | |
| E | S | N | R | E | | | | | |

GINGER MEGGS





REVU IS AN INTENSE DRAMA WITH PREDICTABLE AND SLOW NARRATION

SURESH KAVIRAYANI
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Lately, small films like *Committee Kurrollu* and *Aay* that have introduced new talent have created wonders at the box office. Now adding to the list is *Revu*, which has a Godavari backdrop film. The film directed by Harinath Puli has Vamsi Ram Pendyala, Ajay Nidadavolu and Swathi Bhemireddy as the main leads. The film's promotional videos are interesting and they create some buzz.

STORY

The story has the backdrop of a village near Godavari. Ankalu (played by Vamsi Ram Pendyala) and Gangaiah (played by Ajay) have been childhood friends but have their differences of opinion. They journey on small boats into the river to fish. They are the best fishermen in the area, supplying fish to a company in a nearby town. The arrival of Nageshu (played by Yepuri Hari) caused their once smooth life to become turbulent. The rich person in the village buys a big boat with an engine, making it easy for him to catch the fish. Soon, the company comes to an agreement with Nageshu. The Ankalu and Gangaiah's team unfortunately couldn't compete with Nageshu, and thereafter their lives became miserable

with no work. Meanwhile, Ankalu's wife, Samrajyam (played by Swathi Bhemireddy), is pregnant and is worried about Ankalu, thinking of when he will be able to get a boat with an engine. It's not just them, but also their friends who suffer with no work.

In a turn of events, an incident takes place in the village, which ends in a massacre. How Ankalu and Gangaiah compete with Nageshu and his sons is the crux of the remaining story.

ANALYSIS

There are a few films made in Telugu on the lives of fishermen and the Godavari backdrop. This film *Revu* focuses more on the lives of fishermen and how they suffer, while a rivalry starts within them. Director Harinath Puli takes his own time to introduce all the characters in the first half, making the narration slow-paced. He also takes quite a while to explain the happenings. Speaking of the story, it is easily predictable, making the audience quickly figure out what's going to happen next.

The second half of the story gets intense, and that's when the real story begins. The director is banking more on violence in the second half by introducing Nageshu's sons into the picture. The after-noon intermission is narrated more like a revenge drama.

One thing to appreciate in this film is how the director brings out the intense performances from all the actors, though they are all fresh faces.

He completely sticks to the local flavor. The dialogues are well written with the local Godavari slang, and the artists pronounce it well. John K. Joseph's music and Visakh Muraleedaran's background score are good; they give the emotional scenes a high. Revanth Sagar's cinematography captures the village and Godavari scenes in a beautiful manner.

PERFORMANCES

Except for LB Sriram, who played a cameo in the film, most of the actors are new to the silver screen. Vamsi Ram Pendyala is playing the main lead, and he did a fantastic job delivering a good performance. Ajay can be seen in another lead, and he too gave a commendable performance. Swathi Bhemireddy plays a typical village girl, and she lived in it. She is good at her diction and surprises everyone with her acting. Yepuri Hari plays the negative role very well, but the highlight of the film is Sumesh Madhavan and Leela Venkatesh Kommuri's performances. They show cruelty in their faces, and they definitely scare with their performance. Both did a fantastic job, and they were definitely the talking points of the film. The remaining

actors supported each other each other well.

VERDICT

Revu is an intense drama set against a rustic Godavari backdrop, with good performances from the actors. The first half has a completely slow narration, but the second half is somehow good with intense scenes. If the director concentrated more on the story and less on violence, the film could have been a better one. Because of the violence, the family audience may distance themselves from this film, but one should encourage it as you can see the fresh faces.

Cast: Vamsiram Pendyala, Hemanth Udbhav, Swathi Bhemireddy, Ajay Nidadavolu, Sumesh Madhavan and Leela Venkatesh Kommuri
Director: Harinath Puli
Producer: Murali Ginjupalli, Naveen Parupalli
Music: John K. Joseph
Cinematographer: Revanth Sagar
Background score: Vishakh Muraleedharan
Rating: 2.5/5

MAA revokes suspension on Hema

Lately, there have been reports stating that the Movie Artists Association (MAA) revoked the suspension of actress Hema.

According to the latest update by the association, MAA has lifted the suspension from the actress.

"The Executive Committee of the Movie Artists Association (MAA) convened to discuss your (Hema) suspension. After careful deliberation, President Vishnu Manchu proposed that your suspension be lifted and the committee unanimously

agreed to proceed with his recommendation. I am glad to inform you that, effective immediately, your suspension is hereby revoked," read the statement by the association.

Bengaluru police had arrested Hema at a rave party on the outskirts of Bengaluru. Following this, Hema was banned from the Movie Artists Association due to allegations of drug consumption. But the actress denied taking drugs and urged the association not to take any decision considering the media reports. She did meet MAA president Manchu Vishnu and give a letter to cancel her suspension from MAA. She had also stated getting her tests done in Hyderabad's highest-quality laboratories and is ready to take the test again if anyone suggests any laboratory.

Ravi Teja undergoes surgery

Actor Ravi Teja had a successful surgery on his right hand and has been advised by doctors to rest for a minimum of six weeks, according to his PR team.

On Thursday, the actor underwent a successful surgery at Yashoda Hospital.

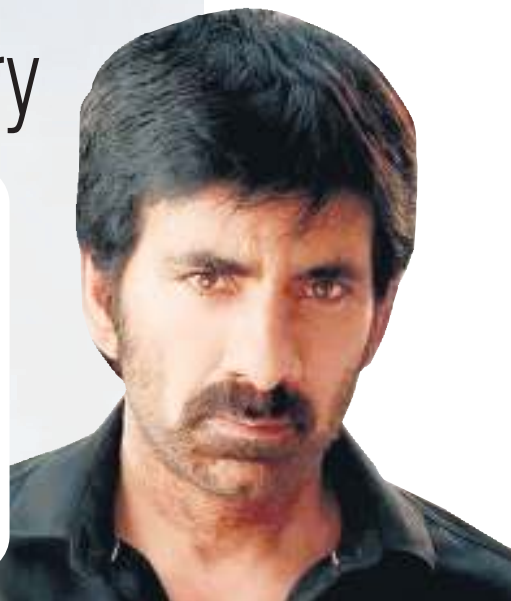
According to his team, the actor sustained a muscle tear in his right hand during the filming of *#RT75*. Despite the injury, he continued to shoot, which unfortunately led to further aggravation.

The actor's latest film, *Mr.*

Bachchan directed by Harish Shankar, failed to attract audiences in theaters.

Now, the actor is working on his 75th film, and the tentative title is *Kohinoor*. Director Bhanu Bhogavarapu, while Sreeleela is the female lead. The film is scheduled for a 2025 Sankranti release.

However, now that Ravi Teja has taken six weeks' rest, the release may be delayed a bit, according to a source. Irrespective of his film's fate at the box office, Ravi Teja is the one actor who continuously does films and has a few releases every year.



Kiran Abbavaram enters wedlock with Rahasya

Young actor Kiran Abbavaram and Rahasya Gorak tied the knot in a ceremony held in Coorg on Thursday evening, which was attended by their close family and friends. Both Kiran and Rahasya shared screen space in their first film *Raja Vaaru Rani Gaaru* and then fell in love with that film. They have been dating since the film; however, the couple never accepted their engagement, which was held on

March 14. On the film front, after her debut film *Raja Vaaru Rani Gaaru*, Rahasya stopped acting in films. The debut film is a small film but a big hit for the couple. Later Kiran Abbavaram acted in films like *SR Kalyana Mandapam*, *Sammathame*, *Nenu Meeku Bagaa Kavalsinavadini*, *Meter*, *Vinara Bhagyamu Vishnu Katha*. His upcoming film *Ka* is slated for a release.



Megha Akash gets engaged to Saai Vishnu

Megha Akash is a well-known actress in Telugu and Tamil cinema. She made her film debut with the Telugu film *Lie* opposite Nithiin in 2017. The actress went on to act in several other Telugu and Tamil films. Well, the actress has now

announced her engagement to her long-time boyfriend, Saai Vishnu. The actress shared their engagement photos on her social media accounts and says her wish came true.

"My wish came true. To love, laughter, and our happily ever after engagement to the love of my life," she says on her Instagram, sharing some of her photos from the ceremony. Though there were initially reports about her relationship with a businessman, she never confirmed it or commented anything on it. However, she has now finally announced her engagement to her boyfriend. The wedding may take place sometime soon. The actress is currently working on some projects both in Telugu and Tamil. She wants to complete these projects first and, later, decide whether she wants to continue in films or not. Meanwhile, on the work front, she is playing the female lead in a film titled *Sahakutumbanam*, which also stars senior actors Rajendra Prasad, Tulasi, Rajshri Nair, and Brahmanandam. She earlier played the female lead in some of the films like *Chal Mohan Ranga*, *Raja Raja Chora*, *Dear Megha*, *Manu Charitra* and *Ravanasura*.



Teja Sajja's Mirai poster unveiled on his birthday



After the fantasy film *Hanuman*, Teja Sajja has become the talk of the industry. The film which released in January, became a huge hit not only in Telugu but in other

languages too. Now, everyone is curious about Teja's next film titled *Mirai*. This is also a fantasy film and directed by Karthik Ghattamaneni.

The young actor celebrated his birthday on Friday. On the occasion, the makers of *Mirai* released a poster of Teja. In this film, he will be seen portraying the role of a Super Yodha and it is also touted to be an action-adventure film. TG Vishwa Prasad is producing this one under his banner of People Media Factory. In the poster, Teja Sajja is shown keeping himself from falling by gripping a sizzling iron rod, while items drop from above. The poster certainly hints that he is once again to play a superhero.

He has been taking time to come up with this film after the success of *Hanuman*, as he wanted to deliver quality with this one. He is working hard and putting in his best efforts for this one, say the makers. The film also stars Manoj Manchu is playing an important and crucial role in this one. When his poster was released sometime back, it got good responses from all over and generated interest in this film. The film is releasing in 8 languages on April 18, 2025 in 2D and 3D versions.

Avram Manchu's first look from Kannappa out on Janmashtami

The makers of *Kannappa* are following a promotional strategy of releasing first-look posters of prominent characters from the movie on Monday. This release is particularly special as it coincides with Krishna Janmashtami.

On this auspicious occasion, the first look of Vishnu Manchu's son, Avram Manchu, will be unveiled. Avram, who plays a significant role, is making his film debut with this movie. The film is more than just a cinematic venture; it represents the

convergence of three generations of the Manchu family's cinematic journey, featuring Mohan Babu, Vishnu Manchu and Avram Manchu. We need to wait for 3 more days to know about Avram's character and witness his appearance in the movie. *Kannappa* is the most ambitious project for Vishnu Manchu, who will be seen in the titular role. The expectations have skyrocketed after the stupendous response for the teaser. The movie will have a pan-India release in December.



