

# sunday pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

Published From: VIJAYAWADA HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH BHUBANESWAR RANCHI DEHRADUN



**Emphasises deeper ties for regional prosperity**

5

Banks should focus on **THEIR CORE** business: FM



8

Kissa **KHASSA KA**



10

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**

The TDP will come to power in Telangana. Due to unavoidable circumstances, the party could not contest the TG Assembly elections. However, we are focussing on local elections. I will visit Telangana on all second Saturdays and Sundays. We will launch a membership drive within 15 days.



- N Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister

**DON'T MISS...**

**Don't fall into trap of loan...**

Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha said that cyber crimes to the tune of Rs 1730 crore have been committed across the country in four months. The Home Minister flagged off a walkathon in Vijayawada on Saturday aimed at creating awareness about cyber crimes among people. On the occasion, the HM launched an App designed for awareness and complaints about 16 various types of cyber fraud. Speaking on the occasion, she mentioned that cyber crimes have...

-PAGE: 3

**'Revenue Sadasulu' from...**

The State government is going to conduct 'Revenue Sadasulu' with the primary objective of resolving all issues about lands at the village level from August 16 to September 30. A team of officers belonging to relevant departments shall visit each revenue village and obtain representations from all the persons having land-related issues with specific reference to those affected by land grabbing and Sec 22A manipulation with proper and advanced communication. A senior IAS officer shall be designated as the District Special Officer who will...

-PAGE: 4

**PM to release 109 varieties of seeds...**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Sunday release 109 varieties of seeds that have been developed by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for different climatic zones and are area specific, Union Minister for Agriculture Shivraj Singh Chouhan said here. The PM will release the 109 seed varieties in an event in the national capital. They comprise 23 seed varieties of cereals, nine of rice, two of wheat, one of barley, six of maize, one of sorghum, one of millet, one of ragi...

-PAGE: 5

**Domestic food market expected...**

The domestic food market is expected to grow by over 47 per cent to reach US\$ 1,274 billion by 2027, a report released by the Confederation of Indian Industry and supported by Danfoss India said. India's food processing industry sees innovative startups emerging with cutting-edge technology, the report titled 'Food Processing Sector in India - Potential for Southern States. and released by CII, CII FACE (Confederation of Indian Industry - Food and Agriculture Centre of Excellence) and Danfoss India, said. Danfoss India is a leader in heating, ventilation and air-conditioning and is the subsidiary of Denmark-headquartered engineering major Danfoss. Some of the key highlights of the report, which was released...

-PAGE: 8

## 12 AP irrigation projects revert to original names

Govt issues order rechristening all projects named after YSR or YSRCP leaders

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government has issued orders to restore the original names of 12 irrigation projects, reversing the renaming carried out by the previous YSRCP administration. During that period, several projects were renamed to honour Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy and other YSRCP leaders.

The new Government Order (GO) mandates that various irrigation schemes, especially those renamed after YS Rajasekhara Reddy or YSRCP leaders, revert to their original names. For example, the Ananta Venkata Reddy Handri Neeva Sujala Sravanthi Irrigation Project will be renamed back to Handri Neeva Sujala Sravanthi (HNSS) Irrigation Project.

This marks the second time the HNSS project name has changed. Originally named after former MP Ananta Venkata Reddy of Anantapur during Congress rule, it was renamed when the TDP came to power in 2014. After the 2019 elections, the project name was reverted to honour Ananta Venkata Reddy once more.

### PROJECTS RENAMED

- The Ananta Venkata Reddy Handri Neeva Sujala Sravanthi Irrigation Project will be renamed back to Handri Neeva Sujala Sravanthi (HNSS) Project.
- The Phase-I Interlinking of Godavari and Penna Rivers, previously called YSRCP Drought Mitigation Project (YSRCP DMP), will return to its original name.
- YSR Vedadri Lift Irrigation Scheme will be renamed Mukyala Lift Irrigation Scheme.
- YSR Veligallu Balancing Reservoir will become Veligallu Reservoir.
- Narredy Siva Rami Reddy Reservoir will be renamed Sarvaraya Sagar Reservoir.
- Nellore Barrage, Sangam Barrage, Thatipudi Reservoir, Mogaligundala Mini Reservoir, and Raketla Amidyala Lift Irrigation Scheme will also drop their YSRCP designations.
- Dr. YSR Upper Pennar Project will be renamed Paritala Ravindra Lift Irrigation Scheme.



The Andhra Pradesh government has stated that these changes will be officially published in the state gazette.

## 11 AP IAS officers shifted in minor shuffle

Girisha appointed VC & MD of SAAP

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Girisha PS of 2012 IAS batch has been appointed as the Vice Chairman and Managing Director (VC & MD) of the Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh.

This move comes as part of a minor reshuffle of IAS officers announced on Friday by state Chief Secretary Neerabh Kumar Prasad through GO Rt No 1391. Dr. Manazir Jeelani Samoon has been relieved from the additional charge of this position.

In this reshuffle, eleven IAS officers have been transferred and posted to new positions. B Navya (2016) has been appointed as Joint Collector & Additional District Magistrate of Kurnool District, replacing her role as Director of Tribal Welfare, S Bhargavi (2015), previously Secretary of the AP Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institution Society (Gurukulam), is now the Director of Tribal Welfare. She will also take on the additional role of Secretary of the Gurukulam.

Continued on Page 2

## 'AP didn't benefit from Jal Jeevan Mission funds: Pawan Kalyan

The Dy CM sees misappropriation of funds during YRSCP rule

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Minister for Panchayat Raj K Pawan Kalyan has expressed disapproval that Andhra Pradesh has not reaped the benefits of the Centrally sponsored 'Jal Jeevan Mission' scheme.

He has raised concerns about possible misappropriation of the scheme's funds during the YRSCP regime.

In a video message on Saturday, Pawan Kalyan emphasized that the Central Government's 'Jal Jeevan Mission' aims to provide safe drinking water to every household.

Officials informed me that Rs 4,000 crore was allocated to Andhra Pradesh under the 'Jal Jeevan Mission' during the five years of the YRSCP regime. However, the results are not evident

not evident," Pawan Kalyan lamented. He noted that while some pipelines were installed under the scheme, many were later abandoned.

Pawan Kalyan questioned whether officials had misused the Jal Jeevan Mission funds rather than using them to create lasting infrastructure. He said that the expected outcomes of the scheme have not materialized in AP.

"I have instructed officials to conduct a 'pulse survey' to assess the current status of the Jal Jeevan Mission in AP, including details on the work completed and funds spent. This survey will be conducted statewide, and its findings will be shared with the public," Pawan Kalyan announced.

Continued on Page 2

## EXCISE POLICY CASES



## SC to hear Kavitha's pleas tomorrow

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on August 12 the pleas filed by BRS leader K Kavitha challenging the Delhi High Court's verdict denying her bail in corruption and money laundering cases linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam.

Continued on Page 2

## Naidu to appoint TDP president for TG soon

Announces plan to strengthen party in neighbouring Telugu state

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has announced efforts to address the challenges left by the previous YSRCP government in Andhra Pradesh. During a meeting with key Telangana TDP leaders at NTR Bhavan in Hyderabad on Saturday, Chandrababu Naidu discussed strategies for strengthening the party and expanding membership in Telangana. Reflecting on the party's four-decade journey, he highlighted the resilience they have shown through various ups and downs.

Chandrababu remarked, "It has been a while since I last addressed you, and I hope my visit energizes those who have diligently support-

ed the party. The supporters and activists are eager to see the party regain its strength in Telangana. Due to special circumstances, I did not run in the last election and did not appoint a president. I respect the sentiments of the people in Telangana, and the party needs to focus on strengthening itself and better serving its workers. We will soon appoint a state president. The Telugu Desam Party was once a formidable force in Telangana, but we have weakened over time. I am committed to

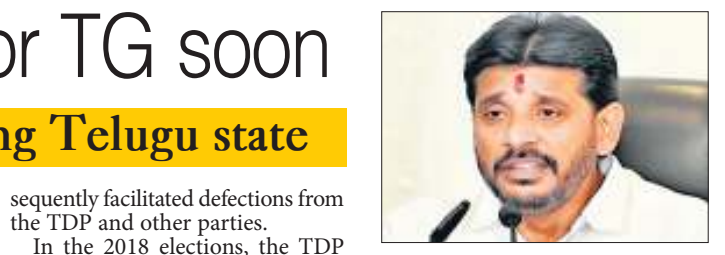
addressing the issues facing both states and working towards solutions."

Since the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh in 2014, the TDP's presence in Telangana has been challenging. In the first Assembly elections post-bifurcation, while the TDP secured power in Andhra Pradesh, it only won 15 seats in Telangana as part of an alliance with the BJP. The Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS, formerly TRS) won 63 seats and its leader, K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR), sub-

sequently facilitated defections from the TDP and other parties.

In the 2018 elections, the TDP allied with Congress, but the coalition failed to make a significant impact. The TDP won 19 seats, while the BRS secured 88 seats. Over time, the TDP's influence dwindled as many of its members joined the BRS, Congress, or BJP.

Notably, Telangana Congress Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who was the working president of the TDP before joining Congress and is believed to be a close aide of Naidu, represents the shifting political landscape. The TDP hopes to regain its political footing in Telangana by focusing on areas with significant Andhra migrant populations.



## YSRCP MLC Duvvada embroiled in extramarital row

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP MLC Duvvada Srinivas is embroiled in a scandal that has caused embarrassment for the party.

Srinivas has been living with Madhuri, ignoring his wife, Duvvada Vani, and their two daughters.

Continued on Page 2

## New rail line will help AP, TG

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A new rail railway route through Malkangiri's tribal belt will provide better connectivity to industries.

Ashwini Vaishnav, the Minister of Railways, said on Saturday that the Pandurangapuram-Bhadrachalam-Malkangiri railway line will be taken up on priority to provide a new rail route through the tribal belt and will act as an alternative rail route between Asansol and Warangal.

The project connects the Junagarh-Nabarangpur-Jepore-Malkangiri-Bhadrachalam-Pandurangapuram route. The new rail line has a length of 290 km and is being executed at a cost of Rs 7,383 crore.

He also said an additional rail corridor to northern and eastern India would help thermal power plants in



south India to get coal faster. The new line will also provide a wider market for agro products in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. This will provide an additional rail route to the coastal area apart from the existing Vijayawada-Visakhapatnam-Bhubaneswar-Kolkata.

This line will provide connectivity to tribal areas and the districts of

Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Koraput, Rayagada and Malkangiri districts which were affected by left-wing extremism. Now economic activities have started and peace is being restored in these districts.

This new line will lead to the development of the above districts of Odisha, the East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh and the Bhadradi Kothagudem district of Telangana.



## Israel airstrike on a Gaza school kills 80 people

PNS ■ DEIR AL-BALAH

An Israeli airstrike hit a school-turned-shelter in Gaza City early Saturday, killing at least 80 people, Palestinian health authorities said, in one of the deadliest strikes in the 10-month-old war between Israel and Hamas.

The Israeli military acknowledged the strike on the Tabeen school in central Gaza City, claiming it hit a Hamas command centre within the school. Hamas denied that. There have been reports of increasing Israeli attacks on Gaza's schools, which have become shelters for people who have been forced to flee their homes by the war.

## Kerala not alone: PM Says Centre will spare no effort to help



PNS ■ WAYANAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday visited the landslides-hit Wayanad district and assured that the Central government will "spare no effort" in helping Kerala in the relief and rehabilitation while describing the tragedy as "nature displaying its furious form".

Modi, who arrived in the hill district by helicopter from Kannur airport, conducted an aerial survey, walked through the disaster-strick-

en Chooramala to get a firsthand view of the destruction caused by the July 30 landslides, visited one of the relief camps and interacted with survivors, including two children who lost their loved ones in the tragedy.

He spoke to survivors, heard their concerns and needs, and tried to comfort them. Modi placed his hands on the heads and shoulders of the victims as they broke into tears while recounting their ordeal.

Continued on Page 2



## BSNL to roll out 4G, 5G compatible platform

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-run telecom firm Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd will roll out 4G and 5G compatible over-the-air (OTA) and Universal SIM (USIM) platform which will enable subscribers to choose their mobile numbers as well as replace SIMs without geographical restrictions.

BSNL said that the platform, developed in collaboration with Pyro Holdings, was inaugurated in Chandigarh, with a disaster recov-

ery site in Trichy. "The new 4G and 5G compatible platform is designed to serve all BSNL customers across the country, offering unparalleled connectivity and service quality," BSNL said on Friday.

The company is rolling out 4G network gradually across the country.

"The introduction of this platform coincides with BSNL's ongoing network upgrades to 4G and 5G, positioning the company at the forefront of telecommunications innovation.



This milestone represents a significant step in BSNL's efforts to bridge the digital divide and empower citizens in rural and remote areas, ensuring equitable access to advanced telecommunications serv-

ices," the statement said.

The over-the-air (OTA) and Universal SIM (USIM) platform provides BSNL mobile subscribers with the flexibility to choose mobile numbers on the fly and enables SIM replacement without geographical restrictions, the statement said.

"This platform will be immensely useful for customers seeking SIM replacement without geographical restrictions, aiding in modification of SIM profile and remote file management on SIM cards. Moreover, it

enables SIM swaps to be performed anywhere in the country," BSNL Chairman and Managing Director Ravi A Robert Jerard said.

Union telecom minister Jyotiraditya Scindia earlier this month said that BSNL will install 80,000 towers for 4G services by the end of October and the remaining 21,000 by March 2025.

The company has launched 4G services in select locations including Punjab on indigenously developed network equipment.

## Why they are not naming the agency that is under a 'cloud'

When a project structure collapses, like the recent crashing of the retaining wall of the Sunkishala project, political heavyweights go all-out to name (and shame) the contracting agency. Surprisingly, even after the deafening 'silence' following the Sunkishala crash, both Congress and BRS leaders have not taken the name of the agency. Bharat Rashtra Samithi working president KT Rama Rao did demand blacklisting of the agency, but refrained from naming the contractor. Only the Bharatiya Janata Party leaders had no qualms about referring to Megha Engineering. The Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board, in its statement, mentioned quite matter-of-factly only once that the project had been awarded to Megha Engineering and that the agreement was signed on 11 March, 2021. Otherwise, the euphemism used by everyone is 'agency'. Scribes recalled that this was the same 'agency' that Revanth Reddy used to curse while he was in the Opposition. Now, even BRS, despite having described itself as 'a responsible opposition party', has not named the agency. For newbies who want to connect the dots, the contracting agency gave funds to all the three parties via electoral bonds as per revelations in official data. Going by Harry Potter terminology, the agency is akin to 'Lord Voldemort -- he who shall not be named'.

MLA Naini Rajender. In sachmuch remarkable speed, the Telangana government has signed an MoU for Rs 1,000 crore investment deal with the Swachh Bio Company established less than a month ago by CM's brother Anumula Jagadeeshwar Reddy. Some sections of the media may be shy to go into it. But, BRS working president KT Rama Rama Rao, during a chat with reporters, pointed out that this would be 'office of profit' when it comes to Revanth and that as the Chief Minister, he cannot shy away. Citing the example set by the Congress high command, he recalled that nearly 12 years ago, Sonia Gandhi announced her resignation from the Lok Sabha and from the National

Advisory Council following a raging controversy over office-of-profit. brazen it out when they seek additional positions even if there are many other deserving contenders. The update is that 10 youth leaders are in the race for the Youth Congress Telangana unit president post. However, National Students Union of India state president and MLC Balmoori Venkat Narsimha Rao, TPCC delegate and LB Nagar Congress unit in-charge Jakkidi Prabhakar Reddy's son Jakkidi Sai Charan Reddy and the Congress candidate who contested from GajwelTumkunta, Narsa Reddy's daughter Aanksha Reddy, are the frontrunners, as per Gandhi Bhavan sources. Throwing spanner in the works, Congress MLA from Ramagundam Makkhan Singh Thakur has called upon Youth Congress activists not to cast their vote for Balmoori Venkat Narsimha Rao. He hopes that the chance would be given to "a Youth Congress common activist".

### REPORTERS' DIARY

Advisory Council following a raging controversy over office-of-profit.

#### Expats irked by Hyderabad traffic

Hyderabad traffic has gone to the dogs literally. A few foreign nationals who frequent the city pointed to the stark difference between the traffic scene now and the situation a year ago. An expat shared that he used to think Bengaluru was worse, but corrected himself after finding that Hyderabad is of late giving tough competition to it. The expat pointed out that this wasn't the case a year ago. He is irritated because all his meetings are getting delayed because of traffic snarls, despite sketching plans to reach the venue in advance. With the city hoping to host the global AI summit, one hopes the government fixes local traffic issues using available pointers. Samples of foreign nationals' opinions must be more than enough, unless the government wants bulk censure by foreign delegates!

#### Copious rains wash away delusive claims of Oppn

In the tinsel town, the term 'iron leg' is often used to describe an actor who is believed to bring bad luck to a film, negatively impacting its commercial success. Although Nature's course is unpredictable, the copious rains this season in Andhra Pradesh have apparently silenced the Opposition. For, the Opposition, extending the iron leg analogy, had claimed that "rains eluded the State during Chandrababu Naidu's (previous) tenure". So, naturally, with the Prakasam Barrage now brimming and with all 70 crest gates of the barrage lifted, the other day Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, en route his residence at Undavalli, made an unscheduled stop to observe the heavy outflow of floodwaters from the barrage. Despite the Chief Minister's positive remarks subsequently, the Opposition has decried that lakhs of cusecs of water is going waste into the sea.

#### 'One man, one post' is just theory

'One man, one post' may be good to discuss as a concept. In reality, people

(With inputs from Pradeep Kumar, Naveena Ghanate and K Venkateshwarlu)

## Sarpanches' bodies discuss panchayat issues with Min

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The leaders of the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Chamber and the Gram Sarpanches Associations met with the Minister of State for Rural Development and Communications, Pemmasani Chandrasekhar, at his office in Guntur on Saturday. The meeting focused on addressing various issues related to Gram Panchayats, and a formal representation was handed over to the minister.



AP PR Chamber and Gram Panchayat Sarpanches handing a representation to Union Minister Pemmasani Chandrasekhar at his office in Guntur on Saturday

During the discussions, the leaders urged Minister Chandrasekhar to take immediate action to recover Rs. 10,411 crore in funds allocated by the 14th and 15th Finance Commissions, which they alleged had been diverted by the previous government. They emphasized the need to return these funds to the Gram Panchayats to support essential local development. Andhra

Parishads, and Zilla Parishads. However, he claimed that the previous YSRCP government had diverted these funds for its own schemes without informing even a single Gram Sarpanch, resulting in stalled development in villages over the past five years. He requested that Minister Chandrasekhar ensure the return of the diverted funds to

the Gram Panchayats' bank accounts. Additionally, he urged the minister to recommend to the Chairman of the 16th Finance Commission that future funds be distributed in a 50:25:25 ratio to ensure equitable allocation among Gram Panchayats, Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituencies (MPTCs), and Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituencies (ZPTCs).

The leaders also proposed that funds from the Upadhi scheme be allocated in a 90:10 ratio for village development and that Upadhi scheme staff be placed under the control of Mandal Parishads and Gram Panchayats.

The meeting was attended by AP Panchayat Raj Chamber General Secretary Birru Pratap Reddy, Vice Presidents A Ramakrishna and G Vasudha, Sarpanches Association State Vice President J Kondaiah, and other prominent leaders.

## 'AP didn't...'

Continued from Page 1

The Panchayat Raj Minister also reiterated efforts to strengthen village panchayats by ensuring adequate funding.

"Since taking office as Panchayat Raj Minister, I have held multiple review meetings with officials from the Panchayat Raj, Forest, and Rural Development departments. We discussed measures to enhance village panchayats and addressed long-standing issues," he said. Pawan Kalyan revealed that three critical decisions were made during these meetings and implemented to build a robust panchayat raj system in the state.

It has been decided to conduct 'Grama Sabhas' in all 13,326 village panchayats, where MPs, MLAs, and Sarpanches will participate in prioritizing MGNREGA works and determining project locations. He affirmed that this initiative aims to improve basic amenities in certain villages using MGNREGA funds.

## CCEA approves 8 major projects

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved eight significant projects under the Ministry of Railways, with a total estimated cost of approximately Rs 24,657 crore. These projects are targeted for completion by the 2030-31 fiscal year.



Minister of Railways, Communications, IT, and Information and Broadcasting, Ashwini Vaishnaw, announced the Cabinet's decision to sanction new railway line projects via a video conference from Delhi. Vaishnaw emphasized that the Pandurangapuram - Bhadrachalam - Malkangiri new railway line project has been prioritized to provide a new rail route through the tribal belt, serving as an alternative route between Asansol and Warangal. The project will enhance connectivity along the Junagarh-Nabarangpur-Jeypore-Malkangiri-Bhadrachalam - Pandurangapuram corridor.

The new rail line, spanning 290 route kilometres, is set to be constructed at a cost of Rs 7,383 crore.

Following the Minister's briefing, Narendra A. Patil, Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) of Vijayawada Division, South Central Railway, addressed local media. Patil stated that the newly proposed lines, approved by the CCEA, will serve as an alternate and parallel route to the heavily congested Vijayawada-Howrah coastal line. He noted that the Pandurangapuram - Malkangiri-Junagarh line via Bhadrachalam will traverse

85.5 kilometres through the East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh, connecting the capital-intensive industrial clusters of Odisha.

Patil expressed gratitude to the Government of India for approving these major projects, which will ease freight movement and provide a crucial alternative route in case of natural calamities or disasters. He highlighted that the current Vijayawada-Howrah sectional capacity has peaked at 130%, and the new line will create opportunities for operating several new trains with enhanced passenger carrying capacity.



## YSRCP condemns attack on Ambedkar's statue

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former MLA Kaile Anil Kumar has strongly condemned the attack on Dr B.R. Ambedkar's statue in Vijayawada, labelling it a heinous act, and criticised the coalition government for its inaction, which he claims reflects the deteriorating law and order situation in the state.

Speaking to the media on Saturday, Anil Kumar accused Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu of showing disrespect toward Dr Ambedkar, pointing out that Naidu has never visited the Smriti Vanam in Vijayawada, where the statue is located. He demanded swift action against those responsible for the attack and expressed dismay at the government's failure to address the incident, calling it appalling.

Anil Kumar also criticised the government's contradictory statements regarding the incident, asserting that it is their responsibility to identify and punish the culprits. He emphasized that the attack on Ambedkar's Smriti Vanam, situated in the heart of Vijayawada near both the Raj Bhavan and the Police Commissioner's Office, is a clear indication of the state's declining law and order.

## Jagan slams Naidu's governance

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former chief minister and YSRCP president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy came down heavily on the current TDP coalition government led by Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu for failing to fulfil their election promises and misleading the public with false financial claims.

Taking to Twitter, the former chief minister pointed out that during the election, Chandrababu Naidu claimed responsibility for the state, promising to create wealth and manage the state's Rs 14 lakh crore debt while guaranteeing all promises made and said Naidu is betraying the people by shifting the responsibility onto them after coming to power, thus revealing his true intentions. He said Chandrababu



Naidu issued misleading white papers to deceive the public, claiming that the state treasury was empty and that there were no funds to pay off debts.

The YSRCP chief highlighted that several welfare schemes, including Amma Vodi, Rythu Bharosa, Vasathi Deevana, interest-free loans, fee reimbursement, unemployment allowance and pensions, have been neglected under Naidu's administration. He also pointed out the lack of action on crucial

schemes like Arogyasri, pension deliveries, and home ration supplies.

He further stated that Chandrababu Naidu is undermining important educational initiatives, such as the TOFEL period in schools and the distribution of educational kits, and neglecting essential services like the midday meal scheme, English as a medium of instruction, and sanitation in schools and villages.

He criticised the law and order situation in the state, citing an increase in crimes and the government's failure to protect women. He questioned Naidu's promises of job creation, financial assistance for fishermen, and the implementation of other schemes, which remain unfulfilled.

## 11 AP IAS officers...

Continued from Page 1

Kothamasu Dinesh Kumar (2017) has been reassigned to the Infrastructure & Investment Department as Managing Director of AP State Fibernet Ltd. He will also hold the additional charge of Managing Director of AP Gas Infrastructure Corporation (APGIC) and AP Drone Corporation. Praveen Adhithya CV (2017), currently CEO of the AP Maritime Board, will assume full additional charge as Managing Director of the AP Airport Development Corporation Limited (APADCL) until further notice. D Haritha (2018), who has been awaiting posting, is now a Joint Collector & Additional District Magistrate of Ananthapuram District. S Chinnna Ramudu (2018), formerly Vice Chairman & Managing Director of AP Scheduled Castes Cooperative Finance Corporation, will take over as Joint Collector & Additional District Magistrate of East Godavari District. P Sreenivasulu (2017), previously Joint Collector & Additional District Magistrate of Chittoor District, has been transferred to the Municipal Administration & Urban Development Department as Commissioner of Guntur Municipal Corporation. Tatimakula Rahul Kumar Reddy (2020) will now serve as Joint Collector & Additional District Magistrate of West Godavari District, replacing his previous role as Project Officer of ITDA, Seethampeta.

Sedhu Madhavan S (2020) is transferred from Project Officer of ITDA, Parvathipuram to Joint Collector & Additional District Magistrate of Vizianagaram District, taking over from Kollabathula Karthik (2020). Kollabathula Karthik (2020) has been reassigned as Joint Collector & Additional District Magistrate of SPS Nellore District.

## YSRCP MLC...

Continued from Page 1

Vani, who comes from a prominent political family and has served as a Zilla Parishad member, accuses Srinivas of neglecting his family and engaging in an illicit relationship with another woman.

Recently, Vani and her daughters attempted to visit Srinivas at his home but were turned away by Madhuri, who claimed they had no connection with Srinivas. On Friday, Vani and her daughters staged a protest outside Srinivas's residence, demanding an explanation for his relationship with Madhuri without formally ending his marriage.

Vani has repeatedly sought help from YSRCP president and former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy but to no avail. She criticized Srinivas for damaging not only their family but also the trust of party workers.

During the protest, which lasted past 2 a.m., Srinivas emerged and attempted to assault Vani and her daughters with a stick. The local community and police intervened to protect them. Srinivas later claimed that his family's actions were an attempt to kill him and seize his property, alleging support from the ruling Telugu Desam Party and accusing the police of ignoring his complaints.

## Kolusu promises all help to Nuzvid residents

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

State Minister of Information, Public Relations and Housing, Kolusu Parthasarathy, has said that he will support the people of the Nuzvid constituency in all possible ways. On Saturday, the minister visited Gopavaram village of Musunur mandal and restarted the mineral water plant built on the premises of Zilla Parishad High School.

The mineral water plant set up earlier was unusable and the villager Siva undertook the repair works with a cost of Rs 60,000 which was restarted by the minister Parthasarathy. Speaking on the occasion the minister said that the alliance government is spending thousands of crores for the future of students and everyone should take advantage of this. He said that if there is any problem in the constituency the people can directly bring the issue to his



notice and will immediately find a way to solve it.

The minister said that all the roads in the constituency are formed with the funds of NRGs and the forest department and will be completed soon. The previous YSRCP government did not leave any funds in the state treasury, however with the vast experience of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu the state is moving ahead in

development. There is a firm determination that every poor person in the state should have his own house. He said that everyone should take advantage of this scheme as it will provide financial assistance. The government's goal is that there shall be no homeless poor person across the state in the next 5 years. School staff party leaders and activists participated in this programme.

## Kerala not alone...

Continued from Page 1

Ayyappan, a survivor of the devastating landslides that swept through Mundakkai hamlet in Wayanad and one of the few who got to interact with Modi, said that the "PM assured all help". The landslides killed 229 people, while over 130 are still missing.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan and Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan during his visit to the ravaged parts, "I would

like to assure the survivors and victims that they are not alone in this time of distress. The nation, the Centre, the state, everyone, is with them. While we cannot replace the lives that have been lost, we should all try to ensure the future and dreams of those who survived are not shattered.

"In such times of distress, when we all work together, very good results are achieved. Everyone's prayers were with the survivors of the landslides, Modi said at a meeting at the District Collectorate here to review the

situation on the ground and work out a plan for the rehabilitation of the landslide victims.

Speaking about his visits to one of the relief camps and a hospital, where many of those injured in the landslides are under treatment, Modi narrated what survivors told him about the disaster and described the landslides as "nature displaying its furious form."

After Modi's visit, state Public Works Minister P A Mohammed Riyas told reporters that on behalf of the state government, Chief Minister Vijayan stressed the need for a comprehensive reconstruction of the landslides-hit areas.

## SC to hear...

Continued from Page 1

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

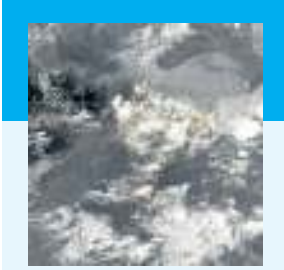
According to the cause list of August 12 uploaded on the apex court's website, a bench of Justices B R Gavai and K V Viswanathan is slated to hear her petitions.

While dismissing her bail pleas, the high court had said no case for grant of regular bail was made for now as the investigation is at a crucial stage.

It had rejected her plea for relief on the grounds of being a woman, saying as a well-educated person and a former MP, she cannot be equated to a vulnerable female, and the court cannot lose sight of the "serious allegations" against her.

This "court is of the opinion that K Kavitha was prima facie one of the main conspirators in the criminal conspiracy hatched in relation to formulation and implementation of Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22," the high court had said.

It had noted the material collected by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has pointed out that Kavitha was one of the chief conspirators in the entire conspiracy relating to the formulation and implementation of the policy. In the high court, Kavitha had challenged the May 6 order of a trial court which had dismissed her bail applications in the CBI's corruption case as well as the ED's money-laundering case.



Heavy rain forecast for R'seema on Aug 14

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Heavy rain is expected in isolated areas of Rayalaseema on August 14. Thunderstorms, accompanied by lightning and strong surface winds with speeds of 30-40 km/h, are also forecasted for isolated spots in Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema over the next five days. According to the Meteorological Centre, a trough extends from South Interior Karnataka to the Comorin area at 0.9 km above mean sea level. The daily weather report indicates that the southwest monsoon remains weak in Coastal Andhra Pradesh but is normal in Rayalaseema. Light to moderate rain or thundershowers are likely at various locations in Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema over the next seven days.

Botsa to file MLC nomination, calls for YSRCP unity

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

YSRCP leader and former minister Botsa Satyanarayana has declared his plan to file his nomination papers on August 12 for the forthcoming MLC elections. Speaking at a press conference on Saturday, Botsa, accompanied by fellow party leader Kurasala Kannababu, made a strong appeal for unity among YSRCP leaders, corporators, and party members, stressing the need for collective effort to secure a decisive victory. "We are committed to ensuring the success of our candidate," Satyanarayana declared, emphasising the importance of collective effort in the upcoming election. "I look forward to everyone's cooperation as we move forward together."

Kurasala Kannababu, reflecting the confidence of the YSRCP leadership, voiced strong optimism about the party's chances. "The efforts of the alliance government will undoubtedly lead to YSRCP's victory in the MLC election," he stated. He also questioned the opposition's decision to

enter the fray despite YSRCP's evident numerical strength. "Given our position, it's puzzling why they would even contest. Despite any conspiracies, YSRCP's victory is certain." Kannababu also highlighted the issue of non-local candidates, taking a swipe at Botsa Satyanarayana's chal-

Greater Visakha Municipal Corporation Standing Committee elections, the TDP coalition managed to secure all ten seats. To mitigate potential risks, YSRCP has taken steps to protect its MPTCs, ZPTCs, corporators, and councillors by relocating them and their families to

"Satyanarayana declared, emphasising the importance of collective effort in the upcoming election. 'I look forward to everyone's cooperation as we move forward together.'"



lengers. "Where did CM Ramesh, who won here previously, even come from?" he asked, underlining the need for local representation.

Meanwhile, YSRCP president Jaganmohan Reddy acknowledged the challenges posed by the upcoming by-election for the joint Visakhapatnam district local body quota MLC. Despite YSRCP's majority in the

South India, away from the influence of the TDP alliance. According to YCP leaders, representatives from the Araku and Paderu constituencies have already been relocated to Bangalore. On Thursday, local representatives from Pendurthi, Payakaraopeta, and Narsipatnam constituencies, along with their families, were brought to the Tadepalli residence. Addressing them, Jagan

cautioned, "The rival parties will attempt to sway you with large sums of money. Remember what happened in 2014 when 23 MLAs defected from YSRCP to TDP—they realized too late that they had been deceived."

He continued with a warning to the current representatives from the Visakhapatnam district. "Do not fall for the same trap."

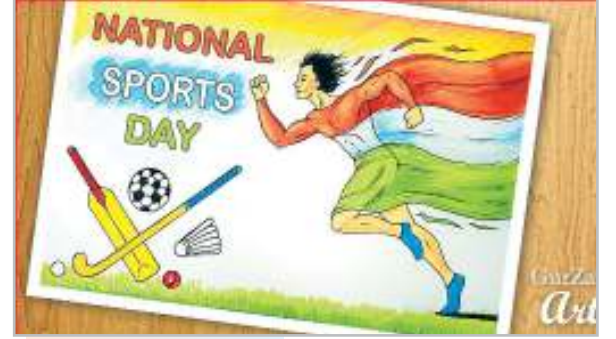
National Sports Day to be celebrated in all AP schools

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Director of School Education, V. Vijaya Rama Raju, has recently issued a directive mandating the celebration of National Sports Day on August 29 in all schools across the state, in honour of the legendary hockey player Dhyan Chand's birth anniversary. As part of these celebrations, the Director has instructed all District Educational Officers (DEOs) and Regional Joint Directors (RJDs) to identify the top five schools in each district based on their performance in the previous year's School Games and Sports.

In a circular issued to all DEOs and RJDs, Director Vijaya Rama Raju emphasised the importance of conducting district-level Sports Day celebrations to recognize the top five schools that have excelled in sports and games. These schools will be evaluated according to specific categories and point-based criteria, with those selected being awarded the title of "School of Sports Excellence" at the district level.

The Director further stated that the Physical Directors,



These schools will be evaluated according to specific categories and point-based criteria, with those selected being awarded the title of "School of Sports Excellence" at the district level

Excellence" Awards. To facilitate this process, all DEOs are instructed to constitute a five-member committee, including the DEO and the District School Games Secretary, to finalise the applications at the district level. Additionally, Director Raju outlined the timeline for the application and selection process. Schools must submit their applications by August 16, with scrutiny scheduled for August 17. Any objections will be addressed on August 18, followed by the finalisation of applications by August 20. The approved list will then be forwarded to the Director of School Education by August 21.

Physical Education Teachers, and Headmasters of the top five schools will be honoured with certificates, mementoes, and shawls. All schools under the School Education Department are invited to apply for the "School of Sports

Hospital to be upgraded to 100 beds: Min Sandhya Rani

PNS ■ PARVATHIPURAM

The Minister of Women and Child Welfare and Tribal Welfare, Gummidi Sandhya Rani, announced today that the Saluru Area Hospital will soon be upgraded to a 100-bed facility to better serve the healthcare needs of neighbouring tribal villages. The announcement was made during the inauguration of a new restroom, constructed for Rs 3 lakh, within the hospital premises.

Speaking at the event, Minister Sandhya Rani emphasized the importance of upgrading the hospital to meet the growing demands of the surrounding tribal communities. "The neighbouring tribal villages depend on the services of this hospital, and there is a pressing need to expand its capacity. Very soon, Saluru Hospital will be a hundred-bedded hospital," she declared. The Minister recounted her earlier visit to the hospital, where she observed the absence of a restroom for patient attendants. "That day itself, I decided that a shed needed to be constructed, and I am pleased to say that it has been completed today," she said, highlighting the prompt response to the hospital's needs.



She also urged the medical staff to provide high-quality care to patients, acknowledging the significant trust that patients place in their doctors. "Doctors should ensure that patients leave with a sense of satisfaction. Pregnant women, in particular, need proper guidance and counselling, especially from the seventh month of pregnancy," she advocated.

Minister Sandhya Rani stressed the importance of early detection and management of conditions like anaemia and iron deficiency in pregnant women. "There should be no high-risk situations or instances of deliveries happening on the road or in an ambulance. If any such situation is identified, the women should be brought to

the hospital well in advance and placed in the Pregnant Women's Hostel," she stated categorically.

During the event, Minister Sandhya Rani also handed over certificates to students who had completed courses in Auxiliary Nurse Midwifery (ANM) and Lab Technician training. The program was attended by the Hospital Superintendent, doctors, and local representatives. The Minister's visit to Saluru Area Hospital marks a significant step towards improving healthcare services in tribal areas, aligning with the Chief Minister's commitment to infrastructure development, including the construction of roads to eliminate the need for "Doli" transportation in remote tribal regions.

YSRCP seeks appointment with Guv Nazeer

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) has sought an appointment with Governor S Abdul Nazeer to appraise him about the damage to the plaque of Dr BR Ambedkar's statue in Vijayawada. The miscreants have removed the name of party President and former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. In January this year, YS Jagan inaugurated the 125-foot statue of Social Justice erected in honour of Dr Ambedkar. The opposition party blamed the ruling TDP government for resorting to political vendetta against the statue. In his letter to the Governor, the former Minister Dr Merugu Nagarajuna said he was appalled to see the 'condemnable act of demolition of the site of the statue.

Role of youth key to combat drug abuse, says Collector

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Visakhapatnam District Collector MN Harendhira Prasad has underscored the pressing need for youth to abstain from harmful substances such as drugs and cannabis, urging them to focus on building a prosperous future. Speaking at a Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan awareness rally held at RK Beach Road on Saturday, the Collector emphasized the destructive impact of addiction on the demographic dividend and society at large. The rally, which witnessed fervent participation from students, social workers, and government officials, was flagged off by Police Commissioner Dr Sankhabrata Bagchi. The event aimed to galvanize public opinion against drug abuse and promote preventive measures.

Collector Prasad, representing the Union Ministry of



Social Justice and Empowerment, underscored the importance of widespread awareness in the fight against drug addiction. He emphasized the need for comprehensive education programs to inform the public about the severe health risks associated with drug use.

During the event, the Collector expressed deep concerns about the widespread cannabis epidemic, noting its detrimental effects. "The

cannabis crisis is creating numerous problems. We must take stringent measures to control its supply and transportation," he said. The Collector also advocated for college and university students to become campus ambassadors, leading efforts to bring about positive change among their peers. "Students should use their influence to promote a drug-free environment and seek support from Addiction Centers for those struggling

with substance abuse," he added.

Police Commissioner Sankhabrata Bagchi addressed the broader issue of drug abuse, emphasizing that the problem extends beyond just ganja to include all forms of intoxicants. "Drug abuse is a national issue, and we must not view it as a trend or a fashion statement. The consequences are severe and affect individuals and families alike," Bagchi warned. He also revealed that numerous parents have sought his guidance on preventing their children from falling into addiction, encouraging the use of rehabilitation services to address these challenges.

The event showcased a united front against drug abuse, with officials from various departments, including Social Welfare, BC Welfare, Education, Justice, and Revenue, actively participating in the rally.

AISF demands third phase of engg counselling

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

All India Students' Federation (AISF) State treasurer, M. Sai Kumar, has appealed to the Minister for Human Resources, Nara Lokesh, to initiate a third phase of counselling to fill the remaining vacant engineering seats across the state. Sai Kumar emphasised that despite the completion of the second phase of counselling, approximately 18,951 engineering seats remain unfilled. In a

letter addressed to Minister Lokesh on Saturday, Sai Kumar urged the state government to take immediate action to conduct this third phase of counselling. He pointed out that the first two phases were conducted through the Andhra Pradesh Engineering, Agriculture, and Pharmacy Common Entrance Test (AP EAPCET) to allocate seats in engineering colleges across the state. Sai Kumar expressed dissatisfaction with the recent announcement by the Andhra Pradesh

State Council of Higher Education, which declared the second phase of counselling as the final round.

He highlighted that despite this decision, a substantial number of seats remain unoccupied in various colleges. He also raised concerns about the fee reimbursement scheme, noting that only candidates who secure seats through EAPCET counselling are eligible for this financial assistance, leaving others without support. He further stressed that the high

cost of engineering education is becoming an additional burden for students from poor and marginalized families. Despite their aspirations to pursue engineering, many students are unable to secure seats under the management quota (B category) due to financial constraints. Sai Kumar urged Minister Nara Lokesh to intervene and ensure that a third phase of counselling is conducted, allowing these vacant seats to be filled and providing opportunities for deserving students.



KGH unveils plan to enhance patient care

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

King George Hospital (KGH) has announced a series of initiatives aimed at improving patient experience and care delivery. The hospital is establishing eight new counselling centres and introducing a WhatsApp service for blood report delivery. These measures are part of a broader effort to reduce wait times and elevate the overall quality of care at the region's premier medical facility.

During a press conference on Saturday, KGH Superintendent Dr K Shivananda outlined the hospital's commitment to patient-centric care. "We are dedicated to providing exceptional healthcare services," Dr. Shivananda stated. "The new counselling centres and WhatsApp services are significant steps towards modernizing our operations and fostering a stronger patient-provider

relationship." Dr. Shivananda also emphasized the hospital's unwavering stance against corruption. He reiterated KGH's zero-tolerance policy, assuring the public of strict disciplinary action for any staff member involved in bribery. Addressing patient concerns, Dr Shivananda announced the establishment of a command control centre at the collector's office. This centre, accessible via phone numbers 0891-2590100 and 2590102, will serve as a direct communication channel for patients seeking assistance.

KGH is at the forefront of digital healthcare, actively participating in the Ayushman Digital Mission. This initiative facilitates secure medical record registration, enabling doctors to access patient health information using Abha ID numbers. "The Ayushman Digital Mission is a transformative step," noted Dr. Shivananda.

Don't fall into trap of loan apps: Home Minister

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

State Home Minister Vangalapati Anitha said that cyber crimes to the tune of Rs 1730 Crore have been committed across the country in four months. The home minister flagged off a Walkathon in Vijayawada on Saturday aimed at creating awareness about cyber crimes among people. On the occasion, the HM launched an App designed for awareness and complaints about 16 various types of cyber fraud.

Speaking on the occasion, she mentioned that cyber crimes have increased by 24 per cent in the country. She said that



frauds are being done through many Apps that are used in our daily life and said that the reason for these frauds is the personal information provided by citizens to many social media platforms and Apps. It is said that many people are losing their

lives by falling in the trap of Loan Apps, Honey trapping and other Apps. The HM promised to set up a cyber coordination team at the state level to control these cyber crimes. The Home Minister instructed that the cyber work actively in every district across the state.

On the occasion, Vijayawada CP Rajasekhara Babu said that daily 5 to 6 cyber crime complaints are being received. He said that many students, doctors and IAS officers are being cheated and advised to call 1930 as soon as a cyber crime occurs. A national-level cybercrime portal will stop the financial transactions of fraudsters, he said.



BIS-marked helmets to bolster road safety in Vizag

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In a move to enhance road safety, the Visakhapatnam District administration has declared that from 1st September 2024, the use of BIS-marked helmets will be mandatory for both riders and pillion passengers of two-wheelers. This move is part of a broader initiative led by the Visakhapatnam District Collector, who also chairs the District Road Safety Committee, in collaboration with the City Police Commissioner.

"The safety of our citizens is our utmost priority," stated the Visakhapatnam District Collector. "This directive is not just about enforcing a rule; it's about saving lives. The statistics clearly show that wearing a helmet can drastically reduce the risk of fatal injuries in accidents." This directive is grounded in

the recent Andhra Pradesh State High Court order "WP (PIL) No. 116/2024," issued on 26th June 2024, which emphasizes the critical importance of helmet use. As per the new guidelines, both the rider and the rear seat occupant of two-wheelers are required to wear helmets that comply with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

Highlighting the dangers of not wearing a helmet, the City Police Commissioner remarked, "Riding a two-wheeler without a helmet is not just a violation of the law—it's a gamble with one's life. We are determined to enforce this rule strictly, as it is a matter of life and death." To ensure compliance, the police will impose fines on violators, and those caught riding without a helmet will face the suspension of their driving license.

AU LIBRARY

2<sup>nd</sup> phase of manuscript digitisation soon



PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The Dr VS Krishna Library, the heart of Andhra University since its inception in 1927, has long been revered as a bastion of knowledge, housing an extensive collection of modern and historical texts. Yet, what truly sets this library apart is its

remarkable archive of ancient palm-leaf inscriptions—some dating back as far as the 8th century—preserving the wisdom of the ages.

"These inscriptions are a treasure trove of knowledge," remarks Prof P Venkateswarlu, the chief librarian of Dr. VS Krishna Library. "They encom-

pass texts from the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, Vedic discourses, and astrological treatises, written in eight different scripts, including Telugu, Tamil, and Sanskrit."

In total, the library proudly houses over 536,000 books and 9,500 journals, yet its most prized possessions are the 2,660 rare bundles of palm-leaf inscriptions. These manuscripts, donated by various Maharajas and benefactors like the Bobbili Raja and the Arsha Grandhalayam, have been meticulously preserved in a dedicated section of the library. Wrapped in red-tinted cloth, these Talapatras are a living link to India's rich cultural heritage.

Recognising the fragile state of these manuscripts, the library,

with funding support from Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), has embarked on an ambitious digitisation project. "The first phase of digitisation has already seen the preservation of 1,491 bundles, comprising 2.50 lakh ancient palm leaves," shares Prof Venkateswarlu. "The second phase will commence soon, ensuring that these priceless texts are conserved for future generations." The digitisation project, beyond being a conservation effort, also aims to make these ancient texts more accessible. Plans are underway to develop a trans-literature tool, allowing these manuscripts to be read in multiple languages and disciplines, further broadening their reach and significance.

# Coalition govt inherited empty exchequer, says Ramanaidu

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

Minister for Water Resources Management Nimmana Ramanaidu has lamented that the Chandrababu Naidu-headed coalition government has inherited an empty exchequer but the government is committed to implementing all welfare schemes.

The Minister laid the foundation stones for various development programmes and inaugurated completed works at various villages on Saturday in the WG district.

The Minister laid the foundation stone for the construction of a CC road at Gangadapalem village at a cost of Rs 10 lakh and inaugurated the newly constructed footpath bridge. He also laid the foundation stone for the construction of a meeting hall at a cost of Rs 20 lakh at Matlapalem village. He also laid the stone



for the construction of the CC road at Meraka village and Vaddilanka villages.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister regretted that the previous government had handed over Rs 14 lakh debt to the new government. Huge funds were diverted to various other purposes consequently no development work had been completed during the five-year YSRCP regime.

He said that he had laid the foundation stone for four development works today at four villages and assured of completing the work expeditiously. Stating that the coalition government is committed to all its promises, the Minister highlighted that the social security pension was enhanced from Rs 3000 to Rs 4000 as soon as it came to power.

He acknowledged that the coalition government initiated a procedure to fill up over 16,500 teacher posts by conducting DSC examinations and observed that Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu had made the first sign on the DSC examinations.

"The government has set ready to launch the Anna Canteens across the state on August 15. The poor can get nutritious food for Rs 15 in the canteens," Ramanaidu has claimed.

Seeds were provided to the farmers at an 80 per cent subsidy in the flood-affected areas. The Minister advised the party leaders not to give him flower garlands and to present him with flower bouquets. He asked them to bring vegetables and essential commodities, instead of garlands and flower bouquets, to give them to flood-hit victims.

# 230 kg of ganja seized; 5 arrested

PNS ■ GUNTUR

The police seized 230 kg of ganja while being taken to Tamil Nadu in two cars and arrested five persons at Khaja toll gate plaza on the night of Friday.

SEB Additional SP Venkateswarulu told the media in Mangalagiri on Saturday that on a tip a police team conducted checking of vehicles at the Kaja toll plaza. The police teams found 230 kg of ganja, worth approximately Rs 30 lakh, in the two cars. The haul was neatly packed as packets and was taken to Tamil Nadu illegally.

The police arrested five drug peddlers and seized Rs 34,530



cash and six mobile phones from them. The drug peddlers purchased the ganja in Payakaraopeta in Anakapalli district from an agent and were taking the same to Tamil Nadu to sell there at high

prices. The police said that they identified some students recently who were addicted to Ganja consumption and counselled them in the presence of their parents.

# 2-month campaign against AIDS by APSACS, NACO from tomorrow

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh State AIDS Control Society, in collaboration with the National AIDS Control Society (NACO), is set to launch a two-month state-level Intensified Information, Education & Communication (IEC) Campaign 'Meeku Telusa?' (Do you know?) on August 12. This initiative aims to provide crucial information and raise awareness about HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

The campaign will be spearheaded by the Andhra Pradesh State AIDS Control Society (APSACS) Project Director, Dr. A. Siri, in Vijayawada. APSACS officials have made all necessary arrangements for the event, which is being organized nationwide in conjunction with International Youth Day.

As part of the state-level program, Dr. Siri will flag off a massive rally at 8 a.m. on August 12, organised from Siddhartha Arts College.

Later, she will serve as the chief guest at the 'Meeku Telusa?' (Did You Know) conference to be held in the college auditorium. District Collector Dr. Gummalla Srijana, public representatives, and APSACS officials are also expected to participate in the event.

# Govt committed to eradicating Lymphatic Filariasis

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State government is committed to eradicating Lymphatic Filariasis in the state, Health Minister Raja Narasimha said on Saturday.

He was participating in a virtual programme conducted by Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Prataprao Ganpatrao Jadhav on Lymphatic Filariasis. The Union Minister launched the second phase of the bi-annual Nationwide Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign for Lymphatic.

# IBM awards 5-star rating to UltraTech limestone mine in Anantapur

PNS ■ ANANTAPUR

G Kishan Reddy, the Union Minister of Coal & Mines felicitated UltraTech as the Indian Bureau of Mines has rated 5-star for Twelve of UltraTech Cement Limited's Limestone Mines in Anantapur. The awards were given out on 7th August 2024 in Delhi by the Minister of Coal & Mines. The felicitation ceremony was also graced by Satish Chandra Dubey, the Minister of State for Coal and Mines.

Of the twelve mines which received the award, one was the Tummalapenta Limestone Mine, which is part of Andhra Pradesh Cement Works, UltraTech's Integrated Unit in Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh. This is the second



consecutive time the unit has won this award.

UltraTech's endeavours in driving excellence in mining are in line with the Indian Bureau of Mines' goals towards sustainable mining, efficient operations, and technology-

driven mineral processing. UltraTech has the distinction of being accorded a 5-star rating for the highest number of mines across all categories of Minerals (Limestone, Iron Ore, Bauxite, Lead Zinc, Manganese) for FY 2022-23.

# Onus on officials to implement new sand policy efficiently: Minister

PNS ■ RAJAHMUNDRY

Minister for Excise and Mines Kollu Ravindra has asserted that it is the responsibility of the officials to implement the new sand policy efficiently.

Addressing a review meeting on the implementation of the new sand policy here on Saturday, which was attended by Minister for Tourism Kandula Dugesh and Collector P Prashanthi, Minister Kollu Ravindra said that 47 lakh metric tonnes of stock was kept ready at the stock point and 71 lakh metric tonnes of sand was kept ready at the de-siltation point to supply sand at free of cost.

He noted that there is a misconception about the free sand policy among people and doubts should be allayed, stating that now the constructions have picked up speed with the availability of sand free of cost. At the same time, the livelihood of those who depended on this sector has also been kept in mind, he stated.



adding that the government will decide between solving the problem of the Lorry Association. A decision would be taken to benefit if one or two months waited, he clarified.

Minister Kollu Ravindra said that our government aims to provide sand to the users according to the prices decided by the government, asserting that the idea of the Chief Minister of the state is to conduct a comprehensive review of the free transport of sand and the process of reaching the end users.

At present, one lakh metric

tons of sand is available in EG district, he informed. Only the cost of transporting sand will have to be paid by the users, he made it clear. The Minister warned of action if the rules at the stock point are violated.

State Tourism Minister Kandula Dugesh said that the main objective of the state government is to make sand available to the poor and those who are building houses. He added that the state government has decided to provide sand to the users free of cost and the decision has been taken in the cabinet. District Collector P Prashanthi explained the implementation of the free sand policy in the district and the decisions taken in DLSA. He said that three teams are monitoring the process of registration, loading and vigilance to transport sand efficiently.

MLAs Gorantla Butchhai Chowdary, M Venkateswara Rao and Adireddy Srinivas also spoke.

# Anchorage Port workers issue strike notice

PNS ■ KAKINADA

Anchorage Port Jetty Coolies Union here on Saturday issued an ultimatum to stop barges loading and unloading operations from Monday onwards in protest against the unusual delay of cargo arrival by lorries due to delay at the check posts opened near the Bombay weighing bridge in the port area.

A letter on Saturday drew the attention of the Cocanada Chamber chairman to the fact that the government has recently opened check posts to check clandestine export of PDS rice and Lorries getting stranded forming beelines leading to delays in the arrival of cargo at the jetties.

The union further made it clear that Jattu coolies who were able to load the barge within four to five hours now took three to four days there by a drastic cut in their wages. The union has urged the Cocanada chamber to take

up the issue with the concerned authorities and save them from distress.

Moreover, the lorry owners association also appealed to the Cocanada chamber that they were facing problems in supplying lorries for port loading and unloading operations because of the enormous delay in checking at the check posts opened by the government for checking the exporting of PDS rice through the port.

Due to the delay the small lorry operators were facing difficulty in maintaining their drivers and cleaners and supplying the lorries for cargo needed for loading of barges at the jetties.

They urged the Chamber to take up the matter with the authorities and solve the problem. The Cocanada Chamber in turn appealed to the port officer, rice handling agents, and steamer agents to solve the problem in the interest of proper port working.

# 'Revenue Sadasalu' from Aug 15 to Sep 30

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The State government plans to conduct 'Revenue Sadasalu' with the primary objective of resolving all issues about lands at the village level.

The Sadasalu shall be conducted from 16.08.2024 to 30.09.2024 preceded by a formal Launch in the district on 15-08-24. A team of officers belonging to relevant departments shall visit each revenue village and obtain representations from all the persons having land-related issues with specific reference to those

affected by land grabbing and Sec 22A manipulation with proper and advanced communication.

A senior IAS officer shall be designated as the District Special Officer who will finalise the district schedule and monitor the village/Mandal level petitions receiving/disposing mechanism and ensure redressal within time. All the petitions will be entered online in a separate window created by RTGS in the Grievance Redressal portal.

The Joint Collector is designated as the Sadasalu

Coordinator. Collectors shall instruct the Sub-Collectors/Revenue Divisional Officers & Tahsildars to prepare a schedule for the conduct of revenue sadasalu in each village in their division and finalise the same by 13.08.2024. One full day may be allocated for large Revenue Villages and half a day for small Revenue Villages. Accessible and suitable venues with sufficient seating capacity shall be selected for the conduct of revenue sadasalu.

Launch a comprehensive awareness campaign using local media to inform the pub-

lic about the Revenue Sadasalu. Distribute pamphlets and posters in all villages/gram panchayats detailing the purpose, schedule and venue of the meetings; Engage public representatives to spread awareness and encourage participation. Conduct preliminary meetings with VROs / VRAs to explain the purpose of sadasalu, address any queries and gather initial feedback; Arrangements shall be made to give wide publicity to the schedule in advance so that villagers are made aware of the visit of the official teams.

# No development in Kuppam town: Chinta Mohan

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

Former Union minister Chinta Mohan has said that Kuppam town has not developed though Chandrababu Naidu has been the Chief Minister four times. Naidu is representing the Kuppam constituency but it is lagging in development, he lamented.

Addressing a press conference here on Saturday, Chinta Mohan said that the Kuppam railway station has remained as it is for the last 40 years without any development. Thousands of commuters through Kuppam railway station daily but there are no basic facilities in the station, he criticised. "Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu



now is saying AP stands for Amaravati and Polavaram," he said and questioned the development of Rayalaseema districts.

Stating that the law and order situation is under control in the state, the ex-minister alleged that former Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy had started making accusations within two months of facing the debacle. Chinta Mohan demanded the Naidu-headed government to disclose in detail the debts brought by former Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy. The former Union Minister opposed the Supreme Court judgment on the SC sub-classification.

# Death of student sparks protests at Malla Reddy varsity

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

After a student Arun Kumar (19) died at Malla Reddy University on Thursday, hundreds of students of the campus, supported by the NSUI and ABVP leaders, staged a protest at campus on Saturday. The students alleged that Arun died due to the negligence of the management.

A National Students' Union of India (NSUI) leader named Raghavender Reddy said that two days back, BSc (Agriculture) 1st year student Arun collapsed in Malla Reddy university. After knowing this he was shifted to a hospital. There is no ambulance in the vicinity of the campus, due to which it took 10 to 20 minutes to reach

the campus.

A student said that there is no room in the hostel to provide medical aid to student who took ill. The management is not providing quality food to the children though they are charging Rs 90,000 from every student.

ABVP state joint secretary Srinath said that the management of the campus should suspend those responsible for the death of Arun, who are Ahok, Jaya Sri, and Lokesh. "ABVP demanding the university to take stringent action against them," he said.

Pet Basheerbad police said that the management had spoken with the agitators, then the agitation was called off around 12.30 pm

# 'Finish Somasila project works expeditiously'

PNS ■ NELLORE

Minister for Endowments Anam Ramanarayana Reddy has directed the officials concerned to take steps to complete the Somasila reservoir works expeditiously on war footing.

Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy has directed the engineering officials to improve the water distribution system in the district and take all advanced measures to provide irrigation water to the farmers without any difficulties.

Ministers Ramanarayana Reddy, P Narayana and Collector Anand reviewed the progress of irrigation projects and the status of irrigation canals with the engineering officers of Somasila, Telugu Ganga and Kandaluru projects at the Zilla Parishad office here on Saturday.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Anam Ramanarayana



Reddy told the officials that the work being done for the protection of the Somasila reservoir should be carried out on a war footing.

Regarding the sanctioning of gate ropes and head regulatory works, Ministers Ramanarayana Reddy and Narayana spoke over the phone to Irrigation Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu and the secretaries of the Irrigation and Finance departments.

Collector has given permission. The officials should take steps to transport the sand to Somasila reservoir.

The officials should identify the remaining works and prepare proposals, he told them and ordered the excavation works with a target of one month. The Ministers directed the officials to implement the water distribution system properly to provide plenty of irrigation water to the farmers of the district.

District Collector Anand said that in the past there was a flood of more than five lakh cusecs to the river Penna. At that time, the embankments of Penna were damaged in many places. The Collector directed the officials to take steps to plug the breaches to the embankments of river Penna with sand bags. MLA Krihna Reddy, Nageswara Rao, K Ramakrishna and SEs were among those who attended the meeting.

# Food Safety officials flag fungal infestation at bakery, sweet shop

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Food Safety Commission conducted inspections in Dilshukhnagar and Malakpet and found several violations.

The Task Force conducted inspection at TopsyTopsy Bakers in Dilshukhnagar and found cauliflower in the refrigerator infested with fungus, which was immediately discarded.

An expired Jeera Biscuit packet was also disposed of. Rose Cookies and a vinegar bottle were found without manufacturing or expiry dates and they were similarly discarded. The premises had open, overflowing dustbins, and there were no medical fitness certificates for food handlers or pest control records.



Food safety officials were seen inspecting a bakery at Dilshukhnagar on Saturday

Food handlers lacked hair caps and gloves, and only one copy of the FSSAI license was displayed.

Later on, the Task Force

inspected Sahadeva Reddy Pure Ghee Sweets, food items like namkeen, mixture, and pickles were not labeled with preparation or expiry dates. Packed chana dal (50 kg) also

lacked these details, leading to the seizure of the stock. The establishment lacked medical fitness certificates and pest control records, and the doors and windows were not properly secured to prevent pests. The only positive observation was that food handlers wore hair caps and gloves.

The task force also inspected Moon Bean Restaurant and Bar in Malakpet and found that the FBO was operating without a valid FSSAI license. The kitchen and storeroom had a cockroach infestation, and expired food items were found. Synthetic food colors were being used in non-veg dishes, and many stored items were uncovered and unlabeled. Medical fitness certificates.

ACROSS THE STATES



'Committed to resolve Mizoram-Assam border'

Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma on Saturday said his government was committed to resolve the state's border dispute with neighbouring Assam and ensure peace along the boundary. During a brief meeting with an Assam delegation, leaders of both states must work together with a heartfelt desire for peace and to resolve the border dispute between the two northeastern states, an official statement said. His government is "desirous of resolving the inter-state boundary dispute during the current term", Lalduhoma said in the statement. Led by state Border Protection and Development Minister Atul Bora, the Assam delegation paid a courtesy call on Lalduhoma at his official residence in Aizawl on Saturday. Lalduhoma said that several meetings were held between the two states in the past and the "decisions were mainly adhering to status quo, which was not the right step towards establishing lasting peace but delaying the peace process and resolving the border dispute amicably".



Woman found after 18 yrs; tells she left husband because of brutality

A 50-year-old woman, "missing" for 18 years, was produced earlier this week before the Madhya Pradesh High Court which imposed a cost on her husband for filing a petition knowing fully well that she had left him because of his ill-treatment. She was forced to leave the matrimonial home along with her two sons in 2006 to save their lives, the woman told the court on Wednesday. Nandkishore Rahangdale, her husband, had moved the court last month seeking a direction to police to find her, said his lawyer S D Gupta. The petition claimed that the woman and her two sons, then aged 13 and 4, vanished from Kharpadia village in Balaghat district on April 18, 2006. Rahangdale lodged a complaint with police a month later, but their whereabouts remained a mystery, it said. After he filed a petition, the high court on July 28 ordered Balaghat Police to find the woman and children.



Influx from Bangladesh cause for concern: Manipur CM

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Saturday said the influx of people from Bangladesh in the wake of unrest in the neighbouring country is a cause for concern, and his government has imposed night curfew in some districts to check infiltration. "I am in touch with the external affairs ministry. As for our security, we have imposed night curfew in Pherzawl and Jiribam districts to check the influx," Singh told reporters here. Over 230 people were killed in Bangladesh in the incidents of violence that erupted across the country following the fall of the Hasina government on Monday, taking the death toll to 560 since the anti-quota protests first started in mid-July. The chief minister was speaking at a function to mark the Centre's 'Har Ghar Tiranga' initiative. "I appeal to all legislators to organise lunch at different relief camps across Manipur on Independence Day, as well as interact with the inmates to address their problems and grievances," Singh said.

Agniveer scheme golden opportunity for youths: Navy chief

PNS ■ BHUBANESHWAR

The Agniveer scheme is a golden opportunity for the youths to serve the nation, the Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi has said.



A total of 1,389 Agniveers, including 214 women, joined the service on Friday following 16 weeks of training, he said. "It is a golden opportunity for the Indian youths to join Agniveer. This provides at

least four years to serve the nation by joining the service in the Indian Navy, Army and Air Force," he said.

Tripathi, who was present at INS Chilika in Odisha's Khurda district for the night passing out parade of Agniveers, on Friday said: "It is a matter of pride for all to join the Agniveer. Four years later, if you decide not to continue, you can go outside and one can opt for several other options available in the society."



EAM JAISHANKAR MEETS MALDIVES PRESIDENT MUIZZU

Emphasises deeper ties for regional prosperity

PNS ■ MALE

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu here on Saturday and emphasised New Delhi's commitment to deepen India-Maldives ties for the benefit of the people in the two countries and the region.

Jaishankar is on a three-day official visit to Maldives to reset the bilateral relationship, the first high-level trip from India after the archipelago nation's pro-China president Muizzu assumed office last year. "Privileged to call on President Dr Mohamed Muizzu. Conveyed greetings of PM @NarendraModi. Committed to deepening India-Maldives ties for the benefit of our people and the region," Jaishankar posted on X along with a photograph of the meeting.

Meanwhile, in a post on X, Muizzu said it was a pleasure to meet Jaishankar and join him in the official handover of water and sewerage projects in 28 islands of the Maldives. "I thank the Government of India,

especially Prime Minister @narendramodi for always supporting the Maldives. Our enduring partnership continues to strengthen, bringing our nations closer through cooperation in

security, development, and cultural exchange. Together, we build a brighter, more prosperous future for the region," he said, sharing some photographs of his meeting with Jaishankar.

India to introduce UPI payment service in Maldives

India and Maldives have signed an agreement to introduce the Unified Payments Interface in the archipelago nation, which will have a "very positive" impact on its tourism sector, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed on Friday during Jaishankar's three-day official visit to the Maldives.

"Witnessed signing of MoU between (the) National Payments Corporation of India and (the)



Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Maldives on (the) introduction of (a) digital payment system in the Maldives," he said in a post on X.

Sisodia calls upon people to fight against 'dictatorship' in country

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

AAP leader Manish Sisodia on Saturday called upon party workers and people to fight against "tyranny" in the country and said if all opposition parties stand united against "dictatorship", Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal will come out of prison within 24 hours.

Addressing AAP workers at the party headquarters here a day after his release from Tihar jail on bail, he said party workers need to start working hard immediately to ensure the BJP loses the Assembly polls in Haryana, Delhi and elsewhere.

The former Delhi deputy chief minister urged the new



allies of the BJP-led NDA as well as the opposition INDIA bloc parties to unite against "dictatorship", not just to save their leaders from being imprisoned but most importantly in the interest of the country.

All efforts on to make AIIMS Rajkot among the best in country: Nadda

PNS ■ RAJKOT

All efforts are being taken, including hiring the best faculty and doctors, to make the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Gujarat's Rajkot among the best in the country, Union Health Minister JP Nadda said on Saturday.

He also inaugurated the Virus Research and Diagnostic (VRD) Lab at AIIMS Rajkot, which aims to end the state's dependency on National Institute of Virology (NIV) in



Pune in Maharashtra. "Despite suffering from delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the AIIMS Rajkot has emerged as one of the fastest growing institutes. Its OPD, IPD and trauma (department) have seen a sharp

PM to release 109 varieties of seeds developed by ICAR: Chouhan

PNS ■ BHOPAL

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Sunday release 109 varieties of seeds that have been developed by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for different climatic zones and are area specific, Union Minister for Agriculture Shivraj Singh Chouhan said here.

The PM will release the 109 seed varieties in an event in the national capital. They comprise 23 seed varieties of cereals, nine

of rice, two of wheat, one of barley, six of maize, one of sorghum, one of millet, one of ragi, one of chheena, one of samba, two of arhar, two of gram, three of lentil, one of peas, two of green gram, seven of oilseeds as well as seven each of fodder and sugarcane, five of cotton, one of jute and 40 varieties of horticulture, Chouhan said.

"The country's scientists have done research and found a variety of paddy which gives higher production and requires 20 per cent less water.

Efforts have also been made to reduce pest infestation. Science should reach directly to each farmer from laboratory to land," he asserted. "The agriculture budget, which used to be Rs 27,000 crore under the UPA government, is now Rs 1.52 lakh crore, including allied sectors. A subsidy of Rs 1.95 lakh crore was provided on fertilizers during last year. This year there is a provision of a subsidy of Rs 1.70 lakh crore, which will rise if consumption increases," Chouhan informed.

'Will terminate highway projects if law and order situation does not improve'

Union Minister Gadkari warns Punjab govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned NHA will have no other option but to cancel/terminate eight more severely-affected highway projects in Punjab with total length of 293 km costing Rs 14,288 crore, if the law and order situation does not improve, Union minister Nitin Gadkari wrote to Punjab chief minister Bhagwant Mann.

Gadkari said that he had been informed about two incidents which occurred recently on the Delhi-Katra Expressway projects. "In one incident in Jalandhar district, the engineer of the contractor

was brutally assaulted. Although FIR has been registered in this regard, strong action is required to be taken against the perpetrators," Gadkari wrote in his letter dated August 9.



The minister pointed out another incident in Ludhiana district, where the project camp of the contractor of Delhi-Katra Expressway was attacked by miscreants and also engineers were threatened of burning the project camp and their staff alive.

However, FIR has still not been filed and miscreants have not been arrested despite written requests by NHA officials, he said.



India to open embassy in Timor-Leste

President Murmu lauds contribution of diaspora

PNS ■ DILI (TIMOR-LESTE)

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday lauded the "very small but active" Indian community in Timor-Leste as a 'living bridge' for its role in improving bilateral relations and announced that India will soon open its embassy here. President Murmu, who arrived earlier in the day, on the first-ever presidential visit from India to Timor-Leste, was speaking at an interaction event with the Indian diaspora in this archipelagic Southeast Asian nation.

Before this event, Murmu received the Grand Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste, the country's highest honour from her counterpart José Ramos-Horta for her achievements in public service and dedication to education, social welfare and women empowerment. "The Grand Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste bestowed upon me is a symbol of manifestation of the warmth and special friendship between the two countries," she said at the outset as she thanked President Ramos-Horta and the country for hosting her and the Indian delegation.

CJI stresses on strengthening infra in courts to deal with pendency in cases

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Saturday emphasised on strengthening infrastructure in the courts to deal with pendency in cases even as he said different mediums like the Lok Adalats were being adopted to reduce the number of court cases.

He said modern technology like Artificial Intelligence was being used to translate the court verdicts in regional languages for the convenience of people.

The Chief Justice of India (CJI) was speaking to reporters on the sideline of the 37th convocation of the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) here. Replying to a question on



pendency of cases, CJI Chandrachud said like in hospitals, people have faith in the courts which is also one of the reasons for the increase in number of cases.

"If you see in a hospital, the number of patients go up and similarly in courts, the number (of cases) rises. What is the reason behind it? People have 'aastha' (faith) in hospitals that

is why the number of patients increases. People have 'aastha' and trust in courts and that is why number increases," the CJI said.

"For this, we have to increase infrastructure. Like infrastructure in the hospitals has to be increased and similarly, infrastructure in the courts has to be increased," he added.

Govt should have nullified SC's 'creamy layer' observation: Kharage

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Asserting that the idea of denying reservation to SCs and STs on account of the creamy layer concept is "condemnable", Congress president Mallikarjun Kharage on Saturday said the government should have brought a legislation in Parliament to nullify the part of the recent Supreme Court judgement that talks about the issue. Kharage said that while other aspects of the

Supreme Court judgement were being deliberated upon by the party, the creamy layer concept that has been advocated should be nullified.

Earlier this month, a seven-judge Bench of the Supreme Court led by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud ruled in a 6:1 majority judgement that state governments were permitted to sub-classify communities within the SC list based on empirical data.

Women's welfare, poverty alleviation NCP's agenda, says Ajit Pawar

PNS ■ SHIRDI

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Saturday said women's welfare, development and poverty alleviation were the planks of his Nationalist Congress Party and asserted he was getting good response from people.

Talking to reporters after offering prayers at the revered Sai Baba temple here on the third day of his party's 'Jan Sanman Yatra', he sidestepped

questions on ally BJP's 'bhaktati aatma' and 'ringleader of corruption' comments on opposition stalwart Sharad Pawar and said his aim was to highlight welfare schemes announced in the budget tabled by him in the assembly last month.

"Women's welfare, development and poverty alleviation are the major planks of the NCP. I am getting good response from people," he said.



# CHARMING COONOOR PROMISES A TRANQUIL RETREAT!

Inhaling the scents of fresh blooms, sipping freshly brewed tea, I witnessed sunrise magic from the folds of Nilgiris, sitting in the garden of the charming villa, The Xanadu in Coonoor. Here I sealed every moment as the celebration of Nature

BY SHARMILA CHAND

Tucked at the edge of a cliff, the villa is my home for three days with a magnificent view of the rolling Nilgiri hills, tea plantations and the plains below. I tell my friend, Aparna Bharathan, the humble owner of this pretty home, that I have 'checked in and breathing out'. She bursts into laughter as that exactly is the tagline she has chosen for her Xanadu chain of premium, fully serviced vacation rental villas.

For me, a trip to Coonoor is essentially to relish slow travel without ticking off 'must do' list. Hence, a game of Jenga or Monopoly in the plush living room while watching the pitter patter of raindrops, is luxury. There is a whiff of pleasant aroma in the room, I can't resist and peep into the kitchen where Ganga Ram is busy making rasam and lemon rice. He is little more generous in using curry leaves in tadka, and that makes me impatient to have the meal. By now, Ganga has spoilt me thoroughly with several glasses of cutting chai and delicious food.

### MAGICAL NIGHT

I wait for the spectacular night view when the sky is full of pretty stars in coherence with the lights of the



plains shimmering below. This is luxury for me. The weather throughout the day plays its own hide and seek, the clouds enveloping the hills in a stroke of misty white and next moment letting the hills magically appear in the famous 'Nilgiri' blue haze.

### NILGIRIS ENDOWED WITH UNIQUE BIODIVERSITY

The Nilgiri mountains stretch over the states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala, connecting Western Ghats with the Eastern Ghats. Located at the convergence of both Ghats, lends Nilgiris vibrant flora and fauna. From Evergreen forests

and lowland Savannas to lush Shola grassland, enchanting flora encompasses the region. Various endangered species including Nilgiri Langur thrive here. What I love is the heady fragrance of cypress, eucalyptus and pine. The soft purple haze of my favourite jacaranda trees keeps my eyes longing for more. I can't get over seeing magnificent trees of Pont Setia, the same festive plant with bold red leaves we have in small pots during Christmas time. And then the lush mosanda in white and pink, another favourite of mine that seems to be calling me back soon!

### INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY - THE TODAS

It is said that Toda community settled here around 3500 years ago, thus the oldest inhabitants of the region. Known for their pastoral way of life and vegetarian lifestyle, the Todas have a distinct identity. Every aspect of their life, including their artistic skills, are inspired by nature. The traditions they follow further prove how nature is significant in their lifestyle. I was told by locals that during an infant's naming ceremony, the grandfather uncovers the child's face out in the open air for the first time, showing various elements of nature - the rising sun, the birds, the cows, buffaloes etc. I visited one Toda

village and saw women busy at their art work. Their embroidery represents an ancient art form and has been granted a GI patent by The Government.

### A CUP THAT CHEERS!

Visiting Nilgiris and not taking a trip to a tea plantation, is unfair. Though you see the sweeping vistas of carpets of tea all around, blooming on the slopes as far as eye can see, but experiencing a walk through the plantation and completing it with tea tasting, is a beautiful outstanding experience. And who can do this better than Sandeep Subramani, a fourth generation tea planter and founder of Tranquillitea which runs a chain of experiential boutique holidays in the Nilgiris and conducts a highly acclaimed gourmet tea tasting experience in their estate in Coonoor called the 'Cups That Cheer'.

Sandeep takes one and half hour glorious session on tea which is full of stories, facts and secrets. One secret he tells with great pride and a smile - "The Nilgiris has the world's highest tea estates. At around 8000 feet there is simply no other place on earth that grows tea as a plantation crop as high as in the Nilgiris. Darjeeling, the region that makes the other famous Indian tea has its highest tea estates at just over

6000 feet. Let me explain why tea doesn't grow at such heights anywhere else. The weather is generally too cold for tea to grow at these elevations. However, the geographical location of the Nilgiris provides the perfect temperature band through the winter months, for tea to grow even at these heights. Talking about temperature, tea thrives between 13° C and 30° C and we are always within that range. Though night-time temperatures in winter can drop below 13° C, day temperatures are always within the optimum range. This results in a tea that is intensely flavourful and typically floral in nature," he concludes.

### INTERESTING ATTRACTIONS TO VISIT

Though I am contented to luxuriate in the comfort of home Xanadu, but for those discerning travelers who might like to have a sightseeing plan, here are few top things to do in Coonoor.

- Dolphin's Nose Point** — Located at an altitude of 1,500, it is set amidst the rolling hills, the tip of the peak of the enormous rock resembles the nose of a dolphin hence the name Dolphin's Nose. Gigantic ravines are on both sides of the place offering a view of inspiring Catherine Falls.
- Lamb's Rock** - enjoy fascinating



views of the valley at this vantage point with jagged rock that drops down several hundred feet to bury itself in the luxuriant jungle below. The place got its name after Captain Lamb who attempted to open a path to this place.

**Droog Fort** — The historical Droog Fort at an altitude of about 6000 feet above the lush plains, is said to be used by Tipu Sultan as an outpost. To reach this place, one has to go up to Nonsuch Estate and trek down for about 4 kms. According to locals' tales, the fort is linked with the legend of a local demon, Bakasura. Due to this, it is also called Bakasura Malai by the natives.

**Sim's Park** — Spend sometime in the park which was developed around the natural contours of the land by JD Sims and Major Murray in the year of 1874. Spread over 30 acres of land, the park was started as a pleasure resort for the residents and visitors, and later developed into garden. It has wonderful landscaped gardens & walkways lined up with beautiful flowers spread across, also a lake inside the park that offers boating facility as well.

### KETTI VALLEY

Embark on the toy train to enjoy this beautiful valley. It is also famous for bird watching and trekking. You can also visit the famous Shiva Lingam temple here.

### GOURMET CHEESE

Coonoor is now also famous for selling gourmet cheese. You can take a tour of cheese farms or simply visit a popular old store Nilgiris Store' or 'Baker's Junction' just 100 m from Bedford circle.

### SHOPPING

Shopping in Coonoor is pretty good. From pretty embroidered shawls, apparels, Toda jewellery and handicrafts items to natural oils, fruit jams, homemade chocolates and of course, the huge variety of tea, shopping here is really good. Spend at least a week, soak in fresh crisp mountain air and come back rejuvenated till you return to the spectacular queen of hills.

Sharmila Chand is an author and journalist who writes on Travel, Food, Culture and Lifestyle.



## EXPLORING PARADISE

### A journey through the pristine beauty of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands

Nestled in the azure waters of the Bay of Bengal, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands are a tropical haven that offers a perfect blend of natural beauty, vibrant marine life, and rich cultural heritage, writes **SANTANU GANGULY**

Every Indian should visit the Andaman Islands at least once in their lifetime to complete their journey. The Andaman Islands offer an incredible blend of natural beauty, historical significance, wildlife, and adventure sports. The Andaman Islands are well-connected by regular flights from Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Kolkata, and one can also reach them by ship from Kolkata, Chennai, and Visakhapatnam. However, traveling by flight is recommended to witness breathtaking aerial views that resemble slices of heaven.

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands comprise a total of 836 islands, of which only 31 are inhabited. Visitors are not allowed on all the islands, and even the non-tribal Andamanese people cannot visit the restricted islands.

Only government officials from departments such as the Army, Navy, Air Force, Forest Department, and Police are permitted to access these islands for official purposes. As a general tourist, the only chance to see some of these islands is from the sky before landing or after takeoff at Veer Savarkar Airport in Port Blair, the capital of the union territory. While the Andaman Islands are open to tourists year-round, the best time to visit is from October to May. Monsoon tourism runs from June to October.

There are numerous hotels and guest houses available for online booking, and package tours are also offered to suit various budgets. The local businesses are known for their honesty, adhering to strict rules and regulations throughout the islands. For



example, if the local authority sets the price of coconut water at forty rupees, the rate will be consistent everywhere. In Port Blair, the major attractions include the Cellular Jail, Chatham Saw Mill, Forest Museum, Samudrika Naval Marine

Anthropological Museum, Fisheries Aquarium, Science Center, and Corbyn's Cove. The historic Cellular Jail will not only enrich your knowledge of history but also evoke a deep emotional connection as you learn about the struggles of lesser-known

freedom fighters and the inhumane torture they endured under British rule. To reach Shaheed Dweep (formerly known as Neil Island) and Swaraj Dweep (formerly known as Havelock Island) from Port Blair, you must travel by small ships,

following a process similar to airport check-in. Plan to stay at least one night on each of these islands to explore them fully. Must-visit beaches on Shaheed Dweep include Bharatpur, Lakshmanpur, and Sitapur, while Elephant and Radhanagar beaches on Swaraj

Dweep are not to be missed. Scuba diving at Shaheed Dweep offers an unforgettable experience. Other popular attractions include Hudi Tikri, Red, Bird and Bat islands, Amkunj Beach near Rangat; Dhaninallah Mangroves and Karmatang Beach near Mayabunder; limestone caves and mud volcanoes near Diglipur; Craggy Island; Ross & Smith Islands, and various national parks and protected sanctuaries.

The indigenous tribes of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands are divided into two groups: the Onge, Sentinelese, Jarawa, and Andamanese of Negroid descent living in the Andaman Islands, and the Shompen and Nicobarese of Mongoloid descent living in the Nicobar Islands. It is strictly prohibited by law to enter tribal reserves,

meet, or photograph these tribes. Respect their peaceful haven and adhere to the law.

During my visits to the Andaman Islands, I was fortunate enough to encounter the Jarwa people. However, last year, I had an incredible experience while traveling by local public bus from Diglipur to Port Blair. As we entered the Jarwa forest after crossing a river, four Jarwa boys waved at our bus driver for a lift. The bus stopped, and they quickly got on board. One of them sat beside me, admiring my bracelet made of beads, which they seem to have a fascination for. Though I wanted to give it to him, I had to refuse due to the law prohibiting the exchange of items with the tribes. Their innocent laughter, however, was priceless.

Photos: Santanu Ganguly

As a dedicated disciple of Padma Bhushan Drs. Raja Radha Reddy and Kaushalya Reddy, Adiva Agarwal have beautifully embodied the spirit of Kuchipudi. Her recent performance was a heartfelt expression of her growth and the profound influence of her esteemed gurus, writes **SAKSHI PRIYA**

## A DANCE OF DREAMS EXPLORING THE BEAUTY OF KUCHIPUDI



In the vibrant world of classical dance, few traditions are as richly expressive and historically significant as Kuchipudi. Originating from the Andhra Pradesh region of India, this classical dance form is renowned for its intricate footwork, elaborate gestures and profound storytelling. It embodies a fusion of dance, drama and music, bringing ancient narratives to life with remarkable grace.

Adiva Agarwal's recent Kuchipudi performance, marking her Rangapravesham, was a stunning demonstration of this art form's enduring allure. From the moment she stepped onto the stage, it was clear that her recital was more than just a display of technical skill; it was a heartfelt journey into the essence of Kuchipudi. Under the guidance of her esteemed guru, Padma Bhushan Drs. Raja Radha Reddy and Kaushalya Reddy, Adiva has honed her craft with dedication and precision, resulting in a performance that both honoured tradition and showcased her personal artistry.

The evening commenced with "Ganapati Vandana," a customary invocation to Lord Ganesha, setting a tone of reverence and anticipation. This opening act seamlessly transitioned into "Dashavatara," where Adiva's portrayal of Lord Vishnu's ten avatars was nothing short of mesmerising. Each avatar was brought to life with a delicate balance of intricate footwork and expressive storytelling, demonstrating

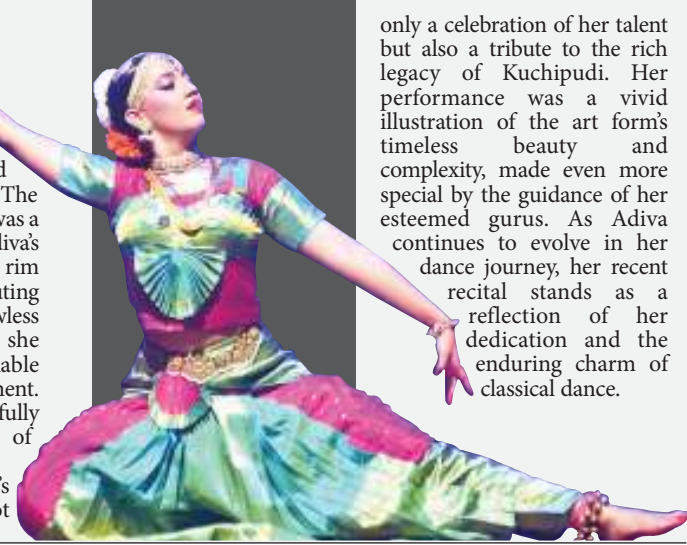


Photos: Pankaj Kumar

Adiva's deep understanding of the form and its narratives. The highlight of the performance was the "Tillana," a vibrant piece characterised by its rhythmic complexity and energetic movements. Adiva's ability to navigate the intricate patterns and maintain dynamic engagement with the audience was a showcase of her exceptional skill and stage presence. Her performance was a beautiful embodiment of Kuchipudi's essence, blending technical brilliance with artistic flair.

Adding emotional depth to the evening was "Chhaap Tilak Sab Cheeni," a devotional poem by Amir Khusro. Adiva's

interpretation of this piece was imbued with spiritual reverence, showcasing her ability to convey profound emotions through dance. The grand finale, "Tarangam," was a breathtaking display of Adiva's virtuosity. Dancing on the rim of a brass plate while executing intricate footwork with flawless synchronisation, she demonstrated a remarkable level of skill and commitment. This climactic piece beautifully capped off an evening of exceptional performances. Adiva Agarwal's Rangapravesham was not



only a celebration of her talent but also a tribute to the rich legacy of Kuchipudi. Her performance was a vivid illustration of the art form's timeless beauty and complexity, made even more special by the guidance of her esteemed gurus. As Adiva continues to evolve in her dance journey, her recent recital stands as a reflection of her dedication and the enduring charm of classical dance.

## Discovering Absence Through Visual Expression

Antra Srivastava's latest exhibition challenges us to delve into the unseen, revealing the hidden depths of absence in our lives, says **TEAM AGENDA**



The allure of absence is a peculiar paradox; it quietly demands attention, shaping our perceptions and provoking our thoughts. Artist Antra Srivastava's exhibition, *The Inescapable Presence of Absence*, invites viewers on a profound journey of reflection. This solo exhibition captivates audiences with its surreal yet deeply philosophical exploration of what lies beyond the visible.

Antra Srivastava, a Dehradun-based artist, her experiences as an avid traveler deeply influence her work, resulting in paintings that capture the vibrancy and diversity of the world. Through her art, she blends surrealism with poetic expression, drawing inspiration from the vitality of nature and the profound energy that flows through her creative process. She describes herself as both a participant and a witness in this artistic journey, immersing herself in the boundless realm of creative energy.

The theme of *The Inescapable Presence of Absence* delves into the paradox where absence becomes a palpable presence. This theme challenges viewers to rethink their perceptions, urging them to reflect on the significant impact of what is not present. It invites an exploration of the unseen and the unheard, asking profound



questions about the nature of existence. Srivastava's artistic journey is profoundly influenced by ancient Indian scriptures and the wisdom of sages, providing a foundation for her introspective quest. Her collection is a philosophical interpretation of the 18 chapters of the Gita, reflections on Sant Kabir's dohe and saakhees and a portrayal of six elements: air, water, earth, fire, space and consciousness. This unique

perspective allows her to seamlessly blend multiple layers of colours, creating harmony and rhythm, blurring the lines between abstraction and realism and evoking a surreal effect. In the Kabir series, Srivastava resonates with Kabir's ability to express complex ideas with simplicity. She emphasises that life's intricacies are self-created and that true knowledge emerges from inner silence rather than

external teachings. This series, inspired by Kabir's dohe and saakhees, underscores the experiential aspect of wisdom, offering a fresh perspective on life's fundamental truths. Srivastava's art invites a profound connection with the self, urging us to explore the deeper implications of absence alongside presence. Her work is a reflection of our existence, challenging us to look beyond what is visible and consider the unseen forces that shape our lives.

The exhibition's title itself, *The Inescapable Presence of Absence* suggests a haunting elegance. It forces us to contemplate the spaces in between, the silence between words and the pauses in conversation that often carry more weight than the spoken. In these gaps, Srivastava finds beauty and complexity, offering her audience a mirror to their inner worlds. This exhibition stands as an attestation to art's power to transcend the ordinary, provoke thought and inspire change. Her exploration of absence is not merely an artistic endeavor; it is a call to acknowledge and embrace the unseen, the unheard and the unmet aspects of our existence. Through her work, Srivastava offers a profound reminder that art is not just a reflection of the world but a gateway to understanding the intricacies of our inner selves. By the time visitors exit,

## A CANVAS OF WONDERS

Experience the magic of watercolor through a captivating exhibition that celebrates the beauty of nature, architecture and human expression, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

At the Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre, a captivating solo exhibition showcases the evocative power of watercolor art. The exhibition "This Beautiful World," featuring the watercolor works of Dr. Sushma Mahajan and curated by Dr. Alka Pande, offers a captivating glimpse into the world through the eyes of a talented and passionate artist. The collection of 35 watercolor paintings is a vivid celebration of beauty, nature and the intricate details of everyday life.

The exhibition successfully highlights Mahajan's extraordinary skill with watercolors, showcasing her ability to create vibrant and realistic images that evoke emotion and wonder. Her unique perspective as both an artist and a medical professional adds depth to her work, and it is evident that she views the world with a keen sense of appreciation for its many facets.

One of the standout pieces is *Spotted Charm*, a painting of a leopard that captures the animal's grace and mystery with stunning accuracy. The richness of the colors and the attention to detail make this piece particularly memorable. Similarly, *Magic of Night Glow* is a beautiful depiction of vintage cars on cobblestone streets, bathed in soft, atmospheric light. This piece resonates with a sense of nostalgia and transports viewers to a timeless scene that feels both familiar and enchanting.

*The Sun Chariot* is a fascinating work that pays homage to the Nalinga temple art. Artist meticulous rendering of the astronomical sundial, with its eight spokes representing the "prahars" of the day, is both educational and visually captivating. The painting serves as a reminder of the rich cultural heritage and architectural marvels that continue to inspire artists today. Her ability to capture both natural and architectural beauty with precision invites



viewers to appreciate the power of art and the beauty that surrounds us. In *Anchored in Serenity* the artist depicts a tranquil boat scene that encourages reflection and peace. The painting's serene composition invites viewers to pause and consider the importance of finding calm amid the chaos of modern life. *The Bridge* similarly highlights the significance of connections and relationships, celebrating the beauty of bridges as symbols of unity and continuity. *The Power of Music*, celebrates music as a universal language of the spirit, while *Sunflowers*, presents a spiritual perspective on these bright blooms. These

artworks reflect the artist's thoughtful approach and emotional depth, conveyed through vibrant colors and delicate detail. The curation of the exhibition by Dr. Alka Pande further enhances the experience, providing context and insight into the themes and techniques that define Mahajan's work. Pande's expertise in Indian arts and

aesthetics brings an added layer of understanding, making the exhibition not only visually engaging but also intellectually stimulating. *This Beautiful World* is an exhibition that beautifully captures the essence of the world around us. Mahajan's paintings are a tribute to her talent and dedication and the exhibition as a whole serves as a reminder of the power of art to inspire, uplift and connect us to the world. The blend of nature, culture and emotion in her work offers a refreshing perspective and an opportunity to appreciate the extraordinary beauty that exists in the ordinary moments of life.

Photos: Pankaj Kumar

IN BRIEF



Coffee Day: NCLT orders insolvency proceedings

Corporate dispute tribunal NCLT has ordered initiating insolvency proceedings against Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd (CDEL), the parent company of Coffee Day Group which operates Cafe Coffee Day chain of coffee houses. The Bengaluru bench of the NCLT (National Company Law Tribunal) on August 8 admitted the plea filed by IDBI Trusteeship Services Ltd (IDBITSL) claiming a default of Rs 228.45 crore and appointed an interim resolution professional to take care of the operation of the debt-ridden company. CDEL, which also owns and operates a resort, renders consultancy services and is engaged in the sale and purchase of coffee beans, had defaulted in the payment of coupon payments of redeemable non-convertible debentures (NCDs). The financial creditor had subscribed 1,000 NCDs through private placement and paid Rs 100 crore towards the subscription in March 2019.



Rupee rises 2 paise to close at 83.95 against US dollar

The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day higher by 2 paise at 83.95 against US dollar on Friday, supported by gains in the domestic markets. Forex traders said the rupee edged up slightly on gains in the domestic markets. However, a surge in crude oil prices capped sharp gains for the local unit. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.95 and touched an intraday low of 83.96 and a high of 83.88 against the dollar during the session. It finally settled at 83.95 against the American currency, higher by 2 paise from its previous close. The local unit had slumped 37 paise to settle at an all-time low of 84.09 against the US dollar on Monday. On Thursday, the rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day lower by 2 paise at 83.97 against US dollar.



VA Tech WABAG Ltd secures repeat order from CMWSSB

Water treatment player VA Tech WABAG Ltd has secured a repeat order of Rs 415 crore from the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board, the company said on Saturday. The order is towards the Operation and Maintenance of 110 million litres per day Sea Water Reverse Osmosis (SWRO) Desalination Plant at Nemmeli in Chennai for a period of 7 years, city-based VA Tech WABAG Ltd said. VA Tech WABAG had bagged an Operation and Maintenance contract from the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB) and it was completed in 2021. In a BSE filing today, the company said, "CMWSSB floated a public tender for the Operation and Maintenance of the plant and WABAG secured this repeat order for Operating and Maintaining the plant for another 7 years."

Banks should focus on their core business: FM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday exhorted banks to focus on their core business and explore new ways to attract deposits, as household savings are increasingly shifting towards alternate investment products.

"Both RBI and the government have been asking banks to focus on their business activity... they should be aggressive in deposit mobilisation and then lend. That is the core activity of banks," she said.

Interacting with the media after her customary post Budget address to the central board of Reserve Bank of India (RBI), she said there is mismatch between credit and deposit growth presently.

Stressing that banks should give emphasis on collecting deposits, she said, "RBI has given them some liberty in managing the interest rates. Using that liberty, they should make deposits attractive... bring innovative products and mobilise deposits."

She also urged bankers to shun lazy banking and focus on small savers rather than big or bulk deposits.

"Trickles (small savings) are going to be your bread and butter, money to bank on... that trickle which was the emphasis long back, which kept nothing for the other side (big deposits).



Now we've (banks) gone to the other side completely. Now they are chasing bulk deposits to meet their targets," she said.

But the requisite small deposit mobilisation is one of the very critical jobs of a bank, she said, adding "it might be grinding monotony, but that's where your bread and butter lies." Echoing a similar view, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said "we have been witnessing about 300 to 400 basis points gap between deposits and credit growth, deposits are lower."

"So at the moment, our effort is to highlight this point. It is kind of a proactive caution for the banks' management that going forward, this may create structural issues with regard to

RBI has given them some liberty in managing the interest rates. Using that liberty, they should make deposits attractive... bring innovative products and mobilise deposits

liquidity management. As it stands today, we don't see a crisis. But it has to be attended to."

Banks should leverage their vast branch network to mobilise deposits through innovative means and products, he emphasised.

He further said interest rates are deregulated and often banks raise deposit rates to attract funds. Asked if any policy intervention is required to bolster deposit growth, Das said, "India has deregulated interest

'Garment sector facing uncertainty due to Bangladesh crisis'

The Indian garment and knitted fabric sector is witnessing a bit of uncertainty due to the Bangladesh crisis, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Saturday, expressing hope that the interim government there will settle things "sooner rather than later." Interacting with the media on the sidelines of customary post Budget address to the central board of Reserve Bank of India, she said efforts are being taken to ensure that borders with the neighbouring country are safe. With regard to Indian investments, she said, the textile industry particularly from Tamil Nadu has made investments there in good faith and they have done well having gone there. "The exports from Bangladesh also increased because of the duty and quota liberal approach that we have towards low-income countries. They (Indian garment industry based in Bangladesh) could even export to India." Particularly, she said, the garment and knitted fabric sector is seeing a bit of uncertainty because of the crisis in the neighbouring country. "I hope that

the investments are all safe... it's too early for me to see what kind of an impact this situation in Bangladesh will have on our economy. I hope that the interim government will settle things sooner rather than later so that both the people of Bangladesh and India can get back to normalcy," she said. Earlier this week, Bangladesh plunged into a political crisis when Sheikh Hasina resigned as the Prime Minister and fled the country. Soon after Parliament was dissolved leading to the creation of an interim government. The 84-year-old Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus on Thursday took oath as the head of an interim government, replacing Sheikh Hasina who abruptly resigned and fled to India leaving the country in turmoil following deadly protests against her government over a controversial quota system in jobs. On Friday, Bangladesh's interim leader Yunus announced the portfolios of his 16-member council of advisors and named a former top diplomat to head the foreign ministry.

demand. This, he had warned, "may potentially expose the banking system to structural liquidity issues. Banks may, therefore, focus more on mobil-

isation of household financial savings through innovative products and service offerings and by leveraging fully on their vast branch network."



CELL MANUFACTURING PLANT IN TG

Amara Raja group holds groundbreaking ceremony

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Amara Raja Group on Saturday held a groundbreaking ceremony of their Customer Qualification Plant (CQP) for cell manufacturing at Divitipally, in Mahabubnagar district in the state.

Amara Raja Advanced Cell Technologies (ARACT), a wholly owned subsidiary of the Amara Raja Energy & Mobility

Limited (ARE&M), one of India's leading industrial and automotive battery majors, held the grand ceremony.

The battery maker's Phase 1 of the battery pack plant was also inaugurated with a current capacity of 1.5 GWh, a press release from the company said.

The plant makes Li-ion battery packs specifically suited for Indian conditions and will be supplying to major EV OEMs along with being used

for stationary energy storage requirements.

The CQP, which is all set to be operational by Q1 of the next financial year, can produce various cell types for customer testing and validation.

The project recently received a fillip after ARE&M's collaboration with Gotion Inobat (GIB) for technology, manufacturing and customized solutions, it said.

Mobile phones priced Rs 10k, 20k dominate Indian market: Infinix

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Mobile phones priced in the range of Rs 10,000-20,000 dominate the country's smartphone industry, constituting over 40 per cent of the total market size, according to Infinix India CEO Anish Kapoor.

Kapoor said the demand for 5G-enabled handset has increased in the recent past and devices

priced between Rs 10,000 and Rs 20,000 see higher demand as compared to those priced below Rs 10,000 that used to dominate the market earlier.

The stagnancy, which was in the market for the past two years, has changed, and the market has once again started to grow back, said Kapoor who was in Lucknow on Thursday for the launch of the



company's latest smartphone Note 40X 5G.

"...earlier the phones which were priced under Rs 10,000 used to dominate the market in India, and it was around 35 per cent to 40 per cent. Now, the major market has gone to the mobile phones priced in the range Rs 10,000 to Rs 20,000 now, which is close to 43 per cent," Kapoor said.

He attributed the new trend to users' preference towards upgraded features and the latest technology.

"We are also seeing that after the advent of the 5G tech-

nology, everybody wants a 5G phone. The demand for 5G technology has gone up. Right now 5G phones start at Rs 10,000 to Rs 11,000," Kapoor said.

About his company's performance in the local market, the Infinix India CEO said, "Uttar Pradesh is one of the biggest markets for us both online and offline, and the response has been phenomenal for us as a brand."

He said the company has been trying to create "break-through products and premium features at more affordable segments, and that's what we are known as a brand."

Explore alternatives to sugercane: Shah

URGES SUGAR MILLS TO DIVERSIFY ETHANOL PRODUCTION

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Saturday called on sugar mills to explore alternatives to sugarcane for ethanol production, pushing for a multi-dimensional approach to biofuel manufacturing.

Speaking at an event organized by the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories (NFCFSF), Shah said India would achieve

its 20 per cent ethanol blending target by 2025-26, ahead of the original 2030 deadline.

The minister highlighted that the government's ethanol blending programme has helped reduce the country's crude oil import bill and address environmental concerns.

"You need to be futuristic and look at opportunities and expand. Ethanol can be made from multiple sources," Shah



said, urging cooperative sugar mills to shed their "orthodox"

approach and explore alternative feedstocks such as maize and bamboo.

Shah said about 1,000 crores of ethanol is required for blending, and the necessary infrastructure to achieve this target is in place.

He emphasised the need for sugar mills to modernise and adopt new technologies, citing potential export opportunities once the Global Biofuels Alliance is established.

'Tourism sector could resolve 50% of employment challenges'

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The tourism sector has the potential to resolve 50 per cent of the country's employment challenges with the right government support, Lemon Tree Hotels Chairman and Managing Director Patanjali Govind Keswani said on Saturday.

Delivering his address at the first National Conclave on India 2047, organised by IIM Calcutta, he said India's tourism sector is on the verge of hitting the inflexion point.

Keswani pointed out that

several countries have seen that the tourism sector contributes as much as 15-20 per cent to their GDP and account for 25 per cent of employment.

Expressing disappointment over the government's approach towards the tourism sector, he said, "In India, tourism contributes only 6.5 per cent to GDP and a similar share in employment. This sector holds enormous potential for creating jobs." "If the government can leverage this opportunity effectively, it could address up to 50 per cent of our employment challenges," he said.

Domestic food market expected to touch US\$ 1,274 bn

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The domestic food market is expected to grow by over 47 per cent to reach US\$ 1,274 billion by 2027, a report released by the Confederation of Indian Industry and supported by Danfoss India said.

India's food processing industry sees innovative startups emerging with cutting-edge technology, the report titled 'Food Processing Sector in India - Potential for Southern States', and released by CII, CII FACE (Confederation of Indian Industry -- Food and Agriculture Centre of Excellence) and Danfoss India, said.

Danfoss India is a leader in heating, ventilation and air-



conditioning and is the subsidiary of Denmark-headquartered engineering major Danfoss.

Some of the key highlights of the report, which was released at the CII-FoodPro 2024 include the potential that southern states hold for food

processing industry.

"Tamil Nadu leads India's export of processing fruits, juices and nuts, with a 33 per cent share by quantity and 27 per cent by value, exporting 2,08,370 metric tonnes worth US\$ 220.81 million in 2023-24," the report said.

The food processing industry in India sees innovative startups emerging with cutting-edge technology, the report said.

The study carries insights on emerging trends, technologies and export opportunities enabling businesses to make informed decisions and tap into the sector's potential.

South India's food processing sector is on the cusp of a revolution, with innovative segments like millets, ready-to-eat and plant-based dairy alternatives unlocking a treasure trove of economic opportunities for farmers. The newly launched report reveals, technology holds the key to supercharging this growth, ensuring the highest standards of safety and quality and propelling

India's exports onto the global stage," CII National Council for Cold Chain and Agri Logistics Chairman Ravichandran Purushothaman said.

"At Danfoss India, we are excited to be a part of this transformative journey, driving sustainable food processing solutions that will shape the future of Indian agriculture and food sector," he said in a statement on Saturday.

During the event, Danfoss Optyma Pack Condensing Unit, a reliable and energy-efficient solution for Bulk Milk Cooling and Cold Room applications was launched.

"The Optyma Pack Condensing Unit is a game changer for India's dairy industry and cold room applications.

Sovereign green bonds trading at IFSC to commence soon: RBI Guv

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Saturday said trading of sovereign green bonds can commence at the International Financial Services Centre in Gujarat during the second half of the current fiscal.

"We are in discussion with the IFSC, it will be operationalised very soon. I think in the second half (of the current financial year), it will be possible," Das said.

In April, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had announced that it will issue a framework to enable the trading of sovereign green bonds in GIFT City.



The government has been raising funds through green bonds since 2022-23 and has raised a total of Rs 36,000 crore in the last two years.

So far in the current financial year, the government has raised only Rs 1,697 crore out of the stipulated Rs 12,000 crore scheduled to be raised in the first half ending in September through green

bonds as it did not find favourable bids.

Asked about the tepid response from investors to such bond issuance, Das said, "as the debt manager of the government, we are watchful of what exactly is happening and if something needs to be done we will interact with the government and deal with it."

He further said, one major announcement in this year's budget about developing a climate taxonomy.

"I think that will have a significant long-term impact on mobilisation of funds for the green sector, not only through green bonds but also overall financing of the green sector," he said.



# Glittering affair: Nothing short of fashion fantasia!

AARTI SREENATH

In Hyderabad, fashion isn't merely about following trends; it's a deep dive into personal expression, where every garment and every accessory is chosen with care and thought. This passion for fashion came alive in a spectacular display at the AISPI and Nykaa Beauty Vault's exclusive trunk show, held at the opulent Almai.

This was no ordinary event—it was an experience designed for those who live and breathe fashion. The trunk show was a curated journey through the finest in both Indian and international fashion, a celebration of luxurious fabrics, featuring an exquisite curation of over 35+ renowned global brands from Italy, United Kingdom, France, Turkey, Germany, Denmark, Japan and others. It was an invitation to indulge in the art of dressing, to explore new trends and to push the boundaries of personal style.

As the venue was filled with Hyderabad's fashion-forward crowd, the air buzzed with excitement. Every detail of the event was crafted to appeal to the city's sophisticated palate. The trunk show was not just about what was on the racks; it was about the stories behind the designs, the inspiration that fuelled their creation and the creative minds that brought them to life.

Prepared to marvel at Rosantica's expertly-crafted handbags, straight from the runway, exploring whimsical designs by L'alingi favoured by celebrities like Jennifer Lopez and Cardi B, and got dazzled by Gedebe's never-before-seen sparkling bags. Organised by AISPI, the event was a showcase of ITRH by Ridhi Bansal's latest collection, drawing in the city's fashion elite, influencers and trendsetters who live and breathe fashion.

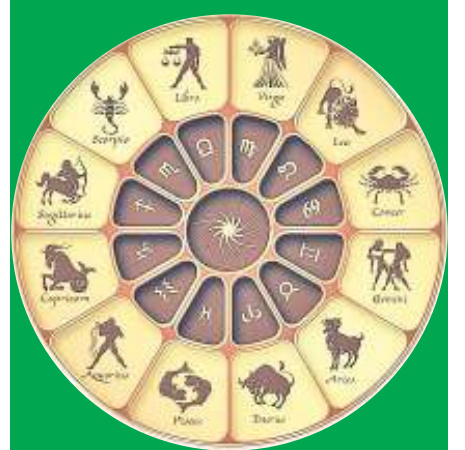
A special highlight of the event was the exclusive opportunity for attendees to pre-order the renowned pill bags from Marzook, carried by celebrities like Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Beyonce. The atmosphere was charged with excitement as Hyderabad's glitterati mingled, their eyes catching the shimmer of mirror work and the glint of rich, luxurious fabrics. It was a feast for the senses—elegance at every turn, with every corner of the space

echoing the grandeur of Indian craftsmanship infused with contemporary flair. ITRH's collection was the crown jewel of the event, a series of designs that spoke volumes about the creative genius of Ridhi Bansal! Ridhi Bansal, in her candid conversation, revealed the intricate dance of creativity and uncertainty that goes into each collection. "Designing is like painting a canvas, where you never know the final picture until it's complete. Our clients often surprise us, preferring something entirely different from what we expect. It's challenging, but it keeps us on our toes," she mused. Her design process is a journey—from sketching initial ideas inspired by art and architecture to experimenting with colours and fabrics and finally, crafting pieces that are both timeless and trendsetting.

The vision was to bring the best of both worlds—Western and Indian fashion—to Hyderabad, a city known for its sartorial elegance. The synergy between these global beauty giants and ITRH's regal designs created a unique shopping experience that was as immersive as it was exclusive.

Nykaa's Megha Chakravarthy was all smiles as she discussed the collaboration. "Our goal is to bring luxury closer to home and Hyderabad's response has been fantastic. We want our customers to

explore, experiment and find what truly resonates with them," she shared. The trunk show wasn't just about selling products; it was about creating a space where beauty and fashion lovers could discover new ways to express themselves. Deepika Tikkavarapu, the force behind Almai and a well-known fashion commentator, added her own flair to the event. Her vision was clear: to make shopping an experience rather than just a transaction. "Hyderabad is discerning and its people know what they want. You can't just bring anything to this city; it has to be special; it has to be desirable," she explained. Her personal style—structured, high-quality pieces with a play on texture and print—was reflected in the carefully curated selection available at the trunk show. As the event progressed, guests were treated to more than just fashion. There was an air of indulgence—luxury cheeses were served and conversations flowed as freely as the champagne. Attendees were invited to try on the latest designs, consult with stylists and walk out with complete looks that were ready for any occasion. The mix of Indian and Western styles, along with the array of accessories and beauty products, ensured that every guest left with something unique and personal.



## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE AUGUST 4 - 10



**ARIES**  
Embrace unexpected connections and harmony. Your innovative nature and deep relationships will bring joy. Stay confident. Don't let others' insecurities affect you.

**TAURUS**  
Your hard work will soon pay off, allowing you to relax. Be patient with siblings. Nurture relationships carefully. Use your strong personality to overcome challenges.

**GEMINI**  
You're seeking adventure. Patience and communication will avoid disputes. Support from friends will help win goals. Embrace new ventures. Use your energy wisely.

**CANCER**  
Your hard work will soon pay off, but remember to rest. Self-improvement and confidence will guide you. Think hard before committing. Stay logical in your deals.

**LEO**  
Your experimental nature will invite attention. Persist in love, but delay major job changes. Be emotionally firm, and enjoy support from unexpected financial sources.

**VIRGO**  
Your attraction to beauty and harmony will relax you. Stay confident and manage your emotions wisely. Embrace your artistic talent. Keep a practical mind.

**LIBRA**  
Your experimental nature will earn appreciation. Stay calm under pressure, focus on personal growth, and embrace upcoming changes. Manage expenses wisely.

**SCORPIO**  
Focus on self-improvement with support from loved ones. Manage financial stress, pursue personal growth, and stay confident. Unexpected challenges may arise.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Address suspicions with siblings early. Balance personal growth with obligations. Embrace relationships and creativity. Be wary of emotions affecting your health.

**CAPRICORN**  
New project ideas will emerge, and your experimental nature will help you choose wisely. Focus on self-care, manage emotions calmly, and embrace opportunities.

**AQUARIUS**  
Proceed with your plans as signs are favourable. Seek advice if facing issues with superiors or children. New ventures and project approvals look promising.

**PISCES**  
Your hard work will soon pay off. Be gentle with loved ones despite the pressure. Your energy and leadership will get support. Use your stamina wisely. Stay humble.

### Eye gummies for enhanced vision

Venturing into the nutraceutical segment, Jagat Pharma, has announced the launch of Isotine Eye Gummies. These gummies are specially formulated for kids and adults to nourish the eyes and promote optimal vision development.



### Effortless cooking, anywhere!

TTK Prestige introduces Infrared Cooktop PIRC 1.0. The infrared cooktop redefines cooking experience, seamlessly blending functionality, safety and efficiency. It boasts its exceptional features like its durable stainless-steel body and a sleek design that ensures a long-lasting and stylish addition to any kitchen. Its portability adds unparalleled convenience, making it a versatile choice for various cooking needs.



### INDULGE IN LUXURY PERFUME

Unleash your X factor with this exclusive gift set of 4 distinguished perfumes, Euphoria, Conquer and Harmony & Discoverer, perfect for the corporate man. The Park Avenue Luxury Perfume Gift Set for Men is crafted by global perfumers. Euphoria EDP features exotic mix of citrus blend with amber and musk, while Harmony EDP offers tangy



### INTRODUCING B-YOND

The ultimate gaming headset by Swiss Military that elevates your audio experience beyond the ordinary. Enjoy exceptional sound quality with deep bass and a wide frequency response range, bringing every game to life with stunning clarity. Boasting an impressive playtime of up to 15 hours and an astounding standby time of up to 500 hours, B-YOND ensures uninterrupted gaming and music sessions.



### EXPLORE FA HOME'S PLAYFUL CUSHION AND THROW SETS

Make your gift-giving truly special with FA Home's exquisite cushion and throw sets! FA Home has crafted a collection that combines practicality with playfulness, ensuring your present is both heartfelt and memorable. Imagine wrapping your loved ones in comfort and joy with their premium and breathable cotton jacquard fabrics, perfect for cosying up every day. Their sets are designed to be as useful as they are beautiful, making them a perfect choice for this festive occasion.



### DI AI DESIGNS ENTERS US MARKET

DI Ai Designs, a leading Indian brand that offers sustainable lab grown diamond jewellery, announces their US website launch.



### NEWEST CRUNCHY CORN FLAVOURS

Crunchy Corn by 4700BC is a burst of flavours and textures in every bite. Experience the perfect combination of newest Crunchy Corn flavours: Sour Cream & Onion, Himalayan Salt and Hawaiian BBQ. Each piece of corn is expertly seasoned and roasted to crunchy perfection, creating a delightful snack that satisfies your taste buds.



### BONKERS CORNER'S EXCITING APPAREL COLLECTION

The Hello Kitty apparel collection by Bonkers Corner blends Hello Kitty's iconic Kawaii charm with Bonkers Corner's trademark creativity. The collection includes skirts, oversized t-shirts, crop tops, bottoms and caps, ensuring there is something for every Hello Kitty enthusiast. The Hello Kitty Collection offers a range of affordable options, priced from 299 to 1099, catering to fans of all ages.



### 'FORK'-LORE



As the monsoon rains usher in refreshing coolness, there's nothing better than indulging in warm, comforting dishes during this season. Godrej Appliances presents some simple yet delicious and easy-to-make monsoon recipes that you can prepare in a microwave oven. From crispy bajra tikki, some savoury millet pyaaz pakoda and delightful vegetable dumplings, these recipes are perfect to relish on a rainy day. Let's dive into these mouth-watering treats and make the most of this beautiful season.

**BAJRA TIKKI**  
**Ingredients:**  
Bajra (Millet) Flour 2 cups  
Jaggery powder 1 cup  
Til Sesame Seeds ½ cup  
Oil For Brushing 4 tsp  
Water as required  
**Method of preparation:**  
**Step 1:** Add jaggery in water and cook for 2 minutes in Micro mode till the jaggery melts.  
**Step 2:** Take a mixing bowl, in it sieve the millet flour, and add 2 tablespoons oil. Knead

## This monsoon, savour hot & healthy recipes!

this mixture well with jaggery syrup that was just prepared. Ensure the dough is not too hard or too soft.  
**Step 3:** Now take the dough little by little and make small size tikkis.  
**Step 4:** Arrange all the tikki on a crispy plate, brush some oil on it and place the crispy plate on the grill mesh rack in the oven. Select Convection mode, set the temperature at 200°C and bake for 12 minutes.  
**Step 2:** After the beep, remove the crispy plate out of the oven, turn all the tikki upside down, brush some oil on it and bake again in convection mode for another 12 minutes. Serve hot once its ready.



**MILLET PYAAZ PAKODA**  
**Ingredients:**  
Kodo Millet Soaked 1½ cup  
Moong Dal Soaked 1 cup  
Onion Chopped 1 cup  
Grated Gajar ½ cup

- Green Peas ¼ cup
- Sweet Corn Kernels ½ cup
- Red Chili Powder 1 tsp
- Garam Masala 1 tsp
- Coriander Powder 1 tsp
- Green Chili Chopped 2 tsp
- Grated Ginger 1 tsp
- Coriander Chopped ¼ cup
- Oil for Brushing

#### Method of preparation:

**Step 1:** In a mixer jar, add soaked kodo millet & soaked moong dal (it should be soaked for more than 7 hours), mix well and make a paste of it.  
**Step 2:** Collect this paste in a bowl, add all remaining ingredients to it and mix everything well without water- this is the pakoda batter.  
**Step 3:** Now take a crispy plate or a baking dish, grease it with a brush of oil. With the help of a spoon, place small sized portions of the pakoda batter on the plate. Arrange this crispy plate on the grill mesh rack in the oven. Select Convection mode at 200 °C temperature, set timer of 12 minutes and press start.  
**Step 4:** After the beep, remove the crispy plate and turn all the pakoda upside down, and again set a timer of 10 mins to fry it well. Serve Hot.  
**For dumpling dough:**  
All-purpose flour 1½ cup  
Warm Water as required  
Corn/Rice flour for Dusting  
**Method of preparation:**

**Step 1:** To make the dough, put the flour in a large mixing bowl. Gradually add water to the flour and knead into a smooth dough. Cover with a damp cloth and let the dough rest for 1 hour.  
**Step 2:** Now to prepare the filling, take a microwave oven safe bowl, add oil, onion, garlic, ginger, spring onion, mix well and select micro mode on high power (P-100), set time for 3 minutes and press start to cook all the ingredients.  
**Step 3:** After the beep, remove the bowl and add all remaining ingredients, mix well and cook again for 5 minutes. The dumpling filling is ready.  
**Step 4:** Now take the dough that was resting aside and cut the dough into small pieces.  
**Step 5:** Take a small piece of dough, dust it with some flour and roll it, this is your dumpling wrapper. Hold one dumpling wrapper in the palm of your hand. Take 1 tsp of filling and place in the centre of your wrapper. Wet the top half edge with water; fold the wrapper in half and pinch in the centre. Use your



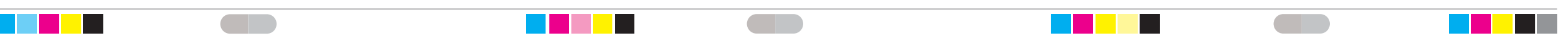
thumbs to pleat from the centre all the way to the edge of one side and seal. Repeat on the other side – pleat from the centre to the end. The dumpling should now be sealed end to end.

**Step 6:** Arrange all the dumplings in a lightly greased crispy plate and place it on the grill stand in the oven. Select Convection mode at 200 °C temperature and set time for 12 minutes, then press start.

**Step 7:** After the beep, remove the plate and apply oil with brush to all the dumplings, turn the dumplings upside down and again arrange in the oven. Once again select convection mode, 200 °C temperature and set time for 12 minutes, press start.

Serve hot with Sauce.

**VEGETABLE DUMPLINGS**  
**Ingredients :**  
Dumpling Wrappers 12  
Chopped Mushroom ¾ cup  
Chopped Onion ½ cup  
Grated Gajar ¾ cup  
Chopped Spring Onion ½ cup  
Soya Sauce 2 tsp  
Chopped Garlic Cloves few  
Grated Ginger 1 ½ tsp  
Sugar 1 tsp  
Pepper Powder ½ tsp  
Salt to taste  
Oil as required



"There are so many roads you can take that will lead you the wrong way, that nobody will hear your name"  
- Maria Sharapova



# DELHI-DEHRADUN EXPRESSWAY DEVELOPMENT ALONG WITH DAMAGE?

The Delhi-Dehradun Expressway project, nearing completion, is expected to be an example for the world with the longest wildlife corridor in Asia. It will cut the travel time between the two cities to 2.5 hours but apprehensions remain about its impact, writes **PARITOSH KIMOTHI**

Uttarakhand has for long been a popular destination for pilgrims and tourists. While Haridwar is a major pilgrimage centre in the plains, the provisional State capital Dehradun hosts a number of prominent national-level institutions including the Survey of India and Indian Military Academy along with famous educational institutions, apart from being the gateway to the popular hill station of Mussoorie and other tourism activities especially in the mountainous regions of Garhwal in the State. Apart from long weekends and special occasions, the summer months frequently witness a large number of people arriving here especially from Delhi-NCR. Similarly, snowfall in the nearby hills also attracts a number of tourists from neighbouring regions. At present, people travel between Delhi and Dehradun/Haridwar by road, train or by air. The time taken to travel between Doon and the national Capital by road ranges from five to seven hours depending on the time when one travels and the location one is going to. Similarly, it takes about five to six hours by train and though the flight takes 40 minutes to one hour, one may spend more than an additional hour to get to the destination from the airport. This scenario is expected to be changed drastically in the near future with the completion of the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway project of the National Highways Authority of India. The completion of this 212-kilometre six-lane access controlled expressway with a project cost of Rs 14,000 crore, which is in its final stage of construction, will drastically cut down the travel time between Delhi and Dehradun/Haridwar to 2.5 hours. This expressway is also expected to be an example for the world as it also features a 13.8 kilometre elevated road, making it Asia's longest wildlife corridor. The authorities involved in the project state that the

“THE DEHRADUN-BASED WILDLIFE INSTITUTE OF INDIA (WII) SET UP 80 CAMERA TRAPS ON THIS STRETCH AND STUDIED WILDLIFE MOVEMENT HERE FOR THREE MONTHS. THE MOVEMENT OF ABOUT 40 TO 50 DIFFERENT WILDLIFE SPECIES RANGING FROM DEER AND WILD BOAR TO LEOPARDS AND ELEPHANTS WAS ASCERTAINED HERE IN THIS DURATION. AS PART OF THE EXPRESSWAY PROJECT, THE AUTHORITIES WILL ALSO WORK ON AN ECO-RESTORATION PLAN.”



stretch where the elevated road has been built has Rajaji National Park on the one side and the Shivalik Wildlife Reserve on the other. An average of 35,000 vehicles pass daily through this stretch. Widening the existing stretch of the highway between Ganeshpur in the Saharanpur district of Uttar Pradesh and Asharodi in Dehradun would have been cheaper but might have ended causing more environmental damage and exacerbating human-wildlife conflict. Widening the existing highway would have entailed the cutting of about 1.5 lakh trees while about 11,000 trees had to be cut for building the elevated road. The Dehradun-based Wildlife Institute of India (WII) set up 80 camera traps on this stretch and studied wildlife movement here for three months. The movement of about 40 to 50 different wildlife species ranging from deer and wild boar to leopards and elephants was ascertained here in this duration. As part of the expressway project, the authorities will also work on an eco-restoration plan. Further, budget

has been allocated for the WII to place cameras on the 550 pillars to study wildlife movement on this corridor for a period of five years. Similarly, the Forest Research Institute (FRI) in Dehradun will undertake a three-year Sal tree regeneration project in this area to enhance the environment. According to officials involved in the project, the elevated stretch is expected to mitigate human-wildlife conflict and also prove beneficial for the wildlife and environment. At present, the longest such wildlife corridor in India is about eight kilometres long and is located in Pench, connecting Madhya Pradesh with Maharashtra. While this project promises to bring about drastic changes not just in Dehradun and Haridwar but also in Delhi, there are many who have apprehensions about the impacts of this major development. Dehradun-based anthropologist and heritage expert Lokesh Ohri says that the project will certainly have benefits but questioned whether Dehradun and Mussoorie are prepared for what is to come. "The opening of

this expressway will practically turn Dehradun into a part of the NCR like Ghaziabad or Faridabad. The flood of visitors has already converted Rishikesh into a trap for the locals who struggle to move around the city through traffic congestion resulting from the rush of tourists, who in turn also face the problem. The pressure on the forest wealth of this region and real estate will also increase after the expressway becomes functional. Though such projects do benefit all, the focus should also have been on ensuring that the locals benefit more. Apart from this, the authorities here do not seem to have taken any measures to prevent the negative impacts the project will have on Dehradun and Mussoorie," he said.

Human rights lawyer Reenu Paul who had also challenged the Ganeshpur-Asharodi stretch of the project in the Uttarakhand High Court for conservation of the Shivalik ecosystem, opined that damage to the Shivalik range will cause considerable damage to the

environment and climate of the Doon Valley. She points out, "The Shivaliks play a vital role in insulating the Doon Valley against high winds, heat, dust and pollutants from the plains on the south western side of the valley. In the Gazetteers of Dehradun published in 1910, HG Walton had remarked that the climate of Dehradun differs from the plains owing to its elevation, while the wooded range of the Shivalik partly suppress and partly moisten the scorching winds that blow during the hot weather in the plains. Apart from this, the project doesn't appear to be sustainable as the hillocks of the Shivalik are highly eroding. The tributaries of the Ganga river including Mohan Rao, Sukh Rao, Saloni and Chilla Rao have also been disturbed and obstructed, disturbing the hydrology of the area. The wildlife corridor has also been fragmented," she opined. The authorities are confident that the opening of the Delhi-Dehradun expressway will not only enhance public convenience by drastically cutting down the travel time, but also boost economic activities further in the region. Infrastructural development is a major focus of the Union government and is a vital requirement for achieving the desired level of economic progress and public welfare. On the other hand, many in Dehradun remain sceptical about the impacts this project will have. The once green and serene Doon Valley has witnessed a considerable drop in greenery and rise in congestion and pollution in recent years. The city's existing infrastructure struggles to meet the requirements of the locals and visitors as factors like congestion and inadequate parking space have impacted the very character of Doon and life here. Expected to be completed in the next couple of months, the opening of the expressway for traffic is sure to bring about drastic changes. However, only time will tell the real cost of this major development.



CHAT-O-CINO

# LAUGHTER IS A CRIME, KENNY'S THE KINGPIN

Kenny Sebastian, the man with many talents, gets onboard for an exclusive interview with *The Pioneer*, as he takes us through his magnetic personality and explores his comedy prowess.

AARTI SREENATH

In a parallel universe where laughter is outlawed and joy is a black-market commodity, a lone figure stands against the tyranny of seriousness. This isn't the plot of a dystopian novel, but the whimsical imagination of Kenny Sebastian, the maverick comedian who would hide in alleys, selling illicit giggles to those brave enough to defy the law. His story is not just about laughter; it's a narrative of resilience, self-discovery and the pursuit of genuine human connection. And as he continues to weave his comedic magic, one thing is clear: in a world where laughter might one day be illegal, Kenny will always be there, hiding in the alleys, ready to make us laugh, no matter the cost. His journey from a shy, introspective artist to a beloved comedian is a testament to the transformative power of humour and the enduring spirit of those who dare to make the world a happier place, one joke at a time.

Well, we have the gagster onboard today for our special Celeb Talk segment and as we begin, "I'd charge a hefty fee," he chuckles, "as long as you're not a cop, of course."

Kenny's journey into the realm of comedy is not just about making people laugh; it's a profound exploration of human connection. "We all crave to find out that we are not that different from the rest," he muses. "But at the same time, we want to feel a little bit special." This philosophy has shaped his approach to humour, transforming his stand-up routines from light-hearted anecdotes into deep, introspective performances. Reflecting on his evolution, he notes, "In my 20s, any connection with the audience was satisfying. Now, a deeper connection seems like the only connection worth having."

If Kenny were to pen his life story, he would title it *Why the Hell Not?*—an apt reflection of his fearless approach to life and comedy. This attitude extends to his hypothetical stand-up routine for none other than Sir Isaac Newton. "I'd love to see Newton admit, 'I don't understand calculus either!'" he imagines, picturing the legendary scientist's faux pas. The idea of making a historical genius like Newton laugh underscores Kenny's belief in the universality of humour—a tool to bridge even the widest gaps.

Despite his confident stage presence, Kenny reveals a lesser-known side: off-stage, he is surprisingly calm and shy. This juxtaposition between his public persona and private self adds another layer to his comedy, often touching on personal anxieties and vulnerabilities. "Making jokes about a subject doesn't make us worse than the subject," he explains, highlighting the therapeutic nature of his work. This candid admission makes his comedy more relatable, as he often draws on his own life experiences and struggles, weaving them into his performances.

Even amidst the cheers and laughter, he admits that dealing with trolls and negative comments is still challenging. "It hurts a lot, especially because my goal is to make people happy. When those same people say mean things, it's tragic," he confesses. This vulnerability reveals the dual nature of being in the public eye, where the drive to entertain is sometimes met with harsh criticism.

Beyond comedy, he has a passion for painting, sketching and motorbikes. With a degree in painting and a love for his Kawasaki Ninja 650 and Triumph Bonneville 900, he leads a life filled with diverse interests. His creative pursuits extend beyond the stage, as he finds solace and expression in the visual arts. He's also obsessed with animals, especially dogs and enjoys

cooking, working out, gaming and travelling with his wife. These hobbies paint a picture of a well-rounded individual who finds joy and inspiration in various aspects of life.

In a rapid-fire round, he reveals a few fun facts: he's a night owl, loves chicken curry and rice, prefers tea over coffee and can't resist a good dumb joke. His go-to karaoke song? Any John Mayer hit. But beyond these playful tidbits, Kenny hopes his comedy leaves a lasting impact. "Expecting entertainers to inspire social change is infantilising the capabilities of the general public," he says. "Everyday individuals are the ones who create social change. My impact, hopefully, leaves people feeling like life is slightly more hopeful."

For aspiring comedians, his advice is simple yet profound: "Always do stand-up comedy for the right reasons—trying to make people laugh and being the funniest person you can be. Any other reason won't help you persevere in this career for decades." His creative process is a blend of respect for every idea and a keen observation of the world around him. "I never let my inner voice die," he shares. "If my brain gives me an idea, I treat it with the utmost respect." This approach speaks to his dedication and passion for his craft, where every thought is a potential spark for the next great joke.

As for what's next, he promises "creative, silly and uplifting jokes," with a hint of music in his upcoming special. If his routines had superpowers, they would instill a deep appreciation for people, nature and animals. He reflects on the struggles of his early career—financial instability, doubt, negativity from peers, and sleepless nights—but remains proud of the person he has become. This journey of perseverance and growth underscores his belief in the power of comedy to connect, heal, and inspire.

TRENDING

VINESH PHOGAT

PERSON



Vinesh was disqualified for being 100 grams over the 50-kilogram weight limit. Lopez won silver, Sarah won gold and Vinesh dashed hopes.

NEWSPRINT WORTH OVER RS 3 MILLION SET ON FIRE

VIDEO

Newsprint valued at more than Rs 3 million was purportedly burned on fire by highway extortionists.



DOUBLE ISMART

MOVIE



In order to fit the part of iSmart Shankar, Ram dropped eighteen kilograms. *Double iSmart*, the result of his second partnership with Puri Jagannadh, is scheduled for release on August 15.

CHUTTAMALLE

SONG



Many people have applauded the upbeat song *Chuttamalle*. However, other Reddit users were not thrilled, claiming that there was "no chemistry between Janhvi and Jr NTR" in the song. A few others also mentioned their 14-year age difference.

PICTURE



The change in Switzerland's Rhone Glacier over 15 years was recently captured, which further highlighted the need for immediate action.

## We hear you, Mumma!

TEJAL SINHA

Despite being a natural way to nourish and bond with an infant, breastfeeding is frequently frowned upon. This leads to the mother feeling overwhelmed with guilt and shame. In order to prevent this scenario, it is important to empower the mother who is breastfeeding to nourish her child in both private and public settings. To curb this, every year we celebrate World Breastfeeding Week. 2024 also saw us celebrate the normalisation of breastfeeding with the theme Closing the Gap: Breastfeeding Support for All. Breastfeeding certainly provides a wide range of advantages for both the mother and child. Improved nutrition, optimised protection against diseases, avoiding infections, mental and emotional growth, improved digestion health and decreased chances of developing diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular illnesses are some of the benefits that are recognised for the infant.

BREASTFEEDING AND MATERNAL NEUROLOGICAL HEALTH

Breastfeeding helps mothers in faster postnatal recovery, weight loss, reducing the risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes, and lowering the risk of breast and ovarian cancers. Apart from these benefits, there is a growing recognition of the connection between breastfeeding and maternal neurological health. Dr. Lekha Viswanath, Professor and Lactation Expert at Amrita Hospital, shares, "Oxytocin, popularly known as the love hormone, released during breastfeeding fosters a sense of connection between the mother and the baby. It promotes emotional bonding and maternal-fetal attachment. The combined effects of oxytocin and prolactin help to reduce anxiety, promote relaxation and mood stability and reduce stress. Breastfeeding enhances cognitive wellbeing and emotional resilience among postnatal mothers, probably due to the positive effect on mood and stress levels. The act of breastfeeding helps to reduce weight, reduce the risk of obesity and regulate glucose and lipid metabolism, which are known risk factors for neurodegenerative diseases." Preparation for childbirth and breastfeeding can help the mother promote neurological and mental health during pregnancy. Awareness about the childbirth process has been shown to reduce the stress and anxiety associated with childbirth. Planning for breastfeeding during pregnancy and learning the correct techniques of breastfeeding will help the mothers establish a successful feeding pattern and reduce the problems related to breastfeeding. Support from family and health care providers, adequate rest and sleep, and nutrition are also important in promoting neurologic and mental health. It also helps the mother to develop breastfeeding self-efficacy or confidence and to have a positive

breastfeeding experience.

MYTHS ABOUT BREASTFEEDING

Dr. G Suma Reddy, lactation counsellor and gynecologist, further dismisses a few misconceptions around breastfeeding:

**Myth: Nursing is a simple process**

Numerous mothers require hands-on assistance in positioning their baby for breastfeeding and ensuring proper attachment to the breast. Breastfeeding requires patience and skill from both mothers and babies. Breastfeeding is also demanding on time; therefore, mothers require both space and support at home and in the workplace.

**Myth: Pain is a common part of breastfeeding**

Numerous mothers feel uneasy during the initial days postpartum while adjusting to breastfeeding. By receiving proper assistance in positioning their baby for breastfeeding and ensuring their baby is properly latched onto the breast, mothers can prevent sore nipples.

**Myth: You must consume plain foods exclusively when nursing your baby**

Similar to everyone else, nursing mothers must consume a well-rounded diet. Overall, it is unnecessary to alter eating patterns. Infants are influenced by their mothers' dietary choices even before they are born.

**Myth: Working out can alter the flavour of your breast milk**

Physical activity is beneficial for breastfeeding moms as well. There is no proof that it alters the flavour of your milk.

CRUCIAL ROLE OF FATHERS

A father's

**THE GREATEST BATTLE OF CULTURE - A Story of Harappans**, penned by Fishers, Indiana-based Panigrahi Bethi and published through Notionpress, is a fast-paced, interesting narrative which has been positioned as historical fiction, but in which one can find some truths germane to the commingling and evolution of diverse cultures and faiths in the Indian subcontinent. Although the author's note identifies it as "a work of fiction, inspired by ancient history and genome study of the Indus Valley people that was published by various scientists", some of the characters in the work do have

HEALTH TALK

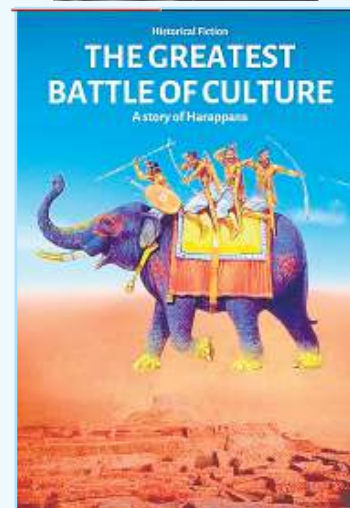
support in breastfeeding is paramount, extending beyond a mother's domain. It profoundly impacts the success of breastfeeding and the overall well-being of the family. Fathers who actively participate in this journey contribute to their partner's emotional well-being, reducing stress and the risk of postpartum depression. Their understanding and encouragement become pillars of strength for mothers navigating the challenges of breastfeeding. Furthermore, Dr. Sai Kiran D, Consultant and Lead Neonatologist, Fernandez Hospital, shares, "Fathers who embrace breastfeeding foster a deeper bond with their babies from the very beginning. By sharing responsibilities like nighttime feedings and diaper changes, fathers actively participate in their child's care. This not only lightens the mother's load but also allows fathers to experience the joys and challenges of parenthood firsthand. Creating a supportive environment is key. Fathers can ensure their partners have a comfortable space to breastfeed and shield them from negativity. Sharing household responsibilities is equally important, as it helps to alleviate the mother's burden, allowing her more time to rest and recover."



splintering of the Aryan Kingdom due to internal

discussions. Historically speaking, the Indus civilisation, earliest known urban culture of the Indian subcontinent, has been dated to about 2,500-1,700 BCE, though some of its southern sites may have lasted later into the 2nd millennium BCE. It is among the world's three earliest civilisations, along with those of Mesopotamia and Egypt and, more importantly, the most extensive. The two major sites of the civilisation, Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, are in Pakistan's Punjab and Sindh provinces respectively. Apart from the two large cities, Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, the civilization comprised more than 100 towns and villages. Some scholars believe that Harappa succeeded Mohenjo-daro, which is known to have been devastated more than once by exceptional floods. Curiously, following recent changes brought by India's National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), the Harappan society will henceforth be designated as 'Sindhu-Saraswati civilisation' in NCERT's new Social Science textbooks, starting Class VI. That apart, the word 'Aryan' has widely differing connotations, depending on antiquity and as-yet unverified historical factors. Basically, Aryan was the name originally given to a people who were said to speak an archaic Indo-European language and who were thought to have settled in prehistoric times in ancient Iran and the northern Indian subcontinent. There is also the theory of an 'Aryan race' that appeared in the mid-19th century and remained prevalent until the mid-20th century. It has been postulated that perhaps light-skinned Aryans were the group who invaded and conquered ancient India from the north and whose literature, religion, and modes of social organisation subsequently shaped the course of Indian culture, particularly the Vedic religion that informed and was eventually superseded by Hinduism. Since the late 20th century, several scholars have rejected both the Aryan invasion hypothesis and the use of the term 'Aryan' as a racial designation, suggesting that the Sanskrit term *arya* (meaning 'noble' or 'distinguished') was a social rather than an ethnic epithet. On the whole, the book, as a work of fiction with relatable aspects of major faiths, stands out as a valuable addition to bookshelves.

BOOKFLIX



Kalinga, the enforcement of Varna system by Aryans that created a social hierarchy of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras - a concept that was entirely alien to the Harappans, the exodus of Harappans to their new homeland called Dravida so much so that they came to be known as Dravidians and the eventual decline of the Indus Valley civilisation amid prolonged drought, rise of Buddhism, the emergence of the Bhagavad Gita as a sacred text to counter Buddhism, and the fanning out of the Buddhist ambassadors post

Relatable tapestry of evolution of an enduring faith



Panigrahi Bethi

Picture yourself entering a realm where the aroma of spices and the essence of traditional delicacies whisk you away to the luxurious time of royal kitchens. This is what you can expect at Khassa, a culinary paradise created with homely touch by chef Shahnoor Jehan. Coming from a royal background, Shahnoor has been carrying forward a long-standing culinary tradition inherited from her ancestors. Her grandmother late Muzaffar Unissa Begum and her mother late Faiq Jehan, who are both of royal lineage, exposed her to priceless collection of ancient recipes and authentic Hyderabad cooking traditions.

Having delved into the vast array of Hyderabad cuisine, Shahnoor Jehan today presents recipes that are over a century old. Her unique gourmet creations translate to food prepared in traditional Hyderabad style. A true-blue Hyderabad, she holds her mother's ancestry in high esteem, but remains grounded in her connection to the city due to her father Shaikat Ali Khan's relatively humble background as an IAS officer.

Her delicacies demonstrate that Hyderabad cuisine goes beyond just biryani. She started her culinary exploration early in life. Thanks to the influence of her grandmother and mother, she adheres with fidelity to traditional cooking techniques, even if they require long hours in the kitchen. Every dish is carefully made to preserve its original cultural essence.

Shahnoor is pleased to have successfully learned her grandmother's cooking methods, which reflect the early Mukalla (formerly Yemen) cuisine. She looks back on her days at Shah Manzil, which is now the Raj Bhavan. It was previously owned by her great grandfather late Shahzore Jung. Additionally, Shahnoor has learned some special secrets from her mother-in-law Shaheda Begum's kitchen. *The Pioneer's* Tejal Sinha got an opportunity to connect with the 'Nawab Shahabzadi' to learn the finer aspects of her growing years, royal lineage and her passion to perpetuate 'Asal Hyderabad' cuisine.



# Kissa Khassa Ka

## Nurturing royal cuisine at home

TEJAL SINHA

### CALM AND STUDIOUS NAWABZAADI

I was a calm kid, just like I am even today. There has not been any significant transformation in me. I was barely two years old when I lost my father. My mother was everything to me. All attention, care and emotions were focussed on her. In a way, she spoiled me a great deal. I was the smallest among siblings. When I was ready for schooling, I was enrolled at St. Anns High School, Secunderabad. I have always had a liking for books. I loved spending time in the library, reading various types of books like comics and storybooks. My passion for studying and reading remained strong even as I grew up. That is how I spent a major portion of my youth. I used to be a typical student, spending most of my time focussed on studying and was not interested in movies or anything else.

### L'IL MASTERCHEF'S BEST MEMORY

Whether it was during vacations or after I finished classes, I liked being with my mother in the kitchen. My mother loved to cook, especially for our family. I would stand with her and she would ask me to identify the ingredients and use them in appropriate measurements, such as which dal or masala was used, even though I had no prior knowledge. From the beginning, I learned everything from her. I used to say, 'Mum, you tell me how to do it and I'll do it. I would support her and educate myself in those areas. I'd grab a recipe book and begin jotting down the recipes with her. She would lead me every step of the way. I also developed a strong liking for cooking. I used to return home from school, study and then sit down with her to write the recipes. There was seldom a time when I would go out and play. I have always been by my mother's side and even now, when I look back, I feel emotional because I spent most of my time with her (she breaks down).

### THE MEMORY SHE CHERISHES...

I still have that book with me, though it's in bits and pieces. I remember even if I used to suffer a little bit of burns as a child, or if I used to burn the food a little, mummy used to be like *Nahi nahi kuch nahi hota*. She never compromised on any of the spices. If some of them were not there at home, she would rather not cook. She always used to make sure that all of the ingredients were there before beginning to cook. That's how I actually enjoyed cooking with her. I remember when I used to tell her 'Maa bass, I think you should switch off the flame' she used to be like 'no, it has to get cooked more'. Even if I used to make a small dish, she used to appreciate me and be like *bahut acha bana hai bass yeh thoda daal do aur badhiya banega*. She used to always motivate me about whatever I had made. Till her last days, she used to be like I made the best food. That was the encouragement that I always got from her. *Motivation hamesha rehta tha*.

### HOUSE AT AMEERPET

My grandfather's name was Ghulam Gouz Khan, but he was given the title of 'Housseur Jung'. My father was the only son and he had five sisters. He was an IAS officer, of course, born and brought up in Hyderabad. I was just two years old when I lost him; so, I hardly have any memories and hardly remember his face. All that I can say is that I see him in his photos -- IAS officer, as you know, he was a government officer. Back then, I remember my mother telling us, he used to move to various places, depending on his posting. In Hyderabad, we used to live in Khyaban in Ameerpet. That was the house in which my mother and the entire family used to live. We were a joint family.

### YOUNGEST OF FOUR SIBLINGS

One of my siblings is married and settled in America, while the rest of us are staying here. A lot of the time, my mother, my elder sister



and I would spend most of our time together. The other two got married first; so, my early years revolved around my mother and my sister. Even though my mother is no longer here with us, my elder sister is present. Even now, whenever I need to share or inquire about something, it is always her. I still recall how my sisters would sew clothes for me.

### TRYING TIMES

Post Independence, bereft of royal status, my mother, along with her parents, resided in Shah Manzil. My grandfather, Shahzore Baig, was actually known as Ahmed Baig. He was the grandson of Shahzore Jung. All of them resided at the Shah Manzil, which is now the Raj Bhavan. Thankfully they had additional assets to prevent any hardship during the period following Independence.



### PERPETUATING NANI'S LEGACY

My mother's cooking style was similar to that of my grandmother. During that time, every dish was prepared with saffron and pure clarified butter. They enjoyed cooking and hosting dinner parties. Their way of cooking was very similar and I always make sure to replicate it. The flavour in these dishes came from the original ingredients used. Currently, contaminated elements enhance the flavour but lack the genuine essence in the dish.

### BEGINNING OF



### 'LAZEEZDAAR KHASSA'

I never actually had to cook in my in-law's house.

However, every time I cooked, my mother-in-law and husband would always praise me. Even now, my husband is so accustomed to my cooking that wherever he goes, he always insists on having home-cooked food, which is how I began cooking. Later on, my son and husband enjoyed inviting people over for parties and I would cook for them. When they received praise, my family suggested expanding and taking orders. I thought it would be a great way to pass the time now that there are no books and schools. I decided to follow my passion and fortunately I started the business. The name was bestowed in 2019. I got married during my last year of graduation and finished my degree post-marriage. My spouse and indeed both of my kids were my support system. I was at a point in my life where I craved to stay busy. And they truly helped me all the way. My daughter continually encouraged me, while my son preferred me to relax at home. However, my daughter insisted that I shouldn't waste time sitting idle at home. When I inquired about my husband's thoughts on the idea, he enthusiastically responded that it was fantastic and encouraged me to give it a try. I was not very young and being at home would make me feel almost dead. I desired to be active and now, it is hard for me to stay inactive. Despite the presence of others who could work, I still find myself obligated to be in the kitchen working. Since I am receiving orders, I am busy the entire week.

### NOT LUCKY ENOUGH TO LIVE AT SHAH MANZIL

Regrettably, my time at Shah Manzil (now Raj Bhavan) was

### AUTHENTIC HYDERABADI KHANA

To be honest, I didn't encounter any difficulties because I was sure that the cuisine handed down to me would be completely genuine --- from the cooking process and ingredients to the methods used. I am happy to announce that I am the one who created the 'authentic Hyderabad cuisine'. Some say they make traditional dishes, citing their heritage, while others may be right in their own way. However, I trust in my own recipes. Some claim to

bring the authentic flavour, but those who have lived in Hyderabad for a long time truly understand its genuine taste. Shortcuts are not available. The cooking methods, cooking style and utensils are all crafted using traditional techniques. The top-selling dishes are *Mutton Roast, Dum Ka Murgh and Haleem*.



### AGE DOESN'T STOP ME..

I am getting older, but I don't consider myself to be very old. Sometimes I feel exhausted, but then I remember that admitting I'm tired means I'm giving up. I continue to be active and my

husband reminds me, "Did you forget how old you are?" I'm like no, I have to. I believe my family has provided a lot of support. It all came up because of the always preferred *Ghar ka Khana*.



### RAPID FIRE

**DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN THREE WORDS:** Loving, humble and simple

**ARE YOU A FOODIE:**

Like to cook but not a heavy eater

**YOUR DRIVING FORCE:** My daughter

**YOUR IDOL:** My mom

**ARE YOU RELIGIOUS OR SPIRITUAL:** Religious

limited. Shah Manzil was named after my grandfather Shah Nawab. Shah Manzil was its new name as a result of his influence. Although my mother resided there, we were not lucky enough to also live there. We have solely listened to anecdotes. During that period, Hyderabad was under the rule of Nawabs. My grandfather was followed by his father Nawab Shahzore Jung. Despite our lack of luck, there are individuals who recount tales of Shah Manzil from the past and the presence of my grandparents and mother there. It still feels good to hear those stories today. As for my father's side, since he was a humble IAS officer, his legacy is still widely discussed by people even today. Elders on my paternal side had good educational backgrounds

### RANI INDIRA DEVI'S BLESSINGS

Rani Indira Devi is a close family friend and dear to me because she and my mother were classmates and friends during their school days. She regards me like her own child. My grandmother, grandfather and her parents were as close as if they were family. Whenever I send her a dish or when she visits, she always reminisces about the taste of old times. She would remember the times when they would have dinners at the Shah Manzil. Her residence is at the Gyan Bagh Palace.

### CARRYING FORWARD TRADITIONS OF HYDERABADI CUISINE

When I began, several of my mom's friends called to congratulate me on carrying forward the tradition of Hyderabad cuisine, after sampling the traditional meals. Those words used to really surprise me. There were poignant moments when tears welled up in my eyes as I looked at pictures of my mom, realising the love she had received and how she is still remembered by many.

