




**Modi, Bhutan King resolve to expand ties further**



**MALVIKA'S**  
 'SHOPPING, SPA AND SELF-CARE' SEULFUL GETAWAY



**Allu Arjun saves the day in Pushpa 2: The Rule, despite lengthy NARRATIVE**

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**  
 The pioneer  
**What kind of democracy is this? The arrests of opposition leaders and the misuse of police power show this is not Indiramma rajyam but an oppressive police raj. Kaushik Reddy visited the Banjara Hills Police Station to lodge a complaint, but not only was his complaint ignored, he was falsely accused and arrested. This government lacks the courage to even accept complaints from public representatives**  
 - Kavitha, BRS MLC

**DON'T MISS...**  
**Govt focuses on safety of women & children**

The Andhra Pradesh government has reiterated its commitment to ensuring the safety and security of women and children, especially those from vulnerable backgrounds, during a two-day state-level workshop on "Safety and Security of Women and Girls in Andhra Pradesh." Organised by the Department of Women's Development and Child Welfare (WD&CW) in collaboration with the HELP Organisation, the workshop is part of the UN's 16-day campaign against gender-based violence. Speaking at the event, A Surya Kumari...

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**'PM running away from discussion**

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra Thursday said the country's people want the "Adani mega scam" to be discussed in Parliament and alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government were "running away" from it. In an unusual protest, leaders of several INDIA bloc parties wore black jackets with stickers reading "Modi Adani Ek Hai" and "Adani Safe Hai" on them and raised slogans on the Parliament premises demanding a joint parliamentary probe into the Adani issue...

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**FM to start Budget consultation today**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will start pre-Budget consultations with various stakeholders beginning Friday as part of Budget making exercise. The first meeting as part of this series will be held with eminent economists on December 6. Sitharaman, who will chair these meetings, will seek their inputs regarding upcoming Budget amid seven-quarter low GDP print of 5.4 per cent in second quarter of the current financial year. It will be followed by a meeting with farmer associations and...

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**Rahul will open innings, I will bat in middle: Rohit**

KL Rahul's composure and brilliant technique while opening the innings in Perth convinced skipper Rohit Sharma to move himself down the order and "bat somewhere in the middle" in the day/night Test against Australia starting here on Friday. The Indian captain said on Thursday he didn't wish to tinker with a combination that brought the team success in the series opener of the five-match rubber which the visitors lead 1-0 following their 295-run win at Optus Oval. Rahul looked solid with scores of 26...

-SPORTS

**ISRO successfully launches PROBA-3 mission**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the Proba-3 mission for the European Space Agency (ESA) on Thursday. The four-stage PSLV-XL rocket took off at 4:04 pm IST from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, achieving perfect stage separations on its way to orbit.

The first stage of the PSLV rocket separated about two minutes after liftoff, followed by the second stage separation at 4:08 pm. At this point,

the spacecraft was exposed to space. At 4:23 pm, ISRO announced that the Proba-3 spacecraft had been deployed in the desired orbit, marking the launch as a success. ESA's team confirmed the deployment shortly after, with telemetry received at the mission control centre in Belgium. The mission was contracted by New Space India Limited (NSIL), ISRO's commercial arm.

The Proba-3 mission is a twin-spacecraft mission consisting of two satellites—Occulter (200 kg) and Coronagraph (340 kg). It is designed to create artificial solar eclipses to study the Sun's corona, the outermost layer of its atmosphere. Funded under ESA's General Support Technology Programme, Proba-3 serves as a technology demonstration mission showcasing precise formation flying. The mission was facilitated by NSIL, ISRO's commercial arm.

ESA highlighted the significance of the mission in advancing solar research, describing Proba-3 as one of the most sophisticated solar observation projects to date.

For ISRO, this mission builds on the success of the Aditya-L1 solar mission launched in September 2023. The collaboration with ESA underscores ISRO's growing prominence in global solar research and its capability to execute complex satellite launches.

With Proba-3 now in orbit, scientists anticipate groundbreaking insights into the Sun's behaviour and the dynamics of space weather, paving the way for a better understanding of solar phenomena that impact life on Earth.

There is no proposal to increase the retirement age of Supreme Court and high court judges, the government told the Rajya Sabha on Thursday. It also underlined that there is no mention of any "cooling off" period in the Constitution for post-retirement assignments for judges. SC judges retire at the age of 65, while HC judges demit office at 62. District judges retire at the age of 60.

**'No plan to hike retirement age of SC, HC judges'**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Continued on Page 2

**Rein in rice smuggling: CM**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has expressed concern over the increasing issues of rice recycling and smuggling in the State. In a video conference with Collectors and district officials from 26 districts, he called for the adoption of new strategies to combat these problems and curb illegal activities.

The Chief Minister emphasised that no farmer should face difficulties in the rice procurement process and stressed the importance of smooth operations. He warned that strict action would be taken against officials and employees found negligent or unwilling to assist rice millers, which could cause hardships for farmers.

"This government has made it easier for farmers to sell paddy," the CM said, explaining that farmers are now allowed to deliver their rice to any mill, a shift from previous restrictions that only permitted deliveries to government-approved mills. Unlike in past years, when farmers had to wait for months for payment, the government now ensures payment within 24 to 48 hours of procurement. Furthermore, farmers can conveniently sell their produce via WhatsApp, with committees involving farmers, millers, and officials ensuring a smooth procurement process.

**DECLARES FARMERS CAN SELL PRODUCE VIA WHATSAPP**



- Naidu calls for new strategies to prevent illegal exports and recycling of rice.
- The CM stresses that no farmer should face difficulties in rice procurement process.
- Strict action to be taken against officials found negligent.
- The govt makes it easier for farmers to sell paddy, with deliveries allowed to any mill instead of only government-approved mills.
- Farmers guaranteed payment within 24 to 48 hours of procurement.
- Officials instructed to set up dryers to address moisture-related issues.
- Rice procurement going on in 14 districts, with East and West Godavari leading in collections.
- GPS tracking for vehicles to expedite the loading process.
- Feedback from farmers being collected through Interactive Voice Recording System (IVRS).

Chandrababu further highlighted the role of lower-level employees and government staff in executing these strategies effectively. He also addressed moisture-related

issues, instructing officials to set up dryers to help solve these problems for farmers. During the review meeting, officials provided updates on rice procurement for the current Kharif

season, with a target of 37 lakh metric tonnes. As of the latest report, 10.59 lakh metric tonnes have already been procured from 1.51 lakh farmers.

Continued on Page 2

**AP govt, Google sign pact on skill development**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government has taken an important step to align with global advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI). An agreement was signed on Thursday between the State government and Google in the presence of Nara Lokesh, Minister for Education, Information Technology, and Electronics, at the State Secretariat. Lalitha Ramani, General Manager of Google India, and Suresh Kumar, Secretary of Real-Time Governance, signed the pact on behalf of their respective organisations.

As part of the agreement, Google will conduct skill development training in all schools and colleges across the State. Additionally, training on AI-related services will be extended to start-ups, traditional

industries, and small-scale business organisations. The collaboration will also focus on key sectors like healthcare and environmental sustainability, integrating AI and machine learning solutions for enhanced service delivery.

Prominent attendees included Saikanth Varma, CEO of the AP Economic Development Board (EDB); Dinesh Kumar, CEO of Real-Time Governance Society (RTGS); Kartikeya Mishra, Secretary of the Chief Minister's Office (CMO); and other senior officials from the State Investment Wing.

Lalitha Ramani remarked that the agreement aligns with Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's vision of leveraging AI for better public services.

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**We are the voice of people, says Jagan**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP president and former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has called upon the party cadre to become the voice of the people, asserting that public dissatisfaction with the coalition government is at its peak. He urged party workers at all levels—state, district, and mandal—to take to social media and expose the government's failures.

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**Govt committed to quality edu: I & PR Min**



**Meeting venue of CM Naidu, Edu Minister Lokesh inspected**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Bapatla District In-charge Minister and State Minister for Housing, Information, and Public Relations,

Minister Parthasarathy, stated that the coalition government's aim is to provide quality education to students in government schools. As part of this effort, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Minister for Education Nara Lokesh will interact with parents at Bapatla for the Mega Parents-Teachers Meeting on December 7. Ahead of the Chief Minister's visit,

Minister Parthasarathy, along with State Power Minister Gopipati Ravikumar and Revenue Minister Anagani Satya Prasad, arrived in Bapatla on Thursday. The ministers, accompanied by District Collector J Venkata Murali, inspected the areas where the Chief Minister will visit and reviewed the arrangements for the public meeting at Bapatla Municipal High School. With students attending the Mega Parents-Teachers Meeting, the ministers inspected the classrooms and arrangements for competitions organized for parents. The ministers emphasised the need to make provisions for the meeting in case of rain and recommended that the venue arrangements be completed swiftly. Collector Venkata Murali informed the ministers that 919 students had registered at the school, with 818 currently enrolled.

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**Rs 172 cr Central funds for tourism in AP: Pawan**

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Deputy Chief Minister K Pawan Kalyan's continued efforts to develop major tourist centres in the state as prominent tourist destinations have borne fruit, with the Union Government allocating Rs 172.34 crore for the development of tourism sites. A release issued on Thursday stated that Pawan Kalyan had met Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat recently in New Delhi and requested funds for enhancing key tourist centres in Andhra Pradesh.

In response to Pawan Kalyan's appeal, the Union Tourism Minister sanctioned Rs 172.34 crore for the development of the 'Akhanda Godavari' and 'Gandikota' tourist centres. The funds have been allocated as part of the "Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI)" programme. It was noted that the Centre had released Rs 113.75 crore in the first phase, with the remaining amount to be disbursed after 75 per cent of

the first phase funds are utilised. A total of 28 State governments vied for the SASCI funds to develop tourism projects, but eight withdrew midway. The Centre selected 11 states to receive these funds, with Andhra Pradesh being one of them.

"With the funds allocated to Andhra Pradesh under the SASCI scheme, the Tourism Department plans to develop Akhanda Godavari, Gandikota, and Suryalanka beach into attractive tourist destinations. Officials have been directed to prepare plans to initiate these works," the release added.

As part of the SASCI funds, the historic 127-year-old Havelock Bridge across the Godavari River will be reconstructed to enhance its appeal to tourists. Additionally, the Pushkar Ghat will be developed, and both the bridge and the ghat will be linked to transform the area into a "Dynamic Tourism Destination" along the banks of the Godavari River.

Continued on Page 2

**UG, PG aspirants can seek admission in any discipline**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

UG and PG aspirants will now be able to seek admission in any discipline irrespective of the one studied by him or her in Class 12 or at the undergraduate programme, after qualifying in a national or university-level entrance exam, according to new norms of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

The UGC on Thursday announced the draft regulations that are being set as the minimum standards of instruction for the grant of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

According to UGC Chairman Jagadesh Kumar, the new regulations will introduce greater flexibility, remove disciplinary rigidity, bring in inclusivity and multi-disciplinary learning opportunities for students.

**UGC proposes sweeping changes**



"Irrespective of the disciplines taken by a student in level 4 or Class-12 schooling, a student is eligible for admission in any discipline of UG programme if the student qualifies the national-level or university-level entrance examination in the discipline of UG programme," the draft norms said.

"Depending upon the academic and physical facilities available in the institutions, the university may admit a certain number of students directly to the second, third or fourth year of an undergraduate programme and second year of a postgraduate degree programme in accordance with the entry and exit provisions given in the National Credit Framework (NCF)," it added.

The commission has stated that a student can pursue two UG or PG programmes simultaneously with flexibility in terms of change of discipline, institution and mode of learning as given in the UGC's Curriculum and Credit Framework.

"We have also decoupled eligibility for UG and PG admissions from the rigid discipline-specific requirements of school education."

Under these regulations, students can choose to study in any programme irrespective of their past disciplinary qualification if they demonstrate their competency by clearing the relevant entrance examination," UGC chief said.

With these reforms, we ensure that Indian higher education evolves to meet global standards while staying rooted in inclusivity and adaptability to diverse learner needs," he added.

# Gunadala Railway Station getting massive facelift

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Gunadala Railway Station in Vijayawada is undergoing a massive transformation under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, with 25 per cent of the works already completed. PE Edwin, Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Infrastructure), Vijayawada Division, and PV Ramana Rao, Deputy Chief Engineer, Gati Shakti, briefed the media on Thursday during their visit to the station to review ongoing developments.

Speaking to reporters, Edwin emphasised the strategic importance of upgrading Gunadala Station to decongest Vijayawada Junction and develop it as a satellite station. He lauded the vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister for



the scheme, which aims to modernise railway infrastructure across the country. Key works completed at Gunadala Station include platform extensions, waiting halls, modular toilets, and the installation of BiPV solar panels. The remain-

ing works, such as improved flooring and roofing, are progressing swiftly to meet the deadline for commercial operations.

Deputy Chief Engineer Ramana Rao showcased the ongoing and planned infra-

structure works through a presentation. He highlighted the station's energy-efficient design, which includes BiPV solar panels, making it a self-sustaining and energy-neutral facility.

Srinivas, DEE, Gati Shakti, Vijayawada Division, along with other officials and around 30 media personnel, inspected the upgraded passenger amenities during a walkthrough of the station.

Previously a small, under-utilised facility, Gunadala Railway Station is being transformed into a modern hub at an estimated cost of Rs 35.5 crore. Once completed, it is expected to witness a significant increase in passenger traffic and train stoppages, playing a pivotal role in meeting Vijayawada's growing transport needs.

# ENC's INS Dega set for expansion with the commissioning of Bhogapuram Airport

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The Eastern Naval Command's (ENC) air station, INS Dega, is poised for a major expansion following the commissioning of the Bhogapuram International Airport in Vizianagaram district. Vice Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of ENC, disclosed this during a media interaction held as part of the Navy Day celebrations.

Currently, INS Dega shares its facilities with civilian aircraft. However, once the Bhogapuram Airport becomes operational, the air station will be exclusively dedicated to military operations. "The space freed up will enable us to enhance our infrastructure and accommodate



more aircraft," Vice Admiral Pendharkar stated. He also confirmed the induction of Rafale fighter jets at INS Dega, adding to the existing assets along the eastern seaboard, including carrier-borne fighter jets.

Regarding long-term plans, the Vice Admiral noted, "The decision on a third aircraft carrier is pending and currently in the initial approval stages." He highlighted the Navy's efforts to integrate emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and drones, to strengthen operational capabilities. "We have begun incorporating these technologies into office processes and maritime domain awareness to build a comprehensive operational picture," he explained.

Vice Admiral Pendharkar emphasised the strategic role of drones in modern warfare. "We have already inducted various drones, including surveillance drones and quadcopters, for monitoring ships. The Navy is

closely tracking global technological advancements to integrate them into its capabilities," he said.

On the induction of aircraft carrier INS Vikrant into ENC, he provided updates on the ongoing naval outer harbour project, assuring that the carrier would be stationed in Visakhapatnam upon project completion.

Additionally, the Navy is developing advanced underwater autonomous systems and enhancing surface vessel capabilities to bolster maritime security. Vice Admiral Pendharkar's remarks underscored the Navy's commitment to leveraging technological advancements and infrastructure upgrades to strengthen India's maritime



## Vijayasai to file defamation suit against KV Rao, Naidu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) MP V Vijayasai Reddy launched a sharp attack on TDP chief and Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, accusing him of engaging in vendetta politics against former Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy over the development and welfare of Andhra Pradesh. Speaking to the media on Thursday, Vijayasai Reddy alleged that Chandrababu's administration is primarily focused on harassing YSRCP leaders, including YS Jagan.

"Chandrababu Naidu's actions indicate a loss of mental balance. He is not focused on the state's development but is fixated on targeting YS Jagan. During the TDP-led NDA rule, the state saw no progress. Instead of addressing governance issues, he keeps creating distractions with baseless allegations," Vijayasai remarked.

He also raised questions about the issuance of lookout notices against him, saying, "What is the need for lookout notices against me? I will file a defamation suit against KV Rao and Chandrababu Naidu for their unfounded accusations."

Vijayasai Reddy criticised Chandrababu for privatising the Kakinada Port, claiming it was initially developed with funds from the Asian Development Bank (ADB). "Chandrababu handed over the public sector port to private interests, pretending it was sold to the son of Malaysia's Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad. In reality, it was transferred to KV Rao through backdoor deals. Rao was unjustly appointed as CMD. There should be an investigation into the Kakinada Port transactions since 1997, not by the CID, which is under Chandrababu's control, but by the CBI," Vijayasai demanded.

## Minister Subhash praises KIA for its commitment to employee welfare

PNS/WELFARE

Minister for Labour, Factories, Boilers, and Medical Insurance Services, Vasamsetti Subhash, has commended the KIA Motors plant for its adherence to government regulations and prioritisation of employee welfare. During his maiden visit as Labour Minister, Subhash, accompanied by Minister for BC Welfare and Handloom Textiles S Savitha, toured the KIA plant in Erramanchi village near Penugonda on Thursday morning.

The delegation was warmly received by KIA CEO Kwon Bong Seok and senior officials, including HODs Han, Ma, Sangjae, Dr Patil, and Dr Somashekhar Reddy. A PowerPoint presentation detailed the plant's developmental activities and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

The visit featured a fire mock drill and a gas leakage demonstration under the supervision of safety officer Riyaz Basha, showcasing the advanced safety equipment and measures employed by KIA. Minister Subhash observed these drills and emphasised the importance of preparedness during industrial emergencies.

Highlighting KIA's contribution to the drought-prone Anantapur district, Subhash stated, "KIA has generated employment for around



20,000 people, including its ancillary units, which is commendable." He credited former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu for his role in establishing the plant.

Praising KIA's safety protocols as a model for other industries, the Minister reiterated the government's commitment to preventing industrial accidents. He cited the establishment of the Vasudha Mishra Committee during Naidu's tenure to address safety lapses and prevent tragedies, noting past incidents that resulted in 34 fatalities.

Subhash also criticised the previous administration for failing to utilise Rs 610

crore allocated by the Central government to the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC). He assured that the current government is fostering industrial growth by supporting new establishments and providing full backing to existing industries.

During the tour, the ministers visited various departments of the KIA plant, lauding its rapid growth and state-of-the-art facilities. Joint Commissioner Balu Naik, Factories Deputy Chief Inspector Keshavulu, Labour Deputy Commissioner Lakshminarasayya, and other officials were present during the visit.

## 188 villages in AP under Groundwater Regulation Scheme: Union Minister

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

As part of the Groundwater Management and Regulation (GWMR) scheme in Andhra Pradesh, 188 villages have been included in the control zone. The Union Minister for Jal Shakti, CR Patil, shared in a written reply in the Lok Sabha that the central government, through the National Aquifer Mapping and Management (NAQUIM) project, has mapped 1.41 lakh square kilometres of land in the state.

This information came in response to questions raised by TDP MPs Kesineni Sivanath and Daggumalla Prasad Rao from Vijayawada in the Lok Sabha about the groundwater management scheme. The Minister further mentioned that nationwide mapping of 25 lakh square kilometres of land has been completed, with the data shared with local authorities and public representatives.

The Ministry of Jal Shakti emphasised that significant steps are being taken to improve groundwater management and regulation across the country. The GWMR scheme, launched

in 2007-08, has seen notable progress in managing the country's groundwater resources.

Additionally, the previous system of designating specific notified areas has been replaced by a new approach, as per the 2020 guidelines, which regulates groundwater use at the assessment unit level. According to the Dynamic Groundwater Resource Assessment of 2023, out of 6553 assessment units across the country, 736 have been categorised as Over-exploited (OE) areas.

The Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has been taking strict action against illegal water usage in violation of groundwater rules. In the past three years, the CGWA has imposed penalties in 5,568 cases and collected environmental compensation in 1,150 cases. As part of the GWMR scheme, 195 check dams, 113 recharge shafts, 8 percolation tanks, 5 bridge-cum-bundars, 2 sub-surface barriers, and 2 dams have been constructed in the last five years. The scheme is set to continue until 2026, but there are no plans to add new components at this stage, as clarified by Minister CR Patil.

## Rs 172 cr Central funds...

Continued from Page 1

The site will serve as a venue for historical, cultural, and entertainment events. The reconstruction of Havelock Bridge will include the addition of glass bridges, waterfalls, and aquarium tunnels. Further, temples in the vicinity will be renovated, and the renowned Kadiyam Nursery and Godavari Canal will be restored using the SASCI funds.

Significantly, the Gandikota

tourist destination will be developed on the lines of the Grand Canyon in the United States. Development work on these sites is set to begin in January, with the tendering process to be expedited, according to Tourism Minister Kandula Durgesh.

Pawan Kalyan has also worked to ensure coordination among the Endowment, Roads and Buildings (R&B), and Tourism departments to accelerate the completion of these

## We are the voice of people...

Continued from Page 1

Addressing local body leaders from Sriakulam on Thursday, Jagan announced plans to tour every parliamentary constituency, interacting with the cadre every Wednesday and Thursday. He emphasised strengthening the party and highlighting the coalition's shortcomings.

"It is time we become the voice of the people as the government has failed on all fronts," Jagan said, citing the weakening of institutions, neglect of education and healthcare, and the distress faced by farmers. He alleged rampant corruption, with mafias controlling liquor, sand mining, and gambling operations across constituencies.

## Govt committed...

Continued from Page 1

Contrasting YSRCP's governance with the current administration, Jagan claimed, "We prioritised family welfare and adhered to a welfare calendar, allocating funds and disbursing benefits as scheduled. In contrast, the TDP misled people with false promises and backtracked on its commitments."

He criticised the coalition government for neglecting key sectors, pointing out delays in schemes like Amma Vodi and fee reimbursement. "Students are suffering, Aarogyasri bills remain unpaid, and even salaries for 108 and 104 staff are pending," he said. Farmers, he added, are burdened by the absence of MSP and exploitation by middlemen, unlike under YSRCP's RBKs.

## Govt committed...

Continued from Page 1

Minister Parthasarathy shared that the Mega Parents-Teachers Meetings will begin across the state on December 7. He affirmed that the government is taking steps to ensure the Chief Minister's programme is conducted in a simple manner, without political party involvement. The meeting will focus solely on parents and students, with no party flags, banners, or flex boards. He emphasised that the government is committed to straightforwardly organising the event, keeping the interests of students and their parents at the forefront.

## Ex-minister Kannababu accuses Naidu of betraying farmers

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former Minister K Kannababu has criticised Chandrababu Naidu, accusing him of betraying farmers during the Kakinada SEZ land acquisition. Kannababu claimed that it was Naidu who went against the interests of farmers, while Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy had returned the lands to those agitating for them.

Addressing the media here on Thursday, Kannababu said farmers had protested the forcible land acquisition in the Kakinada SEZ, and Chandrababu Naidu had



attempted to suppress their movement using heavy police force.

"Chandrababu, who had promised to stand by the farmers before the elections, instead used every effort to crush the agitation once in power. He arrested leaders of the Struggle

Committee and tried to fast-track the land acquisition process," Kannababu remarked.

He added that YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, during his padyatra, had patiently listened to the farmers' concerns and, upon assuming office, set up a committee to study the issue.

Based on the committee's recommendations, lands were returned to farmers who were unwilling to part with them.

"Once the land was returned, it became their choice whether to retain or sell it. False reports are being spread, claiming that the Kannababu Committee has

wronged the farmers. It was Chandrababu Naidu who attempted to forcibly acquire land, while YS Jagan Mohan Reddy returned the land to the farmers who refused to part with it," he said.

Regarding rice smuggling, Kannababu said the coalition was confusing the deep sea port with the anchorage port and the activities taking place there. He stated that over 15,000 workers depend on the port and its associated industries.

"False propaganda is being spread about the port issue as well," he added.

## Rein in rice smuggling...

Continued from Page 1

Payments to farmers have been processed promptly, with Rs 2,331 crores disbursed so far, including Rs 2,202 crores within 24 hours and Rs 128 crores within 48 hours.

Rice procurement is ongoing in 14 districts, with East Godavari leading the way, having collected 1.84 lakh metric tonnes, followed closely by West Godavari with 1.81 lakh metric tonnes. Other districts such as Eluru, Konaseema, and Krishna have also seen significant collections. Notably, payments have been made to 1.45 lakh farmers within 48 hours, indicating significant progress in the process.

The Chief Minister reiterated the importance of ensuring that farmers face no problems in obtaining rice bags and urged officials to closely monitor the proper implementation of WhatsApp-based procurement. He also called for the use of GPS tracking for vehicles to expedite the loading process.

CM Naidu revealed that feedback is being collected from farmers through an Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS), and any signs of dissatisfaction will lead to accountability for officials.

Should any issues arise, Naidu stated that he would personally visit the affected areas to address concerns. He also expressed frustration that poor performance by officials could harm the government's reputation, despite the substantial funds and support available to assist farmers.

## AP govt, Google sign...

Continued from Page 1

Minister Lokesh emphasised that the government's policy centres on improving ease of living by providing faster, mobile-based services, eliminating the need for people to visit government offices.

Expressing satisfaction over the MoU, Lokesh highlighted its potential to create global-standard skill training opportunities for the State's youth, enabling them to access vast career prospects. He affirmed that Google's support would play a pivotal role in preparing the workforce for an AI-driven future.

# Three-day 'Krishnaveni Sangeetha Neerajanam' from today

● Goal is to promote 'music tourism' by showcasing cultural heritage of Andhra Pradesh

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The second edition of 'Krishnaveni Sangeetha Neerajanam', a grand celebration of Carnatic music, traditional crafts, and culinary heritage, will be held at the Tummalapati Kshetraya Kalakshetra Auditorium in Vijayawada from December 6-8. This event is being organised by the Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Textiles, and the Andhra Pradesh Tourism Department. This festival promises to be a remarkable showcase of India's rich cultural heritage.

The event will feature a total of 35 performances over three days, showcasing 140 talented artists, including both seasoned maestros and emerging talents. It will take place across three iconic venues in Vijayawada: Tummallapallivari Kshetraya Kalakshetra, Durga Ghat, and Kanaka

**Krishnaveni Sangeetha Neerajanam is more than a festival; it is a harmonious blend of music, culture, and tourism. It aims to promote "music tourism" by showcasing the cultural and spiritual wealth of Andhra Pradesh, positioning the State as a premier destination for cultural enthusiasts**

Durga Temple. Union Minister of State for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Tourism Suresh Gopi, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Cinematography Kandula Durgesh, AP Tourism Development Corporation Chairman N Balaji, and other distinguished dignitaries will be present on the occasion. The Krishnaveni Sangeetha Neerajanam is more than a festival; it is a harmonious blend of music, culture, and tourism. It aims to promote "music

tourism" by showcasing the cultural and spiritual wealth of Andhra Pradesh, positioning the State as a premier destination for cultural enthusiasts. The festival will celebrate the contributions of legendary Telugu composers and highlight the lyrical beauty of Carnatic music. Through this, it aims to connect audiences with India's classical traditions while promoting the State's cultural legacy. Adding to the vibrancy of the festi-

val is a special Heritage Showcase organised by the Ministry of Textiles. The exhibition will feature GI-tagged products from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, including iconic handloom sarees like Mangalagiri Cotton, Uppada Jamdani, Dharmavaram Silk, and Pochampally Ikat. Craft items such as Kondapalli Wooden Toys, Kalamkari Paintings, Narsapur Crochet Lace, Wooden Cutlery, and Leather Puppetry will also be on display, offering visitors a glimpse into the region's rich artisan traditions.

The Indian Culinary Institute, Tirupati, will set up a food stall highlighting the culinary heritage of Andhra Pradesh, offering visitors a chance to savour authentic regional flavours. Besides, Andhra Pradesh Tourism will host a Tourism Pavilion to disseminate information about the State's renowned attractions and lesser-known gems.



## Move to use drones, AI to improve waste management

● Technological advancements will play key role in cleanliness: Swachh Andhra Corporation chief

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a move to enhance cleanliness, Kommareddy Pattabhiram, Chairman of the Swachh Andhra Corporation, highlighted the importance of using drone surveillance combined with Artificial Intelligence (AI) to improve waste management. A meeting was held at the Command Control Room in the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation's main office on Thursday, which focused on strategies for achieving a cleaner Vijayawada.

During the meeting, Pattabhiram highlighted the crucial role of technology in maintaining cleanliness. He stressed that the use of

Artificial Intelligence and drones should be incorporated into sanitation management practices to enhance their effectiveness. Swachh Andhra Corporation Managing Director Anil Kumar Reddy discussed the integration of AI and drone management to address the current challenges in waste management. He emphasised that drone surveillance could help identify solutions to ongoing problems and improve the overall waste management system.

Municipal Corporation Commissioner HM Dhyanchandra outlined various issues related to waste management in the city. He pointed out the importance of

using AI and drone surveillance to detect black spots, monitor stray dogs and cattle, prevent mosquito breeding, and address other critical concerns related to sanitation.

The meeting was attended by Swachh Andhra Corporation MC 1 Bhagyalakshmi, MC 2 Dasharath Rami Reddy, Chief Engineer Sriramachandra, Vijayawada Municipal Corporation In-Charge Chief Medical Health Officer Dr Suresh Babu, Superintendent Engineer of Projects P Satyakumari, Executive Engineer in charge of Vehicles Yesupadam, Biologist Surya Kumar, and drone experts Sharathchandra and Hanu from NeoSky.

## Engg student detained at airport

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Security personnel at Gannavaram Airport detained a passenger after two bullets were discovered in his luggage during a baggage check. The passenger, identified as Arya, is a second-year engineering student at KL University in Guntur and a native of Panipat, Haryana. He was scheduled to fly to Delhi on an Air India flight when the bullets were found during the security screening.

Inspector BV Siva Prasad of Gannavaram Police Station stated that Arya was immediately detained by airport security and handed over to the police for questioning. Preliminary investigations revealed that the bullets belonged to a licensed firearm previously owned by Arya's father, who had worked as a security guard at a private bank between 2008 and 2010. Arya reportedly packed the bullets unknowingly while preparing to return to college after a recent visit to his home.

## Trophies for Volleyball Tournery unveiled

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Vice-Chancellor of Velagapudi Ramakrishna Siddhartha Engineering College Deemed to be University, Prof P Venkateswara Rao, has unveiled the trophies of the Nadella Basavapurnaiah Memorial All-India Invitation Volleyball Tournament for Women. The event was held on the university premises in Kanuru, near Vijayawada, on Thursday.

The tournament will be conducted by the Nadella Basavapurnaiah Trust from December 12 to 15 at the newly constructed VR Siddhartha Indoor Sports Complex.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Venkateswara Rao praised Nadella Brahmaji Rao, national volleyball player, for organising the tournament in memory of his late father Basavapurnaiah. The Siddhartha Academy of General and Technical Education is extending its full support for providing infrastructure facilities, he added.

He said that the indoor sports complex has been constructed with international



standards and it will be used to play as many as 14 sports disciplines, such as volleyball, basketball, table tennis, badminton, wrestling, boxing, and squash. The university encourages sporting talents by providing admissions and all facilities for them, he added.

Tournament organiser and Nadella Basavapurnaiah Trust Trustee Brahmaji Rao said that the six best women's teams - South Central Railway (Secunderabad), Central Railway (Mumbai), Southern

Railway (Chennai), Gujarat Sports Hostel, Integral Coach Factory (ICF, Chennai), and Bank of Maharashtra (Pune) - are participating in the tournament. Penamaluru MLA Bode Prasad, Vijayawada East MLA Gadde Rama Mohana Rao, Siddhartha Academy president Dr C Nageswara Rao, secretary Palaldugu Lakshmana Rao and other dignitaries will attend the inaugural function, he said.

OTT Hyderabad, TMT Simhadri, Coimbatore-based

GRG organisation, Andhra Hospital, Help Hospital etc. are sponsoring the tournament. The total prize money is Rs.2.75 lakh. They are making arrangements for around 1,000 people to watch the matches, he explained.

University Pro Vice-Chancellor Dr AV Ratna Prasad, Dean Pandu Ranga Rao, Physical Director Raghu and Krishna District Volleyball Association secretary Donepudi Dayakara Rao and others were present.

## Special edition of 'Communism' unveiled

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

CPI senior leader and former Visalandhra Editor Edupuganti Nageswara Rao unveiled a special edition of Communism magazine on Thursday, marking the centenary of the Communist Party of India (CPI) and the 50th anniversary of the party's ideological publication. The event, held at the Visalandhra Office in Vijayawada, featured stories on the communist movement, its struggles, and key issues related to the party. The programme was chaired by Visalandhra Publishing House Editor Gaddam Koteswara Rao



## Jagan has no right to highlight people's problems: Congress

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Congress party has ridiculed former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's proposed agitation to highlight the issues faced by the people.

In a statement on Thursday, Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) Vice-president Kolanukonda Sivaji stated that Jagan Mohan Reddy acted like a factionist during his five-year tenure and has no right to launch an agitation for the welfare of the people.

"The people of the State taught him a fitting lesson for his anarchic rule. Jagan Mohan Reddy himself is a major problem for the people, as all sectors were ruined during his regime," Sivaji said.

The Congress leader lamented that the Jagan Mohan Reddy-led government had tarnished the IAS and IPS services with corruption. "The true-up charges have become a heavy burden on the common man. The

YSRCP government did not pay fee reimbursements, leading to accumulated arrears that have now become a burden on the new government," he said. He also criticised the YSRCP regime for failing to benefit farmers.

Shivaji further claimed that the sand, liquor, and mining mafias thrived during the five years of YSRCP rule, while the common people struggled with exorbitant taxes. "Now, the corrupt actions of YSRCP leaders are being exposed one by one," he said, demanding that the YSRCP leadership take on the role of a constructive opposition.

He expressed concern over the forcible seizure of lands and properties by YSRCP leaders at gunpoint during their tenure and called for a comprehensive inquiry into all corrupt activities. Shivaji also urged the government to establish a fast-track court to expedite trials and ensure punishment for the guilty.



## Mystery shrouds Tagore Pharma accident

● Factory officials say reactor overflowed when chlorine was added to hydrochloric acid, releasing phosgene gas; experts question the claim

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The recent accident at Tagore Pharma Company has sparked allegations of negligence and regulatory lapses. Reports suggest the mishap occurred during the manufacturing of unlicensed drugs, with conflicting accounts from authorities.

"There's no clarity on what truly happened," said scientist Baburao, a representative of the group Scientists for the People. "Officials are merely echoing the company's version without verifying the facts. This raises suspicions of collusion."

The Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB) stated that chlorine gas was released during the production of Pantoprazole, a stomach medication. Conversely, the Factory Department claimed the incident occurred while manufacturing Lamivudine, an HIV drug, citing phosgene gas release due to increased reactor pressure. Both agencies relied on the information provided by the company, leading to confusion and skepticism.

Factory officials explained that the reactor overflowed when chlorine was added to hydrochloric acid, releasing phosgene gas. However, activists and experts have questioned the chemistry

behind these claims. "Hydrochloric acid and chlorine, used in the process, do not chemically react to produce poisonous gas," Baburao stated. "What caused the pressure build-up? Why was the reactor vented, and how did the liquid escape? These are critical questions that need answers."

The timeline of the tragedy has drawn severe criticism. The accident reportedly occurred at 4.40 PM on November 26, yet workers were not hospitalised until 2 AM the following day—a delay of nearly nine hours. "This delay in providing medical treatment directly led to the loss of lives," Baburao alleged. "Had they been treated promptly lives could have been saved."

The management has refuted these claims, insisting that the workers were sent for treatment immediately. However, on-site accounts challenge this narrative, adding to the growing calls for an independent inquiry.

"This is a wake-up call for regulators," Baburao emphasised. "Manufacturing unlicensed drugs, employing inexperienced workers, and ignoring safety protocols are unacceptable. The victims and their families deserve justice, and accountability must be ensured."

## Revenue Conferences to commence today

● Teams of officials to visit villages to address unresolved land issues

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector Dr G Lakshminha has announced that following the directives of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, the district administration is prepared to hold Revenue Conferences from December 6 to January 8. During these conferences, teams of officials will visit villages to engage with the public and address land-related issues promptly. To facilitate this process, district-level officers have been assigned as supervisors for each mandal during the conferences, he added.

In view of the Revenue Conferences starting on Friday, the Collector convened a meeting with people's representatives, district-level officers and tahsildars at the Pingali Venkaiah Meeting Hall in Vijayawada on Thursday. Vijayawada Central MLA Bodna Uma Maheswara Rao, Tiruvuru MLA K Srinivasa Rao and others attended the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, Lakshminha said that these meetings

are expected to find permanent solutions to land issues that have been remaining unresolved for several years, besides pending court cases. Also, they are receiving feedback from the people and explaining the fruitful results of the meetings, he said. If necessary, the district-level officials led teams will reexamine the pending issues, he added.

Further, he said as per the schedule, the Tahsildar, Revenue Inspector, VRO, Mandal Surveyor, and Registration Department officials will attend the conferences. If necessary, Forest, Endowment and other departmental officials also attend the meetings, he said. All tahsildars in the district released the schedule of the Revenue Conferences in advance for the benefit of the public. All the petitions received from the public will be registered online and those will be resolved within the stipulated time, he explained.

Joint Collector Dr Nidhi Meena, DRO K Lakshmi Narasimha, RDOs K Chaitanya, K Madhuri, K Balakrishna, DRDA PD K Srinivasa Rao, and others were present.



### Mandal-wise supervisors:

A Konduru - Dr M Hanumantha Rao, Animal Husbandry Officer; Gampalagudem - DVVSN Raju, MEPMA PD; Vissannapeta - Chakrani, District Fisheries Officer; Reddigudem - P Balaji Kumar, Horticulture Officer; Tiruvuru - A Ramu, DWAMA PD; Jaggayapeta - G Maheswara Rao, APC, SSA; Vastavai - U Srinivasa Rao, Youth Welfare Officer; Penuganchiprolu - A Krishna Chaitanya, Legal Metrology Officer; Nandigama - G Uma Devi, Women and Child Welfare Officer; Chandrapadu - B Nagaraju, Ground Water DD; Kanchikacherla - TV Satish, Civil Supplies DM; Veerullapadu - PM Subani, APMIC PD; G Konduru - A Papa Rao, DSO; Mylavaram - P Lavanya Kumari, DPO; Ibrahimpatnam - T Satyanarayana, R & B EE; Vijayawada Rural - G Kapur, Housing PD; Vijayawada Central - A Ravindra Rao, Forest Settlement Officer; Vijayawada North - Z Ramesh, Panchayat Raj SE; Vijayawada West - S Vidyasagar, RWS SE; Vijayawada East - D Chandrasekhar, VMC Additional Commissioner

## 'Govt focusing on safety of women and children'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government has reiterated its commitment to ensuring the safety and security of women and children, especially those from vulnerable backgrounds, during a two-day state-level workshop on "Safety and Security of Women and Girls in Andhra Pradesh." Organised by the Department of Women's Development and Child Welfare (WD&CW) in collaboration with the HELP Organisation, the workshop is part of the UN's 16-day campaign against gender-based violence.

Speaking at the event, A Surya Kumari, Principal Secretary of WD&CW, highlighted the State's achievements in food safety through Anganwadi centres and emphasised the need to address violence, exploitation, and trafficking. She



urged grassroots workers to enhance their skills and foster inter-departmental collaboration for the holistic development and empowerment of victims.

Joint Director Y Sailaja called for

prompt action by government-run shelter homes to rehabilitate survivors, stressing a social perspective alongside legal provisions.

Ram Mohan, Secretary of HELP, urged the reactivation of state policies

such as GO Ms No 1 (2003) and GO Ms No 28 for effective rehabilitation of trafficking survivors through Community-Based Rehabilitation. PDs Suvarna and Uma from Krishna and NTR districts shared updates on

activities in their respective districts, focusing on addressing the challenges related to the protection and welfare of women and children, including creating awareness about the existing protection mechanisms and systems implemented by the state.

Officials and representatives from NGOs, one-stop centres, and child-care institutions across the state shared district-level initiatives and challenges while advocating for enhanced government-NGO coordination for better service delivery.

The event saw participation from nodal officers, EOs from District Women & Child Development Agencies, heads of Shakti Sedans, In-charges of One-Stop Centres, Child Care Institutions, NGOs from 26 districts of Andhra Pradesh, HELP staff, and VIMUKTHI collective members.

# Basic amenities being provided to hostels: Collector



PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

West Godavari District Collector Chadalavada Nagarani has assured that all necessary basic amenities are being provided to social welfare hostels and has urged students to make the best use of the benefits extended by the government. During a surprise inspection of the social welfare hostel at Polamuru village in Penumantra mandal on Thursday, the Collector reviewed the hostel premises and offered suggestions to officials. She advised the hostel warden to cultivate flower and vegetable plants on the premises and to maintain cleanliness in and around the hostel. She directed Housing Department officials to carry out repairs to the hostel building and reconstruct the damaged portion of the compound wall. Interacting with students, she encouraged them to focus on their studies for a brighter future.

The Collector emphasised that staying away from parents should motivate students to study harder and achieve success in life. She urged them to report any issues faced in the hostel to the concerned officials and inquired about the quality of meals being served. In a gesture that impressed the students, Collector Nagarani joined them for lunch, sitting on the floor and reciting the prayer before eating. She said she intended to instil a sense of equality among the students. The Collector also mentioned that proposals for repairs to the hostel building slab and the construction of toilets, estimated at Rs 14.40 lakh, had been sent to the Government. The work will commence once funds are released. District Social Welfare Officer K. Sobharani, Housing Officer G. Pitsaiah, and Tahsildar A.Y. Ravikumar accompanied the Collector during the inspection.

## Centre approved 145 projects: MP

PNS ■ ELURU

The Union government has sanctioned 145 projects with an estimated cost of Rs 5.65 lakh crore. These include 78 Greenfield projects worth Rs 2.84 lakh crore and 67 Brownfield projects costing Rs 2.81 lakh crore, currently under progress, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri announced. Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Kumar, in a statement on Thursday, revealed that he had raised a question during the Winter Session of Parliament about guidelines for establishing Greenfield and Brownfield projects by oil and natural gas companies. He sought details on permissions required and measures taken to identify violations. In a written reply, the Minister stated that respective oil and gas company boards decide on such projects, streamlining the government's role. Depending on the project's nature, clearances like environmental, forest, Coastal Regulatory Zone (CRZ), wildlife



approvals, land acquisition, and safety permissions are mandatory. Since 2014, 379 projects costing Rs 100 crore or more, with a cumulative expenditure of Rs 4.86 lakh crore, have been completed. This includes 225 Greenfield projects worth Rs 2.52 lakh crore and 154 Brownfield projects costing Rs 2.34 lakh crore. The Minister added that a robust online monitoring system has been implemented to track project progress by oil and gas CPSEs.

## SEIL Energy certified 'Great Place to Work'

PNS ■ NELLORE

SEIL Energy India Limited, one of the country's largest independent power producers (IPPs), has been honoured with the prestigious 'Great Place to Work' certification. This recognition underscores SEIL Energy's dedication to fostering a positive and supportive work environment that enables employees to excel and grow. The 'Great Place to Work' certification is a globally recognised benchmark for workplace culture. Since 1992, the organisation has surveyed over 100 million employees worldwide to identify key factors defining an exemplary workplace, with trust as a cornerstone. Their employee survey platform provides leaders with actionable feedback, real-time



insights, and tools for strategic decision-making. Expressing his pride, SEIL Energy India Limited CEO, Raghav Trivedi, said, "We are thrilled to be recognised as a 'Great Place to Work'. This achievement reflects our team's dedication, hard work, and commitment to cultivating a culture rooted in trust, respect, and collaboration. Our employees are our greatest strength, and we remain committed to their growth and well-being." The certification follows a rigorous evaluation of SEIL Energy's workplace culture, including employee feedback and cultural audits. It is regarded globally as a significant endorsement, enhancing employer branding and attracting top talent.

## 'State committed to fair support prices for paddy'

● Govt has procured 25,000 tonnes of paddy so far

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Information and Public Relations, Housing, and District In-Charge, Kolu Parthasarathy has assured farmers in the district of fair support prices for their paddy produce. On Thursday, the Minister accompanied by Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar, visited paddy fields in Jampani village, Vemuru constituency, to assess the ongoing harvest. Speaking on the occasion, Parthasarathy stated that paddy cultivation in the district spans 2.15 lakh acres, of which harvesting has been completed in 9,000 acres so far. The government has procured 25,000 tonnes of paddy till date, he said. The Minister urged farmers to sell their produce exclusively through Rythu Seva Kendras to ensure fair trade and avoid exploitation by middlemen. He assured that the government will procure every grain of paddy produced by the farmers. The Minister instructed officials and



rice mill representatives at the centres to measure moisture levels in the paddy accurately before procurement. Paddy purchased from farmers must be transported to rice mills within six hours, and payments should be credited to farmers' accounts within 24 hours. He clarified that paddy with up to 17 per cent moisture content would face no deductions, while a reduction of five kilograms per quintal would apply for moisture levels above 22 per cent. Highlighting the government's farmer-friendly initiatives, the Minister pointed out that the coalition government cleared ₹1,640 crore of pending dues owed to farmers by the previous administration.

## Ex-MP Harsha Kumar demands probe into PDS rice scam

PNS ■ RAJAHMUNDRY

Former MP G V Harsha Kumar has demanded a comprehensive inquiry, led by a retired or sitting judge, to uncover the facts behind the illegal rice exports from Kakinada port. Speaking to the media here on Thursday, Harsha Kumar stated that rice exports from Kakinada port were not a new phenomenon but an ongoing issue, supported tacitly by successive governments, whether Congress, Telugu Desam, or YSRCP. He pointed out that the central government had not granted permission for rice exports, as the policy is to maintain rice stocks in godowns as a buffer for eight years, considering the potential for drought. However, rice exports continued unabated, often disguised under other cargo labels such as fertiliser or rice bran. The former MP claimed it was an open secret that influential individuals were involved in the rice export racket, with benamis operating the network. He asserted that the involvement of port officials



was key to enabling these clandestine exports and alleged that the current Port Officer, Dharma Sasthra, was directly involved. Harsha Kumar recounted that when Dharma Sasthra was first appointed on a contract basis and engaged in dubious activities, he had recommended his transfer. However, he lamented that another officer from Visakhapatnam was appointed in his place, only for Dharma Sasthra to make a swift return to oversee the illegal activities at Kakinada port. "What is preventing the current government from revealing the individuals behind the large-scale importation of cocaine?" he asked, adding that it indicated widespread involvement and no one was innocent. Harsha Kumar, a staunch Congress loyalist and close associate of Rajiv Gandhi, runs educational institutions named after the former Prime Minister and served as an MP. The former MP also questioned the handling of sensitive information regarding a container caught with 25,000 kilos of cocaine in Visakhapatnam port during the YSRCP regime, questioning the propriety of keeping such details confidential.

## Visakhapatnam grapples with land disputes, Revenue Dept under fire

● Fundamental processes like land mutations in disarray

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Visakhapatnam continues to be plagued by unresolved land disputes, with the Revenue Department facing increasing criticism for its inefficiency and lack of responsiveness. Citizens seeking solutions to even minor land-related issues often encounter significant hurdles, requiring multiple visits to revenue offices. Fundamental processes like land mutations remain in a state of disarray, and revenue-related grievances dominate public forums for problem resolution, such as the Collector's Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS) programme. To address these longstanding concerns, Revenue Conferences are scheduled to commence on Friday. However, many remain sceptical about their effectiveness,

given the district's history of bureaucratic delays and red tape. Hundreds of complaints flood revenue officials' offices each week, highlighting persistent issues like encroachments, illegal possession through forged documents, discrepancies in land records, and errors in name changes and boundary adjustments. Despite the coalition government's claims of prioritising grievance resolution, Visakhapatnam has been slow to address these widespread issues. A recent review by the Chief Minister revealed that many tahsildar offices fail to take citizen complaints seriously, further exacerbating public frustration. "The neglect at the ground level reflects poorly on the commitment to resolve these disputes. We are demanding a more proactive approach," said a local activist.

## 'Degree college to be set up on Govt Polytechnic campus'

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Minister for Social Welfare Dola Bala Veeranjanya Swamy has announced the establishment of a Degree College on the premises of the Polytechnic College here. He further stated that Rs 9 crore would be allocated for the construction of new buildings. The Minister participated in the Poly Techfest at the Polytechnic campus on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, he recalled the contributions of former Minister Damacharla Anjaneyulu to the education sector in the district. "It is crucial for students to enhance their technological proficiency to stay competitive in this rapidly advancing field," he said. The Minister also highlighted the growing role of technology in various sectors, including agriculture. He noted that drones are now being used in agricultural fields to spray pesticides and assess crop damage during floods and cyclones. The government, he added, aims to establish an industry in every Assembly constituency as part of its job generation programme. Acknowledging the impor-



ance of polytechnic education, the Minister pointed out that it leads to self-employment. "Every student should focus on designing projects that not only promote self-employment but also benefit society. The State Government is committed to providing financial support for self-employment initiatives," he said. The college principal requested a new building for the workshop, and the Minister assured that the proposal would be sent to the Government. He also promised to bring to the Government's attention the need for new courses to be introduced. Additionally, the Minister confirmed that land would be allocated for the establishment of the Degree College on the same polytechnic campus. "Steps will be taken to construct a new building at a cost of Rs 9 crore for the College," he announced. The Minister urged students to make the most of the benefits provided by the government and strive for excellence in their education. AP Maritime Board Chairman Damacharla Satyanarayana emphasised that the State Government is taking steps to provide quality education in Government Colleges, bringing them on par with corporate institutions. Mayor Gangada Sujata also spoke on the occasion. Technical Education Department JD Padma Rao and Principal PVLN Shiva Prasad were among those who attended the event.



## Vikas BPEd College wins KRUIC Volleyball title

● Two-day tournament concludes at Vijaya College of Physical Education

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The two-day Krishna University Inter-Collegiate (KRUIC) Volleyball Tournament for Men, organised by the Vijaya College of Physical Education, concluded at the Vikas Group Institutions at Nunna near Vijayawada on Thursday. As many as 10 colleges from the Krishna and NTR districts participated in the knockout-league tournament. Vikas College of Physical

Education (BPEd), Nunna, bagged the title by winning all three matches in the league stage. PB Siddhartha Arts and Science College, Vijayawada, SRR & CVR Government Degree College, Vijayawada, and LHR Degree College, Mylavaram stood in the second, third and fourth places, respectively. During the closing ceremony, Mother Theresa Educational Society secretary Naredla Satyanarayana Reddy presented the trophies to the winners.

## 67 red sanders logs seized; 4 held in Guntur, Prakasam

PNS ■ GUNTUR/TIRUPATI

Despite intensified combing operations, vehicle checks, and heightened vigilance, red sanders smuggling continues unabated. In the last 24 hours, police seized 67 red sander logs in Guntur and Prakasam districts and arrested four individuals in connection with the incidents. In Guntur, Mangalagiri Rural Police intercepted a transport vehicle at Kaja toll plaza on Wednesday night and seized 49 red sander logs hidden under bundles of A4 paper. Each log weighed up to 50 kg, and their total value is estimated to be over Rs 3 crore. The logs were reportedly being transported illegally from Chennai to Assam, with plans to smuggle them to China. The police detained the lorry driver



and an accomplice. Investigations are underway to uncover further details about the operation. Meanwhile, the Red Sanders Anti-Smuggling Task Force (RSASTF) seized 18 red sander logs in the Giddalur forest area. According to DSP G. Balireddy, a team led by RI Chiranjeevulu and RSI P. Naresh conducted a combing operation near Kanumabavi Rasta, Chintalapalli village. Upon spotting the police, a group of individuals attempted to flee but were chased down, leading to the arrest of two smugglers. The seized logs have been shifted to Tirupati, and Task Force CI Suresh Kumar has registered a case. Police continue their efforts to curb red sanders smuggling in the region.

## BRS slams Cong govt over arrest of its leaders

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

MLC Kavitha criticised the Congress-led government for the alleged misuse of police power and targeted arrests of BRS leaders, including MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy. Speaking at Gachibowli police station, Kavitha expressed outrage over what she described as the government's attempt to stifle opposition voices. She detailed the sequence of events, stating that Kaushik Reddy had contacted an ACP to file a complaint about threats to his life and allegations of phone tapping but was instead arrested. "Kaushik Reddy visited the Banjara Hills police station to lodge a complaint, but not only was his complaint ignored, he was falsely accused and arrested. This government lacks the courage to even accept complaints from public representatives," Kavitha said. She accused the government of using the police to silence BRS

leaders Harish Rao, Jagadish Reddy and others. "What kind of democracy is this? The arrests of opposition leaders and the misuse of police power show this is not Indiramma Rajyam but an oppressive police raj," she remarked, drawing comparisons to an emergency-like situation. Kavitha demanded the immediate withdrawal of all false cases and the release of arrested BRS leaders. She also criticised the delay in presenting leaders before the court. "The government's actions are a blatant abuse of power, and the people will rise against it," she warned. Former minister Niranjan Reddy also voiced his condemnation, stating that Kaushik Reddy's arrest was illegal and violated Supreme Court guidelines. He accused the Congress government of creating a hostile environment for BRS leaders and announced plans to take the issue to the High Court, Supreme Court, and human rights organisations.

ACROSS THE STATES



2 houses in J-K attached in terror case

Authorities here on Thursday attached two houses in Shopian district in a terror case connection under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, police said.



Badal attacker sent to 3-day police remand

A court in Amritsar on Thursday sent former Khalistani terrorist Narain Singh Chaura, who opened fire at Shriromani Akali Dal leader Sukhbir Singh Badal outside the Golden Temple on Wednesday, to three-day police remand, officials said.



'Don't indulge in politics of hate'

Launching a scathing attack on JD(S) supremo H D Deve Gowda in his native, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday accused the former PM of not allowing others to grow politically, including those from his own Vokkaliga community.

'Nurse booked for infant deaths'

A staff nurse, her husband, an ASHA worker, and three others have been booked on charges of culpable homicide not amounting to murder following the death of a woman and her newborn during delivery in Uttar Pradesh's Ballia district, officials said on Thursday.

Modi, Bhutan King resolve to expand ties further

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and Bhutan vowed on Thursday to further bolster the "exemplary" India-Bhutan partnership across all sectors with Prime Minister Narendra Modi conveying to Bhutanese King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck New Delhi's strong commitment to economic development of the Himalayan nation.



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, in reflection of the importance India has attached to the Bhutanese leader's visit. The King is accompanied by Queen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck and senior officials of the Bhutanese government.

scored the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between India and Bhutan, reflecting the spirit of mutual trust, cooperation and profound understanding that underpins the bilateral relations between the two countries, "an Indian read-out said. The prime minister and the King expressed satisfaction at the excellent state of bilateral relations, encompass-

ing development cooperation, clean energy partnership, trade and investment, space and technology cooperation, and people-to-people ties, it said. "They reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening this exemplary partnership across all sectors," it said.

The King expressed gratitude to PM Modi and the people of India for the steadfast support of Bhutan's aspirations for happiness, progress and prosperity, it added.



Parliament passes Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak Bill

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Parliament on Thursday passed a bill to replace the 90-year-old Aircraft Act and further improve the ease of doing business in the aviation space.

The Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak 2024 was passed in the Rajya Sabha by a voice vote. It was earlier approved by the Lok Sabha on August 9.

The bill seeks to remove redundancies and replace the Aircraft Act, 1934, which has been amended 21 times.

change in title of the bill from English to Hindi, to which many members raised objections, was done to "showcase the India's heritage and culture", and "there was no violation of Constitutional rule".

It will be difficult to pronounce the name of the bill in Hindi initially but one will get used to it, he added.

Responding to concerns of some MPs over skyrocketing airfare, the minister said the government has worked on improving accessibility to a certain extent through Udaan scheme and is committed to making it affordable for passengers.

India better placed to engage with Trump 2.0: EAM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

US President-elect Donald Trump has had a positive political view of India and it is in a much more advantageous position than many other countries to build "deeper" relations with his administration and take forward the bilateral ties, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Thursday.

In an interactive session at industry chamber ASSOCHAM, Jaishankar at the same time noted that like many other countries, India may also have some issues and it will deal with them. The external affairs minister said there are countries which are looking at Trump 2.0 as a political challenge but for India, it is not the case.



will deal with those issues, but I would say when I look around the world today, you know there are countries who (are) looking at Trump 2.0 as a political challenge. We are not," he said. "And I think that separates us from a very large number of countries. We are in a much more advantageous position to translate 2.0 into a deeper relationship," he added.

ing of mutual benefits and relationships in several areas like emerging and critical technologies as trusted partners. There have been concerns in many countries over the Trump administration's policy over a range of sensitive issues including tariff, climate change and overall foreign policy priorities against the backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the situation in West Asia.

'PM running away from discussion on Adani issue'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra Thursday said the country's people want the "Adani mega scam" to be discussed in Parliament and alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government were "running away" from it.

In an unusual protest, leaders of several INDIA bloc parties wore black jackets with stickers reading "Modi Adani Ek Hai" and "Adani Safe Hai" on them and raised slogans on the Parliament premises demanding a joint parliamentary probe into the Adani issue. Posting a video from the protest, Priyanka Gandhi said on X, "The people of the country want that the Adani mega scam should be discussed in Parliament. All the parties of the INDIA bloc are demanding a discussion in Parliament but Narendra Modi and the government are constantly running away from the discussion."



Parliament premises," she said in her post in Hindi. Participating in the protest in the morning, Priyanka Gandhi also wore a similar black jacket with stickers targeting the Modi government over the Adani issue. The opposition MPs also held a protest march inside Parliament premises.

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, who put the sticker on his trademark white T-shirt, claimed that Prime Minister Modi cannot get an investigation conducted against Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani as "it would amount to getting a probe done against himself".



Will form govt again in Delhi: Kejriwal

Says he is confident of winning more seats

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal asserted on Thursday that his party is going to retain power in Delhi after the Assembly polls next year, repeating its historic mandate from the previous election.

Undertaking a "padayatra" (foot march) campaign in East Delhi's Vishwas Nagar constituency, Kejriwal exuded confidence that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will get even more seats than it got the 2020 Assembly polls in the capital. He said the Vishwas Nagar constituency has not witnessed any development because even though Delhi has an AAP government, the local MLA is from the BJP. Polls for the 70-member Delhi Assembly are due in February 2025.

In 2015, the AAP won 67 seats and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) just three. In the next election in 2020, the AAP won 62 seats and the BJP eight, Kejriwal said, pointing out that on both occasions, his party could not bag the Vishwas Nagar seat.

"There has been a BJP MLA here for the last 10 years. A lot of work has been done by the AAP in Delhi but there is no mohalla clinic here. CCTV cameras have not been installed and no elderly person from here has gone on free pilgrimage," the former chief minister said.

Amit Shah to interact with surrendered Naxals

To visit Chhattisgarh on Dec 14-16

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will visit Chhattisgarh for three days beginning December 14 during which he will review the law and order situation in the state and interact with surrendered Naxals and locals, sources said on Thursday.

On Wednesday, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnudev Sai met Shah here and conveyed that the state's Bastar and Kondagaon districts, once infested by the Naxals, were completely free from the extremists and operations were on to wipe them

out from other areas. The Union home minister will be on a visit to Chhattisgarh from December 14-16 during which he will chair a security review meeting in Raipur, the sources said.

Shah will also present President's Colour award to the Chhattisgarh Police at Raipur. He will also travel to Jagdalpur, where he will hold interaction with surrendered Naxals, locals and intellectuals, they said.

He will also attend the closing ceremony of the Bastar olympics and pay tributes to martyrs in Jagdalpur besides meeting the families of the vic-



tims of the Left-Wing Extremism. Shah will visit security camps and oversee developmental works besides having lunch with jawans of security forces there.

During Wednesday's meeting, the Chhattisgarh chief minister briefed the Union home minister on the state's recent achievements in anti-Naxal operations and ongoing development initiatives in the Bastar region. According to an

official release, the chief minister has conveyed that joint efforts by the state government and security forces have led to the elimination of Maoist networks and their various wings in these districts. No Naxal-related incidents have been reported in the Naxal-free areas for a long time, Sai said.

He further said the success is not only due to the sustained operations of the security forces but also due to the developmental projects such as roads, schools, healthcare facilities, and employment initiatives that have gained the trust of locals.

He said operations in other Naxal-affected districts are on, with a goal to make them Naxal-free soon.

Sleep helps with learning new language: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Getting those eight hours of sleep can have linguistic benefits, according to a study that found it helped adults speak a new language.

While one sleeps, the brain is known to integrate or 'consolidate' information learnt during the day with previous knowledge to file it for long-term storage.

Researchers, led by those at the University of South Australia, tracked brain activity in 35 native English-speaking adults as they were learning a miniature language called 'Mini Pinyin', which is based on Mandarin but has grammatical rules similar to English.

A miniature language is used in scientific experiments for studying aspects related to learning languages.

Mini Pinyin "mimics natural language as it is based on an

RESEARCHERS, LED BY THOSE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, TRACKED BRAIN ACTIVITY IN 35 NATIVE ENGLISH-SPEAKING ADULTS AS THEY WERE LEARNING A MINIATURE LANGUAGE CALLED 'MINI PINYIN', WHICH IS BASED ON MANDARIN BUT HAS GRAMMATICAL RULES SIMILAR TO ENGLISH.



existing language (Mandarin Chinese) and includes both structure and meaning", according to a 2020 study published in the journal Behavior Research Methods and written

by researchers at the University of South Australia.

In this study published in the Journal of Neuroscience, half the participants learnt Mini Pinyin in the morning and

returned in the evening to have their memory tested, the researchers said.

The other half learnt Mini Pinyin in the evening and then slept in the laboratory

overnight, while having their brain activity recorded. The team tested the participants' progress in the morning.

Those who slept were found to perform significantly better, compared to those who remained awake before having their memory tested.

"We found that sleep relative to wake was associated with superior performance for rules that followed a sequence-based word order," the authors wrote.

Improvements in memory because of sleep were related to the linking of slow oscillations and sleep spindles, which are brainwave patterns that synchronise during the non-REM phase of sleep, according to lead researcher Zachariah Cross, who did his PhD from the University of South Australia.

Non-rapid eye movement (REM) sleep is the restful phase of sleep when eyes stop mov-

ing and during which muscles relax, and brain activity, breathing and heart rate slow down.

"This coupling (linking) likely reflects the transfer of learned information from the hippocampus to the cortex, enhancing long-term memory storage," Cross said.

"Post-sleep neural activity showed unique patterns of theta oscillations associated with cognitive control and memory consolidation, suggesting a strong link between sleep-induced brainwave coordination and learning outcomes," the lead researcher said.

The researchers also said the findings could potentially inform treatments for individuals with language-related impairments, including autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and aphasia, who experience greater sleep disturbances than other adults.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Korean crisis

President Yoon Suk Yeol briefly declared martial law, a move that ignited domestic outrage and international condemnation

A brief martial law was imposed in South Korea, a country known to have a stable democracy and prosperity to vie for. The South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol took this extreme step to preserve his position amid falling popularity. He faces the toughest challenge of his presidency after a controversial decision to impose martial law backfired spectacularly, plunging the nation into a deep political crisis. The fallout has sparked widespread protests, calls for his resignation, and even moves toward impeachment. Yoon declared martial law, citing national security concerns and the need to eliminate "anti-state elements." However, many viewed the measure as a desperate attempt to consolidate power amid mounting political and personal scandals. The backlash was immediate and severe, with lawmakers rushing to overturn the decree and protesters gathering en masse in the streets of Seoul. Within hours, Yoon revoked the order, but the reversal failed to quell public anger. The damage was done.



Yoon's presidency, which began with a narrow 2022 election victory, has been riddled with controversy. His platform, focused on gender neutrality and hawkish stances on North Korea, initially appealed to younger male voters. However, a series of missteps and scandals—ranging from allegations of corruption involving First Lady Kim Keon Hee to tensions with the opposition-controlled National Assembly—have steadily eroded his approval ratings. The Democratic Party's landslide win in April's parliamentary elections further isolated Yoon politically. With an emboldened opposition, efforts to impeach

key government officials linked to Yoon's administration gained momentum, leaving the president with limited room to maneuver. The martial law declaration was a last-ditch effort by a president grappling with dwindling support and mounting resistance within his own party. Indeed the move was a miscalculation, a desperate attempt which backfired miserably with significant political fallout. The incident has intensified efforts by the opposition to impeach Yoon, with some members of his party now openly calling for his resignation. Protesters have taken to the streets in unprecedented numbers, with labour unions threatening nationwide strikes unless Yoon steps down. The crisis has raised alarm among South Korea's allies, including the United States and Japan have expressed serious concerns. Their worst fear of course is that North Korea may exploit the internal chaos to escalate tensions with the South, further destabilising the region. For South Korea, this moment represents a critical test of its democratic resilience. The swift revocation of martial law suggests that institutional checks and balances remain robust. However, the path forward will require careful navigation to prevent further polarisation and ensure stability in one of Asia's most vibrant democracies.

### PICTALK

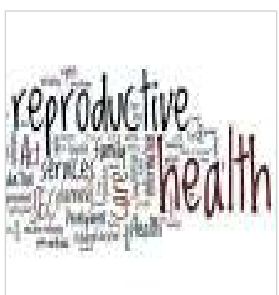


Flamingos at the Pulicat Lake with backwaters brimming to the full, near Sriharikota

## Sexual and reproductive health can drive economic growth

By prioritising sexual and reproductive health in workplace policies, the private sector can be a powerful catalyst for change and lead the way

India stands poised on the brink of a transformative era, with unprecedented opportunities for economic and social progress. Yet, one critical area remains starkly underdeveloped: women's participation in the workforce. Despite notable strides in various sectors, women's workforce participation in India stagnates at a concerning 20 per cent.



Action and Accountability in the Workplace, businesses must take comprehensive actions to ensure women's well-being in professional environments.

**SRH as a Catalyst for Women's Empowerment** Sexual and reproductive health (SRH) plays a vital role in empowering women to reach their full economic potential. In India, limited access to essential services like reproductive healthcare, family planning, and childcare continues to hinder women's workforce participation. These barriers are compounded by societal norms that disproportionately burden women with caregiving responsibilities, making it challenging to balance personal and professional lives.

**Elevating the Care Economy**

The care economy, encompassing both paid and unpaid caregiving roles, is a cornerstone of workforce participation, particularly for women. Many women are compelled to leave the workforce or transition to part-time roles due to caregiving responsibilities. Affordable childcare, eldercare, and flexible work arrangements provided by businesses can significantly alleviate these challenges.

Investing in the care economy is more than corporate social responsibility; it is a sound economic strategy. When women are supported in managing their dual roles, they are more likely to remain in the workforce, contributing to economic growth and workplace inclusivity.

**Strengthening Social Protections** Robust social protections are fundamental to ensuring women's economic security. Enhancing maternity benefits, broadening health insurance coverage, and providing mental health support can create a workplace culture where women feel valued and supported. Such measures are crucial to fostering gender equality and inclusivity.

**Fostering Inclusivity** An inclusive workplace requires more than offering flexible hours or equal pay-it demands a cultural shift. Companies must actively combat discrimination and harassment, creating environments where women feel safe and supported. Initiatives like vocational training and entrepreneurship programmes can also help close the gender gap.

**Creating a Supportive Ecosystem for SRH** Effective SRH initiatives require a supportive ecosystem that promotes awareness and access to resources. This includes regular training, accessible services, open dialogue, and confidential counselling for employees.

**Ensuring Accountability** To maximise the impact of SRH policies, businesses must establish clear metrics for monitoring and evaluation. Regular progress reports promote transparency and accountability, building trust among employees and stakeholders. (The writer is CEO, UpFront, member of UNFPA's Coalition for Reproductive Justice in Business; views are personal)



SHAONLI CHAKRABORTY

## G20 Rio summit: A new voice for the Global South

The summit addressed pressing global challenges such as economic disparities, environmental degradation, food security and poverty alleviation



SUDHIR HINDWAN

The nineteenth Summit of the G 20 held recently in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil holds a lot of significance in raising the voice of the Global South. In addition to the 19 member states, this summit also had two more members which included the African and the European Unions. Amid uncertainty on account of West Asian crises and the ongoing Russian-Ukraine conflict the summit focused on two pertinent issues: the increasing economic disparities and the degradation of the environment besides, the question of food security and poverty alleviation have also become paramount topics of the agenda for a stable and peaceful world order.

In the wake of the economic crisis of 1997, the G-20 Group was formed in 1999 with the basic purpose of uplifting the economies from economic doom and since then economic aggrandizement has been the central point of discussions in all the G-20 summits. The Group of 20 includes an amalgamation of the most powerful as well as the developing countries of the global order like: the United States, France, China, India, Japan, Germany, Russia, the UK, Brazil, Canada, Italy, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, Argentina, Australia. Adding Spain as a permanent guest of the G20 and the recent inclusion of the African Union and the European Union has extended its scope and area of influence.

The latest meeting of G 20 is important from the point of view that now countries of the south started giving a major push to their innate aims and the latest in the series is the idea of green industrial planning and strategies. The increasing demand for bringing about a few reforms in the major international monetary and governing institutions such as the World Bank, IMF the WTO and the Security Council of the UNO indicates the changing dimensions of the Group as now there seems to be a shift towards a more transparent and inclusive world system beside the Cultural Contiguity and exchanges about



energy resources are some new take away of the G 20 meetings. On the other hand, the member countries have increasingly realised the need for sustainable development along with increasing concern for deadly spikes of increasing temperature across the globe. The fullest utilisation of modern technology in the economy such as the digital economy remains another important topic that can play a magnificent role in upgrading the old pattern to save valuable time. The rich experience of India in promoting brotherhood and uplifting standards particularly from developing countries to undoubtedly a developed nation is a lot to learn from. India's remarkable progress in the IT industry has opened new doors for Indian companies, which are now aggressively expanding into overseas markets.

The country's compliance and regulatory authorities have ensured that foreign investments are secure and economic transactions are monitored thoroughly. Despite the challenges posed by a tough global economic climate, India's G20 Presidency during 2023 had already provided it with an opportunity to position itself as a key player in global manufacturing and a reliable partner in various sectors. The cooperation among G20



DESPIITE THE CHALLENGES POSED BY A TOUGH GLOBAL ECONOMIC CLIMATE, INDIA'S G20 PRESIDENCY DURING 2023 HAD ALREADY PROVIDED IT WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO POSITION ITSELF AS A KEY PLAYER IN GLOBAL MANUFACTURING AND A RELIABLE PARTNER IN VARIOUS SECTORS

nations has also fostered the development of new strategies to meet the needs of vulnerable countries, fostering a more inclusive global society. This cooperation could promote a positive shift in international relations, promoting greater harmony and collaboration. India's impressive progress is largely attributed to its incredibly foresighted leadership, immense talent and superb foresight. The setting up of the International Solar Alliance, the Green Hydrogen Innovation Centre, One Sun One World One Grid. and the Global Biofuel Alliance along with the waste-to-energy efforts of India speaks volumes of its being the front leader among G 20 Countries. Prime Minister Modi has very well highlighted the remarkable efforts and achievements of India in his speech. He is undoubtedly the most respected and popular leader of World Politics who has made India the leading voice of the Global South. Gradually the scope of G 20 partnership has expanded to include critical areas such as disaster management, digital infrastructure, and climate change, making it a multifaceted initiative with both security and development dimensions as these are also some issues that are raising concerns about the international community.

However, the G-20 countries are also navigating through social and political pressures and their success will depend on how these countries maintain growth momentum amid numerous challenges. By addressing these challenges on account of socio, cultural economic and political pangs, the G 20 can further solidify its position as a global economic powerhouse, capable of driving growth not only among member countries but also able to create an inclusive world order. By fostering diplomatic engagement and conflict resolution mechanisms, the G 20 group members may also promote stability while ensuring economic prosperity for all member nations. The group's shared strategic vision is vital in shaping a multi-layered, multilateral strategy for dealing with not only economic but also security challenges in an increasingly interconnected world. The G 20 can also become a platform for fostering development in fields such as education, science, biotechnology, and strategic planning, further strengthening the bonds between its members and slowing the entire world community and India is playing front runner's role with the ablest leadership at the helm. (The writer is a professor and expert on strategic affairs; views are personal)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### INDIA MUST ACT NOW

Madam — Apropos of the editorial 'No love lost' and the headlines 'Bangladesh challenges India,' the trajectory of diplomatic relations between India and Bangladesh is steeply going down from unfriendliness to the bottom of hostility in the long-term perspective. Bangladesh is moving menacingly fast to Pakistan's fate with a point of no return. Atrocities on Hindu minorities have been echoed across continents and the phenomenon is similar to Pakistan and Afghanistan. Hindus in India are in deep anguish and seek diplomatic and trade and commerce cessation with Bangladesh. The extremist political and religious culture of Bangladesh will not allow cordiality of diplomatic relations with India even at the cost of their own peril as Pakistan did. Afghanistan has already done it. Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Maldives, and now Bangladesh, all neighbours of our country, are in long-lasting turmoil on religious militancy, extremism, and atrocities on minorities, as well as economic bankruptcy. These countries are killing their own minorities of Hindus and other religions and even their own minorities within the Islamic fold. Bangladesh is now a liability for India, and we can't risk our 4156 km border with Bangladesh with insecurity, violence, and infiltration. We can't afford to allow five states-Assam, Tripura, Mizoram, Meghalaya, and Tripura-to be inflamed in communal violence and anarchy. Bangladesh is devastated by its extremists and their supporters and sponsors in the government. Truly, the mayhem on Hindus can't be perpetrated without government support. It is the most opportune time to stop and cease all civil & food supplies, electricity, tourism, and rail-air-road links with Bangladesh. Even Bangladesh-bound air traffic on our skies should be banned. As Pakistan is fighting for its existential survival, so will Bangladesh, sooner than later. The Modi government must contemplate tough action against Bangladesh, as it will send a strong message to countries like Pakistan

#### Assassination bid on Badal



The attack on SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal at the Golden Temple complex is the surprising incident. Sukhbir Singh, who is fulfilling his religious punishment given by Akal Takt, has been targeted by the lone wolf attacker, Narain Singh Chaura. The open fire

incident within the Harmandir Sahib Golden Temple Complex is a sheer breach of security and raised concerns over the safety of the Gurudwar complex.

Although Sukhbir Singh is safe now, thanks to the Z-plus protection, the police in plain clothes rescued him from the intended act of the assassination. Amidst the bullet-firing attack, it is regrettable that security failure happened, although the alertness of the police personnel halted any misdeed, and every worshipper is safe, including Sukhbir Singh. But somewhere the security breach at the golden temple complex yet remains a question. Meanwhile the investigation is initiated, and police are probing for the real guilty for this whole act; the government must step in to enhance the security of the golden temple complex so that future such incidences can be avoided.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

and China. There is no point in soliciting the UN Peacekeeping force in Bangladesh, as the UN failed to stop even the bloodiest wars in West Asia and Ukraine.

Vinod Johri | Delhi

#### WATER AS 'HIGH-RISK FOOD'

Madam — The food regulatory body of India, FSSAI, has categorised packaged drinking water and mineral water as "high-risk food." According to FSSAI, high-risk foods are those that pose a higher risk of food poisoning due to contamination, poor storage, or poor handling. These require closer and regular inspections to safeguard consumers from food poisoning and other health issues. Consumption of drinking water that is not fully purified can lead to cholera, diarrhoea, typhoid, amebiasis, hepatitis, gastroenteritis, and various other health issues.

Also, if the containers used to store water are unsafe, it can lead to chronic health issues. According to the FSSAI, manufacturers of packaged drinking water will have to pass mandatory inspections before getting a license, and packaged drinking water

products will now undergo more stringent safety checks through regular inspections and audits.

M Pradyu | Kanpur

#### FRAUDSTERS TARGET SENIOR CITIZENS

Madam — Increasing cybercrime frauds are a nightmare for senior citizens. The senior citizens are not tech-savvy enough to operate a smartphone, which they prefer to use mostly for communicating with their near and dear ones. The fraudsters target the senior citizens who are lonely and carry on their vices, resulting in losing their hard-earned savings. Banks may exercise adequate caution in honouring the transfer requests by delaying a day or two by instituting sufficient checks on the destination account before carrying on the instructions. The telecom authorities also may advise the service providers to institute sufficient firewalls on the spam callers.

Gopalaswamy | Chennai

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## FIRST COLUMN

## US-CHINA TRADE WAR HEATS UP

Trump set to amplify Biden's tough stance with tariffs and export controls



KUMARDEEP BANARJEE

The loaded guns are out for the two largest economies of the world, the US and China, even before the original hard hitter Donald Trump takes charge as the new President in January next year. In one of his last "Containing China" measures outgoing President Joe Biden has imposed additional export controls on high-end chips, chip-making equipment to China, which can be used as components or in the manufacturing of weapons as well. The new restrictions also directly target some of the largest chipmakers in China, thus throwing in as many road blocks as possible in the dragon's aggressive weaponisation programme. Not to be covered China imposed retaliatory controls on the export of critical minerals such as Gallium, Antimony etc, which are essential components of the chips.

Even as these measures were being announced, President-elect Donald Trump has been threatening the 9 member BRICS nations with severe 100 per cent tariffs, in case, they choose to create an alternate global currency to the dollar. Mr Trump has already threatened Canada, Mexico and the EU with the tariffs scalpel unless they come back to him with offers that are hard to ignore. Trump's third favourite word is tariffs, which he uses as leverage to negotiate trade deals with allies and enemies.

The nations that have faced the latest threat of high tariffs from Donald Trump have already taken a cautious approach to negotiating with the tough business person. Canada and Mexico have sounded out that would be more interested in sweetening the deal with the US under Trump, than confronting him on the tariff issues. China knows that Trump would be higher on optics, than his predecessor Joe Biden, on issues where the



US considers them as a direct threat. In one of the recently published editorials in the Chinese government mouthpiece Global Times, the Internet Society of China, the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers, the China Semiconductor Industry Association, and the China Association of Communications Enterprises are quoted to have issued statements terming US chips as unsafe and unreliable.

It further states "The US has used this measure to greatly expand its power, affecting many countries and regions, including Japan, the Netherlands, Israel, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, and China's Taiwan region. This will severely disrupt the stability of the global industrial and supply chains and undermine the international economic and trade order." Incoming President Trump is likely to have a harder stance on export controls and, high tariffs for China imports. The incoming administration is likely to focus on high decibels, high optics, and control China measures than what the Joe Biden administration has achieved. It would be worthwhile to note, that some of the restrictive measures against China introduced, during Trump's first presidency, have only been upgraded and made tougher under President Joe Biden.

Therefore at some level, there is bipartisan support for containing China in the US government. India has been watching this space carefully and knows well that it cannot escape the US tariff cannon for too long. It is also well aware that, there is a trade surplus with the US, which means it exports more than imports. Incoming President Trump even though has good relations with Indian PM Modi, is hardly going to miss this infraction. Obviously, the only safe prediction is a degree of unpredictability. Different countries have had their own experiences from the first Administration and would presumably draw from that to approach the second. Naturally, between two major economies, there will always be some give and take. When we look at economic or technology domains, the case for trusted and reliable partnerships have actually increased in recent years. A lot of what lies ahead would be in fashioning terms of engagement that are perceived as mutually beneficial. "A careful recalibration of India's trade relations is on the anvil, not just with the US, but also with its other allies.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

## Charting Bharat's role in a multipolar world

Renowned Russian philosopher Aleksandr Gelyevich Dugin advocates for civilisational revival and the decolonisation of the mind



BHABANI SONOWAL



Aleksandr Gelyevich Dugin, the Russian philosopher, presents a compelling vision of a multipolar world that seeks to restore balance and harmony to international relations. His recent visit to India, during which he delivered an insightful speech at the Russian Centre in New Delhi on November 19, highlighted his ideas on the importance of civilisational revival. Listening to Dugin was a profound experience, as he articulated the need for great civilisations such as Bharat (India), Russia, and China to assume their rightful roles in shaping a new global order. Dugin's philosophy is deeply intertwined with the concept of State-Civilisation, which transcends the boundaries of the Nation-State model imposed by the Westphalian system. In this framework, civilisations are not merely political entities but repositories of spiritual, cultural, and historical identity.

For Dugin, Bharat exemplifies this notion as it represents a civilisation rooted in ancient wisdom, from the teachings of the Vedas and Upanishads to its rich traditions of Dharmic philosophy. He argues that this heritage uniquely positions Bharat to lead a process of decolonisation—not just politically, but mentally and spiritually. Decolonisation of the mind, Dugin asserts, is essential for nations seeking to reclaim their civilisational sovereignty. Bharat's re-engagement with its Vedic and Upanishadic traditions is not merely an academic exercise but a means of reconnecting with eternal principles that transcend the temporal constructs of modernity. In his view, traditional spiritual processes should be revived as living, evolving frameworks that can guide contemporary governance and social organisation. He draws a parallel with Russia's return to Orthodox Christianity, which he sees as a similar act of reclaiming spiritual identity in defiance of Western liberalism. The philosopher emphasises that the post-Cold War unipolar world order, dominated by Western hegemony, has exhausted itself. Dugin critiques the universalisation of liberal values, arguing that they are inherently tied to the Atlanticist worldview and therefore unfit to govern the plurality of human cultures. Liberalism, he contends, prioritises individualism and market ideology at the expense of collective, spiritual, and civilisational values.

As he wrote in The Fourth Political Theory,

"Modernity is a project that has exhausted itself. The future lies in the revival of traditional societies, metaphysical truths, and spiritual values." For Dugin, multipolarity represents an alternative to this unipolar dominance, offering a framework for civilisations to engage with one another as equals.

This vision is rooted in dialogue rather than conflict, with each civilisation contributing its unique insights and values. Bharat, China, and Russia, he argues, form a natural triad that can anchor this new world order. He views these three civilisations as distinct yet complementary, with Bharat's Vedic traditions, China's Confucianism and Taoism, and Russia's Orthodoxy providing diverse philosophical and spiritual foundations for a balanced global system. Dugin's ideas resonate with contemporary geopolitical realities, as platforms like BRICS demonstrate the potential for collaboration among major civilisational powers.



BHARAT'S RE-ENGAGEMENT WITH ITS VEDIC AND UPANISHADIC TRADITIONS IS NOT MERELY AN ACADEMIC EXERCISE BUT A MEANS OF RECONNECTING WITH ETERNAL PRINCIPLES THAT TRANSCEND THE TEMPORAL CONSTRUCTS OF MODERNITY

He sees BRICS not merely as an economic bloc but as a symbolic embodiment of multipolarity—a round table where civilisations can cooperate without succumbing to Western hegemony. Drawing on the Arthurian legend, Dugin suggests that the multipolar world should function as a round table, where all participants, including the West, have an equal seat, provided they relinquish hegemonic ambitions. Bharat's renaming from India, in Dugin's view, exemplifies the philosophical and cultural depth of this multipolar project.

He perceives this act as a profound rejection of the colonial narrative imposed by Western powers. For Dugin, names carry immense metaphysical significance, and "Bharat" embodies a self-affirmed identity that reclaims the spiritual and cultural essence of the civilisation. This aligns with his broader advocacy for civilisations to transcend the artificial constructs of modernity and rediscover their historical and spiritual cores. The philosopher

also stresses the strategic importance of Eurasia in achieving this vision. He argues that the geographic, cultural, and economic ties between Bharat, China, and Russia make them natural allies in reshaping global power structures. By aligning their civilisational and strategic interests, these three powers can mediate international conflicts and create a more equitable world order. As Dugin writes in Foundations of Geopolitics, "Russia's mission is to unite the peoples and nations of Eurasia into a single geopolitical space that rejects Western domination and promotes a multipolar world." Central to Dugin's vision is the rejection of Western universalism.

He critiques the West's attempt to impose its values globally, arguing that this approach erases the distinctiveness of other cultures and leads to alienation. In contrast, the multipolar world Dugin envisions celebrates diversity, recognising the plurality of human experience and thought. Civilisations, he asserts, should engage in dialogue while preserving their unique identities. As he states in "The Great War of Continents," "The salvation of humanity lies in preserving the plurality of cultures and civilisations."

This rejection of universalism extends to Dugin's critique of modernity, which he sees as a destructive force that undermines traditional values. He identifies a global trend toward the revival of traditionalism, noting that civilisations are increasingly turning to their spiritual roots in response to the moral and cultural relativism of liberalism. From Bharat's Vedic revival to Russia's Orthodox resurgence and China's embrace of Confucianism, Dugin sees a worldwide movement toward reclaiming heritage. "The return to tradition," he writes, "is not an act of nostalgia but a necessity for survival in the face of cultural erosion."

Dugin views Bharat as a cornerstone of this traditionalist resurgence. Its

ability to mediate tensions, whether between China and the Islamic world or within the broader multipolar framework, highlights its potential as a stabilising force. Bharat's emphasis on spiritual heritage and cultural unity, he argues, sets an example for other civilisations seeking to harmonise their internal diversity with their external roles. The path to a multipolar world is not without challenges. Dugin acknowledges that the West's resistance to relinquishing its dominance could lead to conflicts, even escalating to dangerous levels. However, he remains optimistic about the long-term prospects of multipolarity, which he sees as a natural evolution of global history. This optimism is grounded in his belief that civilizational revival offers a more stable and equitable alternative to the power struggles of unipolarity.

In Dugin's analysis, the future lies in the hands of civilisations willing to reclaim their spiritual and cultural identities. Bharat's role is pivotal in this transformation. By embracing its Vedic heritage and fostering partnerships with other great civilisations, Bharat can help shape a world that values harmony over domination. As Dugin wrote in The Fourth Political Theory, "The multipolar world is not a competition of powers but a symphony of civilisations, each contributing its melody to the greater harmony."

Dugin's vision challenges conventional paradigms of International Relations, offering a deeply philosophical and civilisational approach to global politics. By placing spirituality and tradition at the core of his analysis, he provides a framework for a world that celebrates diversity while striving for collective progress. Bharat's role in this vision is both profound and indispensable, symbolising the potential for civilisations to lead humanity toward a more balanced and equitable future.

(The writer is an Assistant Professor at Bennett University; views expressed are personal)

## Financial literacy: The key to unlocking India's economic power

By teaching money management skills early, India can cultivate a generation of financially savvy individuals capable of driving economic growth

As we are about to wrap up 2024, it cannot be underestimated how important financial literacy is with changing trends of the economy, where education is pivotal in determining India's arrival as an economic superpower. Even now, with the growing financial awareness, only 27 per cent of Indian adults are financially literate; that number drops to a mere 16.7 per cent for students. Recognising the urgency for the skills of financial management, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 revolves around putting in place financial literacy from the early days of schooling in the country's educational system. Teaching children money management skills early in life helps develop financially responsible



AJAY LAKHOTIA

adults who can make sound decisions benefiting both themselves and the economy. In earlier times, financial education was largely informal. The previous generation was focused on accumulating tangible assets like gold and property. However, India's banking and financial system has undergone a vast transformation since the 1990s. With SEBI paving the way for new regulated asset classes for the

common public - mutual funds, stocks, bonds, REITs and multiple other financial products are available for the common public to invest and grow their capital. The establishment of the Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI), has instilled confidence in financial markets and led to greater participation in investments. As India progresses towards a digital financial ecosystem, the demand for financial literacy has never been so crucial in navigating opportunities.

**Why Financial Literacy Needs to Start Early:** Financial literacy goes beyond just education; it is a life skill and mindset that needs to be cultivated from an early age. All the education policies stress encourage students to be mindful and well-

read towards financial issues so that they can cope with anything ranging from budgeting to retirement savings. Students with such financial sensibilities provided that they have been exposed practically to these concepts, would be able to cope with investment volatility, financial contingencies and planning for a strong future. Building such a ground is vital for citizens to contribute towards building a balanced economy.

**Taking Inspiration across the globe:** Switzerland, Japan, and South Korea have leveraged their core strengths—banking, technology, and manufacturing, respectively—to drive economic growth and establish distinct global identities. These unique specialisations have not only accelerated their eco-



nommic development but also secured their positions as global leaders in their respective domains. Following their example, India could prioritise financial literacy as a national initiative to enhance its citizens' saving and investing behaviours while increasing economic participation. This focus could yield significant social benefits: reducing poverty, narrowing income

inequality, and improving the quality of life for millions. India's abundant advantages—from its tech-savvy youth to its robust educational infrastructure—position it favourably for global leadership in financial prosperity. However, these strengths alone are insufficient. Without proper financial knowledge, even the most talented individuals may struggle to maximise their potential, ultimately hindering economic growth. By combining financial education with India's technological expertise and expanding educational framework, the nation can nurture future entrepreneurs, investors, and professionals who will not only excel in their careers but also effectively manage and grow their wealth.

A multi-pronged approach can

help to establish a financially literate India. The key steps to follow:

**Integrating Personal Finance into Curricula:** Personal finance should be included as part of the school and college syllabus so that a strong foundation towards money management & finance for a lifetime.

**Nationwide Awareness Programs:** Public campaigns on financial literacy will reach areas lacking financially literate communities, effectively democratizing access to that knowledge as well as encouraging wider economic participation.

**Leveraging Technology and Partnerships:** Public-private partnerships can make financial education accessible and attractive. By using technol-

ogy, it is possible to cast interactive sessions and impart practical, real-life skills to a broader audience, regardless of their location.

**A Call to Action for all of us:** It is now time to recognise financial literacy as an indispensable part of our journey towards education and the economic boom of India. Financial literacy, more than a skill, should be regarded as a strategic enabler to achieve personal growth. Through the infusion of financial education across all levels, which range from classrooms to boardrooms, we can unleash a superpower that will help our population bloom and lead us into the 21st century.

(The writer is founder and CEO of StockGro; views are personal)

## IN BRIEF



### CCPA seeks more info from Ola Electric on complaints

The Central Consumer Protection Authority has sought additional documents and information from Ola Electric with regards to the show cause notice issued in October related to 10,644 complaints, according to a regulatory filing by the company on Thursday. The company has received further communication from the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) by email on December 4, 2024, seeking additional documents and information in relation to the previous response submitted by the company. Ola Electric Mobility Ltd said in a regulatory filing. The matter is with reference to the show cause notice received by the company in October, it added. On October 22, the company stated that out of 10,644 complaints received from CCPA, it has resolved 99.1 per cent of the complaints. Earlier on October 7, the CCPA has issued a notice to the company for "alleged violation of consumer rights, misleading advertisement and unfair trade practices". "The CCPA has provided a timeline of 15 days from the date of email communication for the company to submit the response in respect of seeking additional documents and information," the company said, adding that it would ensure a timely response within the specified timeframe.

## 'Investments in India profitable; ready to set up mnfg operations'

PNS ■ MOSCOW/NEW DELHI

Russian President Vladimir Putin has hailed 'Make in India' initiative and the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government's policies, saying companies are eager to set up manufacturing facilities in India as investments are profitable.

Speaking at the 15th VTB Investment Forum in Moscow on Wednesday, Putin said that the initiative, which is aimed at boosting manufacturing and attracting foreign investment, has played a key role in strengthening India's position in the global economy.

The 'Make in India' initiative was launched on September 25, 2014, to facilitate investment, foster innovation, build world-class infrastructure, and make India a hub for manufacturing, design, and innovation.

Putin said that India has created stable conditions for small and medium-sized enterprises while expressing Russia's willingness to establish manufacturing operations in India as investments in India are profitable.



"The Prime Minister of India and the Government of India have been creating stable conditions and this is because the Indian leadership has been pursuing India comes first policy and we believe that investments in India are profitable," the Russian President said.

"And we would be ready to place our manufacturing site in India. Also, the biggest investment in India in the economy to the tune of USD 20 billion by Rosneft happened not long ago," he added.

Rosneft is the biggest oil producer company in the Russian Federation.

exited the market, noting the success of local Russian manufacturers in sectors such as consumer goods, IT, high-tech, and agriculture.

"For us, it has special relevance as part of the import substitution programme, we see the advent of many new Russian brands substituting the brand by Western partners who have voluntarily left our market. And our local manufacturers have been quite successful not only in consumer goods but also in IT, high tech and agriculture," he said.

He also offered to place Russian manufacturing sites in India.

India and Russia in July this year agreed to boost bilateral trade to over USD 100 billion by 2030 by reinvigorating investments, using national currencies for trade and increasing cooperation in sectors ranging from energy to agriculture and infrastructure. The bilateral trade has increased to USD 65.42 billion in 2023-24 as against USD 49.4 billion in 2022-23. Trade gap is highly in the favour of Russia due to jump in crude oil imports.

## FM to kick off pre-Budget consultation from today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will start pre-Budget consultations with various stakeholders beginning Friday as part of Budget making exercise.

The first meeting as part of this series will be held with eminent economists on December 6. Sitharaman, who will chair these meetings, will seek their inputs regarding upcoming Budget amid seven-quarter low GDP print of 5.4 per cent in second quarter of the current financial year.

It will be followed by a meeting with farmer associations and agriculture economists and stakeholders in MSME sector on December 7, sources said.

Union Budget 2025-26 is likely to be tabled in Parliament on February 1.

This would be the eighth straight Budget of Sitharaman and second full budget of the Modi 3.0 government, which will give policy direction for achieving the goal of Viksit Bharat (developed India) by 2047.

The pre-Budget consulta-

tions will end on December 30 with consultations with captains of Indian industry and players in the social sector, especially education and health.

Besides the finance minister, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary; Finance Secretary and DIPAM Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey; Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth; Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra; and Financial Services Secretary M Nagaraju are expected to be present.

The Budget for the current fiscal had projected a nominal GDP growth of 10.5 per cent, while fiscal deficit was pegged at 4.9 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government in 2017 scrapped a colonial-era tradition of presenting the Budget at the end of February. Erstwhile finance minister Arun Jaitley had for the first time presented the annual accounts on February 1, 2017.

With the rescheduled Budget date, ministries are now allocated their budgeted funds from the start of the financial year beginning April.



### Gold climbs Rs 300 to reclaim Rs 79k-mark

Gold price surged to reclaim the Rs 79,000-level in the national capital on Thursday due to fresh buying by jewellers and stockists, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Snapping its three-day losing run, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity rose Rs 300 to Rs 79,150 per 10 grams from the previous close of Rs 78,850 per 10 grams on Wednesday. Traders said gold climbed due to fresh demand by jewellers and retailers in the local markets. Silver continued to shine for the third straight day by jumping Rs 1,300 to Rs 93,800 per kg on Thursday. It ended at Rs 92,500 per kg on Wednesday. Price of gold of 99.5 per cent purity advanced Rs 300 to Rs 78,750 per 10 grams. It settled at Rs 78,450 per 10 grams in the previous trading session. Meanwhile, in futures trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold contracts for February delivery dipped Rs 160 or 0.21 per cent to trade at Rs 76,932 per 10 grams.

### 'Beware of unregistered platforms offering unlisted debt securities'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi on Thursday cautioned investors against using unregistered online platforms offering unlisted debt securities.

These platforms operate without regulatory oversight, lack investor protection mechanisms, and do not provide grievance redress systems, Sebi said in a statement.

The regulator said that offering unlisted securities to more than 200 investors violates the Companies Act, 2013, and Sebi regulations, making it a "deemed public issue".

The regulator recently issued an interim order against some such entities, highlighting the risks involved.

Cautioning investors, Sebi asked them to use only registered online bond platforms

operated by stockbrokers authorised by BSE and NSE to invest in listed debt securities. "Sebi is, issuing this caution, advising investors to not engage with or undertake investment or trading activities through un-registered intermediaries/ web applications/ platforms / apps," the statement noted.

The list of authorised online bond platform providers (OBPPs) is available on Sebi's website.

Also, the regulator warned that disputes arising from transactions on unregistered platforms will not be covered under Sebi or exchange grievance mechanisms, including SCORES and smartodr.in.

The public is encouraged to report unregistered platforms via Sebi's Market Intelligence portal.

### Food processing sector attracts USD 368.37 mn FDI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The food processing sector received foreign direct investment (FDI) of USD 368.37 million till September of the current fiscal year, Parliament was informed on Thursday.

Minister of State for Food Processing Industries Ravneet Singh Bittu in a written reply to the Lok Sabha said, Ireland invested USD 83.84 million, Singapore USD 48.45 million, Mauritius USD 41.65 million, the United States USD 38.60 million, Australia USD 20.18 million, and Mexico USD 9.59 million in April-September FY25. In FY24, FDI in food processing was USD 608.31 million. The sector is being promoted through Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana, Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry, and Pradhan Mantri Formalization of Micro food processing Enterprises (PMFME) scheme

## RBI adds 27 tn gold to country's reserve: WGC

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Gold buying by central banks surged to 60 tonnes in October, mainly led by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) which added 27 tonnes of the precious metal to its reserves, the World Gold Council (WGC) said on Thursday.

India added 27 tonnes of gold in October, bringing its total gold purchases to 77 tonnes from January to October, according WGC data based on reported monthly data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

This buying by RBI represents a five-fold increase as compared to the same period of 2023, said WGC.

According to the data, with this purchase the total gold reserve of India is now at 882 tonnes, of which 510 tonnes are held in India.



emerging market central banks continued to dominate the market with Turkey and Poland adding 72 tonnes and 69 tonnes from January-October 2024, to their gold reserves, respectively.

These three central banks alone accounted for 60 per cent of total global net purchases reported this year, it added.

Meanwhile, the data further revealed that the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey added

17 tonnes, making October the 17th consecutive month of net purchases and the highest reported monthly figure on record since December 2023.

October's figures have surpassed the quarterly total of April-June and July-September quarters, it said.

Further, it revealed that the National Bank of Poland recorded net buying of 8 tonnes during October, its seventh consecutive month of net buying.



### NHAI to raise Rs 1,000 crore via green bond

NHAI on Thursday said its special purpose vehicle DME Development Ltd (DMEDL) will raise Rs 1,000 crore through green bonds to implement climate-friendly measures on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway project. The aggregate size of the issue will be up to Rs 1,000 crore, with a base issue size of Rs 500 crore. Also, there will be a green-shield option to retain oversubscription up to Rs 500 crore, NHAI (National Highways Authority of India) said in a statement. The issue is expected to be launched in the second week of December 2024, it said, adding, the proceeds will be used for avenue plantation, median plantation, construction of animal underpasses, natural stormwater drainage, streetlight on renewable energy (solar), waste recycling and reuse, and rainwater harvesting.

### OnePlus to invest Rs 6,000 crore in next three years

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Smartphone maker OnePlus on Thursday said it plans to invest up to Rs 6,000 crore in its India business over the next three years, one of the largest investments by a Chinese mobile phone company in the country in recent years.

Before this, OnePlus' sister concern Vivo had announced an investment of Rs 7,500 crore in 2019, but the company has invested only Rs 3,500 crore till date as per publicly available data.

According to IDC, Chinese smartphone brands clocked around 72 per cent market share in the September 2024 quarter with BBK Electronics Group companies - Vivo, Oppo, Realme, OnePlus etc. garnering over 40 per cent of the total pie during the reported quarter in India.

## IFFCO seeks govt nod to launch new nano NPK fertiliser

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Fertiliser major IFFCO, which has introduced nano liquid urea and nano liquid DAP, has now developed nano NPK nutrient and sought the government's approval to launch it in the market.

IFFCO's MD U S Awasthi said the cooperative will launch nano NPK product, which is in granule form, after the necessary approval from the government.

He said the company will produce this product at its Kandla unit.

IFFCO will sell this product at Rs 950 per bag of 5 kg, Awasthi said, adding that this will significantly reduce the consumption of urea and DAP (di-ammonium phosphate).

In September, he said that the cooperative has invested around Rs 2,000 crore since 2017 on its two new innova-



tive products nano liquid urea and nano liquid DAP.

He is hopeful that farmers will adopt these key nutrients in a big way over the next 2-3 years.

IFFCO launched the world's first 'Nano Liquid Urea' fertiliser in June 2021. Thereafter, it came up with Nano-DAP fertiliser in April 2023. Nano urea is available at around Rs 240 per bottle of

500 ml while nano liquid DAP at Rs 600 per bottle.

The investments have been made in research and development and setting up manufacturing plants along with branding and marketing activities.

Awasthi had said the cooperative is also investing Rs 200 crore annually in the promotion of nano-urea and nano-DAP and increasing awareness among farmers about how to use these products along with conventional urea and DAP.

One bottle (500 ml) of nano liquid DAP is equivalent to one bag (50kg) of conventional granular DAP. Similarly, one bottle of nano urea is equal to one bag (45kg) of conventional granular urea.

IFFCO currently has a total annual manufacturing capacity of 16 crore bottles of nano liquid urea and 7 crore bottles of nano liquid DAP

## Equity investors become richer by Rs 15.18 lakh cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Investors' wealth surged Rs 15.18 lakh crore in five days of a market rally that took the BSE benchmark Sensex up over 3 per cent.

In the past five trading days, the BSE barometer has jumped 2,722.12 points or 3.44 per cent.

Rallying for the fifth day running on Thursday, the 30-share benchmark Sensex jumped 809.53 points or 1 per cent to settle at 81,765.86. During the day, it soared 1,361.41 points or 1.68 per cent to 82,317.74.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms surged Rs 15,18,926.69 crore to Rs 4,58,17,010.11 crore (USD 5.41 trillion) in the last five sessions.

The NSE Nifty surged 240.95 points or 0.98 per cent to settle at 24,708.40 on Thursday. "Nifty surged for the 5th straight day, closing 0.98 per cent higher at 24,708, despite intraday volatility.

It joined global markets in optimism, following new highs on the Dow, S&P 500, and Nasdaq. Bank Nifty also gained 0.63 per cent, while IT stocks rallied 1.95 per cent," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

From the 30-share pack, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, Titan, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj

Finance, ICICI Bank, Tech Mahindra and HCL Technologies were the biggest gainers.

NTPC, Asian Paints and IndusInd Bank were the laggards.

As many as 2,141 stocks advanced while 1,825 declined and 117 remained unchanged on the BSE.

"Indian equities staged a strong rebound during the day, fuelled by robust buying in heavyweight stocks across various sectors and positive market sentiment.

The upmove was further supported by Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs), who turned net buyers, contributing over Rs 5,000 crore in the past two sessions," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

Among sectoral indices, BSE Focused IT soared the most 1.96 per cent, while tech jumped 1.92 per cent, IT by 1.81 per cent and telecommunication 0.95 per cent. Bankex (0.68 per cent) and consumer durables (0.66 per cent) also advanced.

BSE services and realty emerged as the laggards.

The BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.27 per cent and the smallcap index went up by 0.16 per cent.



## India for fast-tracking talks in WTO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has pitched for fast-tracking negotiations in the WTO on special safeguard mechanism (SSM), which would allow developing countries to temporarily raise tariffs on agricultural imports in response to import surges or price drops, an official said. The country flagged the issues during a meeting of a committee on agriculture issues in Geneva on December 4.

In the meeting, India emphasized on the need to prioritize unresolved mandated issues such as a permanent solution to public stockholding, SSM, and cotton, treating them as standalone issues.

"India highlighted the Nairobi Ministerial Decision's mandate to prioritize and fast-track SSM negotiations, calling for modalities that are simple, operational, and equitable," the Geneva-based official said.

Regarding Guyana's proposal, India reiterated that any facilitator-led processes should be consensus-based and respect WTO's (World Trade Organization) multilateral principles, rejecting the non-traditional approach based on convergence. Guyana has presented a new proposal to advance agricultural negotiations ahead of MC14 (ministerial conference). The 14th conference is tentatively scheduled to take place in Cameroon (Africa) in 2026.

Further India has urged members to conduct text-based negotiations on finding permanent solution to public food stockholding.

Under text-based negotiations in WTO, an agreement is finalised around draft texts floated by the chair of a particular committee dealing with the subject. The draft is based on discussions amongst the member countries and is finalised till all the nations are in agreement with it.



## RAVI DUBEY CONFIRMS PLAYING LAKSHMAN IN RAMAYANA



Ravi Dubey has officially confirmed his role as Lakshman in Nitesh Tiwari's highly anticipated adaptation of Ramayana, which also stars Ranbir Kapoor, Sai Pallavi and Yash. The actor shared insights about the project in an interview, emphasising the sincerity with which the film is being crafted.

When asked about his role, Ravi shared, "With due permission of my makers, yes, I am [playing Lakshman]. What I felt was there was a certain sanctity to the project, and I believe Namit sir, Nitesh sir, might have a plan regarding how they want to talk about it. I will be corrupted if I just blurt out things frivolously in front of people. It would be very unhygienic for me to say 'No comment,' which is as good as a comment. So I sought permission from them and told them that if this question arises, what should I say? Only after their approval am I confirming this."

Ravi went on to describe the narration of the film as deeply "earnest" and "sincere," highlighting the collaborative effort involved in bringing this vision to life. Speaking about working alongside Ranbir Kapoor, Ravi couldn't hold back his admiration. "This is my first time working alongside a megastar like Ranbir Kapoor. His kindness, empathy, silence and grace towards everyone are remarkable. He works incredibly hard but doesn't make a show of it on set. Every time he's in front of the camera, you can see the dedication he puts in. He is the only commercially viable artist of this generation who carries himself with such grace. He is the most graceful person I have come across, and I regard and love him like my own elder brother." The pre-production of *Ramayana* is reportedly in full swing. Earlier this year, a leaked image of Ranbir Kapoor and Sai Pallavi in costume went viral, heightening fans' excitement.

While the team has yet to make an official announcement, the buzz around the film is undeniable and it is expected to release in 2025.

## Saiyami Kher draws inspiration from India's 1st woman firefighter for Agni

Saiyami Kher, celebrated for her impactful performances, is set to take on a groundbreaking role in Indian cinema as a firefighter in the upcoming film *Agni*. Directed by Rahul Dholakia, the film also stars Pratik Gandhi and Divyendu Sharma. In preparation for her character, Kher drew deep inspiration from Harshini Kanhekar, India's first woman firefighter, embodying the courage and resilience that define those who serve on the frontlines. Sharing her thoughts on portraying this powerful character, Saiyami said, "Playing a firefighter is a role I feel deeply proud of. I was humbled and even embarrassed to realise how little I knew about women in the fire department. Harshini Kanhekar's story of breaking barriers and defying odds is not just inspiring but also a wake-up call to acknowledge these incredible women. Spending time with nearly 50 female firefighters during my preparation was an eye-opening experience. Their determination, grit and quiet heroism were invaluable in helping me bring authenticity to the role."

Reflecting on the emotional and physical challenges of the role, she added, "Harshini's journey taught me the strength and resilience required to thrive in a male-dominated field. Through *Agni*, I hope to honor her legacy and inspire audiences to recognise the bravery of everyday heroes who often go unnoticed."

*Agni* is poised to be an action-packed tribute to firefighters, delving into their lives and sacrifices with Dholakia's signature compelling storytelling.

The film aims to celebrate their heroism while shining a light on women who break stereotypes and pave the way in challenging professions.



## Robert Pattinson hints at retirement amid Batman trilogy buzz

Robert Pattinson may not stick around for the full run of Matt Reeves' planned *Batman* trilogy. While his performance in *The Batman* (2022) earned widespread praise and silenced initial skepticism, the actor has hinted at the possibility of stepping away from acting before the trilogy concludes.

Speaking to *The New York Times Magazine* (via *Indiewire*), Robert shared his thoughts on continuing as the Dark Knight. "I could genuinely be retiring by the end of them," he revealed. "Not in a million years did I think I'd still be doing this when I got my first job. It's surreal that I'm still here."

He reflected on his approach to his career, saying, "The main thing is constantly remembering what your job is. It takes discipline to focus your energy on that and nothing else."

Pattinson, who began acting at 17, first gained attention in *Harry Potter* and *The Goblet of Fire* (2005) and achieved global fame with the *Twilight* series. Over the years, he has built a reputation for tackling diverse roles in films like *Good Time*, *High Life*, *The Lighthouse* and Christopher Nolan's *Tenet*.

Next up, Pattinson will star in Bong Joon-ho's sci-fi film *Mickey 17*, where he plays an "expendable" worker on an ice planet colonisation mission. Warner Bros. shifted the film's release to January 31, 2025. This marks Pattinson's first feature since the Oscar-winning *Parasite*.

While fans eagerly await the *Batman* sequel, set for release in 2026, Pattinson's comments leave a cloud of uncertainty about his long-term commitment to Gotham. For now, though, he continues to captivate audiences with every role he takes on.



## Apoorva aka The Rebel Kid talks about social media trolling

Apoorva aka The Rebel Kid, has become a prominent figure in the digital space, captivating audiences with her candid and relatable content. In a recent podcast, she addressed the hate prevalent on social media, sharing how she has learned to navigate negativity.

Apoorva said during the podcast, "Being a man, women everything is difficult on the internet. You need to be really really thick skin. But there's a difference between pure hate and then constructive criticism, like I know there are things that I've done absolutely wrong and I read the comments I ask for feedback and I try incorporating as much as I can."

She further added, "I think if you're a creator or an actor, you need to have a really strong sense of self where you do not let other people's comments affect how you see yourself. You should be able to wake up every day and realize that you are a good person, what you're doing is okay and I think with time you learn to deal with it."

By focusing on self-growth and connecting with her audience authentically, she inspires others to embrace



their individuality despite societal pressures. The Rebel Kid has risen above online trolling to become a top digital star, audience, and brand favorite. Her relatable content has made her a voice for a generation that values creativity and self-expression.

## SHARMILA TAGORE TURNS SPY IN HER BIG-SCREEN COMEBACK

The much-awaited trailer of the slice-of-life, feel-good film *Outhouse*, produced by Dr. Mohan Agashe and directed by Sunil Sukthankar, was released on Thursday. Featuring iconic actress Sharmila Tagore and Mohan Agashe in the lead roles alongside Jihan Hodar, Sonali Kulkarni, Neeraj Kabi, and Sunil Abhayankar, the film promises to be a heartwarming exploration of companionship, connection, and unexpected adventures. The trailer offers a delightful glimpse into the lives of Nana (played by Mohan Agashe), Aadima (played by Sharmila Tagore), and her grandson Neel (played by Jihan Hodar), as they embark on a journey to find the missing dog, Pablo. Through moments of humour, warmth and self-discovery, the film beautifully captures the essence of finding joy in the most unlikely of circumstances.

Sharmila Tagore shines in her portrayal of Aadima, a spirited grandmother whose quest for Pablo leads her to cross paths with Nana, a solitary man with his own



set of struggles. The chemistry between Tagore and Agashe adds a layer of charm and relatability, making the film an emotional yet light-hearted watch.

Speaking about the trailer, Sharmila Tagore shared, "This film is a beautiful reminder that life always has surprises in store, no matter your age. Aadima's journey with Neel and Nana is filled with laughter, lessons and moments that will touch the audience's hearts. I thoroughly enjoyed working in the film. I will be turning 80 in a couple of days and I am happy that I did something so meaningful at this stage of my life."

Dr. Mohan Agashe, who also stars as Nana, added, "It's a movie the whole family can enjoy and relate to. The story is about finding meaning and connection in unexpected ways. It's a slice of life that reminds us to embrace change and cherish relationships – even those with a little puppy like Pablo." With its captivating performances, picturesque visuals, and a heartwarming storyline, the film promises to resonate with audiences of all generations.

### FUN

#### ARCHIE



#### CALVIN AND HOBBS



#### GARFIELD



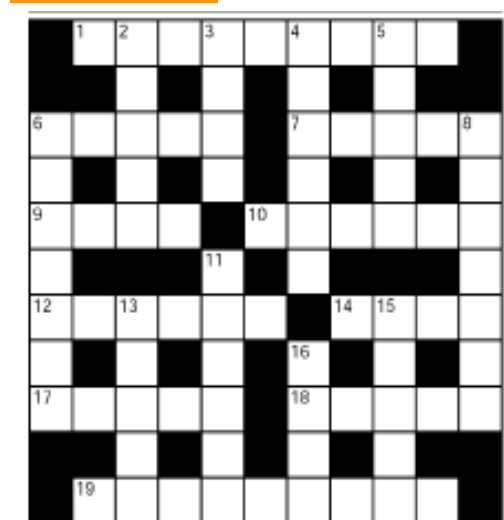
#### REALITY CHECK



#### SPEED BUMP



#### CROSSWORD



#### NANCY



#### SUDOKU

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

#### Yesterday's solution

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

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

#### ACROSS

- Not sure
- Meadow
- A measuring stick
- The colour made by mixing black and white
- Nearly
- Say again
- A hired car
- A feared sea creature
- Telling fibs
- Carried on

#### DOWN

- A female relation
- Comes to a finish
- An animal with a shell
- A house made of snow
- Numbers
- Decaying
- A short type of coat
- A keyboard instrument
- Similar
- A drawing of a building showing all the rooms



## MALVIKA'S 'SHOPPING, SPA AND SELF-CARE' SEOULFUL GETAWAY

With a travel diary filled with vibrant tales of adventure, cultural immersion and personal growth, Malvika shares her wanderlust journey with *The Pioneer* in an exclusive chat

TEJAL SINHA  
tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

With a heart that beats for adventure and a soul that craves cultural immersion, Malvika Sitlani's travels are a testament to her insatiable wanderlust. From the bustling streets of Seoul to the sun-kissed beaches of Thailand, her journeys are a vibrant tapestry of unforgettable experiences, warm encounters and personal growth. Sitlani has been fortunate enough to explore some of the world's most incredible destinations.

"Travelling is an essential part of who I am," begins Malvika with great zest in an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*. Travelling is something that she's always looked forward to because, in many ways, it represents her ideal life. "I love being on the go, exploring new places and experiencing the joy of nature. Whether it's a simple walk in the park or something more adventurous, travel gives me the chance to make core memories—especially now, seeing Abby (my daughter) discover the world with fresh eyes."

Her most recent trip was to Seoul, South Korea, a destination that left her with unforgettable memories and oh, a special one of course. "I went with my best friend Veronica, who's also my manager. Even though it was a quick five-day trip, we packed so much into it! We explored everything from fashion and beauty to work commitments and of course, indulged in the fun side of Korea—spas, shopping and crazy amazing food!"

One of the highlights in this trip—an eight-hour shopping and massage marathon. Hahaha! She says with a laugh, "We explored some of Korea's best shopping districts, like Insa-dong and Myeong-dong, and treated ourselves to a massage halfway through because, honestly, shopping that long can be exhausting! The day was wrapped up perfectly with a cozy dinner at a great restaurant, making it my idea of the perfect travel experience—good food, shopping and a little self-care in between."

Travelling for her, is not just about exploring new destinations – it's about weaving together life's most meaningful moments. "Travel is my way of weaving together life's most meaningful moments and some of my happiest, most treasured days have been spent on these adventures. It's a big part of what inspires me and keeps me grounded."

This trip to Korea was a treasure trove of cultural experiences that left her with lasting impressions. From the moment she arrived, she was struck by the country's unique culture, which values silence and discipline.

"One thing that immediately stood out to me in Korea is how much the culture values silence and discipline. It's fascinating because, coming from a city like Bombay, where everything is bustling and noisy, this was such a stark contrast. Even in the busiest places, you barely hear a sound."

Well, she was also impressed by the safety and security she



TRAVELOGUE

felt while travelling in Korea. "Another thing that struck me was how safe Korea feels, especially as a woman traveling. Whether it's taking a cab at 2 a.m. or navigating the city solo in the middle of the day, there's an innate sense of security that you don't even question."

In addition to the cultural nuances and safety aspects, Malvika was touched by the warmth and hospitality of the Korean people. "What I also loved is how warm and welcoming people are," she remarks. "There are parts of Korea where knowing the language might be appreciated, but overall, they're incredibly kind and accommodating to tourists."

Her interactions with the locals were particularly memorable, especially during a snack taste test. "One of my favorite moments was when we did a snack taste test. We asked locals to recommend their favorite snacks and they were so sweet and enthusiastic about helping us. It's such a core memory from the trip—just chatting with them and trying out their suggestions." When reflecting on Indian destinations that stand out from the rest of the world, Malvika's thoughts turned to Rajasthan. "Indian destinations, especially places in Rajasthan, are truly one of a kind," she says. "The state is home to breathtaking palaces and rich traditions that you don't often find elsewhere in the world."

She is particularly fond of the hospitality in Rajasthan, which she believes is unmatched. "One of the standout aspects for me is the hospitality," she notes. "Rajasthan offers some of the best hospitality services in the world, almost leaving you feeling like royalty! There's a warmth and care in the way guests are treated that is very unique." Her trip to Korea was a memorable experience, thanks in part to her exceptional stay at The Shilla Seoul. "For this trip to Korea, we didn't personally choose the hotel—the brand we were working with selected it for us, and they picked The Shilla Seoul," she explains. "Let me just say, it was an absolutely incredible experience! The hotel truly felt like a vacation in itself."

Malvika was particularly impressed by the hotel's hospitality, panoramic views of the city, and exceptional room service. "For Indian travellers especially, it offers exceptional value because you get seven-star service at prices that feel very reasonable," she notes. "From the moment we arrived, the hospitality was unmatched. The breakfast spread was one of the best I've experienced in all my travels, and trust me, that's saying a lot given how much I travel!"

When it comes to rejuvenation, Malvika prefers escaping to a beach destination. "For me, it's always somewhere near a beach that's just a quick flight away," she says. "Thailand is usually the first place that comes to mind, but really, any island destination works. When I think of a vacation, I imagine myself lying on the sand, with the ocean right in front of me."

Malvika's idea of a perfect getaway is all about relaxation and freedom. "I love the simplicity of spending the entire day by the water—relaxing, soaking up the sun and letting the sound of the waves clear my mind," she remarks. "I'm not someone who likes planning a packed itinerary. For me, the perfect getaway is all about being mindless and letting go of all the structure and stress."

As for her future travel plans, Malvika has her sights set on Japan. "Japan is definitely at the top of my list!" she exclaims. "I've always wanted to experience the culture, the food and the beauty of the country together."

Malvika prefers travelling with a group, particularly with her best friend Veronica, who handles the planning details. "I'm definitely a group traveller through and through!" she says. "I love having someone else take the lead when it comes to planning the trip. My ideal travel experience is also with a local guide as it adds a special layer to the journey and helps me connect with the place in a deeper way."

As Malvika Sitlani's travel stories come to a close, one thing is clear – her journeys are a reflection of her boundless curiosity, her love for cultural immersion, and her passion for living life to the fullest. With a heart full of wonder and a soul that is forever wanderlust, Malvika's adventures are a reminder that travel has the power to transform, to inspire, and to connect us with the world around us. As we bid adieu to Malvika's travel tales, we can't help but feel inspired to embark on our own journeys of discovery, to explore the unknown and to create memories that will last a lifetime.



## Tanaav season 2, Volume 2: The valley bleeds again!

### Plot:

**T**anaav Season 2, Volume 2 picks up with an unrelenting intensity, continuing the narrative with Farid's journey as he grapples with the aftermath of personal loss. His choices lead him into a dangerous spiral, in contrast to his brother's efforts to escape the violence and turmoil. As the season progresses, shocking events and action sequences propel the story forward, delving deep into the raw violence that underscores the turmoil in Kashmir. The show excels in depicting the region's unrest, highlighting the struggles faced by its villagers with remarkable authenticity. Amidst this pursuit, the Indian agents are tirelessly working to track him down, facing not only the physical dangers but also the moral dilemmas that come with dealing with someone they once knew. The series is filled with shocking and tragic character deaths, as the toll of the ongoing conflict becomes more apparent. Some of these deaths are of key characters, adding weight to the plot and highlighting the harsh realities of a world torn apart by violence. The narrative does a brilliant job of capturing the emotional weight of living through conflict, providing viewers with a deeply immersive experience.

### Highlights:

The show excels in its ability to bring the Kashmiri conflict to life, not just through its characters but also through its atmospheric setting. The portrayal of villagers, their fears and the atrocities they face is so authentic that it blurs the line between fiction and reality. The bomb disposal sequences are

especially noteworthy, showcasing technical precision and nerve-racking tension. The use of army-based color psychology, with earthy greens and greys, adds a layer of visual storytelling that complements the narrative's tone. These details immerse viewers into the volatile environment of military operations and the psychological impact of war.

The background music deserves special mention for its subtle yet evocative composition, heightening the tension and emotional depth without overshadowing the story. Action sequences are choreographed to perfection, blending realism with cinematic flair.

### Drawbacks:

While *Tanaav Season 2, Volume 2* delivers an edge-of-the-seat experience, the relentless pacing may feel overwhelming for some viewers. The intensity leaves little room for quieter moments, which could have added emotional balance. Additionally, the show occasionally leans on tropes that may feel predictable in the espionage-thriller genre.

### Performance:

*Tanaav Season 2, Volume 2* continues its gripping narrative with intense performances from the entire cast. Manav Vij delivers a standout portrayal of Kabir, skillfully capturing the moral conflicts and emotional depth of his character. Gaurav Arora adds complexity to his role, while Kabir Bedi's commanding presence and Rajat Kapoor's restrained yet authoritative performance elevate the stakes of the story. Ekta Kaul impresses with her raw portrayal of Farah, embodying the emotional turmoil and resilience of her character. Danish Hussain rounds out the ensemble with a performance that adds both intensity and vulnerability, making the show a powerful, emotionally resonant continuation of the series.

### Technical Aspects:

The technical brilliance of the show is evident in its cinematography and production design. Vivek Shah captures the breathtaking yet volatile beauty of Kashmir, juxtaposing its serene landscapes with scenes of devastation. Lighting and shadows are used masterfully to reflect the characters' moral dilemmas and the constant threat of danger. The action sequences are elevated by meticulous editing, creating a seamless flow that keeps viewers engaged. Symbolic imagery, such as shattered windows and flickering lights, reinforces themes of destruction and hope. The use of sound design further enhances the immersive experience, with subtle audio cues building tension in critical moments.

### Verdict:

*Tanaav Season 2, Volume 2* is an intense, fast-paced thriller that masterfully captures the complexities of the Kashmir conflict. With its riveting performances, stunning visuals and nuanced storytelling, the show is a must-watch for fans of gritty, action-packed dramas. It truly is for people who love fast paced action sequence series.

**Directed by:** Sudhir Mishra, E Niwas  
**Produced by:** Applause Entertainment  
**Cast:** Manav Vij, Gaurav Arora, Kabir Bedi, Rajat Kapoor, Ekta Kaul, Danish Husain, Satyadeep Misra, Shashank Arora, Sahiba Bali, Soni Razdan, Sukhmani Sadana  
**Cinematography:** Malay Prakash  
**Streaming on:** Sony LIV  
**Rating:** 3/5

## SAY GOODBYE TO DRIED LIPS



### Natural alternatives for lip care

For those preferring natural ingredients, cocoa butter is an excellent option. It nourishes, moisturises and protects lips, leaving them feeling pampered. Avocado oil, too, nourishes and protects, providing a healthy and radiant glow. Green tea extract, an antioxidant, hydrates and soothes lips.

### Emollient essentials

The primary ingredients in the creation of lipstick are wax, oil, alcohol and pigments (colouring). Some other secondary ingredients are glycerine, glyceryl stearate, caprylic/ capric triglyceride, isopropyl myristate, octyldodecyl myristate and cetyl alcohol" all of which are derivatives of palm oil.

These ingredients are emollients that amplify the retention and enrichment of pigmentation.

Emollients fill gaps between skin cells, providing a smooth texture. Petrolatum moisturises, protects and conditions lips, while dimethicone hydrates, smooths and protects. Cyclomethicone hydrates, conditions and protects, providing a lightweight and non-greasy texture.

Another reason for the widespread use in lipsticks, is that palm oil is odourless owing to its natural smell, and the melting points increases when palm oil is added to the production.

### Check for sustainably sourced ingredients

Making responsible choices can also act as a balm for your conscience. Choosing products that have used certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO) ensures that the products you buy use responsibly sourced ingredients.

### Choosing the right lipstick

When shopping for lipsticks, look for labels that indicate moisturizing, hydrating, nourishing and soothing properties. Opt for long-lasting lipsticks that won't dry out your lips. By selecting lipsticks with these ingredients, you'll enjoy soft, supple lips, long-lasting hydration and protection from environmental stressors.

By prioritising lip care, you'll experience a healthy, radiant glow. Your lips will thank you for the extra attention. Don't settle for lipsticks that dry out your lips; instead, choose products that provide moisture, nourishment and protection.

(The author, Dr Geetika Mittal Gupta, is a Medical Director & Founder, of Isaac Luxe.)

# KL Rahul will open innings, I will bat in middle: Rohit

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

KL Rahul's composure and brilliant technique while opening the innings in Perth convinced skipper Rohit Sharma to move himself down the order and "bat somewhere in the middle" in the day/night Test against Australia starting here on Friday.

The Indian captain said on Thursday he didn't wish to tinker with a combination that brought the team success in the series opener of the five-match rubber which the visitors lead 1-0 following their 295-run win at Optus Oval.

Rahul looked solid with scores of 26 and 77 and added 201 runs with fellow opener and centurion Yashasvi Jaiswal in the second innings of the first Test.

"He (Rahul) will open the innings. I will play

somewhere in the middle," Rohit told reporters on the eve of the second Test.

The Indian skipper was both categorical and objective in his reply when asked about his hotly-debated batting slot after returning from a brief paternity break.

A team man to the core, the 37-year-old Rohit explained part by part the need for continuity.

"How I came to that decision of, you know, batting down the order is clearly, you know, we want results. We want success," Rohit was categorical about his decision to take a step back after opening the innings for five years.

He was also objective about the rationale.

"Those two guys (Jaiswal and Rahul) at the top, just looking at this one Test match, they batted brilliantly. I was at home with my newborn (son



Ahaan) in my arms and I was watching how KL batted." Rohit didn't want to disturb Rahul but also said that the decision is based on current situation.

"It was brilliant to watch, to be honest. And I felt that there is no need to change that now. I don't know, may be in the future, things will be different."

Rahul has so far scored eight Test hundreds, and five of those tons have come in Australia, South Africa and England, and the skipper feels the Karnataka player is the most deserving to face the new ball.

"Based on what has happened and what KL has shown outside of India, you know, he probably deserves that place at this point in time. And, you know, it is something that has given us success in the first Test, to have that big partnership

with Jaiswal on the other side."

With the team getting 500-odd runs in the second innings besides a double-century opening stand, Rohit doesn't want unnecessary tweaks which can become counter-productive.

"You know, when you come here in a place like Perth and you get 500 runs, it's a massive tick to the box. So, I don't see we need to change that."

"But what I saw from the outside looked brilliant. So, and there was no need to change anything. So, it was actually pretty simple for me."

While Rohit waxed eloquence on the 32-year-old Rahul, he didn't want to divulge the details of the conversation he had with the player.

"This is between me and him. It's a personal matter. I can't share it," he said.



## Indian women's team loses to Australia by five wickets in first ODI

PTI ■ BRISBANE

India put up a dismal show with the bat as Australia stamped their superiority over the visitors with a five-wicket win in the first Women's ODI here on Thursday.

Opting to bat, India collapsed to 100 all out in 34.2 overs with Australia pacer Megan Schutt returning an impressive five-wicket haul.

Australia did experience a minor stutter in the run chase, when Renuka Thakur struck twice in the same over, before coasting to victory in 16.2 overs.

Debutant opener Georgia Vull (46 not out off 42 balls) produced a measured knock to ensure a comfortable win.

Her effort included a six off Renuka in the cow corner region.

Her opening partner Phoebe Litchfield (35 off 29 balls) was the aggressor in their 48-run stand, smashing six fours in a row, four of those coming off Renuka and two off debutant pacer Titas Sadhu.

The second ODI will be played at the Allan Border Field here on December 8.

Jemimah Rodrigues, who batted at number five, top-scored for India with a 23 off 42 balls.

Opting to bat, India failed to get off the blocks, losing the openers in the first seven overs. Priya Punia (3 off 17), playing in place of the dropped Shafali Verma, looked totally out of sorts in her comeback game.

Smriti Mandha (8 off 9) was caught behind, chasing a wide outswinger from Schutt.

Punia, in her attempt to break the shackles, was caught at backward point off Schutt.

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (23 off 42) was trapped in front by pacer Annabel Lutherland.

Rodrigues looked comfortable in the middle until she was bowled by Kim Grath as she tried to run a delivery down to the third man.

From 62 for three, India were all out for 100 in 34.2 overs. Their last three batters got out with the score reading 100 on the board.

Schutt completed her maiden five-wicket haul by casting Priya Mishra.

It was a batting performance to forget for India.

**Brief Scores:** India Women: 100 all out in 34.2 overs (Jemimah Rodrigues 23; Megan Schutt 5/19). Australia 102/5 in 16.2 overs (Georgia Vull 46 not out; Renuka Thakur 3/45).

## Mbappé misses another penalty kick and Real Madrid loses to Athletic Bilbao 2-1

AP ■ MADRID

Kylian Mbappé missed a penalty kick again and Federico Valverde gifted a late goal as Real Madrid lost ground to Barcelona in the Spanish league after a 2-1 loss at Athletic Bilbao.

Mbappé had his penalty saved by Athletic goalkeeper Julien Agirrezabala in the 68th minute, and Valverde lost possession on defense to allow an easy winner by Gorka Guruzeta in the 80th.

"We knew that he is a good penalty taker," Agirrezabala said of Mbappé. "He missed the last one and I believed that he was going to choose the same side and luckily that's what happened."

Valverde had control of the ball but gave it away while trying to get past a few Athletic players instead of passing it to a teammate, leaving Guruzeta with an easy run into the area for his goal.



Alex Berenguer had put the hosts ahead in the 53rd and Jude Bellingham equalized for Madrid in the 78th.

Mbappé had also missed a penalty in Madrid's 2-0 loss at Liverpool in the Champions League last week. He didn't take the one for the club in a Spanish league match on Sunday, but he scored in the 2-0 win over Getafe to ease some of the pressure on him

and the club.

But it was another lackluster outing for Mbappé, who continues to struggle in his first season since finally joining the Spanish powerhouse.

"I won't evaluate the performance of a player because of a missed penalty. Obviously he is sad and disappointed, but you have to move on," Madrid coach

Carlo Ancelotti said about Mbappé. "He is not at his best level, but you have to give him time to adapt. You have to give him time to be able to do better."

The defeat left Madrid four points behind Barcelona, which on Tuesday ended a three-match winless streak in the league with a 5-1 rout at Mallorca. Madrid, which has a game in hand, had won three consecutive league games since a 4-0 loss at home in the "clasico" against Barcelona.

Madrid has lost five of its last 11 matches in all competitions.

Athletic moved to fourth place with the victory, its fourth consecutive across all competitions.

Both matches on Tuesday and Wednesday were moved forward in the schedule because the clubs will be playing in the Spanish Super Cup in January.



## ICC Chairman Jay Shah vows to take cricket to 'unprecedented heights'

PTI ■ DUBAI

Newly-appointed ICC chairman Jay Shah on Thursday vowed to take cricket to "unprecedented heights" following his first visit to the headquarters of the game's global governing body as its head.

Elected unopposed in August, the 36-year-old Shah became the youngest and fifth Indian to take over as the ICC chair.

His term began on December 1.

Shah visited the ICC Headquarters in Dubai for the first time in his role as chairman as he described it as "productive and inspiring."

"While I am encouraged by what I have seen, I recognise that this is just the beginning," Shah stated in an ICC release.

"The hard work to elevate cricket to unprecedented heights starts now, and I am confident that together, we will deliver on this vision."

Speaking after meeting with ICC Board Directors and staff, Shah emphasised the importance of collaboration in shaping the future of

cricket.

"This visit provided an invaluable opportunity to connect with my colleagues on the ICC Board where we discussed the initial roadmap and strategies to shape the future of this incredible sport."

"I was equally delighted to meet with the dedicated ICC team working tirelessly behind the scenes to propel cricket forward."

ICC deputy chairman Imran Khwaja commended Shah for his ambitious vision for the sport.

"On behalf of the Board I would like to welcome Jay Shah to the role and share our enthusiasm for his tenure," Khwaja said.

"Shah's ambition and experience will be instrumental in guiding the ICC and the sport into the future. It has been a very productive visit for everyone, and we look forward to working alongside him, the Members and ICC team in achieving success."

Shah succeeded Greg Barclay, who had held the post of ICC chairman since 2020.

## Don't think Adelaide debacle of 2020 will haunt India in upcoming pink-ball Test: Shastri

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

The Adelaide debacle of 2020 is history now but it should be at the back of players' minds when they take field in the day/night Test against Australia, reckons Ravi Shastri, who was India's coach in that series.

India, under Virat Kohli, were shot out for their lowest-ever Test total of 36 in the second innings of the Adelaide Test that Australia won by eight wickets.

Bruised and battered, and with hardly anyone giving them a revival chance, India staged a remarkable comeback to win the four-Test series 2-1 to clinch the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

"I don't think it (Adelaide drubbing) will play any role but it should be at the back of their mind because you know things happen very quickly with a pink ball," Shastri, who was the coach of the India team during the series, told The ICC Review.

A 1-0 lead in pocket, India will clash with the hosts in the second Test, starting Friday.



"You realise that in a session of play if things don't go your way and the bowling is good, things can happen rapidly."

Shastri added that India's defeat in the match was a freak thing and that he had not seen so many nicks flying to the fielders in his four decades of cricket.

"What we did after that 36 was - like I said at that time - that I'd never seen, and I said it in the dressing room, I'd never seen so much of playing and nicking as opposed to playing and missing."

"And I'd watched cricket for about 40 years. And to be honest, that was a session

where hardly any player played and missed. If he did anything, he got a nick. So it was not beating the bat. You know, the bowlers (being) unlucky... It was just the batsmen being unlucky on that day."

The legendary all-rounder added that the 1-0 lead in the ongoing series should act as a catalyst for India to further tighten their grip on the hosts, who he felt were under pressure.

"Now the fact that they are one-up, should put them in a really great frame of mind going ahead in this Test match because I think it's a massive opportunity for India to tighten the screws further. The pressure will be on Australia."

"In my mind, it was very clear you can't do worse than that (Adelaide). You'll have a day when the luck is in your favour and you can bounce back. And that's exactly what happened."

"Sometimes you don't over-think when something as drastic as that happens. You don't want a knee-jerk reaction taking place where you just lose the plot. Sometimes calmness in situations like that produce the best results."

## Border-Gavaskar Trophy victory is one last thing to tick off for lot of us, says Cummins

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

He has won the ODI World Cup, the Ashes and also the Test Championship mace but the Border-Gavaskar Trophy against India remains the "one last" unchecked item in the bucket list of Australia skipper Pat Cummins, who is confident of pulling it off this time despite the opening Test debacle.

Cummins, who made his Test debut in 2011, played a Test against India for the first time in 2017. Since 2014-15, Australia have not won an India series either at home or away. The pacer is determined to change this stat despite the 295-run drubbing in the Perth game last month.

"For half of the (Australian) change room, we haven't won the Border Gavaskar Trophy. It is one last thing to tick off for a lot of us. Almost every challenge that we faced in last few years, we have stepped up and done well," Cummins spoke with a lot of determination on the eve of the second Test against India in Adelaide.

"I think we need to do that for

another home summer and series. From two-three season thing, it has suddenly been a half a generation thing," he added.

Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood (not playing this Test), Mitchell Marsh, and Nathan Lyon are some of the players, who were part of the 2-0 win back in 2014-15.

From that point onwards, India have won all four series - two at home (2017 and 2023) and two overseas (2018-19, 2020-21).

So, is there pressure on him to win it back this time?

"I don't think it's pressure. You are playing at home and you want to do well. We know they (India) are a really strong side and lot of us were part of those recent three series (defeats)."

"Yeah, it's a big series and kind of not looking too far in the past. And every summer, when we play against them we want to do well," Cummins said.

The 31-year-old, who has 272 wickets from 63 Tests, didn't want to compare the Ashes with the Border-Gavaskar Trophy (BGT) but termed the battle with Indian teams as the most



contested over the years.

"I think it has been the most closely fought. I think the Ashes has got a rich history and (it is) watched as well but I think

Border-Gavaskar Trophy has been a very tight series that I have kind of seen in recent times.

"Both teams play quite similar at times. For the first time (since

1991-92), it is a five-Test series and that adds a bit extra. It really gets attritional with its history as well so it is a big one," the skipper said.

All praise for Nitish Reddy With Rishabh Pant coming in at number five and one among Shubman Gill or Rohit Sharma at number six followed by Washington Sundar and Nitish Reddy, India's top-order does have a scary look. But Cummins backed his bowlers.

"Pretty scary five, six and seven I think. If they come in and bowlers have already had plenty of overs into them, then they are a scary proposition."

"Just like we have seen, when we have been two, three or four down, then (Mitchell) Marshy or (Travis) Heady have put out a 100. That changes dynamics pretty quickly," Cummins said.

Having captained Reddy in the IPL for Sunrisers Hyderabad, Cummins is pretty impressed with the Andhra all-rounder's seam-up bowling.

"He didn't bowl as much as he potentially could have but really impressed with what we saw and looks like he can swing the ball a little bit. Great young kid."

Boland only change and Marsh fit to play

Cummins confirmed that pacer

Scott Boland will replace the injured Josh Hazlewood in the playing eleven for the Adelaide game. Also, Mitchell Marsh has been declared fit to bowl.

"As a captain, it's pretty awesome for someone like Scotty to come in. You know he can bowl a huge amount of overs if you need. He's super consistent, he's performed at this level, so he's ready to go."

Cummins said that Marsh will bowl as he has been in good shape.

"Mitchell Marsh will definitely bowl in this Test. I would imagine a few spells but he is ready to go. He (Marsh) is bowling well this week. His body is great and this has been for a while. So, he is ready to go out there and happy to bowl," he added.

Cummins agreed that play on the opening day could be a start-stop affair with potential rain threat.

"The pitch looks good with even coverage of grass and so not sure what to make of it. It is going to be a bit more rain than what they had perhaps thought and there will be covers on and off but right now the sun is baking it," he added.

# Allu Arjun saves the day in *Pushpa 2: The Rule*, despite lengthy narrative

SURESH KAVIRAYANI  
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Allu Arjun and director Sukumar's combination, *Pushpa: The Rise*, created a sensation when released three years ago. Allu Arjun won a National Award for his performance in the first part and there has been much curiosity about this second installment. Now, the sequel to this film, *Pushpa 2: The Rule*, has hit the screens. Beyond this, Allu Arjun extensively promoted the film in many parts of the country, including Patna. Expectations for this film are immense, as it is the only one to release without any competition. Trade analysts are predicting huge box-office collections for this film. But will it live up to expectations? Here is our review.

## Story:

Pushpa Raj (Allu Arjun) is enjoying his married life and preparing to meet the chief minister. Before that, his wife Srivalli requests a photo of him with the chief minister, which she wants to see. However, the chief minister, while accepting funds from Pushpa, refuses to take a photograph with him because he is a smuggler. Hurt by this, Pushpa announces that he will make his friend Siddhappa (Rao Ramesh) the next chief minister. To achieve this, he needs to arrange Rs 500 crores through smuggling red sanders. Meanwhile, police officer Shekhawat (Fahadh Faasil), who was humiliated by Pushpa earlier, seeks revenge and tries to stop the smuggling. Simultaneously, Pushpa faces a family crisis that he must address. How Pushpa smuggles the red sanders, saves his family and handles the challenges forms the crux of the story.

## Analysis:

The second part picks up where the first part ends. However, Sukumar begins this installment with a grand action sequence set in Japan, which, by the end of the film, feels unnecessary and forced. The focus then shifts to Pushpa, his wife Srivalli, and their married life. After the chief minister refuses to take a photograph with Pushpa, he decides to make his friend the chief minister.

In this second part, Sukumar intertwines Pushpa's story as a ruthless smuggler with his emotional side as a family man. Once he resolves to make his friend the CM, Pushpa begins smuggling vast quantities of red sanders. Shekhawat, determined to thwart him, engages in a cat-and-mouse game with Pushpa throughout the first half. While Sukumar makes these scenes engaging, they come across as overly cinematic with heavy use of graphics.

The first half of the film could have been trimmed as the director stretches many scenes unnecessarily. The lorry episode, where Pushpa smuggles the red sanders while Shekhawat tries to stop him, is a lengthy and drawn-out sequence. However, there are standout moments, such as Pushpa apologising to Shekhawat and the chief minister episode.

The second half focuses more on Pushpa's family affairs, particularly involving his cousin's daughter. The *Gangamma Jatha* episode is a definite highlight of the film, lasting nearly half an hour and showcasing Sukumar's finest craftsmanship.

A significant drawback is the forced extension of the story. The kidnap drama and subsequent action scenes feel lagging and unnecessary. While Pushpa achieves his goal of making his friend the CM, the storyline around Siddhappa meeting a central minister in Delhi is left unresolved until much later in the film. This lack of continuity, coupled with numerous overly cinematic scenes, makes the film feel unnecessarily long.

## Performances:

Allu Arjun delivers a stellar performance, carrying forward his excellence from the first part. He particularly shines in the *Jathara* episode, with his dance and emotional range standing out. His portrayal of Pushpa is undoubtedly a memorable one. Rashmika Mandanna also performs well, excelling in two specific scenes—one after the *Jathara* episode and another at her house. She looks glamorous in a song sequence.

Fahadh Faasil, a proven actor, once again show-



is good, though not as impactful as the first part. The background score is effective, but the special song fails to match the energy of its predecessor. The dialogues are impressive, with every character speaking in the Chittoor accent. While the producers have spared no expense, some of Allu Arjun's dialogues suffer from dubbing issues.

## Verdict:

*Pushpa 2: The Rule* relies heavily on Allu Arjun's outstanding performance, particularly in the second half. However, the film is weighed down by dragged-out scenes in both halves and an overly graphic, illogical climax. The film's fate will depend on how audiences respond to its three-hour and twenty-minute runtime.

**Actors:** Allu Arjun, Rashmika Mandanna, Fahadh Faasil, Rao Ramesh, Jagapathi Babu, Anasuya, Sunil, Jagadeesh Pratap, Brahmaji, Sreeleela, Pavani Karanam and others

**Cinematography:** Miroslaw Kuba Brozek

**Music:** Devi Sri Prasad

**Producers:** Naveen Yerneni, Yelamanchili Ravi Shankar

**Story, Screenplay, Director:** Sukumar

**Rating:** 2.5/5

## PUSHPA 2 MAKERS 'HEARTBROKEN'

The much-anticipated release of *Pushpa 2: The Rule* took a tragic turn in Hyderabad as frenzied celebrations at the Sandhya 70mm Theatre led to a deadly stampede. Superstar Allu Arjun's surprise visit to the venue brought thousands of fans to RTC Cross Roads, causing chaos that claimed the life of a 35-year-old woman, Revathi and left her nine-year-old son critically injured.

Revathi, a resident of Dilsukhnagar, had come to the screening with her husband Bhaskar and two children, Tej and Sanvi. Amid the surging crowd, the family was pushed near the theatre's entrance. While Bhaskar and Sanvi escaped with minor injuries, Revathi and Tej were trampled in the chaos. Revathi was rushed to a nearby hospital but succumbed to her injuries, while her son remains under medical observation.

Police resorted to lathi-charge to control the unruly crowd, but the damage had been done. Mythri Movie Makers, the producers of *Pushpa 2*, expressed deep sorrow over the incident, pledging their support to the grieving family and the injured child. The statement by the makers read, "We are extremely heartbroken by the tragic incident during last night's screening. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and the young child undergoing medical treatment. We are committed to standing by them and extending all possible support during this difficult time. With deep sorrow, Mythri Movie Makers." Despite the tragedy, *Pushpa 2: The Rule* continues to shatter box-office records, marking an explosive start for 2024. Directed by Sukumar and starring Allu Arjun, Rashmika Mandanna and Fahadh Faasil, the film has already cemented its place as a blockbuster hit.



## SONU SOOD'S DIRECTORIAL DEBUT FATEH HACKS INTO HEARTS

The much-anticipated teaser for Zee Studios and Shakti Sagar Productions' *Fateh* has made its electrifying debut alongside *Pushpa 2: The Rule* in theatres. The dark alleys of the digital world are about to meet their match in this gripping action saga inspired by true incidents in cyberspace. Marking the real-life hero Sonu Sood's directorial debut, the film stars him alongside Jacqueline Fernandez, Vijay Raaz and Naseeruddin Shah. While moviegoers are treated to a sneak peek of this outing on the big screen, the digital unveiling of the teaser is set for December 9.

Sonu Sood shared, "Stepping into the director's chair for the first time with *Fateh* has been a journey of passion and purpose. This action saga calls to attention the unseen battles fought in the shadows of the digital world. I'm thrilled that the teaser of *Fateh* is out for the audiences who are watching *Pushpa 2: The Rule* in theatres. It's a glimpse into a world we've poured our hearts into creating and I can't wait for viewers to experience the adrenaline, the emotions, and the sheer power of *Fateh*. This film is my ode to every hero who dares to fight back against impossible odds, and I hope it leaves viewers inspired and electrified."

Produced by Sonali Sood for Shakti Sagar Productions' and Umesh KR Bansal for Zee Studios, *Fateh* a gripping tale of courage, resilience, and the fight against cybercrime is slated to release on January 10, 2025.

## Mokshagnya's debut film launch cancelled

Nandamuri Balakrishna's son Mokshagnya's debut film launch was cancelled on Thursday. The film, directed by Prashanth Varma and produced by Cherukuri Sudhakar, had been in pre-production for several months. The makers had planned to launch the film officially on Thursday, but the cancellation has sparked widespread discussion. Some reports suggest that differences between Prashanth Varma and Mokshagnya led to the cancellation. Others claim that the launch was temporarily postponed and will be rescheduled for a later date. Regardless of the reason, the cancellation has generated significant buzz. Director Prashanth

Varma gained recognition with the film *Hanuman*, which achieved huge success not only in Telugu but also in other languages.

He was subsequently set to direct Hindi actor Ranveer Singh, but the project was cancelled due to a misunderstanding between the director and the actor. Varma was then given the opportunity to introduce Mokshagnya, a significant project, but it appears that the launch has been cancelled. There has been no official statement from the director or producer regarding the cancellation of the launch. If the entire project has been cancelled or temporarily put on hold, the producer should provide clarification.



## DEEPAK SAROJ TEAMS UP WITH HARISH GADAGANI FOR HIS NEXT

Deepak Saroj, known for his work as a child actor, made his debut as a lead actor with the film *Siddharth Roy*. His second film was launched on Thursday at a function in Hyderabad.

Harish Gadagani is making his directorial debut with this film, while Thanniru Haribabu is producing it. Deekshika and Anaira play the female leads, alongside actors Raghu Babu, Hyper Aadi and Satya in key roles. Director Harish

Gadagani said, "Once I narrated the story to the producer, he asked me to start filming immediately." He described the film as a romantic love story. "We plan to start shooting in January and wrap up in April," he added. Lead actor Deepak Saroj said that when he was looking for a good story, this one came to him, and he immediately agreed to do it. "I'm thrilled that Anoop Rubens is composing music for my film," said Deepak.

"We all know how Anoop has delivered excellent music albums in the past, and I feel lucky to have him on board for my film." Producer Haribabu, who has been in the real estate industry for 20 years, has entered the film industry driven by his passion for cinema. "I'm making my debut as a producer with this film. I liked the story and immediately agreed to collaborate with Harish," said the producer.

## Trisha commences shooting for *Suriya 45*

Acclaimed actress Trisha has officially begun shooting for her upcoming film, *Suriya 45*, alongside the talented Suriya. The movie, directed by Vetrimaaran, has been generating significant buzz in the Tamil film industry.

As Trisha started filming her portions, sources close to the project revealed an exciting secret. It appears that Trisha's character in the movie will have a distinct dual role, adding a layer of complexity to the storyline.

The film, produced by Studio Green, is expected to be an action-packed entertainer with a strong social message. With Vetrimaaran at the helm, audi-

ences can anticipate a gripping narrative and outstanding performances from the cast.

*Suriya 45* marks a significant collaboration between Trisha and Suriya, who have previously worked together in films like *Ghilli* and *Aadhavan*. Their on-screen chemistry has always been well-received by audiences, and fans are eagerly anticipating their reunion in this upcoming project.

As the shooting progresses, more updates and revelations about the film are expected to emerge. With its talented cast, acclaimed director, and intriguing storyline, *Suriya 45* is undoubtedly one of the most anticipated Tamil films of the year.

