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India and Italy are strong **maritime** nations: Sonowal 5

'India's growth propelled by **ADVANCEMENT** in science, tech'

8

Getting into the **SKIN OF** characters with elan

Dil se

QUOTE OF THE DAY the pioneer

From Chandrababu, Kiran Kumar Reddy, and Rosaiah to KCR, everyone said they'll adopt Palamuru. Why should they adopt, can't the son of the soil do development? Will we get this chance again? After Burgula Ramakrishna Rao, it took 70 years to get this chance (of becoming CM). Should we lose this chance or develop our region? If we lose this chance, we may never get it again.

- Revanth Reddy, Chief Minister, TG P4

DON'T MISS...

GHMC budget approval deferred

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Standing Committee meeting, held at its headquarters, witnessed intense discussions on the revised budget for the 2024-25 fiscal year and the proposed budget for 2025-26. Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi emphasised the need to curtail unnecessary expenditures and focus on boosting revenue generation to align with the city's development goals. During the meeting, Standing Committee members raised concerns over the proposed budget estimates for 2025-26, particularly questioning the revenue targets set under estate and advertisement budgets.

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Tiger on prowl attacks farmer

A series of tiger attacks in Kumram Bheem Asifabad district over the weekend has left the people shaken. On Friday, 21-year-old Morle Lakshmi from Gannaram village, Kaghaznagar, tragically lost her life when a tiger mauled her while she was plucking cotton along with a group of labourers near Easgaon village. Despite being rushed to a hospital in Kagaznagar, she was declared dead on arrival.

-PAGE: 4

'Manipur not like Mizoram'

A day after the Manipur government urged Mizoram CM Lalduhoma to demonstrate "better statesmanship" by being a "good neighbour" rather than fueling hatred through "unwarranted comments", Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Saturday said Manipur is not like Mizoram, "which was once just a district in Assam". Speaking at a function for construction of infrastructure to relocate the Assam Rifles from the premises of the historic Langthabal Old Palace, Singh said, "Manipur is...

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Entrepreneurs get fintech, AI awards

High achievers facilitating cross-border partnerships between India and Europe were among leading entrepreneurs who received awards at the annual Indo-European Business Forum (IEBF) meet at the House of Lords complex in London. The 2024 IEBF Global Business Meet on Friday, themed as the 'Viksit Bharat Investment Summit', was aimed at spotlighting the many business and investment opportunities offered by India's goal of moving towards a developed economy by 2047. "To me, the thing that ties the UK and India together most closely is that we are two countries chasing the future," said Kanishka Narayan, the Welsh Indian Labour MP who recently returned from a visit to India as part of a parliamentary delegation...

-PAGE: 8

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy addressing a massive Rythu Panduga meeting held at Palamuru on Saturday

Reject divisive politics: CM

REVANTH FIRM ON KODANGAL INDUSTRIAL PARK

- **Says for development, farmers may have to face some loss**
- **Asserts Palamuru may not get chance to make CM again ever**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a first, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy reacted on the land acquisition at Lagacherla.

He said that for sake of development farmers may have to face some loss. "Will Industries come to Kodangal ever if there is opposition. Don't fall in BRS trap and goto jail. Take more compensation if not Rs10lakh take Rs20lakh. We will come and give it at your home. Our intention is to give a job to every house and a generation will change if job comes in family".

He called that For Nagarjuna Sagar, Srisailam, Jurala. Kalwakurthy Palamuru projects also people lost lands. People gave up lands for development, he said.

Raking the Palamuru Self Respect, CM said, "From Chandrababu, Kiran Kumar Reddy, Rosaiah to KCR, everyone said they'll adopt Palamuru.Why should they adopt, can't son of soil do development? Will we get this chance again? After Burgula Ramakrishna Rao, it took 70years to get this chance (of becoming CM). Should we lose this chance or develop our region. If we lose this chance, we may never get it again. You may say what did you do when you got chance"

Continued on Page 2

RURAL LOCAL BODY POLLS

TG considers removing two-children criteria

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A proposal to do away with the restriction that bars persons having more than two children from contesting rural local body polls is under consideration of the Telangana government.

Sources from the ruling Congress party said on Saturday that the government was thinking of going back to the old policy which was changed in the 1990s by the government of undivided Andhra Pradesh. The two-children norm was repealed for urban local bodies in Telangana earlier.

The Andhra Pradesh Assembly has recently passed a bill enabling persons with more than two children to contest in urban local body elections, reversing the previous rule.

Leaders of different political parties have expressed concerns in recent times that the southern states are set to lose in number of Lok Sabha seats in the upcoming delimitation exercise.

Speaking at an event in October, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy said that the southern states have implemented the policy of family planning efficiently but the Centre is not ready to appreciate the south. He was referring to the delimitation of constituencies in the offing.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and his Tamil Nadu counterpart M K Stalin have also recently spoken in favour of having more children.

While Naidu flagged the 'ageing population', Stalin was subtly referring to a Tamil adage and said the Lok Sabha delimitation exercise may make people think about raising "16 children".

'KCR, KTR avoiding caste survey calls'

NAVEENA GHANATE
■ HYDERABAD

The BRS is drawing flak for its top leaders' apparent reluctance to attend the ongoing caste survey in Telangana. Sources revealed that at the Nandi Nagar residence, where BRS bigwigs KCR and KTR stay, survey officials reportedly did not receive a response. Sources said that they were not allowed in.

The CM, Revanth Reddy, set a deadline of November 30 to complete the caste survey. On Saturday, MIM Chief Asaduddin Owaisi participated in the caste survey and gave details. While BRS MLC Kavitha participated in the survey, Congress leaders asked why prominent figures like ex-CM K. Chandrasekhar Rao and KT Rama Rao (KTR) have not disclosed their caste details.

"What's there to hide about caste? If they respect the legislative process, they should participate. Now, with KTR gone for a holiday, his reluctance is even more clear," remarked a Congress candidate.

Continued on Page 2

SHARING OF RIVER WATERS

'Prepare report on TG's losses'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has directed officials to ensure that Telangana gets its rightful share of water from the Krishna and Godavari rivers.

Emphasising the need to safeguard the state's interests, he asked Irrigation Department officials and legal experts to present strong arguments before the Brijesh Kumar Tribunal. He also stressed the importance of preparing evidence, records and government orders to substantiate Telangana's claims.

He also ordered the preparation of comprehensive reports on

Telangana's losses after its formation, including GOs, memos, DPRs and tribunal rulings from the United Andhra Pradesh period, to strengthen the state's case on all forums.

Addressing a review meeting with Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy and irrigation officials, he spoke about the state's irrigation scene, disputes over the Krishna and Godavari waters and the strategies the government would adopt. The meeting focused on ensuring that the state's rightful water allocation is upheld under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act. The tribunal is tasked with finalising water shares and allocations project-wise for both states.

Officials briefed the Chief Minister that while the tribunal has collected evidence and opinions from the states, formal hearings are yet to begin. Telangana's arguments will play a crucial role in the final decision, officials noted.

Continued on Page 2

NEW NOTIFICATION FOR ACQUIRING LAND IN LAGACHARLA & POLEPALLY

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Government issued a notification for acquiring land for the multi-purpose Industrial Park in the Dudyala mandal of Vikarabad district. The government issued a primary notification on Saturday to acquire 110.32 acres in Lagacharla village and 71.39 acres in Polepally village. As stated a few days ago by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy the government is planning to establish an Industrial Park and not a Pharma City in Dudyala mandal.

Continued on Page 2

Burra elevated as Special Chief Secretary

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Government has re-designated B. Venkatesham, IAS (TG: 1995), as Special Chief Secretary to the Government, Education Department.

While serving as Principal Secretary in the same department, Venkatesham's promotion reflects the administration's exigencies and its focus on the education sector.

According to the government order issued by Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari, Venkatesham will continue to draw pay and allowances in the Above Super Time Scale (HAG) of IAS. The move is expected to enhance the department's efficiency and drive critical educational initiatives across the state.

FIR against MRO, others in Bhoodan scam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

An FIR has been registered against officials, including an MRO, in connection with irregularities involving Bhoodan land transactions in the Kandukur Mandal of Rachakonda. The case, booked under Sections 166, 167, 420, and 34 read with 120 (b) IPC, pertains to fraudulent transactions and misappropriations of lands in Thimmapur village.

The investigation, initiated following a complaint by the current Tahsildar Gopal, revealed illegalities in the transfer and allocation of Bhoodan lands. The lands involved have survey numbers 6, 129, 130, 147, 161, 167, 197, 444, 453, 454, 455, 573, 574, and 575, which were unlawfully alienated without adhering to prescribed procedures. The accused named in the FIR are Sripragada Jyothi, former Tahsildar, Thammali Sridhar, former Naib Tahsildar, the then SRO of Maheshwaram, executors of fraudulent transactions and claimants of these lands, whose identities are being verified as part of the investigation. The ED had submitted to the Telangana DGP to file cases under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. While ED recommended filing a case against IAS officer Amoy Kumar too, currently an FIR has been registered against Jyothi.

The complaint alleges that these individuals colluded to manipulate Dharani records, fabricate documents and issue fraudulent pattas, enabling unauthorized transactions. These actions caused significant losses to the state and deprived legitimate beneficiaries of their rights over the lands. The fraudulent transactions were facilitated by forging entries in the Bhoodan Yagna Board register. The records show unauthorized sales and transfers of Bhoodan lands intended for redistribution to landless individuals. The irregularities include the issuance of false classification certificates, illegal registration of deeds and manipulation of official records.

Govt to address grievances of employees

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has issued a series of orders addressing employee grievances regarding cadre transfers under various circumstances, as per the recommendations of a Cabinet Sub-Committee. These orders include guidelines for mutual, spousal and medical-based cadre transfers, ensuring administrative efficiency and addressing employee concerns. As per GO Ms. No: 245, dated November 29, 2024, employees seeking mutual transfers within the same department and post can now apply through an online portal between December 1, 2024, and February 1, 2025. The transfer process mandates that applicants forego their seniority and lien in their existing cadre. The order strictly bars transfers for suspended employees and those facing disciplinary proceedings. Addressing long-pending requests, the GO Ms. No: 243, dated November 29, 2024, allows spousal transfers under Para 23 of GO Ms. No: 317, dated December 6, 2021.

The government emphasized accommodating spouses in the same cadre as far as possible, subject to the availability of vacancies.

Continued on Page 2

BJP plans public meet on Dec 6

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP is planning to organise a public meeting on December 6 to expose the Congress Government's failures, Telangana BJP President G. Kishan Reddy said on Saturday. He said that no section is happy with the government as the Congress Government had failed to implement its assurances given to the people during elections. He said that Union Home Minister Amit Shah or BJP President JP Nadda would attend the meeting and that it would be held at the Saroor Nagar Stadium depending on its availability.

Continued on Page 2

Telangana BJP president G Kishan Reddy addressing a workshop on local body elections on Saturday

PASSPORTS SUSPENDED IN PHONE TAPPING CASE

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

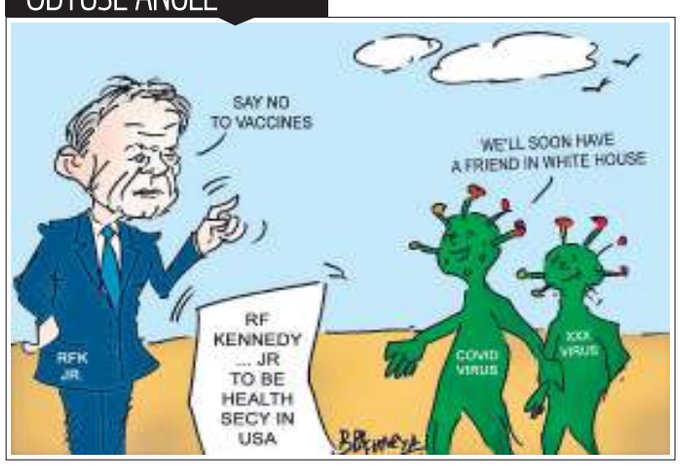
The Centre has reportedly suspended the passports of the main suspects in the phone tapping case, Prabhakar Rao and Shravan Rao, after police recommendations.

Both individuals are under investigation for their alleged involvement in controversial cases. Prabhakar has reportedly filed a petition with the Union Home Ministry in Delhi, challenging the suspension of his passport. Meanwhile, the police have allegedly once again recommended that the Centre permanently revoke the passports of both accused. In a parallel effort, authorities are working with Interpol to issue a Red Corner Notice to bring the accused back to India. Attempts are underway to extradite Prabhakar Rao to Hyderabad, while Shravan Rao has approached the court seeking bail, claiming no involvement in the case.

Adding a new twist, Prabhakar Rao has filed a petition requesting recognition as a political refugee.

The Phone Tapping case was registered on March 10 at the Panjagutta Police Station.

OBTUSE ANGLE



Govt recovers 48 acres of temple land from encroachers

■ SOLAR POWER PROJECT ON 252 ACRES OF UNUSED TEMPLE LAND

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress Government has prioritised enhancing basic facilities for devotees in all Telangana temples. Over the past year, numerous initiatives have been successfully implemented, says the Endowments Department.

A major event was the Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara, regarded as Telangana's Kumbh Mela, held from February 21, 2024, to February 24, 2024. The state allocated Rs 110 crore for the event, ensuring smooth proceedings for millions of pilgrims. Similarly, the Bonalu festival was celebrated with grandeur, emphasising Telangana's traditions. The government allotted Rs 20 crore for festivities in major temples in Hyderabad, Secunderabad and other districts, marking an increase from the previous year's expenditure. The

Endowments Department introduced the 'Samuhika Kartika Deepotsavam,' a first-of-its-kind initiative held throughout the month of Karthika, emphasizing spiritual practices.

The event featured the free distribution of lamps and cultural programmes in all temples. Minister Konda Surekha actively participated in these celebrations.

Significant strides were made in the conservation of temples and their development. The government approved Rs 127.65 crore for Vemulawada Temple development, including infrastructure upgrades and sanctioned Rs 50 crore for constructing an Annadanam complex.

Continued on Page 2

'Psycho Ram' vs 'Chitti Naidu': TDP still key to TG politics

REPORTERS' DIARY

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) may have been marginalized in Telangana's politics in terms of its representation in the state legislature and local bodies. But the party continues to provide ammunition for political barbs traded by the ruling Congress party and the opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi.

TG Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's recent jab at BRS working president KT Rama Rao, dubbing him as 'Psycho Ram', sparked a buzz among Congress supporters. The nickname, which immediately gained traction, was a throwback to TDP's recent election campaign during which AP's ex-CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy was labelled 'Psycho Jagan'. The parallel is hard to miss, given the import of the psychological term. Interestingly, KTR did not hold back his punches. He taunted Revanth as 'Chitti Naidu', reminding him of his tutelage under AP Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and his political baptism in TDP yet again. Looks like Telangana's political arena can never be bereft of the influence of 'Andhra' masala, even if the party in question is largely confined to AP.

KTR's take on media mirrors Rahul's style

Bharat Rashtra Samithi working president KT Rama Rao, known for his sharp wit during public spats, seems to have taken a leaf out of All India Congress Committee leader Rahul Gandhi's playbook when it comes to handling the media. Rahul has no qualms about accusing media outlets of being aligned with the Bharatiya Janata Party so much so that he critiqued it as "media versus the people". KTR appears to be walking a similar path. For, KTR does enjoy significant media coverage, be it his statements or public utterances, though his party is no longer in power. Yet, for buttressing the "us versus them" narrative, the media has been cast as the villain. The irony here is hard to miss. If the media were truly taking sides, would they also publish stories that hurt the government or question its actions? "If you are not with me, you are against me", seems to be their specious logic. This explains why they blame a media house, but do not hesitate to cite articles published by it to drive home their PoV whenever the situation permits. True-blue journalism goes beyond certificates of appreciation from netas.

BRS barred from CM Revanth Reddy's family celebration

Whetting curiosity about Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's ability to draw a line between political rivals and fraternal colleagues, the leaders of Bharat Rashtra Samithi were conspicuous by their absence at a recent family function of the CM—wedding of his brother's daughter—though invitations were dispatched to a wide array of guests, including media personnel. A BRS legislator confirmed there was no invitation, fuelling speculations about the depth of underlying political animosity. Adding to the intrigue, CM Revanth Reddy was spotted at the recent wedding of BRS MLA Malla Reddy's granddaughter. Does it mean the CM has more apnapan with the MLA? Incidentally, the CM attended the nuptials of Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla's daughter. Doesn't it mean BJP chalega? If so, why he does not want to touch BRS with a barge pole?

Scribes share gloom in fraternal WhatsApp groups

The recent verdict of the Supreme Court quashing the 'arbitrary, capricious and irrational' allotment of prime lands at 'throwaway prices' in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation limits to housing societies formed by different MPs, MLAs, SC and HC judges, All India Services bureaucrats, defence personnel and journalists has shattered the dreams of scribes in particular, because they are relatively the least privileged among all the categories bracketed. No wonder the affected journalists have started flooding fraternal WhatsApp groups with their gloom over the judgment. One can understand their anguish. For, more than 1,100 journalists had paid Rs.2 lakh 17 years back to the housing society in the hope of getting a house site without having to necessarily compromise on their professional integrity. What is galling for most of the journalists is that their salaries are pretty low with hardly any perks. In contrast, legislators, bureaucrats and judges get fat salaries from the government, live in government quarters, and travel in government vehicles. Many journalists don't own vehicles; they leg it out or take RTC buses even for official work. Of course, as the SC observed, journalists can't be treated as a separate class for preferential treatment. What if a state government confers special benefits for select journalists? In Telangana, for instance, there is an infamous G-18 group (subsequently expanded to G-27), whose members reportedly got villas/three- or double bedroom flats on the sly under a previous dispensation. In a way, they are better off now, considering the verdict has not 'landed' them in trouble.

Have Telangana Communists changed their lingo?

In general, Communist parties are known for their violent struggles and vociferous protests. 'Peaceful opposition' would be a contradiction in terms for most, if not all, of them. However, the Communists in Telangana seem to have softened their approach. The other day they went to Lagacharla, spoke to the some of the victims, and submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy with an 'appeal' that the government should not take their land forcefully. In other words, the word 'demand' was bahut door ki baath. Even while talking to the media later, they scrupulously avoided the word 'demand'; sticking instead to their 'appeal' to the government to provide land to the oustees and to bring a law in this regard. While Bharat Rashtra Samithi party leaders have criticised the Chief Minister for 'using' Communists shamelessly in the Lagacharla incident, the decision of the state government to subsequently withdraw the Lagacharla land acquisition notification issued in August suggests that the Communists' 'request' worked.

Coalition dharma and lawmakers' drama

A coalition may rule a state, but lawmakers within the grouping have their own interests to secure and therefore would never flinch from a showdown when the situation arises. Revealing small cracks in the NDA coalition government in Andhra Pradesh, the transport of fly ash from the Rayalaseema Thermal Power Plant (RTPP) has become a flashpoint now. Telugu Desam Party leader JC Prabhakar Reddy and Bharatiya Janata Party MLA P Adinarayana Reddy are virtually fighting it out in the open, claiming exclusive rights over the lucrative activity. Their showdown has resulted in blockades and use of strong-arm tactics, apart from stalling operations at RTPP for nearly a week now. Heavy deployment of police in the border areas of Kadapa and Anantapur districts has helped keep matters under control as of now. JC Prabhakar Reddy's trucks en route to Tadipatri were barred from loading fly ash by Adinarayana Reddy's supporters, who insist they will have a say in activities under the Jammalamadugu constituency. JC's faction has accused the BJP of resorting to tactics of intimidation. Although Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has spoken to both the warring leaders, tensions persist.

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

BRS LEADERS SPREADING LIES: MAHESH KUMAR GOUD

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Declaring that KCR, his family and BRS leaders looted Telangana as they liked, the TPCC said that BRS leaders are speaking lies even when the government does things for the public good.

Mahesh asked Congress leaders to campaign about the development projects being executed in villages in a big way. Participating in the TPCC Adivasi Congress meeting organised by TPCC ST Cell Chairman Bellaiah Naik on Saturday at the Gandhi Bhavan, Mahesh said the party will give priority to leaders who work hard for the party while making appointments to party posts.

Stating that the government has been striving to implement all its assurances given during the election campaign, Mahesh said that Congress activists should rebut the criticism of BRS and BJP leaders against the Congress government.

He said that everyone should try to make Rahul Gandhi the Prime Minister of the country. AICC leader Koppula Raju said the party would discuss matters in detail at the week-long Adivasi camp at Nagarjuna Sagar. He said the party will take decisions after discussing seven to eight issues every day at the Adivasi camp.

My group committed to compliances: Adani

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Adani group chairman Gautam Adani on Saturday responded to recent allegations and indictment in the US, saying that the conglomerate was committed to compliances and "every attack makes us stronger". "Less than two week back, we faced a set of allegations from the US about compliance practices. This is not the first time we have faced such challenges. What I can tell you is that every attack makes us stronger," he said addressing the 51st Gems and Jewellery Award here. On November 20, 2024, the United States Department of Justice and the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) issued an indictment and a civil complaint in the New York district court against Gautam Adani, Sagar Adani and Vneet Jaain, key functionaries of Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL).

BRS opens WhatsApp helpline for Gurukul students

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS has started a WhatsApp helpline (8522044336) to report issues faced by students in Gurukuls and other educational institutions.

BRS leaders, led by Dr RS Praveen Kumar, the former secretary of Telangana Gurukul institutions, sharply criticized the Congress Government and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for the deteriorating state of Gurukul schools.

Addressing a press conference at the Telangana Bhavan, the leaders highlighted alarming issues like frequent food poisoning incidents, student suicides, unpaid teachers and neglect of the education and social welfare departments.

Dr Praveen emphasized the absence of dedicated ministers for education and social welfare over the past year, describing the condition of Gurukul schools as a total collapse of the once-admired system established during KCR's tenure.

He said that students are now taking to the streets after repeated food poisoning incidents, including three in a single district, and after 28 student suicides.

Praveen will have to flee abroad like Prabhakar: TPCC

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The TPCC warned that BRS leader RS Praveen Kumar, the secretary of the Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society and the Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society, will face the fate of former Intelligence chief Prabhakar Rao who is now hiding in the US.

The TPCC warned Praveen that would also have to flee abroad like Prabhakar if he continued criticism against the government.

Speaking to the media at the Gandhi Bhavan, the TPCC's official spokesperson, Srirangam Sathyam, said that KCR and BRS Working President KT Rama Rao are using Praveen as their pawn.

Sathyam recalled Praveen's criticism against the BRS government when he was in the BSP. However, the same Praveen joined the BRS before Parliament elections and started praising the BRS government.

He asked Praveen not to become a scapegoat in the hands of BRS 'doras' and not to scapegoat students with his conspiracies.

Sathyam asked Praveen to explain why he was not responding to KTR's comment 'sanyasi' against the IAS officer. He said that BRS leaders pocketed billions while in power.

Man throws liquid on Kejriwal during rally

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a security scare, a man splashed some liquid on Arvind Kejriwal during his 'padyatra' in south Delhi's Malviya Nagar on Saturday, with AAP claiming that it was spirit and the "attacker" wanted to set the party supremo afire. While police said water was thrown at Kejriwal during the public event that was organised without their permission, the BJP strongly refuted Chief Minister Atishi's accusation that the accused was a worker of the saffron party.

AAP lashed out at the BJP-led Centre for the incident and said this is the third "attack" on Kejriwal in the last 35 days. According to the police, the accused, identified as Ashok Jha, a serving bus marshal at Delhi Transport Corporation's Khanpur Depot, has been detained. "Further examination of the person is in progress to find out the reasons behind this act," a statement from the Delhi Police stated. Sources claimed that Jha (41), during interrogation, said that he was frustrated as he was not getting his salary for the past six months.

Jha claimed that during the formation of AAP, he gave a donation to the party, but was upset with its "fake promises", the sources said. The AAP national convener was holding the padayatra in the Savitri Nagar area that falls under the Greater Kailash assembly segment. Police said that around 5.50 pm Kejriwal was shaking hands with some followers standing behind a cordon when Jha attempted to throw water on him. He was immediately caught as the police staff were nearby, they said. Kejriwal and the security personnel accompanying him were later seen wiping their faces.

Proper police deployment, both in plain clothes along with rope party for crowd control and in uniform, was made, the statement said. At a press conference, Delhi minister Saurabh Bharadwaj alleged that the man held for attacking Kejriwal had a matchbox in his hand.

16.75 cr saplings planted this year, meeting 84% goal: Forest Dept

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Forest Department said that they achieved significant milestones during the past year under Congress rule, reflecting its commitment to environmental conservation and sustainable development.

The Van Mahotsav programme, aimed at increasing the state's green cover to 33 per cent, took centre stage this year. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Forest Minister Konda Surekha inaugurated the event on June 29 at the Kakatiya Mega Textile Park in Warangal.

The department set an ambitious target of planting 20.02 crore saplings for 2024, achieving 84 per cent of the goal by planting 16.75 crore saplings so far. Local species were prioritized, and areas were meticulously monitored using the Telangana Forest Management Information System with online registrations and geo-tagging.

Reject divisive...

Continued from Page 1

The Chief Minister touched on industrial development, promising to establish an industrial hub in Kodangal to provide 25,000 jobs to local youth. He condemned the opposition's attempts to disrupt such initiatives and urged the people to reject divisive politics.

Revanth Reddy concluded with an emotional appeal, reaffirming his commitment to Palamuru. "I am a son of this soil. No one loves this land more than I do. Together, we will bring water to our fields, industries to our region, and jobs to our youth. Let us unite to make Palamuru a symbol of progress and prosperity."

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy delivered a powerful speech at the Rythu Panduga held in Palamuru, emphasizing the Congress government's commitment to farmers' welfare and regional development. The event marked the completion of one year since the Congress party came to power, and the Chief Minister took the opportunity to reflect on the progress made and the challenges overcome.

Revanth Reddy began by recalling his journey from Kondareddipalli to becoming the Chief Minister of Telangana, attributing his rise to the trust placed in him by the people. He stated, "This position is not a privilege but a responsibility, and I am committed to delivering justice to every farmer and citizen."

The Chief Minister criticized the previous regimes of BRS and BJP, questioning their contribution to farmers' welfare over a decade. "Under their rule, did farmers receive loan waivers or fair prices for their produce? They failed to deliver, and we are here to correct those mistakes," he remarked.

Revanth Reddy highlighted his government's achievements, including depositing bonuses directly into farmers' accounts and facilitating irrigation for 66 lakh acres, resulting in a record 1.5 crore tonnes of paddy production. He pointed out that projects completed under the Congress era continue to sustain Telangana's agriculture, contrasting this with the Kaleshwaram project, which he claimed failed to deliver promised benefits.

Govt recovers...

Continued from Page 1

At Yadadri, facilities like dormitories, auto-ricks and shaded waiting areas were provided, along with the installation of a gold-plated tower.

The Endowments Department also emphasised digitalization and introduced online services for temple donations, pujas and accommodations. The Bhadradri Temple now offers e-ticketing for its 24 daily rituals and festivals.

Land reclamation and protection saw substantial progress, with 48 acres retrieved from encroachers, benefiting temples in Vikarabad, Ranga Reddy and Kamareddy districts. Solar power projects were launched on 252 acres of unused temple lands.

The Congress admin revived local traditions by organising river harathis in Basara and Alampur, enhancing spiritual tourism. It also set up 126 festival committees and 408 temple trust boards to improve temple administration.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:	Krishna Paksha
Tithi:	
Amavasya:	Nov 30 10:30 AM to Dec 01 11:51 AM
Sukla Paksha Pratipada:	Dec 01 11:51 AM to Dec 02 12:43 PM
Nakshatram:	
Anuradha:	Nov 30 12:34 PM to Dec 01 02:23 PM
Jyeshta:	Dec 01 02:23 PM to Dec 02 03:45 PM
Rahukalam:	4:13 PM to 5:36 PM
Yamagandam:	12:05 PM to 1:28 PM
Varjyam:	08:18 PM to 10:00 PM
Gulika:	2:50 PM to 4:13 PM
Amritakalam:	None
Abhijit Muhurtham:	11:43 AM to 12:27 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Scattered Showers
Temp: 28°C
Humidity: 75%
Sunrise: 6:30 AM
Sunset: 5:40 PM

Updated: November 30, 2024 5:00 PM

NEW NOTIFICATION FOR ACQUIRING LAND IN LAGACHARLA & POLEPALLY

Continued from Page 1

In this connection, the government issued a notification on Saturday, after it withdrew its notification issued on August 1, 2024, for acquiring 632 acres in the Dudyala mandal of Vikarabad district.

The government has been chalking out plans to set up a multi-the Lagacharla, Polepally and Hakimpet villages in Vikarabad district.

The new notification said the government will acquire land for a multi-purpose industrial park.

However, the government has taken many precautions in the new notification regarding land acquisition.

The government said in the new notification that it will first collect land from farmers who are ready to give land. The government made it clear that it would not acquire land by force. The government has been saying that land would be acquired only with the consent of the people.

'KCR, KTR...

Continued fromPage 1

Sources said the resolution supporting the caste survey was adopted unanimously in the Assembly, he said. Sources close to KTR couldn't confirm whether he had given the data. At his other residence in Gachibowli, only stickering was done on houses, according to community sources. The Congress has accused the BRS leadership of hypocrisy, claiming that their inaction undermines the survey's spirit. "In the Assembly, they supported it, but on the ground, their hesitation sends a contradictory message," sources from the Congress camp stated.

The caste survey, which aims to address social inequalities and ensure equitable representation, has garnered widespread public support.

Critics argued that the participation of influential political figures is crucial to uphold the survey's credibility and significance. Meanwhile, CM Revanth Reddy announced a special drive to conduct a caste survey.

Govt to...

Continued from Page 1

This decision aims to reduce personal hardships and foster family welfare. Departments have been directed to complete the transfer process by December 31, 2024. The GO Ms: No: 244, dated November 29, 2024, focuses on employees requesting cadre transfers based on medical and related grounds. This includes critical illnesses like cancer, kidney or liver transplants and disabilities above 70 per cent, among others. The government mandated a case-by-case examination of these requests, prioritising genuine cases while ensuring administrative balance. This exercise is also set for completion by December 31, 2024. Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari emphasized that these measures aim to resolve long-standing grievances while maintaining efficiency.

'Prepare report on...

Continued from Page 1

Highlighting Telangana's share in the Krishna basin, Revanth pointed out that 70 per cent of it is in Telangana, whereas Andhra Pradesh has just 30 per cent. He directed officials to argue for Telangana's share of 70 per cent of the 1,005 TMCs of Krishna waters as per international water-sharing principles. The Chief Minister also said that Andhra Pradesh diverts 80 TMCs of Godavari water into the Krishna Delta through the Polavaram Project.

In return, Telangana is entitled to 45 TMCs from upstream Nagarjuna Sagar, which should be utilised through planned irrigation projects, he noted. The Chief Minister questioned the relevance of the KRMB and GRMB decisions when the tribunal's water-sharing process remains incomplete. He advised officials to argue in the Supreme Court that the boards should not interfere until the tribunal delivers its verdict. The meeting also discussed Andhra Pradesh's alleged over use of Krishna waters. Officials explained the need for scientific monitoring using telemetry systems and estimated its cost at around Rs 12 crore.

Revanth suggested that Telangana would bear the initial costs and recover its share from Andhra Pradesh later. He emphasised recording water usage from all projects like Srisailam, Pothireddypadu, Bana-kacharla head regulator, Telugu Ganga, KC Canal, Handri Neeva, Galeru Nagari and Velugodu projects. The CM asked officials to speed up permissions for the Sitarama and Sammakka barrage projects and complete all works to provide water to the full ayacut.

BJP plans...

Continued from Page 1

Participating in a workshop conducted at the state BJP office on Saturday, Kishan said the Congress government had assured that it would fill two lakh vacancies in government service. However, the Congress admin has not issued any notifications regarding that so far, he added.

Moreover, the Congress government is falsely claiming that they had filled vacancies hiding the fact that the BRS admin had notified them and had conducted exams to fill them. Kishan said that new blood is joining the party and a new leadership is coming up from the village level to the national level. New committees would be appointed so that they can provide good leadership, he said.

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City Pioneer

sunday pioneer

HYDERABAD | SUNDAY | DECEMBER 1, 2024

CITY EVENTS

Weekend kids cooking camp

Master cooking and baking in 09 fun weekends

Venue

Culinary Guru Institute, Hyderabad. Till January 11, 2025.

Arijit Singh Live in concert

HSBC presale is live for now. General sale on October 23, 1 pm. Get tickets only on insider.in and paytm.

Venue

Concert in Hyderabad on December 7.

Texture art workshop

This workshop is suitable for artists of all levels, from beginners looking to explore new artistic horizons to seasoned artists seeking to enhance their skills and repertoire.

Venue

Multiple venues in Hyderabad till December 8

NYU CARNIVAL

With singer KARTHIK

Venue

Boulder Hills, Hyderabad December 31

'Hakku Initiative' poster unveiled in city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A new initiative aimed at tackling societal challenges and collaborating with the government for solutions, the 'Hakku' Initiative, launched its poster, logo, and missed call number at a press event in Hyderabad on Saturday. Actor Shiva Balaji unveiled the initiative at the Hyderabad Press Club.

During the launch, Shiva Balaji explained his motivation for joining the cause, emphasising the importance of individual responsibility in driving social change. He highlighted critical issues such as reckless driving and overloaded vehicles, pledging to report such cases to the authorities.

Tammareddy Bharadwaj, speaking at the event, stressed the need to address unnatural incidents in society and pointed out how elections are increasingly swayed by money.

Vivek, a representative of the Hakku initiative, condemned the exploitation of law-abiding citizens, particularly the middle class who bear the tax burden.

'61% city lakes already encroached, the rest could disappear in 15 years'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath emphasised the critical role of water resources in sustaining biodiversity and vowed to focus extensively on preserving and restoring lakes in Hyderabad.

Speaking at the national conference on urban biodiversity organized by the National Biodiversity Authority and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, Ranganath highlighted the organisation's dedication to safeguarding water bodies and ensuring ecological balance.

Ranganath outlined HYDRAA's primary responsibilities, which include protecting lakes from encroachments, restoring their buffer zones, and enhancing green cover around these vital ecosystems. He stressed that preserving these resources not only benefits the environment but also secures a healthy future for upcoming generations. HYDRAA's plans to set up a dedicated police station to address complaints and take swift action against encroachments have been widely appreciated.

Highlighting challenges, the commissioner noted that 61 per cent of Hyderabad's lakes have already been encroached upon. Without robust intervention, the remaining 39 per cent of water bodies risk disappearing within 15 years.

Using the collaboration of multiple government departments, including GHMC, HMDA, and the Irrigation Department, HYDRAA is meticulously mapping lakes and surrounding lands to prepare a comprehensive database.

Ranganath also stressed the legal backing for these efforts, citing clear court directives against constructions in Full Tank Levels (FTLs) and buffer zones. HYDRAA has been proactive in implementing these directives, with recent actions preventing encroachments in areas such as Lotus Pond in Jubilee Hills.

He acknowledged the growing awareness among citizens about the importance of lake preservation. Many now ensure their property purchases adhere to regulations, avoiding construction in sensitive zones. Ranganath pointed out that affluent individuals and representatives from all political parties are often involved in encroachments, and he assured that HYDRAA would not spare any violators.

HYDRAA is also collaborating with the Pollution Control Board to prevent industrial waste and untreated sewage from polluting lakes. The organisation is advocating for mandatory sewage treatment plants in gated communities, with stringent measures to address non-compliance.

National Biodiversity Authority Chairman C Achalender Reddy commended HYDRAA's initiatives, particularly its efforts to restore heritage lakes like Aminpur into freshwater reservoirs.

Reddy expressed his organization's commitment to supporting HYDRAA and recommended similar setups in other cities to ensure a sustainable environment for future generations.

HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath with National Biodiversity Authority Chairman C Achalender Reddy in Hyderabad on Saturday

Mayor Vijayalakshmi at a meeting in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation on Sturday

GHMC budget approval deferred amid calls for realistic proposals

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Standing Committee meeting, held at its headquarters, witnessed intense discussions on the revised budget for the 2024-25 fiscal year and the proposed budget for 2025-26.

Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi emphasised the need to curtail unnecessary expenditures and focus on boosting revenue generation to align with the city's development goals.

During the meeting, Standing Committee members raised concerns over the proposed budget estimates for 2025-26, particularly questioning the revenue targets set under estate and advertisement budgets. Members alleged that the projections were unrealistic and failed to reflect the city's potential. Responding to their concerns, Finance Additional Commissioner Geeta Radhika provided clarifications on various queries. The members suggested amendments to the budget proposals and called for a realistic approach in drafting the estimates. Following their feedback, Mayor Vijayalakshmi announced that the approval of the proposed budget has been deferred.

She assured the members that a revised draft would be presented in the next meeting scheduled after December 9. "The delay was due to officials not submitting the budget proposals on time, leaving insufficient scope for a thorough study," the Mayor remarked.

Commissioner Ilambarithi highlighted the importance of enhanced revenue streams to sustain developmental works. He informed the members that a GIS survey has been completed for all zones, identifying 24 lakh houses. However, a physical survey covering 1.25 lakh houses is ongoing, which will be expedited with additional surveyors to provide accurate data for the next meeting.

Jump in pneumonia cases as temperature dips

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

As temperatures continue to drop and cold winds sweep across the State, there has been a significant rise in pneumonia cases among children, with Niloufer Hospital in Hyderabad seeing an influx of young patients.

The ongoing cold spell, which has brought temperatures in some areas of Telangana to below 8°C, is posing particular risks to children and the elderly.

With the harsh winter season affecting vulnerable groups, Niloufer Hospital has reported over 200 pneumonia cases so far.

On a daily basis, the outpatient department screens approximately 30-40 patients for pneumonia, with the numbers spiking to 60 on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, according to hospital authorities.

Some of the children have required ventilator support due to the severity of their condition. The pneumonia bacteria and viruses, which cause infections in the lungs, are particularly dangerous for children aged 0-5 years and elderly individuals over 65. At the hospital, many patients have been diagnosed with respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), streptococcus, influenza, and other forms of pneumonia, say medical officers.

To help prevent pneumonia, Niloufer Hospital's medical staff recommends that children be exclusively breastfed for at least the first six months of life. They also urge parents to be vigilant about symptoms such as high fever, difficulty breathing, wheezing, and a bluish discoloration of the skin, which can indicate a serious respiratory issue, and to seek immediate medical attention if these symptoms appear.

In addition, the hospital advises people to stay warm by wearing appropriate clothing that covers the entire body, and to eat freshly prepared food and drink boiled water to avoid further health complications during the cold weather.

117 MoUs signed at T-Consult Collaboration Conclave'24

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The T-Consult Collaboration Conclave 2024 was inaugurated by IT Minister D Sridhar Babu on Saturday, marking the signing of 117 memorandums of understanding (MoUs). These agreements are designed to foster collaboration, innovation, and growth across various industries.

The two-day conclave, held at T-Hub, brought together stakeholders from various sectors, creating a platform for transformative partnerships

Speaking at the conclave, Sridhar Babu appreciated T-Consult and its founder Sundeep Kumar Makthala for their dedication to empowering industries and professionals. He also recognised that T-Consult has set a high standard in connecting innovators and investors. The Minister noted that signing of 117 MoUs marks a major step toward economic progress, further strengthening Telangana's leadership in innovation and entrepreneurship.

The conclave introduced initiatives like the Untapped Investor Programme, T-Consult Health Doctors Pool, and Talent Connect, all aimed at driving collaborations and growth.

Meanwhile, Sundeep Makthala emphasised the significance of these efforts, stating that the conclave aims to unite industries, entrepreneurs, and policymakers to build meaningful partnerships for the future. The event also honoured excellence through the BICCI Entrepreneurial Awards, featuring interactive sessions with officials and leaders.

Information Technology Minister D Sridhar Babu inaugurating T-Consult Collaboration Conclave 2024 in Hyderabad on Saturday

Health awareness programme held under CSR initiative

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A special programme was held as part of a CSR drive to promote health awareness and fight winter illnesses among 250 underprivileged students of TMR Junior College and Boys High School, Habeeb Nager, Aghapura.

The session educated children on boosting immunity through hygiene and a nutritious diet. Winter illnesses like colds, coughs, and respiratory issues often arise due to low immunity.

Awareness on Chyawan prash, a 3,000-year-old Ayurvedic formulation was given, which helps enhance immunity and protects against common infections.

As part of its initiative, Dabur Chyawanprash launched a mega awareness campaign.

The programme included sessions with a renowned doctor to teach children about building immunity to fight seasonal illnesses, bacteria, and viruses.

Dr Parmeshwar Arora emphasised that sudden weather changes increase illnesses. He highlighted Chyawanprash as an effective solution for boosting immunity during such times.

Need to regulate deepfake technology stressed

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Data Science Summit held at the Indian School of Business (ISB) on Saturday discussed the urgent need for action against the rising threat of deepfake technology, .

At the summit, experts raised concerns about the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) to create deepfakes, emphasising its potential to disrupt elections, spread misinformation and harm individuals through scams and personal attacks.

Major Vineet Kumar of the Cyber Peace Foundation highlighted a surge in cybercrimes involving deepfake technology, citing cases where fake audio and video were used for extortion and disinformation. IPS officer Ajay Kumar Yadav noted that deepfakes, once isolated incidents, have become widespread threats affecting elections and public trust.

Experts also proposed a multi-pronged approach, urging social media platforms to develop detection tools, governments to enhance media literacy, and the establishment of stricter legal penalties. Collaboration between academia, government, and industry was deemed essential.

Meanwhile, prof Manish Gangwar stressed the need for ethical and technological safeguards, while the Misinformation Combat Alliance introduced a WhatsApp-based reporting system to empower citizens.

Though deepfakes have some positive uses, experts agreed that their risks far outweigh the benefits, calling for stronger regulations and public awareness.

Journalist and fact-check trainer Sudhakar Reddy Udumula repeated his call for social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube to develop in-built algorithms to detect and block deepfake content.

Major Vineet Kumar of the Cyber Peace Foundation, along with other experts at a panel discussion at the Data Science Summit at ISB Hyderabad on Saturday

Cabinmate opens 27th reading room in city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

India's largest corporate reading room chain, Cabinmate, opened its 27th workspace at Kanchanjunga Complex at King Koti. The centre was inaugurated by Additional Director General of Police Mahesh M Bhagwat, on Saturday.

The Cabinmate provides peaceful, professional spaces for students, professionals, writers, entrepreneurs, and business analysts.

This new King Koti branch brings the chain's total in Hyderabad to 17, with other locations including Madhapur, Kondapur, KPHB, Secunderabad, Vanasthalipuram, Kothapet, Alwal, Suchitra, ECIL, and Miyapur.

Addressing the launch, Mahesh Bhagwat highlighted the centre's role in supporting students and professionals aiming for success.

He appreciated Cabinmate for creating an innovative, focused environment that creates productivity and growth.

Training Programme for Guyana journalists concludes

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A two-week training programme for journalists and media professionals from Guyana, organised by Dr. MCR HRD Institute, concluded on Saturday. Sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme, the training aimed to enhance participants with media skills and create stronger India-Guyana ties.

Addressing the training, Director General of the institute, Dr Shashank Goel highlighted the importance of keeping media skills up-to-date in today's fast-changing landscape.

He emphasised adopting innovation while upholding core values like honesty and accountability. Dr Goel encouraged participants to apply their learnings to promote ethical journalism in Guyana and presented course completion certificates.

The programme included expert-led sessions on media practices and field visits to enhance understanding of media management and Indian culture.

Participants, including Jovan Wilson and Latchman Singh, appreciated the training for its practical insights and cultural exposure. Meanwhile, Dr. Madhavi Ravulapati, Course Director, shared details of the program's success and extended gratitude to the Ministry of External Affairs.

Director General of the MCR HRD institute Shashank Goel giving away course certificates to journalists from Guyana in Hyderabad on Saturday

SCR sets up 7 mechanised laundries in city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The South Central Railway (SCR) has set up mechanised laundries at seven locations, including the Secunderabad departmental laundry (2 tons/day capacity) and the Kacheguda BOOT laundry (12 tons/day capacity), to provide clean linen for passengers, supplementing outsourced services.

Currently, all AC coaches in 116 trains, including special trains, are supplied with clean bedrolls daily. This includes an average of 38,000 woolen blankets and 1,52,000 bedrolls.

The SCR stated that white bedsheets are washed after single use, while woolen blankets are washed monthly. Previously washed every three months in 2010, blankets now undergo washing twice a month when capacity permits, or at least once monthly. This increased frequency has reduced blanket lifespan from four years to two.

SCR also announced a new 48-ton BOOT laundry for the Secunderabad, Kacheguda, or Hyderabad. . Under the BOOT scheme, firms build, operate, and later transfer the laundry to the Railways after the contract ends.

Culture & Heritage

PROLIFICITY, THY NAME IS NAGASURI VENUGOPAL

Prolificity is the hallmark of former Hyderabad station director of AIR Dr Nagasuri Venugopal's writings, who has authored over 80 books and at least helf-a-dozen up his sleeve which need to go for publication. Plenty of awards have come his way, the latest being Sri Kompalli Balakrishna Smaraka Sahiti Pratibha Puraskaram, bestowed on him by Kalamitra Mandali on November 24 at Ongole. With two post-graduate degrees in solar energy physics, he went on to do doctoral thesis on 24-hour television news channels in Telugu. Whether it be in Delhi, Anantapur, Vijayawada, Cuddapah, Chennai, Tirupati and Hyderabad, he produced numerous audio programmes pertaining to social issues, health, science and technology and literature in varied innovative formats and enriched the broadcast media with great aplomb.

Chief among his works are *Vaignanika Kathalu*, an anthology of 27 science fiction Telugu short stories by different writers, edited for Sahitya Academi; *Kathavaranam*, an anthology of 16 Telugu short stories with environment as theme; *Science enduku rasthunaam*, an anthology of articles about their personal contribution from 35 prominent Telugu writers; and *Setha Vasantha sahiti Manjiraalu*, an analysis of 100 Telugu literary works of the century.

A broadcaster by profession, media researcher by training, a staunch Gandhian in thought and science writer by passion, he writes prolifically on contemporary issues. While working in Chennai, he brought out *Madras Badukulu*, a compilation of the works of Telugus based in Chennai. He authored 20 books on popular science, brought out a compilation of essays on Adivi Bapiraju and an anthology of 75 articles on Yeddanapudi Sulochana Rani. Moreover, 20 books that he penned on media research serve as reference works for students of the media as well the practitioners in the field. His book *Science Vaithalikulu* has been prescribed for university curriculum in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

An ardent Gandhian, he easily dispels the misgivings people have on Gandhian principles and way of life. He says Gandhiji was never against science, but provided an Indian alternative to the western ideas of science. To make his point, Nagasuri refers to the Khadi that Gandhi popularized, which is much more than mere hand spun cloth as it symbolises India's self-reliance.

Nagasuri's conviction to write keeps blooming like a flower that never fades!

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Telangana

sunday pioneer

HYDERABAD | SUNDAY | DECEMBER 1, 2024

BRS leader arrested for 'land grabbing'

PNS ■ RAJANNA SIRCILLA

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader B Ramamohan has been arrested by the police on the charge of grabbing government land. He is a key party leader and a close aide of BRS working president KT Rama Rao, it said.

The police claimed that has been illegally occupying government land and running a stone quarry for a long time in Sardapur within the Sircilla Municipal limits.

Acting on the orders of the District Collector, the BRS leader was taken into custody by the police on Saturday morning. Ram Mohan is the president of the BRS Backward Classes Cell of the Sircilla town BRS, Honorary President of the Tractor Association.

He has been also accused of involvement in sand mafia activities and land encroachments.

Govt pushing ahead with Kothagudem airport plan

PNS ■ KOTHAGUDEM

It is well-known that the Revanth government in Telangana has decided to construct four new airports. Currently, the State has only the Shamshabad International Airport, but Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy announced that new airports will be built in Warangal Mamnoor, Kothagudem, Ramagundam, and Adilabad. Funds have already been allocated for the redevelopment of the Warangal Mamnoor airport. Recently, the State government has focused its attention on the Kothagudem airport in the Bhadradri Kothagudem district.

Approximately 950 acres of land have been identified for the airport, and the Airport Authority of India (AAI) has recently been requested to conduct a feasibility study on the airport. Officials have revealed that the study includes data such as location, and 10 years of weather data, and the report has been submitted to the Central government. While the State has proposed four airports, the government is asking the Central government to consider the Kothagudem airport as a Greenfield airport.

The AAI officials found the area identified by the previous Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) government to build the airport. Now, the district administration has identified land in the Kothagudem mandal, including Ramavaram, Sujatnagar, and Chunchupalli villages. The new airport will be constructed in this area, although the proposed land has some forest land. Therefore, clearance is required from the Ministry of Environment and Forests. Once these clearances are obtained, the land acquisition process will begin, according to officials.

Kothagudem is located about 270 km from Hyderabad. The district also hosts industries such as the Singareni offices, the Manuguru Heavy Water Plant, and power generation plants. The airport, when it comes up, will ensure better connectivity. The airport will also be convenient for pilgrims visiting the Bhadrachalam Ramachandra Swamy Temple. Officials say that Chief Minister Revanth has already spoken with Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu regarding this project. Once the feasibility study is completed, the central government is expected to approve the airport project soon.

Rauthu Suresh

Tiger on prowl attacks farmer in Asifabad district

It may be recalled that the animal mauled a 21-year-old woman on Friday

PNS ■ KUMRAM BHEEM ASIFABAD

A series of tiger attacks in Kumram Bheem Asifabad district over the weekend has left the people shaken. On Friday, 21-year-old Morle Lakshmi from Gannaram village, Kaghaznagar, tragically lost her life when a tiger mauled her while she was plucking cotton along with a group of labourers near Easgaon village. Despite being rushed to a hospital in Kagaznagar, she was declared dead on arrival.

On Saturday, Rauthu Suresh, a farmer from Dubbaguda village under Sirpur (T) mandal, was attacked by the same tiger while working on his farm. The tiger bit him on his neck, but Suresh managed to escape by shouting for help. He was quickly taken to the hospital in Kagaznagar, where his condition was reported to be stable.

These attacks have caused widespread fear among residents in about 15 villages across Kagaznagar mandal. The presence of the tiger in the area has left people living in constant fear.

In response, forest officials have intensified efforts to locate and capture the tiger. Drone surveillance tracked the animal near Areguda village on Saturday. To ensure public safety, authorities have enforced prohibitory orders in the affected villages and implemented a standard operating procedure aimed at preventing further incidents.

Restrictions have been imposed in several villages of Kagaznagar mandal. Prohibitory orders under Section 144 have been imposed in these areas.

Poor quality of midday meals cause of concern

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Students being served mid-ay meal in unhygienic conditions in Ranga Reddy district

Students in government schools across Ranga Reddy district are raising concern over quality of midday meals in Rangareddy district. The midday meals are intended to provide essential nourishment. Reports from several schools indicate that these meals are substandard, with uncooked rice, watery soups, and poor-quality vegetables being regularly served.

In many schools, rice has been reported to be infested with worms, while others have found stones mixed in with the grains. At Orella ZPHS in Chevella mandal, students have been receiving rice infested with worms for the past two months, sparking complaints from both students and kitchen staff. Additionally, the usual nutritious curry or dal has been replaced with watery tomato soup. In some areas, meals are served outdoors under trees or in cramped kitchen sheds due to the absence of proper dining facilities.

The unhygienic conditions have only added to the concerns. At Kondurg Girls' Upper Primary School, bottle fragments and stones were discovered in the water tank, which students use for drinking. The lack of proper safeguards has led to the contamination of the water supply, making it unsafe for consumption. Many other schools also cook meals in open-air conditions or in poorly equipped kitchen sheds, exacerbating the already unsanitary environment, it is alleged.

Furthermore, nutritional deficiencies are prevalent in many schools, especially in Dharur and Marpalli mandals, where students are not receiving the promised nutritional value. Rice allocations are insufficient and the supply of eggs and vegetables has been irregular due to rising costs. School authorities are also grappling with delayed payments, with bills for mid-day meals pending for months. In some cases, schools have not received payments for up to eight months, forcing administrators to rely on loans to continue providing meals to students.

In Basheerabad and Keshampet mandals, poor hygienic conditions in kitchen are another significant hurdle. Some schools are forced to cook meals under trees, while others struggle with overcrowded, unsafe kitchen rooms. In some instances, meals are being cooked over wood stoves due to the prohibitive cost of gas cylinders, further compounding the challenges faced by these schools.

The ongoing issues highlight the urgent need for improvements in the quality, hygiene, and sustainability of the mid-day meal program in Ranga Reddy district, to ensure that students receive

Students in Pudur, Doma, and Marpalli mandals are also facing issues with the mid-day meal menu not being followed. While rice, dal, and vegetables are supposed to be served, children are receiving watery soups and insufficient portions of food. The lack of consistency in meal quality is causing dissatisfaction among students and their families.

The district is home to 1,309 schools, including 882 primary schools, 179 upper primary schools, and 248 high schools. With the current state of the mid-day meal program, there is growing concern that the children who rely on these meals for sustenance may not be receiving the adequate nutrition they need to succeed in their studies.

Educational institutions bandh total

The shutdown of schools called by Left student unions in protest against the State government's "neglect" of the education sector was total on Saturday. The government schools across Shadnagar constituency remained shut. The shutdown was part of a statewide call. Student leaders from organizations, such as the All India Students Federation (AISF), Students Federation of India (SFI), and Democratic Students' Union (DSU) expressed their dissatisfaction with the government's handling of education in the absence of a dedicated Education Minister. The protests highlighted concerns over the increasing number of students falling ill due to food poisoning linked to the poor quality of mid-day meals served in Gurukula schools, welfare hostels, Zilla Parishad schools, and primary schools. M Pawan Chauhan, Ranga Reddy District President of AISF, criticised the government's decision to keep the education department under the Chief Minister's direct control, stating, "It is not right to neglect students by keeping the education department under the Chief Minister. Where is the Education Commission? Don't you care about the lives of students?"

Telangana student falls to bullets in US

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Gun violence claimed on more life of student from Telangana in the United States. A Telugu student, Sai Teja, was felled by bullet at a shopping mall in Chicago.

According to the local police and the victim's friends, Sai Teja (26), the son of Nukarapu Koteswararao from Ramannapet under Khammam rural mandal, was studying in the U.S. He had gone to America three months ago for higher studies. Sai Teja was working at a shopping mall in Chicago while continuing his education.

On Saturday morning as per Indian Standard Time (IST), a gang of gunmen stormed the mall. They shot at Sai Teja, who was on duty at the time. Afterward, they stole cash from the store. Sai Teja succumbed to his injuries on the spot.

A pall gloom descended on his family and friends.

Constable arrested for stashing marijuana at home

PNS ■ WARANGAL

The Warangal police are cracking down on drug smugglers and peddlers relentlessly. The police, however, have been shocked to find marijuana in a policeman's home.

A constable from Narsampet, who was working in the Kothapet Police Division on Karimnagar Road, has been charged with involvement in the illegal activity. Police from a special team formed to combat drugs discovered that the constable had allegedly stashed marijuana in his home. He was taken into custody.

According to reliable sources, last year, the task force police had seized a large quantity of marijuana from the police station where this constable worked. The drugs were seized and kept at the station, and a case was filed against him.

The Narsampet division police were conducting vehicle checks on the road from Narsampet to Warangal when they noticed two people on a motorcycle trying to flee upon seeing the police. After a chase, one of the individuals was caught, and some dry marijuana was found on him. Upon questioning, he revealed that he had obtained it from the constable to sell. The constable was arrested and is under investigation.

CP exhorts newly recruited constables to work with honesty

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI

Ramagundam Police Commissioner M Srinivas has called on police personnel to perform their duties with integrity, dedication, and commitment. He emphasised the importance of serving the public with confidence, while addressing challenges effectively. He also advised the newly recruited policemen to receive those who approached the police stations and address their grievances

On Saturday, Ramagundam Police Commissioner Srinivas distributed appointment orders to 392 newly selected constables from the districts of Peddapalli and Mancherial.

Ramagundam Police Commissioner M Srinivas handing over appointment letters to newly recruited constables in Ramagundam on Saturday

Among them, 236 are civil constables, and 156 are armed constables, including 83 female civil constables and 37 female armed constables.

Speaking on the occasion, the Police Commissioner advised the new recruits to perform their duties without succumbing to temptations, stressing that the public would respect them if they worked with sincerity. He also mentioned that Telangana Police has gained recognition for effectively using new technology in crime control, and he urged the recruits to serve in a way that earns the respect of society as law-abiding citizens. The event was attended by Additional DCP Administration C Raju, Special Branch ACP Raghavendra Rao, AR ACP Sundar Rao, AO Ashok Kumar, RIs Damodar, Mallesh, Vaman Murthy, Srinivas, Superintendents Indra Sena Reddy, Manoj Kumar, Sandhya, Inspectors, and RSI officers.

Indian Bank

Mallapuram Branch

Hyderabad Zone,D. No. 4-42-3 Near ESI Hospital
Nacharam Main Road Hyderabad -500076
Phone No. : 040-27172988,040-27177890

APPENDIX - IV (Rule - 8(1))

POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable property)

Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the **Indian Bank** under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated **23/08/2024** Calling upon the borrowers **1. Smt. Adupula Rama Devi** w/o of A Indrasena Reddy, **2. Sri A Indrasena Reddy** with our Mallapuram Branch to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs.15,23,101/-**(Rupees Fifteen lakhs Twenty Three thousand one Hundred one only) within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 and 9 of the said rules on this **28th day of November of the year 2024.**

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Indian Bank for an amount of **Rs.13,99,105/-** (Rs. Thirteen lakhs Ninety Nine thousand One Hundred Five only) as on 27/11/2024 and interest thereon."We draw attention to the provisions of Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act and the Rules framed there under which deals with your rights of redemption over the securities"

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All that the piece and parcel of land and building bearing plot no: 452 eastern part, in Sy. No: 199 admeasuring 250 Sy. Yds or 209 Sy. Mts., situated at Badangpet Village, Saroor Nagar Revenue Mandal, Ranga Reddy Dist., Under Badangpet Panchayat, Hyderabad and bounded by: **North:** 25' wide road **East:** Plot No: 453,**South:** Plot No: 5,**West** : Plot No: 452 Western part.

Date: 28/11/2024
Place: Hyderabad

Authorized Officer
Indian Bank,

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
Revenue (Land Acquisition) Department
FORM - VII
DECLARATION

Under Section 19 (1) of The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Central Act 30/2013) and as per the state rule 25 (1)

Collector's File No. G3/2051/2019 **Date: 28-10-2024**
RDO, Husnabad File No. B/795/2019 **Date: -10-2024**
Gazette No. 153/2024 **Date: 28-10-2024**

As per the directions of the Government of Telangana/District Collector, Siddipet, the below mentioned **Acres 5.15 guntas** of land is needed in the hamlet of Baswapur in Poreddypalli village of Koheda mandal of Siddipet district for public purpose i.e. for construction of check Dam-cum-SLRB across Peddavagu.

Therefore, the declaration has been issued under Section 19 (1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act of 2013.

Ac 5.15 Guntas of land as mentioned in the below mentioned schedule is required in Baswapur hamlet of Poreddypalli village of Koheda mandal of Siddipet district for the abovesaid construction of the project. Therefore, the declaration has been issued.

SCHEDULE

Village: Poreddypalli H/o Baswapur
Mandal: Akkannapeta District: Siddipet

Sl. No.	Sy. No.	Type of Title	Type of Land	Extent of land acquisition	Name of the Pattadar	Name of the Enjoyer	Boundaries East	West	North	South	12
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	641	Patta	Dry	0.03	Panjala Chinna Mallaiah S/o Lingaiah	Panjala Chinna Mallaiah S/o Lingaiah	640 643	Vagu	584	642 656 657	
				0.04	Panjala Srinivas S/o Rajaiah	Panjala Srinivas S/o Rajaiah	640 643	Vagu	584	642 656 657	
				0.14	Panjala Yadaiah S/o Lingaiah	Panjala Yadaiah S/o Lingaiah	640 643	Vagu	584	642 656 657	
				0.04 ½	Panjala Chinna Mallaiah S/o Lingaiah	Panjala Chinna Mallaiah S/o Lingaiah	640 643	Vagu	584	642 656 657	
				0.04 ½	Panjala Srinivas S/o Rajaiah	Panjala Srinivas S/o Rajaiah	640 643	Vagu	584	642 656 657	
				0.05	Panjala Chinna Yadaiah S/o Lingaiah	Panjala Chinna Yadaiah S/o Lingaiah	640 643	Vagu	584	642 656 657	
				1.20	Panjala Yadaiah S/o Pedda Mallaiah	Panjala Yadaiah S/o Pedda Mallaiah	640 643	Vagu	584	642 656 657	
				0.36	Banda Bikshapati S/o Jangaiah	Banda Bikshapati S/o Jangaiah	640 643	Vagu	584	642 656 657	
				0.03	Domala Sailu S/o Odaiah	Domala Sailu S/o Odaiah	640 643	Vagu	584	642 656 657	
				0.02	Mankali Mallaiah S/o Raja Mallaiah	Aasarla Yellaiah S/o Komuraiah	640 643	Vagu	584	642 656 657	
				0.01	Manda Durgaiah S/o Balkaiah	Manda Durgaiah S/o Balkaiah	640 643	Vagu	584	642 656 657	
				0.01	Nagaram Anjaneyulu S/o Bagaiah	Nagaram Anjaneyulu S/o Bagaiah	640 643	Vagu	584	642 656 657	
2	686	Patta	Dry	0.14	Karedla Swathi W/o Indrasena Reddy	Paturi Rajireddy S/o Ramreddy	Vagu	687		685	
3	680	Patta	Dry	0.02	Domala Kanakavva W/o Ilaiah	Domala Kanakavva W/o Ilaiah	681	679	685 684	676	
4	682	Lavni Patta	Dry	0.03	Domala Kanukavva W/o Ilaiah	Domala Kanukavva W/o Ilaiah	Vagu	681	684		
5	685	Patta	Dry	0.07	Domala Kanukavva W/o Ilaiah	Domala Kanukavva W/o Ilaiah	Vagu	690	684 687 686	684 683	
6	640	Patta	Dry	0.06	Panjala Yadaiah S/o Pedda Mallaiah	Panjala Yadaiah S/o Pedda Mallaiah	639	641	584	643	
7	643	Patta	Dry	0.01 ½	Boyini Mallaiah S/o Pochaiah	Boyini Mallaiah S/o Pochaiah	644	642	640	645	
				0.08 ½	Mankali Rajaiah S/o Mallaiah	Mankali Rajaiah S/o Mallaiah	644	642	640	645	
8	657	Patta	Dry	0.02	Ragi Yadavva W/o Venkatreddy	Ragi Yadavva W/o Venkatreddy	655 652	Vagu	641	658	
				0.03	Chintala Venkat Reddy S/o Veerareddy	Chintala Venkat Reddy S/o Veerareddy	655 652	Vagu	641	658	
9	710	Patta	Dry	0.04	Barre Pedda Mallareddy S/o Adireddy	Chanda Prataapreddy S/o Venkat reddy	Vagu	708	711 741		
				0.01 ½	Barre Rajireddie S/o Agireddy	Konda Venkanna S/o Lingaiah	Vagu	708	711 741		
				0.01 ½	Barre Rajireddie S/o Agireddy	Mahammad Jamal S/o	Vagu	708	711 741		
				0.01	Barre Rajireddie S/o Agireddy	Mahammad Shaik Ali S/o	Vagu	708	711 741		
				0.01	Barre Rajireddie S/o Agireddy	S.D. Jafar Bhee W/o Khatuja Bhee	Vagu	708	711 741		
				0.01	Barre Rajireddie S/o Agireddy	M.D. Bole Pasha S/o	Vagu	708	711 741		
				0.18	Pathuri Lingareddy S/o Rajireddy	Pathuri Mahender Reddy S/o Dharmareddy	Vagu	708	711 741		
					Pathuri Mahender Reddy S/o Dharmareddy	Pathuri Mahender Reddy S/o Dharmareddy	Vagu	708	711 741		
					Pathuri Raghupati Reddy S/o Laxmareddy	Pathuri Raghupati Reddy S/o Laxmareddy	Vagu	708	711 741		
					Pathuri Anjireddy S/o Sairaddy	Pathuri Mahender Reddy S/o Dharmareddy	Vagu	708	711 741		
					Pathuri Padma W/o Bhaskar Reddy	Pathuri Padma W/o Bhaskar Reddy	Vagu	708	711 741		
					Sampati Janardhan Reddy S/o Lingaiah	Sampati Janardhan Reddy S/o Lingaiah	Vagu	708	711 741		
					Pathuri Prabhakar Reddy S/o Laxmareddy	Pathuri Prabhakar Reddy S/o Laxmareddy	Vagu	708	711 741		
					Pathuri Mallareddy S/o Balkaiah	Pathuri Mallareddy S/o Balkaiah	Vagu	708	711 741		
Total Extent				5.15							

Since no objections is received under Section 15 (Central Act 30/2013), the declaration has been issued.

The acquisition of the land in Baswapur hamlet of Poreddypalli village of Koheda mandal of Siddipet district is limited to a relatively very small area of the land for the construction of a check dam-cum-SLRB. Moreover, the construction of the canal will improve irrigation facility to their lands and their livelihoods and habitats are not going to be affected by the said land acquisition. Therefore, the question of rehabilitation and resettlement is not applicable here.

Mines of coal, iron-stone, slate or other minerals lying under the said land or any particular portion of the said land are not needed or may be used if they are useful to the project.

The plan of the above said land to be acquired may be inspected in the office of the Revenue Divisional Officer, Husnabad during working hours on any working day.

Sd/- Land Acquisition Officer & Revenue Divisional Officer Husnabad
Sd/- Addl. Collector Siddipet Dist
Sd/- Dist. Collector Siddipet Dist

DIPR No.411/LA/PP-Pub/2024-25

ACROSS THE STATES

5 killed as bus plunges into gorge

Five people were killed and 15 others injured as a bus plunged into a 150-ft-deep gorge near the West Bengal-Sikkim border on Saturday afternoon, police said. The accident happened between Andheri and Atal Setu, about 1 km from the Rangpo border, around 3 pm. The bus, heading to Gangtok from Siliguri, veered off the NH-10 and crash-landed on the bank of the Teesta river, they said. The identities of the deceased and the injured were being ascertained, police said, adding that there was a woman among those dead. The injured persons were taken to a health centre in Rangpo for treatment, they said. Police said that the number of deaths is likely to go up as many injured passengers were very critical. Among the passengers on the bus when the accident happened were some tourists, they said.

UP govt to invite all CMs for Maha Kumbh 2025

The Uttar Pradesh government would send ministers to invite governors and chief ministers across the nation to Prayagraj for Maha Kumbh 2025 in January. This was decided at a meeting of ministers convened by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at his Lok Bhavan office in Lucknow. "It has been decided that UP ministers would visit all the states and invite governors and chief ministers to Kumbh. The itinerary of ministers is being prepared," a senior UP minister told PTI after the meeting. When asked if opposition leaders would also be approached, he said, "Why not? We will seek an audience with all CMs, including those from opposition states and invite them." On November 22, the UP cabinet headed by Adityanath approved a proposal to hold roadshows and events in India and abroad to promote the Maha Kumbh that UP government officials said would draw devotees in record numbers from across the globe. The roadshows would be led by ministers who would also use the occasion to meet governors and CMs of the states they visit on the occasion, a minister said.

Many countries stopped using EVMs: Medha Patkar

Amid a debate on the EVM credibility re-started by some Opposition parties after the debacle in Maharashtra assembly polls, rights activist Medha Patkar on Saturday said many countries have stopped using them. Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge recently suggested that ballot papers be reintroduced in the election mechanism. "I am not an expert on EVMs but it is true that many countries have stopped using them. Experiments show that certain systems can be changed with a mere electric connection," Patkar told reporters in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar city. She was conferred the honorary D.Litt by the Mahatma Gandhi Mission University. Patkar said the code of conduct for polls cannot be implemented impartially if the Election Commission has links with any political party.

The activist said the monthly financial assistance of Rs 1,500 being given to women who come from poor families under the Maharashtra government's "Mazi Ladki Bahin" scheme won't resolve their problems.

India and Italy are strong maritime nations: Sonowal

Invites Italy to collaborate with heritage museum

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Union Shipping, Ports and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Saturday asked Italian museums to collaborate with India for the upcoming National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) in Gujarat's Lothal.

Speaking during a seminar on blue economy and space held on the sidelines of 93-year-old Italian ship Amerigo Vespucci's call on Mumbai port, Sonowal said India is building the largest museum devoted to maritime heritage at Lothal, a site of the Indus Valley civilisation.

The Union Cabinet had recently given the nod for the NMHC, which is estimated to cost over Rs 3,500 crore, as per some reports.

Sonowal said as early as 4,000 BC, Indian ships went to neighbouring countries with produce such as spices, textiles, and arts and crafts.

Indian ships had a reputation of being sturdy and were manned by expert seamen, he said. The Union minister said that Italian travellers including the 13th century Venetian merchant Marco Polo have documented Indian ships to be highly sophisticated, much larger, durable and versatile than other vessels.

The dockyard at Lothal is over 5,000 years old and given its importance, India is building the NMHC there, Sonowal said. "I would invite globally renowned Italian museums to collaborate in our endeavour," he said. The minister called India and Italy as strategic partners, and also affirmed his commitment to take forward the agenda set out by prime ministers of both the countries recently.

India and Italy are ancient civilisations with a rich cultural heritage, the minister said, adding that Italian cities were important trading posts on the ancient spice route.

The country's scientific and economic heritage spans millennia and as far back as the Rigveda period, that is between 3,300 to 1,900 BC, "Indian civilisation laid the foundation for advancement in diverse scientific domain", he said.

Without elaborating, he also told reporters that India and Italy held "informal" talks on Saturday. He said on the upcoming India-Middle East-Europe-Economic Corridor, Italy has made some wish and added that India will take the necessary steps on this aspect and even called it as the country's responsibility.

Both India and Italy are strong maritime nations having advanced space programmes, Sonowal said, stressing that ecology and economic aspirations have to go hand in hand.

"From the enormousness of the ocean to the infinite vastness of space, the potential and benefit of India-Italy partnership is immense," he said.

BJP does not follow rules, democratic norms: Priyanka

PNS ■ KOZHIKODE (KERALA)

Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, on a two-day visit to Kerala after her maiden electoral win from the Wayanad hill constituency, on Saturday said the BJP did not play by any rules or follow democratic norms in its political attacks.

Comparing the BJP's behaviour with the landslides that hit Wayanad in July, Priyanka contended that just like the natural disaster, the saffron party's conduct knows no rules, offers no explanations and follows no democratic norms that are normally adhered to in political fights.

"The political challenges we face (from the BJP) today are like landslides. There are no rules. There are no explanations."

"The behaviour of the ruling party (at the Centre), the BJP, knows no democratic norms, not even those we normally adhere to in a political fight," she said while speaking at a joint public meeting, with her brother and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, at Mukkam here.

She further said that institutions were being destroyed, leading to the wavering of the people's basic faith in the electoral process and "the institutions that held our country together".

Later, at a reception given to her in Karulai in Nilambur assembly constituency in Malappuram district, Priyanka reiterated -- "we are fighting against the BJP that has no rules, no respect for democracy and the Constitution".

"They have a negative and destructive agenda," she added.

She claimed that the Parliament had not functioned for a week as the BJP was afraid to discuss certain issues on which the Congress-led opposition wanted to hold discussions in the Lok Sabha.

"We have a big battle before us in the Parliament and across India. We are fighting to safeguard our Constitution," she said.

'Manipur not like Mizoram'

We joined India with defined boundaries: CM

PNS ■ IMPHAL

A day after the Manipur government urged Mizoram CM Lalduhoma to demonstrate "better statesmanship" by being a "good neighbour" rather than fueling hatred through "unwarranted comments", Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Saturday said Manipur is not like Mizoram, "which was once just a district in Assam".

Speaking at a function for construction of infrastructure to relocate the Assam Rifles from the premises of the historic Langthabal Old Palace, Singh said, "Manipur is not like Mizoram. We have a written history of 2,000 years. Manipur merged with the Union of India as a single entity in 1949. Our boundaries were not newly created but we joined with the Union with intact boundaries."

The Manipur CM's reaction came in the backdrop of a recent interview given by Lalduhoma to a national daily in which he said Singh was a liability for the state, its people and the BJP, and even President's Rule is preferable compared to his administration.

"Assam Rifles is here to serve the nation. They are not our enemies. We all are Indian citizens. The gap can be bridged through interactions between commanders, CSOs, and intellectuals. Our common enemy is located in foreign territories, not within. The paramilitary force can deal with insurgents or unlawful activities as they see fit, but not everyone is an insurgent," the CM said.

"People ask, 'What is the Chief Minister doing?' Can the CM go and engage in firing? The CM makes policy plans—how to identify illegal immigrants, how to cancel the Free Movement Regime, and how to implement the NRC. We will never rest until we have clearly safeguarded the entire land of Manipur and its indigenous people," Singh asserted.

The CM asserted that the conflict since May 3 last year is not due to corruption by the government but because of measures taken to protect the original inhabitants of the land and address the distorted histories of the state. "Naturally, those who once thrived on the drug trade will be upset with the government and against me," he added.

Singh also thanked Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Assam Rifles authorities for agreeing to relocate their camp from Langthabal Old Palace.

Cyclone Fengal induced rains cause heavy inundation in TN

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Hospitals and houses were inundated in Chennai and its neighbourhoods on Saturday following Cyclone Fengal induced heavy downpour, as civic authorities said clearing works were on in a 'war-footing.'

Barricades and umbrellas were swept away by gusty winds and road users scurried for cover as rains poured, with cyclone Fengal inching closer to the shoreline on Saturday, leaving many areas in and around Chennai under water.

Curiously, a lot of people, especially young men and women, frolicked at beaches, and strangely, visitors could be spotted at the Mamallapuram world heritage site too, despite the government warning people against going near beaches, in view of the high tides. Wind speed was pretty high in coastline areas such as Marakkanam in Villupuram district.

Rainwater entered the premises of two state-run hospitals at Chromepet, a general hospital and a facility for thoracic medicine, both of which are located side by side and frequented by people.

Pondy govt issues heavy rain alert

PNS ■ PUDUCHERRY

Puducherry experienced heavy rains on Saturday, prompting the union territory administration to send SMS alerts to around 12 lakh residents cautioning them to remain vigilant as cyclonic storm Fengal is expected to make landfall near here later in the day. Chief Minister N Rangasamy visited the rain-affected areas today to review the steps taken by the Disaster Management department, especially in accommodating those evacuated from low-lying areas into relief centres.

The chief minister instructed officials to closely monitor the situation and ensure the safety of the residents.

'Can't afford this kind of spectacle in mother of democracy'

PNS ■ ITANAGAR

Criticising the disruption of proceedings in the Rajya Sabha, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Saturday said that this "kind of spectacle" could not be afforded in the "mother of democracy".

Dhankhar, the chairman of the Rajya Sabha, made the statement while addressing a special session of the Arunachal Pradesh assembly.

"I express my deep pain, entering into the fourth quarter of the adoption of the Indian Constitution, we could not work for a single moment in Rajya Sabha, my head is in shame. We cannot afford this kind of spectacle in a country that is the mother of democracy, the largest democracy. How can we go against the spirit of the Constitution? How can we afford to walk out of our obligations?" he said. "I'm happy to know your assembly is otherwise. It's a shining example, a beacon of hope," he added.

Dhankhar said political parties have to understand that ultimately the interest of all converges in the prosperity of a nation.

"We cannot, under any situation, keep any interest above our national interest," he said.

Like the previous three sittings of the ongoing Winter Session, the Rajya Sabha could not take up scheduled business on Friday and the proceedings were adjourned within minutes of the assembly amid protests by opposition MPs, demanding discussions on corruption allegations against the Adani Group, violence in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal, and the situation in Manipur. The vice president said the country's growth rate makes him proud "because no country comes close to India".

"It's fine that India is the fifth largest global economy. It's an accomplishment.

TMC protests against Waqf Amendment Bill

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Kolkata, Nov 30 (PTI) The TMC Minority Cell held a rally in Kolkata on Sunday to protest the Waqf Amendment Bill, which its leaders alleged was aimed at seizing properties of Muslims.

Addressing the rally, TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee claimed that the BJP-led government at the Centre does not respect the Constitution as it was moving forward on the matter without any discussion with the states.

Banerjee, who is a member of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on the Waqf Amendment Bill, alleged that the federal structure of the country was under threat because of this "authoritarian" attitude of the BJP.

"The Preamble of the Constitution is the eye of the nation. The BJP government is not following the ideals of the Preamble," he said. Among the other speakers at the rally, held in Rani Rashmoni Road, were state Urban Development Minister Firhad Hakim and Murarai MLA Mosarraf Hossain. Hossain claimed that the Waqf Amendment Bill was part of a conspiracy to seize the properties of Muslims, and polarising the society for narrow political gains. "Today's meeting testifies that the BJP will not succeed in its game-plan," he said.

Women should come forward, take benefits of schemes:FM

PNS ■ MADHUBANI (BIHAR)

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday urged women to come forward and take benefits of central schemes to make them more capable and empowered.

She was speaking at a credit outreach programme held in Madhubani, where loans to the tune of Rs 1,121 crore were provided to 50,294 beneficiaries by various banks.

"Our Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji says there should be a 'Lakhpati Didi' in every village of the country… and for this, banks have launched several schemes for providing financial assistance to women.

"Women are being given financial assistance and training through every Self Help Group (SHG) in Bihar. I urge women to become a part of the schemes launched by the central government... so that they can become more capable and empowered," Sitharaman said.

She also said women would play an important role in achieving the goal of a developed India by 2047.

"Our PM believes that India's development should be led by women. The focus of the NDA government is clear… The poor, women, youths and farmers are the top four priorities of the government. The PM gives the example of Bihar and says that other states should also follow the same path of development and growth," the finance minister said.

Sitharaman also distributed copies of the Constitution in Maithili and Sanskrit languages to people during the programme.

Delhi's air quality remains 'very poor'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's air quality remained in the "very poor" category for the seventh consecutive day on Saturday with an Air Quality Index (AQI) of 346, officials said. The city's air quality is likely to remain in the "very poor" category for the next three days due to unfavourable weather conditions, they added.

Delhi's 24-hour average AQI was recorded at 346 at 4 pm on Saturday, marking a slight rise from 331 recorded on Friday, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). Out of the 38 monitoring stations across the national capital, only Shadipur recorded AQI in the "severe" category, while 34 stations recorded "very poor" AQI, according to the Sameer app that provides hourly updates of national AQI published by the CPCB. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe". According to the Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi, the AQI is likely to be in the "very poor" category for the next three days. PM2.5 was the primary pollutant in Delhi, with levels recorded at 153 $\mu g/m^3$ at 3 pm on Saturday. These fine particles pose significant health risks as they can penetrate deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream. Vehicular emissions, as reported by the Centre's Decision Support System (DSS) for Air Quality Management, are typically updated daily at noon.

However, on Saturday, the data available on the website until 4 pm reflected only Friday's estimated contribution, which accounted for 21.6 per cent of Delhi's pollution.

MICHELIN MAGIC ON A PLATE

Imagine indulging in a meal where every bite feels like a discovery where flavours, textures and creativity come together in perfect plate. That's exactly what you can expect at Zanotta, where Michelin-starred Chef Alessandro Liberatore's culinary genius takes fine dining to a whole new level, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

For anyone who considers themselves a foodie, there's an unmistakable thrill in the promise of a Michelin-starred experience. It's not just about eating; it's about savouring stories told through food, each dish a chapter of creativity, tradition, and mastery. As a vegetarian, I've often found myself navigating the labyrinth of fine dining, where plant-based options can sometimes feel like an afterthought. But my recent visit to *Zanotta* at *The Leela* Ambience, for a unique collaboration with Villa Cora's two-Michelin-Key Chef Alessandro Liberatore, turned all my expectations on their head.

Picture this: a sparkling Gurugram skyline, soft live music and the kind of atmosphere that makes you lean in just a little closer to hear the clink of glasses and the hum of conversation. That's the setting at *Zanotta*, perched elegantly on the sixth floor. *The Leela* Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences proudly presented this iconic pop-up featuring VillaCora, the prestigious two-Michelin-Key hotel from Florence. The stage was perfectly set for a menu promising innovation, comfort, and the finest ingredients, all tied together with a ribbon of Italian finesse.

It began with what could only be described as edible art: a *Deconstructed Bruschetta,* forget the standard fare of toasted bread and diced tomatoes; this was a vivid celebration of marinated cherry tomatoes, bursting with flavour and delicately balanced with a drizzle of herbaceous olive oil. It was light, refreshing and a reminder that sometimes, the simplest ingredients hold the most potential. The next dish, *Millefeuille Aubergine*, was a revelation. A delicate layering of eggplant, tomato coulis, buffalo mozzarella and basil pesto transformed the humble aubergine into something extraordinary. Each bite was an orchestra of smoky, creamy and tangy notes that remained long after the plate was cleared. It felt like comfort food, but with the refinement you expect from an Italian maestro.

Then came the *Potatoes Gnocchi*, a dish that, quite frankly, stole the show. The *gnocchi* were soft, pillowy, and bathed in a luxurious cacio e pepe sauce. But what set it apart was the addition of sour vegetable brunoise, which provided a sharp, tangy contrast to the creamy richness. It was bold yet understated, the kind of dish that makes you pause and appreciate the skill behind it.

And then, the pièce de résistance: *Tomato Tarte Tatin*. If there's a dish that can truly redefine your perception of vegetarian food, this was it. Caramelised tomatoes, their natural sweetness amplified, rested atop a perfectly flaky pastry. The balance between the sweet and savoury flavours was brilliantly done, showcasing Chef Liberatore's ability to surprise and delight.

For non-vegetarians, the feedback I heard was just as glowing. The *Red Prawn Risotto* was singled out as a showstopper, cooked to perfection, with the prawns' sweetness melding beautifully with the risotto's rich texture. Every plate seemed to have the same meticulous attention to detail, leaving no palate unfulfilled.

(left to Right) - Chef Mattea Nasi and Chef Alessandro Liberatore

Throughout the evening, the service was impeccable, attentive without being intrusive. The vegetarian focus of the menu was a refreshing change, with every dish crafted with the same thought and care as any meat or seafood counterpart. It felt as though the vegetables were the stars of the show, celebrated for their natural flavours and textures rather than treated as just substitutes.

Dessert was another highlight: a *Chocolate Cocoa Short Crust Pastry* filled with raspberry cream and chocolate ganache. The sharp tartness of the raspberry paired beautifully with the velvety richness of the chocolate, creating a harmony that felt like the perfect conclusion to an already outstanding meal. Yet, it was the final offerings under Until We Meet Again that left me in wonder.

The Selection of Tea and Coffee was perfect to wind down, but the real treasures were the petit fours. These weren't just bite-sized treats; they were flavour bombs that delighted and surprised. My personal favourites, *Cabosse, Noisette, Mango* & *Coconut Petit* each carried a distinct personality, but together, they created a symphony of textures and flavours that blew my mind. The Signature *Lemon, Chocolate & Coffee Petit* Four were as indulgent as they were unique, leaving a sweetness that felt like a parting gift.

Zanotta's charm lies not only in its food but in how every aspect of the experience is curated to perfection. Chef Liberatore's collaboration was a reminder of why Michelin stars matter, not for their prestige, but for the heart and soul they demand from a chef. Whether you're a vegetarian, a seafood enthusiast or simply someone looking to experience an unforgettable meal, *Zanotta* delivers on every front. It's not just a meal; it's a memory, a moment and a masterpiece rolled into one. For me, it was proof that fine dining isn't just about eating, it's about truly living.

PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR

CHEF MATTIA'S ITALIAN TREATS

Chef Bianchi's Culinary Debut in India was a delight to the tastebuds at Sorrento in Shangri-la, New Delhi, writes **ABHI SINGHAL**

Immersing the Italian cuisine in his own taste and style, Michelin-starred *Chef Mattia Bianchi* made his India debut with the Italian restaurant *Sorrento* at *Shangri-la*, *New Delhi*. The feast was filled with the signature collection of dishes by *Chef Bianchi* himself and was made available for the people for five days.

Being known for their artistic composition, *Chef Bianchi's* food was a culinary delight. Bringing a slice of authentic Italian cooking, his pop-up dinner was a symphony of flavours, textures, and impeccable artistry, designed to tantalise the most refined palates.

The menu was a love letter to Italian cuisine, featuring dishes that showcased *Chef Bianchi's* innovative techniques and passion for fresh, locally sourced ingredients. The meal started with *Chef Mattia's Degustation Menu* with the *Caprese Cloud* for the vegetarian and *Mediterranean Fantasy* for non-vegetarian. *Caprese Cloud* served with *Fratelli Noi* had delicate foam of Buffalo Mozzarella paired with a medley of roasted cherry tomatoes, garnished with basil leaves with a mouth-watering taste. *Mediterranean Fantasy* on the other hand was a luxurious blend of shabu shrimps and salmon eggs atop silky potato foam, dusted with tomato powder and infused with Mediterranean aromas for a sensory delight served with *Fratelli Noi.*

Then came the *Risotto* with the dish *Herbs Whisper's Risotto* as the signature dish served with *Fratelli J'Noon White*. It was a Creamy risotto in a wild herbs infusion, topped with crunchy smoked umami almonds powdered with tangy sumac.

Pastas entered the third round of the menu with *Fusilli Rock n Roll* which had vibrant fusilli infused with beetroot extract, crowned with tangy goat cheese crumble and aromatic rocket pesto, perfectly paired with the rich notes of *Fratelli Sette* wine. *Fusilli Citrus* was served with *Fratelli Sette* wine with lime scented fusilli cooked in beetroot extract and garnished with raw marinated scallops.

The main course showcased a togetherness of flavours, led by the *Sunlit Chicken Rhapsody* with Chicken supreme with butternut squash and *Medley Feast*, a culinary masterpiece perfectly paired with *Fratelli J'Noon Red* wine. The addition with the same wine glasses was *Bitter Bliss* with roasted baby gem, caper fruits, pine nuts and beurre blanc sauce, making the plate look like a painted canvas.

The end was saved for the best: the dessert with three types of symphonies, namely *Autumn*, *Summer*, and *Winter*. The *autumn* was the *Tiramisù Delight*, with traditional Tiramisù with mascarpone cream and marsala-kissed sponge cake veiled in the coffee crumble. The *Winter* Symphony featured *Midnight Silk* with dark chocolate cloud, gilded almonds, and frozen hazelnut cream. The *Summer* symphony had *Summer Ode* with exotic fruits soup-bathed yogurt pearls on vanilla sable. The overall experience of the dessert was a unique one blended with music. There were cards explaining how the desserts explain the personalities of the people.

The experience at *Sorrento* was more than just a meal; it was an unforgettable journey through the heart of Italian gastronomy, curated by *Chef Mattia Bianchi's* masterful touch. Each dish was a testament to his ability to merge tradition with innovation, creating a dining spectacle that celebrated the art of food.

The guests were left in awe, their taste buds delighted and their senses elevated. *Chef Bianchi's* debut in India with his pop-up at Shangri-la, New Delhi, left an indelible mark on every diner who had the privilege to partake in this symphony of flavours.

World Food Carnival

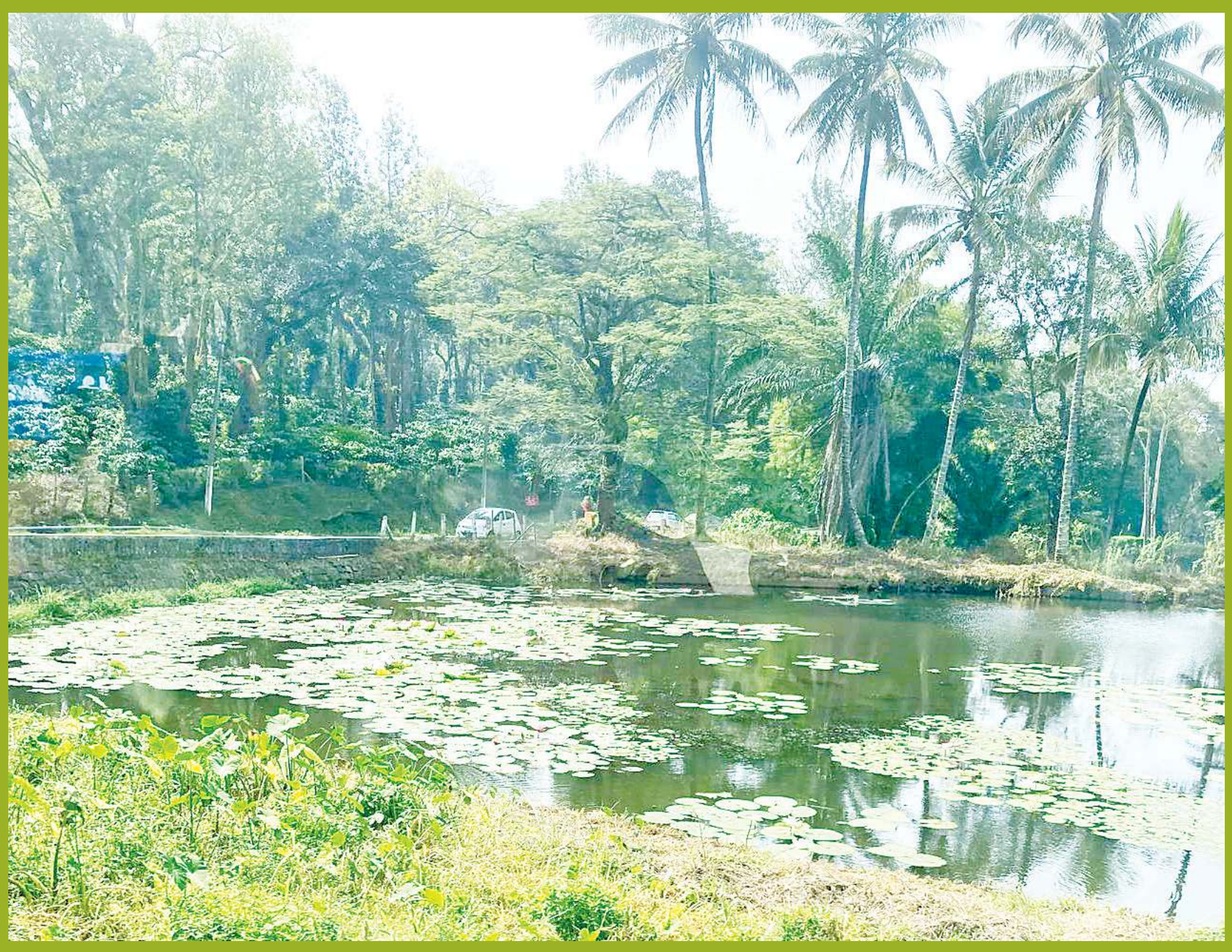
By TEAM **AGENDA**

Worldmark Aerocity in New Delhi recently hosted the *World Food Carnival*, a feast for the senses that brought together food lovers from across the city. With over 30 stalls offering a wide range of cuisines, Mexican, Italian, Indian, Middle Eastern, and more there was something for everyone. Renowned restaurants like Kampai, Cafe Delhi Heights, and Monsoon showcased their signature dishes, elevating the food experience to new heights.

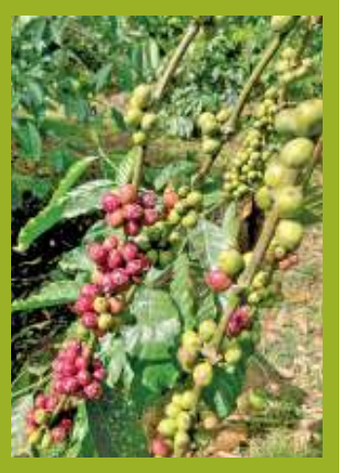
The carnival opened with a lively performance by "The Artictern," setting an upbeat tone for the day. Cultural performances like the Dragon Dance and a saxophonist added a magical touch to the atmosphere. Guests enjoyed live face painting and an instant GIF creator, which kept everyone entertained and added a fun element to the event. The Kids' Zone was a family-friendly highlight, offering activities to keep children busy while parents could indulge in the food offerings.

On the second day, the excitement continued with live bands "The Gus Band" and "The Cherish," whose performances had the crowd swaying to their beats. An African Dance performance added a vibrant touch, and the food stalls kept everyone's taste buds satisfied. The carnival also featured plenty of activities for children, from magic shows to face painting.

What stood out was the way the event brought people together. It wasn't just about the food; it was about creating an experience that celebrated culture, community and fun. The carnival's vibrant atmosphere, combined with delicious food and entertainment, made it a memorable event. For anyone who loves good food and a lively atmosphere, the World Food Carnival at Worldmark Aerocity was an experience not to be missed.



COORG: WHERE COFFEE CULTURE MEETS ASPIRATIONAL AVOCADOS



Coorg's lush landscapes are evolving, with century-old coffee plantations now sharing space with thriving rows of avocado trees, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

As I pack my bags in Delhi the AQI is reading staggering 430, the smog has dawned on the city and there is heaviness in the air, eyes burning, breathing is an effort to be undertaken. The touchdown in Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru is smooth the temperature is almost at par with Delhi but air is breathable. The five hours journey to *Coorg* is tiring but relaxing scenery changes from rocky to green to lush green, on the way you get to see the Gabbar Singh's den, the place where Sholay film was shot some 40 years back. On the way we have elephant family waiting for us by the roadside and snake crosses the road as drives pushes the brakes. Yes, all of us have right to live, even snakes!

It is night already and the day is done without much fuss as we retire in 140-year-old property a British bungalow now a tata property -Taneerhulla in ama coffee trail. The morning view from the window is fascinating, Delhi smog has given way to *Coorg* fog, and AQI has dropped to 43! I take a deep breath, as if to store this purity and carry it back home.

Coorg, or Kodagu as it is known in Kannad is nestled in the heart of the Western Ghats, has a fascinating history shaped by its strategic location, natural resources, and the allure of its spices. This region has been a magnet for traders, rulers, and explorers, each drawn by its bounty and beauty.

The history of *Coorg* dates back to ancient times, with its mention in early Indian texts like the Sangam literature. The region was originally home to indigenous tribes like the Kodavas, who developed a rich culture centered around nature and agriculture. Kodavas are known for their martial traditions, unique customs, and close-knit community life, which continue to define *Coorg's* identity today. Over centuries, *Coorg* saw the rise and fall of several South Indian dynasties, including the Cholas, Gangas, Hoysalas, and Kadambas. These rulers left their imprint through temples and forts, which stand as silent witnesses to the region's historical significance.

By the 15th and 16th centuries, the fame of the Western Ghats and their riches spread beyond India's borders. The spice trade was the primary lure, as *Coorg*, along with other parts of the Western Ghats, became a significant source of black pepper, cardamom, and other exotic spices. The Portuguese were among the first Europeans to set sail for India, with Vasco da Gama's arrival in 1498 marking a new era of trade and conquest. Soon, Dutch, French, and British traders followed, vying for control of spice routes. *Coorg*, though a landlocked region, became an integral part of these trade networks due to its fertile hills and spice plantations.

In the early 19th century, the British annexed *Coorg* after defeating the local ruler, Chikka Veerarajendra, in 1834. Recognising Coorg's agricultural potential, the British transformed its economy by introducing coffee cultivation alongside spices. This was the beginning of coffee plantation on commercial scale in *Coorg* and has stayed that way since. Coffee thrived in the region's climate, and *Coorg* became one of India's premier coffee-producing areas. The planters were of course the British who lived near their plantations. Their Bungalows dot the place and the one we stayed was of course belonged to a British. The British also admired *Coorg's* natural beauty. *Coorg* is often referred to as the "Scotland of India" for its rolling hills, misty valleys, and temperate weather. Under British influence, the Kodavas were granted special privileges, including exemption from the Arms Act, which allowed them to retain their traditional firearms-a legacy still continues.

The Western Ghats, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, are among the most biodiverse regions on the planet. Stretching over 1,600 kilometers from Gujarat to Kerala, these ancient mountains are home to an astonishing variety of flora and fauna.

In *Coorg*, the Western Ghats reveal their most enchanting side. Dense forests, gurgling streams, and cascading waterfalls dominate the landscape, making it a paradise for nature enthusiasts. The forests host an incredible range of plant species, from ancient trees to medicinal herbs. They are especially known for sandalwood, teak, and bamboo. The Western Ghats are a haven for wildlife, including tigers, elephants, gaurs, and numerous endemic species like the Lion-tailed Macaque and Malabar Civet. The Ghats are also critical for the region's agriculture, providing a fertile environment for growing coffee, spices, and now avocados.

Coorg's history is a blend of ancient traditions and modern influences. Its spice heritage continues to thrive alongside its renowned coffee plantations. Now, with the introduction of avocado cultivation by Westfalia Fruit, *Coorg* is stepping into a new chapter of agricultural innovation.

Tourists visiting *Coorg* can trace its history through ancient temples, forts, and colonial-era bungalows, all while enjoying its natural beauty and rich culinary traditions. The intertwining of the Western Ghats' biodiversity with the cultural tapestry of Coorg makes it one of India's most enchanting destinations.

Coorg's identity is deeply intertwined with its coffee plantations, which have been the backbone of its economy for decades. Introduced by Baba Budan in the 17th century, coffee found an ideal home in *Coorg's* rich soil and temperate climate. Today, the district is one of India's leading coffee-producing regions, renowned for its Arabica and Robusta beans.

The plantations, often set against misty hillsides, not only produce world-class coffee but also create picturesque landscapes that attract tourists. Coffee estate tours allow visitors to learn about the journey of coffee beans from farm to cup, making them an integral part of the *Coorg* experience.

Located in southwestern Karnataka, *Coorg* is a verdant hill station known for its cool climate, scenic views, and pristine environment. It is part of the UNESCO - listed Western Ghats, one of the world's biodiversity hotspots. The region's dense forests, cascading waterfalls and diverse wildlife make it a haven for eco-tourism and outdoor activities such as trekking, birdwatching, and nature photography.

Some must-visit spots include the Abbey Falls, Raja's Seat, Dubare Elephant Camp, and the Brahmagiri Wildlife Sanctuary. The Kaveri River, originating from Talakaveri in *Coorg*, adds to the district's charm, serving as a lifeline for the southern states of India.

While coffee remains *Coorg's* hallmark, the region is now witnessing a burgeoning avocado revolution, led by Westfalia Fruit, a global leader in avocado production. Recognising *Coorg's* favourable climate for cultivation, Westfalia has established a state-of-the-art avocado nursery in collaboration with Sam Agri and Dvori-Or Nursery. The initiative focuses on growing high-quality Hass and other commercial avocado varieties.

The saying, "Where tea and coffee grow, avocados can grow better," perfectly describes *Coorg's* potential. Its tropical climate, high elevation, and fertile soil make it an excellent location for avocado farming. Westfalia's meticulous approach to planting, nurturing, and harvesting ensures that the avocados meet global quality standards.

Westfalia has already contributed to planting over 500 acres of avocado farms across India, with a target to exceed 1,000 acres by 2026. The *Coorg* nursery plays a critical role in supplying premium rootstock and planting material, ensuring sustainable practices and high yields. For coffee farmers, avocados offer a promising diversification crop, creating additional income streams and contributing to rural development. Westfalia, in partnership with the World Avocado Organisation (WAO), is driving efforts to educate Indian consumers about the health benefits and culinary versatility of avocados. Campaigns like "Avocado Ki Paatshaala," led by celebrity chef Sanjeev Kapoor, have been instrumental in popularising the fruit. We get hands on lessons on avocado grafting and cloning the techniques Westfalia is introducing in *Coorg* for avocado plantation sooner than later *Coorg* avocados would be available across the country. Avocados is one of the healthy diet options which can served in several avatars from avocado-on-toast to guacamole and even avocado shake and ice cream. This is going to benefit the local farmers as well as they can four to five times the amount they make on coffee.

Coorg's transformation from a coffee giant to a hub for avocados signifies its adaptability and progressive approach to agriculture. Visitors to *Coorg* can now enjoy not only a cup of freshly brewed coffee but also a taste of locally grown avocados, blending wellness with indulgence.

Whether you're exploring its lush landscapes, learning about coffee cultivation, or witnessing the avocado revolution, *Coorg* offers a unique journey through nature and innovation. This jewel of Karnataka remains a must-visit destination for travellers and a shining example of India's agricultural potential.

As the time to leave draws near, I find myself reflecting on the air of Delhi and take one last, deep breath of *Coorg's* pure, refreshing atmosphere. The aroma of spices beckons us to the local market, where we gather handfuls of fragrant treasures and, naturally, *Coorg's* signature Arabica and Robusta coffee. With our bags filled with spices, coffee, and the newfound delight of avocados, we bid farewell to this enchanting land and set out on the highway to Bengaluru. As we journey home, our hearts are brimming with memories that promise to call us back. *Coorg* is a place one longs to return to-sooner rather than later.

'India's growth propelled by advancement in science, tech'

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

Union minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday asserted that the country's growth over the last decade was propelled by advancement in science and technology, and innovation.

He said that empowering youth and fostering innovations are key to achieving development goals for the nation.

Delivering the presidential address at the inaugural session of the 10th India International Science Festival (IISF) here, the Union Minister of State for Science and Technology said, "India's remarkable growth story is deeply rooted in its advancements in science and technology, and innovation."

"Over the past decade, under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, we have seen a profound transformation across sectors -- from the rise of startups to revolutionary breakthroughs in biotechnology, space technology and quantum science," he added.

"Over the past decade, under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, we have seen a profound transformation across sectors -- from the rise of startups to revolutionary breakthroughs in biotechnology, space technology and quantum science,"

The northeastern region, once on the periphery of development, has become a shining example of growth, embodying both economic progress and scientific innovation, he claimed.

"As we approach India@2047, empowering youth and fostering innovation are key. Initiatives like the National Research Foundation and the bioeconomy revolution are driving India toward self-reliance and global leadership, with young innovators leading the way," the Union minister added. The four-day festival aims to popularise science and technology across diverse communities and is expected to attract over 8,000 delegates, researchers and leading scientific organisations, along with 10,000 students, fostering collaboration and innovation across disciplines.

At the programme, Singh also launched the India Science, Technology & Innovation (ISTI) portal, a centralised platform which will serve as a comprehensive repository for content related to science, technology and innovation within India's ecosystem.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, speaking on the occasion, emphasised the importance of integration of technology, resources and capital in present times to accelerate a nation's growth and prosperity.

"Technology is the most transformative force... and by harnessing it, a nation can overcome resource limitation and reduce dependency on capital," he maintained.

It will also help in achieving social equity, poverty alleviation and improving the standard of living, impacting all sectors from agriculture to industry, power, communication and transportation, he added.

In Brief

Pearl Academy, Tech Mahindra to set up innovation hub

Pearl Academy, a unit of the Creative Arts Education Society (CAES), on Saturday said it has collaborated with Tech Mahindra to set up the 'Makers Lab', which will serve as an innovation hub focused on Generative AI (GenAI), metaverse, and gaming. The lab will be set up in Bengaluru. The collaboration aims to empower students, faculty, and industry professionals to develop solutions in artificial intelligence (AI), metaverse, and immersive gaming experiences, Pearl Academy said in a statement.
"By blending our design innovation with Tech Mahindra's technological prowess, we are shaping a future where creativity and technology seamlessly integrate to redefine industries. "The Makers Lab will provide our students with invaluable hands-on experience in emerging technologies, empowering them to reshape the creative landscape," Pearl Academy President Aditi Srivastava said.

Reliance dominates Wizikey media visibility rankings

Reliance Industries - India's largest corporate by revenues, profits, market value and social impact - topped the 2024 Wizikey News Score ranking as India's most visible corporate in the media, the AI-powered media intelligence firm said. Reliance's visibility across media is significantly higher than even the leading FMCG or banking and finance companies in India. Reliance scored 97.43 out of 100 on the News Score for 2024. It was 96.46 in 2023, 92.56 in 2022, and 84.9 in 2021, showing consistent growth year after year while being number one throughout. The Wizikey's News Score is determined by the volume of news, headline presence, reach of publications, and readership. Reliance has continued to top the Wizikey News Score annual rankings since its inception for each of the last five years. Reliance ranking was above the rest of the field with an unassailable News Score of 97.43, followed by State Bank of India (89.13), HDFC Bank (86.24), One97 Communications (84.63), ICICI Bank (84.33), and Zomato (82.94) in the Wizikey rankings.

Goa-IDC launches online platform OPEN

Goa Industrial Development Corporation on Saturday launched India's first Digital Public Good for Industry Governance framework, Open Platform for Enterprise Network (OPEN), to transform industry governance by simplifying, digitising and standardising government-to-business transactions. The formal launch of this platform marks a significant milestone in Goa's journey toward enhancing the ease of doing business and fostering a vibrant industrial ecosystem, Goa Industrial Development Corporation (Goa-IDC) Chairman Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco said while addressing a press conference in Panaji.
As part of the highly-anticipated launch of its new Open Platform for Enterprise Network (OPEN) portal, Goa-IDC also announced the availability of 20 Industrial plots at Verna Industrial Estate and nine commercial plots for auction, offering unparalleled opportunities for the establishment of industrial and commercial enterprises.

'Will resolve all issues faced by tea industry'

Interacts with stakeholders in Guwahati

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Saturday interacted with representatives of the tea industry, and assured them that the Centre will take necessary steps to resolve the issues faced by the sector. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Industry Minister Bimal Bora were also present on the occasion along with stakeholders, including buyers, producers and small tea growers from various states.

Goyal said he has taken cognisance of the challenges faced by the industry, and he will hold further consultations to resolve the issues. Sarma said the state government is cognisant of the macro challenges confronting Assam's tea industry and its solutions require a collaborative approach.

"I am extremely grateful to Hon'ble Union Minister Shri @PiyushGoyal ji for patiently hearing the stakeholders of the tea industry and taking a positive approach to resolve their issues. Thank you Piyush Goyal ji for your valuable time," the chief minister wrote on X.

North Eastern Tea Association (NETA) chairman Ajay Dhandharia, in his presentation, highlighted various challenges being faced by the Assam tea industry, which include routing of 100 percent dust grades through public auctions, maximum residue limit, efficiency of public auctions, early closure of production by December 30, low per capita consumption of tea, stagnancy in export from India and climate change, among others.

NCLAT allows IL&FS to sell subsidiary IPRWL

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Insolvency appellate tribunal NCLAT has given a go-ahead to debt-ridden IL&FS group for the sale of its subsidiary IL&FS Paradip Refinery Water Ltd (IPRWL) to a successful bidder.

According to reports, this may enable IL&FS to repay a debt of around Rs 1,000 crore.

IPRWL was set up to meet water requirement of the 15 MTPA Paradip Refinery Project developed by IOC in Odisha.

IL&FS, which is paring its debt through asset resolution, has not received consent from IOCL for sale of its stake in IPRWL.

It had approached the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), which is supervising the process, to direct IOCL to either acquire 100 per cent shareholding in IPRWL at a fair valuation or grant its consent as per the terms of the BOOT agreement and the RFP so as to enable IL&FS to sell it.

However, IOCL through its counsel submitted that the BOOT (Build, Own, Operate, and Transfer) agreement with IL&FS was till 2039 and it cannot be disinvested before the said period.

Rejecting this, NCLAT said: "IOCL having not given consent for 100 per cent of the acquisition of the shareholding, we are of the view that ILF&S has to be permitted to proceed to give it to the successful bidder as per the process contemplated under the resolution framework."

However, NCLAT in its order also made it clear that the successful entity should be one who is eligible as per the terms of the BOOT agreement and has relevant technical know-how to carry on the project. "We thus accept the prayer of the appellant to proceed for giving it to the successful bidder as per the terms of the BOOT agreement and the RFP as per the process contemplated under the resolution framework to its eligible entity," said NCLAT in its order dated November 22.

IL&FS group has paid Rs 38,082 crore to its creditors as of September 30, 2024, according to the latest status report affidavit filed by the debt-ridden firm before NCLAT.

No bribes paid to secure contracts: Adani Group CFO

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Maintaining that no bribes were given to government officials to secure contracts, Adani Group's chief financial officer Jugeshinder Singh on Friday said that he would definitely come to know if any large amount was paid.

"We know for sure, 100 per cent, that nothing of this sort happened. Because if you are paying that much amount of cash to someone, I would certainly know," the CFO told reporters here on the sidelines of a Trust Group event.

He said the allegations made in the US against Group chairman Gautam Adani and others including his nephew Sagar Adani is a case of "unique use of prosecutorial authority" and also made it clear that it is not an attack on the group.

He said the allegations made in the US against Group chairman Gautam Adani and others including his nephew Sagar Adani is a case of "unique use of prosecutorial authority" and also made it clear that it is not an attack on the group

The individuals named in the allegations will respond and contest the charges at the proper forum, he added.

The fundamental stance of the group is that when it comes to announced investment and growth plans, capital is tied up, hinting that it will continue with all the projects.

He said no bank has contacted the group seeking a review following the allegations made in the US earlier this month, and added that everybody is willing to give the group whatever it needs to build the infrastructure.

"...fundamentally, our banking partners, they understand we don't need their money. Precisely because we don't need it, its available to us," he said.

The group withdrew an ongoing bond sale pending the clearance of the allegations, and added that it will go ahead with a planned private bond placement. There were no issues pending otherwise, and the next is anyways supposed to be coming after the FY25 results are out, he said.

At present, the Group has sufficient ability to repay 30 months of debt obligations, he said, adding that at no point does it go below 12 months.

Roughly about USD 3 billion of debt is coming up for repayment over the next 12 months, he said, exuding confidence that most of the banks will refinance it.

LIC employees' body demands withdrawal of GST on premiums

PNS ■ KOLKATA

A prominent life insurance employees' federation on Saturday said it will launch a nationwide campaign to press for its demands, including withdrawal of GST on insurance premiums and no further hike in foreign direct investment in the sector.

Addressing a conference of the All India Life Insurance Employees' Federation (AINLIEF), general secretary V Narasimhan said it will be approaching MPs from all political parties to voice support for the demands.

The All India Triennial General Conference here is being attended by delegates from across the country.

The federation's demands also include withdrawal of the new labour codes and introduction of the old pension scheme for employees recruited in LIC after 2010.

At present, the FDI in the insurance sector is 74 per cent and the Centre is contemplating raising it to 100 per cent, Narasimhan said.

'Invest K'taka 2025' gets global spotlight

PNS ■ BENGALURU

K'taka Minister for Large and Medium Industries M B Patil on Saturday engaged with top global companies in the United Kingdom during a roadshow held to highlight Karnataka's investment potential across the aerospace and defense, automotive, and education sectors, officials said. As part of the 'Invest Karnataka 2025' roadshow, Patil, who is currently in London, invited leading organisations, emphasising Karnataka's robust infrastructure, business-friendly environment, and forward-thinking initiatives such as the Knowledge, Wellbeing, and Innovation (KWIN) City project. During a meeting with the Rolls Royce Group, the Minister showcased Karnataka's thriving aerospace and defence ecosystem, focusing on composite manufacturing.

No impact on India biz with Bajaj Auto: KTM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Austrian bike maker KTM on Saturday said the judicial restructuring of its holding firm Pierer Mobility AG has no impact on business related to products co-developed with Bajaj Auto for Indian domestic market and select export markets.

However, it is impacting business of Pierer Mobility AG/KTM AG that is run out of Austria, including exports from Austria, India and China to its key markets in the US and Europe.

On November 26, given the immediate liquidity constraints, the Executive Board of KTM AG has decided to file an application for the initiation of judicial restructuring proceedings with self-administration over the assets of KTM AG and its subsidiaries KTM Components GmbH and KTM F&E GmbH, the company said in a statement.

All other subsidiaries of KTM AG, in particular all sales companies, are not affected, it added.

"It is to be noted that the aforesaid matter has a bearing on the business of Pierer Mobility AG/KTM AG that is run out of Austria," the company said.

These developments are impacting the export volumes from Austria, India and China to its key markets in the US and Europe, it said.

"...the KTM business that is run out of India (domestic, select export markets) for which products are co-developed by KTM & Bajaj and manufactured and sold by Bajaj Auto continues to operate in the normal course during this period," the company added.

Bajaj Auto through its wholly-owned subsidiary in Netherlands Bajaj Auto International Holdings BV (BAIHBV) holds a 49.9 per cent stake in its associate -- Pierer Bajaj AG (PBAG) in Austria.

India's vision is to become world's most efficient trade hub: Revenue secy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra said on Friday that India's vision is to become the world's most efficient and trusted trade hub by expanding the participation of authorised economic operators (AEOs), integrated free zones, and innovative policies. "We aim to set new benchmarks in trade facilitation and global connectivity," Malhotra said while delivering the valedictory address at the Global AEO Conference here.

He further said technology and trust are two pillars of the revenue department and underscored the importance of expansion of Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) programme to include more regional and bilateral partners.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
SHORT TENDER NOTICE
NIT No.01/DD- UBD/ LBNZ/GHMC/ 2024-25 Date: 29-11-2024
Name of the Work: Expression of Interest (EOI) from registered plant material suppliers for required different type of plant material under different sizes for utilizing them in greenery developmental works in LB.Nagar Zone, GHMC. **Amount: Rates to be quoted. Download Start Date:** 02/12/2024 @ 3.00 PM., **Bid Submission Closing Date:** 06/12/2024 @ 3.00 PM., **Technical Bid Opening Date:** 08/12/2024 @ 3.30 PM., **Price Bid Opening Date:** 08/12/2024 @ 3.30 PM. **Name & Address Office Ph No.:** Deputy Director, Urban Bio-Diversity Wing , LBNZ GHMC, 3rd floor O/o of the Zonal Office, Gaddiannaram, Hyderabad., ddubez.ghmc@gmail.com Further details can be seen at @ https://tender.telangana.gov.in.
Sd/- Deputy Director
R.O.No.: 7332-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2024-25, Dt. 29-11-2024 L.B. Nagar Zone, GHMC.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
ROADS AND BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT
'E'-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
Online tenders are invited under 'e'-procurement platform for 12 Nos of Road works in Khammam District vide Executive Engineer(R&B) Division Sathupally NIT No.16/TS/TO/ EE/R&B/SPL/2024-25/ Date:28.11.2024.
Tender schedules can download from e-market place ie. **www.Tender.telangana.gov.in** the last date of receipt of tenders before **03.12.2024 up to 3.30 PM.** Further details can be seen at 'e'-procurement market place **www.tender.telangana.gov.in**
Sd/- Executive Engineer (R&B)
R.O.No: 7334-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2024-25, Date: 30-11-2024 Division :: Sathupally

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
'E' PROCUREMENT NOTICE
NIT No. 37/EE/CIR-20/SLPZ/GHMC/1/2024-25 Date: 29.11.2024
Category of work: Other Work, Estimate Amount: **Rs. 41.00 Lakhs,** Start Date / Last Date & Time for Receipt of Bids: **30.11.2024 @ 1.30 PM / 03.12.2024 @ 1.30 PM.** Name & Address, Officer Cell No: **EE, CIR-20, SLPZ, GHMC, 9154834248.**
Sd/- Executive Engineer,
R.O.No: 7335-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2024-25, Dt. 30-11-2024 Circle-20, GHMC

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS DIVISION, OSMANIA UNIVERSITY
'e' PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE.
e NIT. No.3455/EE / UBD / 2024. Dt:29.11.2024.
Name of Work : Providing roof repairs to Senate Hall at Administrative Building on the O.U. Campus.
Last date/time of time for closing of Bids On 16.12.2024 up to 05.00 p.m.
ECV: Rs. 7,53,100/-
Name & address: Executive Engineer, Buildings Division, O.U. Hyd-7. Ph. No.9849741549.
Further details can be seen at 'e' procurement market at **www.tender.telangana.gov.in after Dt:30.11.2024 time: 12.30 p.m.**
Sd/-
DIPR No.728-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT.I/2024-25 Executive Engineer

INDO-EUROPEAN BUSINESS FORUM

Entrepreneurs get fintech, AI awards

PNS ■ LONDON

High achievers facilitating cross-border partnerships between India and Europe were among leading entrepreneurs who received awards at the annual Indo-European Business Forum (IEBF) meet at the House of Lords complex in London.

The 2024 IEBF Global Business Meet on Friday, themed as the 'Viksit Bharat Investment Summit', was aimed at spotlighting the many business and investment opportunities offered by India's goal of moving towards a developed economy by 2047.

"To me, the thing that ties the UK and India together most closely is that we are two countries chasing the future," said Kanishka Narayan, the Welsh Indian Labour MP who recently returned from a visit to India as part of a parliamentary delegation for bilateral exchanges.

"As we talk about the Viksit Bharat vision of a developed India to 10x (10 times) its GDP over the course of the period from now until 2047, the government's primary mission here (in the UK) is economic growth... so the interest we have is a deeply shared interest. The symmetry of what we are trying to do is pretty complete," he said.

Among those honoured at the event, Ashesh Jani, Co-founder and CEO of Ribbon Plc, named Fintech of the Year for his efforts to "support millions of Indian students and professionals navigating the complexities of international financial systems".

Shreeram Iyer collected the Global Firm of the Year award as Chairman and CEO of Prisma.ai for "revolutionising the field of AI-driven visual recognition, providing cutting-edge solutions for image and video analysis".

Narnolia, one of India's leading firms in fund management, investment advisory, and investment banking, was awarded the Top Fund Manager of the Decade, while Manish Tiwari was named British Indian of the Year for his promotional efforts within the India-UK corridor through his firm Here and Now 365. "This year's event comes against the backdrop of Prime Ministers Keir Starmer and Narendra Modi announcing the relaunch of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) talks, which IBEF has been engaging with and is hopeful that a deal will be signed by next year," said IEBF Founder Vijay Goel.

sunday magazine
HYDERABAD, December 1, 2024

the pioneer
agenda

"Music is the tool to express life and all that makes a difference"
– **Herbier Hancock**

A VOICE THAT HEALS

KAILASH KHER'S journey from humble beginnings to Padma Shri is truly inspiring. Through his music, he has touched millions, sharing the struggles and moments that shaped his path and the deep connection he holds with his fans, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

"जो टूट कर बना, जिसे मौत ने जाना,
वो क्या टूटे, वो और क्या मारे"
(What was broken and revived,
what death tried to take away,
how could it be broken again?)

These words, spoken with quiet strength, hold the raw truth of *Kailash Kher's* life. A life that, much like the music he creates, has been a journey of hardship, healing and everything in between. He has faced loss, endured difficult times and seen some of the darkest days. Yet, his songs are always filled with hope. This is what makes him not just a singer, but a storyteller of the human experience, a poet of strength. His music isn't just sound; it's a conversation with the soul. A conversation that comes from the heart of *Kailash Kher*, a man whose very being is felt in every note he sings.

When he speaks about his journey, you can almost hear the weight of each experience in his voice, as if every word he shares is filled with emotion, shaped by years of struggle and success. In December 2016, a moment that would forever change his life arrived, though it took another few months for the reality to sink in. By April 2017, it was confirmed, he was to receive the Padma Shri, one of India's highest civilian awards. The news was a whirlwind of emotions, not just for him, but for his family. "I first told my sister," he recalls with a soft smile. "It was a moment of joy because, in Delhi, we had suffered a lot. We left our homes, lived like orphans and went through many different experiences. We saw the world changing, relationships changing and people's attitudes changing, all of these shifts happened at a young age"

His journey from hardship to honour is one of resilience. He talks about his childhood in Delhi, a city that seemed to change before his very eyes, as people, relationships and even attitudes shifted. Yet, despite the hardships, Delhi, in all its complexity, gave him the opportunity to realise his dreams. The recognition came not just for his music but for the spirit with which he has approached life. From a young age, music was more than just a passion, it was his way of being. "As a child of 4 or 5, I was already curious about music, but I didn't sing the popular songs of the time," he shares. Instead, he gravitated toward unique sounds that defied the norm. "I didn't sing filmi songs, ghazals, bhajans or qawwalis. I didn't sing what was already there. People were curious, what does this child sing and how?" It was this originality that later led to the birth of *Kailasa*, a name that would become synonymous with spiritual and soul-stirring music.

As his career grew, his live performances became a way for him to connect deeply with his audience. "In Kota, Rajasthan, a girl came to one of my shows with a blade, saying she would harm herself if she didn't get to meet me. She was a devotee and my music was more than entertainment to her, it was her lifeline," he remembers. "When I found out, I asked her to drop the blade, and she did. It was one of those moments that reminded me of the emotional power music holds. It's not just about melodies; it's about healing." Every song he writes, sings and composes holds a piece of his soul. "When I sing, it's a reflection of my own emotions. But once it's out there, it becomes part of someone else's story too," he explains. His music resonates with listeners in a way that breaks through language and culture, offering a universal connection.

Despite his success in Bollywood, he differentiates the impact of film music from his non-film compositions. "Film audiences are looking for light entertainment but non-film music carries deeper emotions," he says. "Non-film music touches the soul, while film music is more fleeting. Each platform has its unique audience and I enjoy the challenge of catering to different frequencies." But no career comes without its challenges and his own journey wasn't without rejection. He remembers the time when his song "Allah Ke Bande" was initially dismissed. "At the time, I didn't understand the film industry very well. They told me it was a film song but it didn't have the usual budget. I had doubts. But when the song became a hit, the same people who rejected it came asking for collaboration.That song did become a turning point in my career and it was a lesson that sometimes the smallest beginnings lead to the biggest breakthroughs."

> IT WAS A MOMENT OF JOY BECAUSE, IN DELHI, WE HAD SUFFERED A LOT. WE LEFT OUR HOMES, LIVED LIKE ORPHANS AND WENT THROUGH MANY DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES. WE SAW THE WORLD CHANGING, RELATIONSHIPS CHANGING AND PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES CHANGING, ALL OF THESE SHIFTS HAPPENED AT A YOUNG AGE

Reflecting on his career, he is humble about his influence. "People often ask me which of my songs defines me. It's difficult to choose. Life is so full of shifting emotions. Each song represents a different phase. Take 'Piya Ghar Aavenge,' for example, it's about the anticipation of a reunion. Or 'Teri Deewani,' which is about the intensity of love. And then there's 'Saiyyan,' a song about surrendering to something greater than yourself. Each one reflects a part of my journey but none can define it entirely." As for the impact of his music, he says that whether he is performing in India or abroad, the connection is the same. "Wherever I go, people connect with my music because it speaks to their hearts. Whether in the US or India, our indian audience understands the joy of life. But in Delhi," he adds with a mischievous grin, "there's a certain energy here, a special 'dhamaal' that is unmatched."

He may not have imagined this journey when he first started singing as a child, but today, his music has touched the hearts of millions. It is the story of a boy who didn't follow the conventional path, a boy who sang from his heart and whose voice continues to resonate with the world. The Padma Shri award is just one chapter in his extraordinary journey, a journey that continues to inspire and uplift. *Kher's* journey is a beautiful reminder of the power of music to connect us to something deeper within ourselves. *Kailash kher* doesn't just make music; he shares pieces of his own story, inviting us all to reflect on our own. Every track, *Kher* insists, is a piece of his soul. "They're not just songs," he says. "They're my prayers, my truths. And once they're out in the world, they take on lives of their own."

Much like the lyrics of Piya Ghar Aavenge, "आज मेरे पिया घर आवेंगे, हे–री, सखी, मंगल गाओ री, धरती–अंबर सजाओ री, उतरेगी आज मेरे पी की सवारी", they speak of waiting, of anticipation, of the quiet joy that comes from knowing something beautiful is about to happen. Waiting isn't always celebrated, but his music shows us that there is beauty in the moments in between. The stillness and hope that accompany the wait remind us that sometimes the most profound moments in life aren't the arrivals, but the journeys we take while waiting. In his own way, *Kailash Kher* teaches us that there is an art to waiting. It's in those moments of anticipation when we hold our breath and trust that what we're waiting for will be worth it. Just like the joy in the song, the waiting itself is part of the magic, making the reunion all the more meaningful when it finally arrives.

Photos: Pankaj Kumar

FROM THE MAN HIMSELF

What one piece of advice to your younger self, the Kailash Kher just starting out, what would it be and why?

I would say, "You have never slept for 12 years, nor eaten properly. How did you survive without eating and sleeping? Eat a little, sleep a little and embrace life fully. Be human." I lived like this, living many lives within one birth.

Is there any collaboration or project you have been wanting to do but haven't had the chance yet?

I have no desires or plans. I am a man with no plan and I cherish that state of being. My only "want" is that I have no wants and my only "desire" is to have no desires. I believe life flows best when you're not tied down by endless aspirations. Instead, I would advise others to focus on taking care of themselves first physically, mentally and spiritually, before chasing desires.

What message will you give to the younger generation who are coming into music?

I don't give advice often because I believe when you give something valuable, it should be respected. Because when you give something that holds value, it is respected. If you give it for free, it is not. If someone truly wants it, they will take it. If they don't want it, they won't That's why I believe one should stay true to themselves, neither giving nor taking. If someone insists and asks me for advice, my advice would be this: "Never give advice to anyone. Neither give nor take. Just stay within yourself, and truly be true to yourself.

Who do you think would be the right person to portray your entire journey, from childhood to the present, in a film?

I don't look at it from that perspective and that's why I never have. Most people aren't fully honest in their work. In creativity, too, many people repeat the same things in the name of "new." They claim to be creating something very unique, but it's already been done, Everyone's life and story are unique and to capture that uniqueness, you need a creator who's equally different. It's possible that someone who's never done it before, or even if they have, can bring something fresh to it because they understand the nuances of art and craft. If they can get it right, then it will have that newness and originality.

CHILL, GRILL, THRILL AT CHILI'S!

REVIEW

AARTI SREENATH
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Step into Chili's at Nexity, Hyderabad and you're instantly transported to a vibrant food haven. The ambiance strikes a fine balance between lively and laid-back, a modern interpretation of a Tex-Mex cantina. The warm, earthy tones of the décor, the rustic wooden accents and the subtle pops of colour reminiscent of a fiesta make it a visual delight. The upbeat yet cozy atmosphere is punctuated by the clinking of plates and the hum of happy diners. Add to that the faint sizzle from the open kitchen and you know you're in for a culinary adventure. Let's talk about the star of the menu, the Fresh Mex Rice Bowl, a dish that seems to embody Chili's in a single plate. The first thing you notice is how beautifully it's plated, a riot of colours that could rival a summer garden. At its heart is a bed of fragrant rice, warm and slightly smoky. Then come the toppings: crisp field greens, sweet corn and black bean salsa and house-made pico de gallo that bursts with freshness in every bite.

My version featured crispy broccoli, fried to golden perfection, making a strong case for veggies as the heroes of Tex-Mex cuisine. If you're feeling adventurous (and indulgent), add avocado slices, they elevate the dish to something borderline divine. Pickled vegetables add a punchy tang, perfectly complementing the creamy, garlicky sauce drizzled generously over the dish. The vibrant pico and fresh greens keep it light, but the cottage cheese steals the show with its hearty, melt-in-your-mouth texture. It's indulgent without being heavy, a rare balance in the world of rice bowls.

The black beans and chipotle rice inside add a heartiness that makes it a complete meal. A dollop of sour cream and garlic aioli brings a velvety finish to each bite. Pro tip: If you're feeling adventurous, go for the smoked chicken version, it adds a depth of flavour that lingers long after you're done. No Tex-Mex experience is complete without tacos and Chili's doesn't disappoint. The Veggie Tacos are a delightful surprise. You get a choice between crispy broccoli and country-fried cottage cheese, both of which are seasoned so well they could win over the most devout carnivores.

The Chicken Enchiladas are a must-try if you're a fan of comfort food with a twist. Two tortillas are stuffed to the brim with juicy chicken, then topped with melted cheese and a drizzle of smoky chipotle sauce. They arrive smothered in salsa and garnished with fresh cilantro, accompanied by a generous serving of rice and beans. Every bite is hearty and satisfying, with the creamy cheese perfectly balancing the spice of the chipotle. If you're really hungry (or just greedy, like me), you can add an extra enchilada for 175, because why not?

Chili's isn't just about the food; it's an experience. The service is impeccable, with staff that is attentive without being intrusive. They're quick with recommendations and always eager to customise dishes to your liking. The upbeat music adds to the energy of the place, creating a vibe that's perfect for both family dinners and casual hangouts with friends. The menu offers something for everyone whether you're a vegetarian, a die-hard meat lover, or someone looking for a healthier option. Portions are generous and every dish feels like it has been crafted with care, ensuring that you leave not just full but happy.

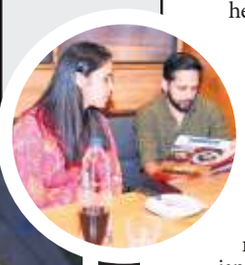
At the food hub, the burgers, chicken dings and cocktails/mocktails are a symphony of indulgence. The burgers are towering marvels, with juicy patties nestled between soft buns, layered with crisp lettuce, melty cheese, and house-made sauces that pack a punch. Their chicken dings, crispy, golden, and irresistibly tender, are the perfect companion for any meal or as a standalone snack that demands repeat orders. And let's not forget the beverages: the mocktails are refreshing, fruity bursts of creativity, while the cocktails are expertly crafted concoctions that blend bold flavors with a hint of sophistication. Whether you're dunking a chicken ding into a zesty dip or sipping on a tangy mojito, each bite and sip feels like a celebration.

FOOD TO TRY
Boneless wings, Southern smokehouse burger

DECOR
Warm white lit, modern eye catchy decor

PRICE
Rs 1800 for two people (approx)

VERDICT
★★★★



Rise of 'Desi Chinese' as cultural phenomenon

Can a dish that was never meant to exist become a symbol of cultural identity and national pride?

This is the story of Desi Chinese, an unexpected fusion that, against all odds, has become one of India's most beloved culinary phenomena. Born out of necessity and the chance meeting of two very different culinary traditions, it now stands as a testament to India's unique ability to adapt, innovate and redefine global influences. What started as an accidental blending of Chinese techniques and Indian spices has grown into a nationwide obsession, becoming not just a cuisine but a symbol of modern India's evolving identity.

The roots of Desi Chinese lie in the Chinese migrant community that settled in Kolkata in the early 19th century, blending Sichuan cooking techniques with Indian spices. This fusion gave birth to iconic dishes like chili chicken, hakka noodles, manchurian and fried rice, which spread across India.

However, it wasn't until the 1990s, with the growth of the middle class and rising disposable incomes, it gained widespread popularity, driven by the demand for affordable, flavourful cuisine that catered to India's diverse tastes.

This cuisine's success lies in its adaptability. Offering a broad spectrum of flavours from tangy and smoky to sweet and spicy, it caters to the diverse preferences of India's vast population.

This ability to provide something for everyone has played a key role in its rise to national prominence. Its affordability and accessibility make it perfect for India's fast-paced urban lifestyle, whether as quick street food or in a more refined, sit-down restaurant. It effortlessly fits into the schedules of working professionals, students and families alike, providing a satisfying, comfort-filled meal at any time of the day.

What also sets it apart is its strong cultural presence in Indian social life. It has become the go- to cuisine for celebrations and casual gatherings, whether for a birthday, family event, or dinner with friends. It's comforting familiarity makes it a popular choice for both special occasions and everyday indulgence. More than just a meal, it has evolved into a shared cultural experience that connects people across regions, social classes and generations.

Desi Chinese has become a key element of India's evolving culinary identity. While global dishes like pizza and pasta have made their mark, they haven't been reinvented like this. This is evident in the adaption of Hunan sauce to cater to the Indian palette alongside a completely re- imagining the soya sauce as chilli Sauce. The fusion of Chinese techniques with Indian spices has created a distinctly Indian flavour, making it a staple in the country's food culture. Regional variations, such as the fiery chili chicken in Delhi or the milder hakka noodles in Mumbai, reflect how local preferences continue to shape this beloved cuisine. While dishes like pizzas, pastas and biryani can often lead to repetitive flavour experiences, this cuisine offers an exciting and diverse tapestry of flavours and a wide variety of dishes that keeps each meal fresh and engaging. This variety makes it an excellent choice for social dining, as friends and families can come together to share and sample multiple dishes, creating a communal atmosphere that enhances the joy of eating and fosters connection over delightful, flavourful experiences.

As India's influence on the global stage strengthens, Desi Chinese is poised for continued growth. Its widespread appeal, born from India's unique ability to blend diverse culinary traditions, sets it up to play a larger role in global food culture. Far from being a passing trend, it reflects India's cultural dynamism and its ability for merging tradition with modernity, leaving a lasting imprint on the broader culinary world.

(The author Aayush Agrawal, is the Founder of Lenexis Foodworks.)

WINTER EDIT

Sttavoss welcomes the winter season with a stunning collection "DEMI" that captures the essence of fun, playful and effortless dressing with great functionality. This latest offering is designed for the fashion-conscious individual who values both comfort and trend-forward styling.

Central to the collection are the fleece cord sets, crafted to provide warmth, comfort and coziness. Available in classic shades of black, white, navy, brown and a luxurious trio of burgundy tones, these versatile ensembles are perfect for lounging in style or stepping out on crisp winter days.

Elevating the outerwear game, the collection also features meticulously designed jackets. From the textured appeal of the boucle to the bold flair of leopard prints and the vibrant charm of multicolor jacquards, each jacket is a statement piece that adds a touch of sophistication to any outfit. Whether layered over casual attire or styled for an evening out, these jackets promise to make an impression.

For those who love a playful yet stylish twist, the collection includes trendy denim cords as well. Perfectly balancing structure and ease, these fun, fashion-forward pieces bring a youthful energy to winter dressing, making them a must-have for the season.

This winter collection embodies the philosophy of combining timeless designs with contemporary trends, ensuring every piece is as functional as it is chic. Whether you're looking to stay cozy or make a bold style statement, Sttavoss has you covered!

HOROSCOPE

JEWELLERY TAILORED TO YOUR ZODIAC SIGN

Ever wondered if your birth sign has a cosmic connection to your jewellery preferences? Well, it might! Each zodiac sign has unique characteristics that align with certain gemstones and styles. So, let's dive into the cosmic closet and discover the perfect jewellery to adorn your zodiac soul.

ARIES: CORAL DIAMOND EARRINGS

Aries, known for their fiery energy and impulsive nature, would find the coral diamond earrings to be a perfect match. Coral's vibrant red hue symbolises passion and vitality, perfectly complementing Aries' dynamic personality. Its hard and durable nature reflects its strength and resilience, making it a fitting symbol of its unwavering spirit.

TAURUS: RUBY, EMERALD & DIAMOND EARRING

Taurus, grounded and sensual, would appreciate the elegance and luxury of the ruby, emerald and diamond earrings. Rubies represent love and passion, aligning with Taurus' deep emotional connections. Emeralds symbolise growth and renewal, reflecting their steady and reliable nature. Diamonds, known for their durability and brilliance, symbolise the enduring love and commitment Taurus values.

GEMINI: EMERALD DIAMOND EARRINGS

Gemini, the social butterfly, would love the sparkling emerald diamond earrings. Emeralds represent communication and expression, fitting Gemini's ability to connect with others. Diamonds symbolise clarity and intellect, reflecting their sharp wit and quick thinking. These earrings would be the perfect accessory for Gemini's lively and engaging personality.

CANCER: PEARL HAIR COMB

Cancer, nurturing and emotional, would find the pearl hair comb to be a sentimental and beautiful piece. Pearls symbolise purity and innocence, reflecting Cancer's gentle and caring nature. The comb's delicate design and timeless elegance would complement their feminine and graceful style.

LEO: RUBY ROSÉ NECKLACE

Leo, confident and charismatic, would adore the ruby rosé necklace. Rubies represent power and leadership, aligning with Leo's natural ability to command attention. The rosé gold setting adds a touch of luxury and sophistication, reflecting their refined taste.

VIRGO: EMERALD LONG EARRING

Virgo, practical and meticulous, would appreciate the classic elegance of the emerald long earring. Emeralds symbolise growth and renewal, reflecting Virgo's dedication to self-improvement. The long, flowing design adds a touch of sophistication, complementing their refined and understated style.

LIBRA: DIAMOND LEAF PENDANT

Libra, harmonious and balanced, would love the diamond leaf pendant. Diamonds symbolise love and commitment, reflecting Libra's desire for harmonious relationships. The leaf design symbolises growth and renewal, representing their optimistic outlook and ability to find beauty in all things.

SCORPIO: THE GARDENIA NECKLACE

Scorpio, passionate and intense, would find the gardenia necklace to be a captivating and mysterious piece. Amethyst symbolises spirituality and intuition, reflecting Scorpio's deep emotional connection to the world. The gardenia flower, known for its delicate beauty and intoxicating fragrance, represents passion and desire.

SAGITTARIUS: YELLOW CITRINE RAYS PENDANT

Sagittarius, adventurous and optimistic, would love the yellow citrine rays pendant. Citrine symbolises happiness and abundance, reflecting Sagittarius' positive outlook and zest for life. The rays design symbolises energy and vitality, perfectly complementing their adventurous spirit.

CAPRICORN: DIAMOND FLOWER EARRINGS

Capricorn, known for its ambition and discipline, will absolutely love the timeless elegance of the diamond flower earrings. Diamonds are a symbol of success and achievement, perfectly representing their unwavering drive and determination. It's a match made in the stars!

AQUARIUS: 2 FINGER RING

Aquarius, innovative and independent, would love the unique 2 finger ring. Blue sapphires symbolise originality and individuality, reflecting Aquarius' unconventional and rebellious spirit. The unique design would be the perfect accessory for their distinctive style.

PISCES: CITRINE HAND BRACELET

Pisces, compassionate and imaginative, would find the citrine hand bracelet with yellow sapphire to be a beautiful and meaningful piece. Citrine symbolises happiness and abundance, reflecting Pisces' optimistic and idealistic nature. The bracelet's delicate design and warm colour would complement their gentle and nurturing spirit.

Whether you're seeking a bold statement piece or a delicate symbol of your inner self, there's a cosmic gem waiting to adorn your zodiac soul. So, why not explore the stars and discover the jewellery that's truly meant for you?

CHAT-O-CINO

WHEN KUBBRA FILMED INTIMATE SCENES WITH 'RIPPED' AND 'BROKEN' HAND

Beneath the spotlight, where talent meets tenacity, **Kubbra Sait** shines bright as a beacon of creativity and passion. In an exclusive and intimate conversation with ***The Pioneer***, the actress delves into the making of her latest release, *Khwaabon Ka Jhamela* and shares her insightful perspectives on love, self-discovery and the ever-evolving landscape of the entertainment industry

TEJAL SINHA
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With a presence that is as unforgettable as it is mesmerising, there's this one talented star, who has emerged as one of India's most captivating and versatile talents. With a sparkle in her eye and a fire in her soul, it's none other than Kubbra Sait, who has been lighting up screens with her irrepressible charm and undeniable talent. From playing a small-screen role in *Ready* to her critically acclaimed performances in films like *Sultan* and *Gully Boy*, Sait has consistently proven herself to be a force to be reckoned with in the entertainment industry. With her infectious enthusiasm, captivating charm and dedication to her craft, she continues to win hearts and inspire audiences across the country.

Well, now as the actress is on cloud nine with her latest release *Khwaabon Ka Jhamela*, ***The Pioneer*** had the opportunity to catch up with her, who is thrilled about the release of the project, now streaming on Jio.

"It feels fantastic, like a relief," exclaims Kubbra as she begins to chat with us. "Everyone around you is constantly speaking about how bad the situation is in the industry and everyone's highlighting the situations where so many projects have been filmed and are waiting for a platform or a release. And I'm just happy that a sweet, lovely, positive story that is filled with hopefulness is now there on Jio for everyone to watch."

The thing about working in films or as an actor, the *Sacred Games* fame acknowledges is that the gratification for the work is not instant. "You really wait for a long time till all the verticals of your film come together and then finally, there is a release." For obvious reasons, *Khwaabon Ka Jhamela* stands out as a very special project since it's her first release of the year and after quite a while.

In this project, she plays a character called Shehnaaz and sharing her perspective on what drew her to the character, she gushes, "There are only three characters in the film. It's my character (Shehnaaz that gets Zubin (played by Prateik Babbar) to go out there and find himself. I feel what we don't recognise is that the person who pushes us to do something that we've never done before is also changing because they're actually asking for what they want for the very first time. I think that is what drew me to my character in *Khwaabon Ka Jhamela* because yes, there's this taboo around marriage. There's a taboo that you can't tell your family, or your friends that sex is bad in a relationship. Then I get to play that character, who says no because my character is unhappy in this relationship."

Well, this is what leads Prateik's character to go on a self-discovery journey. *The Trial* star's enthusiasm for her latest project is evident and she's grateful to have had the opportunity to play a character that challenges societal norms.

"As an actor, we all give so much emphasis on feeling that there is a magical way or a process to reach a character." She emphasised the importance of a well-written script, saying, "I think the first tool that one has is the script. And my character is so clear in the script. It's made so beautifully and it's written so incredibly that I had zero doubts."

With a solid foundation in the script, Sait found the preparation process to be relatively easy. "Now, the preparation process becomes easy because then you're like, oh, this is all written. Now how do I lead with my emotions?" She credited her incredible co-stars, including Pratiek, with making the filming process enjoyable, even during challenging scenes like the sex scenes. "He brought everyone laughing and rolling on the floor," recalled Kubbra with a blast of laugh.

One of the most memorable moments from Kubbra's shoot was also one of the most challenging - filming a sex scene with a broken hand. In fact, "The whole film, I shot for 7 days or 10 days and this was literally 5 days after I was diagnosed that my entire arm is ripped out." Ouchh! Despite the physical discomfort, the *Deva* actress' dedication to her craft shone through and she even managed to find humour in the situation.

In terms of her character's place in the larger narrative, *The Verdict–State vs Nanavati* fame described the film as a romantic comedy that explores themes of coming-of-age and self-discovery. "It's a romcom that meets coming to lie coming to age." She praised the film's ability to update the rom-com genre, making it relatable to modern audiences. "Danish Aslam says this very beautifully. Romcom as a genre constantly needs to be updated like the iOS on your phone because romance is changing."

She further delved into the intricacies of romance and the transformative power of self-discovery— "What romance used to be for me by growing up is not the romance today for children. So I guess this story tells you about how important it is to even explore you being single and the kind of superpower that it draws from you discovering who you are as a person and not just depend on your partner by calling them soulmates. One has to be comfortable in their skin and love themselves in order to love other people." The *Shehar Lakhot* actress encouraged viewers to watch the film to see her character's arc.

Regarding her project choices, she describes herself as 'not a choosy actor'. However, "I am definitely looking at projects that allow me to pick the environments I want to work in. It allows me to pick the stories that I want to tell and the stories and characters I want to be. I want to share my this life with their journey."

Looking back at her journey and growth as an actor, the *Jawaani Jaaneman* star recalls, "When I came here to be an actor, I didn't really know what acting is because I didn't have exposure to schools and to learning and to educational answers." And so, she credited her colleagues and directors with teaching her about acting.

"So whatever I know and learn, it's all on the set. What I know is through learning and growing with my colleagues and my directors. I've been very fortunate to meet incredible people who believe that I can bring something to the table and then we can elevate that together because telling a story is not a one-man business. It takes a whole army to do that."

With a promising pipeline of projects on the horizon, Kubbra Sait is gearing up for an exciting new chapter in her career. Her slate is filled with an exciting array of upcoming shows and films, including a recently wrapped series alongside the talented Kajol. Additionally, Kubbra announced her upcoming film, *Deva*, slated for release next year. With a tantalising tease, she hinted that there's much more to come, saying "All I can say is just watch out... there's a lot more we need to talk about in the coming months and years."

TRENDING

VIR DAS

PERSON

The 2024 International Emmy Awards combined humour, talent and cultural diversity, with comedian and actor Vir Das taking center stage as the first Indian to host the prestigious event.

PRIYANKA GANDHI WON WAYANAD LOK SABHA SEAT

VIDEO

Following her MP brother Rahul Gandhi's footsteps, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra took oath as Member of Parliament in the Lok Sabha on Thursday while carrying a copy of the Indian Constitution.

MOVIE

WICKED

Wicked was number 1 in North America, with sales from Friday through Sunday of roughly $95 million from 3,888 theaters, for a total since opening in previews earlier in the week of $114 million. That sum made *Wicked* the third-highest opener for the year, behind $211 million for *Deadpool & Wolverine* and $154 million for *Inside Out 2*.

NAANAA HYRAANAA

SONG

The makers of Ram Charan and Kiara Advani's next have released the new song from the album and it is a melodious romantic track named *Naanaa Hyraanaa*. Picturised on beautiful and exotic locations, the song features Ram and Kiara's characters romancing each other.

CHINA DISCOVERS MASSIVE GOLD RESERVE IN HUNAN

PICTURE

China has discovered a huge gold reserve in Hunan province. The estimated value of this vast reserve is believed to be hundreds of billions of rupees and is expected to support the faltering Chinese economy.

Reviving 1980s icons and crafting devil for big screen!

AARTI SREENATH
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Josh Blaylock is a master of reviving the past while forging bold new paths. As a renowned comic book creator, he's brought iconic 1980s franchises like *G.I. Joe* back into the spotlight and his original creation, *Mercy Sparx,* is set to leap from the comic pages to the big screen. With a passion that spans historical thrillers, political satire and sci-fi adventures, Blaylock's work continues to captivate audiences and inspire new generations of creators

For comic book creator Josh Blaylock, the past isn't just a place to revisit; it's a treasure trove waiting to be reimagined. Known for bringing iconic 1980s franchises like *G.I. Joe* back into the cultural spotlight, he has a keen understanding of the power of nostalgia. "Originally, the huge resurgence of the 1980s was simply due to the fact that it had not been done yet," he explains. "My company was the first (in comics) to bring back such a brand from the 1980s and everyone was now an adult, in their 20s and they wanted to see it come back the way they remembered it—in their head, not in reality—and a little more edgy."

The appeal wasn't just in the characters or stories but in the era itself. "It was the first time that a generation had grown up with this huge amalgamation of cartoons, comics, toys, lunch boxes, pajamas, McDonald's Happy Meals and so much other collectible merchandise," says Josh. "The older generation did not understand how powerful this nostalgia would be."

Today, the allure of 1980s culture endures, driven by an older fan base and younger audiences alike. While Generation X continues to embrace the era that defined their childhoods, he believes younger fans are drawn to its pre-internet charm. "I can't help but think there is a romanticisation about it in part because it is as close as we will ever get to modern society before the internet changed everything."

Beyond reviving past favourites, his original creation, *Mercy Sparx*, is poised to leap from the comic pages to the big screen with MGM. The character—a devil-girl working for Heaven to hunt rogue angels—comes with her own set of challenges in adaptation. "One of the core elements of the *Mercy Sparx* story is that she herself does not evolve," he notes. "Whenever she is given the chance to move forward, she sabotages her own success."

Still, he insists that certain aspects of the character must remain intact. "It's important that they keep the main 'hook' of the story—a devil that works for *Heaven*. She must also be a counterculture, genuinely reluctant character who is forced into the job against her will and has a snarky attitude about the whole thing." Maintaining her punk-rock roots and subcultural aesthetic poses another challenge. "There are very specific nuances, like her style and the comic books' influences from certain music subculture aesthetics—punk, goth, metal, etc.—that are hard to keep in sync with film elements, but I do my best to exert influence where I can."

With one foot in the past and another in bold new worlds, his creative journey proves that great stories—whether nostalgic or original—never truly go out of style.

For him, the comic book medium is more than just a vehicle for entertainment—it's a powerful tool for education, reflection, and cultural dialogue. From addressing historical tragedies to exploring the future of technology, his diverse body of work showcases the versatility of comics to tackle complex topics with nuance and impact.

In his graphic novel *Operation Nemesis,* he delves into the Armenian Genocide through the lens of Soghomon Tehlirian, the man who assassinated Talaat Pasha, the architect of the genocide. "I was approached by two Armenian cousins who wanted this story told from an outsider's perspective," he shares. The project, marking the 100th anniversary of the genocide, proved both an emotional and rewarding endeavor.

To accurately portray the events, he immersed himself in research, including a treasure trove of early 20th-century New York Times articles chronicling the genocide and its aftermath. "The critical moment was when I found the actual court hearing from the German court system," he says. This document, alongside interviews with historians and accounts from Tehlirian's family, revealed a narrative of tragedy, espionage, and justice. "It all combines to make an incredible tale of tragedy, triumphs, espionage, and drama," he reflects.

With Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and the Freshman Force, he tackled the polarised world of modern politics through a mix of satire and tribute. "The key is to embrace different styles and perspectives from several creators," he explains. The result was a time capsule of the political zeitgeist, designed to entertain and educate while capturing the essence of a transformative moment in U.S. history. "Should someone read it twenty, or even fifty years later, it would represent a true snapshot of that era," he adds.

His fascination with Bitcoin led to the creation of *The Bitcoin Comic Handbook*, a project that simplifies complex concepts of cryptocurrency through visual storytelling. "Comics allow you to communicate visuals and words in a way that no other medium does," he says. Part comic, part illustrated prose, the book demystifies Bitcoin beyond its financial implications, earning accolades from the tech community.

For him, comics remain his go-to medium for exploring passions, whether historical, political, or technological. "It's in my DNA," he says. "When I get passionate about something, I need an outlet and "Comics are something all their own," he says. And under Blaylock's deft hand, they continue to expand their boundaries, proving that no topic is too heavy—or too complex—for this unique art form. He is celebrated for his work across diverse genres, balancing crafting immersive fictional worlds and dissecting real-world complexities. As a veteran in the comic industry, he continues to innovate while championing the evolution of the medium.

"In reality, it's about digging into the information and deciding what's most important to share," he explains. The process forces him to deeply evaluate his own beliefs, making it an introspective exercise.

Conversely, creating fictional worlds means defining their rules and letting characters flourish within them. "People love to create lore, but the hard part is crafting living, breathing characters that connect emotionally with readers," he says. A relatable character serves as a guide, making even the most fantastical stories accessible.

Reflecting on the role of comics in today's world, Baylock wishes the medium had greater cultural influence, especially beyond superhero narratives. "Comics are the source of so much entertainment, but many don't realise how much of what they consume started in comics," he says. Beyond entertainment, comics have proven effective educational tools, even adopted by the military to explain complex concepts.

As a pioneer in self-publishing with Devil's Due Comics, Baylock offers practical advice for aspiring creators. His forthcoming guide, *Breaking Into Comics: No More Rules*, emphasises the importance of simply starting. "No one is waiting to give you permission to call yourself a comic book creator," he asserts. While early attempts may fail, they offer invaluable lessons that fuel growth.

He highlights the enduring power of direct audience connections, particularly in an age of AI-assisted art. Having witnessed the industry's transformation, Blaylock acknowledges significant progress in diversity. "When I started, comic cons were over 90% male, and most characters were white," he recalls. The rise of manga in the early 2000s marked a turning point, bringing in younger, more diverse readers and creators.

Today, conventions often attract a female-majority audience and indie comics continue to expand storytelling horizons. "The melting pot is growing," he says. Blaylock is optimistic about the medium's future, fuelled by a new generation of readers and creators inspired by manga and innovative storytelling.

From delving into historical narratives to imagining alternate ancient worlds, his work highlights the limitless potential of comics. As the medium evolves, he remains a passionate advocate for its ability to entertain, educate and connect with audiences on a deeply human level.

For him, the path to becoming a comic creator seemed inevitable. "I was born wanting to draw and write stories," he shares, recalling how even as a toddler, he was constantly sketching. Early encounters with influential comics cemented his passion, beginning with his discovery of *G.I. Joe*. "The first issue I found in a store blew my mind; it felt so grown-up and became the first series I collected monthly."

Key moments followed rapidly: the debut of the 1989 *Batman* movie introduced him to *The Dark Knight Returns* and *The Killing Joke*. "I had no business reading those at 12, but fortunately, my mom didn't know," he jokes. The realisation that the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles started as an edgy, indie comic further expanded his perspective, leading him to the black-and-white indie scene. With the formation of Image Comics, he was "all in on comics all day, every day."

His enthusiasm hasn't waned. "I'm still constantly influenced and excited by new comics and art—it never stops."

GETTING INTO THE SKIN OF CHARACTERS WITH ELAN

Reginaa Cassandraa shot into limelight with a rare mix of curiosity, spunk and bubbling energy that catapulted her from a chance child model to a much sought-after star who can light up any set. Known for her nuanced performances across Tamil, Telugu and Hindi cinema, she has carved a niche for herself as one of the most versatile actresses in India. Apart from delivering captivating performances in films like *Evaru* and *Nenjam Marappathillai*, Reginaa Cassandraa, a psychology graduate with a deep fascination for human behaviour, has always blended intellect and artistry to breathe life into her characters with elan.

Balancing a complex family history, shifting religious identities and the ever-demanding spotlight; she has emerged as a woman of substance and purpose. Whether sharing the screen with legends like Chiranjeevi or turning down fleeting fame to stay true to her principles, she has consistently made choices that resonate with authenticity. After her debut in *Siva Manasulo Sruthi* (2013), she went on to receive multiple accolades, including the Best Female Debut at the South Indian International Movie Awards. Her filmography reflects a blend of conventional and unconventional roles, from her breakthrough in *Jyo Achyutananda* to critically acclaimed performances in films like *Awe* and *Evaru*, where she was praised for her studied portrayals. Her Hindi debut in *Ek Ladki Ko Dekha Toh Aisa Laga*, where she played a lesbian character, was also well-received. Reginaa has made a strong mark in the digital space too with her role in the web series *Rocket Boys* and *Jaanbaaz Hindustan Ke*. Over the years, she has appeared in a variety of genres, earning recognition for her performances, such as her dual roles in *Nene Naa* and her performance as a paranormal investigator in *Conjuring Kannappan*. She has also made notable appearances in *Acharya* and *Saakini Daakini*.

In a conversation with *The Pioneer*'s **Shikha Duggal**, she shares shades of her off-screen persona as a compassionate soul, having grown up rescuing stray animals. She is still dreaming of making a difference in this interconnected world. Apart from contributing to various charitable causes, she has positively impacted many lives as the ambassador for People For Cattle and by her support for organic farming. In 2023, she co-founded Democratic Sangha to empower rural women.

GROWING UP AS CURIOUS KID

(By design) I was a typical single kid. I was the only child to my parents since they wanted to have just me. I was one of the friendliest kids as a child. Any Tom, Dick, or Harry could become a friend of mine. You can see me standing at the back of the photos in which all boys are seen playing cricket. We used to live in apartments. My mother was quite imaginative. She keeps asserting that having a girl child is the greatest thing that ever happened to her.

FACED ADVERSITY HEAD-ON DURING CHILDHOOD

I had no inhibitions as I grew up. You have to be able to show compassion and all that. I can still clearly recall how my mother instilled the value of compassion in me during my childhood. We began providing shelter to stray animals, including cows, crows, sparrows, kittens and puppies. At my mother's place, we currently have five fresh kittens that had been rescued. I was a pretty impetuous child, too! While we were rebellious as children, we never went too far or did anything to offend anyone. It's true that my mother used to discipline me without hesitation.

FROM MUSLIM TO CHRISTIAN

I'm a hilarious mix. My mother and father are Muslims. My mum was a Christian; she had to convert. I initially had a name that was Muslim; being called by that name made the first six years of my early education somewhat fascinating. My parents divorced when I was a year old. At the very least, my mother wanted me to practice any religion because, to her, it was significant. Any faith that was acceptable to me –Muslim? Alright; Christian? Alright. After receiving the message, I was baptised. It's fascinating that I grew up so quickly. Actually, we millennials are responsible for the majority of our parents' emotions.

CHANGE AFTER MOTHER'S REMARRIAGE

My mother chose to remarry when I was 10. I realised as a child that it was excellent for her. Living alone in this world is quite challenging, particularly for a single mother of a girl child. I used to wonder whether this is the right world and how difficult it must be to live in it when I saw the circumstances of that time. She continued to place me in Chennai's top schools! She also insisted that I attend a coeducational school so that I could learn about equality. An all-girls school won't help because she really wanted me to deal with the world, which is full of guys too.

STEP-DAD SHOWED NO INTEREST IN MAKING HER HIS OWN

After that, my stepfather, a Gujarati, came into my life. He had no interest in adopting me. His desire was to "only" wed my mother. All of this demonstrated to me the importance of love and on top of that, being a single child makes you want even more of it.

HELPING NATURE

To this day, when people question me about my career, I don't hesitate to say that I've always wanted to be a pharmacist. But my mother had told me 'no' since it would be a lengthy path. However, I still believe that I was brought up to help others in need without putting my own physical or emotional well-being at jeopardy. I am a very friendly actor. I would love to work with the Blue Cross next.

UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIANITY

I do not consider myself to be a fully practicing Christian. Although I didn't attend mass, I have enjoyed visiting churches. I've been there every Sunday for the past 28 years of my life. I now consider Sunday mass to be a tradition! But as I get older, I want to fully comprehend the rituals, why I perform them and everything else. I no longer wanted to have blind faith. Thus, my mother was the ideal person to mentor me. She studies the *Bible* and is a devout Christian. The majority of our conversations then result in amusing disputes about these subjects. She keeps saying 'in Christianity, we do this and that'. But, I will not attend church merely to prove to the public that I am a Christian. We can pray in silence too.

FASCINATION FOR PSYCHOLOGY

I completed my bachelor's degree in psychology at Women's Christian College in Chennai. I chose to study psychology because I was constantly wondering why individuals are the way they are. Human psychology piqued my curiosity. I was interested in finding out more about personality disorders. What distinguishes sociopaths from psychopaths! When I graduated from college in 2011, there was no such thing as psychological awareness. Since a counsellor is now an essential component of any company we work for, I am shocked by how much the world has changed. Even books on psychology are being read! I can now better analyse a handful of the parts I've portrayed for you guys on screen, thanks to this insight. Because members of my peer group have also become clinical psychologists and other professionals, I have access to counsellors.

ACCIDENTAL BEGINNINGS IN CINEMA

When I did my first ad, I was in fourth grade. At a gathering, my mother's friend saw something in me. They contacted my mother right away with coordinators and together we were able to get my pictures clicked. I had a complete portfolio made! I looked amazing! I was a tomboy and because I was so into this at the time, I was there for every ad that came out. At that age, I was just having fun and didn't know how to pose. I had started off really carefree. My debut in films occurred when I had a chance to meet the film's director, while she was casting actors for *Kanda Naal Mudhal*. I had previously collaborated with her on a documentary. I was so thrilled to be starring in a movie that was helmed by someone I knew back then. Because I did not consider acting in a conscious manner, I was more self-assured in the early going. Everything was an experience when I was younger. It's a job now and I am no longer carefree.

SPECIAL SONGS ON HER TERMS

I don't want whatever I do to come across as a publicity stunt. After becoming an actress, I took a long time to come to terms with the fact that controversies will likely occur on a daily basis. Until I receive a bountiful offer, I still won't do any special songs—certainly not in Telugu, but perhaps in another language. I still stick to my statement. After *Saana Kashtam*, I refused a lot of special songs! I just need to give credit for one amazing song and that was with Chiranjeevi garu. What could be greater than this? In my opinion, he is the biggest star in the south! Next, I can change my mind if it involves Mahesh Babu (giggles). I've always worked with the Mega family; so, we're extremely close.

NENJAM MARAPPATHILLAI WAS MEANT TO BE HER LAST FILM!

Under Selvaraghavan's direction, I recall acting in *Nenjam Marappathillai*. I wasn't in the finest of mental state when I did the film! I had made the decision that it would be my final movie. But that didn't work out and I was dealing with a lot of personal problems. Destiny had bigger plans for me. I felt a lot more confident after doing the film.

EVARU CAST & CREW BECAME 'HER PEOPLE'

The *Evaru* movie is one of my favourite shooting moments. On that set, the closeness with the creative team was unthinkable! We were more than just actors on that set; we used to have a lot of conversations and private talks. I was really ill throughout the movie and they all made sure I was given the greatest care possible. It was out of sheer humanity, not because I was the actress. They all transcended the idea that we are merely here to work! I formed some lifelong, extremely close relationships during that movie. They became my people.

NO COMPROMISE ON VALUES!

I was informed that I would need to reside in Mumbai and go to meetings when I had first expressed interest in working in the north. In the south, we don't do that. Although you network, you don't actually meet people. In the south, there is no such thing as a casting agent; managers and PROs are all that exist! The marketplaces in the south have now been penetrated by talent management firms. When it comes to Hindi, it's much more competitive. I don't think I'm the type of person who would sell oneself for a job. I am unable to go lobby for anything. However, I then realised that I wouldn't receive it if I didn't do this. I came to terms with the fact that many people felt I wasn't as aggressive as my colleagues. It simply seemed so rushed. Now that I have a team that advocates for me, I come down to just try out and I am thrilled with them.

BREAK FROM RELATIONSHIPS

Having a strong sense of independence, I would not listen to anyone. He needs to look after me and be safe. I am a serial dater who has had a lot of relationships throughout my life, but I am currently taking a sabbatical. I am so direct that I have had parents of ex-boyfriends question me about things I say. I can't lie, though. For me, love would include two things. Although I am not sure how to define love, if I were to give it any criteria, it would be having an unconditional understanding of one another and being open to each other's development. A date would be ideal anywhere outside. It only needs to be something my partner and I would like doing together; it doesn't need to be romantic. Because I tend to be too protective of the people I love, some of my friends refer to me as the group's mother. However, they would also characterise me as aloof because I dislike becoming attached to anything or anyone. No one in my life, romantic or platonic, can be in a codependent relationship with me.

BRINGING *VIDAAMUYARCHI* TO LIFE WITH AJITH

Perseverance is what *Vidaamuyarchi* signifies. It's coming along pretty damn nicely. We filmed 90% of the movie in Azerbaijan and it looks fantastic. I am extremely excited for it since it's an exciting role. I'm thrilled that the producers trusted me enough to give me such a significant part in such a huge movie. I must admit that before working on the movie, I had never met Ajith sir. After we finished filming, everyone got to meet him. No one I have seen has the charm and charisma that he does. He took great care to ensure that the movie was released in a proper manner.

HOSTING GIG AT GACHIBOWLI STADIUM

Another favourite memory is co-hosting with Shirish and Navdeep. We worked on rehearsals and I had the opportunity to collaborate with the Telugu-speaking scripting team because the event was being held at Hyderabad's Gachibowli Stadium and I was hosting the Telugu portion of it. I also wore a really nice dress. I believe Gabrielle McGu. I'm not entirely sure who designed it, but it resembled a net dress and the Telugu journalists gave me a lot of flak for it. I wanted to step up my fashion game since they always treated me like this sweet girl. For example, you wouldn't have been curious about what I was wearing underneath the dress if you had glanced at it. That was how scandalous it was!

LOVE FOR DANCING

I enjoy dancing a lot. Dancing has, in my opinion, been a really significant way for me to express myself. I have danced all my life. Actually, dancing was the only method I knew to release my energy when I was younger and I was unaware that I was doing it. But as you get older, you realise what you did and why you did it. I would just turn to dance.