www.dailypioneer.com Published From: VIJAYAWADA HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH BHUBANESWAR RANCHI DEHRADUN

US looks forward to expanding critical partnership with India

SOUTH AFRICA TO BE REVIVED

'It was a challenge to dub for an ape IN TELUGU one seat in the last three elections in Khammam. Even in the last election, my disciple using my image and influence won that seat. BRS would be completely wiped out in the future and be a zero.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

the pioneer Harish Rao should ask his uncle

(KCR) about the spirit of Khammam. The less BRS pokes Khammam people the better for them. BRS managed to win only

-Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy,

#### Minister Telangana

#### AP to sign MoU with ISRO...

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Panchayat Raj, K. Pawan Kalyan, has revealed that the Andhra Pradesh government is keen on signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to share space knowledge and receive valuable advice. He announced plans to discuss the possibility of signing an MoU with ISRO in the Cabinet meeting and subsequently make a decision. Pawan Kalyan participated as the chief guest at the National Space Day 2024 programme held...

#### All Indian salt and sugar brands...

All Indian salt and sugar brands, whether big or small, packaged or unpackaged, contain microplastics, according to a study published on Tuesday. The study, titled "Microplastics in Salt and Sugar" and conducted by the environmental research organisation Toxics Link, tested 10 types of salt -- including table salt, rock salt, sea salt and local raw salt -- and five types of sugar purchased from both online and local markets. The study revealed the presence of microplastics in all salt and sugar..

India's smartphone market grows...

The Indian smartphone market grew 3.2 per cent with 39 million units shipment in the second guarter of 2024, market research firm International Data Corporation said on Tuesday. The market was Vivo with a 16.5 per cent share in volume terms with its shipment growing by 6.7 per cent on a yearover-year (YoY) basis, it said. Apple led the super-premium segment, which are smartphones priced above Rs 67,000 apiece with an 83 per cent share followed by Samsung with...

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#### Ponting backs Australia to...

Ricky Ponting believes Australia will have a "point to prove" after two straight Test series defeats at home against India and backed the Pat Cummins-led side to win the five-match Border-Gavaskar Trophy 3-1 come November-December India who have returned victorious in both their previous Test assignments Down Under with identical margins of 2-1. will take on the world No.1 Australia in a five-Test series starting on November 22. "It's going to be a competitive series. Australia has got..

#### AGRIGOLD LAND SCAM CASE



## Jogi Ramesh's son arrested by ACB

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Jogi Rajeev, the son of former minister Jogi Ramesh, was arrested by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) after a five-hour search operation at their residence in Ibrahimpatnam near Vijayawada. Rajeev was apprehended in connection with irregularities in the AgriGold land scam, where he is the primary accused.

The allegations against Rajeev involve the purchase of land that had been previously seized by CID officials as part of an investigation into the significant financial scam orchestrated by AgriGold in 2014.

The AgriGold case, a major financial scandal, has been under extensive investigation and legal scrutiny. Following the primary inquiry, ACB officials announced

the arrest of Jogi Rajeev (A1) and Vijayawada Rural Mandal Surveyor Ramesh in connection with the AgriGold land scam.

According to ACB sources, several other individuals were implicated in the case, including Jogi Venkateswara Rao, Adusumilli Mohana Ranga Dasu, Venkata Seetha Mahalakshmi, Ambapuram Surveyor Dedeepya, Vijayawada Rural Tahsildar Jahnavi, Deputy Tahsildar Vijay Kumar, and Sub Registrar Nageswara Rao.

The ACB registered a case on August 8, following a complaint by Avva Sesha Narayana, which led to an investigation revealing irregularities involving the land attached to AgriGold, implicating the family of former minister Jogi Ramesh.

# Value-based edu govt's aim: CM

SCHOOL SYLLABUS TO BE UPGRADED IN TUNE WITH FUTURE NEEDS

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has said that the State government's primary objective is to provide value-based quality education to students. During a review meeting with the Education Department on Tuesday, the CM directed officials to upgrade the school syllabus to align with future needs.

Chairing the meeting, the Chief Minister urged officials to enhance government schools to compete with private educational institutions. He underscored that education is a fundamental right and stressed that no child of school-going age should be found outside the education system.

The CM advocated for the relaunch of the Pratibha Awards and parent-teacher meetings and encouraged participation in the Janmabhoomi program to support school development. "I want radical changes in the academic sector with the sole aim of achieving excellent results. The State Government is investing Rs 32,000 crore annually in education, and these efforts must yield tangible results at the ground level," he stated.

Chandrababu Naidu highlighted the necessity of updating the school syllabus to meet evolving needs and suggested that educational experts, intellectuals, and prominent figures



• Govt schools will be improved to compete with private institutions.

100% enrolment and proper monitoring up to the graduation level targeted.

Pratibha Awards and parent-teacher meetings to be relaunched.

Participation in the Janmabhoomi programme for school development to be

GO No. 117 to be reviewed based on expert and teacher

encouraged.

One teacher for one class' system to be implemented.

Skill reduced. development census to be conducted in consultation

with industry

leaders.

Burden on teachers over app usage to be

> Identity cards to to be issued to every student under APAAR.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

Low student enrollment in many schools (5,530 with less than 10 students, 8,072 with less than 20 students).

Need for basic amenities in all schools.

Consultation with experts and intellectuals for syllabus improvement.

in the academic field be consulted for input. He also called for a focus on providing basic amenities in all schools without seeking publicity.

"I want 100% enrolment, and proper monitoring should be in

**NDA** opts out

place up to the graduation level. Every student should be issued an identity card under the Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) of the Central

also instructed officials to conduct a thorough review of Government Order (GO) No. 117 and submit a report after consultations with academic experts and teachers. Government," the CM remarked. He

## Anagani accuses YSRCP of caste politics

PNS VIJAYAWADA

State Revenue, Registration, and Stamps Minister Anagani Satya Prasad has announced that a case has been registered in connection with the Agrigold land scam after a thorough discussion with authorities. The Minister claimed that the case, supported by substantial evidence, highlights irregularities involving YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) leaders. Addressing the media on Tuesday,

Satya Prasad criticised the YSRCP leaders, stating that their frequent references to the 'Red Book' would backfire if its contents were ever revealed. "None of the YSRCP leaders

would remain in the state if the Red Book is opened," he asserted. The Minister further alleged that the YSRCP had engaged in significant misconduct over the past five years, with 75 per cent of land-related complaints implicating their members. Minister Satya Prasad specifical-

ly accused Jogi Ramesh, a prominent



YSRCP leader, of land encroachment, asserting that the evidence Minister expressed disappointment to the law. over Ramesh's alleged attempts to

Minister for Revenue, Stamps,

and Registrations, Anagani Satya

Prasad, has disclosed that the

'Revenue Sadassulu' programme

scheduled to start on August 16

will be postponed. Initially, the

government had decided to launch

PNS VIJAYAWADA

incite caste-based sentiments to deflect attention from his corrupt activities. "What has Jogi Ramesh done for the Backward Classes (BC) community? Where was the concern for caste when Amarnath Goud was murdered?" the Minister questioned, adding that no one is intimidated by Ramesh's threats.

Minister Satva P the government's commitment to rectifying past mistakes and ensuring that anyone involved in wrongagainst him is irrefutable. The doing is held accountable according

the programme on August 15 and

subsequently conduct village-level

'Revenue Sadassulu' programmes

from August 16, he said. However,

due to government employee

transfers, they have decided to

commence this program after the

completion of the transfers, he

Continued on Page 2

#### of Vizag MLC by-poll PNS VIJAYAWADA

The TDP-BJP-JSP alliance has decided to abstain from the by-election for the MLC quota seat representing the TDP chief and former Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu made this announcement during a teleconference with party leaders on Tuesday. Naidu reportedly stated that while victory was attainable, the alliance would gracefully forgo the contest. Alliance leaders expressed their support for Naidu's decision.

Meanwhile, the nomination process for the MLC by-election concluded on Tuesday evening. Former minister Botsa Satyanarayana is contesting on the YSRCP ticket, while Sheikh Shafi Ullah is an independent candidate. The scrutiny of nominations will take place on Wednesday, with the deadline for withdrawal set for August 16.



## CM to launch Anna Canteen in Gudivada

#### Minister Narayana inspects Akshayapatra kitchen in Atmakur

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The government is preparing to relaunch Anna Canteens, aiming to provide meals to the poor starting on Independence Day, August 15. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu will inaugurate an Anna Canteen in Gudiyada, Krishna district, on August 15. District authorities are making all necessary arrangements for the event.

Initially, the launch was planned for Uttarandhra, but due to the MLC elections in Visakhapatnam and the election code in effect, the venue was shifted to Gudivada.

A total of 100 canteens will be

opened in the first phase on Independence Day.

The government has decided to establish these canteens in 33 selected municipal and urban local bodies in districts unaffected by the election code. Municipal Administration Minister Narayana has been coordinating with officials to determine the locations and number of canteens. These facilities will be fully operational starting August 16.

On Tuesday, Minister Narayana inspected the Akshayapatra Kitchen in Atmakur, Mangalagiri mandal, Guntur district.

## 'Repairs cannot proceed without releasing water'

'Revenue Sadassulu' postponed

**PNS** ■ HYDERABAD

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday assured the Agriculture Ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana about the restoration work of the Tungabhadra Dam gate.

Karnataka assures AP.TG on Tungabhadra Dam repair work

"Our farmers are no different than your states' farmers. We will take measures to ensure that they are not troubled



in the wake of damage to the Tungabhadra Dam gate," the Chief Minister told media to expedite the repair work of the Tungabhadra Dam gate at the earliest. "Water from the Tungabhadra Dam persons in the presence of Agriculture Ministers of Telangana.

Andhra Pradesh and He also instructed the officials

was previously released through the gates. However, the 19th gate of the dam, which prevents water flow, has been damaged," the Chief Minister

'Ample scope for eco, temple, and beach tourism in State'

## CAS verdict on Vinesh deferred again

#### To be delivered on 16<sup>th</sup>

**PNS** ■ PARIS

Suspense continued on the fate of Vinesh Phogat's appeal against her Olympic disqualification with the adhoc division of the Court of Arbitration for Sport extending the time limit to deliver its decision till August 16 without specifying the reasons for continuing to defer the matter.

The 29-year-old was disqualified from the women's 50kg free-style final for being 100gm overweight at the time of weigh-in on Wednesday last week. "The CAS ad hoc division president has allowed Hon. Dr Annabelle Bennett, Sole Arbitrator in the Vinesh Phogat vs United World Wrestling (UWW) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) matter, an extension until disqualification.



6:00 pm (Paris time) on Friday, August 16, 2024," a release from the IOA said. This is the third deferment in the case and no reasons

have been given. In her appeal, Vinesh has demanded that she be given a joint silver with Cuban wrestler Yusneylis Guzman Lopez, who had lost to her in the semifinals but was promoted to the final following the Indian's

#### PNS VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has highlighted the potential for tourism development in the State, particularly in the areas of eco, temple, and beach tourism. However, he expressed concern over the setback the sector has faced due to the alleged mismanagement by the previous YSRCP government from 2019 to 2024.

Addressing a review meeting held on Tuesday, the Chief Minister criticised the former administration for its negligence, which, according to him, led to the withdrawal of companies that had previously signed agreements during the TDP regime. He noted that the expected level of new investments in the tourism sector was not realised

during this period. CM Naidu pointed out that

while the Compound Annual between 2019 and 2024. He also ment, the previous government crucial for generating employment Growth Rate (CAGR) of the highlighted the disparity in governtourism sector was 20.6 per cent ment spending, noting that while during the TDP government, it the TDP regime had allocated Rs plummeted to just 3.3 per cent 880 crore to the Tourism depart-



■ CM Chandrababu Naidu criticises the previous YSRCP government for mismanaging the tourism sector, leading to reduced investments and

The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of tourism fell from 20.6% under the TDP government to 3.3%

during 2019-2024.

■ The TDP government allocated Rs 880 crore for tourism, while the previous government spent only Rs 213 crore.

CM condemns the previous government for spending Rs 500 crore on the Rushikonda Palace instead of tourism

spent a mere Rs 213 crore.

The Chief Minister revealed that under his administration, 190 agreements were signed, resulting in investments totalling Rs 1,939 crore and the creation of 10,573 jobs. In contrast, the previous government managed to implement only three projects out of the 117 agreements it made. Additionally, while the TDP government organised 105 events to promote tourism, the YSRCP administration conducted only 44.

CM Naidu also criticised the construction of the 'Rushikonda which cost Rs 500 crore and was residence. He lamented that the have been better spent on developing the tourism sector, which is

and boosting the economy.

The Chief Minister urged officials to capitalise on the State's potential in eco, temple, and beach tourism. He emphasized the need to revive previously agreed-upon projects and attract new investments by engaging with investors. CM Naidu also called for the development of tourism in areas like Śrisailam, where temple, water, and forest

tourism can be promoted. He stressed the importance of creating tourism centres that showcase the state's cultural traditions Palace' by the previous government, and culinary heritage. Additionally, he suggested that tourism policies intended as the Chief Minister's from the top five states in the country be studied to formulate a new funds used for this project could and effective tourism policy for Andhra Pradesh.

**Continued on Page 2** 



# Quota sub-categorisation may affect unity efforts among SCs

gorisation of reser-Agorisation of reservations for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (SCs/STs) may appear to be the right way for **POINT** bringing the fruits of quota to targeted sections, it has potential to thwart unity efforts among Dalits, who have failed to emerge as a strong political force across the nation. All along, political parties have seen to it that downtrodden sections remain so as they can be used as mere vote banks. The recent verdict of the Supreme Court has paved the way for sub-categorisation. In the backdrop of the move for sub-categorisa-

Prominent Dalit leader and

tion, we need to look at social

and political factors.

founder-president of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Kanshi Ram had made concrete efforts to make Dalits a viable political force. Most of the political parties

are known to be controlled by people belonging to forward castes. The seeds of subcategorisation had been sown by political parties under the influence of forward castes in the backdrop of the 1994 Assembly elections. Kanshi Ram had made sub-

stantial efforts to bring Dalits under one umbrella. Two major sub-castes of SCs, Mala and Madiga, had played a vital role in the combined state of Andhra Pradesh. Kanshi Ram held a series of meetings in Hyderabad to unite downtrodden sections of

**Prominent Dalit leader and founder**president of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Kanshi Ram had made concrete efforts to make Dalits a viable political force. Most of the political parties are known to be controlled by people belonging to forward castes.

society by creating awareness among them on the wish of the architect of Constitution Dr BR Ambedkar that Dalits could find a way to become rulers of this country by effectively using statutory provi-

Political circles then sensed that BSP could make an impact in at least 100

Assembly constituencies, thus becoming a viable force in AP. This created a flutter among all political parties in AP, including the principal ones. So, the seeds of sub-categorisation of quota for SCs were sown in the backdrop of the possible outcome of those elections. The then state government headed by N. Chandrababu Naidu



decided to bring sub-categorisation of the reservations for SCs. Soon it was felt that Madiga caste will benefit most by the implementation of subcategorisation of SC quota. The Madiga community was very happy, but the Mala community revolted and spearheaded the movement against sub-categorisation. Subsequently, two organisations were floated: one, for; and the other, against sub-categorisation of SCs. These developments drove a wedge between the two major subcastes in SCs. Chandrababu implement-

ed the sub-categorisation of SC quota for four years, benefitting Madiga community and hurting the Mala community, until the SC put a full stop over

sub-categorisation. Chandrababu Naidu also picked up then Lok Sabha member from Amalapuram (SC) constituency GMC Balayogi for the Speaker's post, after having joined hands with the Bharatiya Janata Party-

led National Democratic Alliance at the Centre. During the mid-term polls for the Lok Sabha in February 1998, Chandrababu had fought elections against BJP and Congress by aligning himself with the Left parties. But immediately after the elections, in sync with the outcome, he shifted his stance and declared his support to the NDA government headed by AB Vajpayee. In turn, Naidu's TDP was offered the Lok Sabha Speaker's post, which Balayogi (who hails from Mala community) occupied. This was questioned subsequently by then TDP leader K. Chandrasekhar Rao (who went on to float Telangana Rashtra Samithi

and become chief minister of

Telangana after bifurcation).

He had faulted Chandrababu

"for not selecting a member from the Madiga community due to regional discrimination shown by Naidu".

That way, both Madiga and Mala communities are predominant in the Telugu states by virtue of their population. In Telangana, at present the Madiga community would get a major share of 15% (approximately 10%) reservations for SCs. In the same way, the Mala community would benefit in Andhra.

The implementation of 'creamy layer' in quota for SCs while implementing subcategorisation may not be an easy task without constitutional amendments. Whatever it be, the issue of sub-categorisation has once again exposed the wide gap between the two major castes among SCs in Telugu states.

# Aqua and food processing industrial parks soon

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu announced plans to establish a network of industrial parks focused on food processing, aqua, horticulture, and mineral-based industries across the state. During a meeting on Tuesday to review the Departments of Industries and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) at the State Secretariat, the CM directed officials to develop an action plan for these initiatives, citing the state's favourable conditions for such developments.

Naidu instructed officials to conduct a comprehensive study of existing industrial parks and explore opportunities for creating additional ones. He emphasized the importance of establishing area-based industrial parks, particularly in the state's back-



Officials presented a detailed overview of current industrial parks and upcoming port developments via a PowerPoint presentation. The CM urged the implementation of measures to attract industrialists

and support the establishment of new units within the state. The Chief Minister set a target of developing at least 100 industrial parks, each spanning 100 acres. He noted that while Maharashtra leads the country in the number of industrial

parks, the state currently has only 53 and called for increased efforts to expand this number.

Additionally, Naidu directed the revival of the Malavalli Industrial Park in Vijayawada, which he criticized for being neglected by the previous administration. He also requested an action plan for the development of integrated ports under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model and a detailed study of successful privately managed ports.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Industries TG Bharat, Minister for MSME and SERP Kondapalli Srinivas, Chief Secretary Neerab Kumar Prasad, Principal Secretary Suresh Kumar, Secretary Dr. N. Yuvaraj, Additional Secretary to the CM Kartikeya Mishra, Commissioner of Industries CH Sridhar, APIIC MD Kishore, and other officials.

#### Value-based... Continued from Page 1

Officials from the Education Department presented the reforms and new policies intro-duced by the Minister for Education, Information Technology, and Electronics, Nara Lokesh. They informed the Chief Minister that the 'one teacher for one class' system is being implemented, and the burden of app usage on teachers has been reduced.

The presentation also detailed the current status of the Education Department, revealing that the State has 44,570 government schools and 813 aided schools. Notably, 5,530 schools have fewer than 10 students, while 8,072 schools have fewer than 20 students

Later, the Chief Minister conducted a review meeting on Skill Development, during which officials presented the ongoing skill development census. The CM emphasized the importance of this initiative, describing it as a prestigious project for the State Government. He instructed officers to proceed with the skill development census after consultations with industry leaders. The census will be conducted at the grassroots level following additional preparations, with Tuesday's meeting focusing on preliminary exercises.

## YSRCP flays CM over alleged misuse of power

The YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) has strongly criticised the arrest of Jogi Rajeev, son of former minister Jogi Ramesh, accusing Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu of misusing his power for political vendetta. The party condemned what it called the implementation of a 'Red Book Constitution' to target political rivals.

Speaking to the media outside the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) office following Rajeev's arrest, former minister Jogi Ramesh denounced the government's actions, describing them as a personal vendetta. He questioned the motives behind targeting his family, suggesting that the arrest was driven by political animosity.

Ramesh accused the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) of employing "Red Book Constitution" tactics, urging the government to focus on fulfilling election promises rather than engaging in what he called diversionary politics.



Former minister Perni Venkatramaiah (Nani) echoed these sentiments, asserting that the government is filing false cases and conducting illegal arrests without due process. He claimed that Rajeev's arrest was part of a broader strategy to intimidate and harass YSRCP members, vowing that the party would fight back both legally and politically, including plans to challenge the alleged harassment in court.

Other YSRCP leaders, including former ministers Velampalli Srinivas and Merugu Nagarjuna, and MLC Lella Appi Reddy, also expressed their support for Jogi Ramesh and his family, condemning the arrest as an unjust targeting of a former

minister from the BC community. They assured that the YSRCP would stand united against such actions. Jogi Ramesh's wife shared the emotional toll the situation has taken on their family, particularly questioning why their son was singled out.

At a separate press conference in Rajahmundry, former minister Chelluboina Venugopala Krishna criticised the government for suppressing opposition voices and engaging in political vendetta. He condemned Rajeev's arrest, calling it a deliberate attempt to target Ramesh out of political spite. Krishna accused the TDP coalition government of failing to fulfil its pre-election promises and instead focusing on retaliatory actions against

these communities.

#### CM to launch...

Continued from Page 1

He later addressed the media, stating that he reviewed the arrangements for food distribution to the canteens. He mentioned that during the previous TDP government, 180 canteens were set up across the state, serving meals to per meal. The food was provided in a clean and hygienic environment. However, the Anna Canteens were closed after the YSRCP government came to power. Upon the return of the alliance government, it was decided to reopen the canteens to continue serving the poor.

The minister also mentioned that Akshayapatra has been awarded the contract for food distribution to the Anna Canteens. On August 15, CM Chandrababu Naidu will inaugurate the Anna Canteen in Gudivada. The government plans to open 180 canteens in urban areas and over 200 canteens in rural areas. These canteens will be strategically located near markets and hospitals where there is a high concentration of poor people.

Minister Narayana highlighted the modern and hygienic standards of the Akshayapatra kitchen.

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#### HAR GHAR TIRANGA CAMPAIGN

## National flags distributed to rail staff

PNS VIJAYAWADA

As part of the 'Har Ghar campaign, Tiranga' Vijayawada Railway Division undertook Indian National Flag Distribution programme on Tuesday. 'Har Ghar Tiranga' is an initiative by the Ministry of Culture under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to encourage people to bring the Tiranga home and to hoist it to mark the 77th year of India's independence. Flags were distributed to the entire staff of Vijayawada Division. Supervisors from various based



Rajahmundry, Nellore, Ongole, Kakinada, Eluru and Tuni were called upon to collect the National flags and hoist them at their homes.

As part of the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign, Officials of the Personnel Department presented the Indian National Flag to Narendra A Patil, Divisional Railway Manager, Vijayawada Division, SCR at DRM Chamber.

Speaking on the occasion, Patil said that the idea is to invoke the feeling of patriotism in the hearts of the people and to promote awareness about the National Flag.

#### Jogi Ramesh's son.... Continued from Page 1

On the day of Rajeev's arrest, a team of 15 ACB officials arrived at the residence of Jogi Ramesh at around 5:15 AM, verifying documents and records related to the land scam. The search operation lasted approximately five hours, culminating in the arrest of Jogi Rajeev, identified as A1

Jogi Ramesh's uncle, Jogi Venkateswara Rao, was identified as A2. The ACB registered cases under various sections of the IPC, including 420 (cheating), 409 (criminal breach of trust), 467 (forgery), 471 (using forged documents), and 120(B) (criminal conspiracy). Despite protests by YSRCP leaders and supporters at the residence, who attempted to prevent the arrest, ACB officials proceeded with their actions. ACB Additional SP Sowmya Latha later addressed the media, confirming the irregularities in the Agri Gold lands.

She explained that Rajeev and Venkateswara Rao had purchased 2,160 square yards of land in Ambapuram, Vijayawada Rural Mandal, which

had been fraudulently registered and then resold for significant profit. The ACB also revealed that the land records had been tampered with in collusion with local revenue officials.

As of now, two persons have been arrested, and further investigations are going on. The involvement of more suspects, including former minister Jogi Ramesh, is under examination, and further cases may be registered based on the findings. After the arrest of Jogi Rajeev, ACB officials took him to the government general hospital for a medical check-up before producing him in court. Vendetta politics, says Jogi Ramesh

Following the arrest of Jogi Rajeev, his father and former minister Jogi Ramesh claimed that his son, who studied in the US and worked at a multinational company, is innocent. Dismissing the allegations, he accused Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and his son, Minister Nara Lokesh, of political vendetta. He questioned the possibility of selling land held by CID, stating, "If the State government proves my family guilty, I will commit suicide in Vijayawada. It is not right for the government to file false cases against my son, who returned from abroad," said Ramesh.

## 'Ample scope for eco, temple...

Continued from Page 1

The Chief Minister underscored the importance of creating an environment where tourists are encouraged to stay for one or two days, which would, in turn, generate employment for residents and increase revenue for the government. He also mentioned that projects in Srisailam, the Rajahmundry Godavari region, and Suryalanka beaches should be completed

using the Rs 300 crore fund allocated by the Central government for tourism development. Finally, CM Naidu identified Gandikota, the Visakha Agency, and the Godavari River catchment areas as key locations with favourable conditions for tourism projects. He also emphasized the need to promote local handicrafts, handlooms, and tribal products at tourist centres, providing artisans with a sustainable source of income.

## Singapore Univ Prof Chowdari meets Education Minister Lokesh

National University of Singapore Professor BVR Chowdari said his institution would provide support and assistance to improve education standards, rankings, and higher education reforms in Andhra Pradesh. Professor Chowdari paid a courtesy call to State Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh at his Undavalli residence on Tuesday. They discussed measures to enhance the performance of state universities.

Professor Chowdari attributed the decline in Andhra Pradesh's university rankings to a lag in research and innovation, suggesting that improvements in these areas would yield better results. He expressed readiness to share curriculum changes and other policies to foster international exposure for AP universities, aiming to boost their national and inter-

He accused Ramesh and his family of steal-

ing property worth Rs 5 crore in the Agrigold

scam, an allegation substantiated by an

ongoing investigation that began following a

The Minister also pointed out that none of

the BC organizations have come forward in

support of Jogi Ramesh, underscoring the

lack of backing for the embattled leader.

Referring to an earlier incident, Minister Satya

Prasad recalled how Jogi Ramesh had previ-

ously attacked former Chief Minister

Chandrababu Naidu's residence with knives

and sticks during the YSRCP's tenure in

power. The Minister said that the current gov-

ernment is not engaging in vengeful politics.

He made it clear that the case against Jogi

Ramesh's family is based on solid evidence,

and the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has

also filed charges against officials involved in



national recognition. Chowdari invited academic experts and students from AP universities to visit the National University of Singapore to study its methods. Minister Lokesh welcomed

the cooperation and pledged to leverage the University of Singapore's expertise to improve the state's university rankings. Professor Chowdari serves as the Senior Executive Director of the Department of

Strategic India and Initiatives at the National University of

## 'Revenue Sadassulu'...

Singapore.

Anagani accuses... Continued from Page 1

Addressing the media at the secretariat in Velagapudi on Tuesday, Minister Satya Prasad said that the primary aim is to resolve all landrelated issues at the village level. He explained that if they conducted this programme with the current staff, people would not receive justice. Therefore, the government has decided to conduct the 'Revenue Sadassulu' after the comple-

tion of employee transfers. Furthermore, he stated that during the Revenue Sadassulu, officials will receive applications from the public regarding land disputes and re-survey defects for the first 45 days. Subsequently, they will take the necessary steps to address the received applications within the next 45 days.

For this purpose, the government has appointed a senior IAS officer as a nodal officer, he said. Additionally, concerned district ministers will be monitoring the programs, he explained.

the opposition to divert public attention.

He further alleged that the government is targeting BC community leaders who have risen from marginalised sections, questioning what it hopes to achieve by oppressing

EXCISE 'SCAM' Judicial custody of Kejriwal, Kavitha till Sept 2nd

PNS NEW DELHI

A court here on Tuesday extended till September 2 the judicial custody of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, BRS leader K Kavitha and others in a moneylaundering case related to the alleged excise scam.

Special Judge Kaveri Baweja extended the custody of the accused after they were produced before the court through a video-conference on the expiry of the period of their judicial custody granted earlier. The Supreme Court had earlier granted interim bail to Kejriwal in the case. However, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader continues to be lodged in the Tihar jail here as he has not furnished the bail bond in the case.

#### 'Repairs cannot... Continued from Page 1

He also expressed confidence

that the Tungabhadra Dam will fill up again, saying that he will personally come to offer worship once the dam is full. "Tungabhadra Dam management falls under the Tungabhadra Dam Board, which includes members appointed by the Union government as well as representatives from Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka. The dam's construction began in 1948 and was completed in 1953 while the water was being released in 1954. No gate chain has ever broken in the 70-year-old dam until now," the Chief Minister said.

The dam currently holds 115 TMC of water while 25 TMC has already been released to farmers. Farmers require 90 TMC for their initial crops and this quantity is available in the dam. However, due to the damage to the 19th gate, 35,000 cusecs of water were lost.

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the matter.

## 'Pavitra Sangamam' set to turn into a major spiritual centre

#### Ministers Anam, Narayana & Kolusu inspect the site

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government has reaffirmed its commitment to restoring the 'Nava Harathulu' ritual at the sacred confluence of Krishna and Godavari rivers, known as Pavitra Sangamam, near Ibrahimpatnam. Ministers Anam Rama Narayana Reddy (Endowments), Kolusu Pardha Saradhi (Housing and I&PR), and Narayana (Municipal Administration and Urban Development) announced plans to reinstate the ritual before the Dasara Sarannavaratri festivities.

Inspecting the site on Tuesday, the ministers, accompanied by officials, discussed the revival of the Nava Harathulu as directed by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. They envision Pavitra Sangamam as a major spiritual centre and have proposed acquiring 50 acres for a temple and additional land on the opposite side for tourism development.

The government aims to commence the Nava Harathulu with-

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

The escalating demand for

passport slots has once again

left applicants struggling to

secure appointments, with

many waiting up to 15 days

without success. Just a few

months ago, the situation

reached a crisis point when

applicants were unable to

obtain slots for an entire

month. Although a special

drive temporarily eased the sit-

uation by making slots available within a week, the prob-

its implementation. "The



Ministers Anam Ram Narayana Reddy, KP Saradhi and Narayana as well as Endowments Commissioner S Satyanarayana inspect the 'Pavitra Sangamam' site at Ferry in Ibrahimpatnam near Vijayawada on Tuesday.

in 45 days and has already initiated a review process. Criticising the previous YSRCP government for neglecting the site and discontinuing the Jala Harathulu, the ministers emphasised the importance of the rituals. The monthly expenditure for the Harathulu is estimated at Rs 11 lakh.

To enhance accessibility, the government is considering boat and speedboat services from Prakasam Barrage to Pavitra

Rising demand, software

upgrades cause passport delays

New version has caused delays in slotting,

verification, and issuance

current transition phase is

challenging for everyone

involved," said a senior official

To address the growing demand, additional Passport

Sava Kendras have been estab-

lished in District Head Post

from the Passport Office.

Sangamam. The Durga Vedic Committee will be consulted for temple construction. The development of Pavitra Sangamam as a spiritual centre will involve collaboration with various departments, with the APCRDA providing primary financial support.

Before visiting Pavitra Sangamam, the ministers offered prayers at the Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam on Indrakeeladri.

in 20 days. However, the high

demand has forced applicants

from districts like Guntur to

flock to centres in Vizianagaram

and Srikakulam. "We're seeing

a significant increase in appli-

cants from other districts and

even from Odisha, where the

software update is ongoing," an

Further complicating mat-

ters, the Visakhapatnam

Passport Officer recently took

a six-month maternity leave,

leaving the Assistant Passport

official noted.

A meeting with officials from irrigation, CRDA, R&B, Transco, and police estimated the cost of developing amenities at Pavitra Sangamam to be around Rs. 88

Endowments Commissioner S Satyanarayana, NTR district Joint Collector Nidhi Meena, Tiruvuru RDO Madhavi, Endowments RJC Chandrasekhar Azad, and Irrigation EE Krishna Rao were among those present.

RITES CMD

calls on

Minister

**Parthasarathy** 

Rahul Mittal, Chairman

and Managing Director, Rail India Technical and

Economic Services,

called on Kolusu

Parthasarathy, Minister

national-level as well as

Minister Parthasarathy

advised the officials to

prepare designs of var-

ious development activ-

ities implemented by

the State government

under the leadership of

He also requested

them to maintain qual-

ity control measures in

the ongoing and to-be-

taken up projects in the

Sobhana Palli, Group

General Manager of Rail

India Technical and

Economic Services, was

PNS VIJAYAWADA

next elections.

YSR Congress Party president and former Chief Minister YS

Jagan Mohan Reddy met with

local body representatives from

the Madugula, Anakapalli, and

Chodavaram constituencies and reaffirmed his belief that the good work done by YSRCP

made in the YSRCP manifesto

were successfully implemented

during his tenure, despite the

severe financial challenges

posed by the COVID-19 pan-

demic. He emphasised that his

government never sought

excuses and treated the mani-

festo as a sacred text, akin to the

Bhagavad Gita, Bible, or Quran.

N Chandrababu Naidu for

misleading the public with

false promises during the elec-

tions, such as unemployment

allowances for the youth

He criticised Chief Minister

Chandrababu

Pradesh.

PNS VIJAYAWADA

# Massive fire in Vizag Dino Park

#### Preliminary reports indicate that a short-circuit may be the cause

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

A major fire devastated the Dino Park on the Beach Road on Tuesday, as flames swept through the popular attraction, causing extensive damage. The blaze, which broke out around at 10.45 am at the Robotics Adventure walkway, quickly engulfed the entire park, sending thick black smoke billowing into the sky. According to eyewitnesses, the fire start-ed suddenly and rapidly spread. "The flames were enormous, and within minutes, the whole park was engulfed in smoke," said Ramesh Kumar, a local resident. "It was a scene of utter chaos."

Park staff acted quickly, alerting the fire station and police as soon as the fire was noticed. Firefighters and emergency responders arrived on the scene promptly, working tirelessly to control the inferno. "We received the alert at around 11:10 AM and dispatched teams immediately," said District Fire officer (DFO) S Renukaiah. "Our primary concern was to



contain the fire and prevent it from spreading further."

Preliminary reports indicate that a short-circuit may be the cause of the blaze. "Our initial assessment points to an electrical fault," said the DFO. "However, a thorough investigation will be conducted to confirm the exact cause."

The Dino Park, renowned for its thrilling robotic dinosaur exhibits, has been a beloved destination for families and children. The park features a walkway where children are surprised by lifelike robotic dinosaurs, providing a unique and exhilarating experience. "It's heartbreaking to see the park in ruins," said Priya Sharma, a frequent visitor. "It's a place where so many children have enjoyed memorable experiences," she added.

The park was closed this morning, which helped prevent any injuries. However, the fire has raised serious concerns among residents and officials. "This is the latest in a series of troubling fire incidents in our city," said banquet manager Ravi of The Taj Gateway. "From

Indus Hospital to the railway station, we've

seen a disturbing pattern of frequent

In recent months, Visakhapatnam has faced a series of fire accidents, including incidents at Indus Hospital, Medicover, King George Hospital (KGH), the railway station, and Seven Hills Hospital. "The pattern of these incidents is alarming," said Madhu Burra, Fire Safety Consultant, "We need a comprehensive review of fire safety protocols and stricter enforcement to

prevent such disasters in the future."

## I-Day: Full dress rehearsals held

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Ahead of the Independence Day, full dress rehearsals of the parade were conducted at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation (IGMC) Stadium Gandhi in Vijayawada on Tuesday. All contingents along with various departments' tableaux participated in the rehearsal.

Director General of Police Director General of Police (DGP) Ch Dwaraka Tirumala Rao, Principal Secretary (Political) S Suresh Kumar, NTR District Collector Dr G Srijana, APSP DIG B Rajakumari, District Police Commissioner SV Pajasekhar Commissioner SV Rajasekhar Babu, Vijayawada Municipal Commissioner Dhyanachandra and others supervised the rehearsals and expressed happiness.

They also inspected the tableaux which will be partic-



DGP Dwaraka Tirumala Rao, Principal Secretary Suresh Kumar, NTR District Collector Srijana, and CP Rajasekhar Babu observing the dress rehearsals at the IGMC Stadium in Vijayawada on Tuesday

ipating in the parade. Various departments, through these tableaux, aim to describe government schemes.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu will be the chief guest and hoist the Indian national Tricolour. Besides Chief Secretary Neerabh Kumar Prasad, several ministers, MPs, MLCs and MLAs will attend the Independence Day celebrations.

For the celebrations, Additional DGP (FAC) Ch Srikanth is acting as Nodal Officer, NTR District Police Commissioner SV Rajasekhar Babu as the Coordinating Officer and Protocol Director

State Coordinating Officer.

Alluri Sitarama Raju District Superintendent of Police (SP) K Dheeraj will lead the parade as Parade Commandant. Fourteenth APSP Battalion Assistant Commandant PV Hanumanthu will be acting as Parade Second-in Command and the Third APSP Battalion RI T Prabhakara Rao will be Parade Adjutant.

The participants of the parade are: Telangana State Police, APSP Second Battalion. Kurnool, APSP Third Battalion, Kakinada, APSP 11th Battalion, Kadapa, APSP 16th Battalion, Visakhapatnam, NCC Boys, NCC Girls, AP Social Welfare Residential Schools, AP Tribal Welfare Residential School, Bharat Scouts and Guides, AP Red Cross Society, and the AP Sainik Welfare Department

#### Officer in charge. This change may lead to additional delays for Housing, I&PR, Government of Andhra lem has resurfaced. The delays are largely due to as the reduced number of offi-Offices across Srikakulam, the ongoing upgrade of the passport issuance software by Vizianagaram, Elamanchili, Pradesh here on cers necessitates more thor-Kakinada, Rajamahendraough checks. Previously, police Tuesday. AP Open School Society State Coordinator P. Ravindranath releasing the poster the Ministry of External varam, Eluru, and Kakinada, verification and passport deliv-Rahul on admissions to Class 10 and Intermediate programmes at the Viswa Bharath Affairs. The new version, 2.0, with an extra centre at Botsa ery could be completed withexplained the activities Square in the Visakhapatnam in a week. "While some delays of the Rail India is intended to enhance efficienare inevitable, we aim to issue Technical cy but has caused significant Passport Regional Office. A Technical and Economic Services passports within a week to ten delays in slotting, verification, mini centre is also operational Limited (RITES) at the days, provided there are no and issuance processes during Bhimavaram.

Andhra

Naidu.

State.

### Campaign to raise awareness on open school system

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Open School Society State Coordinator P. Ravindranath unveiled a poster for admissions into Class 10 and Intermediate programmes at Viswa Bharathi Vidyaniketan in Patamata, Vijayawada, on Tuesday. Following the poster release, Ravindranath led a campaign with district officials and teachers at the Patamata Rythu Bazar to raise awareness on the benefits of the open school

During the event, Ravindranath said that many working individuals without

formal qualifications have completed Class 10 and Intermediate through the Open School Society. This has enabled them to pursue higher education and achieve career advancements. He emphasised that anyone can enrol in the Class 10 and Intermediate programmes offered by the society, which also provides study materials to support students in their education.

AP Open School Society NTR District Coordinator N. Babu Rao, Viswa Bharati Vidyaniketan Headmaster P. Murali, and others were also

Jagan holds meetings with local bodies representatives

Claims 99% of promises made in YSRCP manifesto successfully implemented

## Smart meter deployment kicks off in Visakhapatnam

#### Initial phase will focus on govt offices

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

The Eastern Power Distribution Company of Andhra Pradesh Limited (EPDCL) has initiated the installation of smart meters in Visakhapatnam, marking a

ernising the State's power infrastructure. The first smart meter was installed at the office of the **Executive Engineer** of the Public Health Department in Seethammadhara.

This is a landmark moment for Visakhapatnam," declared Shyambabu, Superintending Engineer of the Visakha Circle. "Smart meters will not only optimise power management, but also foster transparency and accountability in electric-

ity consumption. The initial phase of the rollout will focus on government

offices within Visakhapatnam district, with a target of 3,000 installations. However, only 500 meters will be deployed in this stage. Subsequently, the focus will shift to commercial consumers, numbering around 1.1 lakh Household co

> of the smart meter project. Prioritising those with high electricity consumption, the EPDCL plans to install smart meters for five lakh out of the total 15 lakh households in the district.

will be the final phase

Aligned with Central government directives, smart meters offer real-time data on electricity consumption, voltage fluctuations, and power supply, enabling remote monitoring by distribution officials. 'Consumers will have greater control over their electricity usage," added Shyambabu.

## Break misconceptions, donate organs: Collector

Visakhapatnam, up to 410 slots

term improvements, but the applicants to secure a slot with- assured.

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

District Collector MN Harendhira Prasad has urged residents to dispel misconceptions about organ donation and embrace this life-saving practice. Speaking at an organ donation awareness programme organised by State Jeevandan on the World Organ Donation Day, the Collector highlighted the significant impact that organ donation can have on the lives of those in need. "Organ donation is a noble cause that can illuminate the lives of many," said Collector Harendhira Prasad. "It's imperative that we dispel the myths surrounding organ transplantation and understand its life-saving potential."

Highlighting the critical shortage of organs in the country, the Collector revealed that nearly 5 lakh people are currently awaiting life-saving trans-

plants. He urged medical professionals and NGOs to intensify their efforts in educating the public about the importance of organ donation, reassuring citizens that the process is conducted with utmost transparency and the consent of the donor's family. "Many people are hesitant due to misconceptions, but it's crucial to educate our communities about the realities of organ donation," he added. "Medical advancements are constantly improving, offering hope for a brighter future for those in need?

GVMC Commissioner P Sampath Kumar echoed the Collector's sentiments, emphasising the need for widespread awareness campaigns. "We must organise rallies, camps, and conferences to inform the public about organ donation," Kumar said. He also cautioned assuring citizens that all transplants are conducted under strict government regulations. Dr K Rambabu, Rashtra

complications in the applicant's background," the official

Jeevandan Coordinator and Director of Visakha Institute of Medical Sciences (VIMS), underscored the life-saving potential of organ donation. "A single brain-dead donor can save up to eight lives," he stressed. "While we've made significant progress with 136 successful transplants in Visakhapatnam this year, there are still over 3,000 people in the State waiting for life-saving organs." Dr Rambabu also assured the public of the equitable distribution of organs, emphasising that the allocation process is fair and impartial. The event saw enthusiastic participation from District Red Cross Chairman Siva Nageswara Reddy, doctors from leading hospitals, NGOs, and healthcare professionals.

against fraudulent activities related to organ donation,

## Ramesh Hospitals celebrates 36 years of service

PNS VIJAYAWADA

into the 37th year.

Dr Pothineni Ramesh Babu established a small cardiac clinic in Vijayawada city on August 15, 1988. Ramesh Hospitals has now successfully completed 36 years of service and is stepping

Dr Ramesh spoke to the media persons about the future plans of Ramesh Hospitals. "With the experience gained in 36 years, we wish to pro-

vide the best quality medical services emulating the standards like Mayo Clinic and Cleveland Clinic and with their inspiration, we wish to

start Wellness Centres in the region. Also, in the near future, we will establish a Quaternary Care Hospital in the capital



Recalling the olden days, he said that they had to overcome many hurdles in rendering quality medical services to the people. After establishing a

cathlab in Vijayawada for the first time, the hospital conducted the first angiogram, angioplasty, bypass surgery etc. The six-bed hospital has

grown into a Multi Super Speciality Medical Services with 925 bed capacity in the coastal districts of Vijayawada, Guntur and Ongole. He said blending tech-nology with medical ser-

vices, Transmission ECG machines were installed in villages 20 years ago. With the partnership of private and public institutions, the system of Telemedicine was introduced to provide quick

relief to the patients.

will not go unnoticed. He expressed confidence that the party will regain power in the among others. He said those unfulfilled promises have led to Addressing the gathering at significant public dissatisfacthe camp office here on tion within just two-and-a-Tuesday, Jagan highlighted that half months of the new govern-99 per cent of the promises ment taking office.

He lamented the discontinuation or mismanagement of key programmes such as Rythu Bharosa, Amma Vodi, zerointerest loans, Vidya Deevena reimbursement), Matsyakara Bharosa, and Vahana Mitra, which were

consistently delivered during the previous government. The return of Janmabhoomi Committees and the neglect of crop insurance premiums have further compounded the challenges faced by the public.

He listed out the failures of

the TDP coalition government in education and health sectors. The return of Janmabhoomi Committees and the neglect of

crop insurance premiums have lenges faced by the public. He also raised concerns about the

#### YSRCP team to meet national SC panel today

YSR Congress Party will meet the National SC Commission on August 14, 2024, at 11:00 AM in Delhi. The delegation will file a formal complaint concern ing the recent acts of vandalism on the statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a monument

delegation from the located at the Ambedkar Smriti Vanam in Vijayawada. The YSRCP delegation includes leaders MP

Gurumurthy, former ministers Adimulapu Suresh and Merugu Nagarjuna, former MP Nandigam Suresh, MLC Monditoka Arun Kumar, and former MLA Kaile Anil dedicated to social justice, Kumar, among others.

decline in law and order, accusing Chandrababu of fostering a governance style that encourages vendettas and destabilises rural communities. He warned that these injustices are fueling public anger, which he believes will lead to a YSRCP victory in the next elections.

Mentioning his personal experiences, including 16 months of imprisonment, YS Jagan emphasised the importance of resilience and integrity in the face of adversity. He assured that YSRCP, driven by values and trust, will continue to work with unwavering commitment to the people, condemning the habitual deception and lies of Chandrababu and TDP.

he pioneer



#### **SHARING SPACE KNOWLEDGE**

# AP to sign MoU with ISRO: Pawan

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Panchayat Raj, K. Pawan Kalyan, has revealed that the Andhra Pradesh government is keen on signing a Memorandum

Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to share space knowledge and receive valuable advice.

He announced plans to discuss the possibility of signing an MoU with ISRO in the Cabinet meeting and subsequently makes a decision

quently make a decision.
Pawan Kalyan participated as the chief guest at the National Space Day 2024 programme held at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre on

Speaking on the occasion, Pawan Kalyan emphasised the keen interest of Andhra Pradesh youth in space science. "An MoU will be signed between the Andhra Pradesh government and ISRO to share knowledge and provide valuable guidance to the youth. I will discuss this in the Cabinet and make a decision," he stated.

"Future generations should be interested in space research. We will collaborate with ISRO officials to provide appropriate

guidance, helping youth explore suitable employment or research paths in space science. We aim to foster increased interest in space research among students in both rural and urban areas. We will create a special MoU for this and work together to move forward. The primary objective is to cultivate interest in space

the students and youth of Andhra Pradesh," he noted. lauded ISRO's remarkable

research, particularly among

achievement of simultaneously launching 104 satellites. The Centre has been consistently increasing the budget to support ISRO's experiments. The allocation for ISRO has risen from Rs. 5,615 crore in the financial year 2013-14 to Rs. 13,700 crore in the 2022-23 budget under the NDA government," he pointed out, highlighting the government's priority for space research pro-

The Andhra Pradesh government will extend full support to ISRO's ambitious Gaganyaan project," Pawan Kalyan promised. He also assured that the government would address the poor condition of the 17 km road from Bucchinaidu Kandriga to SHAR by instructing the Collector to reconstruct it within five days, following a request from SHAR centre

Director A. Rajarajan, Associate Director Syed Sameed, Controller M. Srinivasa Reddy, General Manager Shambhu Prasad, and others participated in the program. The Deputy Chief Minister later distributed prizes and appreciation letters to students and visited the Satish Dhawan Space Centre.

## Plans to develop Bhimavaram: DC

West Godavari district Collector C Nagarani said that the Bhimavaram town would be developed in a planned manner and assured to resolve the Yanamadurru dumping yard problem. The Collector conducted surprise inspec-tions to the dumping yard located at Yanamadurru on Losari road near here on

Tuesday.
The Collector said that according to the norms of the National Green Tribunal, the National Green Tribunal, the waste deposited in the ground over the last 20 years has to be dug up and converted into soil through a treatment plant in every town. As part of this process, a target of 12,000 metric tons of waste has been metric tons of waste has been converted into soil, and the government will pay the total cost of Rs. 96 lakhs to the agency concerned. After the waste is processed in the treatment plant, the soil-like material is dumped in empty places and used for burying.

Collector Nagarani said that the treatment of legacy waste has already started. Due to this, the groundwater does not pollute and the plastic waste left undissolved in the layers of the ground for years is converted into soil through the treatment plant. "Garbage has become a big problem in every city and treatment plants will resolve it. Apart from environmental benefits, animals and humans will not be burdened with diseases, if the treatment plant starts work-

ing," she stated. Later, the Collector visited BV Raju Park in the city and issued several orders to the officials. "It is the only park in the heart of the city where people can enjoy themselves and it is suggested to make it more pleasant. There should be no stagnation of water in the park and it should not be unhygienic," the Collector told the offi-

The water in the pool should be kept clean through the process of filtration. The Collector also inspected the parking area, the entrance to the back of the park. She ordered the officials to immediately remove and clean the mud, stones and garbage placed adjacent to the guard wall on the right side of the park and to set up hurdles with iron rods as the boundary of

Later, she inspected the 6.5 acres of land purchased for the dumping yard on Taderu Road and inquired about the issues that are hindering dumping. The municipal commissioner was advised to use this land for setting up a water power plant or a biogas midline plant. Bhimavaram Municipal Commissioner M Shyamala, Municipal Engineer Trinadh Rao Assistant Commissioner A Srividya and other officials accompanied the Collector.

#### Torch rally held against attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh

PNS NARASARAOPET

A torch rally was held in Piduguralla on Tuesday protesting against the attack on Hindu minorities in Bangladesh.

Large number of activists affiliated to various Hindu outfits including Vanrasena took out a huge rally holding torches and flexi banners. They raised slogans denouncing the attacks on the Hindu minorities in Bangladesh.

They demanded the intervention of the Central government to check the attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh.



### 3 killed as car rams truck

PNS ELURU

Three persons were killed when the car in which they were travelling rammed a stationary container truck at Satyanarayanapuram village on the national highway on Tuesday. Police said that the car was going to Devarapalli from Vijayawada.

The car rammed a stationary container truck from the rear end killing Dommeti Nagarjuna (50), Yaganti Subramanyam (35) and Dommeti Manoj (21). The car was going at high speed when the mishap occurred. Two of the deceased died on the spot while another died while being taken to the GGH.

## 'Efforts to curb diversion of PDS rice yielding results'

PNS KAKINADA

Minister for Civil Supplies Nadendla Manohar has claimed that the efforts launched to curb the illegal export of PDS rice have started yielding results. The Minister flanked by MLA V Kondababu held a meeting with the exporters, port workers and transport workers in the Collectorate here on Tuesday. The exporters complained to the minister that the setting up of a new check post is causing delays in the export

Speaking on the occasion Nadendla Manohar said, "PDS rice smuggling has been rampant in the state for the last five years. Kakinada Port has become a hub for the same. Under the Food Security Act, ration rice is

PNS VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector Dr G

Srijana and District Revenue

Officer (DRO) V Srinivasa Rao

participated in the 'Har Ghar

Tiranga' signature campaign held at the Pingali Venkaiah

During the programme, the

Collector called upon the pub-

lic for massive participation.

The primary aim of this cam-

paign is to encourage patrio-

As many as nine girl-students

were injured when a small

said that there were 30 stu-

dents in the classroom when

portion of the

roof of a class-

room fell on

them at Sri

Sankalpa

School on

Official

sources here

on Tuesday

Tuesday.

Meeting Hall on Tuesday.



by mediators at a price of less than Rs 10. and export the same in the name of broken rice and boiled rice to other countries. The previous government misused the anchorage and even the media and the officials were not allowed to the place, he slammed.

The officials conducted

tism among the people. Everyone should remember

the leaders who sacrificed

their lives for independence,

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Additional

Commissioners Dr A Mahesh,

KV Satyavati, Civil Supplies

DM G Venkateswarlu,

Collectorate AO S Srinivas

Reddy, NSS Coordinator Dr K

Ramesh and others were pre-

the incident took place.

When the class was in

them. Two of

the girl stu-

dents suffered bleed-

ing injuries

were treated

in the hospi-

tal. All the

injured stu-

and

progress, a small portion of the

roof peeled off and fell on

DC takes part in 'Har Ghar

Tiranga' signature campaign

9 students hunt as roof caves in

she said.

inspections on June 28 and 29 and seized 50,000 metric tonnes of rice of which 26 metric tonnes of rice was PDS rice. A

PDS rice traders. He promised to take steps to remove problems with the new check post. Arrangements are being

department inquiry is being

conducted and action will be

taken against the offenders," he

revealed, adding that 41A notice would be issued to the illegal

made to export 1000 to 1100 lorry loads of rice from Kakinada port. Two check posts would start functioning from next Monday onwards to reduce delay in completing the process, he added.

"During the previous regime, the rice traders set up a green channel to transport

a green channel to transport the PDS rice straight away to the Kakinada port. The PDS rice smuggling has stopped now," the Minister observed.

Later Nadendla Manohar inspected the check post set up at the Bombay gate at the Kakinada port. He directed the officials to set up two more check posts to expedite the process of checking vehicles. Civil Supplies MD Veerapandian Collector Mohan and Port officials were

## KV students organise 'Kutumba Sammelan'



PNS MACHILIPATNAM

Kendriva Vidyalaya-Machilipatnam Alumni Association hosted the Vidvalava Kendriya Machilipatnam Kutumba Sammelan-2024, reuniting over 50 former and current teachers here on Tuesday.

The event, marking 30 years of the school's legacy, saw teachers and students from across the country gather to celebrate their alma mater.

The programme began with an emotional 'Pada Pooja' ceremony by former students, honouring the teachers' con-

tributions. Inspiring speeches followed, emphasising the teachers' lasting impact on society. A major highlight was the launch of the alumni association's logo and newslet-

The current principal lauded the alumni for their active role in school development and announced plans for a stage shed, which was immediately supported by Ragaswanth Miriyala. Cultural performances added a festive flair, celebrating the school's enduring spirit and the strong bonds within its community.

## organised ahead of I-Day As part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit

Human chain, rally

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Mahotsav' programme held at Nandigama town in NTR district, a rally was organised under the auspices of Paryavarana Parirakshana Samithi and an NGO on Tuesday. The rally was flagged off by Nandigama RDO Ravindra Rao, students of various schools, colleges and other educational institutions besides political party leaders, ex-servicemen and voluntary organisations, ahead of the 78th Independence Day celebrations. Around 5,000 people took part in the rally and the Tricolour was hoisted on the occasion by RDO Ravindra

Rao. A human chain was also



formed by the people.

On the occasion, the RDO said that we are enjoying the fruits of the sacrifices made by many freedom fighters for the country. Children should develop patriotism from a tender age. We are now living a life without fear, which is the result of the sacrifices of many national leaders, he added.

Paryavarana Parirakshana

Samithi founder Ramireddy Sridhar also spoke on the occasion. He said that Independence Day is celebrated by Indians keeping aside caste, creed, religion and politics.

Government officials, representatives of various voluntary organisations, school teachers, students and representatives of various political parties participated in the programme.

## CM to switch on Sitarama Project's pumps tomorrow

PNS HYDERABAD

Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Capt N Uttam Kumar Reddy has refuted the claim of former minister Harish Rao that 90% of the Sitarama project work had been completed under the Bharat Rashtra Samithi regime, calling it 'ludicrous'. He asserted that only 39% of the work had been completed under the BRS government. Uttam Kumar Reddy announced that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy would switch on the Sitarama Lift Irrigation Project's pumps on August 15. The project would be fully operational by August 15, 2026, he added.

Uttam Kumar Reddy, along with Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, conducted a review at Jal Soudha on Tuesday to discuss the arrangements and other aspects of the inauguration of the project. Speaking to media persons later, Uttam Kumar Reddy criticized the BRS party, questioning how 90% of the project could have been completed, considering that only Rs 7,230 crore out of the allocated Rs 18,231 crore had been spent. He accused the government of installing motors prematurely to earn higher commissions, even though a dry run was never conducted. He also dismissed claims that the necessary permissions from the Central Water Commission (CWC) had been obtained and stated that no such permissions had been granted.

The Sitarama Lift Irrigation Project, now fully approved by the Godavari River Management Board, will receive 67 TMC of



water from the Godavari River, which is an achievement of the Congress government.

Uttam Kumar Reddy stated that the Sitarama Project was originally conceived as the Rajiv Sagar and Indira Sagar projects during the Congress government's tenure. He accused the BRS of renaming the project to Sitarama to claim credit and to conceal the fact that the original projects, estimated to cost Rs 3,500 crore, could have been completed with an additional Rs 1.500 crore.

He alleged that the BRS government's negligence had led to a significant cost escalation to Rs 18,000 crore, without a corresponding increase in the acreage to be irrigated.

Minister Srinivas Reddy further challenged

Harish Rao to ask his "uncle" (KCR) about the spirit of Khammam, where the BRS managed to win only one seat in the last three elections. He warned that the BRS would be completely wiped out in the future, attributing the solitary victory in the previous election to his own influence and the victory of his disciple. He cautioned Harish Rao against underestimating the people of Khammam.

#### **LOCAL BODY MLC POLL**

dents were out of danger, the

## Is Botsa heading for win after TDP's withdrawal?

PNS VIJAYAWADA

In the Visakhapatnam Local Bodies MLC election, YSRCP candidate Botsa Satyanarayana appears poised for victory after the ruling TDP opted out of the race due to insufficient strength. TDP leader Chandrababu Naidu confirmed the decision during a teleconference with party leaders, citing the party's inability to mount a strong challenge.

On Tuesday, the final day for filing nominations, Naidu held discussions Visakhapatnam TDP leaders, ultimately deciding not to con-



test the by-election. The election notification was released with the nomination process running from August 6 to 13, followed by scrutiny on August 14, withdrawal on August 16, and polling on August 30. The

vote count is scheduled for

process concluding by September 6.

The election covers the combined Visakhapatnam district, including Visakhapatnam, Anakapalli, and Alluri Sitarama Raju districts. Representatives from Municipal Corporations, Municipalities, District Parishads, and Mandal Parishads within these areas will participate in the voting. With over 500 of the 838 electors in the district aligned with YSRCP, the party is confident

of securing a win. Some alliance leaders believed that fielding a candidate could garner support from YSRCP-aligned local body representatives, enabling them to pursue development projects in their respective areas.

The by-election is being held to fill the vacancy left by the disqualification of Chennuboina Srinivasa Rao, also known as Vamsi Krishna Yadav. Rao was disqualified in March under the anti-defection law after leaving YSRCP to join JSP. He was elected to the Assembly on a JSP ticket from the Visakhapatnam South constituency in the May 13 elec-

So far, two nominations have

been filed for the by-election: Botsa Satyanarayana for YSRCP and Sheikh Shafiullah as an Independent. Botsa Satyanarayana, a senior YSRCP leader, previously served as the Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development, as well as Resources Human Development, in the previous YSRCP government led by Jagan Mohan Reddy. Despite his recent defeat in the Cheepurupalli constituency in Vizianagaram District by TDP's K Kala Venkata Rao, he remains a prominent figure in

## Govt policies leading to deterioration in education sector: Adimulapu Suresh

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Expressing deep concern over the TDP coalition government's policies, former minister Adimulapu Suresh said they are leading to deterioration in the education sector in the State.

Speaking to the media at the camp office here on Tuesday, the former minister stated that the coalition government, under the pretext of implementing new reforms in the education sector, has been systematically dismantling the schemes implemented by the previous government.

He pointed out that the cancellation of TOEFL training and the withdrawal of the English as medium of instruction indicate that the education sector is being disrupted. He warned that the people will not tolerate the reversal of the decisions made during the five years of YSRCP gover-nance, which had significant-

ly benefited the public. The former minister emphasised that under the leadership of Jagan Mohan

Reddy, revolutionary changes were introduced in the education sector, with an expenditure of Rs 73,000 crore. He criticised the current government for making baseless allegations against the efforts to transform government schools to compete with corporate schools.

He questioned whether the current government supports or opposes the National Education Policy (NEP) and demanded clarity on whether it will be implemented in the

#### ACROSS THE STATES

the pioneer



#### **Indian visa centre in Dhaka** resumes 'limited operations'

he Indian visa application centre here resumed "limited operations" on Tuesday, days after Bangladesh saw violent clashes which led to the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina. Hasina, 76, resigned and fled to India last week following widespread protests against her Awami League-led government over a controversial job quota system. In a press release, the Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC) announced the resumption of limited operations in its Dhaka centre. "IVAC (JFP) Dhaka has resumed limited operations. Messages will be sent to individual applicants regarding (the) collection of passports," the press release said. It requested applicants to arrive at the centre only after receiving a text message to collect their passports. "Because of limited operations, the process may take longer. We request your understanding," it said. Last week, the IVAC announced the closure of all visa centres in the country until further notice due to the unstable situation after the fall of the Hasina-led Awami League government, Somoy TV news channel reported.



#### **IIT-M** to roll out programmes in Mathematics and B Ed

he Indian Institute of Technology, Madras here will introduce a B. Sc programme in Mathematics as it aims to produce at least 500 Maths teachers a year. IIT-M on Monday secured the first rank in the 'overall category for the sixth consecutive year and in 'engineering' category for the ninth year in a row as per the list released by the National Institutional Ranks Framework of the Union Ministry of Education. Under the Research Institution category, IIT-M secured the top second rank. Expressing his gratitude to the 11,000 students, faculty members, teachers for bagging the top honours in the NIRF list, IIT-M Director V Kamakoti said the institution was selected under various parameters, including percentage of those who graduate every year and number of students who complete their Ph Ds every year. Another parameter that led to securing the top rank was 30 per cent diversity in students and 30 per cent in gender equality.



#### 'Haem iron from red meat with 26% increased diabetes risk'

aem iron, found in red meat and other animal products, has been linked to a 26 per cent increased risk of type 2 diabetes compared to non-haem iron found in plantbased foods, a new study has found. While previous studies relied only on epidemiological data, in this study, researchers "integrated multiple layers of information, including conventional metabolic biomarkers, and cutting-edge metabolomics," said lead author Fenglei Wang, a research associate at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, US. Metabolomics is the study of small molecules within cells and tissues. "This allowed us to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the association between iron intake and type 2 diabetes risk, as well as potential metabolic pathways underlying this association," Wang said. The study is published in the journal Nature Metabolism. The researchers suggested that cutting down on red meat and adopting a plant-rich diet can help lower diabetes risk.

#### Some people unable to digest India's fast pace of development

PNS NEW DELHI

In an apparent swipe at the opposition over its demand for a JPC probe into Hindenburg Research's allega-

tions, President Jagdeep Dhankhar Tuesday said India is developing at a "nuclear speed" but some people want to "bring instabili-ty", and take ran-

domly surfaced issues as authentic.

The remarks came as the opposition stepped up its attack on the government

over Hindenburg's allega-

tions against SEBI chairperson Madhabi Buch, with the Congress warning of a nationwide stir if a JPC probe is not initiated. The

BJP has dismissed demand as a "sham" aimed at undermining the Indian economy Dhankhar, who flagged off a 'Tiranga Bike

Rally' from Bharat Mandapam, as part of 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign, said in his address that Fellow citizens, our pace of development is such that we are moving ahead at a nuclear speed.



## **US** looks forward to expanding critical partnership with India

PNS WASHINGTON

The Biden Administration looks forward to expanding its "critical and critically important" partnership with India and creating a more prosperous and secure Indo-Pacific, the White House has said.

White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre made the remarks on Monday while responding to questions on the priorities of US President Joe Biden in the remaining six months of his administration.

We look forward to continuing to expand our critical and critically important partnership and how it's going to benefit the American peoole," she said while addressing her daily news conference.

'We want to create a more prosperous and secure Indo-Pacific and the



our focus as we move forward," she

"The president (Joe Biden) views our relationship -- the United States' relationship with India -- as one of the most consequential in the world. We work closely with India on our most vital priorities, including through the Quad and the US-India initiative on -- Critical and Emerging Technology,"

Earlier in the day, India's Ambassador-designate to the US, Vinay Mohan Kwatra,

arrived in the American Capital. Kwatra, who previously served as Minister of Commerce in the Indian Embassy here, is expected to present his credentials to President Biden shortly.

The top Indian diplomat, who world. That is going to continue to be is well known in the US diplomatic circles, arrives in the US in the middle of an intense presidential election campaign, fast-moving developments in Bangladesh and two wars in which

the US is currently engaged. Over the next 90 days, India and the US are expected to have some high-level diplomatic engagements, including visits of cabinet-level officials on either side.

#### Youth must strive to make India a developed nation by 2047: Shah



PNS AHMEDABAD

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday launched the BJP's 'Tiranga Yatra' in Ahmedabad and called upon youth to come forward and strive to make India a developed nation by 2047.

The 'Tiranga Yatra' is a way to energise youth and commit themselves to nation building, asserted the senior BJP leader while addressing a gathering before flagging off the yatra in Gujarat's commercial hub ahead of

Independence Day.
"The Har Ghar Tiranga campaign launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi two years ago has become not just an expression of patriotism, but also a symbol of our pledge to make India a great and developed nation by 2047," Shah

emphasised.

"When the country under PM Modi's leadership is committed to become a developed nation, citizens, especially youth, need to come forward and work with the aim of making the country No. 1 in the field they are working in," he underlined. After flagging off the city-wide event, Shah, along with Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, participated in

the yatra by walking for some distance on the route holding the nation-

The third edition of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign is being celebrated from August 9 to 15 to mark the 78th Independence Day. The idea behind the initiative is to invoke the feeling of patriotism among citizens and to promote awareness about the tricolour





#### India, Australia discuss ways to boost counter-terror cooperation

PNS NEW DELHI

India and Australia have emphasised the need for strengthening global cooperation to combat terrorism and condemned the use of "terrorist proxies" for cross-border terrorism.

Ways to further expand bilateral cooperation in dealing with terrorism figured prominently at the 14th meeting of the India-Australia joint domestic, regional and global terrorism threat assessment. "They discussed counter-

terrorism challenges related to the use of new and emerging technologies by terrorists, misuse of the internet for terrorist purposes, radicalisation and terror financing, and the nexus between organised crime and terrorism, among other issues," it said in a state-

It said both sides also dis-



rorism that was held in Delhi on Monday. "India and Australia strong-

ly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and emphasized the need for strengthening international cooperation to combat terrorism in a comprehensive and sustained manner," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said. "They also condemned the use of terrorist proxies for cross-border terrorism," it said.

The MEA said the two sides exchanged views on the al, global and multilateral fora such as the UN, FATF (Financial Action Task Force), Quad and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).

Joint Secretary for Counter-Terrorism at the MEA K D Dewal and Richard Feakes, Ambassador for Counter-Terrorism, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia, led the respective delegations at the meeting.

Separately, India and Australia also deliberated on ways to boost cooperation in the maritime domain.

## SC closes contempt proceedings against Ramdev, Patanjali Ayurved

In a relief to yoga guru Ramdev, his aide Balkrishna and Patanjali Ayurved Limited, the Supreme Court on Tuesday closed the contempt proceedings initiated against them for "violation" of the undertakings given before the court in the misleading advertisements case. While the apex court accepted their apology and closed the mat-ter, it cautioned them to strictly abide by the terms of their undertakings.

"Any future intransigence on their part, whether by act, deed or speech that could tantamount to violating the orders of the court or dishonouring the terms of the undertakings, shall be viewed strictly and the ensuing consequences could indeed be grave," a bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Ahsanuddin Amanullah said.

"In that eventuality, the sword of contempt that has now been returned to rest in its sheath, shall be flourished as swiftly as these proceedings were originally initiated," the bench said in its 41-page verdict. The contempt proceedings was initiated

by the top court which is hearing a plea filed by the Indian Medical Association alleging campaign against the ( cination drive and modern systems of medicine. In its November 21, 2023 order passed in the matter, the top court had noted that the counsel representing Patanjali Ayurved had assured it that henceforth there shall not be any violation of any law(s), especially relating to advertising or branding of prod-



ucts manufactured and marketed by it and further, that no casual statements claiming medicinal efficacy or against any system of medicine will be released to the media in any form".

Jharkhand HC directs govt to

#### **India-Israel join hands for new** water technology centre at IIT-M

PNS NEW DELHI

India and Israel have joined hands for the establishment of a new water technology centre at IIT-Madras, which is expected to serve as a "key contributor" to India's efforts to achieve sustainable water supply for all.

The Embassy of Israel in India in its statement termed the deal a "significant milestone" in the ongoing collaboration between the two countries in the field of integrated water resource management.

A Joint Statement of Intent was signed to establish a Center of Water Technology at



the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology, Madras.

"This tripartite agreement, signed by the Embassy of Israel, IIT Madras, and the AMRUT mission of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, reflects a shared commitment to address the critical challenges of water management in India," it said.

#### identify illegal Bangla immigrants PNS RANCHI The Jharkhand High Court on

Tuesday directed the state government to identify illegal immigrants from Bangladesh who have taken refuge in the Santhal Parganas region. A division bench of Acting

Chief Justice Sujit Narayan Prasad and Justice Arun Kumar Rai while hearing a public interest litigation on illegal immigration of Bangladeshis ordered the government to launch a campaign to identify the original residents of the area.

The court also directed that



ing ration cards, Aadhaar cards and voter ID cards should be issued only after verifying land documents and domicile status of the applicants.

The bench said that illegal immigration from the neighbouring country was a dangerous proposition and a matter of serious concern for the state and the Centre.

# All Indian salt and sugar brands have microplastics: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

All Indian salt and sugar brands, whether big or small, packaged or unpackaged, contain microplastics, according to a study published on Tuesday.

The study, titled "Microplastics in Salt and Sugar" and conducted by the environmental research organisation Toxics Link, tested 10 types of salt -- including table salt, rock salt, sea salt and local raw salt -- and five types of sugar purchased from both

online and local markets. The study revealed the presence of microplastics in all salt and sugar samples, in various forms, including fibre, pellets,

of these microplastics ranged from 0.1 mm to 5 mm. The highest levels of

tive of our study was to contribute to the existing scientif-



microplastics were found in iodised salt, in the form of multi-coloured thin fibre and films. Toxics Link founder-director

ic database on microplastics so that the

treaty can address this issue in

a concrete and focused manner."
"We also aim to trigger pol-

researchers' attention to potential technological interventions that could reduce exposure risks to microplas-

Toxics Link associate director Satish Sinha added, "Our study's finding of substantial amounts of microplastics in all salt and sugar samples is concerning and calls for urgent, comprehensive research into the long-term health impacts of microplastics on human

health.' The concentration of microplastics in the salt samples ranged from 6.71 to 89.15 pieces per kilogramme of dry weight, the report said.

#### Cal HC transfers probe to CBI Bengal state healthcare remains in limbo

DOCTOR MURDER

PNS KOLKATA

The Calcutta High Court on Tuesday ordered the transfer of probe into the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital from the Kolkata Police to the CBI.

A widespread agitation by junior doctors has crippled state healthcare services for the fifth day, with the functioning of even emergency and outdoor departments coming to a

halt in most state-run hospitals. The high court directed the city police to hand over the case diary to the central probe agency by this evening, and all other documents by 10 am on Wednesday.



the wake of a petition moved by the victim's parents praying for a court-monitored probe and multiple other PILs seeking probe transfer to the CBI. The interim order came five days after the gruesome incident had come to light and five days ahead of the probe deadline of Sunday issued to the police by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, beyond which she had vowed to hand over investigations to the central agency.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

#### **Sunshine after the storm**

Indian agriculture set to benefit from good monsoon and PM Modi's release of climate-resistant seeds

ndia's agricultural sector, the cornerstone of its economy, is set to benefit from a double dose of positive news this monsoon season. With forecasts predicting a normal to above-normal monsoon and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent announcement of 109 climate-resistant seed varieties, the outlook for the country's farmers is brighter than ever. These developments not only promise a significant boost for agriculture but also hold the potential to ease inflationary pressures—a key concern for both policymakers and the general public. A favorable monsoon is expected to drive agricultural growth in India, with a report from India Ratings predicting a 4.3% increase in FY25, up from 1.4% in FY24. The monsoon plays a critical role in sustaining food supply, which in turn satisfies consumer demand and helps stabilise food prices. Additionally, a good monsoon increases rural incomes, which can stimulate demand for fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG). Monsoon rains are vital for Indian agriculture, particularly for the



kharif crop season, which includes staples like rice, maize, and pulses. With nearly 60 per cent of India's farmland being rain-fed, a good monsoon often translates to a successful harvest. This year's normal to above-average rainfall has raised hopes for a bumper crop season. A successful monsoon reduces the need for costly irrigation solutions, helping farmers save on input costs. As a result, rural incomes are expected to rise, driving consumer demand in villages and small towns, which are vital engines of the country's economic growth.

Against this promising backdrop, Prime Minister Modi's release of 109 climate-resistant seed varieties marks

a significant step towards securing India's agricultural future. These seeds have been specially developed to withstand the growing challenges posed by climate change, including erratic rainfall, prolonged droughts, and rising temperatures. By enhancing crop resilience, these seeds aim to ensure stable yields even in adverse weather conditions. The introduction of these seeds is a forward-looking initiative that aligns with the government's broader agricultural strategy, which emphasises sustainability and self-reliance. These seeds are expected to reduce crop losses due to unpredictable weather, providing farmers with a safety net and helping to stabilise food production. This could lead to a more consistent food supply. In recent years, inflation, particularly driven by volatile food prices, has been a persistent concern for the Indian economy. A good monsoon and the adoption of climate-resistant seeds could bring much-needed relief to consumers, especially those in lower-income brackets who are most affected by rising food costs. During his second term, Prime Minister Modi had promised to double farmers' incomes a goal that was challenging to achieve at the time. However, that target now seems within reach. The combination of good rainfall and resilient seed varieties could be the key to realising that vision and securing a prosperous future for Indian agriculture.



# Finding fault with the US for internal failures



The narrative of an 'American hand' in political unrest in South Asia sells, even as the root cause of instability often lie with its own politicians

he United States of America did not have a significant role in the run-up to the independence of the Indian subcontinent from the British Raj. Indeed, the Gadar Party started as a San Francisco-based anticolonial organization, as did the New York-based India Home Rule League founded by Lala Lajpat Rai, but the Government of the USA had remained largely oblivious of the subcontinental developments. It was only in the post-World War 2 tensions between the competing 'blocs', when the Cold War started in earnest, that the USA went into overdrive to control the subcontinental narrative. To further its interest, the USA had backed military dictators in Pakistan, and undemocratic monarchies in Afghanistan and Nepal, while remaining decidedly hostile towards India.

Washington DC tellingly overlooked the genocidal conduct of the Pakistani Generals in what later became, Bangladesh. Americans were instrumental in harnessing toxic religiosity by creating the Afghan mujahedeen, the curse of which continues to this date. Pakistan was a 'Major Non-NATO Ally' and did most of its bidding in the region. The end of the Cold War with the implosion of the Soviet Union in the early 90s coincided with the rise of China as the new principal enemy. This led to a recalibration of allies and enemies, which eventually warranted a more pro-India outlook from Washington DC, even though an unnatural alliance with Pakistan persisted owing to the necessities of Afghanistan and tackling religio-

For a variety of reasons, including the continuing 'War on Terror' in Afghanistan, the Middle East, and Iran, to now the latest Israel-Palestine War, perceptions of America within the Immah (Islamic World), made it naturally unsavoury. This often the Americans, as it was safe makes the USA the prime suspect for anything that went wrong in Tehran, Kabul, Damascus, Islamabad to even Dhaka. Invariably the Americans are seen to be partaking in Samuel P



Huntington's 'Clash of the Civilisations', which seemingly pits the Americans as a force against the Ummah. Americabashing is a latent and potent undercurrent that is tapped by various political parties in the Islamic countries of the region like Pakistan, Afghanistan, Maldives or Bangladesh, even if the same is genuinely warranted or not. There is no denying that America has had an amoral past with many missteps and convenient overlooking of events, but it is equally true that many political parties have twisted and even extrapolated the same to suggest outsized agendas for Washington DC because they know that such a spiel feeds into the popular and basic instincts of their citizenry.

In Pakistan, amidst the turf wars between the Military 'establishment' and Imran Khan's Tehreek-e-Insaaf government, the wily Imran Khan dialled up a phoney 'cypher' controversy entailing a foreign power i.e., the USA. This move sought to conflate two enemies (one already imagined i.e., USA, and the other requiring some context i.e. Pakistani Military) to apportion a disproportionate and popular to do so. The Americans have historically had a say in Pakistani affairs, but the ouster of Imran Khan had more to do with the



WHILE IT IS TRUE

THAT DHAKA UNDER

HASINA HAD ADOPTED A **BELLIGERENT** STANCE AND EVEN COSIED UP TO ITS NEMESIS THAT IS, CHINA, BY ACCEPTING **BEIJING'S** OVERTURES -BANGLADESH WAS **NOT CHINA'S BUNNY** IN THE SAME WAY AS PAKISTAN IS, NOR WAS IT POISED TO GO THAT WAY

Americans agreeing to the same, as opposed to the other way round.

Today, realising his folly of hav-

ing overplayed the America-

hand storyline, Imran Khan

has deftly redirected the attack

onto his local political rivals as opposed to the Americans or even the Pakistani 'establishment', as done earlier. Now, after the self-created tinderbox-like situation and the subsequent implosion, Bangladesh's former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is believed to have drummed up the US hand in the recent coup. While it is true that Dhaka under Hasina had adopted a belligerent stance and even cosied up to its nemesis i.e., China, by accepting Beijing's overtures Bangladesh was not China's bunny in the same way as Pakistan is, nor was it poised to go that way, either. It is true Hasina had declined the American request for a Military base in its Saint Martin Islands, but that was

Hasina was the routine concerns expressed by the USA that Hasina was increasingly undemocratic, intolerant and authoritarian (which she was) - but other than these concerns, both Hasina and the

more out of good sense given

the societal sentiments that

prevailed and good local pol-

Americans had a common enemy in religious-extremist forces that threatened the interests of both sides. Hasina also amplified her American rhetoric as it was without any accompanying risks and could endear her to Bangladeshi society, as the Ummah has been wounded by emotions of the Palestine war, and the tacit role of the USA. Hasina's purported accusation of the USA plotting regime change in Bangladesh (in her undelivered speech) needs to be read contextually. His supposed stance that she'd be in power if she had given away, "Saint Martin and Bay of Bengal", is more theatrical than factual as Bangladeshis (especially youth) had genuinely tired of her rule.

If anything, the forces that have come to power reflect the sort of spirit and religious tenor that militates against American preferences. Hasina's exit has more to do with her hubris and excesses than with America working overtime to dislodge her. America is just a convenient (though often justified) enemy in Islamic countries and those who are inelegantly bumped out resort to blaming the USA hand on the rebound e.g., Pakistan earlier, Bangladesh now.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

## The quest for real freedom in a divided society



Real liberation comes from transcending divisions and recognising our spiritual identity, a path that leads to peace, harmony, and tranquility

ore than seven decades after we attained independence from the British, we are still enslaved- trapped in the bondage of caste, creed, religion, regionalism etal. This has created deep fissures in society, destroying the democratic fabric of amity, harmony and peaceful co-existence. All this is there because as individuals, society and a nation, we have not attained real or to say ultimate freedom that promotes peace, harmony and happiness.

What is real or ultimate freedom? It is a state of not being enslaved to physical senses, to mind and its desires. It means breaking free from toxic thoughts and the vices associated with it. We need freedom from prejudices of caste, creed and religion, greed and selfishness, anger and animosity, hate and hostil-

But then why are we failing to achieve real freedom and how can we attain it? Real freedom is eluding us because we are facing an identity crisis. We don't know our real identity. low beings and this dis- ourselves in a pure state of

In reality, we are spiritual beings (having soul-based identity) in body form. But we make a fallacy of treating ourselves as a body and this unreal world as the real world.

The basic nature of our material existence is bondage and when we act upon the material desires of the mind and senses, we often take to unwise and unholy acts which lead to our sorrows and sufferings. Because of duality, we tend to discriminate against fel-

crimination takes the form of hatred, animosity and hostility, even leading to violence and bloodshed. Liberation of the soul or spiritual freedom is the

ultimate freedom. The devotees belonging to the Nirankari Mission observe the 15th of August as 'Mukti Parv Diwas' to signify the liberation of the soul. To attain this ultimate liberation, we have to come out of the contaminated state of our consciousness and position

our consciousness. Even Bhagavad Gita says that being situated in such a position, one is never shaken even amid the greatest difficulty and it is actual freedom from all miseries arising from material con-

We can certainly attain ultimate liberation through self-liberation by way of self realization that we are a pure and noble soul- a constituent of God. We can lead such an aware life constantly by strengthening our spiritual dimension through God's remembrance and the company of saintly persons. Lord Jesus set people free from bondage to live in the freedom that only comes from God.

We shall be able to attain real freedom by living an enlightened life in the spirit of oneness (Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam) with the Creator and His creation, in turn turning this world into a happy, harmonious and peaceful place to live.

(The writer is a senior journalist; views expressed are personal)

#### **MOTHERS HAVE BIG HEART**

Pakistani 'establishment' tak-

Madam — In the world of sports, where records are measured in meters and seconds, Nadeem's Olympic gold throw of 92.97 meters and Neeraj's silver throw of 89.45 meters are remarkable feats. Yet, they pale in comparison to the "universal affection javelin throw" of infinite meters launched by their mothers. The media captured a heartwarming moment as both mothers wished their sons not just victory and medals, but everlasting friendship and affection.

Indeed, the true champions here are the mothers of Nadeem and Neeraj, whose boundless care and love transcend international borders, setting a new record for the longest "affectionate and harmonious javelin throw" of infinite meters. Kudos to these incredible women for their unparalleled contribution to the spirit of

sportsmanship and humanity. PV Madhu Nivriti | Secundrabad

#### **ADDRESS ATTACK ON MINORITIES**

Madam — The ongoing attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh are deeply concerning. Despite Hindu support for the movement against the Sheikh Hasina government, the new regime has failed to protect them. Alarmingly, Indian opposition parties, vocal about minority rights in India, have remained silent on this

Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus, leading the interim government, has appealed for calm but to little effect. The anti-quota protests in Bangladesh, which led to the fall of the Hasina government, have now targeted Hindus, even though their involvement was primarily against the previous government. The situation worsened with the forced resignation of Bangladesh's Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan. Bangladesh remains an Islamic country, and protection for minorities is limited compared to India. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's offer to shelter "anyone" in distress is problem-

# **Medics need support**



The removal of the City Police Commissioner and the Medical Superintendent cum VP of RG Kar Medical College Hospital in Calcutta, following the horrific rape

demographic challenges in states like Assam and West Bengal.

Mamata Banerjee's silence on the attacks against Hindus in Bangladesh is troubling, especially as her actions seem to prioritise vote-bank politics over national security and humanitarian concerns. The government must act fast as things are very fluid in Bangladesh

K V Seetharamaiah Bengaluru

**LESSONS FROM WAYANAD** Madam — The recent landslides and floods in Wayanad, Kerala, have drawn global attention, reminding us of the ongoing vulnerability of our planet to natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods.Our Earth has always been a haven of beauty and abundance, providing a diverse range of species and natural resources like majestic mountains and expansive oceans. For millennia, Mother Nature has been humanity's nurturing cradle. I recall the massive floods of the early 1990s, which devasatic, as it could enable more Bangladeshi tated regions in Tamil Nadu, including infiltration into India, exacerbating the Korkai, Tiruchendur, Tuticorin, and

and murder of a 31-year-old medical professional on the hospital grounds, will not alone bring justice to this case. The Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA) has demanded a CBI inquiry and calls for decisive

action. The frequency of such atrocities against doctors across the country, compounded by inadequate protection from many state authorities, is undeniable. The reluctance of junior doctors to speak out due to fear has led to even greater tragedies over the years. If this situation persists, it will severely impact medical care for millions of impoverished patients and place the medical profession in a critical condi-

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

Tirunelveli. It is crucial for all Asian countries, especially those in the Himalayan region, to implement proactive measures such as adopting advanced technologies and large-scale afforestation to mitigate

the effects of natural disasters. These events underscore the urgent need to harmonise human activities with the Earth's natural systems. Overexploitation of resources has pushed our planet to its limits, disrupting its balance. To address this, it is essential to regulate high-rise construction in earthquake-prone areas and shift focus from building concrete jungles to fostering green, sustainable landscapes. Regions like Korkai, Tiruchendur, Tuticorin, Tirunelveli, Marthandam, Nagercoil, and Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu serve as examples of how humans and nature can coexist harmoniously. By prioritising reforestation and sustainable land use, we

can build a resilient future. P Senthil Saravana Durai | Mumbai

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## **FIRST COLUMN**

#### FROM RIFTS TO RESOLUTION

It is very important to recognise that the world shall change when I change



BY RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR **NIKUNJ JI** 

Te all know that conflicts are a part of our everyday life and they form in our close relations, at a societal level & on an international level. Very often we see conflicts leading to aggression, hostility and war. However, conflicts can also be a stepping stone leading to change and wisdom; if we learn to handle them constructively. Since relationship conflicts are inevitable, learning to deal with them healthily is extremely crucial because when a conflict is mismanaged, it can harm the relationship. But when handled respectfully and positively, it provides an opportunity for growth, ultimately strengthening the bond between two people.

Any kind of conflict has two dimensions, internal and external. Internal conflicts arise when the mind and intellect are moving in opposite directions and external conflicts are caused when people or situations confront us and we are not sure how to cope with them. Some people view conflicts as an opportunity for a change and some see it as a natural global phenomenon. But others feel that conflicts are avoidable through better communication but they are frightened of the process. Due to this fear, they hold themselves back and content themselves by making a peace contract or a deal. However, such solutions are very temporary and can be seen as a band-aid solution, which might be effective for the short term only. We all know that conflicts ought to be resolved by use of intellect or reasoning because when conflicts are allowed to develop unhindered without intervention or when the parties involved fuel the



conflict, it often happens that the conflict evolves negatively. And that is why people seek guru's or senior's advice when they are faced with conflicting decisions. But the irony is that with all the information and advice that is available to us, we are unable to resolve matters because there is an acute implementation paralysis. We must not forget about the fact that the best source of judgement is a person's intellect because nobody can understand his feelings, situations and capabilities to deal

We may seek advice from an experienced person, however, the sense of joy or security that we feel on hearing good advice is only temporary because it is not real. Just like the feeling of joy derived from thinking of eating something delicious is unreal, real joy comes only after eating the thing. We too have to undergo an experience to make it real. Remember! conflict triggers strong emotions and can lead to hurt feelings, disappointment, and discomfort. When handled in an unhealthy manner, it can cause irreparable rifts, resentments, and break-ups. But when it is resolved healthily, it increases our understanding of one another, builds trust, and strengthens our relationship bonds. A growing body of research has shown spirituality as a great antidote for all kinds of conflicts. Spirituality is like the medicine that heals the root of the disease and not just the symptoms. It is the only means that gives us complete solutions to conflicts. From a spiritual perspective, the most powerful value needed for conflict resolution is 'respect'. This is because most of the people don't wish to negotiate when they have material power. Therefore, there's an urgent need for those to realize and respect their inner powers. Similarly, faith is also a very important element in conflict resolution, it is the key to mutual understanding. For global conflicts, the solution lies with the leadership. The leaders can bring about the muchneeded change and make it trickle down the societies. Leaders of today must remember that any kind of change can be termed 'real' only when it affects the grassroots. It is thus very important to recognize that the world shall change when I change. Hence, people should not wait to be told that they need to change, instead, they should realise it themselves. (The writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist, views are

# Rupee's fall against dollar is a wake-up call for India BRAJESH KUMAR TIWARI



As the rupee weakens and inflation rises, strategic economic reforms to boost domestic manufacturing and reduce import dependency are urgently needed

the rupee hit a record low against the US dollar on August 5th and was trading at 84.09 per dollar. This is the biggest fall ever seen in the rupee and the rupee has reached its all-time low.If the currency of any country is stronger than other currencies, then the country is considered strong. In this globalized world, the value of every country's currency against the US dollar not only impacts the economy of that country but also affects the prices of many things in

Rupee has Fallen 20 Times since **Independence:** The rupee has fallen almost 20 times since independence; in 1948, 1 dollar was equal to 4 rupees. At that time there was no debt in the country, then when the first five-year plan was implemented in 1951, the government started taking loans from foreign countries and then the value of the rupee also started decreasing continuously.

The continuous outflow of foreign funds from financial markets and crude oil has increased pressure on the rupee. The economy around the world has seen two major shocks - the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine, Israel conflict. India is also not untouched by this. Today, the condition of currencies in major markets around the world is weak.

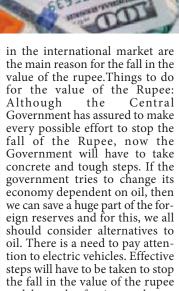
Dollar as King: According to the International Standard Organization list, there are a total of 180 currencies around the world, but among them, the American currency 'Dollar' has become a global currency. The price of most of the things exported is paid in dollars.
Today the dollar is involved in 80 percent of the world's trade. The US dollar has the status of a global currency, which is why the value of the rupee against the dollar shows whether the Indian currency is strong or weak.

The falling value of the Rupee affects Common People: When the rupee becomes cheaper against the dollar, it has a direct impact on the economy.

The falling value of the rupee brings

inflation. Rising prices could accelerate inflation, which is already high. In such a situation, everything from the life of the common man to businessmen and government will be affected by the value of the rupee. The decline in global activity, investors' decision to invest money in safe global markets and increasing tension in global politics are among the main reasons behind the fall of the rupee. Even if we do not take seriously the fall and rise of a few paise in the rupee, they have a big impact on our lives.

The fall in the rupee has a direct impact on the country's economy, due to which import of petroleum products will become expensive and freight transportation will become expensive. This will have a direct impact on the inflation of every essential item. There is a sudden increase in all loans taken in foreign currency and the interest paid on them. Studying abroad will also be expensive. Why the Rupee is falling: The value of the rupee completely depends on its demand and supply and import and export also have a direct impact. A country that imports more than it exports has GROSS DOMESTIC a higher demand for dollars. Like India imports more than it exports. India is one of the major importers of crude oil and imports about 80 per cent of the oil, undoubtedly the rising prices of crude oil



and keep the foreign exchange

Government Steps: The government is indeed striving to create a competitive, dynamic environment to provide sustained economic growth and enhance its relevance in international trade, PM Gati Shakti, National Single Window Clearance, GIS-mapped Land Bank, Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) etc. The manufacturing sector is expected to ben-TRILLION efit from the implementation of recent policies like the PLI scheme. Its results are also visible in some areas, the development of coronavirus vaccines by Indian companies is a vivid example of indigenous talent. India has rapidly made its place in the Ease of Doing Business index released by the World Bank. India's EDB rank was 134th in the year 2014, whereas in the year 2023, it has become 63rd. India is ranked 40th in the Global Competitiveness Report Index published by the Genevabased World Economic Forum, where it was ranked 60th in 2014. But all these reforms in the ranks have also failed to revive the manufacturing sector and provide the desired support to the

Make in India campaign. Big Time for Make in India: The government will have to move strategically towards controlling imports and increasing exports. This is the time to effectively program which even after nine years is far behind in its effective contribution. Despite being the fifth largest economy, India contributes barely 1.6% to world exports. A primary objective of the campaign was to increase the share of the manufacturing sector in the Indian GDP to 25 per cent by 2022 although it has remained between 14 to 16 per cent in the last 9 years. During the coronavirus pandem-

ic, there was publicity that the companies leaving China were going to come to India, however, most of these companies have shifted their base to Vietnam, Taiwan, Thailand etc. and only a few have come to India. Every year crores of laptops, desktops and servers are sold in India, in which motherboards memory models and chips are being imported. We are dependent on other countries for these compo-

Even today, most of the items are assembled. There is no justification for the import of Harmonized System products (HS-84, nuclear reactors, boilers, mechanical equipment and their parts), and HS-85 (electrical machinery) as most of these items can be produced locally. PLI schemes should be extended to MSMEs and emerging industries to increase exports.

The 15 per cent corporate tax rate for new investment in manufacturing should be extended to all industries including the service sector. The expansion and use of new-age technology applications such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT) and Machine Learning (ML) require tax incentives on capital or operational expenditure. The government should reduce the logistics cost to 6-8% of the GDP which is currently 14%, the good thing is that recently at the G-20 summit, there has been talk of setting up an economic corridor at the international level. The manufacturing industry in

poor infrastructure of the country. Compared to China, which spends 20% of its GDP on infrastructure development, our country spends only 3%. Way Forward: At a time when the value of the rupee has crossed Rs 84 per US dollar, the role of 'Make in India' becomes very important. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), India may face a shortage of about 29 million skilled workers by 2030. The economy needs more than policy window dressing to increase manufacturing activity. We need to understand that just passing bills and organizing investor conferences will not be enough to promote industrializa-

The manufacturing sector is constrained by large amounts of paperwork, be it labour, land or environmental clearances, stringent regulations and policy. Taxation and customs policies are complex to such an extent that it not being produced but are being is cheaper to import things like medical equipment rather than domestically. India can make itself the next 'global factory' in the future, which is already fed up with China and is looking for alternative manufacturing hubs. There is a need to free the manufacturing sector from cumbersome rules.

Certainly, the fall of the rupee against the dollar can be controlled through such effective steps. Also, if we start using indigenous goods then the cost of importing foreign goods will be saved. For India to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2025, we need to export at least \$2.5 trillion worth of goods and services, as exports currently contribute about 25% to the total gross domestic product (GDP). India has no time to rest. We have come a long way, but the journey is not over yet.

(The writer is an associate professor at JNU, New Delhi; views





IF WE START

USING

INDIGENOUS GOODS THEN THE COST OF IMPORTING FOREIGN GOODS WILL BE SAVED. FOR INDIA TO BECOME A \$5 **ECONOMY BY** 2025, WE NEED TO EXPORT AT LEAST \$2.5 TRILLION WORTH OF GOODS AND SERVICES, AS **EXPORTS** CURRENTLY CONTRIBUTE **ABOUT 25% TO** THE TOTAL **PRODUCT** 

# The strength of sisterhood: How women's circles empower and change lives Women groups foster empowerment, drive economic progress, and challenge societal stereotypes, proving that together, women can achieve anything

umans are inherently social beings, and **⊥** women, in particular, thrive on social connections. This insight struck me during a recent celebration of Hariyali Teej, a Hindu festival dedicated to women. On this day, women don traditional attire, enjoy special foods, and revel in music, reflecting the profound significance of women's gatherings in our cultural history. Hariyali Teej exemplifies the value our ancestors placed on women's circles. These gatherings not only provide joy but also reinforce the unique strength women possess. This power is deeply rooted in



SUGANDHA NAGAR

nect with their feminine essence and the best way to nurture this strength is by bonding with other women. Such connections are crucial for self-discovery and empowerment.

The concept of Shine Theory, coined by journalist Ann Friedman and businesstheir ability to manage and woman Aminatou Sow, share energy, which flourishence encapsulates this idea: excepwoman Aminatou Sow,

Historically, women have workplace environments, the passed wisdom and experience through communal practices, whether through household chores or cultural rituals. For example, traditional activities like grinding spices together in Indian families or crafting quilts in Alice Walker's \*The Color Purple\* symbolize unity and shared strength.

Everyday interactions among women not only ease the burden of tasks but also preserve cultural traditions and create a space for emotional exchange. These interactions form a vessel of healing and transformation, extending beyond personal growth to effecting positive change in their communities.

In modern settings, such as

same principles apply. Despite the often harsh competitive dynamics driven by stereotypes, supportive women's circles offer a vital source of relief and rejuvenation. Unfortunately, societal narratives and media perpetuate the myth that women are inherently competitive and unsupportive of one another. This stereotype undermines the historical practices of women uplifting each other and fosters unhealthy rivalry. Recent initiatives aim to counteract these negative dynamics by promoting women's economic empowerment. The Union Budget for 2024-25 proposes establishing working women hostels and es through communal inter-actions. Women need to con-other to shine even brighter. In modern settings, such as other settings or help groups (SHGs). These



measures are designed to enhance financial stability and provide economic opportunities for women, particularly in rural areas. The goal is to transform women into "Lakhpati Didis," or those with an annual income exceeding INR 1,00,000,

improved living standards. The emphasis on SHGs highlights the importance of collective unity and mutual support among women. These groups not only provide economic benefits but also foster a strong network of women who support each

engage in such supportive other. By rejecting stereoenvironments, we can pave the way for greater economic prosperity and gender

Sheryl Sandberg, former COO of Meta Platforms, emphasizes the power of women supporting women in her book, \*Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead\*. She dispels the myth that women don't support each other, arguing that collaboration among women is key to achieving remarkable success. Successful women often have the backing of other women who help them reach

their goals. To overcome systemic discrimination and internalized biases, women must challenge the societal pressures that pit them against each

types and fostering genuine support, women can create spaces where they feel safe to express themselves, show vulnerability, and receive the support they need.

Ultimately, female friendships and communal support not only inspire personal and spiritual growth but also enhance collective strength and performance. Women's circles provide a crucial platform for sharing energy, ideas, and support, enabling women to achieve their full potential and contribute positively to their communities.

The author is a writer, social worker, culture enthusiast, and former UN employee; views are personal)

## IN BRIEF



#### **Alembic gets USFDA nod** for generic medication

lembic Pharmaceuticals on Tuesday said it has received Approval from the US health regulator to market a generic product indicated for prophylaxis of deep vein thrombosis. The company has received approval from the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) to market Dabigatran Etexilate Capsules (110 mg), the drug firm said in a regulatory filing. Dabigatran Etexilate Capsules are indicated for prophylaxis of deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism following hip replacement surgery. The approved product is therapeutically equivalent to Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals Inc's Pradaxa Capsules (110 mg). The company said it now has a cumulative total of 211 ANDA (abbreviated new drug application) approvals from the USFDA. Shares of the company on Tuesday closed 3.17 per cent down at Rs 1,076 apiece on the BSE.



#### **Gold jumps Rs 500 to Rs** 72,850 per 10 g

old prices jumped Rs 500 to Rs 72,850 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday amid strong cues from the global market and a rise in domestic demand. In the previous session, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had settled at Rs 72,350 per 10 grams on Monday However, silver prices remained flat at Rs 83,500 per kilogram on Tuesday, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also rallied by Rs 500 to Rs 72,500 per 10 grams against the previous close. Traders attributed the rise in gold prices to the rising demand from retail buyers as well as jewellers. In the overseas market, gold is trading at USD 2,502.70 per ounce, up by USD 1.30 per ounce. "Gold's gains on Tuesday as demand for safe-haven assets continued to support the precious metal's rise. "Further, there were concerns that Iran could strike Israel as early as this week have raised the gold-



#### **Fintech startup Jai Kisan gets RBI nod for NBFC acquisition**

ural fintech startup Jai Kisan on Tuesday said it has Preceived regulatory approval from the Reserve Bank of India for the acquisition of a majority stake in NBFC Kushal Finnovation Capital. Details of the stake acquired were not disclosed. "With the NBFC subsidiary, Jai Kisan will be able create and deliver customized, innovative, and relevant products directly to its farmer and rural business customers in a more accessible and seamless manner making its products cheaper, faster, and more impactful," Jai Kisan said in a statement. The acquisition will also enable Jai Kisan to strengthen its partnerships and integrate systems more deeply with its financial institution partners to provide co-lending and further financial inclusion, it added "The NBFC subsidiary allows us to cater to our farmer and rural business customers with credit products they want, how they want them, when they want them and where they want them--which is what they deserve," Jai Kisan co-

# **Not heard from Govt on** stake sale: Vodafone Idea

Amid reports that the government may have sounded out some sovereign funds for offloading its stake in the telco, Vodafone Idea on Tuesday said that it is up to the Centre to decide what it wishes to do about its holding, and that the company has had no commu-nication from them on the

During Vodafone Idea's Q1 earnings call, CEO Akshaya Moondra further said that the company has seen port-outs by its users to BSNL increased since tariff hikes were effected, and is closely watching the situation. The VIL top boss, however, believes that quick decisions to port out taken purely on the basis of tariff action may not eventually sustain, given the 4G coverage offered by VIL.

To a question on media reports that the government may be exploring whether sovereign wealth funds would be keen on picking up its stake in the company, Moondra said: 'We have had no communication with the government...to that extent, we have to say that



government as a public shareholder...they are free to take decision with respect to their investment. That is an independent subject.'

At the same time, he said, whether government continues with its shareholding, or divests gradually is independent of their policy stance on conversion of dues to equity.

"Reforms package was announced with the objective of saying support needs to be provided and the government is

very clearly focused on having three healthy private operators...The conversion to equity was a means of supporting balance sheet of the company by converting some debt into equity. I would say, the policy of the government remains the same, what they do with their public shareholding is their decision... we as a company do not have any information or engagement with them on this sub-

ject," Moondra said. Responding to another ques-

iff hikes on the ground, he said, while it is still early days to draw a conclusion about SIM consolidation, given that the entry price increase this time has been minimal, the SIM consolidation could accordingly be relatively

"One of the trends we have "One of the trends we have seen is that the port-out to BSNL has generally risen from pre-tariff increase levels, which is a space we are watching...and the reason for that is because they (BSNL) has not increased their tariffs so there is a fair their tariffs so there is a fair amount of arbitrage," he said.

The VIL CEO, however, believes that any decision to port out purely on the basis on tariffs may not sustain.

"We are watching this space our expectation is that customers who are used to having a good coverage and experience of 4G coverage, probably current offering of BSNL may not be to that extent ... as people who may have taken a quick decision in terms of tariff actions...may most likely come back. But we will keep on watching this space and see what needs to be done," he said.

## India-SA trade relations to be revived

PNS JOHANNESBURG

The Consulate General of India in Johannesburg on Thursday here launched a new initiative to revive the once very vibrant trade relations between India and South Africa until the COVID pandemic led to a slump.

"The India-SA Investment Network is an effort to bring our wider bilateral eco-system closer," said Consul General Mahesh Kumar, who initiated

the concept.
"We have about USD 19 billion annual trade and an estimated cumulative multiple investment of USD 19 billion. All of us are aware that this is

ment leaders and top captains of industry from South Africa. Kumar said there had been a simultaneous outreach programme to corporate South achieved."We found that while bright, the action was not tak-

way less compared to the potential. All of us would like this to grow, unlocking more opportunities for us," Kumar

said as he welcomed govern-

Africa and to corporate India to learn how this could be the overall mood was right and ing place. We learned that there was a lack of awareness and information and a lack of avenues to find this. There were also lots of unknowns and a fear of the unknown," he said



## Investors' wealth declines Rs 4.52 L cr as markets plunge

PNS NEW DELHI

Equity investors became poorer by Rs 4.52 lakh crore Tuesday as markets plunged due to intense selling in HDFC Bank amid fresh foreign fund out-

Extending its losses for the second straight day, the 30-share BSE Sensex tumbled 692.89 points or 0.87 per cent to settle at 78,956.03. During the day, it tanked 759.54 points or 0.95 per cent to 78,889.38.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms declined by Rs 4,52,565.44 crore to Rs 4,45,30,265.42 crore (USD 5.30 trillion). "The domestic market plunged into red terrain in the latter half, amidst mixed global sentiments. Recent IIP data indicates a lacklustre growth in the major manufacturing sector. Persistent selling by FIIs and elevated valuations are further contributing to the decline.

"All sectors, especially bank-HDFC Bank declined due to lower-than-expected passive



index rejig," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

From the 30 Sensex firms, HDFC Bank declined over 3 per cent. Bajaj Finance, Tata Motors, Tata Steel, State Bank of India, Power Grid and JSW Steel were

In contrast, Titan, HCL Tech, Nestle, Sun Pharma, Reliance fund inflows in the recent MSCI and Mahindra & Mahindra

were the gainers.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) again turned sellers on Monday as they offloaded equities worth Rs 4.680.51 crore after a day's breather, according to exchange

Ιn BSE smallcap gauge declined 1.16 per cent, and the midcap index dipped 0.98 per cent.

#### Hero MotoCorp Q1 PAT up 47 pc at Rs 1,032 cr

PNS NEW DELHI

Hero MotoCorp on Tuesday posted 47 per cent increase in consolidated profit after tax at Rs 1,032 crore for the first quarter ended June 30, 2024, aided by higher sales.

The country's largest twowheeler maker had reported a profit after tax (PAT) of Rs 701 crore for April-June period a year ago. Revenue from operations rose to Rs 10,211 crore from Rs 8,851 crore, Hero MotoCorp said in a regulatory filing. The company said it sold 15.35 lakh units of motorcycles and scooters in the April-June period this fiscal as compared with 13.53 lakh units in the first quarter of FY24. Hero MotoCorp said it witnessed positive trends across domestic, EV and global businesses during the quarter.

The company also witnessed sequential improvement in retail sales, it added. It expects the momentum to build up in the positive customer sentiments, good monsoons and the upcoming festive season.

## **Indian FMCG companies** resume operations Bangladesh

PNS NEW DELHI

Indian FMCG companies with operations in violence-hit Bangladesh say their business in the neighbouring country is slowly returning to normalcy after being shut for about a

Leading FMCG companies, including Marico, Dabur, Industries, Britannia Godrej Consumer Products, have operations in Bangladesh, which recently faced violent clashes leading to a regime

change there. Besides, leading QSR chain Jubilant FoodWorks Ltd (JFL), a master franchisee of American pizza restaurant chain Domino's, also operates around 30 stores in Bangladesh.

Marico, which has the biggest exposure in Bangladesh, has informed the bourses that its the country resumed at normal scale on August 11.

"Operating conditions in the

market have been gradually improving and a large majority of our retail sales force and distributors have been functioning since last week," the Mariwala-promoted FMCG maker said.

In Bangladesh, Marico operates in personal care, baby care, edible oil and food segments, and has contributed 44 per

cent to the international sales of the company. It has two factories in Gazipur, Dhaka, and five depots. "We continue to prioritise the

safety of our

employees, factory workers, distributors and other stakeholders of our business," it said adding "we firmly believe that the mediumterm prospects of Marico's business in Bangladesh remain

It had incorporated a subsidiary Marico Bangladesh in 1999. It is a listed entity on the exchanges and is amongst the top 3 FMCG MNCs in

Bangladesh.

#### CIL to supply coal beyond annual contracted quantities

PNS NEW DELHI

State-owned CIL on Tuesday said thermal power plants, including independent power plants, will be supplied coal beyond annual contracted quantity (ACQ).

The development comes after CIL's board cleared the decks for allowing supplies beyond ACQ. "With this, CIL has removed

the earlier provision which allowed coal supplies to a maximum of 120 per cent of ACQ to power plants and IPPs," Coal Îndia Ltd (CIL) said in a statement. Now, the simplification would benefit the power plants which prefer to lift higher quantities of coal beyond their stipulated ACQ.

The development comes at a

time when the coal demand is showing signs of slackening. Coal India accounts for over 80 per cent of the domestic coal production.

CIL's pitheads currently have a coal stock of 72 million tonne (MT), which is 47 per cent more compared to 49 MT as of August 12 last year.

Supplies to coal-fired plants peaked to an unprecedented 619.7 MT in FY24, meeting 101.6 per cent of the demand projected. Compared to 586.6 MT offtake by the power sector in FY23, the increase in volume terms was 31.9 MT, which is a growth 5.4 per cent.

Of the 153 domestic coalbased power plants of the country, CIL has long-term linkages with 127 plants of 592 MT.

Discoms face financial constraints: Icra structure upgrades and higher subsidy payout.

PNS NEW DELHI

The state-owned power distribution companies are facing financial constraints despite improving their aggregate technical and commercial losses, according to an Icra report.

The agency has cited delays in realising payments from state government departments for power supply as one of the reasons for the constrain of discom finances and assigned a negative outlook for the power distribution segment.

The all-India aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) losses for state-owned discoms declined from 23 per cent in FY2021 to 16.5 per cent in FY2022 and further to 15.8 per cent in FY2023 due to infra-

Despite this progress, losses remain particularly high at over 20 per cent for the discoms in Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh, Icra noted.

"The performance of stateowned discoms remains constrained by inadequate tariffs relative to the cost of supply, higher-than-regulator-approved AT&C losses, and a considerable debt burden. Further, delays in realising payments from state government departments for power supply constrain the discom finances," Icra said.

The agency further said its outlook for the power distribution segment remains nega-



**DUE TO DELAYS IN PAYMENTS** 

Icra Vice President & Co-Group Head - Corporate Ratings Vikram V said: "The tariff-determination process for state discoms has improved, following the General Elections, with 22 of the 28 states issuing the orders for FY2025 as of July 2024 against

only 11 states as of May 2024. However, the tariff hikes

remain modest with a median 1.7 per cent rise for FY2025, lower than the 2.5 per cent approved for FY2024. Despite an uptrend in tariff hikes in a few states in recent years, discoms continue to incur losses due to increases in power purchase costs, operating inefficiencies in a few large states, and a high debt burden, he

## Niti Aayog seeks proposals to evaluate central schemes

PNS NEW DELHI

Government think tank Niti Aayog has invited proposals for evaluation of centrally sponsored schemes across nine crucial sectors, including health, agriculture and educa-

According to the Aayog, each sector will require a separate application through the

GeM portal.
The 9 CSS packages include agriculture and allied sector, women and child development, education and rural development, among others.

sponsored schemes (CSS) are implement-



ed by the state governments but sponsored by the central government with a defined

shareholding. These schemes are aimed at supplementing efforts undertaken by the state government because the Centre has more

resources at its disposal.

These schemes can either be national or regional in character. In CSS, the funding by the central government works as an initiation, with further spending coming from states towards the cause

# India's smartphone market grows 3.2 pc

**VIVO TOPS THE CHART** 

PNS NEW DELHI

The Indian smartphone market grew 3.2 per cent with 39 million units shipment in the second quarter of 2024, market research firm International Data Corporation said on Tuesday.

The market was led by Chinese smartphone maker Vivo with a 16.5 per cent share in volume terms with its shipment growing by 6.7 per cent on a year-over-year (YoY) basis, it said.

Apple led the super-premium segment, which are smartphones priced above Rs 67,000 apiece with an 83 per cent share followed by Samsung with a 16 per cent share.

Overall, Vivo continued to lead for the second consecutive quarter, with multiple launches across price segments through the Y series, midpremium V series and flagship K Fold 3 Pro. Motorola registered the highest growth backed by product portfolio across price segments," the report said.

Xiaomi followed Vivo with 13.5 per cent market. Samsung slipped to the third

sport with a 12.9 per cent share as its shipment declined 15.4 per cent on a YoY basis, according to the report.



Apple stood at the sixth spot with a 6.7 per cent market share and a 24.2 per cent first half of 2024. increase in shipment on a YoY

According to IDC Worldwide Quarterly Mobile Phone Tracker, the Indian

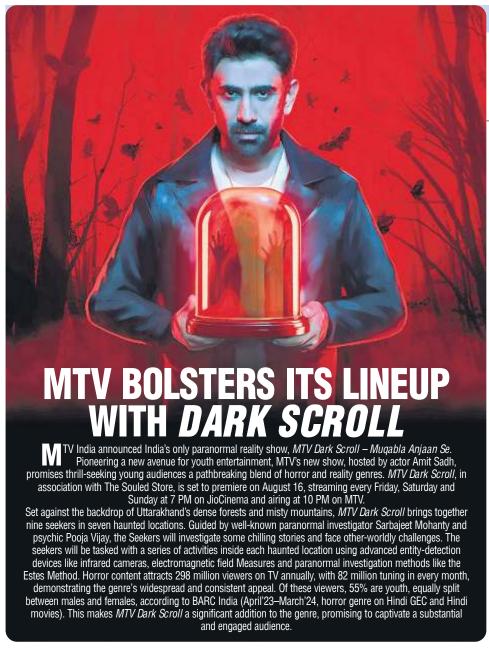
In the premium segment, the price range above Rs 50,000 to Rs 67,000, Apple's share increased YoY to 61 per cent, while Samsung's share

21 per cent a year ago, the report said.
"The entry-premium segment (USD200 or about Rs

increased to 24 per cent, from

16,700 to USD 400 or Rs 33,500) is expected to see healthy growth, while the entry-level (sub-USD100) will remain challenged at least this year despite efforts around launching affordable 5G smartphones.

Also, the marketing around GenAI smartphones will be more pronounced, amid heavy promotional activities around it," IDC, Associate Vice President, Devices Research, Navkendar Singh said.





# SUNNY TAKES ON AN ENTRANCING ROLE IN

ans are brimming with excitement as Sunny Leone-starrer Quotation Gang is gearing up to hit theatres on August 30. This highly anticipated movie promises to showcase the actress-entrepreneur in an intense avatar, diverging from her typical glamorous image. In Quotation Gang, Sunny Leone takes on the compelling role of Padma, a masterful assassin who is an integral part of a dangerous gang that specialises in contract killings. The film's trailer has already stirred up significant buzz, highlighting Sunny's shift to a dramatic and gritty portrayal that promises to keep audiences on the edge of their seats. Quotation Gang is a true-blue proof of Sunny's versatility and her sensibility to make careful choices in films. Previously, Sunny Leone thanked the filmmakers for offering her such a role in the film. She also spoke about how everything, from her eyebrows to her skin tone, had to undergo major changes to suit the part. Apart from Quotation Gang, which also features Jackie Shroff and Priyamani, Sunny Leone has an exciting line-up of projects. She will star in Kennedy, has an untitled Malayalam film to her credit and is collaborating with Himesh Reshammiya and Prabhudeva on an untitled project.





# Kit Harrington admits *Game of Thrones* ending was rushed!

istakes were made during the final season of Game of Thrones, says British star Kit Harington, who played the fan-favourite character of Jon Snow in the HBO series.

During a profile interview, Harington agreed with the fans that the eighth and final season of the smash hit show, which premiered in May 2019 to negative reviews, was "rushed."

"I think there were mistakes made, maybe story-wise towards the end. I think there were some interesting choices that didn't quite work," Harington said.

"I think if there was any fault with the end of *Thrones*, it was that we were all so tired, we couldn't have gone on longer. And so I understand some people thought it was rushed and I might agree with them. But I'm not sure

there was any alternative," he added. The final season of Game of Thrones, which aired in 2019, faced widespread criticism from fans and critics alike for several reasons, with the most common complaint being that the show, which had spent years building up complex storylines and character arcs, crammed significant events into just six episodes. Harington said that though "everyone is entitled to their opinion, the team felt worn out after filming the series for over 10 years. I look at pictures of me in that final season and I look exhausted. I look spent. I didn't have

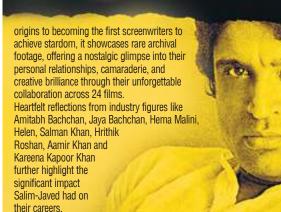
another season in me," he said. "I went in and everyone loved *Thrones*; I came out and everyone hated it ... I thought, 'What the f\*\*k is going on?" he added.

## FROM STRUGGLES TO SCREEN LEGENDS

The trailer for Angry Young Men, a three-part docuseries released by Prime Video, masterfully captures the personal and professional journey of the legendary writer-duo Salim Khan and Javed Akhtar, more popularly known as Salim-Javed.

In the 1970s, they revolutionised Indian cinema by reinventing the Bollywood formula, introducing 'angry young man' heroes in a romance-dominated industry and making action-dramas a beloved genre. Produced by Salman Khan Films, Excel Media & Entertainment and Tiger Baby, Angry Young Men is executive produced by Salma Khan, Salman Khan, Ritesh Sidhwani, Farhan Akhtar, Zoya Akhtar and Reema Kagti and marks the directorial debut of Namrata Rao.

The trailer for the docuseries presents an emotional and inspirational look at the extraordinary journey and enduring legacy of Salim-Javed. It immerses the audience in the rich Bollywood realm that they created, spotlighting their iconic characters and blockbusters such as Deewar, Don, Sholay, Trishul and Dostana—films that have left an indelible imprint on Indian cinema. From their modest



'I started my career in front of the camera but realised that my true strength lay in telling stories," said Salim Khan. "That's when I decided to focus on what came naturally to me—writing. I then met Javed, who was equally passionate about writing and together we did some fantastic work, of which I am very proud. We had an excellent run, achieved great success and also challenged industry norms along the way. It feels wonderful that our journey is being documented for future generations, and I hope they will be inspired to do their best and not be confined by society's prescribed roles.

Meanwhile, Javed Akhtar recalled arriving in the city as a young man with no job, contacts, or money and often going to bed hungry. Despite that, quitting never crossed his mind. "What I always knew, however, was that my life story was something I would want to share with the world. The support we have received from our family, friends and the industry in documenting our journey has been heartening and I would like to thank them all for their love

Actress Rani Mukerji honoured the late filmmaker Yash Chopra with the unveiling of a commemorative stamp, marking a significant milestone for the Indian cinema industry. The historic occasion was marked with the first-ever celebration of Indian cinema at the Australian Parliament, which coincided with the 15th anniversary of the *Melbourne Indian Film* Festival. The program coincided with Rani Mukerji and Karan Johar's keynote addresses at the Canberra Parliament.



#### **ARCHIE**









#### **CALVIN AND HOBBES**









#### GARFIELD



I LOVE THE SOUND OF RAIN



ALSO THE SIGHT OF THE SOUND OF RAIN





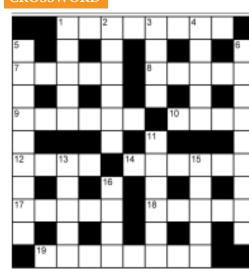
#### REALITY CHECK



# SPEED BUMP



#### **CROSSWORD**



#### **GINGER MEGGS**





PLOP



#### **SUDOKU**

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

#### ACROSS

- A water sport 7 After eighth 8 Worship
- 9 Hurt someone's feelings
- by being rude to them 10 Fewer
- 12 This metal goes rusty
- 14 A fruit
- 17 A large serving spoon

- 18 Book name
- 19 Someone in jai

#### DOWN

- 1 Musical pieces for the voice 2 Breathe in
- 3 A ditch around a castle



4 Rope loop

5 Not able to be seen

6 Read this daily

11 Cardboard box

13 Command

15 Change 16 Untidy shambles

# 11 avawala

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Wednesday August 14, 2024

## UNSTOPPABLE FORCE BEHIND KILL:

Nikhil on turning Patna's chaos into cinematic gold



SHIKHA DUGGAL

he greatest spot to watch *Kill*, a violent Indian beat-em-up set on a train and written in Hindi by Nikhil Nagesh Bhat, ten in Hindi by Nikhil Nagesh Bhat, would probably still be a cinema theatre. The director has been blown away by Lionsgate and the John Wick franchise producing company's plans to remake his Indian action film in English. True, the filmmaker produced nonstop action scenes that as many people as possible should witness. It's fantastic to learn that an English-language version is now being developed. It could be inevitable for it to occur! for it to occur!

We contact the filmmaker out of curiosity to find out more about how it all transpired and he suffuses, "People first took an interest in my film, I recall, at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) premiere. Then the news suddenly leaked out! At first, I would surreptitiously visit theatres to observe the reactions to my movie. Applause, hoots and other noises were heard. This isn't what I recall from last time! These kinds of reactions, in my opinion, would only occur in a star-studded film, yet look at us. It was also a huge confidence booster for my actors?

It's unbelievable that the movie is still making news and the writer keeps telling us, "I learned with a pleas-ant surprise that my movie was being considered for a Hollywood remake. When I saw the guys from the production business, I could see they were shocked by the scenes I had directed and the performances my a were giving them. The strength and emotional engagement of it rather impressed them! Do you have feelings for a dacoit? That's what was taking place in the movie theatres. This astonished them to see. Today, a localised tale is making its way around the world; to me, this is nothing less than a phenomenon."

Speaking briefly about his hopes for such a worldwide hit, the *Apurva* fame says, "My film has been viewed by people from Chile, Argentina, Ecuador and Mexico. What a feeling! They were all required to state only one thing: they all truly enjoyed the film's emotional content. Permit me to take the readers back in time to the

thing: they all truly enjoyed the film's emotional content. Permit me to take the readers back in time to the 1990s, when I was a child living in Patna. Back then, Bihar was an unstable state.s Every day, murders and robberies occur and I have witnessed these crimes in my immediate surroundings. But the thing that sticks out in my memory from all of this is that none of them appeared to be criminals—rather, they were charmers! I made similar suggestions in my film, which is where the inspiration that everyone is discussing originated."

The name of the unconventional actor, Raghav Juyal, was suggested by one of his associates! After seeing a hundred or more auditions, Nikhil cast him because of a selftape where he could see an unpredictable quality in Raghav's eyes. "The casting director had enough of me until I decided on Raghav. I told my team right away not to put me in front of any other actors after meeting Lakshya Kapoor because I couldn't see beyond him. He served as my Amrit. I saw Tanya Manikantala in the cult film A Suitable Boy and her innocent gaze convinced me to cast her in Kill. Her eyes convey so much emotion."

The Patna guy reminisces about filming Kill by sharing a few unforgettable stories, such as, "I have a clear recall of the first time my film was shown at an international film festival around midnight. Suddenly, I started to get strange ideas like, "Why am I here?" Right now, I feel like something is wrong with every shot and sound! I was experiencing intense inter-

Right now, I feel like something is wrong with every at and sound! I was experiencing intense inter nal anxiety. I began to worry that we might be poorly received by the crowd. Twenty-five minutes in, the audience began to react. From then on, there was no turning back and the rest is history." He said he had chills as he was talking. That's how vivid the recollection of shooting *Kill* was for him!



Feasts made effortless!

et's not forget the fact that, when it comes to hosting a party at your house, it's no less than a tiring task. I used to feel overwhelmed for sure by the endless chores, especially cooking the huge amount of food for the guests, until I discovered CaterNinja. This service doesn't just provide food; it creates a culinary experience that lingers long after the last bite. The menu reads like a symphony of flavours, each dish carefully curated to deliver a memorable

> The Achari Chicken Tikka, with its perfect balance of spice and tang, could easily make you rethink your go-to starter. The *Tandoori Prawns*, juicy and charred just right, evoke the smoky allure of coastal grills. The *Seekh Kebab*, despite being a vegetarian option, was packed with such a robust taste that it competed with its meaty counterparts. The Paneer Tikka, with its velvety texture and fragrant marinade, was to the finesse with which the simplest ingredients can be elevated.

The main course was a celebration of classic Indian comfort food. The Butter Chicken, rich and indulgent married the sweetness of tomato with the warmth of garam masala in a way that lingers on the palate long after the last bite. The Dal Makhni, slow-cooked to perfection, was creamy and hearty, a bowl of warmth that felt like home. The Veg Pulao, fragrant with spices and dotted with colorful vegetables, was the perfect accompaniment, while the Wheat Paratha offering a wholesome touch. And just when you think you can't eat another bite, the Moong Dal Halwa arrives, a sweet finale that is both comforting and indulgent, with its earthy notes of lentils and the

But what truly sets it apart isn't just the food; it's the entire experience. As the brainchild of Anup Agarwal and Anurag Mishra. CaterNinia redefines what catering can be. It's not just about delivering food; it's about making the process seamless and customisable, catering to events of all sizes, whether at home or in the office. Their journey hasn't been without challenges. It's a platform that's a haven for food lovers, offering services like

Ninjabox, NinjaBuffet and NinjaLive, each bringing a unique twist to the catering experience. In a world where hosting an event can often feel daunting, it is the ally you need—swift, efficient and always on point ensuring your event is nothing short of spectacular.

**FOODS TO TRY:** Achari Chicken Tikka, Tandoori Prawns, Paneer Tikka

**VERDICT:** 3.5 /5

**TEJAL SINHA** 

023 saw India's first-ever chat show on positive masculinity with Yuvaa's popular show Be A Man Yaar, by The Man Company. While the first season saw Naseeruddin Shah, Karan Johar, Vicky Kaushal and Zakir Khan, among the rest, start the much-needed conversation around men and see an astonishing response, the second season has already been making waves with Javed Akhtar, Kartik Aaryan, Bhuvan Bam and Imran Khan.

With more men, laughs, love, hugs and vulnerability, an ecstatic Nikhil Taneja has taken up the seat, engaging in candid conversations. "I could have only hoped but not expected the overwhelming response to Season 1 of *Be A Man, Yaar,*" shares the media entrepreneur in an exclusive interaction with The Pioneer. As he shares the response, he reiterates his belief that there is space in the media and entertainment sector, as well as among audiences, for gentler, more empathetic and more intimate conversations involving men.

So what's up with Season 2? This season, he says, they have tried to maintain the goal of creating a safe space on the internet for positive masculine conversations.

"There's a belief system that the only kind of masculinity that exists or is lauded is the alpha masculine or hyper-masculine because we see that in pop culture and in films time and again," shares Nikhil, adding, "It leads us to believe that perhaps this is what the audiences want, but the fact is that we have never given an alternative to the audiences. We have always reinforced gender stereotypes by showcasing a certain kind of 'heroic' masculinity, so it just made me feel so grate-ful that the audiences showed up for an alternative. It proves that there are many masculinities possible and we need to hold space for softer masculinities as well."

With Be A Man, Yaar, Nikhil aimed to reclaim the idea of the phrase 'Be a man', that's often used to ask men to not cry, to toughen up, to not express pain and to not be emotional or vulnerable, rather 'it's okay to express'.

"Everything I heard from any guest, no matter how difficult or different it was from my own story, I felt like I was able to see my own stories in theirs," affirms Nikhil. Whether it was Nakuul Mehta speaking of not being able to hug his father, Karan Johar speaking of being called unkind names in school, or Vicky Kaushal speaking about not being able to cry. "That's the incredible thing about listening to the raw stories of those who may seem to be unlike you—you realise that we are all the same in the kind of emotions we feel and how difficult it is, especially for us men, to be able to find spaces to speak of these emotions."

When you have a theme like Be A Man, Yaar, he believes that it encourages men to have deep, personal conversations, which, in fact, is not easy for everyone to agree to let their guard down and to be a part of a show like that. For instance, "So when someone like Kartik Aaryan, who is so widely known and loved, agrees to bring his most authentic self to a show

Be A Man Yaar,
it's okay to
express! Nikhil Taneja returns with more conversations and continues to promote men opening up about their emotions in the new season of *Be A Man Yaar*, featuring beloved celebrities. In an exclusive conversation with **The Pioneer**, he discusses the theme, recalling the stories of celebrities and more

like ours, it is an indication to his fans and so many others that these conversations are necessary, important and meaningful." True that! Today, despite Kartik being one of the leading actors of the B-Town, he still spoke about his fear of being 'unfit'.

With people having a notion that men can work and fit anywhere, he further highlights, "The stereotype there is that men can work and fit anywhere that's acceptable by society as a conventionally male profession. There are professions where the name in itself typically has 'man' associated with it because it's expected only of men to do it, like 'fireman', or 'watchman'. Even in sports, it was called 'batsman' until women started playing just as well and they changed the term to 'batter'. But whenever men want to take not-so mainstream professions, they are discouraged and told that they are unfit for them, just as women and other genders are discouraged from taking up things typically expected to be done by men. In an ideal society, everyone should have equal rights to be whoever they want to be.

We are definitely getting there, but slowly."

When men speak about their depressive thoughts, they are either thought of or shamed as 'weak', or are expected to get better on their own because they are men. There's very little space given to the mental health of men, as men are always expected to be on top of their emotional health—except when it comes to anger.

Talking of men's mental health, there was also a time when Nikhil battled anxiety, making him put a pause on his career, take a sabbatical and reevaluate life choices, which led him on a more introspective and empathetic path. With several panic attacks and emotional breakdowns, he somehow took up the courage to battle the stigma that comes with seeking therapy.

In his most recent episode, Imran Khan shared that he had In his most recent episode, Imran Khan shared that he had trouble recognising his anxiety at first. He described waking up at 4 a.m, feeling his heart racing and struggling to breathe and staying awake until sunrise. This ongoing discomfort caused him to open up to his mother about feeling powerless and inept. He encountered criticism from those who dismissed therapy and emotional vulnerability as weaknesses when seeking help.

"How do you respect a man who's not earning, not going to work or just crying about his feelings? That parrative

to work, or just crying about his feelings? That narrative weighed heavily on me," he expressed.

We often do not have enough conversations about failure in society with men. Men are often looked at as 'return on investments', for a lot of our countrymen are supposed to be breadwinners to support the dreams and aspirations of the whole family and sometimes to just put food on the table. While Kartik spoke about rejections in his career, Nikhil shared, "In such a situation, where the worth of men is reduced to how much money they can make for their families, any time they face failure, it's not just taken as 'rejection', but as the difference between the family's survival and livelihood. Every rejection then adds up in the minds of men and they see themselves as unable to live up to their gender, by not being able to earn enough. We need men to become comfortable with the idea of failure as a way of life and not take it personally to the level of harming themselves or others."

# PONTING BACKS AUSTRALIA TO HAND INDIA 3-1 DEFEAT IN BORDER-GAVASKAR TROPHY

Ricky Ponting believes Australia will have a "point to prove" after two straight Test series defeats at home against India and backed the Pat Cummins-led side to win the fivematch Border-Gavaskar Trophy 3-1 come November-December.

India, who have returned victorious in both their previous Test assignments Down Under with identical margins of 2-1, will take on the world No.1 Australia in a five-Test series starting on November 22.

series starting on November 22.

"It's going to be a competitive series. Australia has got a bit of a point to prove against India in Australia on the back of what happened the last the last two series here," Ponting told 'The ICC Review'. "We are back to (having) five Tests as well, which is the other really important thing about this series. It has only been four Tests the series. It has only been four Tests the last couple of time. (To have) five Tests, everyone is really excited by that and I don't know if there'd be too

many drawn games.
"I'm obviously going to tip Australia to win and I'm never going to tip against Australia. There will be a draw somewhere and there will be some bad weather somewhere, so I'm going to say 3-1 to Australia," he added. India and Australia have not played a five-Test series after their bilateral affairs came to be known as the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Before that, in 1991-92, India had toured



Australia for a five-Test series. Ponting backed India's left-arm seamer Khaleel Ahmed, whom he coached in the IPL at Delhi Capitals, to be a part of India's touring party.
"Someone like Khaleel Ahmed, I think, could find himself on the Test

tour. He has just been over in Zimbabwe recently and played that (T20I) series over there, but a leftarmer would be ideal for them to have in their touring squad," Ponting said.
The former Australia skipper hoped both teams will be deploying full-

fledged bowling attacks. "(Mohammed) Shami will be back fit by then, (Mohammed) Siraj we know will be there-abouts somewhere and obviously (Jasprit) Bumrah is going nowhere. Both teams are going to line up really, really strongly," he said.

between India and Australia is quite close to the Ashes rivalry against England.

"I was a part of it when that really started to grow, when the rivalry really started to grow, was it's right at the back end of my career," Ponting

"I've said for the last couple of years now, Australia have always had a fierce rivalry with England, obviously, and a very strong rivalry with South

"But I think India is now sitting right on the back of what an Ashes clash is like and probably overtaken the rivalry with South África. Ponting said while Australia's squad

looks more or less settled, it remains to be seen if Steve Smith would like to persist being at the opening slot. "Australia will pretty much pick itself. Probably, the only one question there might be with Australia again, is if

(Steve) Smith's the right man to be opening the batting," he said. "That would be the only query that I can see there. But that was all about obviously bringing Cameron Green back into the side.

"So I'll rephrase it, not whether Smith's the right man to open the batting but whether he thinks it's the right spot for him. Because if he doesn't think it's the right spot, then they'll make a change and get someone else back up there," Ponting

We didn't even get desired coach for Olympics: Ashwini



## Sri Lanka Cricket ropes in lan Bell as batting coach ahead of away Test series vs England

PTI COLOMBO

Sri Lanka on Tuesday appointed Ian Bell as their batting coach ahead of their tour of England comprising three Tests.

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) announced on its website that Bell, who scored 7727 runs in 118 Tests, will start working with the national side later this week.

"He will start working with the team from August 16 and remain until the conclusion of the three-Test match series," SLC said.

SLC CEO Ashley de Silva expressed: "We appointed Ian to bring in a person with local knowledge to help the players with leavy insights on the with key insights on the conditions there."

"Ian has a lot of experience playing in England, and we believe his inputs will help our team in this crucial tour.

Sri Lanka's tour of England begins with the first Test at Manchester from August 21-25. The second Test will be played at Lord's from August 29-September 2 while The Oval will host the third and final Test from September 6-

Meanwhile, England could be in a race against time with skipper Ben Stokes suffering a hamstring injury last Sunday while playing in The Hundred. Stokes sustained the injury while batting and was eventually helped off the field. He was taken for scans and was also seen walking with the help

## I will meet hockey team before Sept 10 to chalk out future plans: Sports Minister

Oports Minister Mansukh Angeles Mandaviya on Tuesday informed that he will hold a meeting with the bronze medal winning Indian men's hockey team before September 10 to chalk out future plans in its endeavour to clinch the gold medal in 2028 Los Angeles Games.

Tuesday Mandaviya on felicitated star custodian PR Sreejesh, defender Sanjay, Amit Rohidas and striker Abhishek after their return from Paris on Tuesday morning.
"It's been a wonderful

performance from you guys, we didn't get the gold but we came very close to it and the way you guys inspired after the semifinal loss is commendable," Mandaviya

future course of action so that

we should return with nothing less than gold from Los seek vour opinion how to go about it and try to provide you all possible from support

government." The minister also said he was satisfied with the performance of the Indian contingent even though they couldn't match last edition's result.

In Tokyo India won seven medals including a gold, but in Paris the country could manage just six medals -- five bronze medals and one silver. The Indians, however, missed out on seven medals, finishing fourth, a fact which Mandaviya rued.

"In Tokyo, we won seven medals but in Paris we won six. But the fact is we missed out on seven more medals by finishing fourth, which is a worthy performance," he said. "But it's not the end of the road Mandaviya had earlier and I will sit with you by felicitated the others members September 10 and churn out of the hockey who returned **PTI** ■ NEW DELHI

badminton doubles Aspecialist Ashwini Ponnappa on Tuesday said she received little to no individual financial assistance from the sports ministry in the build up to Paris Olympics and even her request for a coach was turned down ahead of the just-concluded Games. The Sports Authority of India (SAI) had come out with a document, detailing the financial support provided to the Paris-bound Indian athletes.

It mentions that Ashwini was provided Rs 4,50,000 under TOPS and Rs 1,48,04,080 under Annual and Rs 1,48,04,080 under Annual calender for Training and Competition (ACTC), which included the procurement of Game Ready recovery equipment, international competitions and sparring partner in the Tokyo cycle. "I'm absolutely shocked.. I don't mind not getting money but telling the nation that I got money is the nation that I got money is ridiculous. I haven't received it. Like

camp, then that 1.5 Crore is spent on all the campers," Ashwini told PTI. all the campers," Ashwini told PTI. "I don't have a specific coach. As for my personalised trainer, I'm paying for him myself. I'm not taking money from anyone. I've played on my own until November (2023). I was included as part of TOPS only after we qualified..." Ashwini, 34, has been one of the top Indian doubles player, having won a gold, a silver and a bronze in the Commonwealth Games 2010, 2014

Commonwealth Games 2010, 2014 and 2018 respectively.

She has also competed in the London and Rio Olympics with Jwala Gutta.

Detailing the Rs 1.48 crore spending, a SAI source said: "The Rs 1.48 crore has been spent on her on travel, stay, food, competition fee, DA in all the competitions that she participated in as part of the Indian team in the Paris cycle.

"This money is given to BAI as part of ACTC."

Ashwini, who had paired with N Sikki Reddy till August, 2022, joined if you're talking about national hands with Tanisha Crasto in



December that year and started international tournaments from January 2023.

A series of good performances helped them seal their Paris berth, after which the duo were included in the TOPS scheme in May this year. "The ministry has always supported me. I've been part of the team for years and I'm grateful for the support I've received," Ashwini said. "The last year I haven't been supported and it's ok. But you can't say I've been given Rs 1.5 crore, if it's over four years, fair enough. As I was TOPS when I was partnering

Playing her third Olympics, Ashwini was left in tears after she and her partner Tanisha couldn't win a single match to make an unceremonious exit from the group

"I haven't played well, irrespective of the coach not being there, I take responsibility for that. But you can't say I'm getting this amount when I even got this amount"

#### **PTI** JAIPUR

India is hoping to win more than 25 medals from its largest-ever contingent of 84 athletes at the upcoming Paris Paralympic Games beginning on August 28, the country's governing body chief Devendra Jhajharia said on Tuesday.

Jhajharia, himself a double gold medallist at the Paralympics, said the Indian contingent would look the carry the momentum of record-breaking performances in the 2021 Tokyo Paralympics and 2023 Hangzhou Asian Para Games. India had won 19 medals at the Tokyo Paralympics and a historic 111 medal at the Para Asian Games.

"This is the biggest para

## India aiming to win more than 25 medals at Paris Paralympics: PCI chief Jhajharia

contingent India has ever sent to the Paralympics. We are very confident about the overall performance and are sure to win more than 25 medals," Jhajharia said here at a event organised by the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI).

India is set to compete in 12 sports, including archery, athletics, badminton, canoeing, cycling, blind judo, powerlifting, rowing, shooting, swimming, table tennis, and taekwondo.

"Most of our athletes are in excellent shape, having excellent



trained rigorously for this event. We expect outstanding results, particularly in badminton, athletics, archery, and shooting. They are ready to make India proud," the PCI president

The Indian team boasts of a mix of experienced and young athletes athletes. Many of them are participating in their second or third Paralympics.

Amit Kumar Saroha, a seasoned athlete competing in his fourth Paralympics, will represent India in the

with her legs instead of her hands due to a medical condition that has afflicted her since birth. She recently made headlines by winning gold medals in individual compound and

mixed team events in archery

F51 category discus throw. The 39-year-old Asian Para Games medallist is the oldest

member of the contingent.

On the other end of the

spectrum, the youngest athlete is 17-year-old archer

Sheetal Devi, who shoots

at the 2023 Asian Para Games. Meanwhile, 100 Sports Management Private Limited has been awarded the exclusive broadcasting and digital media right for Paris Paralympics in India,

according to a release.

## Premier League will have different look when season starts Friday

**AP** LONDON

 $T^{
m he\ Premier\ League\ rarely\ stands}_{
m still.}$ 

For the 2024-25 season starting on Friday, there are five newly hired managers, around \$1.6 billion worth of new players (and counting), new offside technology, updated financial regulations and a tweaked match schedule.

**COACHING CHANGES:** A quarter of the coaches will be taking charge of a Premier League game for the first time, with Liverpool (Arne Slot), Chelsea (Enzo Maresca) and Brighton (Fabian Hurzeler) all having new managers and both Southampton (Russell Martin) and Ipswich (Kieran McKenna) gaining promotion with managers owning no top-flight experience. Throw in Julen Lopetegui being the new guy at West Ham after 4 1/2 years of David Moyes at the helm and Steve Cooper replacing Maresca at Leicester, and the dugouts will look different this season. Most of the intrigue, however, will focus on Slot and what style he implements at Liverpool after the team's nearly nine years with the popular Jurgen Klopp. Rock n' roll could turn into more control, with Slot preferring more of a possession

game. SLOWER MARKET: The Premier League's 20 clubs have spent as much on new players in this transfer window as those in Spain, Italy and Germany combined, according to transfermarkt.Com. So why does it feel such a slow summer of trading? Maybe because there have been no blockbuster deals, with the most expensive being striker Dominic Solanke moving to Tottenham from Bournemouth for 65 million pounds (\$83 million). However, lots of deals for between \$30-70 million quickly add up - and there are still three weeks left in the window, during which Manchester City, Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal and Chelsea are expected to weigh in. City (Savinho) and Arsenal (Riccardo Calafiori) have only made one new signing so far and Liverpool hasn't made any. Come the end of transfer deadline day on Aug. 30, don't be surprised if Premier League clubs have spent way more than \$2 billion even if most are balancing the books with sales because of the league's sterner financial rules.



SEMI-AUTOMATED OFFSIDES: Expect offside decisions to be reached much quicker in the Premier League this season. The competition is introducing semi-automated offside technology for the first time, with the new system set to be launched during the first half of the season. Multiple cameras will track player movements and record data points on parts of the body that are relevant for an offside decision. Data is processed with artificial intelligence to create a 3D offside line that is alerted to the team of VAR officials. It is expected to take an average of around 30 seconds off the length of time it currently takes VAR officials to come to a decision manually. Semi-automated offsides were used at the 2022 World Cup and European the recent

Championship.

SPENDING RULES: Last season in the Premier League was notable for some clubs, like Everton and Nottingham Forest, receiving points deductions for breaking the competition's profitability and sustainability regulations, which are now being more strictly applied. This coming season is the final year of those regulations, with two new

forms of spending caps being trialed ahead of their introduction from the 2025-26 season. Teams in England's top division will trial a "Squad Cost Rules" system, which will limit spending on players to 85% of a club's soccer revenue and net profit or loss on player sales. A second system called "Top to Bottom Anchoring" limits - or anchors - spending to a multiple of the lowest combined prize money and cash from TV rights forecast to be earned by a team. The league said the systems aimed to "improve and preserve clubs' financial sustainability and the competitive balance of the Premier League" as well as "promote aspiration of clubs.

NO WINTER BREAK: The Premier League is renowned for being a relentless slog - even more so this season. There's no winter break for clubs this time, with the season starting later, to give players more time to recover from international tournaments this summer, and therefore being squeezed. Last year, for example, five games were held each weekend over a two-week period, giving teams at least one weekend off over January.

Vijayawada | Wednesday August 14, 2024

## 'ITWAS A CHALLENCE TO DUB CRANAPEINTELUGU



hat started off as an inclination back in his childhood, today R. Shankar has been a dubbing and voice artist for over 13 years now. Having his voice over multiple languages, he has recently lent his voice to the box-office hit Deadpool and Wolverine. Not just this, he has also been the voice of the Proximous character in the Kingdom of the Planets of the

Apes.
"I began dubbing as a voice artist in 2010," shares the artist, who had also lent his voice to Sylvester Stallone in Samaritan, John Cena in Ricky Stanicky, as well as Jackpot and Dave Bautista in *My Spy*. "I began working as the voice behind the supporting characters and now here I am doing lead characters. I have lent my voice to around 750 to 800 movies in all

languages."

Over the years, he has found his inspiration in Sai Kumar, Ravishankar, Shrinvas Murthy and Hyderabad's legend, RCM Raju. However, Big B's voice, he says, has been a benchmark

that has inspired him a lot.

After finding his inspiration in the voice of Big B, he did get the opportunity to even be his voice in films like Ganapath and Sye Raa Narasimha Reddy. What an honour!

As we went ahead in this chat, he recalls, "It was a nice experience working in Deadpool and Wolverine because this was a big opportunity for me. The dubbing director, had supported me a lot. Voicing has been one of the most important aspects of every movie. Every movie has voice tests; collecting voice samples and pick the ones that better suit the character." However, he shares that dubbing for Hollywood movies is a bit challenging because they are

very conscious. "We cannot afford to leave out the beauty of the character. We cannot leave out what the expressions of the characters should be. As a voice artist, our main focus needs to always be on connecting with regional audiences.

Having also lent his voice to Prabhas-starrer *Salaar* and Yash-starrer *KGF* and sharing his feelings on the films' success from his point of view, he shares, "It's pleasing. However, if a film is going to do well or not, as a voice artist, we have to do our work. If, commercially, the film is doing well, then what else can we ask for? Our hard work is recognised by other people; they'll get to know about you and also know about how we can work on any of the projects, not confined to a particular genre."
Speaking of his most chal-

lenging project, beyond a doubt, it was the *Kingdom of the Planet of the Apes*. Voicing the Proximous character, he says, "I really enjoyed it. Working on different projects, brings a whole new learning experience. This project was certainly different from the previous ones because it was the first time that I was dubbing for an ape. The film is made of motions that capture a kind of technology. With this project, I was really surprised because they came up with detailed expressions. We had to coordinate and be very careful because every minute the expressions were being changed."

As we head towards the end of the chat, with great enthusiasm, Shankar gushes, "The job of a voice artist is in itself a tough job, because it is not your behaviour or expressions. We need to dub according to the dubbing director, take inputs and deliver things accordingly. Now, I am glad that the voice artists have also been getting their due credit."

tollywood

KRITI SCOOPS OUT **OVER HER IDEAL** LIFE PARTNER

riti Sanon has been making waves this year with standout performances in *Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya* and *Crew* recently. As she enjoys the success of these films, she's also gearing up for her next project, *Do Patti*, where she stars alongside Kajol. In a recent interview, Sanon shared her thoughts on what she reache in a life partner.

view, Sanon shared her thoughts on what she seeks in a life partner.

Sanon expressed a desire for a partner who brings positivity and motivation into her life. She explained, "You want people who contribute positively to your life. They should inspire and support you, especially during tough times. A partner should be there for you through both joyful and challenging moments, making achievements feel meaningful when shared" shared."

The actress also touched on the loneliness often felt in the Bollywood industry, noting, "Loneliness in this field can be profound. You frequently form close bonds on found. You frequently form close bonds on set, but they are temporary. Moving from one project to another, everything feels fleeting. Therefore, having stable constants in your personal life is essential."

Recently, Sanon celebrated her birthday in Greece with her sister Nupur Sanon and her rumoured boyfriend Kabir Bahia made

an appearance in the social media posts from the celebration. Despite the public interest, Sanon has chosen to keep details about her relationship status private.

Is Malavika Mohanan set to portray goddess in Thangalaan?

The trailer for *Thangalaan* has recently been unveiled, generating considerable buzz with its stunning visuals and unique portray-als. Among the notable cast members are Chiyaan Vikram and als. Among the notable cast members are Chiyaan Vikram and Malavika Mohanan, who both appear in striking new roles. While Vikram's character is prominently featured, Malavika's role is more enigmatic, with her being briefly introduced as Aarathi. The trailer's brief but impactful glimpses of Malavika Mohanan have sparked widespread speculation about her character. Although details are scarce, many believe she may be playing the role of a goddess. Her significant mention by other characters and the grandeur associated with her appearance suggest a pix

and the grandeur associated with her appearance suggest a pivotal role in the narrative.

An industry insider has hinted, "Malavika Mohanan, as Aarathi, is expected to portray a goddess in *Thangalaan*. Her role is designed to add substantial depth to the film's storyline and audiences can look forward to experiencing intriguing character nuances." While the specifics of her role remain under wraps, it is clear that Malavika Mohanan's character will be a crucial and compelling element of *Thangalaan*. Fans eagerly await to discover whether she will indeed embody a goddess in this highly anticipated film.



# Kamal's ThugLife hits new milestone with train set shoot

The highly anticipated film *ThugLife*, starring the iconic Kamal Haasan, has recently taken a thrilling turn as the team shifts focus to a dynamic train set for pivotal scenes. Filming is currently underway on these meticulously crafted sets, with the climax and crucial flashback sequences being captured over the

past five days. The train set, designed to reflect various time periods, adds a distinctive atmosphere to the film's narrative, enhancing the dramatic impact of these pivotal scenes. This segment of the shoot is crucial as it underscores the film's high-stakes drama and emotional depth. Directed by Mani Ratnam, ThuaLife promises to be a gripping saga, with Kamal Haasan portraying a complex character embroiled in thrilling and intense situations. The choice of a train set for these important scenes adds a layer of authenticity and excitement, complementing the film's intricate storvline. Fans eagerly await further updates on the project, which is expected to showcase Haasan's unparalleled acting prowess and innovative storytelling. The film's production team is working diligently to ensure that *ThugLife* 

meets the high expectations of

audiences and critics alike.



**Following their blockbuster hit with** *iSmart Shankar*, Ustaad Ram Pothineni and the

Double ISMART has generated substantial buzz with its engaging songs, teaser, and dynamic director Puri Jagannadh are poised trailer. The film promises to blend mass to make an even bigger splash with their highly anticipated seguel, Double ISMART. The film is set to hit theatres on August 15. In a significant development, PrimeShow Films has secured the theatrical rights for Double ISMART in the Nizam area. The distribution house, known for its lucrative deals in

other regions, will oversee

the release in this crucial

appeal with action, romance, and poignant emotional moments.

Bollywood star Sanjay Dutt joins the cast in a prominent role as the Big Bull, while Kavya Thapar stars as Ram's love interest. Produced by Puri Jagannadh and Charmme

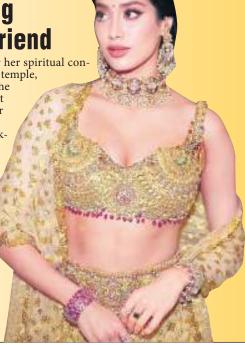
Kaur under the Puri Connects banner, the film features a chart-topping score by Mani Sharma, adding to the excitement surrounding its release.



A ctress Janhvi Kapoor, known for her spiritual connection with the Tirupati Balaji temple, made a heartfelt pilgrimage to the shrine on her late mother Sridevi's 61st birth anniversary. Accompanied by her boyfriend, Shikhar Pahariya, Janhvi's visit was captured in a video that quickly went viral on social media.

On Tuesday, Janhvi honoured her mother with a touching Instagram post. She shared a series of photos, including an image of the temple, a childhood picture with Sridevi, and a snapshot of herself in a saree worn for the Tirupati visit. "Happy birthday Mumma. I love you (sic)." In the video from the temple, Janhvi, dressed in a vellow saree with a green blouse and traditional iewelry, was seen seeking blessings with Shikhar, who wore a traditional

South Indian dhoti and shawl.





The highly anticipated film starring Kavin and Nayanthara, is generating a lot of buzz. The latest update is that the first single from the film is ready. The song, crafted into a lively and peppy melody, promises to be a highlight of the film's soundtrack.

The track, which features a popular sweet name as its title, has been penned by the talented Vishnu Edavan. Known for his work on the songs for LFO and Dayang Edavan brings his apparties to this page.

songs for *LEO* and *Devara*, Edavan brings his expertise to this new project, ensuring that the song is both catchy and memorable. The music for the film is composed by Jen Martin, who has been working on creating an engaging and energetic score to complement the vibrant mood of the single. The collaboration between Edavan and Martin aims to deliver a track that will resonate with audiences and enhance the

film's appeal. Vishnu Edavan, who is also directing the film, is making his mark not only behind the camera but also through his musical contributions. The song's upbeat nature and Edavan's lyrical touch are set to make it a popular addition to the film's sound-





# DEVARA 'AYUDHA PUJA' SHOOTING WRAPS UP

The production of the highly anticipated film *Devara* has reached a significant milestone with the completion of its Ayudha Puja shooting on Tuesday.

The wrap-up of this crucial segment signals exciting developments ahead for the movie's release.

Devara: Part 1 is described as "an epic action saga" set in picturesque coastal landscapes. The film showcases exhilarating, emotionally intense events across a historical timeline. It centers on a titular protagonist who rises as a hero for the oppressed and a formidable force against wrongdoers.

Directed and written by Koratala Siva and produced by Sudhakar Mikkilineni and Nandamuri Kalyana Ram, the film unfolds against the stunning backdrop of coastal lands. Featuring Jr. NTR and Janhvi Kapoor in the lead roles, it also boasts a robust supporting cast, including Saif Ali Khan, Prakash Raj, Meka Srikanth, Chaitra Roy, Murli Sharma and more.