

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**  
 The pioneer  
 Congratulations to the Congress party and its advocates for securing bail for BRS MLC in the infamous liquor scam. This bail is a win for both BRS and Congress — BRS leader is out on bail & the Congressman gets to Rajya Sabha. Remarkable political acumen by KCR in supporting the candidate, who initially argued for the bail, to be nominated to Rajya Sabha unopposed by the ruling Congress. Congratulations to the partners in crime who wine & dine.  
 - Bandi Sanjay, MoS

**Modi-Putin discuss measures to further strengthen ties**  
 5

**'I DO NOT FEEL PRESSURED TO BE SHAKTI KAPOOR'S SON OR SHRADDHA'S BROTHER'**  
 9

**'To debate, audience not coming to theatres is WRONG'**  
 P11

**DON'T MISS...**

**TG aims to become India's...**

Emphasising that Telangana aims to become India's AI capital with plans for an AI City, integrating AI in governance, agriculture, and schools, Minister for Industries and IT, D Sridhar Babu, highlighted the government's goals at the Hyderabad Software Enterprises Association (HYSEA) meet at Marigold Hotel on Tuesday. He was the chief guest for the curtain-raiser of the upcoming First-Ever Global AI Summit by the State government scheduled for September 5 and 6 at the HICC Novotel...

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**India-Brazil strategic...**

The India-Brazil strategic partnership has "deepened and diversified" over the years and now spans a very wide range of domains, including defence, space, security, technology and people-to-people relations, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Tuesday. In his opening remarks at the 9th India-Brazil Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) in Delhi, Jaishankar congratulated the Latin American country for conducting the G20 meetings successfully. "I would like to reiterate..."

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**200 global players to attend Bharat...**

Over 200 global players are likely to showcase cutting-edge battery and charging infra technologies at the Bharat Battery Show in January 2025. Industry body India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA), in a statement, said it is organising the Bharat Battery Show at the second Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025. According to the statement, the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025 led by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry is set to be held on January 17-22, 2025, across three major venues -- Bharat...

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**Hopefully, we will break final...**

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur remained optimistic that India can grab their maiden global title in the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup, and said conditions in the UAE could work to their advantage. The International Cricket Council has recently shifted the showpiece, to be held between October 3 and 20, to the UAE from Bangladesh owing to the political unrest in the latter nation. "Whenever we play on this kind of stage (World Cup), we always want to do well. We have always done well in the past..."

-SPORTS



**Kavitha gets bail**

SC questions agencies over fairness of probe

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a relief to BRS leader K Kavitha, the Supreme Court on Tuesday granted her bail in corruption and money laundering cases linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam, while questioning the central agencies over the fairness of their probe and asking if they were free to "pick and choose" an accused.

The apex court said Kavitha's custody was no longer required as both the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the

Enforcement Directorate (ED) have completed their probe against her. The Bharat Rashtriya Samithi (BRS) lawmaker from Telangana has been in jail for over five months.

**Kavitha is directed to be released forthwith on bail... on furnishing bail bonds in the sum of Rs 10 lakh in each of the cases.**

A bench of Justices B R Gavai and K V Viswanathan noted since 493 witnesses were to be examined and 50,000 pages of documents were to be considered in the two cases, there was no likelihood of the trial being concluded in the near future.

**Those who put me in jail will pay the price: Kavitha**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS MLC Kavitha was released from Tihar Jail on Tuesday night at 9:12 pm, after spending nearly 165 days in custody.

As soon as she stepped out of the jail, she embraced her son, who was waiting for her, overcome with emotion. Following this, she hugged her husband Anil and brother



KTR, shedding tears of joy. During this emotional moment, Harish Rao also became deeply emotional.

Speaking to the media after her release, Kavitha asserted that being KCR's daughter, there is no question of committing any wrong-doing. "I was unnecessarily sent to jail, and that has only made me stronger," she stated.

**HYDRAA after homes in buffer zones now**

Alwal residents around Chinnarayuni Cheruvu get notices

DEEPIKA PASHAM deepikapasham2015@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD

Indicating official intent to raze all illegal structures, be they long-standing or recently built; residents of Alwal village, particularly those living near Chinnarayuni Cheruvu, have been issued notices by the Additional Collector (Local Bodies) of Medchal Malkajgiri District.

The notices demand the removal of alleged encroachments on the expanse of the water body, sparking alarm and widespread concerns among local people, including those who have been living there for more than 30 years.

The notices, distributed over the past 10 days, cite the Telangana Irrigation Act 1375, and state that the residents' homes are "illegal constructions within the buffer and Full Tank Level (FTL) areas of Chinnarayuni Cheruvu".

Most of the residents, however, dispute these claims.



Most of the residents, however, dispute these claims. They insist that their homes are legal and that they have been living in the place for decades.

**When notices come, I will demolish my building myself: MLC Patnam**

Stating that his house is not in the FTL or in buffer zone, MLC Patnam Mahender Reddy said that he will demolish his building by himself when he receives notices from the HYDRAA. He said that he will extend his full support to the HYDRAA as a responsible public representative.

Mahender Reddy said, "We will stand by CM Revanth Reddy's policy of conservation of ponds. KTR may not know that my small house in Kotwalguda is not in FTL. Anyone who encroaches will have to think and they have to surrender to HYDRAA". Speaking to the media on Tuesday, Mahender Reddy said that in Kotwalguda above Gandipet pond, he bought 14.14 acres of land in 1999. He said, "It is in the name of my son Rineesh. I am cultivating a mango plantation and paddy by taking patta land. According to Irrigation officials, I built the house according to the rules."

Continued on Page 5

**BRS wants Janwada farmhouse to be demolished**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

For all the debate around the Janwada farmhouse leased by KT Rama Rao, the BRS party wants it to be demolished. Highly placed sources said that the sentiment among the BRS leaders is for the farmhouse to go away, including that of KTR.

It is learnt that BRS expects to get political mileage from it. This move by KTR mirrors a strategy previously seen when Praja Vedika built by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's Amaravati residence was demolished by the YS Jagan government, sparking significant political attention.



However, for all the feelers sent by the Congress government, the question now is whether the government will take consistent action against him. It may be noted that KTR has publicly challenged the government to demolish his Janwada farmhouse if it is found to violate any norms.

On Tuesday, Irrigation officials have already inspected the property, which is leased by KTR, to assess whether it encroaches upon the Full Tank Level (FTL) of nearby water bodies.

**BAIL TO KAVITHA**  
**Bandi sees win-win for BRS and Cong**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar sees the bail granted on Tuesday to Bharat Rashtra Samithi MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha in the Delhi liquor scam case as a 'win-win' situation for BRS and the Congress.

Bandi Sanjay said "BRS

leader (Kalvakuntla Kavitha) is out on bail and the Congressman (Abhishek Manu Singvi) gets to Rajya Sabha". On Tuesday, Bandi Sanjay posted on his X account: "Congratulations to the Congress party and its advocates for securing bail for BRS MLC in the infamous liquor scam."

**'Casting aspersions on SC'**

KTR for contempt rap against Bandi

Bharat Rashtra Samithi working president KT Rama Rao has strongly condemned the comments made by BJP leader Bandi Sanjay, stating: "You're a Union Minister in charge of Home Affairs and casting aspersions on the Supreme Court! Highly unbecoming of your position." Reacting to Bandi Sanjay's post on 'X',

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**Singhvi unanimously elected as member of RS**



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress candidate Abhishek Manu Singhvi has been unanimously elected as member of the Rajya Sabha from Telangana.

For the Rajya Sabha by-poll, Abhishek Manu Singhvi had filed his nomination from the Congress; however, one Padmarajan filed his nomination as an independent.

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**10-day Praja Palana' from Sept 17**

TG to issue new ration cards, digital health cards

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has decided to hold 'Praja Palana' programme in the state for 10 days starting September 17, focused on issuing new ration cards and digital health cards to all eligible persons. Under a new policy, ration cards will be delinked from health cards, with the two cards being separately.

The Chief Minister asked officials to organize Praja Palana in all villages and wards across the state and collect details of every family during the 10-day program.

The Chief Minister held a review at the Secretariat on Tuesday. The meeting was attended by state Health Minister Damodara Raja



Narsimha, Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari, Principal Secretary of Health Department Dr. Christina Chongtoo, Principal Secretary of Municipal Department Dana Kishore and Principal Secretary to CM Seshadri.

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**Stone for Telangana Talli statue in Sectt today**

The foundation stone for the grand unveiling of the Telangana Talli statue will be laid on Wednesday at 11:00 am at Dr BR Ambedkar Secretariat. The event will be attended by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhathi Vikramarka, along with other ministers, MPs, MLAs, and MLCs. The unveiling of the Telangana Talli statue will take place at the same location in the Secretariat that was previously selected by the Chief Minister. As announced earlier by the Chief Minister, the official inauguration of the Telangana Talli statue is scheduled for December 9 this year.



**New Osmania Hospital in Goshamahal: CM**

32-acre Police Dept site to be transferred to Health Dept

NAVEENA GHANATE naveena.ghanate@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has directed the officials concerned to expedite the construction of the proposed new Osmania Hospital building in Goshamahal here. The proposed

32-acre site, currently under the control of the Police Department, presently includes the Police Stadium and the Police Sports Complex. The Chief Minister has instructed that this land be transferred immediately to the Medical and Health Department for the construction of the hospital.

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**TG to receive 200 MW solar energy**

Ministry of Coal takes initiative address TG power needs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Union Ministry of Coal has taken a significant step to address Telangana's future power needs, resulting in an agreement to supply 200 MW solar energy annually to the state. Neyveli Lignite Corporation will provide this energy as part of the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency's scheme involving Central Public Sector Units.

A 510 MW solar power plant is being set up by NLC in the Bibar region of Kutch district, Gujarat, with an investment of Rs. 1,214 crore. The project is near completion and power generation in the plant is expected to begin by June 2025.

Telangana is set to benefit great-



ly from this project, estimated at Rs. 2,000 crore in savings over the next 25 years as the power will be supplied at a rate of Rs. 2.57/kWh. This project aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's green energy goals, contributing significantly to Telangana's energy needs.

The solar panels and related equipment for this project will be sourced from Telangana, promoting local manufacturing sector and providing both direct and indirect employment opportunities.

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**CBI seeks polygraph test of Kolkata police ASI**



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad is now the 3rd highest paying city in India for top tech jobs, according to TeamLease Digital's report.

As the tech sector in India rapidly evolves, it is crucial to understand talent demand, skill preferences, and salary trends. The report, Digital Skills & Salary Primer for Financial year 2025, offers insights into these aspects, highlighting trends in IT products & services, global capability centers (GCCs), and non-tech industries. The report shows Hyderabad is



overtaking cities like Delhi and Mumbai in tech salaries. Key roles in Hyderabad such as Product Management, Data Science, and Data Engineering offer competitive

salaries, with significant year-on-year increases. Like, Product Managers earn about Rs.21.1 LPA, while Data Scientists make Rs.16.1 LPA.

India's tech market, valued at 254 billion dollars in Financial-year 2024, is growing with major investments in AI, ML, and blockchain. However, there is a significant skills gap, with only 2.5% of engineers skilled in AI. To address this, 86% of businesses are re-skilling their IT workforce.

TeamLease Digital's report also reveals that India's tech industry will grow to 350 billion dollars by 2025, driven by GCCs and cloud investments. Hyderabad, with its strong infrastructure and skilled talent, is emerging as a key player in this growth.

# Will 'buffer zone' operations land Revanth in trouble spot?

The Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Monitoring Agency (HYDRA), recently created under the Revanth Reddy-led Congress government in Telangana, has begun razing in right earnest structures built illegally on full tank level (FTL) or buffer zones of innumerable lakes and tanks across the twin cities and elsewhere. One wonders whether the drive will be taken to its logical conclusion by demolishing all such constructions, regardless of their owners' political affiliations, celebrity status, or any other form of clout.

Most of the tanks and lakes in question were constructed centuries ago, mainly to meet drinking water needs and for irrigation purposes. Over the years, many brazen encroachments on these water bodies have remained uncleared or even unnoticed because of the big wigs involved. Successive governments have ignored these encroachments on lakes, mainly in pursuit of vote bank politics.

The monsoon period, year after year, sees inundation or submergence of many of the colonies that have sprung up in lake areas, with the official machinery hardly in a position to help them during an emergency. After all, it is the same official machinery that had granted permissions for

**Most of the tanks and lakes in question were constructed centuries ago, mainly to meet drinking water needs and for irrigation purposes. Over the years, many brazen encroachments on these water bodies have remained uncleared or even unnoticed because of the big wigs involved.**

constructing houses inside the buffer zones! Politics related to caste, religion and region often come into play in these areas with far-reaching consequences.

The aborted razing of the N-Convention centre owned by film star Akkineni Nagarjuna, allegedly built in violation of rules, has sent

shock waves to many influential persons. This daring act of the authorities has unnerved political and other influential circles so much so that the city is now being referred to as 'HYDRAA'bad. The N-Convention had invited the wrath of Telangana statehood protagonists, particularly during 2009-14, in



M D RATNA KUMAR  
Senior Journalist

the combined state of Andhra Pradesh. The leader who had then been spearheading the T-stir, BRS chief K. Chandrasekhar Rao, spit fire at Nagarjuna for allegedly encroaching on the tank con-

cerned in the Madhapur area of Hyderabad. Taking advantage of the Andhra roots of Nagarjuna, KCR had declared that the Telangana government to be formed by his party would demolish the N-Convention centre.

Interestingly, Nagarjuna thereafter tried to get his construction regularized under the Building Regulation Scheme (BRS). KCR too remained noticeably silent on the illegal structure, which reportedly fetches Rs 5 lakh per day as rent. Previously, Revant too, as TDP legislator, had organised his daughter's marriage in the same convention centre. KCR perhaps chose to go soft on Nagarjuna, after the actor had declared that T-people should be given chance to

have their own state. After all this, it is now advantage Revanth when it comes to HYDRAA's action on N-convention.

Likewise, many more illegal structures owned by leaders of various political parties can be seen everywhere in Hyderabad. This allegedly includes those owned by leaders of the Majlis-e-Ittehadul-Muslimeen. Sensing danger for his college, MIM floor leader in T-Assembly Akbaruddin Owaisi emotionally asked the government to shoot him, instead of demolishing his college. Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi too expressed his displeasure over the working style of HYDRAA. He advised HYDRAA to remove the Necklace Road as "it is with-

in FTL of the Hussain Sagar lake".

Political mileage apart, HYDRAA's operations might brew dissidence against Revant Reddy within the Congress. Presently, the Revant government is in a comfortable position, having attracted 10 legislators from BRS. Besides, Revant enjoys the confidence of the party's high command. Still, Revant cannot afford to antagonise the Majlis.

If Revant can convince the Congress' high command on the much-needed 'impartiality' in taking HYDRAA's operations further, there will be political mileage for Revant as well as the Congress. Otherwise, HYDRAA's drive could land Revant in trouble spot.

## Bail expected as part of BRS' deal with BJP: Cong

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Alleging that BRS MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha's bail was expected by everyone as Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy a week ago had said that Kavitha would get bail as part of the BRS' deal with the BJP, Telangana Congress leaders commented that Kavitha has got bail and only thing left is the merger of the BRS with the BJP.

Speaking to the media on Tuesday, Transport Minister Ponnampati Prabhakar alleged that the BJP and the BRS colluded with each other and brought bail for Kavitha. BRS party mortgaged Telangana to

the BJP for its political interests, Prabhakar alleged, saying that in the same manner, KCR sought refuge in the BJP to free his daughter who has been in jail for 160 days. This bail came because of KCR's friendship of 10 years. BRS voted to avoid the Congress. So, the BRS didn't get deposit in many seats. That is why the non-existent BJP got 8 seats in Telangana, he added. Alleging that the BRS and the BJP tried to weaken the Congress and as part of it, TPCC working president B Mahesh Kumar Goud said that the BRS colluded with the BJP in the parliamentary elections and the BRS became loyal to

the BJP. KTR and Harish Rao fell on the feet of the BJP leaders and got bail for Kavitha. The process of merger of the BRS with the BJP has started, he said. TPCC Media

Committee chairman Sama Rammohan Reddy said that CM Revanth Reddy, a week ago, had said that Kavitha would get bail as part of the BRS' deal with the BJP.



BRS celebrates Kavitha getting bail  
PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS working president KT Rama Rao (KTR) expressed relief and gratitude for the Supreme Court's decision. Taking to social media X, KTR stated, "Thank you, Supreme Court. Relieved. Justice prevailed." His brief message underscored the sentiment of vindication felt across the party ranks.

Former Minister Singireddy Niranjan Reddy also expressed satisfaction over the Supreme Court's decision, calling it a moral victory. He criticised the political motives behind the case, stating, "Without any substantial evidence, investigative agencies had been pursuing this case purely out of political vendetta."

## Won't tolerate irregularities in weights and measures: Uttam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies, Uttam Kumar Reddy, warned that there would be no leniency for those involved in irregularities in weights and measures. He emphasised that any violation of consumer rights under the guise of the Ease of Doing Business (EODB) Act would be met with strict action.

On Tuesday afternoon, Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy chaired a review meeting of the Weights and Measures Department at the BR



Controller Rajeshwar and Assistant Commissioners from across the State. During the meeting, the Minister instructed officials to raise awareness among consumers about the Weights and Measures Department and to conduct frequent inspections to ensure that people are not deceived. He also directed the officials to increase vigilance on petrol pumps and weighing machines to prevent fraud. Furthermore, he called for regular district-wise reviews and announced steps to fill the vacancies in the department.

Controller Rajeshwar and Assistant Commissioners from across the State.

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## Excise Case: Money used as per wishes of Kejriwal: CBI



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Tuesday claimed before a Delhi court that the money generated from the excise "scam" was spent according to the wishes of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who promised Rs 90 lakh to each candidate of his party in the 2022 Goa assembly elections.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) made the submission before Special Judge Kaveri Baweja, who extended the judicial custody of Kejriwal in the case of

alleged corruption till September 3. The CBI urged the court to take cognisance of a charge sheet that it has filed against Kejriwal and others. "Money has been spent according to the wishes of Kejriwal...the entire money was sent in the funds of AAP. He had promised Rs 90 lakh to be given to each candidate of each constituency and there are 40 constituencies in Goa," the CBI told the court, which reserved the order on whether to take cognisance of the charge sheet for September 3.

## Justice Hema Committee Report Fallout: Mohanlal, others resign from actors association amid uproar

PNS ■ KOCHI

Top actor Mohanlal and other office-bearers of an influential cine artists' association in Kerala resigned en masse on Tuesday amidst an uproar over the sexual abuse allegations made against a number of male professionals by women actors over the past few days.



Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA) issued a press statement announcing the mass resignation of its office-bearers, including president Mohanlal. The veteran actor, in his capacity as president, reportedly convened an online meeting of its members to discuss the unprecedented dilemma being faced by the association before taking the decision about the resignation of the executive panel members.

AMMA said that the current

administrative panel has resigned as such, taking moral responsibility for the allegations. Following the release of the Justice Hema Committee report, some office-bearers of the AMMA, including actor Siddique who quit as its general secretary, had to face sexual allegations in the social, visual, and print media.

And in view of that, the present executive panel was resigning, taking moral responsibility, it explained.

**TODAY ALMANAC**

Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha  
Tithi: Dashami: Aug 28 01:33 AM to Aug 29 01:19 AM  
Ekadashi: Aug 29 01:19 AM to Aug 30 01:37 AM

Nakshatram: Mrigashirsha: Aug 27 03:38 PM to Aug 28 03:53 PM  
Ardra: Aug 28 03:53 PM to Aug 29 04:39 PM

Rahukalam: 12:17 PM to 1:50 PM  
Yamagandam: 7:38 AM to 9:11 AM

Variyam: 12:33 AM to 02:12 AM  
Gulika: 10:44 AM to 12:17 PM  
Amritakalam: 06:59 AM to 08:36 AM  
Abhijit Muhurtham: Nil

**HYDERABAD WEATHER**

Forecast: Scattered Showers  
Temp: 30°C  
Humidity: 72%  
Sunrise: 6:01 AM  
Sunset: 6:33 PM  
Updated: August 27, 2024 5:00 PM

## Women's rights groups demand justice amidst rising sexual violence

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As a series of rape cases shock the nation, women's rights groups from across the country on Tuesday sought expeditious investigation and action, and demanded an end to sex crimes and gender-based violence.



The All India Dalit Mahila Adhikar Manch (AIDMAM), All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA), All India Mahila Samskritik Sanghathan (AIMSS), All India Progressive Women's Association (AIPWA), Act Now for Harmony and Democracy (ANHAD), All India Feminist Alliance (ALIFA), All India Lawyers

Association for Justice (AILA) are among the 35 organisations who have made the appeal.

The outcry comes in the wake of shocking incidents of sexual violence from various parts of the country including Kolkata, Manipur, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, with the statement saying they are a

grim reminder of the ongoing threat to women's safety in India.

The immediate catalyst for this voice of protest is the alleged rape and murder of a 31-year-old medical practitioner at the RG Kar Hospital and Medical College in Kolkata. The case has drawn widespread condemnation, not only for the brutality of

the crime but also for the subsequent "cover-up" by the institution and authorities, the statement said, criticising the response of elected representatives and government officials, accusing them of politicising these tragedies rather than ensuring justice.

"We condemn the actions and inactions of the West Bengal government led by Mamata Banerjee for trying to obfuscate the issue as a suicide case and a political conspiracy, transferring Sandip Ghosh, Principal of the RG Kar Hospital as Principal of the Calcutta National Medical College Hospital, and only rescinding the order under great public pressure," the statement said.

## Miscreants vandalise Bholakshmi idol

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Some unidentified assailants vandalised the idol of Goddess Bholakshmi in the temple located in Raghapuram in Santosh Nagar police station limits of Hyderabad on Monday night.

The incident has sparked significant public anger, with a crowd gathering there. Police rushed to the spot immediately and arrested two persons and took the situation under control.

Speaking to The Pioneer, Kanti Lal Patil, DCP South East, Hyderabad said, "This incident occurred on Monday night between 11.30 pm and 12 am under the Santosh Nagar police station limits. One person entered the temple and vandalised the idol while another person waited outside the temple. They planned to flee from the spot immediately."

## Initiate action against KCR family: Jagga

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC working president T Jagga Reddy alleged that the BRS delivered the judgement three days before that supposed to be delivered by the Judge.

Kavitha got bail as part of the pact between the BJP government and the BRS party, Jagga Reddy pointed out, saying that KCR, KTR and Harish Rao got information about bail three days before the Judge delivered bail verdict on Tuesday. Jagga Reddy stated that the Congress is not finding fault with the Judge but the Congress argument is that how BRS knew three days before that Kavitha will get bail. Jagga Reddy appealed to the Judiciary that it should take action against KCR's fam-

ily for making hungama three days before saying that Kavitha will definitely get bail.

Speaking to the media at Gandhi Bhavan on Tuesday, Jagga Reddy alleged that BJP strategy is that it will make BRS merge with it as the Congress is in power in Telangana. He said that the BRS played a dummy role in the Lok Sabha elections and made people cast their votes for BJP as part of Kavitha's bail condition.

Jagga Reddy said, "BJP and BRS strategy is to weaken the Congress politically in Telangana as part of their pact. The BJP and the BRS are going to contest the next elections in alliance. However, they will resort to campaign that BRS will merge with the BJP now."

## Ministers review measures to ensure smooth Ganesh Utsav

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Ministers Ponnampati Prabhakar and Sridhar Babu have instructed officials to take all necessary measures to ensure a smooth celebration of the upcoming Ganesh Utsav in Hyderabad. During a preparatory meeting held at MCRHRD, chaired by Ponnampati Prabhakar, the importance of coordinating efforts across various departments

was emphasised. The ministers provided guidelines to various departmental officials for the successful coordination of the festival, which is scheduled to be held from September 7 to 17.

Given the large influx of devotees from within and outside the State, Ponnampati Prabhakar stressed the need for meticulous planning and coordination among all departments. He directed officials to

ensure that the 11-day festival proceeds without any disruptions and that any issues related to social media or law and order are addressed promptly and strictly.

"We have successfully celebrated Ramzan, Moharram and Bonalu in the past and Ganesh Utsav should be conducted just as peacefully without any hindrances," Prabhakar stated.

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 of 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. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.

**CITY EVENTS**

**Femina Miss India  
Telangana 2024**

Prakruthi Kambam (A Model, actor, dancer, choreographer, To share her struggle, Femina Miss India journey, her illustrious career today is nothing short of inspiring.

**Venue**

Venue: OPT Board Room, First Floor, FTCCI, Red Hills, Hyderabad  
Wednesday, August 28  
11.30 am to 1.30 pm

**Equal Opportunity  
Job Fair**

40m prominent companies offering inclusive job opportunities across sectors.

Shrawan Kumar Gone, COO, AP and Telangana, K Raheja Corp, A Rajendar, Assistant Director, DEPwDs, SC & TGP, will be present.

**Venue**

12th floor, Building No. 9, Mindspace, Madhapur, Hyderabad.  
August 28, 11 am to 12 noon.

**The InnovAtion Gala  
Awards 2024**

Hosted by MATH. This premier event celebrates the latest breakthroughs in AI and ML and sets the stage for the Global AI Innovation Summit 2024. The event will bring together over 100 Global Capability Centers (GCCs), including major names like NVIDIA, Bristol Myers Squibb, Advance Auto Parts, DBS Bank, and First American.

**Venue**

T-Hub, Hyderabad, August 29, 2024

**Monopoly Moves**

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

**Venue**

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

**Journey of Rhythms**

Presented by Shivansh and Tatvaa Arts

**Venue**

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

**Control room to monitor seasonal fevers**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

On the directives of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Minister for Medical, Health and Family Welfare, Damodar Rajanarasimha chaired a high-level review meeting at the Secretariat on the control of dengue and seasonal fevers across the State. During the meeting, the Minister issued several directives to senior officials of the State Medical and Health Department. He instructed the establishment of a control room under the supervision of the State Director of Public Health to monitor and manage seasonal diseases. Furthermore, Minister Rajanarasimha emphasised the need for a coordinated special drive, involving local representatives and officials from relevant departments, to curb the spread of these diseases.



# City Pioneer



HYDERABAD WEDNESDAY | AUGUST 28, 2024

03

GLOBAL AI SUMMIT 2024 TO BE ON SEPT 5, 6

## TG aims to become India's AI Capital

**SAMUEL JOSHUA**  
samueljoshua@gmail.com  
■ HYDERABAD

Emphasising that Telangana aims to become India's AI capital with plans for an AI City, integrating AI in governance, agriculture, and schools, Minister for Industries and IT, D Sridhar Babu, highlighted the government's goals at the Hyderabad Software Enterprises Association (HYSEA) meet at Marigold Hotel on Tuesday. He was the chief guest for the curtain-raiser of the upcoming First-Ever Global AI Summit by the State government scheduled for September 5 and 6 at the HICC Novotel.

Addressing the media, Sridhar Babu stated that the government's intention, conviction and commitment are clear in delivering on promises. He focused on the commitment for the State's growth, tracing back Telangana's IT journey from the establishment of the first software park in 1992. He noted the State's resilience, with continued policy support driving the IT sector's success, despite changing governments.

Sridhar babu expressed optimism about the IT sector's

growth, noting that despite three decades of change, the industry has consistently advanced, especially between 2004 and 2014, thereafter rapidly till 2023. The continuation of supportive policies has ensured a strong future, regardless of changing governments. He highlighted plans to expand Global Capability Centres (GCCs) across various sectors, including hospitality, with 5 and 7 star hotels set to sign agreements next month. The Minister also mentioned that during the recent US visit, the administration has successfully convinced some to establish resource centres for the defence sector.

Minister Sridhar Babu emphasised the rapid changes in technology, particularly with disruptive technologies like AI. Telangana is currently ranked No. 2 in software exports, saying that this is an opportunity to further advance with plans for AI City in Mucherla, where 200 acres has been sanctioned. Collaboration with IIT Hyderabad, a Skill University is planned to upskill workers and reduce job loss fears, as it is real in today's AI world.

Sridhar Babu concluded that



Minister D Sridhar Babu, along with HYSEA president Prashant Nandella at a meeting in Hyderabad on Tuesday

the upcoming Global AI Summit, with over 2,000 registrants, aims to raise awareness and promote AI adoption. He mentioned that a clearer picture of the AI City plans will emerge in October. Students will be a major focus at the Global AI Summit, with master classes and technology sessions by Meta and Microsoft. The summit will also

feature discussions on AI's impact on manufacturing, with Mahindra, along with other industry leaders, participating in CEOs from Jaguar and the two-day event.

- Plans afoot for AI City in Mucherla, where 200 acres has been sanctioned.
- A Skill University is planned to upskill workers and reduce job loss fears, in collaboration with IIT Hyderabad

## ISB Online ties up with CNLU to transform legal education

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Indian School of Business (ISB) Online and Chanakya National Law University (CNLU) have entered a strategic partnership to revolutionise legal education with the introduction of a unique credit-based programme on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) on Tuesday. The collaboration aims to elevate academic offerings and set new industry standards, with a focus on developing accomplished future legal professionals.

This programme from ISB Online will integrate advanced interpersonal and intrapersonal skills into CNLU's curriculum, marking a transformative shift in legal education. During the 2024-25 academic session, CNLU will offer a two-credit SEL programme as an elective, designed to enhance students' professional skills and career readiness. This forward-thinking programme will cover essential areas such as emotional intelligence, stress management, leadership and teamwork.

Sujatha Kumaraswamy, Executive Director of Executive Education and Digital Learning at ISB, said, "The partnership with CNLU has the potential to enhance and enrich the future of legal education. Our approach



enriches the traditional curriculum by integrating valuable multi-disciplinary knowledge, ultimately preparing students to navigate the complexities of their future careers and emerge as well-rounded professionals."

Prof. Faizan Mustafa, the Vice-Chancellor of CNLU, emphasised, "This partnership with ISB Online is a major leap forward in our commitment to providing holistic education. This programme is aligned with our vision of nurturing future leaders who are empathetic, resilient and ready to take on the world."

This innovative programme is a curated learning journey of online courses delivered by distinguished faculty; integrating cutting-edge theory with practical, real-world applications.



Kachiguda Police hand over the rescued baby to her mother

## One-year baby rescued by Kacheguda Police

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Kacheguda Police have rescued a one-year-old baby, who was kidnapped by a woman here in the wee hours of Tuesday.

The baby girl was kidnapped by an unknown offender from Kacheguda railway station early Tuesday. A complaint has been lodged by the infant's grandmother, upon which Kacheguda Police took up investigation by registering a kidnap case.

Police formed six special teams to investigate the case and arrested the kidnapper Dasari Manjula by rescuing the kidnapped baby near Dabeerpura railway station within a span of 12 hours.

The arrested Manjula is a ragpicker and separated from her husband due to matrimonial issues and used to come to Hyderabad.

Manjula came to Kacheguda railway station two months back and stayed on the footpath

along with the complainant's daughter named Mamatha. During this period, Mamata quarrelled with her and bet her mercifully and caused injuries and robbed Rs 1500 from her. Keeping the grudge in mind, Manjula, along with her sister's husband Munna, came to Kacheguda railway station and kidnapped the daughter of Mamatha, while she was sleeping along with Munna and went to Osmania General Hospital area in an auto and disappeared from there to Dabeerpura railway station with an intent to take her to Kamareddy to cause harm to the child.

All the six special teams checked about 50 to 60 CCTV footage on the route from Kacheguda railway station to Dabeerpura railway station, nabbed the accused woman and rescued the kidnapped girl within 12 hours of the crime.

## THERE IS A HUGE DEMAND FOR IDOLS: IDOL MAKERS

# Dhoolpet artisans brace up for Ganesh Chaturthi

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■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad is getting ready for the Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations, but the fervour has already started at Dhoolpet. This area is famous for the Ganesh idols for the last so many years. Balapur Ganesh idol and other prominent Ganesh idols would be supplied from here.

A team of 20 artists led by Dhulpet-based artist Lakshminarayana Singh are shaping the 18-feet tall Balapur Ganesh idol with moving ears and eyes. Lord Ganesh sits on a five-headed snake (Sesha Nagu), and that snake would move on the crown.

"For the first time, the villagers of Balapur installed the idol in front of the gram panchayat office in 1980. Then onwards, the tradition is continuing there," he added.

A 10-feet tall Ganesh idol of Balapur, which was installed for the first time was sold by artist Lakshminarayana of Dhoolpet for Rs 4,400. At present the 18-feet Balapur Ganesh idol costs between Rs 2.20 lakh and Rs 4 lakh.

Along with the Balapur Ganesh, there are



many types of idols in the making here. An artist said that there is a huge demand for the Ramlala kind of Ganesh idol in the city. For that kind of idol, people are coming here from across the country.

An artist named Ramprasad said that people are coming from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh to Dhoolpet for Ganesh idols.

A customer named Bisanna from Raichur said that he has been coming to Dhoolpet for the past 10 years for Ganesh idols. "We could get many styles of Ganesh idols here. So, I always choose to come here for a big Ganesh idol."

Though artists are still working on preparing Ganesh idols before September 7, they are sure that they will complete all the works before Ganesh Chaturthi arrives.

## AIG removes a complex brain tumor

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The neurosurgical team at AIG Hospitals removed a complex brain tumor from a 54-year-old female patient using a new approach that doesn't require any cut or opening in the skull of the patient.

It is known as Endoscopic lateral Trans orbital approach. It is a way for neurosurgeons to reach and treat certain brain areas through a small, carefully made path around the eye using a neuro-endoscope.

The 54-year-old female patient had complained of right-sided visual blurring and headaches for the last six months and was treated as viral encephalitis with no improvement.

As her condition worsened, she came to AIG and on evaluation it was found that she is suffering from sphenoidal cavernous meningioma (SOM), a benign tumor that forms in the region where the sphenoid bone (a bone located at the base of the skull,

behind the eyes), the eye socket, and the cavernous sinus (a large vein located at the base of the skull) meet, said the release from AIG.

"Upon multiple discussions, we found that the case is appropriate for a new approach where we will be able to do the excision of the brain tumor without leaving any observable mark on the patient's face or skull." Dr Abhirama Chandra Gabbita, Senior Consultant Neurosurgeon, AIG Hospitals, said.

## POSH to address sexual harassment in workplaces



Kothakota Sreenivasa Reddy, Commissioner of Police, Hyderabad city, extending support to the POSH workshop on Tuesday

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad City Security Council (HCSC) has initiated a series of Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) workshops at FTCCI, Red Hills on Tuesday, to address sexual harassment in workplaces and communities. The inaugural session focuses on educating Internal Committee members from various organisations about the POSH Act, 2013. The primary objective of this programme is to bridge the knowledge gap surrounding the Act and empower organisations to implement it effectively.

The POSH Act, which mandates the formation of Internal Committees in all organisations, is crucial for ensur-

ing a safe and secure environment for employees, particularly women. However, despite this legal mandate, there is still a need for greater awareness and understanding of the Act's provisions among companies.

The workshop series is designed to address these gaps by offering comprehensive training that includes legal aspects, psychological insights into the behavior of perpetrators and a better understanding of the vulnerabilities faced by victims. Shikha Goel, Director General of Women Safety, who has been a driving force behind initiatives like the Sahas Portal and SHE Teams, has been instrumental in organising this workshop and ensuring that it addresses key areas of concern.

## Steps for Ganesh fest discussed

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chandra Mohan, Deputy Commissioner of Police, South West Zone, has conducted a joint coordination meeting at Empire Convention on Tuesday to discuss the preparatory works in view of the forthcoming Ganesh festival.

Officials of the traffic wing, fire department, RTA, GHMC, R&B, HWS&SB, TGPDCI attended the meeting.



G Chandra Mohan, Deputy Commissioner of Police, South West Zone, conducting a coordination meeting at Empire Convention on Tuesday

## 63,000 SCR staff to benefit from UPS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

P Kishore Babu, Principal Chief Personnel Officer, South Central Railway, stated that the approved Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) for Central and State government employees will benefit around 63,000 SCR employees during a press meet at Rail Nilayam, Secunderabad on Tuesday. S Vivekananda, Principal Financial Advisor, SCR, along with other senior railway officials were present.

He stated that the UPS can be opted by all the Central government employees who are the subscribers of the New Pension scheme. As part of it, 63,000 employees working in SCR will be benefited, which is about 75 per cent of the total employees in the zone.

He also stated that the scheme will come into effect from April 1, 2025 and has five major benefits i.e., Assured Pension, Assured Family Pension, Assured minimum

pension, Inflation Indexation and lump-sum payment at superannuation in addition to gratuity.

The benefits of UPS are 50 per cent of the average basic pay drawn over the last 12 months prior to superannuation would be considered for a minimum qualifying service of 25 years. Proportionate for lesser service periods up to a minimum of 10 years of service. In the case of Assured Family Pension - 60 per cent of

pension of the employee, the Assured Minimum Pension is Rs 10,000 per month on superannuation after minimum 10 years of service. Dearness Relief will be based on All India Consumer Price Index (AICPI).

Other benefits are lump-sum payment at superannuation in addition to gratuity 1/10th of monthly emolument (pay + DA). Existing as well as future employees will have an option of joining NPS or UPS.



## Collector's daughter attends govt school

PNS ■ ASIFABAD

Collector Venkatesh Dhotre's daughter, has been admitted to the Sisuvihar established by the Anganwadi centre at Markandeya colony near the Collectorate. The Sisuvihar has been established as part of the Mission Sakti programme for the benefit of children of the government employees.

Collector on Tuesday visited the Sisuvihar, where children of government employees as well as others aged between 1 and 5 are being taken care of.

He said that the Sisuvihar provides nutritious food to children like eggs and helps the toddler learn. He said he is happy to note that his daughter is a student of Sisuvihar.

## MP hails SC for granting bail to Kavita

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

BRS Rajya Sabha member Vaddiraju Ravichandras welcomed the Supreme Court granting bail to Kalwakuntla Kavita, the main accused in Delhi liquor scam, and said that the SC gave at last relief to her after languishing in jail for nearly 168 days in ED and CBI cases.

Addressing media on Tuesday soon after the apex court granting bail to Kavita, the MP said that it was painful to note that Kavita was lodged in jail for 168 days though she is innocent.

He alleged that the Enforcement Directorate foisted a case on her. She was not at all involved in the liquor scam.

The Central agencies could not secure any documentary evidence to prove her involvement in the scam.

The apex court found fault with the agency for treating a people's representative on a par with other ordinary convicts, he alleged. He said that there was no substance in the case.

He said that truth would prevail ultimately.

## DEMAND WAIVER OF LOANS WITHOUT STRINGS

# Farmers' bodies stage protest at Collectorate

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Farmers' associations staged a massive protest in front of the Collectorate here on Tuesday demanding that the State government implement a Rs 2 lakh crop loan waiver at one go and without any strings attached to it.

Telangana Rythu Sangham and Telangana Rashtra Rythu Sangham led the protest on a massive scale.

Telangana Rashtra Rythu Sangham district secretary Kondaparti Govinda Rao and Telangana Rythu Sangham district secretary Bonthu Rambabu spoke at the meeting held on the occasion.

Telangana Rythu Sangham State unit president Potineni Sudarsan Rao and Telangana Rashtra Rythu Sangham State unit president Bhagam Hemant Rao found fault with the conditions incorporated in the GO No. 567 released by the State government. These conditions crippled the loan waiver scheme to some extent, he said.

The state government declared that it had credited Rs 17,933 crore in the bank accounts of 22 lakh farmers, he said, pointing out that the congress promised that it would waive the crop loan up to Rs 2 lakh at one go at the time of the elections. However, at least 40% of the farmers could not get loan waiver benefits.

In Khammam district alone, 1,15,343 farmers benefited under the loan waiver in all three phases against the total number of 3.17 lakh farmers. In Khammam district, at least 2.55 lakh farmers have

## Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao addresses farmers and assures them of all help



Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao interacting with protesting farmers at the Collectorate in Khammam on Tuesday

been eagerly waiting to derive benefits under the loan waiver.

When the protest was underway, Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao was in the Collectorate. He told the farmers that the loan waiver was not implemented for the past 10 years. The CAG found fault with the loan waiver in its report. Therefore, the

state government has been taking all precautions to avoid mistakes pointed out by the CAG.

The Minister said that the agriculture officials would visit the farmers' houses and report the facts. The state Cabinet would discuss the issue of the farmers whose total borrowings crossed Rs 2 lakh. CPM district secretary N

Nageswara Rao, CPI district secretary Potu Prasad, Telangana RythuSangham district president Madineni Ramesh, secretary Bontu Rambabu, Telangana Rashtra RythuSangham district president Dondapati Ramesh, secretary KondapartiGovinda Rao and other leaders took part in the protest programme.

## Retailers distribute vegetables free to people after a row between traders

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI

A row between wholesale traders of vegetables and retail traders has led to unexpected good fortune for common people. The retail traders as a mark of protest against the wholesale traders disubuted vegetables free to people. Tonnes of vegetables have been distributed to people as part of the protest when the prices of vegetables are skyrocketing and selling at Rs 80 a kg.

The incident took place at the district vegetable market here on Tuesday. According to traders, there is an ongoing row for long between wholesale traders and retail traders of vegetables.

The row between wholesale and retail traders has erupted over the former selling vegetable in retail also.

Directing their ire at the wholesale traders, the retailers distributed vegetables free of cost among the people. On learning about it, the local people viewed with one another to



Retailers distributing vegetables to people free in Peddapalli on Tuesday

get the vegetables free of cost.

The retailers did not relent and distributed vegetables free of cost among the people.

Commenting on the incident, retail traders' association president Ravinder alleged that the wholesale traders, in violation of the rules, have been selling vegetables in quantities of half-a-kg and quarter kg, causing loss to the retailers.

He said that the issue

entered the portals of police stations several times, but the wholesale traders were in no mood to relent. To express their anguish, vegetables were distributed free of cost among the people. He claimed to have distributed vegetables worth Rs 30,000 to Rs 40,000 on Tuesday. Till their problem is resolved, the vegetables will be distributed free of cost, he said.

## Minister Ponguleti condoles death of municipal councillor's father

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy toured Khammam district. As part of his tour, he visited the bereaved family of municipal councillor Puna who lives in Medarabasti of Kothagudem municipal to console her following her father's death.

He also visited the family of Seetala Ramasangam, in Allipuram Kothagudem area of the city, who passed away recently.

The minister conveyed his profound condolences to the bereaved family members. He visited Venigalla Nageswara Rao who was injured in a road accident and enquired about his health.

## NALGONDA HOSPITAL

# Doctors accused of laxity on warpath

DEEPIKA PASHAM ■ NALGONDA

Amid ongoing protests by doctors working in government hospitals in Telangana over inadequate facilities, a group of doctors at Nalgonda Government Hospital are fighting a different battle—defending their integrity after being blamed for incidents that occurred while they were on duty.

Over the past week, the Gynaecology Department at Nalgonda Government Hospital has faced scrutiny after a series of incidents, including one in which a pregnant woman gave birth on a chair in hospital. The incident attracted public attention after

the woman's relatives shared pictures on social media, which were quickly picked up by news outlets.

In response, District Additional Collector (Local Bodies) T Purnachander issued show-cause notice to four staff nurses and the duty doctor, accusing them of negligence.

The doctors, however, argued that they were not given a chance to present their side of the story before the notices were issued. Dr Nikitha, an Assistant Professor in the Gynaecology Department, spoke to The Pioneer, explaining the circumstances of the incident. "The incident happened after midnight on August 22. The woman was asked to wait outside due to



limited space, as we only have four beds in labour ward and had already handled five to six deliveries. While she waited, she walked to the washroom and ended up delivering on a chair. There was no negligence on our part. We are doing our best with the limited resources avail-

able," she said. In protest against the show-cause notices, seven gynaecologists from the hospital went on mass leave. After a late-night discussion with the Collector on Monday, the doctors agreed to return to work, and the notices were with-

drawn. Dr Abdul, President of the Junior Doctors Association in Nalgonda, highlighted the chronic staffing shortages at the hospital. "Our Gynaecology Department should have 24 doctors, but we only have 10, including five Assistant Professors, one Associate Professor, one professor, and three senior residents. We have repeatedly brought these issues to the Collector's attention, but no action has been taken. It's unfair to blame doctors who are doing their jobs under such challenging conditions," he stated.

The Pioneer tried to contact Nalgonda Collector C Narayana Reddy for comment, but there is no response.



Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar addressing farmers at Timmapur railway station in district on Tuesday

## MLA assures farmers of loan waiver benefit

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar has reaffirmed the Congress government's commitment to addressing loan waiver issue.

During a recent meeting with local farmers, he emphasised that the government has taken a clear stance on the issue and that specific instructions have been given to bankers to ensure that all eligible farmers secure loan waiver benefit.

The meeting, held at the farmer's platform near Timmapur railway station under Kothur mandal, Shankar, along with

Agriculture Assistant Director Rajaratnam, Kothur Mandal Agriculture Officer Gopal, and several Congress leaders from the region, participated in the event.

Key figures in attendance included Kothur Mandal Congress Party Presidents Harinath Reddy, Sudarshan Goud, Farooqnagar Mandal Congress President Srikanth Reddy, as well as local leaders Surender, Enugu Janardhan Reddy, and Sailu. The event saw participation from farmers representing various villages, who took the opportunity to clarify their doubts and seek assurance on the loan waiver process.

## Collector makes surprise visit to govt hospital at Siddipet

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

Quality medical services are being provided in government hospitals to ensure that patients suffering from seasonal diseases are recovered speedily, said District Collector Manu Chaudhary.

On Tuesday, he inspected the Government General Hospital here. He asked the medical officers and other officials concerned to take steps to prevent the spread of the seasonal diseases like dengue, malaria and diarrhoea.

He said that the government made all arrangements for the purpose. Besides preventing the spread of the seasonal diseases, a medical team should always be kept ready to treat the patients suffering from seasonal diseases on an emergency basis.

So far, four dengue cases have been reported in the district so far. A case each of malaria and diarrhoea have been detected.

He warned the medical officials of action for laxity in duty.

## BJP, villagers demand reclaiming of Tummala pond

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Andela Sriramulu, BJP in-charge of the Maheshwaram constituency in Rangareddy district, along with local villagers, has raised a concern over disappearance of the Tummala pond. The pond, which is supposed to span eight acres in Tukkuguda under Maheshwaram mandal, has reportedly disappeared, leading to allegations that it has been encroached upon for development ventures.

The villagers expressed concern that the absence of the pond is causing significant harm to their crops, as the traditional water source has vanished. The complaint further urged the police to take immediate action to locate the pond and address the issue. Villagers also voiced their frustration over the lack of response from Revenue and Irrigation officials despite their repeated attempts to resolve the matter.



BJP leader Sriramulu addressing a meeting in Shadnagar on Tuesday

Sriramulu highlighted a broader issue, alleging that ponds across the Maheshwaram constituency are being encroached upon. He specifically accused followers of MLA and former minister Sabitha Indra Reddy of occupying ponds in areas under the Badangpetta, Mirpet, and Jal Pally Corporations over the past 15 years. The villagers and Sriramulu are calling for urgent intervention to restore these crucial water bodies and protect the agricultural livelihoods dependent on them.

## Telangana Grameena Bank provides loans to self-help groups

PNS ■ NIRMAL

Telangana Grameena Bank Nirmal regional office organised a mega loan disbursement programme at the new Collectorate building.

Chairman of Telangana Grameena Bank YS Shobha participated in the loan disbursement programme. Loans were provided to women self-help groups.

She exhorted women to become entrepreneurs. She urged the women to take advantage of ample opportunities and become financially strong.

Talking about the Women's Associations, she said that there is no non-performing assets in the loans given to the Women self-help groups. She said that 30 per cent of the women are working in Telangana Grameena Bank and 30 per cent of the



Chairman of Telangana Grameena Bank YS Shobha distributing cheques to beneficiaries in Nirmal on Tuesday

loans have been given to women. Every woman is asked to increase her income through such loans taken by the bank and thereby also improve the status of the district.

District Project Director DRDA Vijayalakshmi said that

as part of rural development, rural women should maintain good relations.

TGB RM Rama Rao said that everyone is requested to use the social security scheme. He said that they can get 24 lakh insurance with a premium Rs 1,456 per year.

## India-Brazil strategic partnership deepened and diversified over years: Jaishankar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The India-Brazil strategic partnership has "deepened and diversified" over the years and now spans a very wide range of domains, including defence, space, security, technology and people-to-people relations, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Tuesday.

In his opening remarks at the 9th India-Brazil Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) in Delhi, Jaishankar congratulated the Latin American country for conducting the G20 meetings successfully.

"I would like to reiterate India's full support to the Brazilian G20 presidency and also recall that we got your fullest support during our own presidency. We appreciate various unique initiatives centred on the theme of building a just world and a sustainable planet," he said.

Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira, who arrived here on August 25, said in his opening remarks that

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva will be glad to welcome Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro in November.

Brazil is currently the chair of the influential bloc. The G20 presidency was relayed to Brazil by India last year.

Jaishankar, in his address, welcomed his Brazilian counterpart and the delegation and said he looks forward to a "very productive Joint Commission Meeting".

"Our strategic partnership, which was established in 2006, has deepened and diversified over the years. It now spans a very wide range of domains from defence, space and security, including cyber, to trade and investment, oil and natural gas, biofuels, agriculture, animal husbandry, food processing, health and medicine, traditional medicine, science and technology, culture and people-to-people relations," he said.



## Modi-Putin discuss measures to further strengthen ties

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday spoke to Russian President Vladimir Putin as he shared his "insights" from his recent visit to Ukraine and reiterated India's firm commitment to supporting an early, abiding and peaceful resolution of the conflict with Ukraine.

In a post on X, Modi said the two leaders also discussed measures to further strengthen special and privileged strategic partnership between the two countries.

He said, "Exchanged perspectives on the Russia-Ukraine conflict and my insights from the recent visit to Ukraine. Reiterated India's firm commitment to support



an early, abiding and peaceful resolution of the conflict."

The prime minister had on Monday briefed US President Joe Biden on his visit to Ukraine and conveyed India's

full support for early return of peace to the region through dialogue and diplomacy.

The Ministry of External Affairs in a statement later said Modi during his telephone conversation with Putin recalled his "successful visit to Russia" last month to participate in the 22nd India-Russia Bilateral Summit.



## ACROSS THE STATES

### 'Cong-NC alliance for J&K Assembly polls will have no bearing on BJP'

PNS ■ JAMMU

Exuding confidence of the BJP forming the next government in Jammu and Kashmir, Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Tuesday said the pre-poll alliance between the Congress and National Conference for the upcoming assembly elections will have no bearing on his party.

Singh was in Doda district, which is part of his Udhampur parliamentary constituency, to accompany former minister Shakti Raj Parihar and Gajay Singh Rana who filed their nomination papers from the Doda-West and Doda assembly constituencies, respectively.

Tuesday was the last day for filing of nomination papers for 24 assembly segments - 16 in south Kashmir and eight in Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts of Jammu region - which are going to polls in the first phase on September 18.

Talking to reporters after the filing of nomination papers by the two BJP candidates, the Union minister said this is not for the first time that a coalition between the Congress and National Conference had happened and it will have no bearing on the prospects of the BJP.



## CBI seeks polygraph test of Kolkata police ASI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/KOLKATA

The CBI has sought permission from a Kolkata court to conduct a polygraph test on city police assistant sub-inspector Anup Dutta who was said to be close to Sanjay Roy, the arrested accused in the rape and murder of a trainee doctor at RG Kar medical college, officials said Tuesday.

The CBI is exploring if Dutta helped Roy in any cover up of the crime, they said. According to reports, Dutta was allegedly instrumental in extending various favours to Roy, they said.

The central probe agency is trying to find out if Roy told Dutta about the crime and received any help, they said. They said the court would decide the application for a polygraph test after seeking Dutta's consent on the issue.

The CBI completed polygraph tests on former principal of the medical college



Sandip Ghosh on Tuesday, the third day of subjecting him to a series of Deception Detection Tests (DDT), they said.

He underwent a Layered Voice Analysis test on Saturday, followed by a polygraph test on Monday. The test on Monday could not be completed, so it was resumed on Tuesday. Layered voice analysis is a new DDT in the forensic experts' arsenal. It detects the speaker's reaction to a lie but does not identify a lie. The technology identified stress, cognitive

processes, and emotional cues in different voice properties.

A polygraph test, also a DDT, can help assess inaccuracies in statements of suspects and witnesses. By monitoring their psychological responses -- heart rate, breathing pattern, sweating, and blood pressure -- investigators can determine if there are discrepancies in their responses.

However, these are not admissible evidence during the trial and can only be used to get further leads in a case.

## 'I will take sides, won't let 'Miya' Muslims take over Assam'

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

Asserting that he would take sides, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday said he would not let 'Miya' Muslims 'take over' Assam.

Sarma was speaking in the assembly on the admissibility of adjournment motions moved by the opposition parties to discuss the law and order situation in the state in the wake of the gang-rape of a 14-year-old girl in Nagaon.

He said the crime rate had not increased in the state as was being alleged by the opposition if the population growth was taken into account.

"Not a single case of rape is acceptable. Still, if population increase is taken into consideration along with the number of rape cases in recent years, the crime rate has come down. There has been much improvement in the last 10 years," he said.

## New Osmania Hospital in Goshamahal ...

Continued from page 1

At a review held on Tuesday at the Secretariat, the Chief Minister discussed various developmental projects under the state's SPEED (Smart Proactive Efficient and Effective Delivery) initiative. The meeting was attended by Damodar Rajanarasimha, Minister of Medical and Health, Shanti Kumari, the Chief Secretary and other officials.

Among the 19 projects under the SPEED initiative, the construction of the new Osmania Hospital building, along with 15 new nursing colleges, 28 new paramedical colleges, and the construction of district federation buildings across the state, was discussed. The Chief Minister emphasized that the design of the new hospital should take into account the projected needs over the next 50 years.

The Chief Minister instructed officials to ensure enhanced connectivity to the hospital by developing roads in all four directions, making it easily accessible from various parts of the city. Additionally, the hospital should include all essential departments, an academic block, and hostels for nursing staff, with services and facilities on par with those in corporate hospitals. The Chief Minister also suggested that the design should incorporate ample open spaces to create a pleasant environment, rather than just concrete buildings and multi-story structures.

The Chief Minister mentioned that experienced architects should be consulted for the hospital's design. Regarding the current Osmania Hospital buildings, the Chief Minister assured that they would be preserved as historical structures. As part of the Musi

River Development Project, these buildings will be transformed into tourist attractions, highlighting their historical significance.

The Chief Minister also directed officials to allocate alternative piece of land in the Police Department in lieu of their Goshamahal site. He instructed the District Collector to visit Petla Burj to inspect the Police Transport Organization, City Police Academy, and surrounding areas, with the aim of ultimately relocating the existing Police Stadium and Sports Complex. Furthermore, the Chief Minister ordered the acceleration of hospital construction projects across the state, with a mandate to complete the 15 nursing college buildings by next year.

Revanth Reddy suggested that the nursing colleges be temporarily operated from rented buildings, with a plan to start them this year itself. Additionally, the Chief Minister approved the construction of new federation buildings in the 22 districts that currently lacked such facilities. Each district will be allocated one acre of land for these buildings, with officials directed to identify suitable land promptly.

In Hyderabad, the Chief Minister ordered the immediate transfer of three acres of land adjacent to the Shilparamam to the Women's Empowerment Societies.

He proposed that these societies set up year-round stalls showcasing their products at this location, transforming it into a must-visit destination for global guests, industry leaders, and national dignitaries visiting Hyderabad. The area should be developed into a permanent exhibition space, offering a wide variety of products to all visitors.

## 10-day Praja Palana' ...

Continued from page 1

The Chief Minister asked the officials of the Medical and Health Department to take decisions on procedures for issue of digital health cards, medical tests to record the health profile of everyone, establishment of health check-up camps in the villages and engagement of laboratories in the state. The Chief Minister said that, according to some representatives who had met him during his recent foreign visit, France had adopted the best policy for issuing digital health cards. Therefore, he advised TG officials to study the policy. Henceforth, only the health cards being issued by the state government would be considered for providing medical treatment under Rajiv

Arogyasri and for assistance extended from the CMRF.

Revanth Reddy directed the officials to be vigilant in view of increasing cases of seasonal diseases and expressed his concern over rising dengue, chikungunya and other viral fever cases in the state. The officials concerned have been asked to take appropriate preventive and other measures to check the spread of fevers and diseases. He asked officials to intensify fogging and spraying to eradicate mosquito menace in all towns and villages as well as in Greater Hyderabad. He wanted officials to conduct regular field visits and inspections in this regard. The Chief Minister warned that employees found indifferent towards public health would be suspended. The Chief Minister ordered

officials under GHMC as well as Medical and Health department officials and the district collector to work in tandem to curb seasonal diseases. The Chief Minister appealed to the police, voluntary organizations and the media to educate people about seasonal diseases. Collectors and Panchayat Raj officials in all districts have been directed to take up a special drive to prevent the spread of seasonal diseases immediately. Collectors have been advised to also make field visits in all villages and towns to ascertain the ground situation from time to time. The officials have been asked to visit areas where dengue and chikungunya cases have been reported to identify reasons and take up sanitation program.

## TG to receive ...

Continued from page 1

Additionally, this will boost the state's revenue through SGST collections and increase Telangana's share in green energy production. Over its lifetime, the project is expected to supply 12.5 billion units of green energy, preventing 8.9 million tons of carbon emissions. Notably, the project will use only domestically produced solar cells, supporting the 'Make in India' initiative.

Union Minister Kishan Reddy has urged the Telangana government to expedite the signing of the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with NLC to move forward with this critical project. According to him, right from the formation of Telangana, the central government has extended complete support to increase power production in the state. This includes the establishment of two power plants in Ramagundam with a total capacity of 1,600 MW, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and a 100 MW floating solar power plant also in Ramagundam. The central government, through NTPC, is ready to set up additional power plants with a total capacity of 2,400 MW in Telangana. However, the state must come forward to sign the PPA to facilitate the commencement of these projects.

## Those who put me ...

Continued from page 1

She raised her fist and chanted slogans of 'Jai Telangana' with renewed vigour. Kavitha further expressed her feelings by saying, "I have been in politics for 18 years and have faced many ups and downs. Being away from my children and spending five-and-a-half months in jail was extremely difficult. Those who put me through this hardship will certainly pay the price, with interest. The time will come, and we will settle it. I also express my heartfelt gratitude to those who stood by me and my family during this tough time. I am the daughter of Telangana, the daughter of KCR. I am neither wrong nor will I ever do wrong. I am strong and steadfast. I was unnecessarily sent to jail, but that only made me stronger. We will work harder in the people's arena with commitment and stand tall with everyone. We are not afraid of anyone and will continue to fight legally."

## BRS wants Janwada ...

Continued from page 1

The inspection at Janwada farmhouse has garnered media attention at a time of Kavitha's release. However, Hyderabad Disaster Response and Management Authority (HYDRAA) is not yet involved in it as despite the property not falling under its jurisdiction. Irrigation officials have reportedly taken measurements to confirm whether the farmhouse is within the FTL, and based on their findings, the revenue department is expected to proceed with necessary action. Moreover, there is proposal to extend HYDRAA to entire GO111 area. However, the demolition can be done by the Irrigation department and local authorities.

## Kavitha gets ...

Continued from page 1

"The appellant (Kavitha) is directed to be released forthwith on bail ... on furnishing bail bonds in the sum of Rs 10 lakh in each of the cases," the bench said, while allowing her appeals against the July 1 verdict of the Delhi High Court which had denied her bail in the two cases.

Later in the day, a Delhi court issued release warrants for Kavitha, paving the way for her release from jail. While quashing the high court verdict, the apex court said Kavitha shall not make any attempt to tamper with evidence or influence the witnesses and shall deposit her passport with the trial judge.

It said she shall regularly attend the trial court proceedings and cooperate to ensure expeditious disposal of the trial.

## HYDRAA ...

Continued from page 1

They insist that their homes are legal and that they have been living in the place for decades.

As per the notice, residents have seven days to remove the alleged encroachments, which are said to be "obstructing the natural flow of water to the Ayacut area of the Cheruvu". Failure to comply would result in enforced removal of the structures.

Some of the residents of Bharati Nagar Colony and Anand Rao Nagar Colony, preferring anonymity, expressed their frustration while speaking to this correspondent of The Pioneer. "We've been living here for 25 to 30 years, paying property taxes, and holding all the valid documents. The officials who originally granted us permission should be held accountable, not us. We haven't

encroached on any land or built illegally. We want a legal resolution, but we're waiting for the collective decision of all residents before taking further action," one of the residents said.

Another resident mentioned that they had met with Member of Parliament Eatala Rajender, who then contacted the officials concerned and assured residents of his support. They also approached BRS legislator Marri Rajashekar, who questioned the officers about the short eviction notice and promised to intervene.

The residents are currently gathering their documentation, including building plans, property tax receipts, and utility bills, to respond to the notices. They hope for support from the politicians they've approached and are prepared to take legal action, if necessary.

## Bandi sees ...

Continued from page 1

Your untiring efforts finally yielded fruits. This bail is a win for both BRS and Congress -BRS leader is out on bail & the Congressman gets to Rajya Sabha. Remarkable political acumen by KCR in supporting the candidate, who initially argued for the bail, to be nominated to Rajya Sabha unopposed by the ruling Congress. Congratulations to the partners in crime who wine & dine".

## 'Casting aspersions ...

Continued from page 1

KTR urged the Chief Justice of India and the Supreme Court to take cognizance of Bandi's remarks and initiate contempt proceedings against him. KTR emphasized the need for the Supreme Court to take action against "highly inappropriate comments from a Union Minister".

## Singhi unanimously elected ...

Continued from page 1

However, Padmarajan's nomination was rejected as MLAs did not propose his name. Thus, Abhishek Manu Singhvi's election became unanimous. TPCC senior vice-president G Niranjan obtained the Election Certificate from Returning Officer Chada Upender Reddy on Tuesday evening as Abhishek Manu Singhvi had authorised him to collect it on his behalf.

## When notices ...

Continued from page 1

If it is against the rules, we will demolish it."

"Only the pond and the house are shown. There is no need for the government to come and demolish it. If the tiny house is found to be against the rules, I will demolish it myself," he added.

Mahender Reddy said HYDRAA has authority over the actions of anyone who has encroached the ponds. "I have not even built a compound wall above the pond. I have not received any notices. According to GO No. 111, many bigwigs constructed buildings. I also constructed buildings along with everyone else. According to GO.No.111, 10 per cent of the existing agricultural land can be developed. I constructed the house according to the boundaries shown by the pond buffer zone authorities. KTR may not know that Mahender Reddy goes as per rule."



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Step in the right direction

### Modi Govt launches assured pension scheme for Central Govt Employees, amid concerns of financial implications

The Modi Government has announced the fixed pension scheme for the central government employees. This must be music to the ears of central employees who were not happy with the ongoing market-linked pension scheme and were demanding its scrapping. In a significant policy shift, the Indian government has approved a new pension scheme guaranteeing central government employees 50% of their base salary as a pension. This move marks a departure from the current National Pension Scheme (NPS), which links payouts to market returns. The newly introduced Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) is set to be implemented from April 1, 2025, and will impact over two million federal employees. The shift towards the UPS stems from growing dissatisfaction with the NPS, which was adopted in 2004 as part of a broader fiscal reform. Under the NPS, employees contribute 10% of their base salary, and the government adds 14%, with the eventual pension amount depending on the market returns from investments, primarily in federal debt. However, as some states began reverting to the older, more fiscally burdensome system of guaranteed pensions, the Modi government faced mounting pressure to reassess the NPS.



The decision to approve the UPS aligns with demands from trade unions and the Opposition parties, who have long advocated for a guaranteed minimum pension. The issue gained political traction during recent general elections, where the lack of pension security under the NPS became a contentious topic. The UPS guarantees that employees who have completed at least 25 years of service will receive 50% of their base salary, calculated over the last 12 months before retirement, as a pension. This assured payout provides a safety for retirees, addressing concerns about the volatility of market-linked pensions. While the UPS offers greater security for employees, it also imposes a significant financial burden on the government. The expected cost to the exchequer for the fiscal year 2024-25 is approximately Rs 62.5 billion. This annual expenditure is likely to fluctuate based on the number of employees retiring each year. However, the shift to the UPS raises several concerns. First, the financial sustainability of the scheme is a critical issue. The guaranteed nature of the pension could strain government finances, especially if economic growth slows or tax revenues decline. Additionally, the UPS may lead to disparities between central and state government employees. Moreover, there is a risk that the shift back to a defined benefit pension system could set a precedent for other sectors, potentially leading to broader demands for similar guarantees. This could exacerbate fiscal challenges, particularly in a country where social welfare spending is already under pressure. As India prepares to implement the UPS in 2025, careful management and ongoing evaluation will be essential to ensure that the benefits of the scheme are balanced against its fiscal impact.

JanAushadhi, India is doing better in providing generic medicines at low prices. Harris does not have that option and says would cap the out-of-pocket cost of insulin at \$35 per month for all. As direct benefit pensions are given to kisans in India, Harris would give a child tax credit that would provide \$6,000 per child to families for the first year of a baby's life. Indian budgetary novelties introduced as direct benefits or pensions in various ways have fascinated Harris. Each of Harris's proposals, whether in terms of food, medicine, housing or child care is "populist", involving government intervention against corporate interests on behalf of consumers. Socialism, direct or indirect, despite big companies ruling the roost, is returning to world politics. What Harris does may just create a flutter, but countries like India, who claim to be the next global leaders, have to tread more cautiously to safeguard the poor, farmers and the working class. Harris has borrowed quite a few of it from the Indian budget. Now it is India's turn to ensure how it could check the corporates to serve people's interests. The world is changing and India's populism is winning big one's heart. (The author is a freelance writer and columnist; views are personal)

### PICTALK



A painter gives final touches to the Goddess Durga's idol ahead of Durga pooja, in Kolkata

## The risk of monetising public education

### Commercialisation of these institutions undermines their core mission which is to provide inclusive, affordable high-quality education to all

The Vice-Chancellor of JNU, Prof. C Santhoshree D Pandit recently remarked that the country's top university is facing a financial crunch with little regular income generated from its resources. The VC has decided to repurpose the university's properties with private participation. This culture of looking at public academic institutions as a source of revenue has been rhyming among our policymakers during the past several years. One reason is the huge prime land area holding maintained by the public sector institutions and another is the change in the shift in societal perception. Today's society evaluates everything based on money. The primary objective of public sector academic institutions is to offer an inclusive and excellent education to all sections of the population. Central to these institutions is the concept of education as a public good—a valuable asset that has advantages for society as a whole, rather than solely for individuals. Education, in this view, is not simply a product that can be purchased and



sold, but rather a profound process that moulds individuals into knowledgeable, reflective members of society who are capable of making meaningful contributions to the collective welfare. Their value should be assessed based on the number of enlightened minds generated by these institutions. As we can see it's these enlightened minds who are driving the wheel of the government machinery, and the nation's progress. Public sector academic institutions have been under growing pressure in recent decades to implement business-oriented strategies, which include prioritising income creation. The transition has been prompted by several circumstances, such as decreases in government financing, increasing operational expenses, and the expanding

impact of market ideology in public policy. Consequently, numerous public universities and colleges have resorted to alternate sources of income, such as raising tuition fees, extending online programs, providing executive education courses, renting out spaces and forming alliances with private industries. Private parties, if allowed to rent out spaces, should work closely with the academic and research community of the university. It should also help in imparting knowledge and transformation to students. In many NITs, the guest house rate has been increased tenfold, as mandated by the policymakers. Unfortunately, people who visit these institutions including academicians and parents of students have to pay more than what is the market rate in that area. Although these initiatives can offer significant financial support, they also pose a potential threat of altering the core purpose of public sector institutions. It can be detrimental to maintaining high academic standards and fostering a wide range of intellectual perspectives.

Additionally, it can generate pressures to give higher priority to programs and research areas that provide greater profits, perhaps overlooking subjects that are less financially rewarding but equally crucial for societal progress. It is vital to provide students with a well-rounded education that encourages critical thinking and broad-based knowledge. Public sector academic institutions hold a distinct and crucial role in maintaining the social fabric of the nation. Their objective is not to earn financial gain but rather to generate enlightened minds capable of critical thinking, and contribute to the development of the nation. The great minds working in every field, including the bureaucrats and political leaders are groomed by these public sector institutions. For this to continue, we should not put a price tag on every facility a public sector university offers to the student or society at large. (The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies; views are personal)

# A new standard for global populism

### Kamala prioritises the everyday citizen over corporate interests and her message is getting traction not only in the US but across the globe



SHIVAJI SARKAR

The global economic landscape could shift dramatically if the US Democratic Party's presidential nominee, Kamala Harris, succeeds in implementing her bold stance on prices and corporate control. This move could send shockwaves across the world, compelling nations like India to reconsider their current economic models—just as they did during the liberalization era when corporate power surged. It appears the tide is turning, as people worldwide demand freedom from the manipulative tactics that drive up prices. Harris's message is clear: Americans can no longer tolerate skyrocketing costs. Her aggressive, populist economic agenda aims to rein in corporate power and lower the cost of living, potentially setting a new standard for global economic policies.

A 74-year-old Indian blogger after a lavish Indian corporate marriage in July blurted out on X-twitter, "In my 74 years, I have not seen, or even heard of, a more tasteless, egotistical or pretentious wedding than the recent, 24X7 televised extravaganza. The perversity and its real portent lie elsewhere." It lies in the way money was expended, at a time when the average Indian has never been worse off economically, when inequality and unemployment have reached record heights, when 67 percent of the GST is paid by 50 percent of its poorest citizens, when the top 1 percent control 40 percent of the country's wealth, when 800 million people have to be provided free/subsidized foodgrains to survive.

Not much different is the weekend speech of Harris. She says, "We know that many Americans don't yet feel that progress in their lives. Costs are still too high and it feels too hard to get ahead." No wonder Republican nominee Donald Trump calls her too liberal. It seems so similar to the echoes of severe price rises and joblessness during the June Lok Sabha elections in India amid rows of mutton, muslim, mandir and mujra, mehngai and berojgari. Yes, Indians and Americans need food, a minimum quality of



life and freedom from organised oppression. Indians are certainly more concerned because with whatever rank in the world economy, it is nowhere near the US. If the American economy is not in good shape, Indians can at best be convalescing, post-COVID-19. But the stranglehold of the honchos in India is more gripping than in the US, which has strong anti-trust laws despite the protests from the big. Indian policies suit the big shops more with quite a few trillions being waved off in taxes and other benefits, including tailoring national and stock market policies. Harris instead, despite being the Vice President of the USA, empathising with the American people, says, "The bills add up. Food, rent, gas, back-to-school clothes, prescription medication. After that, for many families, there's not much left at the end of the month. As president, I will take on the high costs that matter most to most Americans."

Those words any Indian voter would love to hear from their leaders. It follows a dozen proposals for improving the lives of Americans. Some like 3 million new housing units to the people seemingly have been picked up from Indian political party manifestos. Like India's PM Avas, she proposes to provide up to \$25,000 in down payment support for a million first-time home buyers. Both countries are discussing it intensely and often end up saying the United Kingdom has the best medical facilities. Harris promises to eliminate medical debt for millions of Americans, possibly by using federal funds to buy and forgive outstanding debt from health providers. She wants to limit Americans' annual out-of-pocket spending on prescription drugs to \$2,000. Thousands of kilometres apart the conditions are so similar! The one difference is that India wants to repeat the US insurance follies and they are trying to change it. Though in some cases like PM



AMERICANS CAN NO LONGER TOLERATE SKYROCKETING COSTS. HER AGGRESSIVE, POPULIST ECONOMIC AGENDA AIMS TO REIN IN CORPORATE POWER AND LOWER THE COST OF LIVING, POTENTIALLY SETTING A NEW STANDARD FOR GLOBAL ECONOMIC POLICIES

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### CELEBRATING KRISHNA'S BIRTH

Madam — Krishna Janmashtami, the birthday of Lord Krishna, is a joyous celebration that embodies the triumph of love and divine joy over evil and negativity. This auspicious occasion marks the arrival of Krishna, the eighth avatar of Lord Vishnu, who brought hope and redemption to a world plagued by darkness and despair. As devotees around the world honor Krishna's birth, they are reminded of his profound teachings in the Bhagavad Gita, which emphasize the importance of spiritual growth, self-realization, and the eternal victory of good over evil. Through vibrant festivities, soulful bhajans, and heartfelt pujas, Krishna Janmashtami celebrates the unconditional love and divine joy that Krishna embodies, inspiring devotees to embrace their own spiritual journey and revel in the bliss of the divine.

Purva Pandya | Ujjain

### STALIN'S NEW MOVE

Madam — As against the Sanatana Dharma before the Lok Sabha elections, the DMK has changed its stand now by a mix in the Dravidian model by supporting the individual's faith of choice and wanting to help them in their religious pursuits. By inaugurating the two day Global Muthamizhil Murugan Conference, the Chief Minister of TN M K Stalin is bringing in a new colour other than black and red as he's well aware that this will help him in the forthcoming assembly elections to woo the votes of the Hindus by using the Murugan card to play to DMK's advantage. We welcome this change and are happy if something good for the people happens from the leadership of M K Stalin whom I respect for his flexibility of principle if he finds something worth it. One hopes Stalin's new found alliance with the Lord Murugan may bestow the blessings for the people for the prosperity of the state. A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

## Unified pension scheme launched



This refers to the news report, "Unprecedented Unified Pension Scheme by Modi Government" (August 25). Though driven by the huge political pressure after jolts in recently held Lok Sabha polls, the NDA Government's decision to roll out a new guaranteed Unified Pension Scheme for its employees is a step in right direction. In fact, pension is a social welfare measure which is granted to ensure that a retired employee lives with dignity in his

old age. Reversing its 21 year old pension reforms partially, the Government has introduced OPS features like assured pensions, inflation-linked adjustments, family pensions, and a guaranteed minimum pension in the UPS. Employees are still required to contribute 10% of their basic pay and dearness allowance to UPS remains only major difference between the OPS and the UPS. The government will also contribute to the UPS, which will increase from 14% (currently contributed to NPS) to 18.5%. Thus, the UPS will lead to higher burden on the exchequer. Thus, it remains to be seen whether state governments adopt the UPS, which certainly would not augur well for their financial health. Manoj Parashar | Ghaziabad

### PM MODI BROKERS PEACE

Madam — Modi's visit to Kyiv will strengthen India-Ukraine bilateral relationship. Like with Russia in March 24 Modi is likely to have had the message of peace with Zelenskyy about ending the war and restoring peace. The catch is both Russia and Ukraine are not keen in fighting any further but both wanting to end the war on their own terms. Kyiv does not want to compromise on its sovereignty and territorial integrity which could lead to an instability and even a revolution in Ukraine. Kyiv wants to retrieve all the Ukrainian territory occupied by Russia something that Russia is unwilling to do. The US and NATO have rejected Russia's demand to end the war. Under this situation it is extremely unlikely that a peace can be brokered by PM Modi as an one off attempt. Unlike other leaders of the world PM Modi enjoys a special relationship with Putin who in his words has called Modi as his best friend. India also in none of the resolu-

tions passed by the UN has gone against Moscow. While on the same lines has been maintaining good equation with Zelenskyy (post his ire after having a hug with Putin in March 24) through telephone calls and the sidelines meetings in summits. With Modi's Aug 23 personal visit and signing of the trade agreements and India's commitment to be on the side of the PEACE and just a not a neutral country one can expect PM Modi will make attempts for a peace talk between the two warring leaders. Besides, PM Modi's initiative also takes care of the growing Chinese influence in the region and places India at par with it if not above, India must be more proactive in the region to safeguard its own interests. With US already started feeling the heat of recession and a leadership change in the offing one can see the light at the end of the tunnel! Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



## FIRST COLUMN

### LIVE IN THE PRESENT

### MOMENT, IT MATTERS MOST

One needs to inculcate habits of equanimity, and remaining calm, whatever the circumstance



RAVI VALLURI

The romance was in the air as India attained freedom from the British yoke. The period was the 1950s as India embarked upon the socialistic pattern to revive the country, which had inherited an impecunious economy. Two bright students from coastal Andhra landed in rain-washed Delhi University to pursue their dreams. To remain connected with their past, they made recurrent trips to the New Delhi Railway Station to receive students arriving in droves from their state and revive those nostalgic moments. When it is repetitively said, "Those good old days!", in one stroke we send a signal to our Universe that the present is not congenial. As Buddha says, "The mind is everything. What you think you become." If we live in the past, we keep fretting and fuming about the missed opportunities and those past impressions create roadblocks in our physical and metaphysical advancement.

On completion of their studies, the more aspiring students stayed back and the less enterprising ones returned home. The person in Delhi aspired to be a civil servant like his more illustrious siblings and their children. But destiny had carved out its plan. His friends and acquaintances qualified for the coveted job, a sinecure that eluded him. So, the mind became envious of his siblings, their children and friends and started implanting his failed mission upon his children, much to their discomfiture. How does one reach that state of 'present moment'? Before dwelling on some techniques, it will be useful to read a fas-



cinating Buddhist parable. One afternoon a Buddhist monk was carrying a bucket filled with water in a dense forest. Suddenly he heard a rustle. It was a tiger, smacking its lips and intently looking at the potential prey. The monk ran for his life, with the tiger in pursuit. The monk reached a precipice and had a choice to make, either be devoured by the ferocious tiger or jump off the cliff. Death stared in his face. The monk jumped and fortuitously clung onto a branch of a strawberry tree. He ate the strawberry—considering it to be his last meal—and thoroughly relished it. The monk had never had such a meal, as was absolutely in the present moment. A simple yet profound technique of sadhana is to be a witness to all the actions and activities that take place. The actor in us becomes the spectator too. This is what is espoused in the esoteric philosophy of Ashtavakra Gita (a classic dialogue between King Janaka—who himself was a Raj Rishi—and the sage Ashtavakra).

Any individual, householder or seeker needs to inculcate habits of equanimity, equilibrium, and equipoise to remain calm, whatever the circumstance or situation, to be contented and remain in the present moment. The protagonist who stayed back in Delhi could fulfil his dreams only partially. His son did qualify for the civil services, but could not join the service of his choice; this was due to excessive pressure applied by family members already in the elite services. Eventually, the son turned into an alcoholic. Perhaps it was because both father and son were not grateful to the Universe and did not adhere to the Law of Gratefulness.

Thus, lives were ruined. Meanwhile, the friend who returned home did not lose his way in the sands of time. He became a trade union leader and politician, living in the present. "Life is one big road with lots of signs. So, when you are riding through the ruts, do not complicate your mind. Flee from hate, mischief, and jealousy," sang Bob Marley.

*(The writer is a faculty at Art of Living, views expressed are personal)*

# Catalyst for cinematic evolution and excellence



CHAITANYA K. PRASAD

The 70th National Film Awards once again celebrated the rich tapestry of Indian cinema, where diverse languages and cultures converged to showcase the best talent

The National Film Awards: A Platform for The Great Leap Forward. At the 70th National Film Awards, India's cinematic excellence once again took centre stage, showcasing vibrant and diverse storytelling from across the nation's many languages. Southern cinema emerged as a dominant force this year, with films and artists from the region sweeping some of the most prestigious honours. The Malayalam film 'Aattam' captured the Swarna Kamal for Best Feature Film, while the Kannada blockbuster 'Kantara' clinched the title of Best Popular Film.

Rishab Shetty, the driving force behind Kantara, took home the Best Actor award, sharing the limelight with Nithya Menon and Manasi Parekh, who shared Best Actresses for the Tamil film 'Thiruchitrambalam' and Gujarati film 'Kutch Express' respectively. Meanwhile, the Haryanvi film 'Fouja' gathered acclaim, earning Pramod Kumar the award for Best Debut Director, while Pavan Raj Malhotra secured Best Supporting Actor. The epic Tamil drama 'Ponniyin Selvan: I' also made its mark, with AR Rahman's power-packed music earning him the Best Music Director (Background Music) award, alongside wins for Best Sound Design by Anand Krishnamoorthi and Best Cinematography by Ravi Varman. In the Hindi cinema category, 'Gulmohar' emerged as the Best Hindi Film, adding another feather to Sharmila Tagore's illustrious cap with her third National Film Award.

This year's awards not only celebrated individual excellence but also highlighted the ever-evolving and dynamic landscape of Indian cinema. The lifeline and longevity of any artist and any film is fuelled by the adrenaline of 4A's "Acknowledgment, Awards, Appreciation, and Applause". Globally, awards are given for excellence in the celluloid space which has opened a new phase of creativity, innovation perspective perspective-building through storytelling and film narration. Since its inception in 1954, the National Film Awards for Excellence in Cinema have symbolised the journey of excellence and creativity. The awards have offered an equal platform to cinemas of various languages, cultures, diversities, themes, and perspectives, where all the creative energies of India converge to speak the unified language of artistic excellence. These awards in the last seventy-odd years have showcased the gold standard of filmmaking across different verticals reinventing and shaping the diverse landscape of cinema in this country.

Each edition of the National Film Awards has strengthened inclusivity and converged the diversity of celluloid space seamlessly. The National Film Awards are unique in terms of their magnitude, canvas, and spectrum. Every award ceremony has been an opportunity to witness the emergence of different forms and categories of cinema that reflect continuity and legacy. The landscape of the National Film Awards is deep and insightful, promoting diversity, storytelling, and narration.

It has truly elevated parallel, regional, and experimental cinema; voiced social concerns; and embraced and adapted to contemporary standards, content, and style



THIS YEAR'S AWARDS NOT ONLY CELEBRATED INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE BUT ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE EVER-EVOLVING AND DYNAMIC LANDSCAPE OF INDIAN CINEMA

of presentation. Over the years, Indian cinema has witnessed a remarkable evolution, with regional films gaining recognition for their artistic brilliance. It all began in 1954, as the film "Mirza Ghalib" made history as the first recipient of the Best Feature Film award.

This milestone paved the way for a treasure trove of cinematic gems from various regions. Bengali cinema, in particular, has been a shining beacon, with timeless classics like Satyajit Ray's "Pather Panchali", "Aparajita", and "Charulata" earning the prestigious Swarna Kamal. The legendary Soumitra Chatterjee, a revered Bengali actor, has been lauded for his performances in classics like "Aparajita" and "Charulata", earning him National Film Awards for his works.

The spotlight has also turned to Southern cinema, which has produced its own set of trailblazers. In 1965, the Malayalam masterpiece "Chemmeen" captivated audiences and critics alike, winning the Best Feature Film award. Kannada cinema made a powerful statement with "Chomana Dudi" in 1976, sweeping the National Awards for Best Feature Film, Best Actor, and Best Story. Tamil cinema joined this illustrious list in 1990 when Marrupakkam became the first Tamil film to clinch the Best Feature Film award.

The northeastern region of India has also produced its share of winners at the National Film Awards, bringing regional tales to the national stage. "Halodhia Chorai Baodhan Khai", the first Assamese film to win the Swarna Kamal for the Best Feature Film in 1987. Rima Das, a director has been recognized for her movies "Village Rockstars" and "Bulbul Can Sing", which capture the essence of life in Assam by portraying simplicity and resilience. At the 60th National Film Awards, Jahnur Barua's Assamese film "Baandhon" won

the Best Feature Film in the category while "Ko:Yad", a Missing film won the Best Feature Film in the non-Eighth Schedule language category. At the 62nd National Film Awards the movie "Phum Shang", from Manipur was honoured with the Best Investigative Film award showcasing the contributions of filmmakers from North East India. Such examples also prove that the National Film Awards serve as a crucible for bringing together a convergence of ideas, creativity, and talent. They offer hope that creativity knows no barriers in India, allowing unknown filmmakers and names to become stars. One of the most coveted awards of the National Film Awards is the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest award in the field of cinema honouring the artists' lifetime achievement. Named after Shri Dadasaheb Phalke, the visionary often hailed as the father of Indian cinema, this award is a tribute to those whose contributions have indelibly shaped the landscape of Indian filmmaking.

This award was introduced in 1969 and was presented to Devika Rani. Since then this distinguished honour has been awarded to Waheeda Rehman, Satyajit Ray, B.N. Reddy, L.V. Prasad, Bhupen Hazarika, Sivaji Ganesan, B.R. Chopra, Soumitra Chatterjee, Lata Mangeshkar, Raj Kapoor, Shyam Benegal, Amitabh Bachchan and Rajnikant are some of the renowned names who have been recognized for their lasting impact and their outstanding contribution to cinema. The National Film Awards also spotlight the significance of non-feature films by inspiring emerging directors to experiment and push boundaries.

This platform has nurtured talent, with acclaimed works like "Ek Tha Gaon" and "An engineered Dream", the Marathi film "Girni" and the Bengali film "Aamaar Katha: Story of Binodini" winners at the 52nd and the 62nd

National Film Awards. These awards bring attention to themes and innovative storytelling approaches demonstrating that Indian cinema thrives on creativity and embraces diversity beyond commercial considerations. The non-feature segment of awards over the years has acted as a catalyst for young film-makers who have unleashed their creativity across diverse subjects and narratives. This segment has showcased a unique simplicity, aesthetics and deep understanding of filmmaking and creativity. The recent changes to the regulations for the 70th National Film Awards demonstrate an evident wave of evolution. Changes like renaming awards and merging categories reflect an approach to acknowledging excellence in filmmaking.

The National Film Awards of India have witnessed several historic moments that have not only enhanced the country's cinematic excellence but also served as a stepping stone to celluloid success and international acclaim. One such landmark was the recognition of Satyajit Ray's "Pather Panchali" in 1956, which won the Best Feature Film award and subsequently brought Indian cinema to global attention. Another significant milestone was Aamir Khan's "Lagaan" in 2001, which not only won the National Film Award for Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment but also earned an Academy Award nomination for Best Foreign Language Film. The National Film Awards have played an instrumental role in shaping the course of Indian cinema. By celebrating a variety of perspectives and pushing boundaries the awards not only recognize exceptional achievements but also inspire upcoming filmmakers and artists.

*(The writer is former additional DG, DFF and Festival Director, IFFI; views are personal. Inputs provided by Zoya Ahmad and Vaishnavi Srinivasan)*

## How personalised and adaptive technologies are shaping the future of education

The future of education is personal, adaptive, and brimming with possibilities for individual success. It's time to embrace this change

The education system is witnessing a revolutionary shift, one that promises to reshape how we learn, grow, and succeed. At the core of this transformation lies advanced personalized and adaptive learning - a groundbreaking approach set to redefine the educational landscape.

With the global adaptive learning market projected to reach \$5.3 billion by 2025 and the personalized learning market expected to soar to \$19.86 billion by 2030, it's clear that these technologies are more than just a passing trend.

**Unpacking Personalized and Adaptive Learning** Personalized learning crafts educational experiences that resonate with each student's



VEDANT HAMIRWASIA

unique needs, skills, and interests. It's about creating learning journeys that allow individuals to flourish in their way. Adaptive learning takes this concept further, using AI to adjust content difficulty and style in real time based on student performance.

It's like having a high-tech tutor that ensures learning is always challenging but never overwhelming.

**The Power of Data-Driven Insights:** One of the most exciting aspects of these systems is their ability to harness data for good. Through sophisticated learning analytics, educators gain unprecedented insights into each student's progress. This foresight allows for timely interventions, ensuring no student falls behind. Predictive analytics even allows these systems to anticipate which students might struggle, enabling proactive support measures.

**Customized Learning Paths:** Gone are the days of one-size-fits-all education. Advanced personalized learning creates individual learning plans that adapt to each student's unique learning style.

Whether you're a visual learner who thrives on interactive simulations or prefer diving deep into text-based explanations, these systems have you covered. The flexibility extends to pacing as well, allowing students to linger on challenging concepts or race ahead in areas they excel.

**Engagement, the Secret Sauce of Success:** Engagement is crucial for effective learning, and these technologies serve it up in spades. Interactive content, gamification elements, and multimedia experiences make learning feel less like a chore and more like an adventure. By catering to diverse learning preferences, these systems ensure that every stu-

dent finds their groove and stays motivated. **Levelling the Playing Field:** Perhaps one of the most profound impacts of these technologies is their potential to promote equity in education. Assistive features embedded within these systems support students with disabilities, offering tools like



text-to-speech and customized interfaces. This push for inclusivity ensures that quality, personalized education is accessible to all, regardless of individual challenges.

**The Benefits and Challenges Ahead:** The benefits of advanced personalized and adaptive learning are clear and compelling. Studies consistently show improved learning outcomes, increased student engagement, and the potential to bridge achievement gaps. However, it's important to acknowledge the challenges that come with this educational revolution. Privacy concerns surrounding student data and the persistent digital divide are hurdles

that must be addressed thoughtfully. Embracing the Future of Education The educational landscape is evolving rapidly, propelled by the transformative potential of advanced personalized and adaptive learning.

By embracing these technologies thoughtfully and addressing the challenges head-on, we can create an educational landscape where every student has the opportunity to thrive, learn, and reach their full potential. The future of education is personal, adaptive, and brimming with possibilities for individual success. It's time to embrace this change and unlock the potential of every learner.

*(The author is director, ODA Class; views are personal)*

IN BRIEF



ReNew, Microsoft sign clean power sale agreement

ReNew on Tuesday announced the signing of a clean power sale contract of 437.6 megawatt (MW) with Microsoft. The contract is expected to generate over one million units of green electricity attributes annually, contributing to Microsoft's aim to become carbon negative by 2030, ReNew said in a statement. "ReNew today announced the signing of a green attribute sale contract of 437.6 MW with Microsoft," it said. ReNew will direct about USD 15 million of revenue from the contract towards a community fund to support environment-focused initiatives. This work will be delivered in partnership with the ReNew Foundation, the philanthropic arm of ReNew, which works to create sustainable communities through climate action with a focus on women and youth and whose efforts are aligned with Microsoft's Environmental Justice priorities.



Airtel to shut down Wynk Music app, absorb all staff

Bharti Airtel will exit from music vertical and shut down its Wynk Music app, according to sources. The company will absorb all Wynk Music employees. "Airtel is planning to close Wynk Music in the next couple of months. It will absorb all the employees into the company," a source said. When contacted, an Airtel spokesperson confirmed the development. "We can confirm that we will sunset Wynk Music and all Wynk music employees will be absorbed within the Airtel ecosystem. Airtel users will have access to Apple Music. Additionally, Wynk Premium users will receive exclusive offers from Airtel for Apple," the spokesperson said. The company has entered into an agreement with Apple to provide access to Apple Music with special offers to its customers who use iPhone.



CDSL, Citibank N.A. settle regulatory violation cases

Leading depository CDSL and global lender Citibank N.A. on Tuesday settled with Sebi cases pertaining to the alleged violation of regulatory norms after paying settlement charges. CDSL and Citibank N.A. (DDP) paid Rs 1.3 crore and Rs 40.2 lakh, respectively, towards settlement charges, according to separate orders passed by Sebi. The orders came after Central Depository Services (India) Limited or CDSL and Citibank N.A. filed applications with Sebi proposing to settle the instant proceedings initiated against them, "without admitting or denying the findings of facts and conclusions of law" through settlement orders. In view of the acceptance of the settlement terms and the receipt of the settlement amount, the instant adjudication proceedings initiated against CDSL and Citibank N.A. through show cause notices dated November 13, 2023, and February 9, 2024, respectively, are disposed of, Sebi said in its orders.

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Commercial electric vehicle maker EKA Mobility on Tuesday said it has formed a strategic partnership with Swedish furniture retailer IKEA for supply of electric delivery vans in India.



Under the partnership, Eka has already delivered 10 such vehicles to IKEA, with plans to expand the fleet across multiple regions in the country, EKA Mobility said. The collaboration is a part of IKEA's plan to electrify its last-mile delivery fleet in the coun-

try, it said. The transition to electric delivery vans is expected to significantly reduce IKEA's carbon footprint, contributing to a more sustainable and environmentally friendly logistics operation, EKA mobility said. "By supplying IKEA with

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING CONCLUDES Indo-Singapore talks productive

PNS ■ SINGAPORE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will pay an official visit to Singapore shortly, Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan has announced, after senior ministers of India and Singapore concluded a high-level meeting here to further their strategic ties. A four-member Indian delegation comprising Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw participated in the second India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR) here on Monday to discuss bilateral cooperation and exchange views on issues of mutual interests. Describing the ministers-only meeting as "productive", Balakrishnan said it also sets the stage for an official visit to Singapore by Prime Minister Modi.

"We are also working on all this because very shortly, we will be announcing an Official Visit by Prime Minister Modi to Singapore as well. I cannot give you the specific date, but it will occur shortly," he told reporters here. Balakrishnan said advanced manufacturing and semiconductors, as well as aviation and maritime connectivity, are new areas that Singapore and India have added to the high-level platform for discussing ways to enhance bilateral cooperation. Senior ministers from the two countries held a "productive" round of discussions at the second multi-ministerial roundtable here and explored how the two countries can boost bilateral cooperation in digital, skill development, sustainability, healthcare, connec-



tivity and advanced manufacturing. This was the second time that ministers from Singapore and India met at the India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR) after its inaugural edition was launched in September 2022 by then Deputy Prime Minister Lawrence Wong during a five-day visit to India. Balakrishnan said advanced manufacturing and semiconductors, as well as aviation and maritime connectivity, are the new areas that Singapore and India have added to a high-

level platform for discussing ways to enhance bilateral cooperation.

These two additions to the India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable are areas of significant opportunity for both countries, as well as their companies, the Singaporean foreign minister was quoted as saying by The Straits Times newspaper on Tuesday.

On Monday the Indian-origin minister said that both countries want to collaborate on advanced manufacturing and semiconductors -- a sector that India wants to expand significantly, and one where Singapore punches well above its weight.

India is also likely to see tremendous growth in aviation in the coming years, having ordered more than 1,000 planes in the past year alone, the Singaporean foreign minister said, adding it represents great opportunities for services such as maintenance and air operations in the coming years -- another niche area where Singapore and its companies are globally competitive.

"A country with more than 1.4 billion people is now embarking on a major upgrade of its aviation sector.



Next round of India-Australia comprehensive trade pact talks soon

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior officials of India and Australia are expected to hold their next round of talks for a comprehensive free trade agreement in November here, the commerce ministry said on Sunday. The two countries implemented an interim trade agreement in December 2022 and are now under negotiations to expand its scope.

It said that the tenth round of India-Australia CECA (comprehensive economic cooperation agreement) negotiations was held from 19-22 August in Sydney in the areas of goods, services, digital trade, government procurement, rules of origin and agritech. Intense discussions were held on each of these tracks

bringing in clarity and understanding for convergence in the remaining provisions, it added. "The next round of CECA negotiations is likely to be held in November," it said in a statement. The Indian delegation was led by Rajesh Agrawal, the Chief Negotiator and Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce and the Australian delegation was led by Ravi Kewalram, the Chief Negotiator and First Assistant Secretary in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

"The meeting saw intensive discussions and negotiations to narrow down the differences through better understanding of each other's proposals and the way to bring in convergence.

Gold climbs to Rs 74,350 per 10 gm; silver rallies Rs 1,200

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices climbed Rs 550 to Rs 74,350 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday on the back of fresh demand from local jewellers.

The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 73,800 per 10 grams in the previous session on Friday.

Silver prices also rallied Rs 1,200 to Rs 88,200 per kilogram on Tuesday from Rs 87,000 per kg in the previous close, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also jumped Rs 550 to Rs 74,000 per 10 grams. Traders attributed the rise in yellow prices due to a pick-up in demand by local jewellers and retailers in the domestic market.

The bullion markets were closed in New Delhi on Monday on account of Krishna Janmashtami.



In the Asian trading hours, gold is trading at USD 2,543.90 per ounce, down USD 11.30 per ounce.

"Gold declined marginally on Tuesday, weighed down by better than expected US macro data and an uptick in US Treasury yields," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

According to Manav Modi, Senior Analyst, Commodity Research, MOFSL, gold prices fell but remained in sight of record highs it hit last week as

the prospect of lower US interest rates battered the US dollar and presented a brighter outlook for metal markets.

Further, bullion surged to record highs last week, as market participants welcomed dovish comments from the Federal Reserve. Some safe haven demand also buoyed gold as ceasefire talks between Israel and Hamas yielded few results, while hostilities in the Middle East persisted, Modi added.

Additionally, silver was quoted lower at USD 30.34 per ounce in the global markets.

"Traders will focus on the US consumer confidence data going to be released later on Tuesday which will provide more insights on the direction of the bullion prices," Navneet Damani, Group Senior VP of Commodity Research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services (MOFSL), said.

NIFTY HITS LIFETIME HIGH Markets settle flat in volatile trade

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended on a flat note after a volatile session on Tuesday due to the emergence of profit-taking near record high levels amid rising geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and Ukraine.

The NSE gauge, however, hit a new lifetime peak of 25,017. According to traders, profit booking in metal, consumer durable and FMCG shares negated gains in telecom, tech, and IT stocks.

After oscillating between highs and lows, the 30-share BSE Sensex eked out a marginal gain of 13.65 points or 0.02 per cent to settle at 81,711.76 - its sixth consecutive session of rise. During the day, it hit a high of 81,919.11 and a low of 81,600.51.

The NSE Nifty ended almost flat, up 7.15 points or 0.03 per cent, at 25,017.75 -- its ninth straight session of gains.

"The domestic market witnessed profit-booking near record highs. While the posi-



tive expectations regarding a potential rate cut by the Fed in September remain, the recent geopolitical tensions and rising crude oil prices have made investors cautious amid high valuations.

"Further, the recent shift in Fed stance towards the domestic market and the anticipation that the RBI will align with the Fed's actions are expected to foster a positive outlook in the near term," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

On the Sensex chart, Bajaj Finserv, Alkerm, Larsen &

Toubr, Bajaj Finance, Infosys, Axis Bank and ICICI Bank were the biggest gainers.

In contrast, Hindustan Unilever, JSW Steel, Titan, NTPC and Tata Motors were among the laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.58 per cent, and smallcap index went up by 0.50 per cent.

Among the indices, telecommunication jumped 1.13 per cent, tech (0.70 per cent), financial services (0.68 per cent) and healthcare (0.44 per cent).

GCCs offering up to 20 pc higher salaries than IT services: Report

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Global Capability Centres (GCCs) in India are offering up to 20 per cent higher salaries as compared with the IT services, especially at entry and mid levels, a report said on Tuesday.

According to the report by TeamLease Digital, India has over 1,600 GCCs employing over 1.66 million professionals. It is poised to welcome 800 new GCCs in the next 5-6 years, which shows the country's growing prominence as a global tech hub.

GCCs are centralized units established by multinational companies to manage specific business functions or processes, leveraging cost advantages, a skilled work-



force, and favourable business environments in strategic locations worldwide. GCCs play a vital role in driving efficiency and innovation across sectors such as IT, finance, and

research and development.

On the other hand, IT products & services encompass development, production, and management of hardware, software, networks, and ser-

vices that enable organizations in the creation, management and optimization of or access to information and business processes.

"GCCs are rapidly surpassing the IT sector in the talent market, especially at entry and mid levels. They offer salaries that are, on an average, 12-20 per cent higher than those in IT services and non-tech industries," TeamLease Digital CEO Neeti Sharma said quoting the report. This wage premium underscores the growing influence of GCCs as they attract top talent from the IT sector to fuel their expansion, signalling a shift in market dynamics where GCCs are emerging as the dominant force, she added.

EKA Mobility enters into strategic pact with IKEA

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Commercial electric vehicle maker EKA Mobility on Tuesday said it has formed a strategic partnership with Swedish furniture retailer IKEA for supply of electric delivery vans in India.



Under the partnership, Eka has already delivered 10 such vehicles to IKEA, with plans to expand the fleet across multiple regions in the country, EKA Mobility said. The collaboration is a part of IKEA's plan to electrify its last-mile delivery fleet in the coun-

try, it said. The transition to electric delivery vans is expected to significantly reduce IKEA's carbon footprint, contributing to a more sustainable and environmentally friendly logistics operation, EKA mobility said. "By supplying IKEA with

200 global players to attend Bharat Battery Show

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Over 200 global players are likely to showcase cutting-edge battery and charging infra technologies at the Bharat Battery Show in January 2025.

Industry body India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA), in a statement, said it is organising the Bharat Battery Show at the second Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025.

According to the statement, the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025 led by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry is

set to be held on January 17-22, 2025, across three major venues -- Bharat Mandapam, Yashobhoomi (IICC) Dwarka, and India Expo Center & Mart, Greater Noida.

IESA, as a key industry partner, has been entrusted with the organisation of the Battery Tech Pavilion, Recycling Pavilion, and Charging Infra Pavilion under the umbrella of the Bharat Battery Show.

Bharat Battery Show -- part of the Bharat Mobility -- will be organised at the central Delhi venue Pragati Maidan,

New Delhi, from 19 to 21 January 2025.

The Bharat Battery Show (an expo on batteries and charging) will feature cutting-edge technologies in battery storage, battery recycling, and charging infrastructure, reflecting IESA's commitment to driving the adoption of clean energy and sustainable mobility solutions in India. IESA said that it is expecting 200+ global players to showcase their cutting-edge battery and charging infra technologies during this event.

Road developers to see slower revenue growth of 5-7 pc: Crisil

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Revenue growth of road engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) companies is expected to moderate to 5-7 per cent next fiscal, as lower national highway awarding weighs on their order books, rating agency Crisil said on Tuesday.

That said, the credit profiles of these companies will remain stable, supported by steady operating profitability and strong balance sheet, it added.

Crisil Ratings senior director Manish Gupta said the revenue growth will be impacted this fiscal and the next -- after a compound annual growth rate of 13 per cent over the

past five years.

Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) awarded an average of 12,500 km projects between fiscals 2022 and 2023, but the number dropped to 8,581 km last fiscal and is seen modest at 8,000 km this fiscal. This slowdown is attributed to procedural issues linked to the approval of cost estimates of projects and restrictions under model code of conduct before elections, transition-linked issues as the government explores build-operate-transfer (BOT) toll model for future projects in addition to its currently dominant modes of EPC and the hybrid annuity model (HAM), it said.

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA PANCHAYAT RAJ ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT TENDER NOTICE** Dt. 27.08.2024  
Online tenders are invited on procurement platform for the works shown in tender notice comprising of (01 to 15) NIT with an estimate cost of Rs.150.00 Lakhs sanctioned under SDF, DMFT Grants. Tenders shall be uploaded by DPRE, PIU, JS Bhupalpally on e-procurement platform randomly and each NIT will be available on online with validity period of (07) clear working days from date of publishing from 30.08.2024 onwards. Other details can be seen in online https://tender.telangana.gov.in and also obtained from DPRE PIU Bhupalpally Email ID: dprebhupalpally@gmail.com Sd/- District Panchayat Raj Engineer P.O.No: 3314-PPCL/ADVT/10204-25, Dt. 27-08-2024

**GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION SHORT TENDER NOTICE** Date: 27.08.2024  
NIT No. 10/EEC-4/LBNR/GHMC/2024-25  
Name of the Work: Maintenance Works-1 No., Estimate Amount: Rs. 8.50 Lakhs, Start Date / Last Date & Time for Receipts of Bids: 27.08.2024 @ 03:00 PM / 31.08.2024 @ 03:00 P.M., Name & Address Officer Cell No.: Sri. V. Karthik., Executive Engineer, L.B.Nagar Circle-4, GHMC (M): 9701365519. For further details can be seen at e-procurement@https://tender.telangana.gov.in. Sd/- Executive Engineer L.B.Nagar Circle-4, GHMC P.O.No: 3314-PPCL/ADVT/10204-25, Dt. 27-08-2024

**GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION 'E' PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE** Date: 27.08.2024  
NIT No. 14/DB/EE/Awal Circle/GHMC/2024-25  
Name of the Work: Engaging of tractor trolley mounted with 10 hp diesel dewatering pumpset, in ward no.134 of Awal Circle-27, GHMC. Estimate Amount: Rs. 2.00 Lakhs, Start Date & Time: 28.08.2024 @ 02.00 P.M., Last Date & Time for receipts of Bid: 02.09.2024 @ 02.30 P.M. Name & Address of EE: Executive Engineer, Awal Circle-27, GHMC. Further details can be seen at e-procurement@www.e-procurement.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer, Awal Circle-27, GHMC P.O.No: 3314-PPCL/ADVT/10204-25, Dt. 27-08-2024





## Unlocking Munjya-verse

The man behind the horrifying yet also humorous world of *Munjya*, Aditya Sarpotdar, gets in touch with *The Pioneer* for an exclusive chat about directing the project, relishing frightening moments and more around the same

SHIKHA DUGGAL

**M**unjya, a movie from the horror comedy universe that debuted in theatres this year, was out before *Street 2*. *Munjya*, which stars Abhay Verma and Sharvari in the key roles, is currently available on OTT and its popularity seems greater than that of *Street 2*. Isn't now the ideal moment for us to present to you our exclusive interview with *Munjya*'s director, who has sparked an online debate between fans of *Street 2* and *Munjya* over which is the finest?

Aditya Sarpotdar, the interviewee, takes us back in time by stating, "Directing *Munjya*, I was determined to create a jumpscare since the film was slated for big-screen release. I'll be honest: yes, I did intend to frighten folks! Hehe. However, I thought it would be a drastic risk to combine it with some comic components and I hoped that it would work. You can tell that we struck the appropriate notes! I was thrilled when the box office results for the film began to roll in shortly after its premiere. Being a part of the genre was enjoyable; however, the main difficulties I could identify were with *Munjya*'s writing. With everything, including the CGI character *Munjya*, we couldn't have made a mistake! Furthermore, the only CGI character we had was our protagonist; there were no other references. I started from scratch with everything."

That isn't the case! In *Munjya*, humour did not triumph over horror. The intended audience for the director was never a niche; he was making it for his general audience. He wanted to relish those frightening moments rather than fear people. In light of this, this genre is undoubtedly a little challenging. It came down to timing and writing most of the time. "I really tried to reduce the jump scares to a minimum so that the elderly wouldn't actually have a heart attack. Thus, I counterbalanced it with a good laugh. I also encountered a lot of female viewers who, to be very



honest, weren't initially interested in watching *Munjya* because they thought it might have been really scary. After all this, I learned that my target audience were women and children," adds this year's wildly popular film's director.

With *Munjya*'s popularity, he shares, "I also wanted to introduce another new—you could call it intriguing, whatever—but unique notion. My origins are in the Konkani area! I was aware of this myth when I was younger. You see, people really did buy into the idea. I noticed a lot of explanation videos cropping up on my stream as soon as the trailer was out, which led me to believe that, yes, people are still interested in seeing some folklore-related content. Vlogs were posted online! For a filmmaker, the imagination point is particularly special since it allows us to think beyond the conventional storyboard. Because *Munjya* also included a cultural element, people could relate to it much more." Aditya wanted to share with the readers how his decision to include a folklore aspect made the film even more profitable.

Not only that, but he also offered actors Abhay Verma and Sharvari a fresh start. They're fast becoming the names to keep an eye on! The *Kakuda* fame says, "Because Sharvari Wagh and Abhay Verma had it in them, they were my film's leading duo. When I vanquished these two, I had won half the fight. Even though

goal was to make it appear as authentic as possible."

Yes, his lead actress did light up the screens when we all watched her flexing her booty in the *Taras* song! In the director's opinion, "I included the song *Taras* only to advertise the movie; I didn't want people to think *Munjya* was a Marathi movie. Our song *Taras* was a reaction to my upbringing in provincial film, where I came from. *Munjya*'s public appearance was greatly aided by Sharvari's moves! Viewers start to realise that the movie is blatantly commercial. Sharvari looks amazing and she truly did crack *Taras* on her own! She completed it overnight; buddy, it's not simple. People jumped when they saw *Taras* and realised which movie she belonged in. I'm sure Sharvari was itching to have that one highly-regarded movie in her repertoire. She's been watching films and she's gotten picky. When things didn't work out for *Bunty aur Babli*, she changed. In actuality, not even Abhay signed any other film until the movie was out. Their diligence paid off."

Regarding the breathtaking locales we witnessed in *Munjya*, the director informed us that he has been visiting Konkani for as long as he can remember. He travels to Konkani at least three times a year. *Munjya* is the third of his three films that are set in the Konkani region. He has spent a lot of time there; therefore, he is well-versed in their culture. Actually, this was the first time his cast had visited the Konkani side. "I took them to the quaint towns and they were totally fascinated by them," he informed us. "Additionally, I dislike telling themes that are so universal in real life because I want the public to understand where I stand through the films I make. Not that I create a lot of preachy movies. The first nine minutes of *Munjya* were crucial, in my opinion, because I have previously worked on Marathi films. My

**IN ORDER TO KNOW WHAT KINDS OF EMOTIONS MY ACTORS ARE GOING THROUGH, I DO RESEARCH ON THEIR REAL-LIFE BACKGROUNDS WHEN I AM CASTING**

## 'I do not feel pressured to be Shakti Kapoor's son or Shraddha's brother'

TEJAL SINHA

Just as his character in his latest venture, *Chalti Rahe Zindagi*, Siddhanth Kapoor is all about fighting against the odds, with the brightest smile on his face. Recognised for his versatility in handling a range of characters and praised for his achievements in both mainstream and award-winning movies, the talented star is currently enjoying the traction he has been receiving for *Chalti Rahe Zindagi*.

With a lot of ups and downs, many rejections back-to-back, and being accepted by filmmakers for his skills, his journey has been all about gaining experience and having a lot of fun along with his hard work. "I had gotten a lot of support from a lot of people; the journey has been very good and the best is yet to come," begins the *Bombairiya* actor in an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*. For the uninitiated, Siddhanth is the son of the OG Shakti Kapoor and brother of the *Street* star Shraddha Kapoor. However, more than being known by their names, he has created a niche for himself and he couldn't agree with us much as he says, "Yes, I actually do different kinds of cinema compared to dad and Shraddha, sometimes more like low-budget films, but the impact has been there."

Though coming from a filmy background, he had gone through his own struggles: "The rejections have happened and I guess that's what makes you stronger. It's not easy because comparison always happens with the sibling, father, mother, or whoever it is. It always works like that, but I think I'm enjoying it and I'm around good people."

Going ahead as we discuss his experience working on a project like *Chalti Rahe Zindagi*, it was no less than a marvelous one for him. "It was amazing working with such a beautiful, honest and talented team. But again, a lot of hard work went into it because it was shot during the lockdown with permissions and a lot of rules and regulations. A lot of my scenes were in cycles, so I had to travel a lot. It was quite hectic, but a lot of fun."

Though the shooting could have been a little bit of a challenge, his role wasn't! Rather, the *Shootout at*



Actor Siddhanth Kapoor, who is currently basking in the success of his latest venture, *Chalti Rahe Zindagi*, speaks to *The Pioneer* of his beginnings, facing rejections, creating a niche for himself and more.

Wadala actor says his character was much more relatable, mirroring who Siddhanth is in real life. "The previous ones that I played have gray shades, but that's not me, unlike in *Chalti Rahe Zindagi*. Many people have said that 'Chalti Rahe Zindagi' will make you stronger. It has been very relatable to me with this character. Like I said, there was a time when I was going through the rejection phase." And he believed, *Chalti Rahe Zindagi*!

But again, hailing from a prominent filmy family, does that certainly pressure him in any way, we ask? And he enthuses, "I do not feel pressured; I just enjoy myself and do good work. That's about it." Staying around showbiz is definitely not his scene. Siddhanth is someone who enjoys doing his work and quietly moves on.

Meanwhile, recalling shooting with his darling sister on the sets of *Haseena Parkar*, he recalls, "It was really good and a lot of projects came to me, but the one *Haseena Parkar* did with my sister was special. We did a lot of hard work and had fun together. I was really emotional at times. But it's so much fun to work with your sibling."

Are we going to see the *Papa, Beti* and *Beta* trio anytime or sometime later? He says, "Why not? If the script comes by with a good set-up, then for sure."

For him, it's all about positivity, good people, travelling, music culture and good spirituality, among many other things that keep him moving.

So what's the criteria that he looks for to check off a project? It's the people, script, director, location and character with a decent release. "Comedy character is what I want to really play," says *The Heist* actor as he goes on to sign off, saying, "I do have some upcoming projects that I'm definitely going to speak about when I can."

## JAW CLENCHING DILEMMA OF BRUXISM

You may not be aware of it, but bruxism or tooth grinding is more common than you think. This condition often results from stress and anxiety, which are quite visible in worn-out teeth, aching jaws and morning headaches. It affects anyone; despite the fact that adults remain at risk, most commonly those under chronic stress who have unhealthy lifestyles leading or even people with unaligned teeth due to sleep apnea.

For some people, the tension they feel in their temples gives them away as sufferers while for others its partners who complain of the disturbing sound of grinding at night. Whether it is brought about by stress, anxiety or simply disarranged teeth; this condition can result in life-long dental complications like enamel erosion if not treated. However, there is good news since there are various ways through which you can effectively manage this state so that your grin remains bright and strong.

Stress is one of the main causes of clenching or grinding teeth. While sleeping, there are individuals who unconsciously grind their teeth mostly because of pressure or nervousness.



It is possible for you to cut down on it by using relaxation methods such as meditation, yoga and deep breathing. Incorporating these practices that reduce anxiety into your daily life will reduce overall stress levels and potentially rid you of bruxism.

Stress-related teeth grinding is a particular problem that may be addressed effectively through Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). Through CBT it is possible for individuals to identify triggers which cause bruxism and develop healthier coping mechanisms. For instance, if

one is highly anxious then there are strategies which CBT can employ in order to manage this anxiety hence reducing how often and severely one grinds his/her teeth.

For people who clench or grind their teeth during the night dental night guards are often recommended. These devices are tailored to fit an individual person's mouth and act as shields against further wear. While night guards protect your teeth from damage it also relieves symptoms like migraines, jaw pain and tightness in the muscles. A night guard worn during

sleep may help to save teeth from the harmful effects of bruxism. Some cases may require medication for relief of bruxism signs. Jaw muscle tension can be reduced by muscle relaxants while anti-anxiety drugs are used in order to minimise anxiety that causes clenching jaw joint disorder (bruxism).

Teeth grinding may also be caused by malocclusion or malpositioning teeth so that they do not meet properly when one chews or bites food. This misalignment can create pressure points that lead to grinding. In such cases, dental correction such as orthodontic treatment may be necessary. By realigning the teeth, this will reduce pressure and tension resulting in relief from grinding which would in turn relieve symptoms and stop further damage on their dentition.

There are several lifestyle changes that can be useful in managing teeth grinding. For instance, reducing your caffeine and alcohol consumption (especially before going to bed) can decrease the likelihood of sleep bruxism. Also, avoid habits such as biting on pencils or pens. If you smoke, quitting may help as it increases the chances of bruxism occurrence.

### SELF-CARE PRACTICES

Apart from these treatments, there are a few things you can do at home to help manage bruxism. These include:

- **Jaw muscles:** Stretching the jaw muscles, and exercises can relieve tension in the jaw muscles specifically associated with teeth grinding. Make sure to consult your dentist or physician before trying any specific mouth workouts.
- **The heat compresses:** Soothing warm compress placed on the jaw muscles helps them relax and reduce muscle tensions that trigger teeth grinding.
- **Eating considerations:** Refrain from hard or chewy foods that put stress on your teeth and also minimize signs of grinding.
- **Sleep hygiene:** Establishing good sleep habits like ensuring sufficient rest, avoiding alcohol and caffeine will help reduce nocturnal bruxism.
- **Regular dental checkups:** By making regular visits to your dentist, the early stage of bruxism can be detected thus saving further damage to your teeth. Additionally, a dentist can evaluate if your treatment strategies are working or require changes.

There is no cure for tooth grinding, but it can be effectively managed through various therapies. There are numerous ways to treat this condition such as stress-reduction techniques, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), dental night guards, medications and dentistry correction among others. Nevertheless, it is crucial to work closely with your healthcare provider or dentist who will advise you on the best treatment option for you. Alternatively, self-care practices e.g., jaw exercises; warm compresses; and maintaining good sleep habits could alleviate bruxism effects in one's life.

(The author, Dr. Sindhu U Muktamath, is the HOD - Dental Science, at Aster Whitefield Hospital.)

# what's brewing?



Swadesh together with the global couturiers Falguni Shane Peacock announced an exclusive showcase at Swadesh's flagship store in Hyderabad. The collection features iconic Indian crafts such as Kanjeevaram silks, Chikankari embroidery and Banarasi brocades, meticulously designed to reflect the ethos of both brands. The limited edition couture, available exclusively at Swadesh, reimagines Indian artisanal heritage through contemporary masterpieces, showcasing exquisite craftsmanship alongside innovative design.



Classic Mrs. India Ratna Mehera and Bollywood's upcoming actress Sahruda Fruity, along with the organisers Somnath Bowmik and Abhijit Shaw, inaugurated the Silk of India Handloom Expo 2024, at Kalinga Cultural Centre in Banjara Hills Road no: 12. The expo promises to be a vibrant showcase of artisanal craftsmanship and cultural heritage.

PARTY  
Photos by - SV Chary

## Global Ophthalmology body honours Gullapalli N Rao

**D**r Gullapalli N Rao, Founder - Chair of the L V Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI) was awarded the prestigious ICO Jules François Golden Medal for 2024 by the International Council of Ophthalmology. He received the award amongst his peers from around the world at the World Ophthalmology Congress 2024 (WOC2024) Vancouver, Canada. The ICO Jules François Golden Medal for 2024 is given once every four years for 'ophthalmic work of the highest scientific quality.'

## Week of unmissable eyewear extravaganza

**T**itan Eye+ redefined the eyewear experience with its latest extravaganza, "The Great Indian Spectacle." This spectacular event, ran from August 14th to 19th, meticulously crafted to bring the latest trends in the eyewear category within everyone's reach. With a focus on providing exceptional value and style, one enjoyed a discount up to 25% on a range of stylish frames and spectacles to choose from. The Great Indian Spectacle offered a compelling range of deals.

## SOCIAL celebrates 10 years of redefining urban culture

**S**OCIAL marked its 10th anniversary, celebrating a decade of communities and connections. For ten years, SOCIAL has been the go-to spot to hangout, beloved by the nation's youth for its vibrant atmosphere and unique experiences. Starting August 16, 2024, SOCIAL kicked off this milestone celebration with its guests across India, extending the experience throughout August.

## TATA Starbucks unveils its first pet-friendly store

**T**ATA Starbucks has announced the launch of its first pet-friendly store in India. Featuring a range of varied pet-friendly amenities, this unique store extends the Signature Starbucks experience to not only coffee enthusiasts but also their furry companions. The store features a specially designed coffee forward menu for its consumers while their pets relish a delicious treat - Starbucks Puppucino (vanilla whipped topping). The store offers special dog parking areas with leash hooks, water bowls and an indoor as well as outdoor seating area where pets can play along with a curation of toys.

## Hawkins is now 10 minutes away on Swiggy Instamart!

**I**n a move to revolutionise the way customers shop for kitchen essentials, Swiggy Instamart, announced the launch of Hawkins Cookers Limited on its platform. For the first time, Hawkins cookware will be available on quick commerce, allowing customers to get their favourite Hawkins items, including pressure cookers, pans and more, delivered straight to their doorstep in under 10 minutes, ensuring unparalleled convenience.

## Yuma Energy launches operations in Hyderabad

**Y**uma Energy announced that it has surpassed one million monthly battery swaps within just 18 months of starting operations. Even as it celebrated this milestone, it also launched its BaaS service in Hyderabad, Telangana, extending its overall presence to 10 key cities. The company's accelerated growth attests to its success at filling a critical market gap with its deep tech-driven operations and benchmark-setting service standards.

## DCGpac launches premium gift packagings

**D**CGpac is thrilled to announce the launch of its premium gift packaging for the festive season. These thoughtfully designed gift packages are perfect for adding a touch of elegance and joy to any celebration, making them an ideal choice for individuals and businesses looking to delight their loved ones, clients, employees and partners during this festive period. The new range of gift packaging offers a variety of customisable options, allowing both individuals and businesses to tailor the packaging to reflect their personal style, brand identity and the spirit of the season.

## Step into The Corner Room

**N**ewest destination for discerning palates, invites guests to indulge in a gastronomic experience like no other, where every corner spills stories of laughter, flavour and unforgettable moments. The Corner Room is an establishment that promises to redefine "fine dining" with a blend of exquisite flavours, impeccable service and an elegant ambience. It is not just a place to eat - "It's a destination where events come together to create a multifaceted and enriching experience".

### CURTAIN RAISER

## Telangana Global AI Summit

TELANGANA IS LEADING THE WAY IN AI INNOVATION!

Join us at the Curtain Raiser for the Telangana Global AI Summit, organised by NASSCOM, on 28th August 2024 at 5:30 PM at HYATT Gachibowli, Hyderabad. This exclusive event will give a glimpse of the groundbreaking discussions, transformative innovations, and cutting-edge technologies that will shape the AI landscape. Be part of the conversation with global AI pioneers, thought leaders, and industry experts. On the spot registrations will begin from 5pm. Don't miss this opportunity to connect, collaborate, and contribute to the AI revolution

**Location:** HICC, Hyderabad

## FUN

### ARCHIE



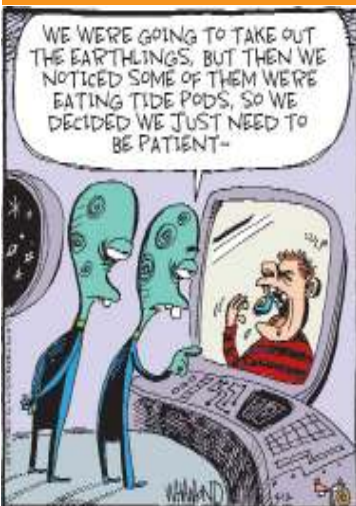
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### GARFIELD



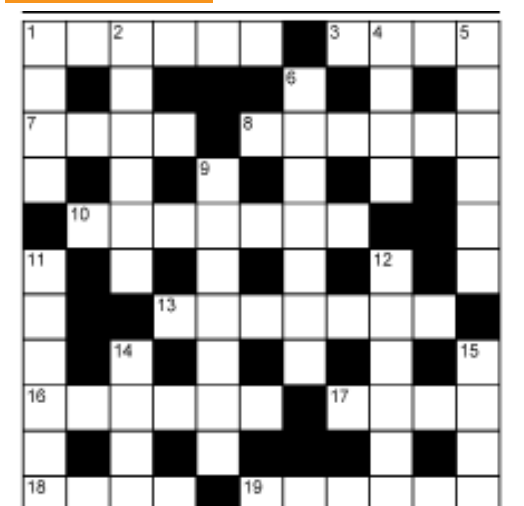
### REALITY CHECK



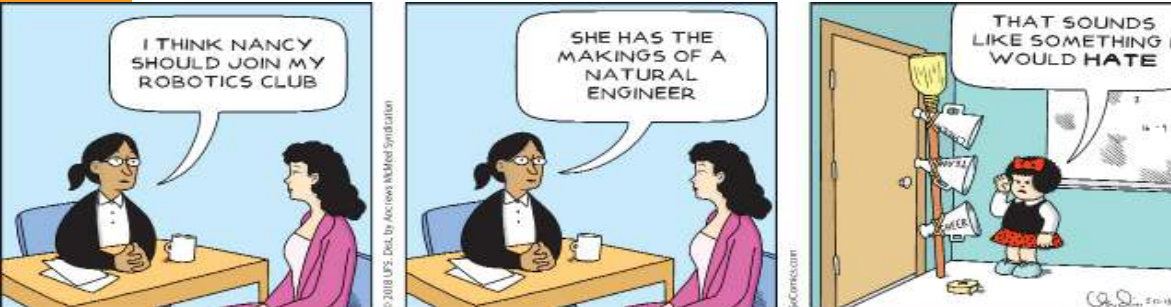
### SPEED BUMP



### CROSSWORD



### NANCY



### SUDOKU

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

**Yesterday's solution**

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

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

### ACROSS

- A sheep's coat
- Hall
- A tangle in your hair
- Get
- Sets fire to
- Courage
- Disappear
- Thought
- Lines
- A bird that is raced for sport
- Watch
- Female tiger
- Tremble with cold
- A bed for a baby
- Cold winter flakes
- Sunrise

### DOWN

- Counterfeit
- As much as is needed
- Rip
- Draw with this



# 'TO DEBATE, AUDIENCE NOT COMING TO THEATRES IS WRONG'



Actor Nani's upcoming film, *Saripodhaa Sanivaaram*, is all set to hit theatres on August 29. Ahead of the release, he spoke about the film, working with director Vivek and shared a lot more insights around the film



SURESH KAVIRAYANI  
sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

Nani is currently busy promoting his upcoming film *Saripodhaa Sanivaaram* and has been travelling to different cities. The actor was here in Hyderabad on Tuesday and spoke to the media here before he could jet off to Bengaluru.

"As an actor, I want to complete my responsibility, so I have made sure to promote the film in all the areas," began the *Eega* star, who believes that it is also his responsibility to promote the film and said, "My job is done here and now; it's up to the film to take it to another level."

Vivek Atreya's earlier film *Ante Sundaraniki* with Nani did not go well with the expectations. However, now that Nani has again worked with him on this *Saripodhaa Sanivaaram*, the actor has given the director another chance, as he said, "I don't think this logic is correct. Many of the great directors, actors and producers have all seen flops. If a person doesn't work with a flop director, actor, or producer, only Rajamouli can make films and others would stop making films," said Nani, adding that failure makes a person stronger. "If a director gives two continuous successful films, he may get lazy for the third one, but one failure makes a person stronger and he also works harder to get success."

He further shared that director Vivek Atreya is not demoralised by *Ante Sundaraniki* not doing well at the box office. "He feels that our film didn't collect more than my earlier films. I know his strength and I encouraged him well like a brother when he needed to; I did my job," shared the *Hi Nanna* fame.

Talking about this *Saripodhaa Sanivaaram*, he said, "It's an action film; you can see only 20 percent of the action, and the remaining 80 percent, we take you into the action mood. I like all kinds of films, but I enjoyed working on this action film," said Nani. He added that there are no made-up scenes in the film. Rather, Nani, who plays an LIC agent in this film, says, "Everything is organic and the audience will definitely enjoy it." Going ahead, he opines that the debate around the audience not coming to the theaters is incorrect.

"If you look at the scenes before the pandemic, there were only one or two films that had collected Rs 1000 crore, but after Covid, you can see three films that had collected Rs 1000 crore. So, I don't think that the debate about audiences not coming to theaters is right. Earlier, we made six out of ten films with a minimum guarantee; now, only two out of the films have a minimum guarantee. If you make a good film, people will definitely come to theaters to watch it. There is no need to do some magic trick; you have to do all's make a good film," he said about the debate.

Tamil actor SJ Suryah is playing an important role in it. When asked if the makers just took SJ Suryah onboard just to please the Tamil audience, he refutes it. "If you make the *Saripodhaa Sanivaaram* film in Hollywood, I feel SJ Suryah is the perfect choice for Daya's role," clarifies Nani. He added that his Telugu accent also comes out very nicely. "I am sure everyone will just fall for his Telugu accent and want to watch the film a second time," says Nani.

He further shared that in this film he gives responsibilities to others as well. "Generally I play the lead character, but I share more weight on SJ Suryah, Murali Sharma and Priya Mohan. I was there in the front, but they are the driving force in this film," says Nani.

There are some media reports that Janhvi Kapoor is going to pair opposite Nani and that he is also playing a key role in *Kalki 2898AD* part two. "I don't have any idea about all these reports, and they are not true," he said. He added that these days the social media is writing what they want, and he can't deny for each and every report.

# Sudheer Babu's *Maa Nanna Superhero* releasing this Dasara

Actor Sudheer Babu is coming up with another variety of subject, and this time he chose an emotional drama titled *Maa Nanna Superhero*. Abhilash Reddy Kankara of *Loser* fame is the director. The makers announced that they had completed the shooting part of the film and now they are in post-production.

Meanwhile, the makers came up with an update on the film's release. They planned for the film to release during the Dasara festival. The makers wanted to cash in on Dasara holidays and they feel the content of the

film will definitely appeal to family audiences, so they thought it was the perfect time to release. They said they will announce the exact release date at a later stage!

The film centers around a father-son drama, which is embarked on a soul-stirring journey, discovering the true meaning of love and connection.

Aarna is playing the female lead opposite Sudheer Babu, while Sai Chand, Sayaji Shinde, Aamani and Annie are playing prominent roles. Raju Sundaram, who is playing an important role in the film, is also the choreographer for the film. Sunil Balusu is the producer.



# Don't drag me into controversy, again: Raj Tarun

Raj Tarun has been in the news for the last few months, not for his films but about his marriage and the allegations made by his alleged girlfriend. The actor is now concentrating on his upcoming film *Bhale Vinnade* which is releasing on September 7. The trailer for this film was released on Tuesday and he spoke about the film and all other things with the media. The actor says that he is now completely focusing on this film and promoting it.

"I couldn't do proper promotion for my earlier two films," he says. When asked about the controversies surrounding him and how he gets out of it, he shares, "Don't drag me again into controversy by asking the same; I am good now and focusing more on my film." He denies that he deliberately made an issue with his girlfriend Lavanya to get promotion for his earlier films; that's why everything is calm now. "Can anyone do a promotion like that for a film? I can't digest the thought," he said and he never wanted to do that. He added that the film is a clean entertainer and he gave credit to the director, Sivasai Vardhan, for it. Raj Tarun is playing a saree draper in it.

He accepted that his earlier films didn't do well at the box office. "I got good appreciation for *Purushottamudu*, but *Tiragabadara Swamy* is not done well. I would like to know what went wrong with those films and in the future I don't want to make the same mistakes. Still, I feel guilty that I couldn't promote those films," he said.

There are reports that Raj Tarun is going to enter the *Bigg Boss* house, but the director Sivasai denies it completely. "It's totally wrong. He can't sit in a room for a few hours and how can he stay in a house for a few days? Not possible. It is wrong news," said the director. Popular director Maruthi is presenting this film and Kannada actress Manisha is playing the female lead. "She dubbed on her own for her role; she is speaking Telugu very well," further shared the director.

# Devara makers officially reveal dual role of NTR

The makers of the much-awaited film *Devara* revealed an important update about the film. Directed by Koratala Siva, the film has Janhvi Kapoor as the female lead and Hindi actor Saif Ali Khan in a negative role. On Tuesday, the makers released a poster with the title 'The Faces of Fear' and showing two faces of Jr NTR. It says that NTR is playing dual roles, which they confirmed. According to a source, Jr NTR can be seen as father and son in the film, in which the story backdrop is sea. The film is releasing on September 27; it's a month away, so the makers are revealing more about the film and story. The film has completed its shooting and is also about to complete the post-production work. The first part of *Devara* is releasing and the second part may release next year. This film is important for one Jr NTR, as his earlier film *RRR* was successful not only in Telugu but in other languages too. The multi-starrer film won accolades at the international level, so Jr NTR wanted to continue the same kind of success with this *Devara*. That's why the makers are planning to release the film in all languages, along with Telugu. Shruti Marathe, who is popular in Marathi and Hindi cinema, is playing a key role in this film. Apart from Saif Ali Khan, there are many actors like Srikanth, Prakash Raj, Malayalam actor Shine Tom Chacko, Ajay and Murali Sharma. Anirudh Ravichander is providing the music, while Sabu Cyril is the production designer.



# FARIA'S FIRST LOOK FROM MATHU VADALARA 2 OUT

Followers of the successful Telugu movie *Mathu Vadalaru* from 2019 can look forward to the sequel releasing on September 13, bringing them a delightful treat. The crime-comedy, helmed by first-time director Ritesh Rana, caught viewers off guard with its original storyline and unforeseen turns. Titled *Mathu Vadalaru 2* the next installment assures a similar exciting journey, continuing the story that had audience members on the edge of their seats.

In this film, Sree Simha and Satya will reprise their roles as Babu and Yesu. Adding to the cast now, Faria Abdullah has joined as the female lead. Increasing the anticipation around the film, the makers had released the first look of Faria and introduced her character as Nidhi.

The poster seemingly introduces her character as a detective agent on a mission. The makers had further also announced that the teaser will be out soon.



# QG IS RAW AND RUSTIC



Jackie Shroff, Priyamani, Sunny Leone and Sara Arjun are playing lead actors in the movie *QG Gang War*. The Telugu rights were bought by producer Venugopal and he says that he is releasing the film on September 20. "It's a complete commercial entertainer and you can see the raw and rustic scenes in the film," says Venugopal.

The director of this film, Vivek Kumar Kannan, worked with popular Tamil and National Award-winning director Bala for nearly 15 years in the direction department. "He came up with some realistic scenes and he shoots in amazing locations. I am confident audiences like it," says the producer. The trailer for the film was released on Monday at an event in Hyderabad.

The film has some big stars like Jackie Shroff, Sunny Leone and Priyamani, who all appeared in different avatars when compared to their earlier films. Popular producer Damodar Prasad, who attended the trailer release event, says that the trailer gave him a big shock. "It is very good, and they also chose a good cast. This movie is made in a commercial format, which people want these days. I wish Producer Venugopal that this film will be a big success," says Damodar Prasad. NTR Sreenu, who worked earlier with senior NTR, is presenting the film.

# HOPEFULLY, WE WILL BREAK FINAL BARRIER IN T20 WC: HARMANPREET

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur remained optimistic that India can grab their maiden global title in the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup, and said conditions in the UAE could work to their advantage. The International Cricket Council has recently shifted the showpiece, to be held between October 3 and 20, to the UAE from Bangladesh owing to the political unrest in the latter nation. "Whenever we play on this kind of stage (World Cup), we always want to do well. We have always done well in the past as well, and hopefully, this time we will break that final barrier and go all the way," Harmanpreet told PTI videos. Harmanpreet was on Tuesday appointed as the captain of the Indian team for the T20 World Cup. The 35-year-old did not read too much into the venue shift, and said the conditions in the UAE are quite similar to India. "We have not played much cricket in the UAE. But the conditions in the UAE are going to be similar to Indian conditions."



"We will see how the conditions play out (there) and try to adjust ourselves to the conditions as soon as possible," said Harmanpreet, who led India to the final of the 2020 T20 World Cup. Irrespective of the playing conditions, she wanted the team to dish out a "positive" game in the World Cup. "As a team, we learn from our defeats and break those barriers that are pushing us back. Hopefully this time we can express ourselves in a more positive way in the World Cup," she said. Harmanpreet also backed the Indian bowlers, who floundered in the recent Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka, to deliver in the World Cup. "The bowlers are working really hard as a team and, hopefully, in this World Cup we tick all the boxes." Harmanpreet, who led Mumbai Indians to WPL victory last year, said the key to winning the World Cup will be to keep themselves in the present. "It is always important for us to play good cricket, keeping ourselves in the present. Whatever the situation is in front of us...we go there and evaluate (it) as soon as possible," she signed off.



## Jeev, Jyoti among Indian stars to compete in country's inaugural Legends Tour

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

"Now, you can play golf as a career till 60." Randhawa, also 52, said not only the money, a golfer can also maintain the competitive spirit by continuing to play in the Legends Tour. "It's good for the budding Indian golfers and amateurs. They will now know that a golfer can play another 10 years after retirement," he said. "By playing in the Legends Tour, you are keeping your golfing passion and competitive spirit intact as well as keeping yourself fit." Jeev (twice Asia No. 1 in 2006 and 2008) and Randhawa (once Asia No. 1 in 2002) are well-known names around the world with numerous appearances in Majors too. Jeev has won four times each on the European and Japan Tours, one on the Korean Tour besides six times on the Asian Tour. Randhawa has won eight times on the Asian Tour and once in Japan. Jeev, who has played all four Majors, was the first Indian to tee up at the Masters at the Augusta National in 2007. He was a former captain of Asia in EurAsia Cup (Europe vs Asia team event). He has five top 10 finishes on the Legends Tour since 2022. Besides Jeev and Randhawa, there are other seven Indians in the fray. They are Mukesh Kumar, Digvijay Singh, Harmeet Kahlon, Vijay Kumar, all past winners on the Asian Tour, Amandeep Johl, Vishal Singh and Sanjay Kumar. The 55-year-old Campbell, who has also won 15 other tournaments around the world, said, "I started playing golf when I was 10. My grandmother told me that time when I achieve success, I should remember I have two hands, one for receiving and another for giving back," he said. "Legends Tour is great in that way. You keep playing after retirement and inspire youngsters to take up the game. We have to give back to the game."

## US OPEN

# Djokovic starts his bid for record 25th Grand Slam title with straight-set win

AP ■ NEW YORK

Novak Djokovic began his bid for a record 25th Grand Slam title and tied Roger Federer with his 89th match win at the U.S. Open by defeating qualifier Radu Albot of Moldova 6-2, 6-2, 6-4. The second-seeded Djokovic, again wearing a gray sleeve over his surgically repaired right knee, was competing for the first time since claiming an Olympic gold medal three weeks ago at the Paris Games, the last significant achievement that was missing from his resume. "It's always challenging to start, particularly when you haven't played on this surface for five, six months,

and coming off an Olympic gold and playing on clay. I haven't had any official matches before the U.S. Open. So I'm expecting to be probably challenged a little bit more in the opening rounds," he said. "Hopefully, I can play better each day." He said his knee, which was operated on in early June, feels fine. Djokovic, a 37-year-old from Serbia, improved to 18-0 in first-round matches at Flushing Meadows and is now 89-13 overall at the hard-court tournament, which he's won four times, including a year ago. He's never lost earlier than the third round at the U.S. Open; Albot never has been past the third round in 30 appearances at majors.



The retired Federer went 89-14 in New York, with five consecutive championships from 2004 to 2008. He's the most recent man to win the U.S. Open at least twice in a row. Among men, only Jimmy Connors, who went 98-17, won more matches than Djokovic and Federer at the event. Djokovic never has lost a Grand Slam match to someone ranked as low as No. 138 Albot. And Albot is now 0-12 against opponents ranked in the top 10. Next up for Djokovic is a countryman, familiar opponent and friend, Laslo Djere, who advanced with a 6-7 (7), 6-1, 6-7 (7), 6-4, 6-2 victory over Jan-Lennard Struff. A year ago, Djokovic

met Djere in the third round at the U.S. Open; Djere took the first two sets before Djokovic came through in five. "It's a guaranteed third round for one of the Serbian guys. Hopefully it's going to be me. But Djere is a guy that really likes playing on a big stage. I think he also loves the conditions here. It's a bit quicker. Ball stays low. He has a very flat backhand particularly and very good serve, great return. He's physically as fit as anybody," Djokovic said. "I remember very well our match. It was a very tough match. I'm going to try to analyze that and hopefully do some things even better than I did last year."

# New Champions League format promises more

AP ■ GENEVA

The new Champions League format this season will see more teams playing more games for more prize money. On Thursday, the Union of European Football Associations makes the draw in Monaco for the match schedule of the new single-standings league phase that replaces the traditional group stage. The first new Champions League format since 2003 promises more of almost everything that Europe's wealthiest and most influential clubs wanted from UEFA. There are four more places in a 36-team lineup; at least eight games each instead of six; Champions League games scheduled in January for the first time; a prize money rise of at least 25% to a minimum of 2.5 billion euros (USD 2.8 billion). There also was more evidence, at UEFA's European Championship this summer, that constant expansion of international competitions is leaving players tired and unable to perform at their best year-round. The new league phase in European club soccer's marquee event will have 144 total games compared to 96 in the group stage last season. The "key aims," UEFA said, is to "improve competitive balance and sporting interest and in the process increase the number of meaningful matches - matches with something at stake for both sides - throughout the competition." In the eighth and final round, all 36 teams play on the same January 29 evening to finalize the



standings which will decide which eight teams advance directly to the pre-quarterfinals - and with what seedings in a tennis-like knockout bracket - as well as which 16 go into a new knockout playoff round in February, and which 12 are eliminated. "We simulated that qualification should be possible with an average of 7.6 points, which means two victories and two draws," said UEFA's head of competitions strategy, Stéphane Anselmo.

### Why change such a successful competition?

Money, mostly, though that's not the only reason. The Champions League in Europe has for the past 32 years showcased the highest quality play in world soccer. It let UEFA steer billions of euros (dollars) of prize money to clubs that pay the highest transfer fees and salaries. Still, influential officials at the European Club Association

(ECA) got bored of the group stage, saying it was too repetitive and lacked drama. They wanted more games against stronger opponents that would be more valued by broadcasters, viewers and new fans worldwide. Their leverage over UEFA was potentially launching their breakaway competition. The road to agreeing on the format was rocky. A controversial first proposal in 2019, favoring storied clubs, was stopped by a

backlash from mid-ranked clubs and domestic leagues. There was intense turmoil sparked by the failed Super League launch in April 2021 by most of the same club officials who negotiated Champions League reform with UEFA. Final format approval came in May 2022 - when Real Madrid, Barcelona and Juventus were exiled from the talks and still pursued UEFA in court - and it was broadly what the rebel Super

League clubs had negotiated.

instead of four last season.

### What is the new format?

Out goes the group-stage format played for 21 seasons where 32 teams were put into eight groups of four teams from a seeded draw. The top two in each group advanced to the pre-quarterfinals. Groups gave each team six games from September into December, playing each rival once at home and once away. In comes a single-standings league - 36 teams each playing eight games against eight different opponents through January. The top eight in the standings go directly to the pre-quarterfinals in March. Teams ranked ninth to 24th go into the knockout playoffs in February. The bottom 12 teams are eliminated. In the playoffs, teams ranked Nos. 9-16 are seeded in the draw to play second legs at home against unseeded teams Nos. 17-24.

### Who gets the four extra places?

Two for countries whose teams collectively had the best record in UEFA club competitions in the previous season. That was Italy and Germany so the fifth-placed teams in Serie A and the Bundesliga qualified: Bologna and Borussia Dortmund. The fifth-ranked national league (based on five years of results in UEFA club competitions) gets a third direct entry. That is currently France and Brest was third in Ligue 1. An extra place goes to the qualifying rounds path for national champions from lower-ranked countries. They now play for five total qualifying places

### How will the draw be done?

The 36 teams come out of four seeding pots graded by each team's "UEFA club coefficient" - its ranking by results in five years of European competitions. The top-seeded pot contains recent Champions League winners and beaten finalists, plus Leipzig and Barcelona. When a team's ball is drawn, its slate of eight opponents - two from each seeding pot, one to play at home and one away - will be allocated by a software program and displayed within seconds. Match dates will be confirmed Saturday, to avoid city clashes with Europa League and Conference League games being drawn Friday in Monaco. Those lower-tier competitions also are a 36-team single-standings league. Conference League teams play just six games.

### Billion-dollar prize money fund

Winning the Champions League title in 2023 earned Manchester City 135 million euros (USD 151 million) from UEFA. This season's winner can reach 150 million euros (USD 168 million), with total competition revenue boosted by selling 189 total games instead of 125. Commercial strategy is managed by a UEFA-ECA joint venture, and new sponsors for the Champions League include a cryptocurrency trading platform and a betting site. Each of the 36 teams gets a basic 18.6 million euros (USD 20.8 million), then 2.1 million euros (USD 2.3 million) for five total qualifying places