



# sunday pioneer

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**QUOTE OF THE DAY**  
The pioneer

Hyderabad has become a centre of high drama. Those who gave permission to construct buildings are now creating drama by demolishing illegal buildings. Why did they give permission then? How did they provide electricity, water and road facilities? Now all these should be discussed in depth. Any decision taken by the government should be applied equally to all. It is not right to do as you like. The Congress government should also take action against the officials who gave permission.

- G Kishan Reddy, Union Minister P4

**DON'T MISS...**

**AP urges Centre to facilitate...**

The Andhra Pradesh government has requested the Government of India to facilitate 35 lakh 'Customer Premises Equipment Boxes' for the optimal utilisation of BharatNet infrastructure in the State. To this end, Andhra Pradesh Infrastructure and Investment Department Secretary S. Suresh Kumar made a detailed presentation to Union Minister of State for Panchayat Raj and Communications Dr Pemmasani Chandrasekhar and Union Telecommunications Department Secretary...

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**Gottipati opens 4 MW solar...**

Minister for Energy Gottipati Ravi Kumar inaugurated a 4-megawatt (MW) Solar Power Plant at Marella village in Mundlamuru mandal on Saturday. The plant, established on 18 acres of land, was completed within 80 days by the officials. The solar plant has been connected to the Marella electric substation and will soon be linked to the grid. In his address to the media, Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar highlighted the coalition government's commitment to prioritising solar and wind energy under the leadership of Chandrababu Naidu. He praised the...

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**Law & order has deteriorated in...**

Alleging that law and order in Karnataka had deteriorated in a big way and incidents of murders, extortion and rapes have become rampant, the state BJP on Saturday claimed the situation after the Congress government coming to power is such that criminals don't fear the police. Also claiming that drug mafias were growing and a jihadi mindset is expanding in Karnataka, the principal opposition party also said the Congress government had lost the moral right to govern the state. The attack against...

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**Work-life balance poses challenge...**

Fewer flexible work options, work-life balance and family responsibilities pose substantial challenges for women trying to re-enter the workforce and are the main reasons for quitting their jobs, according to a report. A survey by Naukri.com has revealed that work-life balance poses a significant concern, as 39 per cent of the women respondents cited it as a key reason for leaving their jobs. "These issues pose substantial challenges for women trying to re-enter the workforce, with 41 per cent identifying a lack of flexible work options and 35 per cent highlighting family responsibilities as significant barriers to continuing with their jobs," the report said. The report is based on a survey conducted by online recruitment...

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## 'Amaravati will be tourist spot'

● Minister Narayana inspects parks in Capital ● Construction work to resume on Dec 1

- Key projects include constructing scenic reservoirs in Sakhamuru, Ananthavaram, and Neerukonda, along with extensive green spaces and parks.
- Development overseen by Lakshmi Parthasarathy, who is known for her success in transforming Hyderabad's green.
- Plans include a 50-acre reservoir for boating, 500 acres of water lakes, and the establishment of a 20-30 metre wide buffer zone along water projects.
- A 360 km highway is planned, with Rs 41,000 crore allocated for essential infrastructure including water lines, ICT, power, gas, stormwater drains, and irrigation systems.



- Rs 5,100 cr allocated for project construction under the TDP regime.
- Clearing jungles with a budget of Rs 36 crore is expected to be completed within a fortnight.
- IIT Madras and IIT Hyderabad will submit a field report next month on the structural integrity and technical aspects of the constructed projects.

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Municipal Administration & Urban Development (MA & UD), Ponguru Narayana, has said that the State government will proceed with developing Amaravati Capital as a prime tourism destination, featuring 'blue-green projects' that incorporate extensive greenery and water bodies to create a vibrant environment. He highlighted plans to construct scenic reservoirs in Sakhamuru, Ananthavaram, and Neerukonda, which will serve as key attractions for tourists.

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The minister, accompanied by Amaravati Development Corporation (ADC) Chairperson and Managing Director D. Lakshmi Parthasarathy, on Saturday visited the Venkatapalem Nursery and Sakhamuru Central Parks. CMD Lakshmi Parthasarathy provided detailed information about the diverse range of plants cultivated in these parks.

Minister Narayana addressed the media at Pragathi Resort in Sakhamuru Central Park, stating that the master plan for Amaravati was developed by experts from Norman Foster and Partners (London) and Singapore. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has crafted a Blue and Green Master Plan, focusing on creating an enhanced environment for Amaravati. Minister Narayana noted that construction work, which had previously been halted, is expected to resume on December 1.

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He mentioned that the development of greenery projects in Amaravati has been assigned to Lakshmi Parthasarathy, a senior official known for her successful transformation of Hyderabad's green spaces. Plans include constructing a 50-acre reservoir for boating in Sakhamuru Central Park, establishing a tourist centre, and preparing 500 acres of water lakes in Neerukonda. Additionally, a 20-30 metre wide buffer zone is being established along water projects such as Kondaveetiwagu and Palavagu Gravity Canal. Ananthavaram Park (35 acres) and Malkapuram Park (21 acres) in front of the State Secretariat will also be developed with various medicinal plants.

The minister also announced that a 360 km highway will be constructed by the ADC in Amaravati. The government is investing Rs 41,000 crores in essential infrastructure, including water lines, ICT, power, gas, stormwater drains, and irrigation systems. Of this, Rs 5,100 crores have been allocated for project construction under the TDP regime. He criticised the previous YSRCP government for neglecting Amaravati in favour of three capitals. Current efforts include clearing jungles with a budget of Rs 36 crores, expected to be completed within a fortnight. Additionally, IIT Madras and IIT Hyderabad will submit a field report to the state government in the first week of next month, detailing the structural integrity and technical aspects of the constructed projects.

## NHRC orders probe into food poisoning incidents

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has stepped in to investigate two alarming food poisoning incidents in Andhra Pradesh that have resulted in the deaths of three children and left over 100 others ill. The commission's intervention underscores the gravity of these tragic events and the urgent need for reforms in food safety standards.

The most severe incident occurred in Anakapalli district, where three young students from a private hostel lost their lives after consuming contaminated food.

An additional 37 students were hospitalized, some in critical condition. In Chittoor district, 70 students from another private institution were also affected by food poisoning.

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## 'Will expedite TG-AP iconic bridge'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari has assured he will expedite the construction of a double-decker cable-stayed iconic bridge between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh over the Krishna River, the Telangana government said on Saturday.

The assurance came during a meeting with Telangana Tourism and Excise Minister Jupally Krishna Rao in New



Delhi. Gadkari responded positively to Rao's request to fast-track the project and assured him that all necessary procedures would be completed, with tenders set to be launched by September end, an official statement said.

The Rs 1,082.56 crore-bridge, connecting Somashila in Telangana and Sangameswar in Andhra Pradesh, has been pending for two years due to various reasons.

Rao, during the meeting, had an extensive discussion on the bridge construction, which falls in the Kollapur constituency, as well as various national highway development projects in the Mahabubnagar district.

The bridge is expected to promote environmental and temple tourism in Telugu-speaking states, provide a safer route to commuters, and reduce travel distance from Telangana to Tirupati by 70-80 kilometers, cutting down travel time by at least 90 minutes.

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## EXPERIMENT GOES AWRY



## 24 students fall sick after inhaling toxic gas

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

As many as 24 students of Class VI fell ill after being exposed to toxic gases released from the science lab during an experiment. The incident occurred at Kendriya Vidyalaya in Bapatla on Saturday. An experiment conducted by Sixth Class students in the science lab went awry, resulting in the release of toxic gases and subsequent breathing difficulties.

The students were promptly rushed to the government hospital in Bapatla for treatment.

Dr Vijayamma, District

Medical & Health Officer (DMHO), stated that the students who experienced breathing problems were transferred to the government hospital and are now reported to be out of danger.

The incident happened when the teacher briefly left the classroom. One of the students had mixed coffee powder, salt, sugar, vinegar, and lemon soda, dried it at home, wrapped it in wet tissue paper, and brought it to school.

When the girl unwrapped the tissue paper, the mixed ingredients released a strange smell, causing the students to fall ill.

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## 11 urban forests to be developed with Central funds, says Dy CM

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan announced that the Central government has approved the development of urban forests in cities across the State. The Central Environment and Forest Department has sanctioned an initial fund of Rs 15.4 crore for the creation of new city forests under the jurisdiction of 11 Municipal Corporations and Municipalities.

The Deputy Chief Minister outlined that these Central funds would support the development of urban forests in the following locations: Gargeyapuram in Kurnool, Kadapa in Kadapa district, Velagada,



Nellimarla, Chittoor Dairy in Chittoor, Kaligiri Konda in Chittoor, Kailasagiri in Srikalahasti, Prakasaraopalem in Tadepalligudem, Srikrishnadevaraya

Kota Eco Park in Penukonda, Batrepalli Waterfalls Eco Park in Kadiri, Kashibugga in Palasa, and the Eastern Ghat Biodiversity Center in Visakhapatnam.

In a meeting with state forest department officials, the Deputy Chief Minister reviewed the progress of urban forest projects. Officials informed him that the development of 50 urban forests across the state is proceeding swiftly, with 30 of them expected to be completed within the next 100 days. The Deputy Chief Minister emphasised the importance of maximising the use of central funds to enhance greenery across the state.

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## Caste census needed for 90% people: Rahul

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ (UP)



Pressing the demand for a nationwide "caste census", Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said 90 per cent people of the country are sitting out of the system and the step should be taken in their interest. He also said for the Congress, the "caste census" is the foundation and a tool for policy making.

Addressing the "Samvidhan Samman Sammelan" here, Gandhi said, "90 per cent people are sitting out of the system. They have skill, knowledge but no connections (with the system). That is why we have raised the demand for a caste census."

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## ROAD ACCIDENT IN NEPAL IAF brings back bodies of 25 Indians

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A military transport aircraft of the Indian Air Force on Saturday brought to Maharashtra's Jalgaon 25 mortal remains of Indian pilgrims from Bharatpur in Nepal.

The Indians were killed in a tragic bus accident on Friday in Tanahun district of Nepal, around 115 kilometres from Kathmandu. Twenty-seven Indians were killed in the accident and the bodies of two deceased would be taken to Maharajgunj in Uttar Pradesh, officials said.

"Responding swiftly to a call for crucial humanitarian support, the #IAF deployed a C-130J aircraft to

airlift the mortal remains of 25 Indian citizens who tragically lost their lives in a road accident in Nepal," the IAF said in a post on X.

"The mortal remains were transported from Bharatpur (Nepal) to Jalgaon (Maharashtra). The #IAF extends its deepest condolences to the bereaved families and wishes a swift recovery to those injured," it said.

The Indian pilgrims were in Nepal for a 10-day tour. Sixteen others were also injured in the accident.

The bus the pilgrims were travelling in veered off a highway and fell into the fast-flowing Marsyangdi river at Abu Khaireni in Tanahun district, according to local officials.

**OBTUSE ANGLE**



## Central staff to get 50% of salary as pension

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Cabinet on Saturday approved an assured 50 per cent of salary as pension for 23 lakh government employees who joined service under the National Pension System (NPS).

The National Pension System is applicable for government employees joining the service after April 1, 2004. It was based on the premise of contribution rather than defined benefit applicable for employees

### CABINET APPROVES UNIFIED PENSION SCHEME



prior to the NPS. Announcing Cabinet decisions, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini

Vaishnav said the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) announced that government employees will now be eligible to get 50 per cent of the average basic pay drawn over the last 12 months before the superannuation as pension. For this full pension or 50 per cent of pay as the pension, he said, the eligibility service length will be 25 years. However, he said, it would be proportionate for a lesser service period up to a minimum of

10 years of service. NPS subscribers can now opt for the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS), which offers assured pension applicable from the beginning of the next financial year.

Last year, the finance ministry set up a committee under Finance Secretary TV Somanathan to review the pension scheme for government employees and suggest any changes, if needed, in light of the existing framework and structure of the National Pension System.

Several non-BJP-ruled states have decided to revert to the DA-linked Old Pension Scheme (OPS) and also employ organisations in some other states have raised demand for the same.

Briefing media, Cabinet Secretary-designate TV Somanathan said the new scheme is applicable from April 1, 2025. The benefits of the Unified Pension Scheme are applicable for those retired and retiring till March 31, 2025, with arrears, he added.

## CM's language under 'diplomatic' lens

Diplomats are trained to say the nastiest thing in the nicest way. Naturally, most of them will be aghast at the tone and tenor of some of our hard-boiled netas' language. No wonder, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's occasionally ungraceful language, especially the derogatory remarks he makes against his bete noire in the political arena, is under diplomatic lens these days. Certain diplomatic circles are showing undue interest in the Chief Minister's choicest words in this regard. Their studied observations do mirror their diplomatic credentials, but are not in the least flattering to the head of the government in the state. Representatives of certain circles, during their interactions with the media, discreetly question the appropriateness of Chief Minister's use of certain words even during his public speeches. Diplomatic niceties apart, reporters are neither obliged nor ready to defend the Chief Minister's inelegant discourses to placate 'outsiders'. Caught in a cleft stick, a scribe, who shares her roots with Revanth Reddy, made what appeared to be a face-saving remark by pointing out that 'regional dialects change every 120 kilometers'. That surely did not work; for, the consular representatives left no one in doubt that they were not convinced. Finding themselves in a pickle, the scribes could only mutter among themselves: 'He's our Chief Minister, but how do we defend his language in front of outsiders?' Well, soon they arrived at a situation-specific consensus: silence speaks louder than words.

## REPORTERS' DIARY

### Women journalists' ultimatum: Enough is enough

### When the 'source' has nothing to share

Enraged by vicious attacks on field and trolling on social media, a group of women journalists in Telangana have just given an ultimatum: "Enough is enough. Firstly, establish a support system to quickly respond to problems of women journalists. Secondly, hold the political parties concerned responsible for trolls and attacks orchestrated by their supporters". These fiery scribes have had their fill of the daily dose of drama dished out by certain political bigwigs and their unthinking followers, who seem to think that making life difficult for bold women scribes is part of their job and an index of their loyalty to the party concerned. The situation seems to have gotten so out of hand that these fuming journalists are wondering if their jobs are more about dodging verbal bullets than reporting news that powers that be would rather suppress. Why should they face harassment when, after all, they are doing their duty by uncovering unpalatable truths camouflaged by political statements that are based on half-truths or downright lies, instead of being supported by facts and figures?

### When the mud sticks

When you throw mud at someone or some organization, usually at least some of it sticks. Raising eyebrows in media and other circles, TDP legislator from Srikalahasti B Sudheer Reddy reportedly threatened the reporter of a media house known for its out and out 'yellow' journalism for writing an article against illegal sand mining by certain MLAs in the local area. Rubbing salt into the wound, the MLA questioned the scribe why he had chosen to keep quiet when the sand mafia was active during the erstwhile YSRCP government. Some politicians' brazen attempts to continue their illegal sand mining activities have drawn the attention of the media, though after the TDP-led NDA government took the reins in AP, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu had made it clear that sand should be supplied free to beneficiaries transparently and that the government would release its Sand Policy on September 11. For some lawmakers, all good things can wait.

### When the 'source' has nothing to share

Scribes thrive on juicy information shared off the record by netas. The more rebellious the neta in a party, the more is he or she a darling of the journalistic fraternity. Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee working president T Jagga Reddy, known among scribes as an 'evening star' for his prolonged, almost daily sessions past 4:00 pm, has suddenly gone silent for reasons best known to him, saying he won't come to Gandhi Bhavan for 10 days. Curious scribes later got to know that he has "no specific issues about which he could speak to the media". Some reporters who had read too much into the fading of the evening star later heaved a sigh of relief. They do long for a 'source' that feeds them always, rain or shine.

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

# CM urged to develop Telugu film industry

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Movie Artistes Association of Andhra Pradesh (AP) has urged Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu to include the development of the Telugu film industry as an additional promise in the upcoming election manifesto, transforming the "Super Six" into the "Super Seven." Association President and film director Dilip Raja made this appeal during a press conference held on Saturday, where he praised the "Super Six" election promises of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and their implementation.

Dilip Raja highlighted the importance of the upcoming AP Cabinet Meeting scheduled for August 27 and requested CM



Chandrababu Naidu to discuss the government's efforts towards the promotion and development of the Telugu film industry in Andhra Pradesh.

He suggested that the con-

struction of film studios, with all necessary facilities, in Amaravati, Tirupati, and Visakhapatnam, modeled after the Hyderabad film studios, could significantly boost rev-

enue for the state. Raja proposed the establishment of a mega film studio in Amaravati that meets international standards, which could potentially lead to the relocation of various departments of the film industry to the city. He also expressed optimism that a dedicated "Filmnagar" could be established in Amaravati if film workers, who wish to reside in Andhra Pradesh, are allotted housing.

In conclusion, Dilip Raja appealed to CM Naidu to discuss the development of the Telugu film industry in the upcoming cabinet meeting and to consider announcing this initiative as the seventh promise, thereby enhancing the "Super Six" into the "Super Seven."

## 11 urban forests... Continued from Page 1

He highlighted the goal of achieving 50 per cent greenery in the state and stressed the need for focused efforts on the development of urban forests. The Deputy Chief Minister also confirmed that Vana Mahotsavam would be celebrated statewide on August 30, urging officials to ensure its success. He called for active participation from the public, especially the youth, and instructed officials to turn the sapling plantation programme into a celebratory event across all villages, towns, and cities. He further directed that all government departments, educational institutions, universities, industries, paper mills, and spiritual organisations should be involved in this initiative.

## Botsa announces YSRCP aid for Essentia pharma blast victims

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Botsa Satyanarayana, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, announced that the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) will provide Rs 5 lakh to each family whose family members lost their lives and Rs 1 lakh to each injured person undergoing treatment due to recent Essentia Pharma blast in the Atchutapuram SEZ, Anakapalli district.

Addressing the media, Botsa affirmed, "Under the guidance of our party president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, we will ensure that this financial assistance reaches the victims promptly. We must stand by them in these challenging times." He criticised the State government for its inadequate relief measures, accusing them of negligence in both responding to the disaster and enforcing safety protocols in industries.

"The government's response has been woefully insufficient. Ministers have been more preoccupied with blaming the previous administration than addressing the real issues at hand," Botsa said. He questioned the government's actions following such tragedies, emphasizing, "What have the officials done to support the victims? What steps have been taken to prevent future incidents?"

Botsa drew a stark contrast



between the current administration's response and the swift action taken during his tenure as a minister. Recalling the LG Polymers gas leak incident, he noted, "Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the government acted swiftly. Ministers, including myself, along with the Chief Minister, were at the scene by afternoon. Today's government seems to be lacking that urgency and commitment."

He condemned the current administration's focus on irrelevant statements and the tendency to blame others for the accidents. Botsa pointed out that a committee, led by an officer now serving as Chief Secretary, had previously established safety protocols and issued a Government Order (GO) to enhance industry safety.

"Our party leaders have shown responsibility by visiting the mortuary and meeting the families of the deceased. In contrast, the government has failed to take any meaningful

action, such as setting up a call centre for the victims," Botsa said.

He lamented the current situation, noting that the factory management's lack of responsiveness has compounded the tragedy. "When the LG Polymers incident occurred, compensation of Rs. 1 crore per victim was provided. The government disbursed Rs. 30 crore immediately, later reimbursed by the company. Now, the factory management is reportedly unresponsive. We will hold them accountable and ensure compensation is provided," Botsa vowed.

In addition, Botsa condemned the recent attack on YSR Congress Party worker Prasad in Etcherla, which led to his death after days of treatment.

"The ruling party's actions are unacceptable. We demand an end to such violence and insist on murder charges against those responsible. The public will not tolerate this behaviour," Botsa declared.

## BJP leader slams Congress-JKNC pre-poll alliance

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh BJP leader Lanka Dinakar on Saturday slammed the Congress party's decision to form a pre-poll alliance with the Jammu Kashmir National Conference, alleging that the opposition party's approach is against the spirit of national integrity. Dinakar alleged that the newly formed alliance in poll-bound Jammu Kashmir is against peace and harmony and also a "threat" to India's sovereignty. "Congress party's approach is against the spirit of national integrity, peace and harmony, and a threat to the country's sovereignty since it is allying with the Jammu Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) for the upcoming Assembly elections," Dinakar alleged at a press conference at the BJP's office in Vijayawada. Dinakar, took a dig at the grand old party and wanted to know whether the Congress respects India's national flag or supports a separate flag for the northern state as allegedly promised by the JKNC.

According to the BJP leader, the Farooq Abdullah-led JKNC is "encouraging" Jammu & Kashmir's youth to engage in stone pelting rather than providing employment and business opportunities. Questioning the Congress' stance towards JKNC's reservation approach, he said that the grand old party's alleged divisive politics from one state to another need to be exposed.

## ANAKAPALLI INDUSTRIAL ZONE

# Super specialty hospital imperative

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The logistical nightmare of transferring critically injured patients from Anakapalli's industrial suburbs to Visakhapatnam's corporate hospitals or King George Hospital (KGH) is causing growing concern among crisis managers. The precious time lost in navigating through heavy traffic can mean the difference between life and death, especially in emergencies involving severe burns and trauma. In response to this pressing issue, a strong proposal has emerged to establish a super specialty hospital dedicated to burning injuries and trauma care within the industrial zone between Atchutapuram and Anakapalli. "King George Hospital can take any number of patients. But there must be a specialist hospital in the industrial area to save travel time and provide emergency treatment to victims of mishaps," emphasized Dr K Sivannand, Superintendent of KGH.

The Visakhapatnam region is a major industrial hub, home to over 550 units, including the steel plant, HPCL refinery, and the

shipyard, along with 220 pharmaceutical units, collectively employing around three lakh people. Despite this significant workforce, approximately one lakh workers registered under the Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) currently rely on corporate hospitals or KGH for emergency medical care.

"ESI funds are being wasted. Instead, the government may think of building a high-class hospital in the industrial area," suggested CITU state president Narsinga Rao, highlighting the inefficiency in the current healthcare resource allocation. CPI(M) Anakapalli secretary K Lokanadham proposed that a super specialty hospital could be developed using Corporate

care centre. The VSP general hospital, for instance, has not had a plastic surgeon for the last 20 years, and other makeshift hospitals in the area are poorly equipped to handle accident victims. However, the execution of this proposal is not without challenges. Dr PV Sudhakar, a renowned plastic surgeon and former principal of Andhra Medical College, expressed con-

cerns about the practicality of managing such a facility. "Managing emotionally charged workers at times of accident would be very difficult as there would be no control over them. Hence, specialist doctors might not come forward to work in industrial hospitals," he noted.

Despite these challenges, trade union leaders are steadfast in their demand for government intervention. "At the very least, the government should establish a hospital in industrial areas to provide first aid," they insisted, stressing the critical need for immediate medical intervention in this high-risk zone.

The push for a dedicated super specialty hospital in the Anakapalli industrial zone reflects the broader necessity for improved healthcare infrastructure to protect the lives of thousands of workers in the region. Whether through government initiatives or industrial collaboration, addressing this urgent need is imperative for the safety and well-being of those who power Visakhapatnam's industrial engine.

## Free sand policy...

Continued from Page 1

Appropriate action will be taken for each complaint, and a response will be provided by the offices of the respective District Collectors. The government aims to provide free sand to all and will collect daily feedback from consumers through the IVRS system. Following the Chief Minister's instructions, a sand bulletin will be released daily, detailing sand reserves, loading progress, the number of beneficiaries, and the available allotment date. The government's goal is to facilitate hassle-free sand booking, improve transportation, and streamline operations while strengthening the vigilance mechanism.

To avoid overcrowding at loading centres, customers can book sand at revenue offices, where special counters are being set up for sand booking. A standard invoice system has been introduced for customer bookings, collecting all necessary details such as mobile numbers, vehicle numbers, payment information, and transport costs. The delivery date and

time will be specified in the invoice based on the supply capacity of the reaches and stockyards.

Meena also mentioned that police have been ordered to maintain strict vigilance in respective areas and at checkpoints. Only vehicles with valid invoices will be allowed, and arrangements are being made to increase the loading capacity at stockyards. Transport rates will be established and made available to users, and only registered and verified vehicles will be used for transport. Strict action will be taken against transporters who charge more than the prescribed rates.

District Collectors have been instructed to submit detailed reports to the government on daily activities, registered complaints, and actions taken.

The Chief Minister has made it clear that strict action must be taken against any violations of the rules, including illegal mining and the collection of extra transport charges, according to Mukesh Kumar Meena in a release on Saturday.

## NHRC orders...

Continued from Page 1

In a strongly worded statement, the NHRC expressed deep concern over the incidents, stating, "The contents of the news reports, if true, raise a serious issue of violation of the human rights of the victims. Both incidents indicate negligence on the part of the concerned authorities towards ensuring proper food quality and the health of the inmates." The commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police of Andhra Pradesh, demanding a detailed report on the incidents within two weeks. The report should include information on the FIRs filed, the health status of the affected children, and the preventive measures being taken.

Parents and guardians have expressed outrage over the incidents, calling for stricter food safety regulations and inspections in schools and hostels. "The safety of our children should be the top priority," said a concerned parent in Visakhapatnam.

The NHRC's intervention is a crucial step in addressing these tragic events and ensuring that such incidents do not recur in the future.

## 24 students...

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Initially, the students were taken to Suryalanka Military Hospital before being transferred to Bapatla Government Hospital, where they received treatment and were later discharged. A team of doctors examined the affected students, and all were discharged except for two. One boy is receiving advanced treatment due to a pre-existing heart condition and has been moved to Guntur GGH, while a girl who had been experiencing fever for a couple of days is undergoing treatment at Bapatla Government Hospital. Joint Collector Subba Rao visited the affected students, and officials are investigating the incident.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu contacted the Bapatla district authorities to obtain further details about the situation. The CM spoke with officials to ensure that the affected students were safe and receiving appropriate medical care.

## 'Will expedite...

Continued from Page 1

Slated to come up against the backdrop of the Srisailem reservoir and Nallamala forest, the bridge will connect the Lalitha Someshwara Temple on the Telangana side with the Sangameshwar Temple on the Andhra Pradesh side.

## Caste census needed...

Continued from Page 1

Asserting that before ensuring the participation of various sections of the society, there is a need to ascertain their numbers, the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha said, "For the Congress, the caste census is the foundation of policy making. It is a tool for policy making. We cannot make policies in the reality of India without a caste census."

Gandhi said just like the Constitution, the "caste census" is a policy framework and a guide for the Congress.

"Just like our Constitution, which is a guide in a way and it is being attacked every day, a caste census, a socio-economic survey, an institutional survey will be our second guide," he said.

"We want the data. How many Dalits, OBC (Other Backward Classes), tribals, women, minorities, general caste people are there. We are trying to protect the Constitution through this demand for a caste census," he added. Gandhi said the Constitution is not for the 10 per cent of the country's population, it is for all the citizens.

"The Constitution is protected by poor people, labourers, tribals and not (industrialist Gautam) Adani. If 90 per cent people do not have participatory rights, the Constitution cannot be protected.

"Our aim is to protect the

Constitution. This (the Constitution) is a protective shield for the poor, farmers and labourers. Without it, the situation would be as it used to be earlier in the times of kings and emperors, who did whatever they wanted," he said.

The former Congress chief alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is trying to replicate the model of kings and emperors.

"You (Modi) consider yourself non-biological. You consider yourself connected with the god. Right after the (Lok Sabha) election, you had to bow down before the Constitution. This was not done by us but by people," he said.

Gandhi said those who think that the "caste census" can be stopped or the 50-per cent ceiling on reservation cannot be lifted are dreaming.

"This will definitely happen. It cannot be stopped. Neither the caste census nor an economic survey or an institutional survey can be prevented and the 50-per cent barrier will also fall. All of these will happen," he said. The Congress leader asserted that the people of the country have made up their mind in favour of a "caste census".

"The order of the people has come. The prime minister should accept it and implement it. If he does not do so, someone else will become the prime minister," he said.

HOUSEHOLD WATER TAP CONNECTION SURVEY

# 94% of work completed in V'wada

VMC COMMISSIONER DHYANACHANDRA INSPECTS PROGRESS OF THE SURVEY IN CITY

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) has made significant progress in its ongoing household drinking water tap connection survey, with 94% of the work completed, according to Commissioner HM Dhyanachandra. The Commissioner assured that the remaining 6% would be finalised soon.

During a field inspection at Governerpet in Vijayawada on Saturday, Commissioner Dhyanachandra reviewed the survey's progress. He discussed the ongoing efforts with the Ward Administrative Secretary and Amenities Secretary. The Commissioner instructed



VMC Commissioner Dhyanachandra enquiring the staff about the status of the drinking water connections survey, at Governerpet in V'wada on Saturday.

ed VMC staff to ensure that every household is assessed for tap connections without exception. He also emphasised the

importance of accurately uploading the survey data online. Commissioner Dhyana chandra noted that of the

2,33,121 assessments under the purview of the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation, 2,20,592 assessments have

already been surveyed. He urged the staff to complete the remaining surveys promptly and submit the final report.

Additionally, the Commissioner commended the Zonal Commissioners for their swift progress in the survey. He called for collaboration between the Revenue and Engineering departments to expedite the completion of the remaining 6% of the survey.

VMC Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) G. Srijana, DEE (Water Supply) Ramakrishna, Assistant Commissioner B. Srinivasa Rao, Revenue Inspector Srinivas, Assistant Engineer Narmada, and other officials were present during the inspection.

# Govt to focus on rapid development of Amaravati

The MA & UD Minister inaugurates SCREDAI's South Con 2024

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

South Con 2024, organised by the Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (CREDAI), was inaugurated by Ponguru Narayana, Minister for Municipal Administration & Urban Development, on Saturday in Vijayawada. The programme was launched in the presence of Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma, Union Minister of Heavy Industries and Steel, along with the leadership team of CREDAI national, leaders, and members from all chapters of CREDAI in the southern states.

Speaking on the occasion, Narayana highlighted that the Government would focus on the rapid development of the Amaravati Capital Region. He also informed that the government will work to develop all the district headquarters in the state to disperse growth and employment generation. The minister emphasised the Government's commitment to resolving farmers' issues at the earliest.

Boman Irani, President of CREDAI National, said, "South Indian states are emerging as rapidly developing hubs for commercial, residential, and retail real estate. We are delighted to host South Con in Vijayawada, as the state of Andhra Pradesh is on the cusp of rapid growth and transformation under the visionary leadership of Chandrababu



Speaking on the occasion, Narayana highlighted that the Government would focus on the rapid development of the Amaravati Capital Region

Naidu. As Andhra Pradesh develops Amaravati into a sustainable city, South Con 2024 will provide valuable insights into this transformation. Together, we can seize these opportunities to advance real estate in South India."

Alla Siva Reddy, Chairman of CREDAI AP, said, "South Con 2024 marks a pivotal moment for the real estate sector in Andhra Pradesh, bringing together developers to foster collaboration, innovation, and sustainability. We should seize this opportunity to translate our ambitions into tangible outcomes and collectively strive towards creating a more promising future."

YV Ramana Rao, President of CREDAI AP, said, "As we kick-start South Con 2024, we are pleased to unite industry leaders, developers, and innovators from South India for this groundbreaking event. The conference aims to elevate our real estate sector and foster a sustainable future. This gathering offers exceptional

opportunities for interaction, sharing ideas, and gaining valuable insights. With a focus on collaboration and local initiatives, including the transformation of Amaravati into a green city, this conference is vital for progressing the real estate landscape in Southern India."

D Rambabu, Convener of South Con, said, "South Con 2024, hosted by CREDAI Andhra Pradesh, is a key event for South India's real estate leaders to foster collaboration, innovation, and sustainable growth. We invite everyone to visit and join us for discussions on trends and challenges that will shape the region's real estate future and gain insights to drive the industry forward."

# Officials crack down on 'Sadarem' certificate fraud

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In response to mounting concerns over the misuse of 'Sadarem' certificates, authorities in Visakhapatnam are implementing stricter regulations to prevent fraudulent practices. Recent allegations against a doctor at a primary health centre have sparked investigations and prompted officials to mandate more transparent procedures for issuing these crucial documents. 'Sadarem certificates are essential for disabled individuals to access government pensions,' explained a senior official from the Department of Health. 'However, we have received numerous reports of ineligible people obtaining these certificates through fraudulent means, which undermines the integrity of the system and deprives deserving individuals of the support they need.'

Brokers, according to sources, are charging exorbi-

tant fees—up to Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 12,000, equivalent to two or three months' worth of pension, to secure certificates by manipulating doctors. "These brokers are exploiting the desperation of vulnerable people," said an anonymous hospital worker. "In some cases, when doctors cannot be influenced, counterfeit documents are allegedly being produced."

To address this issue, the government has implemented several measures. "We have issued strict instructions to ensure that all applicants undergo a thorough examination," the senior official added. "Points will be allocated based on stringent eligibility criteria, and any deviation from these standards will be met with serious consequences." The demand for 'Sadarem' certificates has surged, with large numbers of applications being processed at KGH, ENT, Regional Eye Hospital, Psychiatric Hospital, and more than 20 other PHCs,

CHCs, and area hospitals in the Visakhapatnam district. "We see at least 50 applicants at KGH on assessment days, and about 20 at other hospitals," said a medical examiner involved in the process. "Our goal is to ensure that those who genuinely need the certificates receive them, but the influx is overwhelming."

Despite these efforts, brokers continue to exploit the system. "It's disheartening to see brokers charging huge sums from applicants by claiming they can 'manage' the doctors," lamented a local activist. "This corrupt practice is not only illegal but also deeply unethical, especially when it involves those who are already struggling with disabilities." Most of those seeking 'Sadarem' certificates are physically disabled, mute, deaf, or mentally and neurologically challenged. Yet, even those with minor ailments are hoping to secure government assistance through these certificates.



# APFA Sub-Junior Boys' Football Championship kicks off

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh Football Association (APFA) Sub-Junior Boys' Inter-District Football Championship commenced here on Saturday.

The championship, organised by the APFA,

runs from up to August 25, featuring football teams from 23 districts across the state. The tournament is spearheaded by former MP and APFA President Kotagiri Sridhar Rao, in collaboration with all district presidents and secretaries.

## RESULTS FROM THE FIRST DAY OF MATCHES

- NTR district defeated Nandyala 7-0
- Nellore district edged past Eluru district 2-1
- Vizianagaram district overcame Annamayya district 2-1
- Kurnool district secured a 1-0 victory over Kakinada district
- West Godavari district triumphed over Prakasam district 3-1
- Palnadu district claimed a 3-0 win against ASR district

# 'Grama Sabhas' okay Rs 120.94 cr works in NTR dist

## CC roads to be laid in all villages at an estimated cost of Rs 80 cr

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

'Grama Sabhas' held across the NTR district approved development works worth Rs 120.94 crore under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) on Saturday. Among the key projects sanctioned are the construction of CC roads, estimated at Rs 80 crore, cattle sheds at Rs 16.80 crore, and farm ponds at Rs 7.30 crore.

According to an official report from district authorities, 'Grama Sabhas' were con-

ducted in all 289 Gram Panchayats within the district. These initiatives, prioritised to enhance the infrastructure of the district's Gram Panchayats, will be financed through the MGNREGS, marking a significant stride in rural development.

The meetings witnessed participation from officials, public representatives, and approximately 80,000 residents. During the discussions, essential development works were identified and approved by the attendees, reflecting a collective decision-making

process aimed at addressing the district's most pressing infrastructure needs.

The official report further emphasised that the government convened the Grama Sabhas intending to achieve 'Swarna Gram Panchayats'. In these meetings, various infrastructure requirements—including CC roads, cattle sheds, horticulture crops, Mini Amrit Sarovar, and other significant works—were identified. Resolutions passed during the Grama Sabhas have been forwarded to the respective departments for implementa-

tion, ensuring that the prioritised projects are advanced efficiently.

The report also indicated that funding for these projects would be released from the MGNREGS Material Component. The works will be prioritised and completed expeditiously. The state government has already sanctioned Rs 80 crore for these development activities in the district. However, district officials are preparing to submit proposals for additional funds to ensure the completion of all approved works.

# Plan to build another reservoir in Krishna

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The drinking water problem in Vijayawada City is set to be resolved with the government's planning to construct a reservoir at Chodavaram on the Krishna River, downstream of the Prakasam Barrage, and to replace the existing old pipelines with High-Density (HD) pipes, according to V. Sambu Reddy, president of the Tax Payers' Association, and secretary M.V. Anjaneyulu. They assured that even in the summer months, the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) will be able to provide an adequate supply of drinking water without relying on the Prakasam Barrage.

The association submitted a petition to Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu during the Mee Kosam programme on August 2, urging the construction of new barrages downstream of the Prakasam Barrage and the replacement of outdated pipelines within VMC limits. The petition has since been forwarded to the Water



Resources Department in the NTR district for further action.

In response, R. Srirama Krishna, the NTR District Water

Resources Superintendent Engineer, confirmed that the government is considering the construction of two reservoirs on the Krishna River, downstream of the Prakasam Barrage. The first reservoir, proposed at Chodavaram in Penamaluru mandal, will have a storage capacity of 4.131 TMC, while the second, planned at Bandikollanka in Mopidevi

mandal, will have a capacity of 4.95 TMC. These proposals are currently awaiting administrative approval.

Regarding the replacement of the old pipelines in the city, district authorities have advised the Tax Payers' Association to coordinate with the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation for further steps. The association remains dedicated to addressing these crucial infrastructure issues to ensure a sufficient and reliable drinking water supply for the city.

# Week-long National Sports Day celebrations from tomorrow

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In honour of National Sports Day, which commemorates the birth anniversary of hockey legend Major Dhyana Chand, the NTR District Sports Authority has announced a series of sports competitions, quizzes, and essay-writing events to be held from 26 to 31 August. District Sports Development Officer (DSDO) S.A. Azeez stated that, following directives from the Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh (SAAP), these competitions will take place in schools, and colleges, and later culminate at the district level.

In a press release issued on Saturday, Azeez detailed that district-level sports and games, including quizzes and essay writing contests, will be held at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation (IGMC) Stadium in Vijayawada. Additional events will be organised.

# AP woman falls into sinkhole in Malaysia, remains untraced

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Vijayalakshmi, aged 45, from Kuppam in Chittoor district, has reportedly fallen into a sinkhole in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The incident occurred near Malayan Mansion on Jalan Masjid when the pavement she was walking on suddenly col-

lapsed, causing her to fall into the sinkhole. Vijayalakshmi, who was in Malaysia with her son and husband, was scheduled to return to India in a week.

Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has promptly addressed the situation by directing officials of the Andhra Pradesh Non-

Resident Telugu Society (APNRTS) to assist Vijayalakshmi's family and ensure a thorough and comprehensive search. Malaysian authorities are working diligently to locate the missing woman and ensure her safe recovery. Efforts are also being made to contact her son in

Malaysia and her relatives in Kuppam.

The incident was captured on a nearby CCTV camera, which showed the pavement giving way and leading to Vijayalakshmi's fall. The Kuala Lumpur Fire and Rescue Department dispatched 15 firefighters to the scene.

# AP asks Centre for 35 L 'CPE boxes'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government has requested the Government of India to facilitate 35 lakh 'Customer Premises Equipment Boxes' for the optimal utilisation of BharatNet infrastructure in the State. To this end, Andhra Pradesh Infrastructure and Investment Department Secretary S. Suresh Kumar made a detailed presentation to Union Minister of State for Panchayat Raj and Communications Dr Pemmasani Chandrasekhar and Union Telecommunications Department Secretary Dr Neeraj Mittal at a high-level meeting in New Delhi on Saturday.



Centre to reimburse Rs 635 crore spent on IP-Multi Protocol Label Switching technology for BharatNet Phase-II in the state and also requested the Centre to clear the pending payment towards capital expenditure for BharatNet Phase-II. The Secretary stated, "AP

State Fibernet Limited (APSEL) has been dedicated to providing affordable, high-speed broadband connectivity across the state, with a focus on rural and underserved regions. Since its inception, APSEL has connected over 9.7 lakh households, of which about 5 lakh

connections are currently active. Additionally, 6,200 schools, 1,978 health centres, 11,254 Gram Panchayats, 5,800 farmers' support centres, 193 telecom towers, and 9,104 government institutions are also connected by APSEL."

Suresh Kumar further remarked, "To fully utilise both the APSEL Phase-I network and BharatNet Phase-II infrastructure, there is an urgent need for 35 lakh Customer Premises Equipment (CPE) boxes. APSEL is uniquely positioned to deploy these boxes immediately, thereby delivering swift and impactful results for optimal utilisation of BharatNet. This model could serve as an exemplar for other states, ensuring rapid expansion of digital connectivity across the

nation." He added that APSEL had proactively adopted IP-Multi Protocol Label Switching technology at its own cost during the implementation of BharatNet Phase-II.

He continued, "As the Government of India is funding IP-MPLS deployment under the amended BharatNet Programme for other states under BharatNet Phase-III, APSEL requests reimbursement of Rs 635 crore for pioneering this active technology investment in 2017, ensuring equity among all states and incentivising early adoption." BBNL, under the CPSU model, has implemented BharatNet Phase-I (Mandal to GP) in 57 mandals and 1,692 Gram Panchayats in the erstwhile districts of Visakhapatnam and Chittoor.

# CP launches initiative to raise cybercrime awareness in NTR dist

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Police Commissioner SV Rajasekhar Babu has launched an innovative initiative by arranging for Cyber Commandos within the police commissionerate to raise public awareness about cyber crimes. He emphasised the importance of taking preventive measures before beginning investigations.

Following the formation of these Cyber Commandos, Commissioner Rajasekhar Babu organised a workshop at the police commissionerate in Vijayawada. The primary goal of this initiative is to prevent cyber crimes in the city.

During the workshop, CP Rajasekhar Babu explained the concept of cybercrime and its various types. He also discussed tools and resources such as the Cyber Citizen mobile app, the 1930 call centre, the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (NCRP), and the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre. Additionally, he shared insights from various case studies.

Rajasekhar Babu highlighted the importance of analysing bank statements, understanding the "golden hour" in investigations, and addressing day-to-day cyber crimes. He also covered online threats such as fraud-

ulent online games, loans, QR code scams, and part-time job offers, stressing that Cyber Commandos should actively create awareness among the public to help them face these challenges.

The Cyber Commandos are also tasked with regularly visiting the command control room to monitor city traffic and oversee CCTV cameras. During the workshop, ACP Tejeswara Rao and others further elaborated on various aspects of cyber crimes. DCPs Gowthami Sali, ABTS Udaya Rani, T Harikrishna, Inspectors Gunaram, V Srinivasa Reddy, and other officials also participated in the event.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECT

# Minister lays foundation stone for Boyagudem-Sitanagaram Road

'JANA HITAM' APP TO BE LAUNCHED TO ADDRESS PUBLIC GRIEVANCES

## 3 students drowned in canal

PNS ■ ONGOLE

In a tragic incident on Saturday, three Intermediate students, all under 20 years of age, drowned in the Darsi branch canal at Darshi.

According to police, the deceased are Kanduru Kiran Kumar Reddy (19), Battula Manikantha Reddy (20), and Pothireddy Lokesh (20). The students had entered the canal for a bath when they slipped and were swept away. The body of Pothireddy Lokesh has been recovered, and expert swimmers are currently searching the canal for the other two students.

Darshi TDP in-charge, Dr Gottipati Lakshmi, visited the area to console the bereaved families. She also consulted with CI Y Rama Rao and SI M Murali regarding the incident.

Dr Lakshmi has contacted the district Collector and SP to request the deployment of NDRF teams to assist in locating the remaining two students. Family members have reported that the victims were Intermediate students from Darsi.

PNS ■ ELURU

Minister for Housing K. Parthasarathy has laid the foundation stone for the Boyagudem-Sitanagaram road at Namavaram village in Chintalapudi mandal. The road, which will cost Rs 20 crore, is set to enhance connectivity between Boyagudem and Sitanagaram via Shettivardum.

Minister Parthasarathy, accompanied by MP Putta Mahesh Kumar and MLAs S. Roshan Kumar and Badeti Chanti, inaugurated the project on Saturday. Additionally, he launched the 'Janahitam' app to address public grievances.

Speaking at the event, the Minister stated that the government plans to reconstruct and repair all R&B roads in every Assembly constituency under the NREGA scheme, with each project costing between Rs 10 crore and Rs 20 crore.

He reiterated the government's commitment to completing the Polavaram project, noting that the Centre has



sanctioned Rs 12,000 crore for this purpose and Rs 15,000 crore for the development of Amaravati. The Centre has also assured further financial support for various projects in Andhra Pradesh.

Parthasarathy criticised the previous YSRCP-led government for its failure to complete the Chintalapudi Lift Scheme. He highlighted that while Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu had invested Rs 4,000 crore in the project during his previous term, the YSRCP regime had allocated only Rs 10 crore. He emphasised the

significance of the Lift Scheme, which aims to provide irrigation and drinking water to Nuzvid and Tiruvuru constituencies.

The Minister also noted that Grama Sabhas were held on 23 August across 13,000 village panchayats to address and resolve public grievances.

Addressing the financial challenges inherited by the coalition government, Parthasarathy affirmed that the Naidu-led administration is committed to steering the state out of its current difficulties. He criticised the previous

YSRCP government for neglecting road maintenance and pledged to expedite the reconstruction of damaged roads.

MP Putta Mahesh Kumar announced that work is underway to repair potholes and that comprehensive road reconstruction will commence within the year. He also revealed that some road projects will be developed under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode, including the Eluru-Jangareddy state highway.

The MP further informed that he has lobbied with the Central government to lift the ceiling on tobacco crops, which will benefit tobacco farmers by Rs 106 crore. He also promised to advocate for fair prices for oil palm farmers.

MLAs S. Roshan Kumar and Badeti Radhakrishnaiah, former MLA Ganta Murali, and BJP district president Vikram also addressed the gathering, underscoring their commitment to implementing welfare schemes and development projects.

# TIDCO houses to be handed over soon: Minister

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

Minister for Water Resources Development, Nimmala Ramanaidu, has promised the swift completion of TIDCO house construction and their prompt handover to beneficiaries.

The Minister convened a meeting with relevant officials and beneficiaries of the NTR TIDCO houses to review the current status. He also inspected the houses in Palakollu.

Speaking to the media in Palakollu on Saturday, Ramanaidu highlighted that during Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu's previous term, 8 lakh TIDCO houses were sanctioned, with Palakollu receiving an allocation of 7,164 houses. However, he criticised the current administration under Jagan Mohan Reddy for failing to complete even five per cent of the work over the past five years. Ramanaidu alleged that the YSRCP government neglected the needs of the poor, women, and middle-class families.

He also noted that a Rs 160 crore loan taken for the TIDCO houses in Palakollu had been diverted to other purposes.

"We are expediting the



Speaking to the media in Palakollu on Saturday, Ramanaidu highlighted that during Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu's previous term, 8 lakh TIDCO houses were sanctioned, with Palakollu receiving an allocation of 7,164 houses

completion of the TIDCO houses and are committed to handing them over to beneficiaries as quickly as possible," Ramanaidu stated.

Municipal Administration Minister P Narayana is scheduled to visit the TIDCO houses in Palakollu to review the progress with officials. Ramanaidu

assured that the housing complex would be equipped with essential facilities, including a hospital, park, shopping mall, rythu bazaar, schools, and ATM kiosks. Municipal Commissioner B Vijay Sarathi, engineer K Raj Kumar, and other officials were also present at the meeting.



## Couple killed in blast in cracker unit

PNS ■ CHITTOOR

Close on the heels of an explosion in the Escientia Advanced Sciences Private limited at Atchutapuram in Anakapalli district, a couple was killed and two others were injured when an explosion took place in a firecrackers manufacturing unit at Maredupalli village in Gangavaram mandal in the district on Saturday.

Police said that a massive blast took place while firecrackers were being made in a firecracker unit killing a couple Khadar Basha and his wife Shajeeena. As many as two persons were injured in

the blast and their condition is said to be very critical.

Police said that the deceased Khadar Basha had taken a license to make firecrackers but he opened a firecrackers manufacturing unit illegally. A huge quantity of explosive substance was stocked in the unit to make firecrackers. A massive blast took place suddenly killing the couple instantaneously. The house in which the incident took place collapsed under the impact of the blast.

The police registered a case and shifted the bodies to the GGH for post-mortem examination.

## DSP 'deliberately' struck by SUV at toll plaza

PNS ■ NELLORE

The DSP of Nellore Rural was injured while conducting a vehicle check when he was allegedly deliberately struck by a vehicle at the Venkatchalam toll plaza in the early hours of Saturday.

According to the police, Nellore Rural DSP Ghattamaneni Srinivasa Rao and his team were checking vehicles at the toll plaza. The DSP had stopped an SUV, and while he was speaking to the driver, the SUV was driven forward recklessly at high speed. In the ensuing commotion, the DSP, who was holding onto the SUV, was thrown onto the road and sustained a bleeding head injury.

Following the collision, the SUV continued towards Chennai. Venkatchalam CI Subba Rao and Manabolu SI Ajay pursued the SUV in a police vehicle. At Mairipadu village, the police blocked



the road and began checking vehicles. Despite this, the SUV driver did not stop and continued to flee. The pursuit continued, but during a high-speed chase on the highway, the Atmakur CI's vehicle veered off the road and crashed into the bushes. Fortunately, no one was injured in this incident.

Eventually, the police intercepted the SUV, arrested the driver, Suryanarayana, and

seized the vehicle. Authorities suspect that he was transporting a large quantity of ganja to Chennai, which he may have unloaded elsewhere.

The accused, Suryanarayana, hails from Rajanagar village in Rajahmundry mandal. MLA Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy visited the injured DSP in the hospital, and SP Krishnakanth oversaw the incident.

## 350 kg of cannabis seized; 2 peddlers arrested

PNS ■ PADERU

The police seized 350 kg of ganja, worth over Rs 17.60 lakh, while being transported illegally at Mothugudem village near the check-post. ASP Pankaj Kumar Meena told the media that on a tip-off, a police team conducted checking of vehicles at the check post.

They found the accused Anzarali Ronakali Sayyed and Yunus Mustaf Shaikh were taking 350 KGs of ganja in a vehicle to Lathur in Maharashtra. They purchased the ganja at Cak Reddy of Kurmanuru village in Odisha state. The seized ganja is worth Rs 17,60,000.

The police during the last 100 days have seized 1,670 kg of ganja in ASR district and arrested 43 drug peddlers.



However, two persons who were involved in the illegal transport of ganja were absconding and a massive search is on to arrest them, the ASP said.

Meanwhile, the vigil has been intensified across the

state, especially at vulnerable places, to prevent the illegal transport of ganja through the ASR district. CCTVs have been installed at vital centres and other important places to monitor the movements of drug peddlers.

## Ex-MLA raps CM Naidu for targeting Jagan during Vanapalli visit

PNS ■ RAVULAPALEM

Former MLA Chirla Jaggireddy has strongly criticised Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu for focusing solely on attacking YS Jagan Mohan Reddy during his recent visit to Vanapalli, rather than addressing issues that would benefit local villagers.

Speaking to the media in Ravulapalem on Saturday, the former MLA urged CM Naidu to abandon personal attacks

and instead concentrate on fulfilling the promises made to the public.

Jaggireddy accused the Chief Minister of recycling old ideas, such as "Grama Sabhas," which he claimed have been conducted in the past, misleading the public with false promises. He expressed disappointment that the Gram Sabha conducted by CM Naidu did not result in any meaningful announcements for the residents.

## Ex-MLA Pinnelli released on bail

PNS ■ NELLORE

YSRCP leader and former MLA Pinnelli Ramakrishna Reddy was released from Nellore Central Prison on bail on Saturday.

The release followed a court's decision to grant bail in the Karampudi case. Reddy had been incarcerated for 55 days in connection with charges related to the vandalism of EVMs on polling day.

Upon his release, Reddy was greeted with a grand welcome outside the prison. YSRCP leaders, including former Ministers Kakani Govardhan Reddy and Anil Kumar, were present to receive him. The leaders expressed their concerns over the state's deteriorating law and order situation and emphasised their commitment to remain engaged with the public without intimidation.

## Gottipati opens 4 MW solar power plant

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Minister for Energy Gottipati Ravi Kumar inaugurated a 4 Megawatt (MW) Solar Power Plant at Marella village in Mundlamuru mandal on Saturday. The plant, established on 18 acres of land, was completed within 80 days by the officials.

The solar plant has been connected to the Marella electric substation and will soon be linked to the grid.

In his address to the media, Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar highlighted the coalition government's commitment to prioritising solar and wind energy under the leadership of Chandrababu Naidu. He praised the establishment of the solar plant in the agricultural lands of Marella in Prakasam District as a commendable initiative.

He expressed his intention to develop more solar plants



He expressed his intention to develop more solar plants across the state, emphasising that solar power generation will reduce carbon emissions and improve environmental conditions

across the state, emphasising that solar power generation will reduce carbon emissions and improve environmental

conditions. The Minister also noted that the Central government is supporting rural solar power projects through the PM

Kusum scheme.

The Minister criticised the previous government for failing to generate an additional 100 MW of electricity, which led to significant public suffering due to unscheduled power cuts. He assured that measures have been taken to prevent power shortages, ensuring sufficient supply for both public and industrial needs.

Looking ahead, the Minister outlined plans to advance electricity generation through solar, wind, and waste management (PSP) plants. He stated that the government aims to position Andhra Pradesh as a leader in non-conventional power generation in the country. The event was attended by MLA Yeluru Sambashiva Rao, former MLA B Chenchu Garataiah, Darshi TDP in-charge Dr. Gottipati Lakshmi, and various engineers and officials.

## 'Students with diverse skills welcome across the globe'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Supreme Court Judge Justice Pamidighantam Sri Narasimha has stated that the world eagerly anticipates students with diverse skills and encourages them to follow their curiosity, asserting that India is an unparalleled destination for such exploration. Speaking at the 12th convocation of Vignan University on Saturday, which was held with grandeur at the university campus in Vadlamudi, Chebrolu Mandal, Guntur, Justice Narasimha highlighted the significance of venturing beyond academia and embracing the challenges that the real world presents.

During the ceremony, Vignan University honoured three eminent personalities with honorary doctorates for



Justice Narasimha remarked that while students transition from their academic achievements into the broader world, they will face new challenges that will test the extent of their education. He urged students to express gratitude to their families, mentors, and peers who supported them throughout their academic journey

their contributions across various fields: D. Seshagiri Rao, Founder and Chairman of SEC Industries, Hyderabad; Mullapudi Lokeshwara Rao, Founder of Lokesh Machines, Hyderabad; and Indian Composer and Singer Saluri Koteswara Rao (Koti).

As the chief guest, Justice Narasimha remarked while students transition from their academic achievements into the broader world, they will face new challenges that will test the extent of their education. He urged students to express gratitude to their families, mentors, and peers who supported them throughout their academic journey. Noting the profound revolution occurring in various aspects of life, he advised students to appreciate and

adapt to the significant changes across different sectors of society. Justice Narasimha encouraged them to reinvent themselves according to evolving circumstances and embrace new methods to achieve their goals, rather than adhering to conventional practices.

Narasaraopet MP Lavu Srikrishna Devarayalu urged the graduates to make a significant impact on the world. He suggested drawing inspiration from the stories of Justice Narasimha and Vinesh Phogat, and encouraged students to consider how they can contribute to society as they embark on their new journeys. MP Devarayalu expressed confidence that the graduates, having completed their degrees amidst compe-

dition, would make valuable contributions to society and achieve success. He affirmed that today's youth are the nation's future, and their progress in the right direction will strengthen India.

Vignan University Vice-Chancellor Professor P. Nagabhushan announced that a total of 1,539 students received their degrees during the 12th convocation. Additionally, 60 gold medals were awarded, including 26 academic gold medals, 24 best outgoing student awards, one chairman's gold medal, three endowment gold medals, one best leader award, one best NCC cadet award, one best NSS volunteer award, and three academic toppers in Vignan online programmes.

## Revanthth gov't enacting high drama in HYDRAB name: Kishan



Making it clear that the law should be applied equally to all, the Union Minister of Coal and Mines, G. Kishan Reddy, said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's government was enacting a drama in the name of 'HYDRAB'. He said

the government which permitted illegal buildings in the past is now carrying out demolitions.

Speaking to the media, Kishan said, "Hyderabad has become a centre of high drama. Those who permitted to construct buildings are now creating drama by demolishing illegal structures. How did they give permission? How did they provide electricity, water and road facilities? Now all these should be discussed in depth. Any decision taken by the government should be applied equally to all. It is not right to do as you like. The Congress government should also take action against the officials who gave the permission."

ACROSS THE STATES

# India-US discuss 'key' strategic matters

## Defence Minister Rajnath meets US NSA Jake Sullivan

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has met the US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and shared perspectives on "key" strategic matters of mutual interest, a day after India and the US signed two key agreements to further boost their comprehensive global strategic partnership.

Singh arrived here on Thursday on a four-day official visit to further boost the comprehensive global strategic partnership between the US and India.

"Delighted to meet the National Security Advisor of the United States @jakesullivan and share perspectives on key strategic matters of mutual interest," Singh said in a post on X after his meeting on Friday.

He also had a "fruitful" exchange with leading US defence companies and invited them to work with Indian partners to accelerate the Make in India programme.

"Had fruitful interaction with leading US defence companies at the Defence Industry - Roundtable organised by @USISPF (US India Strategic Partnership Forum). Invited them to work with Indian partners to accelerate our Make in India programme towards achieving Atmanirbharta in defence sector. Together, Indian and US companies will co-



develop and co-produce for the world," he said in another post.



"Delighted to meet the National Security Advisor of the United States @jakesullivan and share perspectives on key strategic matters of mutual interest," Singh said in a post on X after his meeting on Friday

"At a luncheon roundtable with USISPF Board members and leaders from the defence industry, the Defence Minister

investments from American companies will play a central part in India's growth story and vision 2047," USISPF said in a post on X.

It said that Singh "echoed building on the defence cooperation and elevating the strategic partnership through deeper defence engagements at multiple levels".

President and CEO of USISPF Mukesh Agni said that Singh touched on the "evolu-

tion of the defence relationship and the strategic depth, where the private sector now plays an epochal role in driving deep defence synergy in new areas of critical and emerging technology, such as cyber, drones, AI, space, and quantum."

Earlier in the day, he met US Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin to review and further deepen the existing defence cooperation activities between the two countries.



## Mumbai: Man kills wife after quarrel, informs cops

A 26-year-old man allegedly killed his wife with a sharp weapon following a quarrel and arrived at a police station to inform about the attack in the western suburbs here in the early hours of Saturday, police said. Intekaaf Idris Ansari walked into Malwani police station in the western suburb of Malad around 6 am and informed officials that his wife fell unconscious after he attacked her, an official said. A team was dispatched to Ansari's house, and his wife Ayesha (22) was found lying in a pool of blood, he said. The accused confessed to slitting his wife's throat with a sharp weapon after an argument, the official said. Ansari has been arrested under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS) and further investigation is on, he added.



## Fake call centre busted in Gurugram, 20 arrested

A fake call centre being run in three flats of Flora Avenue 33 society on Sohna road was busted with the arrest of 20 people, including 4 women, police said on Saturday. The accused were duping foreign nationals on the pretext of providing online technical support, they said, adding that 25 mobile phones, 16 laptops and Rs 50,000 cash were recovered from their possession. According to the police, they got a tip off that a fake call centre is being run in flat A-20, 21, and 22 in Flora Avenue 33 society wherein foreign nationals are being defrauded on the pretext of online technical support. Following the tip off, a raid was conducted by the team of cybercrime south police station on Friday night where the men and women were found busy on laptops and mobiles, they said. Most of them were busy making calls in English using their headphones. On asking they could not show any valid OSP licences of Department of Telecommunications or any other agreement/MoU related to their work, said police.



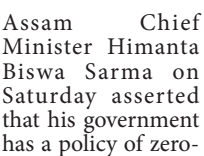
## Body of 3-year-old girl found inside bag in Muzaffarpur

The body of a three-year-old girl was found inside a bag hidden near her home in Bihar's Muzaffarpur on Saturday, police said. The girl had gone missing a day ago. The girl was a resident of Nirala Niketan locality and according to her father she had left home on Friday afternoon along with her mother to attend a function. "The father of the deceased said the mother and daughter did not return home and that he was unable to contact his wife as her mobile phone was out of reach. Today, his neighbours informed the police about a bag hidden in the bushes near his home. When we opened it we found the body," said Mithanpura police station SHO Ram Iqbal. "We have sent the body for post-mortem. We shall not comment as to whether there were injury marks, which could indicate murder, till forensic experts complete their investigation," he said. The SHO also said attempts are being made to track down the girl's mother by placing her mobile phone under surveillance.

### CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN

## Assam has zero-tolerance policy: CM Himanta

PNS ■ SILCHAR



Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday asserted that his government has a policy of zero-tolerance in dealing with crimes against women and "drastic action" is taken against the culprits in such cases.

He also said the state's police force is "setting an example" with its prompt action in cases of crimes against women.

"When an incident (like rape) happens in Assam, police take quick action. No compromise is made. When it comes to matters of crimes against women, we have a

zero-tolerance policy," Sarma told reporters.

Referring to the gangrape of a 14-year-old girl in Dhing, the main accused in which died while purportedly trying to escape from police custody, Sarma said, "The incident happened two days back. The police arrested the accused, he tried to escape by jumping into water and died in the process."

On another case in which a person accused of molesting a girl was injured in police firing while reportedly trying to flee in Tezpur, the CM said, "He tried to escape and was shot."

## CBI takes over investigation to probe financial irregularities at RG Kar College

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Saturday registered a case of alleged financial irregularities at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College where a trainee doctor was found dead in a bloody state on August 9, officials said.

The agency took over the investigation from the Special Investigation Team (SIT) constituted by the West Bengal government on the directions of Calcutta High Court.

The high court which had already handed over the probe into the rape and murder of the medico also transferred the

probe of financial irregularities to the CBI "in the interest of ensuring a comprehensive and unbiased inquiry".

...this Court directs that the investigation be transferred to the CBI, given that the case involved serious allegations and multiple agencies handling different aspects of the case could lead to inefficiencies or inconsistency for comprehensive justice, unnecessary delays in the judicial process and potential misinterpretation of information thereby undermining effective and credible enforcement.

## 'India to be free of Naxal menace by 2026'

PNS ■ RAIPUR

India will be free from Left Wing Extremism (LWE) by March 2026 and a strong and ruthless strategy is required for the final assault against the menace, Union Home Minister Amit Shah asserted on Saturday.

The minister stated this during a press conference here after he along with Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai and senior central and police officers reviewed the Maoist issue in the state and adjoining areas.

Urging Naxals to shun violence, Shah announced that the

### Time for final assault: Amit Shah



Chhattisgarh government would announce a "new look" surrender policy in 1-2 months.

"A strong and ruthless strategy is required for launching the last assault against Naxals," he said.

The home minister said Naxal violence is a challenge to democracy and the menace has claimed about 17,000 lives in the country.

He said there was a 53 per cent drop in Naxal incidents during 2014-24 as compared to

2004-14. It is time to deal the final blow to the problem of Left Wing Extremism with a strong strategy, Shah said.

The minister said the government has been working to fill the security vacuum in LWE-hit areas and the security personnel have undertaken operations along with development works.

He said that besides the security forces, central agencies like NIA and ED have also worked to dismantle Maoist finances.

"We believe we will be able to free the country from Left Wing Extremism by March 2026," Shah said.

## PK's new party to have equal representation from social groups

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As political strategist Prashant Kishor looks to shape his 'Jan Suraj' campaign into a political party, he is keen to shake off any perception linking the new organisation with any particular voting bloc by incorporating an equal number of representatives from various social groups.

The new party, which will be formed on October 2 in Bihar, will have a 25-member central committee, having five persons each from the general category, other backward classes



(OBCs), extremely backward classes (EBCs), scheduled castes and minorities, 'Jan Suraj' representatives have said.

The 25 members will elect a leader of the party for a term of one year, and the representative of the most deprived community will get the first term followed by other com-

munities, they said.

Kishor has already announced that he will not be a part of the leadership group and will continue his foot-march across his home state.

He is keen that the new party gets fully on the ground before the next Assembly elections in the state to be held by the end of 2025.

Any founder member of the campaign having at least 5,000 proposals can be a part of the election process to become the party's central committee member, according to its announcement made recently.

## Selja rules out alliance with AAP

### Says Cong will fight on its own in Haryana

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ruling out the possibility of an alliance with the AAP for the Haryana Assembly polls, senior Congress leader Kumari Selja has said her party is strong in the state and will fight the elections on its own.

The Lok Sabha MP and the party's prominent Dalit face also dismissed the possibility of a hung assembly, asserting that the Congress would secure an "excellent majority" in the 90-member House. Selja also asserted that the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) has lost a lot of ground in Haryana as it is



"breaking up" and does not have a chance in the upcoming polls. She also dismissed the INLD-BSP alliance, pointing out that both parties had lost a lot of ground in the state.

"I don't think so (they will cut into our votes). The (Indian National) Lok Dal's

performance was abysmal in the Lok Sabha polls. The BSP has also lost a lot of ground. So, this alliance may have been forged in whatever way but when the results come out, you will see that this alliance will also come a cropper," Selja said.

Asked whether there was a possibility of the Congress forging an alliance in Haryana with its INDIA bloc partner Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Selja said, "We are partners (at the national level) but if you remember, it was decided that in every state, they (partners) can decide on their own.

## Mayawati slams SP, Congress for silence on SCs, STs sub-classification

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati on Saturday accused

Samajwadi Party and Congress of maintaining silence on the Supreme Court's decision to make sub-classification within the Scheduled Castes and Schedule Tribes reservation and said their thinking is "anti-reservation".

"The conduct, character and

face of SP, Congress and others has always been anti-reservation, which is proven by their lack of support of Bharat Bandh.

Anyway, it is not clear from their statements regarding reservation whether they are in favour of the Supreme Court's decision or against it? Why is there such a confusion?", she said raising questions in a series of posts on X in Hindi.



## BJP, CBI 'conspiring' to keep Kejriwal in jail: AAP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Saturday slammed the BJP and central probe agency CBI for allegedly conspiring to keep Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in jail in the excise policy case.

No immediate reaction was available from either the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) or the BJP on the AAP's charges.

Senior AAP leaders Manish Sisodia and Atishi alleged that the CBI sought time from the Supreme Court to file a reply on Kejriwal's bail plea, but



"planted" it in newspapers. "The CBI says in court that its reply on the bail plea is not ready and so the hearing of bail be extended by 14 days. The

same day the CBI's reply is given to the media so that it can become a one-sided headline in the newspapers," Sisodia posted on X in Hindi.

"The CBI is dancing like a puppet on the BJP instructions to keep Arvind Kejriwal in jail," he added.

The senior AAP leader asserted that the conspiracies being hatched for "headline management" will fail and truth and honesty will win one day. The agencies may dance to a political tune but the Constitution and justice are with the truth, he said.

The Supreme Court on Friday deferred hearing on Kejriwal's bail plea in the excise policy case till September 5 after the agency sought more time to file its affidavit on it.

## Law & order has deteriorated in K'taka: BJP

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Alleging that law and order in Karnataka had deteriorated in a big way and incidents of murders, extortion and rapes have become rampant, the state BJP on Saturday claimed the situation after the Congress government coming to power is such that criminals don't fear the police.

Also claiming that drug mafias were growing and a jihadi mindset is expanding in Karnataka, the principal opposition party also said the Congress government had lost the moral right to govern the state.

The attack against the government on the law and order

### Says Cong gov't has lost moral right to rule



situation comes in the wake of a 24-year-old woman being allegedly kidnapped, drugged and raped after being taken to a secluded place in Karkala in

Udupi district.

The incident was reported from Karkala town police station limits on the night of August 23, police said, adding two persons have been arrested in connection with the case.

"The law and order situation has deteriorated in the state in a big way, after this (Congress) government came to power there is a situation where there is no fear of police. Incidents of murders, extortion and rapes are increasing daily," BJP's state BJP General Secretary and Karkala MLA Sunil Kumar said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said, at the time when the drug mafias are growing, jihadi mindsets are expanding, leaving aside politics, the government should come forward to save women and girls.

## Cabinet nod to 'BioE3' policy for innovation-driven support to R&D

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Saturday approved the 'BioE3' (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment and Employment) policy for fostering high-performance biomanufacturing of the Department of Biotechnology.

According to Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, the BioE3 policy seeks to include innovation-driven support for research and development and entrepreneurship across thematic sectors.

This will accelerate technology development and com-

mercialisation by establishing biomanufacturing and bio-AI hubs and biofoundry, he said.

Along with prioritising regenerative bioeconomy models of green growth, this policy will facilitate the expansion of India's skilled workforce and provide a surge in job creation.

An official statement said, the policy will further strengthen the government's initiatives such as a 'Net Zero' carbon economy and 'Lifestyle for Environment' and will steer India on the path of accelerated 'Green Growth' by promoting a 'Circular Bioeconomy'.



# SLY GRANNY'S NEW MENU PROMISES A MEMORABLE CULINARY FARE!

Nestled in the vibrant heart of Delhi's Khan Market, Sly Granny has finally unveiled its much awaited new menu which boasts of blending classics with contemporary flair

BY SHARMILA CHAND

On a sultry afternoon, I walk in at Sly Granny in Khan Market to see how the mischievous adorable Granny is wooing her diners with the new menu. The buzz here perks up my mood, almost all tables occupied with diners busy chatting and eating, servers attending hurriedly with spectacular food, the colorful décor with pictures from Granny's travels amp up the spirits and build my appetite all the more. I love the cheery vibes, lively music, quirky flair, and finally get a table to settle down. Sly Granny is damn interesting, what a vibrant personality, I think to myself.

"Yes, she is," says the Co-Founder, Rahul Khanna. "Sly Granny is the embodiment of a wickedly sassy, witty, and sly character—she's a mashup of everything quirky and cool. We've designed the restaurant to be as layered and unpredictable as Granny herself, blending her love for art, music, travel, entertainment, and pop culture into every nook and cranny. Whether it's the quirky décor, the eccentric vibe, or the adventurous menu, every aspect of Sly Granny is a nod to her multifaceted personality. She's constantly evolving, just like our space, making sure that every visit feels like a new, exciting chapter in her ever-entertaining story."

## INDIGENOUS & CONTEMPORARY FOOD SYMPHONY

The new menu features seasonal Indian produce which is carefully selected and mindfully prepared for all cuisines here. For example, Indian amla (Gooseberry) is picked and used in salads. Lotus stem and sweet potato is popular as chips.



CHEF ANUBHAV MOZA  
SLY GRANNY

Hemp seed from the state of Uttarakhand is processed to make a dip which is used in mezze platter. Similarly jackfruit is braised with bbq sauce and used in making tacos. It is evident that the focus is to keep the menu fresh, seasonal with a flair of contemporary techniques and yet highlight the importance of Indian produce.

Anubhav Moza - Assistant Brand Chef explains, "Our new menu at Sly Granny is a vibrant tapestry of Granny's eclectic passions—each dish is inspired by her travels, her love for music, quirky art obsessions, and her unapologetic affection for good drinks and pop culture. We've infused her playful spirit into every bite, blending classic flavors

with unexpected twists. Granny's food is all about the joy of discovery, where each dish tells a story of her adventures and her ever-evolving taste. It's a celebration of the bold and fun, in the world of gourmet. Our aim to give healthy and seasonal fresh produce from the farms in India and serve in European flavors. For example, amongst other indigenous produce, we also use phalsa, another Indian berry for making compote and serving with our chocolate desserts."

The meal begins with 'Shish Tawook Broccoli' - a fusion of chargrilled broccoli and tender Shish Tawook. The addition of sautéed chickpeas and a kale-mashed potato makes it a delightful combination. Next up is the 'Greek Vegetable Medley' with Candied Pumpkin adding the fun element. Spiced pumpkin steak is an interesting variation served with seasonal vegetables and creamy tahini, a great way to showcase myriad flavours and textures. Not to be missed is the intriguing Roots & Halloumi, a symphony of slow-roasted carrots, beetroot, sweet potato, and savoury halloumi complemented by labneh, chilli garlic oil, and candied walnuts - a true delight for discerning palates.

For Seafood aficionados, the Herb-Crusted Salmon, served with crème fraîche, pan-tossed vegetables, and a delicate beurre blanc sauce embodies coastal elegance at its best. Also gracing the menu is the Paprika Chicken and Caramelized Onion Pizza - a perfect harmony of paprika-infused chicken, caramelised onions, jalapeños,



savoury goat cheese atop a crispy crust, promising a burst of flavours. For me Granny's Mezze, spectacular in its presentation and taste, turned out to be the best. With spiced pita, lavaash, cheese cracker, yam kebab, falafel, spinach and cheese borek, and the showstopper 'Hemp seed dip', marinated olives, pickled greens, I couldn't have been happier. 'Pesto Al Genovese' comes next. A lovely rendition of pasta along with broccoli, asparagus in basil pesto, tossed with burrata crumble. I especially loved the texture of the pesto-creamy, like velvety.

'Sly Tiramisu' looks outstanding to conclude gastronomic journey as it's a decadent ensemble of mascarpone-soaked sponge, coffee ice cream, cocoa crunch, caramel popcorn, and Baileys ganache, an exquisite finale to an exceptional meal. But I go for 'Chocolate Torte' - absolutely heavenly with strawberry ice cream, hazel nut crunch and phalsa compote that refreshes my palate.

## NEW SEASONAL COCKTAIL MENU

Whether you're a seasoned cocktail

connoisseur or simply seeking a refreshing beverage, there is a drink for everyone to enjoy.

Sly Granny has revisited historical favourites and given them a modern twist. Take, for instance, the "Castel Del Monte," which captures the essence of the Italian sunshine in a delightful blend of gin, roasted pineapple, Campari, and sweet vermouth. For a spicy kick, "Wildcat of Bombay" offers a fiery concoction of tequila, yellow pimento, lemon, cilantro, and a hint of jalapeno that will get the evening going. These reinventions honour bar classics while adding a unique Sly Granny flair.

The new cocktail menu is inspired by flavours from around the world, ensuring that every sip takes you on an exotic adventure. From the cinematic streets of India to the serene landscapes of Italy, the drinks are crafted to transport you to different corners of the globe with just one sip. Not forgetting the classics, The "Posh G&T" elevates the traditional Gin & Tonic with cucumber, rosemary, mint, and a touch of citrus. Whisky lovers rejoice with "The Betty Ford Tribute," a sophisticated mix of whisky, orange, kaffir lime, jaggery, and lemon.

For a touch of nostalgia, indulge in "Granny's Dirty Martini," a perfectly

balanced dirty martini with your choice of vodka or gin.

There's a wide selection of non-alcoholic refreshing mocktails as well. The "Almodovar" is a vibrant blend of watermelon juice, peppermint, and a touch of saline, while "Jungle Love!" takes the heat up with guava juice, basil, Granny's hot sauce, and a hint of jalapeno yet is a perfect cooler on a hot day.

## TO CONCLUDE

Sly Granny not only wows it's discerning diners with all day dining menu, but also offers Breakfast on weekends, serving some classic and of course, some of her quirky breakfast dishes from 8:30 am to 11:30 am.

Go and explore Granny's new menu, renowned for its culinary wizardry and vibrant atmosphere.

Chef Anubhav Moza's dedication to culinary excellence is evident throughout the menu, making Sly Granny Khan Market a must-visit destination for food enthusiasts seeking refined flavours and unforgettable dining moments.

## CHECK OUT

Sly Granny  
4, Khan Market, New Delhi

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

# THE PINNACLE OF GOURMET EXCELLENCE

The Purple Plate, under the visionary leadership of Ishaan Kapoor, has redefined the luxury catering landscape. With a meticulous approach that combines traditional flavours with contemporary techniques, the company delivers unparalleled experiences, making each event a memorable celebration of taste and elegance, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

In the world of luxury wedding catering, where every detail is meticulously planned and executed, The Purple Plate has emerged as a distinguished leader. Since its inception in January 2017 by Ishaan Kapoor, this innovative company has set new standards in opulent dining experiences. Combining traditional flavours with contemporary techniques, The Purple Plate has catered over 2,000 global events, earning a reputation for excellence and creativity.

What truly sets The Purple Plate apart is its relentless pursuit of perfection in every aspect of its service. The company follows a rigorous 21-step process to ensure each dish meets the highest standards of quality and presentation. This meticulous approach is complemented by a unique policy of catering one event per day. This exclusivity allows The Purple Plate to offer unparalleled personalised service, ensuring that every detail of the event receives the utmost attention and care. A hallmark of The Purple Plate's service is its innovative use of interactive live stations and pass-around dishes. These features are designed to create an engaging and memorable dining experience. Interactive live stations allow guests to interact with chefs, watch the culinary process and customise their meals. This not only adds an educational and entertaining element but also deepens the connection between guests and the food. Pass-around dishes, on the



other hand, enhance social interaction by circulating among guests, encouraging mingling and conversation in a relaxed and informal setting. The Purple Plate's philosophy blends traditional and modern culinary techniques, starting with a deep respect for classic recipes and enhancing them with contemporary methods and innovative presentation. This approach ensures each menu respects culinary heritage while offering fresh and engaging experiences. As the company looks to the future, it aims to incorporate artificial intelligence for personalised menu recommendations, introduce more plant-based and locally sourced ingredients, and explore immersive dining through augmented and virtual reality. These forward-thinking innovations will elevate the dining experience and solidify

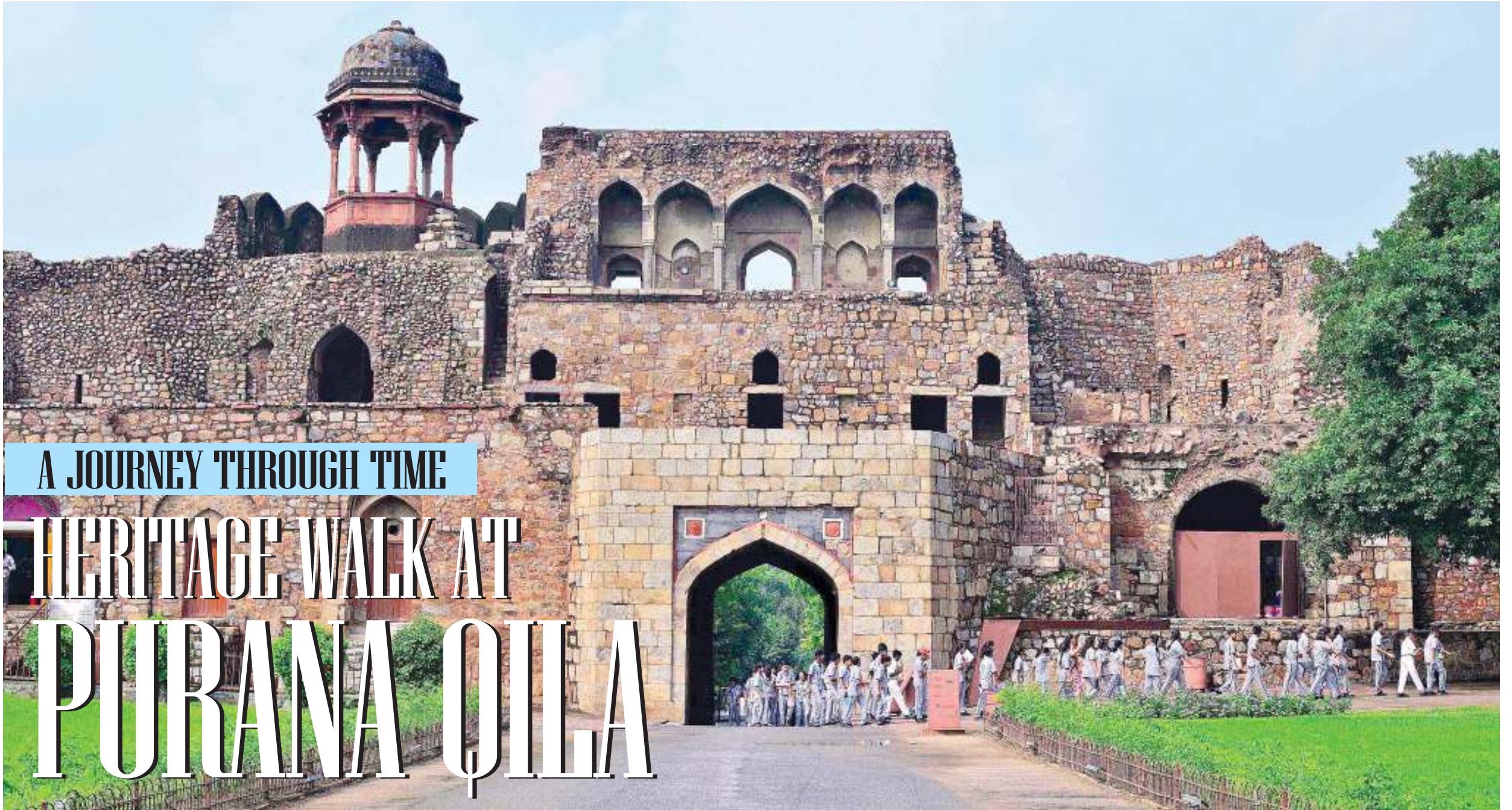
**WHAT TRULY SETS THE PURPLE PLATE APART IS ITS RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF PERFECTION IN EVERY ASPECT OF ITS SERVICE. THE COMPANY FOLLOWS A RIGOROUS 21-STEP PROCESS TO ENSURE EACH DISH MEETS THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF QUALITY AND PRESENTATION. THIS METICULOUS APPROACH IS COMPLEMENTED BY A UNIQUE POLICY OF CATERING ONE EVENT PER DAY**



The Purple Plate's leadership in luxury catering. The Purple Plate's dedication to excellence extends beyond culinary artistry to a deep commitment to sustainability. The company integrates eco-friendly practices by carefully planning to

reduce food waste, using biodegradable materials and sourcing local ingredients, thus supporting communities and minimising its carbon footprint. As it prepares to enter the Middle Eastern and Asian markets, The Purple Plate will adapt its offerings to regional tastes while upholding its high standards. Through comprehensive training, the team will be well-prepared to navigate cultural nuances, ensuring that exceptional catering experiences are delivered across diverse global settings. Ishaan Kapoor's background in hospitality management and culinary arts has played a crucial role in The Purple Plate's success. His extensive training and practical experience have provided him with a profound understanding of both the operational and creative aspects of luxury catering. Kapoor's commitment to quality and

innovation is reflected in every event. As he puts it, "We're not just serving food; we're crafting an experience that combines artistry and excellence in every bite." Beyond its culinary achievements, The Purple Plate remains deeply committed to making a positive impact on society. By supporting NGOs like Shanti Sahyog, the company demonstrates its dedication to giving back and using its success to contribute to meaningful causes. This commitment to social responsibility not only reflects The Purple Plate's values but also sets a precedent for the hospitality industry, showcasing the importance of community engagement and ethical business practices. In every dish and every event, The Purple Plate strives to deliver not just an exceptional dining experience, but also a lasting positive impact.



A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

HERITAGE WALK AT  
PURANA QILA

Historian *Vikramjit Singh Rooprai* led a captivating Heritage Walk through Purana Qila, offering participants a blend of history and architectural insights. This immersive experience highlighted the fort's significance, revealing hidden stories and the interconnectedness of its historical and ecological aspects, writes **SAKSHI PRIYA**

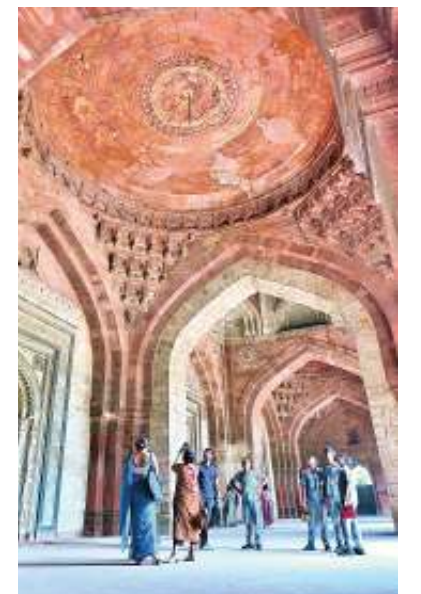
As part of his second series of the Delhi Heritage series, historian and author Vikramjit Singh Rooprai led an insightful walk through Purana Qila, one of Delhi's most famous and second-most visited forts. Inspired by his upcoming book, *Delhi Heritage: Top 10 Forts*, this exclusive Heritage Walk offered a select group of history enthusiasts rare insights and thoughtful details about the fort that are not widely known. Against the backdrop of the ancient walls of Purana Qila, Rooprai embarked on a journey to unravel the secrets of this historic fort, blending myth, history and architecture as he explored one of Delhi's most significant yet often overlooked monuments.

Purana Qila or the "Old Fort," is one of Delhi's oldest forts, with a history that stretches back centuries. It is often overshadowed by more famous landmarks like the Red Fort and Qutub Minar, yet it holds a crucial place in the narrative of Delhi's evolution. The fort's origins are shrouded in mystery, with legends linking it to the ancient city of Indraprastha, the legendary capital of the Pandavas from the Mahabharata. Rooprai, with his deep knowledge and passion for Delhi's history, made it clear that much of this association is based on later folklore rather than historical evidence. The fort as we see it today is primarily the work of two great rulers, Emperor Humayun and Sher Shah Suri, whose contributions to its construction have left a lasting legacy.

The exploration began at the grand entrance of the fort, the Bada Darwaza, where the sheer scale and architectural prowess of the structure immediately impressed upon visitors the importance of this site in Delhi's history. Rooprai explained how this massive gate, with its towering height and intricate carvings, served as a formidable barrier, protecting the fort's inhabitants from invaders. The Bada Darwaza, like much of the fort, reflects a blend of Islamic and Hindu architectural styles, a syncretism that has always been a hallmark of Delhi's culture. This gate is not just an entrance but a symbol of the fort's strategic importance in the defense of the city.

As the group moved deeper into the fort, Rooprai guided them towards the imposing Talaqi Darwaza, a gate that remained sealed for centuries until it was rediscovered in the early 20th century. The name "Talaqi," meaning "separation," intrigued many. Rooprai mentioned that if we look closely at the interior detailing at the top of Talaqi Darwaza, we can still see some remnants of its original colors, a subtle yet vivid reminder of the fort's rich past. He narrated how this gate, with its intricate carvings and lofty chhatris (domed pavilions), had been sealed shortly after its construction, its purpose shrouded in mystery. Some historians speculate that it might have been closed due to superstitions or security concerns, while others believe it was simply never completed. As Rooprai spoke, it was easy to imagine the fort as it once was, a bustling hub of activity, a place where history was made.

One of the most captivating aspects of the walk was Rooprai's discussion about the



the fort and Rooprai patiently answered each one, providing insights that captivated both the young participant and the older attendees.

As the tour came to an end, Rooprai left the group with a deeper appreciation for this ancient site. Purana Qila was no longer just an old fort but a living part of Delhi's rich and varied history, a place where myths and facts converge, creating a story that is both beautiful and complex. Through his insights, Rooprai had brought Purana Qila to life, making the past palpable and the stories within its walls a part of the present. The fort's layers of history, from its ancient origins to its role in the Mughal Empire, were laid bare, offering a glimpse into the lives of those who walked its grounds centuries ago.

Vikramjit Singh Rooprai's approach to history is not only informative but also deeply engaging. His ability to work together factual history with the legends surrounding Purana Qila makes the past resonate with present-day audiences. He reminds us that history is not just about dates and events but about the stories of people, places and cultures that have shaped our world. This walk was more than just a tour - it was a journey through time, offering a rare insight into the layers of history that have shaped Delhi. It's clear that such events are crucial in building a deeper appreciation for the rich heritage that surrounds us. Rooprai's work is a tribute to the importance of preserving and sharing our history, ensuring that future generations can continue to learn from and be inspired by the past.

The *Heritage Walk* at Purana Qila was an enlightening experience that left the participants with a profound respect for the history and architecture of one of Delhi's oldest forts. Through Rooprai's expert guidance, the group gained not only knowledge but also a sense of connection to the city's past. The walk was a reminder that history is all around us, waiting to be discovered and that by exploring it, we can gain a better understanding of the world we live in today.

Photos: Pankaj Kumar

PURANA QILA OR THE "OLD FORT," IS ONE OF DELHI'S OLDEST FORTS, WITH A HISTORY THAT STRETCHES BACK CENTURIES. IT IS OFTEN OVERSHADOWED BY MORE FAMOUS LANDMARKS LIKE THE RED FORT AND QUTUB MINAR, YET IT HOLDS A CRUCIAL PLACE IN THE NARRATIVE OF DELHI'S EVOLUTION

inscriptions near Talaqi Darwaza, discovered by the British during their restoration efforts. These inscriptions explore the preservation of "the house of Humayun," adding a layer of intrigue to the fort's history and sparking curiosity about their true meaning. During the walk, Vikramjit emphasised the challenges of accessing historical resources, sharing anecdotes about the British efforts to clean and preserve the gates. These efforts uncovered inscriptions pleading to "save this house of Humayun," a phrase that sparked debate among historians. Some interpreted it as a reference to Emperor Humayun, while others saw it as a metaphorical plea to protect the sanctity of the site.

The architectural grandeur of Purana Qila is not just limited to its gates. The fort's walls, towering over the surrounding landscape, are a witness to the engineering prowess of the time. Built using large stone blocks, the walls are interspersed with bastions and watchtowers, which would have provided a vantage point for the fort's defenders. Rooprai pointed out the changes that had occurred over the centuries, especially the eastern wall, which once overlooked the Yamuna River. The river, which has since shifted its course, played a crucial role in the fort's defense, providing a natural barrier against invaders. Today, the fort's strategic location remains evident, offering stunning views of the city and a reminder of its importance in Delhi's history.

Ecological insights were also an integral part of Rooprai's narrative. He highlighted the green layer on the lake within the fort, which plays a crucial role in supporting various forms of life, including fish and birds. This lake, once a part of the Yamuna River's floodplain, has



now become an isolated water body. Rooprai discussed how the lake's ecosystem is a delicate balance, with the green algae on the surface providing oxygen for aquatic life while also serving as a breeding ground for insects that are crucial for the survival of birds and other animals. Any disruption to this delicate ecosystem could have a significant impact, underscoring the interconnectedness of human history and the natural environment. The tour culminated at Humayun Darwaza, another significant gate of the fort. Rooprai highlighted how much of the fort's construction, including these gates, may have been initiated by Humayun himself, despite the popular attribution to Sher Shah Suri. The Humayun Darwaza, with its grand archways and intricate tile work, stands as a symbol of the Mughal emperor's ambition to create a lasting legacy. The fort's story, Rooprai noted, is one of resilience, evidence to a city that has been

built, destroyed and rebuilt countless times. Through this walk, Rooprai not only guided the visitors through the physical space of Purana Qila but also through the complex narrative of Delhi's history. He emphasised that while Purana Qila is often overshadowed by more famous structures like the Red Fort, it remains an essential part of Delhi's heritage, a silent witness to the city's evolution.

The active involvement of a 14-year-old boy during the walk was particularly noteworthy. Deeply engrossed in the exploration, the boy actively engaged with Vikramjit, asking thoughtful questions that enriched the experience for everyone present. His curiosity and enthusiasm reflected the walk's success in sparking interest across different age groups, showing the importance of making history accessible and exciting for all generations. The boy's questions ranged from the significance of the inscriptions to the architectural details of

IN BRIEF



Indian telcos aim for 10 pc share in 6G patents

Indian telecom players are targeting a share of 10 per cent of all 6G patents and one-sixth contributions to global standards in the next three years, an official statement said on Saturday. Telecom industry players have proposed to systematically align research to 'India's needs' and put in place a vibrant 'Standards Community'.

The proposal came up during the second meeting of Stakeholders Advisory Committee (SAC) on Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) which was chaired by union Telecom minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on Friday.

"Industry leaders proposed systematically aligning research to 'India's needs' and put in place a vibrant 'Standards Community' targeting a share of 10 per cent of all 6G patents and one-sixth contributions to global standards in the next 3 years," the statement said.



Govt cuts drawback rates on exports of jewellery

The government has reduced the drawback rates on exports of gold and silver jewellery by more than half to adjust for the significant cut in import duties on these precious metals in the Budget. A notification regarding this was issued by the Department of Revenue. On the export of gold jewellery, the drawback rate has been brought down to Rs 335.5 from Rs 704.1 per gram of net gold content in the article. The rate of silver jewellery and articles of silver have been cut to Rs 4,468 per kilogram of net gold content in an article. The Duty Drawback Scheme refunds import duties and internal taxes, which are paid while importing goods, which are, in turn, used for manufacturing products for exports. In the Budget, the import duty on gold and silver to 6 per cent from 15 per cent. Through this notification, "duty drawback on gold and silver jewellery was reduced as the duty on gold and silver lowered in the budget". Federation of Indian Export Organisations Director General Ajay Sahai said.



Goodveda plans to raise USD 1 mn to fund growth plans

Goodveda, a D2C startup offering a range of supplements, ayurvedic remedies, snacks, and wellness programmes - expects a significant expansion in revenue and customer base, helped by the demand for healthy and convenient snack options. Founded in September 2023, Goodveda recently secured a pre-seed funding of Rs 2 crore. Moreover, to fund its expansion plans, Goodveda has plans to raise USD one million this year, he added. It currently has a revenue of Rs 1.9 crore and expects to have a turnover of Rs 12 crore in the current fiscal. Goodveda Founder and entrepreneur Abhishek Gagneja said. Goodveda currently has a user base of over 20,000 and its monthly revenue has increased to Rs 87.8 lakh in July this year. In the June quarter, it had a business of Rs 1.74 crore. The company aims to become a known nutritional food brand in India, expanding its offerings and reach. Gagneja said. The D2C brand currently has 12 SKUs, which are mainly focused on diabetes, liver health, obesity and heart diseases.

TARGETTING \$14 TRILLION ECONOMY

India needs 400 million more women in workforce: Report

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India requires an additional 400 million women in the workforce to contribute USD 14 trillion to the economy which would necessitate nearly doubling the current female labour force participation rate (LFPR) from 37 per cent to 70 per cent by fiscal year 2047, according to a new report.

Non-profit TheNudge Institute has unveiled a new report, Labour Force Participation Distillation Report, outlining a crucial element for India's economic future. The report is based upon Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) over the years. As the country aims to become a USD 30 trillion economy by 2047, the report highlights the need for a substantial increase in female labour force participation to achieve this goal.

According to the report, India requires an additional 400 million women in the workforce to contribute USD



14 trillion to the economy. This would necessitate nearly doubling the current female labour force participation rate (LFPR) from 37 per cent to 70 per cent by fiscal year 2047.

With only 110 million women projected to join the labour force by then, an additional 145 million women need to be integrated to meet this target.

The report reveals a stark disparity in job security and

face limited advancement.

According to the report, in construction, women represent just over 12 per cent of the workforce, often earning significantly less than men in unskilled roles. The pandemic has exacerbated these issues, with many rural women forced back into work due to income loss or job loss by primary earners, underscoring the fragility of female employment.

To address these challenges, the report outlines three key pathways to increase female labour force participation. First, redefining work through platform jobs and digital microwork could activate fractured employment.

Second, enhancing entrepreneurship opportunities via digital commerce infrastructure could invigorate the sector.

Third, addressing bottlenecks, such as mobility and digital access, is crucial to improving women's participation in the labour market.

Quality control orders to protect MSMEs: Goyal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The quality control orders (QCOs) issued by the government for different products will protect MSMEs from unfair competition and help cut the import of sub-standard goods, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Saturday.

He said that through these orders, the government is supporting the MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises).

"We are giving time to MSMEs to meet the QCO requirements," he said, adding that MSMEs will benefit from these orders as "it stops sub-standard goods imported at strange rates from outside the country and thus helps the MSME sector by protecting it from unfair competition".

MSMEs should not be looked upon as merely a small enterprise, he added.

The entire ecosystem

around big industries and enterprises comprises thousands of MSMEs, without whom they cannot succeed, he said, adding that MSMEs act both as suppliers and customers of big industries.

The sector also plays an important role in the tourism and infrastructure development of the country and has a big share in India's exports.

"Today, several SMEs have listed their firms at BSE," he said.

Under these orders, items cannot be produced, sold, traded, imported and stocked unless they bear the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) mark. These orders are issued for goods like smart meters, nuts, bolts and fasteners.

Mandatory QCOs help curb the import of sub-standard products, prevent unfair trade practices and ensure the safety and well-being of consumers as well as the environment



Chevron to invest Rs 8,300 cr in K'taka

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Chevron, a global leader in providing energy solutions, on Saturday announced an investment of Rs 8,300 crore to set up its Engineering and Innovation Centre of Excellence here.

The investment was announced during a high-profile meeting attended by the Karnataka Minister for Large and Medium Industries and Infrastructure Development, M B Patil and others.

"Karnataka has been consistently leading the way in promoting economic growth and development. The collaboration between the state government and Chevron company in implementing this Rs 8,300 crore investment is a clear indication of the significant progress in engineering and innovation in Karnataka. The

state government is committed to promoting innovation, economic growth and job creation," he said.

Akshay Sahni, Country Head of Chevron India, shared the company's vision for the new centre and said, "It will provide an opportunity for India's exceptional talent to work with the resources and expertise of our global network to provide affordable, reliable clean energy."

According to a statement shared by the Minister's office, the centre will hire 600 engineers by 2025 in engineering and digital services to accelerate energy system technology innovations. The state has taken exemplary steps to promote technological progress through progressive policies that have created an enabling environment for innovation.



RAPID GROWTH OF QUICK COMMERCE PLATFORMS

FMCG raises concern, seeks scrutiny

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

FMCG distributors have raised concerns over the "rapid and unregulated growth" of quick commerce platforms, saying it needs immediate scrutiny.

In a letter written to Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, FMCG distributors' body AICPDF said this unchecked expansion of quick commerce platforms, which typically deliver goods within 10 to 30 minutes, is creating an "uneven playing field", threatening the livelihoods of millions of small retailers and distributors who have been the backbone of India's retail sector for decades.

The All India Consumer Products Distributors Federation (AICPDF) also suspected potential violations of FDI regulations by these quick-commerce companies and sought an immediate investigation into the operational models of these platforms.

The rapid growth of quick commerce platforms like Blinkit, Zepto and Instamart has posed significant challenges to the traditional retail sector and the established fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) distribution network.

"We are witnessing the erosion of



small "mom-and-pop" stores and a shift in the FMCG distribution landscape, as these platforms are increasingly being appointed as direct distributors by major FMCG companies, side-lining traditional distributors," AICPDF said in the letter. While raising concerns regarding the compliance of foreign direct investment (FDI) regulations by the quick-commerce platforms, it said AICPDF suspects them of blurring the lines between the marketplace and inventory-based models.

"The FDI rules clearly prohibit e-commerce entities operating under the marketplace model from holding inventory or exercising control over the inventory sold on their platforms.

"However, it appears that these quick commerce platforms may be engaging in practices that blur the lines between a marketplace and an inventory-based model, potentially violating FDI norms," it noted.

It also requested the government to "initiate a thorough investigation into the operational models of these quick commerce platforms to ensure compliance with FDI regulations" and to "implement protective measures for small retailers and traditional distributors to safeguard their interests and prevent monopolistic practices".

AICPDF has urged the government to facilitate a dialogue between all stakeholders, including representatives from the retail sector, FMCG companies and quick commerce platforms, to establish fair and equitable business practices.

It also appreciated Goyal's recent remarks, where he lambasted the e-commerce companies, questioning their business model that has been impacting small retailers in the country.

INFY DENIES ALLEGATIONS

Cognizant files lawsuit against Infosys over trade secrets

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IT major Cognizant's subsidiary TriZetto has slapped a lawsuit on Infosys in a US federal court, accusing the Bengaluru-headquartered company of stealing trade secrets and information related to healthcare insurance software. Infosys, in a statement, denied all allegations. The company asserted it is aware of the lawsuit and will defend its position in the court.

Cognizant in a lawsuit filed in Texas federal court has accused Infosys of illegally accessing data from TriZetto's software -- Facets and QNXT -- and using the same to develop and market a competing product. Cognizant offerings include TriZetto's Facets and



QNXT, which healthcare insurance firms use to automate tasks. Teaneck, New Jersey-based Cognizant has the bulk of its employees in India.

Cognizant has reportedly alleged that Infosys misused TriZetto's software to create "Test Cases for Facets," which repackaged its data into an Infosys product.

Further, it has reportedly alleged that Infosys created

software to extract data from QNXT, that contained confidential TriZetto information.

It is interesting to note that just this week, Cognizant named former Infosys executive Rajesh Varrier as global head of operations and India Chairman and Managing Director, following the resignation of Rajesh Nambiar, who is set to take over as Nasscom president.

Carraro India files draft papers for Rs 1,812-cr IPO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Carraro India Ltd, manufacturer of transmission systems for off-highway vehicles and other agricultural and construction equipment, on Saturday filed draft papers with markets regulator Sebi for its Rs 1,812-crore initial public offering (IPO).

The Pune-based company's initial share-sale is completely an Offer-For-Sale (OFS) by Carraro International S.E, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP).

Since the entire issue is an OFS, all the proceeds from the IPO will go directly to the selling shareholder, rather than to the company.

Founded in 1997, Carraro India, a subsidiary of Carraro S.p.A, began its manufacturing journey with transmission systems in 1999 and axles in 2000.

Hero Motors files draft papers for Rs 900-crore IPO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hero Motors Ltd, the auto-components firm of the Hero Motors Company (HMC) Group, on Saturday filed preliminary papers with markets regulator Sebi to raise Rs 900 crore through an initial public offering (IPO).

The IPO is a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares worth Rs 500 crore and an Offer-For-Sale (OFS) of shares valued at Rs 400 crore by promoters, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP).

The OFS includes Rs 250 crore worth of shares by O P Munjal Holdings, and Rs 75 crore each by Bhagyoday Investments and Hero Cycles.

The company may consider a pre-IPO placement of Rs 100 crore. If such placement is completed, the fresh issue size will be reduced.

Proceeds from the fresh



issue to the tune of Rs 202 crore will be used for debt payment, Rs 124 crore for purchase of equipment required for expansion in capacity of the company's facility in Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh.

Hero Motors is India's leading automotive technology company engaged in designing, developing, manufacturing and supplying high engineered powertrain solutions provider to automotive OEMs in the United States, Europe, India, and the ASEAN region.

Work-life balance poses challenge for women : Report

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Fewer flexible work options, work-life balance and family responsibilities pose substantial challenges for women trying to re-enter the workforce and are the main reasons for quitting their jobs, according to a report.

A survey by Naukri.com has revealed that work-life balance poses a significant concern, as 39 per cent of the women respondents cited it as a key reason for leaving their jobs.

"These issues pose substantial challenges for women trying to re-enter the workforce, with 41 per cent identifying a

lack of flexible work options and 35 per cent highlighting family responsibilities as significant barriers to continuing with their jobs," the report said.

The report is based on a survey conducted by online recruitment company Naukri.com among job seekers registered on its platform.

The report found that 73 per cent of women interviewed said equal opportunities exist for both men and women in employment and leadership positions, and 79 per cent of men agreed that both genders get equal chances at workplaces.

Despite a majority of respondents viewing that workplaces



offer equal opportunities to both genders, the report revealed that 24 per cent of women felt men have better growth prospects compared to only 8 per cent of men holding the same view.

On the other hand, 13 per

cent of men interviewed said women have better opportunities at the workplace, however, only 3 per cent of women shared this opinion.

"Our report highlights an encouraging trend towards gender equality in the work-

place, with 73 per cent of women recognising that equal opportunities do exist today.

It also reveals lingering challenges in areas of work-life balance and career advancement, underscoring the need for strategic interventions by industry to ensure continued progress," Naukri.com Chief Business Officer Pawan Goyal said. Even the gender pay gap remains an area of concern, with 31 per cent of women perceiving unequal compensation relative to 16 per cent of men.

It also found that 53 per cent of respondents said that salary compensation is entirely equal for both genders in the same role.

ICAI plans to leverage AI for professional growth of members

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) is planning to harness the potential of artificial intelligence for the professional growth of students and members, its president Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal said.

He said ICAI has set up a committee - 'AI in ICAI' - to explore how the idea can be leveraged, and will also explore and prepare a roadmap for using it in the operations of the institute.

The official said a similar



'ICAI CA GPT' was launched in July 2024 for the members and students.

ICAI has also come up with an initiative to educate the masses about the basics of taxation, banking, insurance and

other areas related to finance, Agarwal said.

Besides, the institute is conducting certificate courses for accountants of panchayats and municipal bodies, he added



**'FORK'LORE**

**THE NEWEST DESTINATION FOR DISCERNING PALATES, THE CORNER ROOM INVITES GUESTS TO INDULGE IN A GASTRONOMIC EXPERIENCE LIKE NO OTHER, WHERE EVERY CORNER SPILLS STORIES OF LAUGHTER, FLAVOR AND UNFORGETTABLE MOMENTS**



**Recipes by Unit Chef Dipak Samanta**

**BEETROOT CHEVRE SALAD**

**INGREDIENTS**

- For The Salad**
- Roasted Beetroot 70gm
  - Malta Orange 40gm
  - Passion Fruit Dressing 20gm
  - Salt 0.5gm
  - Evoo 2gm
  - Ice Berg 50gm
  - LoLo Rosso 20gm
  - Romaine 60gm
  - Candid Walnut 15gm
  - Roasted Peanut 2gm
  - Fried Wild Rice 3gm
  - Goat Cheese Chevere 10gm
- Passionfruit Dressing :**
- Passion Fruit Pure 100gm
  - Salt 2gm
  - Pepper 2 gm

**METHOD**

- 1. Roast The Beetroots:**
  - Preheat Your Oven To 400°F (200°C).
  - Wash The Beetroots Thoroughly And Trim The Tops And Roots.
  - Wrap Each Beetroot In Aluminium Foil And Place Them On A Baking Sheet.
  - Roast The Beetroots In The Preheated Oven For 45-60 Minutes, Until They Are Tender When Pierced With A Fork.
  - Once Done, Let Them Cool Slightly, Then Peel Off The Skins And Cut The Beetroots Into Wedges Or Cubes.
- 2. Prepare The Dressing:**
  - In A Small Bowl, Whisk Together Passionfruit puree With Salt And

Pepper To Taste. Set Aside.

**3. Assemble The Salad:**

- In A Large Salad Bowl Or On A Serving Platter, Arrange The Mixed Greens.
  - Place The Roasted Beetroot Wedges Or Cubes On Top Of The Greens.
  - Scatter The Crumbled Chevre (Goat Cheese) Over The salads.
  - Add The candied Walnuts, peanuts, and wild rice Thinly Sliced Malta orange.
- 4. Dress And Serve:**
- Drizzle The Prepared Dressing Over The Salad Just Before Serving.
  - Toss Gently To Combine, Ensuring The Dressing Coats All The Ingredients Evenly.
  - Serve The Salad Immediately.



**COTTAGE CHEESE CHIMICHURRI**

**METHOD**

**Prepare The Chimichurri Sauce:**

- In A Bowl, Combine The Finely Chopped Parsley, Cilantro.
- Add The Olive Oil, Red Wine Vinegar.
- Stir In The Dried Oregano And Red Pepper.
- Season The Sauce With Salt And Pepper To Taste.
- Mix Well, Then Set The Chimichurri Sauce Aside To Allow The Flavors To Meld
- While You Prepare The Cottage Cheese.

**2. Marinate The Cottage Cheese:**

- In A Shallow Dish, Mix Together The Olive Oil, Smoked Paprika, Salt, And Pepper.
- Add The Cottage Cheese Slices To The Marinade, Tossing Gently To Coat Them Evenly.
- Let The Cottage Cheese Marinate For At Least 15-20 Minutes To Absorb The Flavors.

**3. Cook The Cottage Cheese:**

- Heat A Non-stick Pan Or Regular Skillet Over Medium Heat.
- Once Hot, Add The Marinated Cottage Cheese Slices To The Pan.
- Cook The Cottage Cheese For 3-4 Minutes On Each Side Until They Develop A Nice Golden Crust. Be Careful Not To Overcook, As Cottage Cheese Can Become Tough.

**4. Assemble The Dish:**

- On A Serving Plate, Spread A Bed Of Cooked Couscous.
- Place The Grilled Or Roasted Vegetables Around Or On Top Of The Grains.
- Arrange The Cooked Cottage Cheese On Top Of The Grains And Vegetables.
- Generously Spoon The Chimichurri Sauce Over The Cottage Cheese. Pour Paprika Sauce on side.

**5. Garnish And Serve:**

- Garnish With Fresh Herbs Or Microgreens For A Fresh Touch.
- Serve Immediately, Allowing The Vibrant Flavors Of The Chimichurri To Complement The Creamy Cottage Cheese And The Hearty Grains

**INGREDIENTS**

- cottage Cheese 140 gm
- Bell pepper 40 gm
- pepper 2 gm
- chilli flakes 2 gm
- creamy pepper sauce 40 gm
- micro green 2 gm
- chimichurri 30 gm
- Zucchini 40 gm
- Broccoli 30 gm
- Oil 10 gm
- Onion 5 gm
- pimento couscous 120 gm

**For The chimichurri**

- parsley 45 gm
- fresh oregano 6 gm
- Pepper 4 gm
- Evoo 32 gm
- olive oil 18 gm
- Coriander 135 gm
- red wine vinegar 18 gm
- Salt 8 gm

**For The pimento couscous**

- boiled couscous 500 gm
- bell pepper 200 gm
- pepper 5 gm
- butter 10 gm
- olive oil 20 gm
- salt 10 gm

**For The creamy pepper sauce**

- water 20gm
- butter 5gm
- salt 2gm
- coconut cream 45gm
- sweet paprika 3gm
- pepper 2gm

**For Serving:**

- Cooked Couscous
- Grilled Or Roasted Vegetables (Zucchini, Bell Peppers, Broccoli, Etc.)
- Fresh Herbs Or Microgreens For Garnish

**CUBANO HOTDOG**



**INGREDIENTS**

**For The Hotdog Sandwich:**

- Hot Dog Buns (Preferably Hoagie Rolls Or Soft Sub Rolls) 1 no
- marinated Cubano chicken 165gm
- BBQ sauce 18gm
- Cubano seasoning powder 2gm
- garlic butter 10gm
- cilantro mayo 10 gm
- cilantro mayo 10gm
- romaine 5gm
- potato wags 100gm
- cocktail mayo 40gm

**CUBANO CHICKEN**

**INGREDIENTS:**

- chicken leg 470 gm
- oil 15 gm
- salt 3 gm
- garlic 6 gm
- pepper 2 gm

**COCKTAIL MAYO**

**INGREDIENTS:**

- mayonnaise 100 gm
- sriracha sauce 30 gm
- red tobacco 10 gm
- tomato ketchup 50 gm

**METHOD**

**Grill Or Cook The Hot Dogs breeds:**

- Preheat Your Grill Or A Stovetop Griddle To Medium Heat.
- Heat cooked Cubano chicken.

**2. Toast The Buns:**

- Place The Buns On The Grill Or Griddle, Cut Side Down, And Toast Them Until
- They Are Golden Brown And Crispy. This Should Take About 1-2 Minutes.

**3. Assemble The Sandwich:**

- Spread garlic butter cilantro Mayonnaise, and cocktail mayo On The Toasted
- Sides Of Each Bun.
- set the lettuce into the bread, and

spread Cubano chicken on it.

- Top The Hotdog with Cubano seasoning.

**4 Serve:**

- Cut The Sandwich In Half Diagonally For Easier Eating.
- Serve The Cubano Hotdog Sandwich Immediately With potato wags and cocktail
- Mayo On The Side.
- For Extra Flavour: Brush The Outside Of The Bun With A Little Garlic Butter
- Before serving For An Added Flavour Boost.
- Enjoy Your Delicious And Unique Cubano Hotdog Sandwich

**HEALTH TALK**

**STAYING INFORMED WITH M POX**

TEJAL SINHA

With monkeypox cases reported in China, Delhi and other places, the Telangana health minister has directed Health Department officials to stay vigilant and screen travellers arriving at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport.

**WHAT IS M POX?**

It is a virus illness caused by the monkeypox virus, which is part of the Orthopoxvirus genus, the same virus family as the variola virus (responsible for smallpox).

**SYMPTOMS**

**Dr. K. Krishna Swaroop Reddy, Senior Consultant in Pediatrics and Neonatology at Apollo Cradle and Children's Hospital in Jubilee Hills, highlights a few symptoms, which include:**

- **Fever:** A sudden onset of fever is common.
- **Headache:** often intense.
- **Muscle aches (myalgia):** general muscle pain.
- **Back pain:** Another common symptom.
- **Swollen lymph nodes (lymphadenopathy):** This is one of the key distinguishing features of smallpox.
- **Chills and exhaustion:** fatigue and chills are frequently reported.
- **Rash:** develops 1-3 days after the fever starts
- **Progresses through different stages:** macules, papules, vesicles, pustules and scabs

Health experts have recommended that Hyderabad, which is a popular choice for African students pursuing further education, raise awareness about mpox. To provide thorough information on this outbreak, *The Pioneer* connects with health professionals to gather additional insights for your protection



**HOW IS M POX TRANSMITTED?**

Mpox is transmitted through contact with an infected animal or person. "Transmission of the infection happens through direct contact with the sores, scabs, respiratory droplets, or oral fluids of an infected individual, typically during close, intimate interactions such as cuddling, kissing, or sexual activity. Research is currently in progress, but specialists are uncertain if the virus can be transmitted through semen or vaginal fluids," explains Dr. Sheetal Rao, an infectious disease physician, adding, "Transmission from animals to humans happens through injuries on the skin such as bites or scratches, or by coming into contact with an infected animal's blood, body fluids, or lesions."

**IS M POX CURABLE?**

Dr. V. Ramesh, infectious disease expert and pediatrician, guides us: "Mpox typically resolves on its own within two to four weeks, without the need for treatment. After the diagnosis, your healthcare provider will observe your condition, alleviate symptoms, prevent dehydration and

administer antibiotics for any secondary bacterial infections that may arise."

**DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT**

**Dr. Krishna further shares the diagnosis and treatment for a better understanding:**

**Diagnosis:**

- **Clinical evaluation:** based on symptoms, especially the characteristic rash and history of potential exposure.
- **Laboratory tests:**
  - polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing of samples from skin lesions.
  - blood tests for virus identification.
  - Serological tests can detect antibodies in some cases.

**Antiviral medications:**

**Tecovirimat (TPOXX):** An antiviral medication specifically approved for the treatment of smallpox and monkeypox. It can reduce the severity and duration of the illness. **Cidofovir and Brincidofovir:** These antiviral drugs may be used in severe cases or for patients with weakened immune systems, though their use is off-label and typically limited.

**PREVENTIVE MEASURES**

**The majority of individuals with mpox will experience a full recovery within a period of 2-4 weeks. Ways to manage symptoms and avoid spreading the infection:**

- **DO'S**
  - Remain indoors and within your personal space whenever you can. Frequently wash your hands with soap, water, or hand sanitiser, particularly before or after coming into contact with wounds.
  - Wear a mask and conceal any sores when in the vicinity of others until your skin condition improves. Keep dry skin uncovered unless in the presence of another person.
  - Refrain from touching objects in shared areas and regularly sanitise shared spaces.
  - Utilise saltwater rinses to treat mouth sores.
  - Utilise sitz baths or warm baths with baking soda or Epsom salts to help relieve body sores.
  - Use non-prescription medications such as paracetamol (acetaminophen) or ibuprofen for pain relief.
- **DON'T'S**
  - Popping blisters or scratching sores can delay healing, spread the rash to different areas of the body, and lead to infections in the sores.
  - Shave regions with open wounds until scabs are no longer present and new skin has formed beneath.
  - The disease is generally self-limiting.



**CONFIDENCE IN COMFORT**

Experience impeccable fit and unparalleled comfort this season with Wacoal's latest 'Everyday Elegance T-shirt Bra' collection. Boasting sleek molded cups and underwire support, this T-shirt bra ensures all-day comfort and effortless wearability. Available in a stunning array of colours including peach nectar, wasabi green, Beige and black, this versatile range empowers women to express their unique style with confidence.

**BANANA WALNUT CAKE**

Taste the sweetness of the banana walnut cake, a healthy, nutritious treat that is made with fresh ingredients. This cake combines the ideal ratio of rich flavours and necessary nutrients with the natural sweetness of ripe bananas and the pleasant crunch of fine walnuts. Perfect for gifting and as a healthy snack, it's made to satiate your appetite and fuel your body. **Price: Rs. 309/-**



natural sweetness of ripe bananas and the pleasant crunch of fine walnuts. Perfect for gifting and as a healthy snack, it's made to satiate your appetite and fuel your body. **Price: Rs. 309/-**

**WHAT'S NEW**

**MOIRA 2-IN-1 LASH ADHESIVE LINER**

For a simple lash application, MOIRA 2-in-1 lash adhesive and waterproof liner are a necessity. Long-wearing, pigmented eyeliner with a mess-free applicator that doubles as lash adhesive and lasts up to 12 hours. With the 2-in-1 contact lens-friendly felt tip liner, you can apply lashes in a flash and easily touch them up later. **Price- 1410**



**AURELLE CLEAR CANVAS**

The clinically proven product comprises clean ingredients and is based on a unique formulation consisting of magnesium and vitamin C. Aurelle Clear Canvas, designed to manage metabolic health and harmonise her hormones, provides adequate nutrition to alleviate conditions like acne while making the skin radiant inside out. The other benefits of it include reduced inflammation, hyperandrogenism and ovarian volume, while it further helps in improving antioxidant capacity, vascular function, lipid profile, and sleep quality. **Price: INR 1450 (30 capsules)**



**ROWA'S JEWELS SHOWCASES EMOTIONAL TREASURES OF BOND**

Rowa's Jewels is thrilled to announce the launch of its exclusive new offering, #SistersAreJewels. This year, they celebrate the unique and cherished bond between siblings with a stunning array of jewellery pieces designed to honour every type of sister. Understanding that every sister is a gem in her own right, they have crafted a diverse selection that caters to different styles and personalities, ensuring that there's a perfect piece for each individual. For the experimental sister, the Russian Emerald Majestic Ring is the perfect choice. Inspired by the opulent and intricate designs of Russian imperial jewellery, this ring features a stunning central emerald that evokes the lush forests and rich heritage of Russia. Set in a luxurious gold band, the ring reflects the grandeur of the czarist era.



**MEET CUTE : HEELS**

Crafted with beautiful pastel embellishments, these block heels are ready to be your wedding-to-wedding companion this season! Before you know it, you'll be twirling in them on the dance floor. **Price: Rs. 8,058.42**

**CREATIVE CURATION OF CRAFT CHOCOLATE CONFECTIONS!**

Inspired by the many flavours, Manam Chocolate launched a new collection. The exciting collection offers an eclectic mix of tastes and textures. Nutty chocolate clusters, creamy bonbons, chocolatey tablets, ganache-filled palettes, crunchy chocolate barks, hazelnut giandujas, crumbly shortbread cookies and more.



**NUTRI-CUP PORTABLE BLENDER + SIPPY STAINLESS STEEL BOTTLE, GIFT COMBO**

It is the ultimate solution for delicious smoothies and juices on the go that can be carried anywhere. This thoughtfully designed combo ensures that your ladies never have to compromise on their nutrition, even with their busy schedules. Gift your health-conscious ladies the Nutri-Cup and Sippy Bottle Combo and help them stay nourished and hydrated. **Price: 1,599/-**



**UNLEASH VIBRANT BEAUTY WITH COLOR CUPID**

Make your loved one feel special with Color Cupid's vibrant and empowering range. Choose from the Lip Duo Balm + Liquid Lipstick for all-day hydrated color or the Forever Love Matte Liquid Lipstick for its 18-hour stay and hydrating formula. Surprise them with versatile Bullet Lipsticks or precise Kajal and Eyeliner for stunning looks.



**HOW TO CLEANSE NEGATIVE ENERGIES THROUGH LAMA FERA HEALING TECHNIQUES!**

Lama Fera is a powerful healing technique that originates from Buddhism and is used to cleanse negative energies, negative thoughts, heal emotional and physical ailments and promote overall well-being. **Here are some tips to follow for cleansing negative energies:**

- 1- Attunement**

It requires proper attunement from a qualified master. Ensure that you have received the necessary attunements and training before performing the healing.
- 2- Preparation**

Clearly define your intentions for the healing session, focusing on cleansing negative energies. Create a peaceful and sacred space for the session. This can be done by lighting candles, incense, or playing soft, calming music
- 3- Invocation**

Invoke the presence of Buddha Ji's energies. This can be done by chanting specific mantras or prayers that you have been taught during your training.
- 4- Use of symbols**

It involves use of specific symbols that are activated during the session. Visualise or draw these symbols on the energy centers (chakras) of the person or place to receive the healing.

**Hand movements**

Use specific hand movements and gestures as instructed during your training to channel the healing energies. These movements help direct the energy flow and remove blockages.

**Healing process**

Begin by scanning the body of the person or place receiving the healing to identify areas with negative energies or blockages. Use your hands to channel the Lama Fera energy into the identified areas. Focus on cleansing and releasing negative energies. Pay special attention to balancing the chakras, as they are key energy centers in the body.

**Closing the session**

Seal the energy - Once the healing is complete, draw symbols for sealing the person's energy field to protect them from any negative influences.

**8- Express gratitude** - Thank the higher energies, spiritual guides, and the person receiving the healing for participating in the session.

**9-Hydration** - Ensure the person receiving the healing is properly and advise them to drink plenty of water to help flush out any released toxins. Lots of love n blessings to readers!

*(The author, Gita Kalyal, is a vastu-astro consultant, numerologist, Lama Fera healer, counsellor and founder of Shubhaarambh.)*

# the pioneer agenda

"If things happen for the good, I say that Lord Krishna wished it so, and if anything goes against me, even then I say Lord Krishna wanted it to happen that way"  
— Sushma Swaraj



## Janmashtami THE CELEBRATION OF DIVINE BIRTH

As devotees gather to honour his birth, the tale of Krishna's miraculous arrival inspires hearts, reminding us of the enduring power of faith and the timeless victory of good over evil, writes **DIVYA BHATIA**

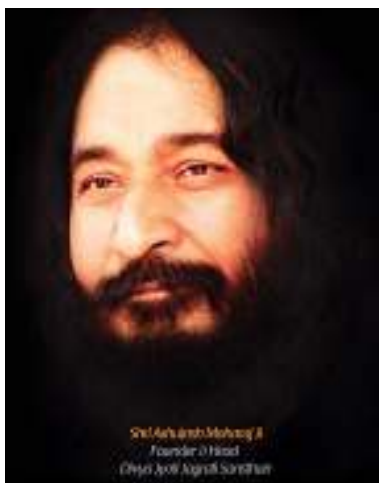
In the stillness of the midnight hour, when the world is wrapped in darkness, a divine light descends upon the earth, heralding the birth of Lord Krishna. Janmashtami, a festival that transcends time, celebrates this miraculous moment when the cosmos rejoiced, and the universe conspired to bring forth a savior destined to restore dharma and vanquish evil. As the bells ring out and devotees gather in reverence, the story of Krishna's birth is retold—an epic tale of love, courage, and the triumph of righteousness. It is a night when the heavens dance in celebration, and hearts are filled with the timeless wisdom of the one who forever changed the course of humanity. Krishna Janmashtami, also known as Krishnashtami, Janmashtami, or Gokulashtami, is a major Hindu festival celebrated with devotion across India and by Hindu communities worldwide. This occasion marks the birth of Lord Krishna, the eighth avatar of Vishnu, whose life and teachings inspire millions. Observed on the eighth day (Ashtami) of the dark fortnight (Krishna Paksha) in Shravana Masa (amanta tradition) or Bhadrapada Masa (purnimanta tradition), Janmashtami typically falls in late August. The festival is not just a religious event but a celebration of the values Krishna embodied. Krishna's birth is a tale of divine drama in Hindu mythology. Born to Queen Devaki and King Vasudeva in Mathura, his arrival was marked by peril. Devaki's brother, the tyrant King Kamsa, imprisoned the couple after hearing a prophecy that foretold his death at the hands of their eighth child. Kamsa had already killed six of their children. To protect Krishna, Vasudeva secretly transported the newborn across the Yamuna River to Gokul, where he was raised by Nanda Maharaj and Yashoda. Krishna's escape and triumph over Kamsa symbolize the victory of good over evil, a central theme of Janmashtami. The festival reminds devotees of the eternal struggle between righteousness and wickedness, urging them to uphold virtue. Krishna's life represents divine intervention that restored justice, reinforcing the timeless value of standing against injustice. The metaphor of Janmashtami is rich in symbolic meaning, depicting the eternal battle between good and evil and the soul's journey toward spiritual awakening. Kamsa symbolizes the destructive ego, while Devaki represents human consciousness carrying divine potential. Vasudeva symbolizes human will aligned with divine purpose. Krishna, the incarnated soul, nurtured in a righteous environment, eventually overcomes the ego (Kamsa) to establish peace and harmony, reflecting the soul's journey to transcend ego and realize its divine nature. Sadhvi Tapeswari Bharti Ji of Divya Jyoti Jagrati Sansthan eloquently describes the metaphors surrounding Krishna's birth, noting that Kamsa represents the ego, with its demon-like qualities such as arrogance, pride, and ignorance. According to her, Devaki symbolizes the part of the human self that harbors consciousness, while Vasudeva represents the will attuned to divine command. Krishna, as the incarnated soul, must separate from the



### Where to celebrate?

DJJS Shri Krishna Janmashtami 2024 at Dwarka, New Delhi Divya Jyoti Jagrati Sansthan (DJJS) celebrates Shri Krishna Janmashtami Mahotsav 2024 under the theme "Darshan Itihaas Ka, Parivartan Aaj Ka" (Recalling the Values of the Past & Transforming the Present) on August 25th and 26th, 2024. The festival will be held at DDA Ground, Sector 10, Dwarka, New Delhi, starting from 7 PM each evening. This year's celebration features several unique and innovative elements designed to enhance the festival experience. A major highlight will be the Environment Conservation initiative, showcased through a remarkable Govardhan Mountain 3D Model. Echoing Lord Krishna's dedication to environmental preservation in the

Govardhan Leela, this massive, cutting-edge model will incorporate digital and lighting elements. The model will also feature Sankalp/pledge placards representing various commitments to environmental conservation. The event will unfold with captivating performances, including 15 dance ballets and theatrical presentations depicting significant episodes from the life of Jagatguru Shri Krishna. Key performances will include dramatic interpretations of the 'Slaying of Tyrant Ruler Kamsa', 'Virat Roop Darshan of Shri Krishna', 'Slaying of Kaliya Snake', 'Paundra-Ka-The Fake Krishna', 'Devotion of Social Reformer Meera Bai', and 'Joyful Birth Celebration of Lord Krishna'.



ego to fulfill his purpose, much like the soul must detach from worldly desires to attain spiritual enlightenment. Divya Guru Shri Ashutosh Maharaj Ji, founder of Divya Jyoti Jagrati Sansthan, further elaborates on this symbolism. He suggests that the soul, nurtured in a holy and righteous environment (symbolized by Yashoda and Nandlal), must evolve to ultimately overcome the ego, leading to inner peace and harmony. Sri Gaur Prabhuji, Vice President of ISKCON Temple Dwarka, Delhi, emphasized that Janmashtami is a profound reminder of Lord Krishna's teachings for humanity's upliftment. Celebrating the 5251st anniversary of His appearance highlights the enduring relevance of the Bhagavad Gita, guiding

lives toward devotion, humility, and love. In today's world, marked by pandemics and conflict, Krishna's divine wisdom is essential. This festival is a key moment to reconnect with dharma and strengthen the bond with the Supreme Personality. In today's chaotic world, Krishna's teachings provide insights for managing stress, leading an ethical life, and fostering personal growth. The Bhagavad Gita's emphasis on equanimity and detachment offers tools for navigating modern pressures. Krishna's principles of selfless duty and moral values guide ethical decision-making and achieving a balanced life. His focus on self-realization encourages introspection, helping us understand our true selves amid distractions. This philosophy extends to Janmashtami foods, chosen to reflect Krishna's principles of balance, purity, and nourishment. The simple, nutrient-rich ingredients like fruits, nuts, seeds, and grains not only sustain the body but also maintain mental clarity and spiritual focus. Just as Krishna's teachings guide us toward a balanced life, these foods nourish both body and soul, reinforcing the connection between what we consume and how we live. **Dr. Sangeeta Tiwari, Clinical Nutritionist at Artemis Lite, NFC, New Delhi**, explained that Janmashtami foods are designed not only to sustain energy during fasting but also to offer numerous health benefits. Ingredients like fruits, nuts, seeds, dairy, and gluten-

## RECIPES

### Black rice and coconut kheer

By Aditi Dixit, Chief, CYK Hospitalities

#### INGREDIENTS

##### FOR BLACK RICE KHEER

- Black Rice (washed & soaked) - 50 gms
- Coconut Milk - 500ml
- Full fat Milk - 1 ltr
- Jaggery - 135 gms
- Coconut (fresh, grated) - 80 gms
- Cashew nuts (fried) - 30 gms
- Raisins (fried) - 30 gms
- Walnuts (fried) - 20 gms
- Chironji (fried) - 10 gms
- Cardamom Powder - 5 gms
- Cinnamon Powder - 3 gms
- Ghee - 45 gms

##### FOR FOXNUT ROSE PRALINE

- Granulated Sugar - 200 gms
- Foxnut (roasted) - 15 gms
- Rose petals - 8 gms

#### METHOD

##### OR FRIED NUTS

- In a pan, add ghee and let it warm.
- Once the ghee is moderately hot add raisins and fry them. Once done take the raisins off, drain the excess ghee in the pan



- and let it cool down.
- Put cashew nuts, walnuts and chironji in the ghee and lightly stir them till golden brown. Once done take them off the pan and drain the excess and let it cool down.

##### FOR ROSE FOXNUT PRALINE

- In a heavy bottom pan take granulated sugar and let it melt nicely and slowly.
- Do not stir the sugar while it is melting.
- Bring the sugar to a beautiful bronze shade, and pour it on a silicon mat or a well oiled granite top or thali.
- Once poured, put roasted fox nuts and

dried rose petals on it and keep it aside in a well ventilated room.

- Once done, break it randomly and store in an airtight container.

##### FOR KHEER

- Soak washed black rice for at least 30 minutes. Once done, dry them in the air for another 30 minutes. Blitz it very coarsely for 2-3 seconds and keep it aside.
- Take all the milk in heavy bottomed kadai and cook the milk till first boil.
- Add the grated coconut flesh to the milk, stir it for 2-3 minutes.
- Once done, add black rice to the milk and cook it for at least 40-45 till the rice is cooked and milk is reduced to half, take it off the cooktop to rest for a minimum of 3-4 hours.
- In a different pan take jaggery and 50 ml water and cook it and make a syrup.
- Once the syrup is cooled down add the syrup to cold kheer for the sweetness.
- Adjust the sweetness according to the taste and add cardamom powder.
- Add fried nuts to kheer and leave some for garnish.
- Pour the kheer in a beautiful bowl, garnish it with fried nuts, coconut flakes and rose fox nut praline.

### Kaju Badam Astrian laddo, Safawi khajoor and Manna Anjeer

By Richard Charlie, Chef, Namaste Dwaar Resort

#### INGREDIENTS

- Almond-50gm
- Cashew - 50gm
- Pista- 30gm
- Melon seed- 25gm
- Raisin - 25gm
- Pure ghee- 25 ml
- Dates- 20 gm
- Fig - 20 gm
- Apricot - 20 gm
- Jagary - 15gm



#### METHOD

- On a medium flame add the desi ghee and roast the almonds and cashew until slightly aromatic, add pista and roast again for 2 to 3 min.
- Roast melon seed and raisin in a small amount of ghee until it cracked
- Add dates and fig to the mixture and roughly blend it partially
- Add jagary into it according to taste and mix all the ingredients together.
- Keep it in a cool and dry place for 45

min and then again mix well by adding the chop nuts and dry fruits

- Make small round balls according to your size and enjoy this delicious and healthy laddoo are ready to serve
- HEALTH TIPS**— dry fruit laddoo are full of vitamin E, magnesium and full of Zinc, and other essential nutrients Which helps in giving energy to the body organs If a person feel low in energy, a good note of dry fruit and dates laddoo will make you feel rejuvenated of energy.

### Sahi tukda

Amandeep Singh Executive Sous Chef, The Westin Mumbai Garden City

#### INGREDIENTS

- 6 slices of bread
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup ghee (clarified butter)
- 1/4 cup cashews, chopped
- 1/4 cup almonds, chopped
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 1/2 teaspoon cardamom powder
- A pinch of saffron strands (optional)
- Silver vark (edible silver foil), for garnish (optional)

#### METHOD

- Trim the edges of the bread slices and cut them into smaller pieces or quarters.

- Heat ghee in a pan over medium heat. Fry the bread pieces until they turn golden brown and crisp. Remove them from the pan and set them aside on a paper towel to drain excess ghee.
- In the same pan, add cashews, almonds, and raisins. Sauté them until they are golden. Remove and set aside.
- In another pan, bring the milk to a boil. Reduce the heat and add sugar, cardamom powder, and

saffron strands (if using). Mix well and let it simmer for a few minutes until the sugar dissolves and the milk thickens slightly.

- Add the fried bread pieces to the milk mixture. Gently mix to ensure the bread is coated with the milk.
- Allow the bread to soak in the milk for about 10-15 minutes, letting it absorb the flavors.
- Serve the Double Ka Meetha warm, garnished with fried nuts and silver vark.



free grains such as buckwheat and amaranth provide essential nutrients that support overall well-being. Fruits are rich in vitamins and antioxidants, aiding hydration and digestion. Nuts and seeds offer healthy fats and proteins for sustained energy and brain health. Dairy ensures gut health and muscle support, while grains like buckwheat provide slow-releasing carbohydrates to

maintain energy levels. Together, these foods ensure balanced energy, digestion, and hydration during the fast, promoting overall health. Janmashtami is more than just a celebration of Lord Krishna's birth; it is a profound reflection on the eternal struggle between good and evil, the importance of righteousness, and the path to spiritual awakening. As devotees

come together to celebrate this festival, they are reminded of the timeless wisdom that Krishna imparted, wisdom that continues to guide humanity toward a life of purpose, peace, and harmony. In a world that often feels disconnected from spiritual values, Janmashtami serves as a beacon, illuminating the path of righteousness and divine love.



CHAT-O-CINO

**THE PIONEER HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO CONNECT WITH THE LEGENDARY SINGER KUMAR SANU, KNOWN AS THE MELODY KING OF BOLLYWOOD, ABOUT HIS LATEST TRACK, 9 TO 5 GRIND, HIS LEGACY IN THE MUSIC AND A LOT MORE AROUND IT**

**'PURE EMOTIONS THROUGH SONGS NEVER FADE AWAY,'**

**KUMAR SANU ON HIS LEGACY**

TEJAL SINHA

**K**umar Sanu, who we know as the Melody King of Bollywood, beyond a doubt has a voice that cures your inner pain. His voice brings out the song's aura so well that it makes the track a classic hit! His discography has romantic songs like *Tu Kaun Hai Tera Naam Kya*, *Paas Woh Aane Lage*, *Dil Hai Ke Maanta Nahin*, or the *Aashiqui* tracks and groovy songs like *O Laal Dupatte Waali*, *Yeh Kaali Kaali Aankhein* and *Main Khiladi Tu Anari*; well, the list is endless. That's the legacy that he has created! From our parents humming his songs, they are to date as out-of-the-ordinary as they were in the past. The mark that he has created in the history of Indian music is something of an honour.

The man who is known for breaking his own record is 'The Kumar Sanu' and we had the privilege to connect with the king himself as he was much-keen on interacting with us about his latest track, *9 to 5 Grind*, along with his daughters Shannon and Annabelle. The song delves into the daily grind of people with traditional 9-to-5 jobs and how it affects their ability to follow their true passions. This emotional track is intended to connect with audiences worldwide, promoting the appreciation of small moments in life.

The excitement for the singer gradually grew. How? He shares with us, "I initially didn't want to do the song. After hearing the track and concept of the song, I agreed to sing it. My daughters left no stone unturned to get me on board. At last, they convinced me and I think the song came out to be great."

What really surprised us when doing our research before the chat was that Kumar Sanu has sung songs in not one or two languages but twenty-eight other languages? English, being one of them and this latest track also being in English, the vocalist tells us, "I have sung English in the past, but my main concern was getting the American accent down. Because I was singing along with my daughter Shannon, I had to make sure that I sounded just as good. I learned the dialect of certain words and sang them accordingly."

Guess what? The *Chaand Sitare* singer humorously shares an anecdote: "In this whole process, my daughters were much more relaxed and I was the one on the hot seat. There was laughter along with focus-driven creation as well."

Well, hahaha, isn't that how daughters work with their dearest dads? With great excitement, this time being guided by his daughters, he goes on, "It was certainly a very special feeling for me as a father to see my daughters creating and working hands-on with their craft. I loved their teamwork and enthusiasm. As an artist, I had been directed by great music directors and now being directed by two Gen Z little girls was definitely something fresh and new for me."

The millennials or Gen Zs who certainly enjoy old songs, especially those of Kumar Sanu, wouldn't be aware, but it was Nadeem Akhtar Saifand and Shrawan Kumar Rathod who played a major part in his journey, from giving him his biggest break with *Aashiqui* songs to his name being changed and later being named Tiger!

35 years down in the industry, his charm and aura to date remain the same. Honoured with this love he's to late been receiving, the *Dil Jigar Nazar Kya Hai* singer says, "I am truly grateful to all my fans who've loved me and my voice for the past 35



*Dheere Dheere Se Meri Zindagi* singer. Who would you believe doesn't listen to his own songs? Well, yes, that's true! He tells us, "When I listen to my songs today, I feel like I could've sung them differently or I could've added something in this section, which is why I end up translating them through my live performances. That's where I change up a bit and sing how I could've sung in the recording."

You know there was also a time when he recorded 28 songs in just one day and this was something unintended. "I had a 40-day US tour and all the music directors had wanted me to sing their songs," tells us *Tukur Tukur Dekhte Ho Kya* vocalist as he continues, "I decided to call them all to the studio to get their songs recorded. I was so engrossed in the recording that I didn't realise it until the next morning when I saw that." Damnn! Now we understand why he is called the 'KING'. Well, there have been many records that he broke, but winning back-to-back Filmfare awards stands out as the ultimate record for him.

There was also an unfortunate day in singer's journey when he lost his dad and on the same day, he had to perform live. But he believed that 'the show must go on' and performed with his charming smile. Well, that's how dedicated he has been to his craft.

We further hear, "The industry is going through a phase where they are heavily influenced by the west but have forgotten that our culture is deeply rooted within our Indian music. It's not that certain lyrics and sounds have not been used in the past, they have, keeping the culture in mind. The music directors and lyricists back then would only create such songs if it was required as per the situation or scene in the movie. It's all about how you convey it. Music is a powerful element that heals your souls."

Many of his songs, like *Tumhe Apna Banane Ki Kasam*, among many others, have been remade. "I am happy that the remakes are being made because the songs are being reintroduced to the current generation," says the *Dil Ka Aalam* singer. That being said, he shares, "I'd prefer if the remake versions were sung by the original singer. When you go ahead and get another artist to sing the song, the first thing people do is compare the original to the new version. Regardless of how well or poorly you sang, you'd get compared and it won't work!"

**Brushstrokes of heritage, goggles and humour**

AARTI SREENATH

**I**n the heart of Vijayanagaram, amidst the echoes of royal footsteps and the intricacies of palace architecture, a young boy grew up immersed in the art that surrounded him. Today, that boy is A. Rajeswara Rao, a celebrated artist who seamlessly translates the elegance of his childhood memories into his artwork. His journey is one of deep sensitivity, profound creativity and unwavering dedication, reflecting a life steeped in artistic heritage.

Rajeswara Rao's early years were spent in a uniquely privileged environment. "We lived near the King's palace," he recalls, "a vast, protected area of about thirty acres with front and back gates. The palace grounds were our playground and its majestic curtains, intricate windows and arches left a lasting imprint on my imagination." These childhood experiences, wandering through the royal corridors, laid the foundation for his artistic expression. "The designs and details I saw as a child continue to influence my work even today," he says. Unlike many artists who draw inspiration from books or external sources, his creations stem directly from his personal experiences. "It's all about what I lived through, which makes it easy for me to channel these memories into my art."

His artistic journey was significantly shaped by his father, Antyakula Paidiraju, a traditional artist renowned for his modern art forms in Andhra Pradesh. "Until I completed my BFA, I was always in close contact with him, absorbing his techniques and philosophy," Paidiraju was known for his realistic and creative art, with a strong leaning toward folk and decorative styles, which undoubtedly influenced his own artistic development. He later ventured to Hyderabad Central University (HCU) for his Master's in Fine Arts (MFA). The influence of his home environment, filled with the constant hum of artistic activity, also played a significant role in his development. "My father never forced anything on me," he remembers. "He was a soft-spoken man, very artistic and gentle. He allowed me to explore the world on my own terms, always encouraging but never pushing."

After completing his intermediate studies, his father was called to start a fine arts department at Andhra University. Following in his father's footsteps, he pursued his BFA in Fine Arts. After completing his studies, he embarked on his professional journey with a small job as an art teacher in Garividi. However, the artist in him longed for more. He returned to Hyderabad to pursue his master's, and upon completion, he joined forces with four friends to establish a studio in the old city. "I wanted to go to Shantiniketan but didn't get a seat," he shares. "However, I was second on the waiting list at HCU and that's where my journey continued, under the mentorship of Laxma Goud." For five years, he and his friends lived together in the studio, creating art and navigating the challenges of the time. "We faced many challenges, especially with smoke in the area, so we had to move from one place to another," he recalls. "But those were formative years, filled with creativity and camaraderie."

The decision to move to Hyderabad marked a pivotal moment in his life. "Coming to Hyderabad meant stepping out of my father's shadow," he says. "I couldn't go back to my village; it would have meant returning to a life of dependence. I had to make my own decisions and find my own path." The city, with its vibrant art scene, offered the perfect backdrop for Rao to explore his individuality and professional aspirations. "We lived in the old city, cooking our meals, working and sleeping on the floor," he recalls with a smile. Despite the hardships, he was determined to carve out a professional identity independent of commercial constraints. "I didn't want a job that would bind me. I wanted to create freely, without the pressures of a regular income."

His decision to marry Padma, an artist with a stable job, was also a strategic one. "I knew I needed someone who understood my world, who could support me financially and emotionally. Padma understands my world," he says with deep gratitude. "Her stable job has been our anchor, enabling me to create freely without worrying about income."

For him, art is not just a profession—it is life itself. "Without art, there is no Rajeswara Rao," he declares. "I can't do anything else. I can't even book a cab on my own; my wife and children handle everything. My mind is solely dedicated to art, nothing else." His dedication to his craft is evident in every word he speaks and every memory he shares. "People talk about politics or weddings, but I don't engage. My world is art and that's where I find my true self."



One day, inspired by a story his maid told him about her aunt, who struggled to get married due to societal expectations, he began to explore themes of transformation and imitation in his art. "I imagined a fat woman wearing goggles, drinking Pepsi, with a motorbike and an almirah and this vision became the subject of my art," he recalls. "People started asking about my paintings and when I explained them, they found them humorous. This led me to start giving titles to all my artwork. Without humour, goggles and titles, my paintings wouldn't be the same." His use of goggles in his artwork became a signature element, symbolising the attempt to mask one's true self. "Students who came to learn from me thought I couldn't draw eyes and that's why I used goggles in my paintings," he says with a chuckle. "But when I showed them my realistic work, they realised I could and they were confused about the goggles. I explained that I use goggles to hide emotions, as eyes reveal a lot about a person's feelings. The point is, people may try to imitate higher society, but their rural background remains visible and when they wear goggles, their appearance changes dramatically, which has become a central theme in my work."

As he looks ahead, he is excited about the upcoming release of a book celebrating the hundred years of the King's reign in Vijayanagaram, for which he has been asked to do the illustrations. "It's a full circle," he says with a smile. "Going back to those memories, those influences—it's like reconnecting with a part of me."

**TRENDING**

**PERSON**

**BRIAN NICCOL**

When Brian takes over as CEO of Starbucks next month, he will have an exceptionally long journey to work. Every day, Mr. Niccol will travel 1,600 kilometers to the company's Seattle headquarters by corporate jet.

**VIDEO**

**MONEY STUNT ON HYDERABAD ROADS**

A shocking video has surfaced from Hyderabad. To attract people's attention towards his content, a YouTuber suddenly started blowing wads of rupees on road, after which a chaotic situation was created there.

**MAHARAJA**

**MAHARAJA**

Maharaja, the most-watched Indian film on Netflix in 2024, is a new record in Indian cinema, thanks to Vijay Sethupathi. In addition to captivating viewers in theatres, Nithilan Swaminathan's action thriller has had a big influence on digital platforms too!

**SONG**

**BIG DAWGS**

*Big Dawgs*, the most recent song by HanuMankind, achieved yet another accomplishment by being among the Top 10 songs on the Billboard Global 200 singles.

**PICTURE**

**HISTORIC VISIT**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made an official visit to Poland, becoming India's first Prime Minister in 45 years (after #Morarji Desai) to be visiting the European nation.



# A farmhand who went on to become an educationist

Having learnt valuable lessons from the school of hard knocks early in life, Prof R Limbadri, Chairman of the Telangana State Council of Higher Education, in conversation with **Deepika Pasham** of *The Pioneer*, looks back on his rise as an educationist from the seeds of success sown in his mind by his dad through letters to him and his family. Even though these are times when technology has supplanted heart-to-heart letter-writing, Prof Limbadri's insights along his incredible journey from a remote village in Nizamabad to TGSCHE reflect the undying spirit of a fighter who has triumphed the most formidable odds in life



### CHILDHOOD IN A REMOTE VILLAGE

I grew up in Ravutla village, previously known as Ragutla, in Sirkonda mandal of Nizamabad District - a place without electricity or transport facilities. Farming was my dad's initial occupation. Without owning any piece of land, he used to work on another farmer's field. Realising that income from this work was not enough to support the family, my father left for Mumbai in search of better opportunities. Although I had chosen to continue working in the fields, my father, determined to ensure a better life for me, sent word from Mumbai that I should be educated.

### LIFE-CHANGING LETTER

My father first communicated through a letter, asking the family members to join him in Mumbai. Once we got there, I was enrolled in a school. I quickly progressed through the first and second grades in a single year. However, due to cramped living conditions, the family returned to the village. I continued my education, walking long distances to attend classes, eventually moving to a hostel. In the eighth grade, I had fallen ill and missed a month of classes, prompting me to drop out due to shame. My father, upon coming to know of this, wrote a letter directly to me, urging me to return to school forthwith.

### MEMORIES OF MUMBAI

I fondly recall a photograph taken in Mumbai during a family visit. Amid a massive strike in the city, my father decided to leave for Dubai to find work. The family had gathered in Mumbai, where we took a photograph that reminded me of how much I resembled my father. Though the photo is now lost, the memory of that moment remains.

### ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITIES EARLY

During my tenth grade, I had discussed with my mother the need to contribute to the family's income, considering that father alone could not support all of us. I made attempts to find work in Mumbai, even by paying a middleman to help secure a job. However, after days of fruitless efforts, my father intervened, writing a letter to the middleman, asking him to return the money and send me home with a train ticket.

### STRIVING FOR ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

I was not an extraordinary student; yet, I was sincere and driven by the need for recognition. In a class of sixty, I aimed to stand out by excelling in specific subjects. One night, I studied intensely for a unit test on a chapter in biology, determined to answer every question correctly. When the teacher called my name, praising my score of 23 out of 25, I proudly stood up, savoring the moment of acknowledgment.

### SHIFTING FOCUS: FROM MEDICINE TO PROGRESSIVISM

Initially, I had aspired to become a doctor, performing well in science subjects. However, during the second year of BPC, I realised that the interest in progressive ideologies growing in me was also distracting me from my studies. I decided to pursue Bachelor of Arts instead; thereafter, becoming active in student politics and eventually served as the president of the student wing.

### FIRST JOB OPPORTUNITY

During my M Phil studies, a faculty member at Dr. BR Ambedkar College left for a position at Osmania University, creating a vacancy. The Head of the Department then encouraged me to apply for the position. Amid competition with another candidate, I was selected for my teaching skills. I began teaching public administration, earning Rs 700 per month.

### MARRIAGE ON STAGE

Six to seven months into my first job, I got married to a girl I had known from my days in Nizamabad. Our wedding was a simple affair, conducted on a stage with no dowry and only the exchange of garlands. My wife now works as the Principal of Dr. BR Ambedkar College.

### OSMANIA UNIVERSITY: A PROFESSIONAL PILLAR

Osmania University played a central role in my career, providing me with numerous opportunities -- from my first job to various leadership positions. I served as the Assistant Coordinator, Vice Principal, Joint Director of the Audit Cell, twice as Registrar, OSD to the Vice-Chancellor, Vice Chairman, Officiating Chairman and now, Chairman.

### INVOLVEMENT IN AGITATION

Throughout my career, I have participated in the phases of the Telangana movement in my own way. Alongside two experienced colleagues, I spoke out during the agitation. They invited Prof Jayashankar and others to Nizamabad, organising a successful meeting in Tilak Garden. This was followed by similar events in Warangal and other areas.

### BOYCOTTING MEDIA HOUSE IN A VILLAGE

During these meetings, the idea of boycotting news channels and papers to avoid government retaliation gained traction. This movement spread and a village in Nizamabad, Mothe, decided to boycott the daily and channel of a popular media house. I, along with Prof M Kodandaram and Mallemlali Laxmiah, visited the village to study the situation, noting its similarities with Telangana's struggle. The village had a vagu (rivulet) on both sides but it had no water just as Telangana had Krishna and Godavari but no water. Prof M Kodandaram wrote a book on the subject and we assisted him.

### FIRST MEETING WITH EX-CM KCR

Today when we go back to the time spent with Prof Jayashankar and Prof Kodandaram, we remember how much experience we had gained. We still have respect and consider them our teachers. The first time we were introduced to former chief minister K Chandrashekar Rao it turned out to be a beautiful experience.

### FAMILY LIFE

I acknowledge that I have been criticised for not spending enough time with my family. I have two siblings and two children - Sanket, who works in the USA and Shrestha, who works with Uber. Despite the challenges, we are a happy and comfortable family.

### NEVER AFTER POSTS

Throughout my career, I have never asked for promotions or positions. Instead, my work was recognised by both the state governments, which entrusted me with responsibilities to implement reforms in educational institutions. I remain committed to my duties, with no regrets.

### IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENTS

As Registrar, I focused on improving facilities for students, such as providing purified water in girls' washrooms. One day an engineer raised a complainant with the Vice Chancellor and I was present there, laughing all the while. For, I could explain that the water came from the Sriram Sagar Project pipeline, while the purifier was donated by the State Bank of India. So, what is the problem and why are my students are losing hair due to water supply? I had taken the step because my role is to work for students' welfare, not just sit in air-conditioned offices.

### CHAIRMAN OF TELANGANA STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Currently, as Chairman of the Telangana State Council of Higher Education, we have been instrumental in implementing student-friendly initiatives like DOST, an online registration system that allows students to enrol from anywhere. Recently we initiated efforts to come up with a toll-free number for curbing drug influence on students.

**RAPID FIRE**

**Fav hero:** Never bought a ticket for a movie in a year

**Fav food:** Non-vegetarian

**Fav colour:** In 10, shirts eight are white

Color calibration bars and registration marks.