

QUOTE OF THE DAY The pioneer The BRS would return to power and govern the state for another 15 years. Schemes launched by YSR like Arogyasri and fee reimbursement were continued without changing their names but were implemented better by the BRS. Some people want to wipe out all traces of KCR. So will you remove Telangana also then as I fought for its statehood - K. Chandrasekhar Rao, BRS chief

www.dailypioneer.com Published From: HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH BHUBANESWAR RANCHI DEHRADUN VIJAYAWADA Deepening ties with India in several areas: US 'I DON'T WANT MY DAUGHTER SEE ME PLAYING NEGATIVE ROLES' 'My role in Virraaji is unlike any I've played BEFORE'

DON'T MISS... Manpower shortage hampering... With the rise in train collisions across the country, people raised concerns on the safety measures taken by the railways. They questioned why the railways have been dilly-dallying in installing train collision avoidance system (TCAS), called 'Kavach.' It has been adopted as an automated train protection system. To avert these dreadful collisions, Indian Railways took initiative to develop Kavach system in 2012 and completed its development in 2022. However, despite its development, some of the areas still remain uncovered... -PAGE: 3

'Only 8 countries could lower... Even as premature deaths due to cancer have come down across three-fourths of the world, only eight countries are likely to meet the related United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Target 3.4, pointed out a recent study. The target is concerned with slashing premature deaths from non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including cancer, by a third by 2030 through prevention and treatment. For the study, researchers, including those from the World Health... -PAGE: 5

International toy fair to begin on... More than 300 domestic companies and over 100 foreign buyers from the US, Germany and other countries are expected to participate in the four-day international toy fair beginning on July 6 in the national capital, a statement said on Tuesday. More than 250 Indian brands will display their products during the fair, which is being organised at Pragati Maidan here, Toy Association of India senior vice-president Naresh Kumar Gautam said in the statement. Gautam said that the 15th Toy Biz... -PAGE: 8

Lot of time for me to sleep, for now... Rohit Sharma held the T20 World Cup trophy like a new-born baby as he walked towards the beach here for the triumphant captain's post-tournament photo shoot, a serene smile refusing to leave his face and the feeling of being a world champion yet to fully sink in. He couldn't be faulted for being a bit dazed. After all, a jinx that lasted over a decade had been broken. "It's surreal. It feels like a dream. It feels like it hasn't happened. Although it has happened but it feels like it hasn't happened," Rohit... -SPORTS



CM ASKS IAS OFFICERS TO TURN TG INTO A ROLE MODEL 'Come up with new ideas'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD Chief Minister Revanth Reddy issued directives to all senior officials to align their work with government priorities. He advised them to undertake necessary cleansing to improve efficiency and urged the sharing of new ideas with the CMO. Every officer was ordered to submit a flagship idea to the government within two weeks. He emphasised that IAS officers must take control of their departments and ensure that they are accountable to the public. The CM urged everyone to deliver good governance which would benefit the public. The CM said that it is the officials' responsibility to shape Telangana into a model state. He recommended that officials should regularly review their department's functioning, a meeting with secretaries at the Secretariat on Tuesday, the CM along with Ministers Komatireddy Venkat Reddy and Tummala Nageswara Rao, CM's Advisor Vem Narendar Reddy, Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari, and CMO Principal Secretary Sheshadri, addressed the gathering. 29 IAS officers attended the programme. The CM said the Congress government had implemented five of its six guarantees within the first 100 days, despite the imposition of the Model Election Code. He directed officials to focus on governance and reiterated that changing Telangana into a model state is the officials' responsibility. The CM stressed the importance of discipline among officials for providing good governance. He called for strict adherence to schedules, ensuring availability at the Secretariat, and conducting weekly district-level field visits to monitor department performance. Monthly meetings with district officials were recommended to review department programmes. Expressing dissatisfaction with collectors not leaving their offices in many districts, the CM urged IAS officers to implement good governance practices. 2



Rs 60k cr to be spent on schemes for farmers Though it is burden Govt will honour its word: Tummala

PNS ■ HYDERABAD Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao said that Rs 50,000 crore to Rs 60,000 crore will be spent on waiving farm loans, the Rythu Bharosa, crop insurance and Rythu Bima schemes in the next three months. He said the government would implement these schemes as per its word although it is a burden on the government. 2



NEET-PG likely to be held mid-August: Sources

PNS ■ NEW DELHI The National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Post Graduate (NEET-PG) 2024 is likely to be held mid-August, sources said on Tuesday. The revised date for the medical entrance exam is expected to be announced this week. A meeting was held in the Union home ministry on Monday, in which officials from the health ministry, Continued on Page 2

'Guilty won't be spared' 116 killed in stampede at UP 'satsang', most victims women Working on war footing to curb paper leaks.: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI Prime Minister Narendra Modi told the Lok Sabha on Tuesday that the government is working on a war footing to curb the incidents of paper leaks, while asserting that those playing with the future of youngsters will not be spared. The prime minister's comments came amid a raging row over alleged irregularities, including paper leaks, in competitive examinations such as the NEET and the NET. The opposition has been demanding a discussion on the issue in Parliament. Replying to a two-day debate on the Motion of Thanks to the president's address to a joint sitting of Parliament, Modi said arrests are being made across the country in connection with the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) issue. "The president expressed concerns about paper leaks in her address. I also want to tell students and youngsters that the government is serious about controlling such incidents and we are taking back-to-back steps on a war footing to fulfil our responsibilities," he said. 2

BRS will be back and rule again Asserts confident KCR, recalls 10 years of BRS good governance



PNS ■ HYDERABAD BRS president K. Chandrasekhar Rao said that he was confident that the BRS would return to power and rule for another 15 years. He criticised the Congress stating that those playing with the future of youngsters will not be spared. On Tuesday, KCR held a meeting with the ZP chairpersons of Telangana at his farmhouse in Erravelli. Speaking on the occasion, KCR acknowledged the key role ZP chairpersons played in the state's development during BRS rule and congratulated them on completing their terms. He urged them to aim for greater heights, emphasizing that real politicians work for the people regardless of power. Reflecting on the 10 years of BRS governance, he said that everything ran smoothly, contrasting it with problems regarding electricity, drinking water and law and order under the Congress government which led to communal riots. Continued on Page 2

'Yes, let's meet and iron out bifurcation issues'

Revanth accepts Naidu's proposal to meet on 6th July



PNS ■ HYDERABAD Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has accepted an invitation from AP Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for a face-to-face meeting on July 6 at the Jyoti Rao Phule Praja Bhavan. "I completely agree with the need for an in-person discussion to better serve the people of our respective states," he said. "On behalf of the people of Telangana, I am delighted to invite you to the meeting on July 6 in Hyderabad," he added. He concurred with CBN's reflections on the necessity of resolving all pending issues of the Bifurcation Act through an in-person meeting, emphasizing the importance of building a strong foundation for cooperation. On behalf of the people of Telangana and his government, Revanth expressed delight in accepting Naidu's invitation for a meeting. The discussion is scheduled for the afternoon of July 6 at the Mahatma Jyoti Rao Phule Bhavan in Hyderabad. 2

New TPCC president within three days

PNS ■ HYDERABAD The Congress high command may announce the new TPCC President within three days before 'Ashada Masam' begins. Sources said the party will finalise the new president's name within three days after discussing the matter with the current TPCC head Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy again on Wednesday. The Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister may go to New Delhi on Wednesday to hold talks with the high command about the new TPCC President and Cabinet expansion. 2

regardless of power. Reflecting on the 10 years of BRS governance, he said that everything ran smoothly, contrasting it with problems regarding electricity, drinking water and law and order under the Congress government which led to communal riots. Continued on Page 2



brought to a hospital in neighbouring Etah district. Senior Superintendent of Police Rajesh Kumar Singh said 23 of them were women. 2

Won't comment on new criminal laws, says CJJ

PNS ■ NEW DELHI Amid a heated debate over the three new criminal laws, Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud on Tuesday refused to comment on them, saying the issues arising from these statutes were pending before the Supreme Court. The new laws -- Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) -- came into effect across the country from July 1 and replaced the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act, respectively. Recently, a PIL was filed in the top court seeking a stay on the new criminal laws. It also challenged the constitutional validity of certain provisions in these laws. "These are issues which are sub-judice before the Supreme Court, maybe possibly the other high courts. Therefore, I should not be speaking on anything which is likely to come up before the court," the CJI said. 2

Apply online for CMRF from July 15

PNS ■ HYDERABAD Applications for help from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) will now be accepted online. From July 15, CMRF applications will be accepted only online. Applications can be submitted on the site https://cmrf.telangana.gov.in. This decision was based on orders from Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to ensure transparency and to prevent misuse of CMRF funds. A website for this purpose has been developed under the guidance of the Centre for Good Governance. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy inaugurated the website on Tuesday at the Secretariat. The new system was introduced to check the misuse of CMRF funds during BRS rule. Now, applications for help from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund must be uploaded on this website. Applicants must provide their details and MLAs and MLCs should attach their recommendation letters and upload them. Including the applicant's bank account number in the application is mandatory. After uploading, a code will be issued from the CMRF. Based on this code, original medical bills and MLCs should attach their recommendation letters and upload them. The application will be sent to the respective hospitals online for verification. If the given details are correct, the CMRF application will be approved, and a cheque will be issued.

'Deliberate act of sabotage' KTR condemns digital vandalism

PNS ■ HYDERABAD BRS Working President KT Rama Rao raised serious concern about the digital vandalism on Telangana government websites and social media handles. In a detailed letter to Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari, KTR highlighted the alarming trend of disappearing digital content, which he believes to be a deliberate act of sabotage by certain elements within the TG government. He requested the immediate restoration of all content removed from the public domain and urged the Chief Secretary to take action to address the digital vandalism. He emphasized the importance of preserving digital content created using public funds. This information, he asserts, is a crucial part of Telangana's history and belongs to the people of Telangana and not to any individual or political party. He stressed that future generations would not forgive the destruction of this public property based on the whims of a few. KTR called on the Chief Secretary to fulfil her duty as the guardian of the state's physical and digital assets, ensuring the protection and restoration of this valuable information. Continued on Page 2

INDIA CORNER

51-foot-statue of sage Parshuram to come up on holy river bank in Arunachal

A 51-foot-tall statue of Sage Parshuram, considered one of the incarnations of Lord Vishnu, will be erected at 'Parshuram Kund', a holy spot on the bank of the Lohit river in Arunachal Pradesh, an official said on Tuesday.



Court allows two-hour custody parole to Engineer Rashid to take oath as MP

A court here on Tuesday granted two-hour custody parole to Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid to take oath as a Lok Sabha MP on July 5, subject to some conditions.



Woman moves HC seeking termination of 'unwanted' pregnancy

A 28-year-old woman has approached the Bombay High Court seeking to terminate her 26-week pregnancy as the same was "unwanted".



Deepening ties with India in several areas: US

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

The US is deepening its ties with India in several key areas, including economic and security cooperation, a senior official has said.



President Biden "had the opportunity to briefly see Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi in the margins of the G7 summit in Italy."

'No mention of Ayodhya in Prez's speech'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Samajwadi Party (SP) MP from Faizabad in Uttar Pradesh Awadhesh Prasad regretted on Tuesday that there was no mention of Ayodhya, the birth place of Lord Ram, in the president's address to a joint sitting of Parliament.

'Oppn upset as 1st time non-Cong leader became PM for 3rd term'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asked NDA MPs to follow parliamentary rules and conduct, and learn from senior members about the best practices.



Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said Modi asked MPs to study parliamentary issues, attend Parliament regularly and raise the matters related to their constituency effectively.

Delhi: Around 1500 stones removed from woman's gallbladder

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Nearly 1500 stones were removed from a woman's gallbladder at a private hospital in Delhi.

"During her surgery (on Saturday), 10 mm and 5 mm incisions were made in her abdomen to facilitate the removal of the gallbladder," Dr Gupta said.



Raj govt decides to repeal Gandhi Vatika Trust Act

PNS ■ JAIPUR

The Rajasthan cabinet on Tuesday decided to repeal the Gandhi Vatika Trust Act, 2023 brought by the previous Gehlot government for the operation and management of 'Gandhi Vatika', a museum based on the biography of Mahatma Gandhi.

India in talks with Africa, Latin America for critical mineral block

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is in talks with Africa as well as Latin America to get critical mineral blocks on a government-to-government basis, Veena Kumari Dermal, joint secretary of the Ministry of Mines, said on Tuesday.

America for getting... a block on a G2G basis or on a priority basis," Dermal said at India Energy Storage Week (IESW) 2024 organised by India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA).

Maiki South Mining Pvt Ltd had last month bagged the country's first lithium block in Chhattisgarh that was put up for sale.

'Only 8 countries could lower early deaths'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Even as premature deaths due to cancer have come down across three-fourths of the world, only eight countries are likely to meet the related United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Target 3.4, pointed out a recent study.

how the pattern of yearly premature deaths due to cancer changed from 2000-2019 across 183 countries.



By 2050, 35 million new cancer cases are predicted, with the highest burden expected in lower-middle-income countries (LMICs) and low-income countries (LICs), according to the researchers.

Preach prohibition in Tamil Nadu: Sitharaman to VCK member in LS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday asked Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) member Thol Thirumavalavan to "preach" prohibition in his own state of Tamil Nadu where 56 people died recently after consuming spurious liquor.



Intervening in the debate, Sitharaman said Thirumavalavan is requesting the Union government to invoke provisions given in the Constitution, particularly referring to the Preamble, to bring in prohibition and also to ensure that there are no drugs in the country.

Sitharaman, who is a Rajya Sabha member from Andhra Pradesh, said the VCK MP has raised a very noble cause, which is appreciable.



FIRST COLUMN

EMBRACING THE PRESENT
WITH MINDFULNESSTrue peace and creativity flourish when
we fully engage with the present

RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

Most of us might have heard the proverb 'You only know what you've got when it's gone' many times in our lives. But, in spite of that, many of us realize the fortune we had, only when we lose it. The stream of life flows on and every second the water in the stream is changing. At any given moment the water at the same spot in the stream is different. What is present now will move on to the next moment, so every moment life is unfolding and something new is being presented. Life unfolds in the present. But so often, we let it slip away, allowing time to rush past unobserved and unseized, and squandering the precious seconds of our lives as we are lost in the past or caught up in the future.

It's very common for most of us to fantasize about things like shopping or going to a movie while we are at work. And while we are actually in a movie theatre, we worry about the work piling up on our desks, isn't it ironic? We are trapped by intrusive memories of the past or fret about what may or may not happen in the future and in this whole struggle, we don't appreciate the Present because we identify ourselves with our thoughts, beliefs and emotions strongly. We forget the fact that we need to live in the Present i.e. the NOW, and for that, we need to be very still inside but we are constantly distracted by our thoughts linked to the past and future. Most of us think in a conditioned, addictive way.

We are addicted to the patterns and beliefs we created in the past which keep driving our thoughts in the present. Instead of thinking consciously and with full awareness, we are controlled by our thoughts of the past. To change this pattern we need first to pause and observe what's going on in our mind. We need to step back and watch and then steer our thoughts towards the present moment and creative goals. We need to focus on being before thinking, judging, analysing and doing. Living in the present is a state of active, open, intentional attention to the present. When we become aware of what's going on inside our mind, we realize that we are not our thoughts; we are the observer of our thoughts from moment to moment and stop judging them. It is like watching waves rising and falling on the surface of the ocean. Spiritual wisdom makes



us aware and realise that we are souls — sentient points of light and purity, peace, joy and love are our original state of being. As the noise and chatter of the mind slow down, we can experience our true nature and just relax in our state of being. Then we are connected to the now not influenced by the past, future or anything out there. We are in a highly creative state when our pure awareness creates pure energy of love, joy and peace in every moment and shapes our destiny. Under such a stage, we are flowing with life without grasping, chasing, wanting, needing or holding on to anything. We are in a truly liberated state and truly powerful and creative. There is fresh energy in every thought and action. Living in the present reduces impulsive and reactive behaviour. Those who live in the moment can hear negative feedback without feeling threatened.

They are more accepting, accommodating and flexible, as a result of which they have easy and satisfying relationships. It is very important for all of us to realize that we are now in the most important and beneficial age when the Almighty Himself is bestowing His treasures of wisdom, love and powers upon humanity. Hence, by becoming soul-conscious we can live in the present and make the best out of each second of this valuable period. Being aware of the self as a soul and of being connected to the Supreme liberates us in a second and we are able to flow with life with ease and lightness. So, don't look back because you are not going that way.

(Writer is a spiritual educator and popular columnist; views are personal)

Modi Govt's imperative
for employment growth

AS MITTAL

Despite the country's emergence as a major manufacturing hub, the sector has seen limited progress, contributing to a rising unemployment rate among the youth

There has been a long-standing vision to make India a global manufacturing hub to create millions of jobs. However, considering India's size and status as one of the world's fastest-growing economies, it's perplexing how the potential for job creation and growth in the manufacturing sector has been overlooked for so long. The new government must implement a new industrial policy having decisive measures to address current structural constraints and reshape India's manufacturing sector in response to global supply chain shifts. This is crucial for achieving a GDP of \$5 trillion and making India the world's third-largest economy by 2027. It's alarming that unemployment among young people with graduate degrees is at an all-time high of 29 per cent as India moves towards becoming the third-largest economy. In 2019, manufacturing was the second-largest employer in India after agriculture, but it has now fallen to fourth place behind the construction sector, trade, and hospitality.

The National Sample Survey Organisation (NSO) data shows that 45.5% of the workforce is employed in agriculture, 12.4% in construction, and only 11.6% in manufacturing, despite its potential to create a multitude of job opportunities. Manufacturing still employs around 60 million people in India, effective action is needed to unlock its full potential for job creation at large. India's impressive growth is hindered by the lacklustre performance of the manufacturing sector, which has shown limited expansion over the past 25 years. Unlike other countries, India's production structure has shifted directly from agriculture to services-driven growth, resulting in a stagnant contribution of manufacturing to India's GDP at 15-17%, significantly lower than in East and South-East Asian countries. China has a 31.63% share of global manufacturing, the US has 15.87%, Japan 6.52%, Germany 4.78%, and India 2.87%. This highlights the urgent need for India to address the challenges in its manufacturing sector.

The reasons for this stagnation could be diverse, such as high tax burden, overburdened regulatory compliances, inadequate infrastructure and connectivity, unreliable electricity, lack of access to credit or a skilled workforce, and insufficient focus on research, development, and technology adoption.

Despite these obstacles, Indian manufacturers are now more emboldened to transcend their comfort zones and align with the nation's goal of becoming a global player.

Areas to be addressed:

Focus on sectors of strength: There are strong capabilities in various sectors such as automobiles (especially e-vehicles, to raise its current share from 7% to over 30%), pharmaceuticals and chemicals, textiles and apparel, engineering goods, farm-implements, and bicycles. However, there are significant gaps in mega-scale facilities that can anchor large-scale exports. The reliability of supporting infrastructure and fostering global partnerships for MSMEs are critical for accelerating growth.

Revisit PLI: It is necessary to reevaluate the effectiveness of the Production Linked Incentives (PLI) scheme, creat-



THE NATIONAL SAMPLE SURVEY ORGANISATION DATA SHOWS THAT 45.5 PER CENT OF THE WORKFORCE IS EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURE, 12.4 PER CENT IN CONSTRUCTION, AND ONLY 11.6 PER CENT IN MANUFACTURING, DESPITE ITS POTENTIAL TO CREATE A MULTITUDE OF JOB OPPORTUNITIES.

ed in 2020 to invigorate the domestic manufacturing sector, showing the desired results. The progress of schemes worth over Rs.2 lakh crore covering 14 sectors, especially in labour-intensive sectors like automobiles, auto components, textiles, IT hardware, and medical devices, it has been slow.

The PLI scheme's broader goals, such as job creation, attracting substantial investments, enhancing exports, and positioning India as a global manufacturing hub, have yet to be fulfilled. **Restructure GST:** The current Goods and Service Tax (GST) structure applies to over 1250 items and services, with standard tax rates of 5%, 12%, 18%, and the highest rate of 28%. Additionally, there are zero and special rates of 0.25%, 1.5%, and 3% for certain goods and services.

To address inflation and tax-related issues, a restructuring of the tax system is necessary. This could involve transitioning from the existing four-slab structure to a two-slab model and providing exemptions for items such as farm implements, which were previously exempted under the Pre-GST regime.

Opportunities in next-generation sectors: Opportunities in renewable energy, aerospace, and high-tech manufacturing sectors such as semiconductors and mobile devices is a case in point as the \$ 12 billion exports in FY 23, more than double the \$ 4.8 billion in FY20, are rapidly emerging as the world transitions to a

green and connected future. Building a solid foundation in these sectors requires focusing on R&D, investments in technology transfers, global tie-ups, and incentivizing investments, along with collaboration across academia, industry, and the government.

Smart manufacturing stack: India's technology stack is a leading example of digital disruption at scale and showcases the country's capabilities for innovative solutions. A similar innovative leap in manufacturing, oriented toward the next generation of smart industrial clusters, connected factories, enhanced efficiency and reduced waste, high-productivity assets, end-to-end value chain transparency, and tech-enabled real-time interventions, can be significant differentiators. Accelerate future-ready infrastructure: India's inefficiencies are costing the nation heavily in time and money.

It is imperative to reduce current logistics costs from 8-10 per cent to 6 per cent of GDP by 2030. This requires a \$1.2 billion investment in industry-focused corridors. To provide a level playing field to the northern India manufacturing hubs, away from seaports, especially land-locked border states like Punjab needs policy-backed support to combat over double freight burden in comparison to southern-western states.

Labour-intensive manufacturing: As technological advancements drive productivity in manufactur-

ing across various sectors, the government also needs to address the transition of the workforce from agriculture and other fields. The 2024 India Employment Report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) emphasizes the need to promote labour-intensive manufacturing and enhance efforts in skilling. It is crucial to prioritize skill development, and industry leaders should play a pivotal role in driving this initiative.

The Way Forward: A thriving and self-reliant domestic manufacturing sector is essential for India to achieve inclusive growth by implementing an aggressive and effective reform agenda and navigating geopolitical risks and climate change-driven calamities.

It is crucial to ensure that the recent promises made in the poll can be fulfilled to transform India into a global manufacturing hub, resulting in employment generation and tangible progress. India has the capacity and resources to excel in this area, and it's time for the new government to make it happen.

(The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika ITL Group, Vice-Chairman (Cabinet minister rank) of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council and President of Tractor and Mechanization Association (TMA). Views expressed are personal)

The petrodollar system and its influence on global finance and geopolitics

A more multipolar financial ecosystem that accommodates a diverse array of currencies and economic influences is taking shape

The petrodollar system, inaugurated in 1974, has long been a linchpin of global finance and geopolitics. Established through an agreement between the United States and Saudi Arabia, it stipulated that the kingdom would exclusively sell its oil in US dollars. This arrangement not only guaranteed a consistent demand for the dollar but also directed oil revenues back into the US economy through investments in US Treasury bonds and other financial assets.

As a result, the system created a significant source of funding for the US government and solidified the dollar's status as the world's primary reserve currency. Geopolitically, the petrodollar system forged a symbiotic relationship between



SANTOSH MATHEW

the US and oil-exporting nations, particularly those in the Middle East. In exchange for security assurances and economic assistance, these countries committed to conducting oil transactions in dollars, thereby granting the US significant sway over global oil markets and the broader economy. This symbiosis reinforced the US's geopolitical influence and allowed it to project power in

the strategically vital Middle East, ensuring the uninterrupted flow of oil, which is critical for the global economy. Recent developments suggest a potential departure from this long-standing arrangement. On June 9, Saudi Arabia declared its intention to discontinue exclusive oil sales in US dollars. This decision is part of a broader strategy to diversify the Saudi economy and diminish reliance on oil revenues. The move away from the petrodollar system is seen by some as a step towards strengthening ties with other economic powers, notably China, which seeks to promote its currency, the yuan, as an alternative in global trade. The role of Henry Kissinger, a pivotal figure in establishing the petrodollar system, under-

scores its historical significance. Kissinger's negotiations with Saudi Arabia in the 1970s not only secured American dominance in global finance but also assured protection for Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, cementing their alliance with the US through military cooperation and strategic partnerships.

Reactions to Saudi Arabia's decision vary widely. Analysts speculate it could weaken the dollar's global hegemony, potentially leading to its depreciation and higher inflation rates in the US. However, mitigating factors include the US's current status as an oil exporter, reducing vulnerability to fluctuations in oil prices and currency dynamics. The broader implications for the global economy remain



uncertain. A shift away from the dollar in oil transactions could promote greater currency diversification and lessen dependence on the US financial system. For oil-importing countries, this shift could offer more stable pricing if transactions are conducted in their own currencies or other stable alternatives. In conclusion, Saudi Arabia's strategic pivot signifies a significant evolution in global financial systems.

While it may not immediately dismantle the petrodollar's influence, it signals a transition towards a more multipolar economic order, where multiple currencies could assume pivotal roles in global trade and finance. This transformation is anticipated to unfold gradually, with profound implications for international relations and economic strategies worldwide.

Throughout decades, the petrodollar system has upheld the dollar's global dominance, intertwining economic power with geopolitical influence. The petrodollar system's historical context and its prospective decline illustrate the dynamic nature of global financial and geopolitical landscapes. The shift in Saudi Arabia's pol-

icy highlights the kingdom's strategic intent to align itself more closely with emerging economic powers and reduce its over-reliance on oil revenue. This move is emblematic of a broader global trend toward economic diversification and the quest for greater financial sovereignty among oil-producing nations.

The gradual erosion of the petrodollar system could herald the rise of alternative financial paradigms, challenging the entrenched supremacy of the US dollar. As countries explore new avenues for conducting international trade and finance, the world may witness an increase in currency diversification, potentially leading to a more balanced and less US-centric global economy. Such a shift could also

encourage more equitable economic partnerships and reduce the economic vulnerabilities associated with dependence on a single dominant currency. Moreover, the potential decline of the petrodollar system invites reexamination of existing geopolitical alliances and economic dependencies.

The ripple effects of these changes could extend beyond the realm of finance, influencing international diplomacy, trade policies, and even security dynamics. The focus will likely shift toward fostering a more multipolar financial ecosystem that accommodates a diverse array of currencies and economic influences.

(The writer is an associate professor; views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS

Groww Asset Management, trustee settle case with Sebi; pay Rs 9 lakh

Groww Asset Management Ltd (formerly known as Indiabulls Asset Management Company Ltd) and its trustee have settled with markets watchdog Sebi a case pertaining to alleged violation of regulatory norms after paying Rs 9 lakh.



Allcargo Gati raises Rs 169.28 crore through QIP

Express logistics firm Allcargo Gati Ltd on Tuesday said it has raised Rs 169.28 crore by issuing equity shares through a Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP).



India's coal production rises 14% in June

The country's coal production rose by 14.49 per cent to 84.63 million tonne (MT) in June. The country's coal output was 73.92 MT in June last fiscal, according to provisional figures of the government.



RBI proposes rationalising norms on ex-im transactions

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The RBI on Tuesday proposed rationalising regulations that cover export and import transactions with an aim to promote ease of doing business and empower banks to provide more efficient service to their foreign exchange customers.



The central bank has issued 'Regulation of Foreign Trade under Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999 - Draft Regulations and Directions' in this regard.

An exporter who has been cautioned listed can undertake export only against receipt of advance payment in full or against an irrecoverable letter of credit, to the satisfaction of the authorised dealer.

Sensex, Nifty close flat after hitting fresh lifetime highs

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty hit fresh lifetime high levels before closing flat due to profit-taking in select banking and telecom shares amid mixed global cues on Tuesday.

Centre developing platform for resolution of non-trade barriers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The commerce ministry is developing a platform for registering non-tariff barriers (NTBs) faced by exporters and taking up with the concerned countries for their resolution, a senior official said.

The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) has suggested a two-pronged strategy to mitigate the influence of NTBs on exports.



agriculture products face problems due to higher pesticide levels, presence of pests and contaminations due to foot and mouth disease. India's exports are far below potential as they face NTBs in the EU (European Union), the US, China, Japan, Korea and many other countries.

Chhattisgarh govt launches 'single window system 2.0' for ease of industrialists

PNS ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Tuesday launched the second edition of the 'single window system' (SWS) to facilitate speedy approvals of various clearances required for setting up industries.



operates a 'single window system' portal which has been updated and re-launched, Sai said.

tolerance towards corruption" are top priorities of the government. The online facility helps simplify the process by reducing administrative physical interference in the grant of clearances and approvals, he said.

Divine Power Energy's makes stellar debut; shares jump over 284%

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Divine Power Energy Ltd, a manufacturer of insulated wires and strips, on Tuesday made a remarkable debut, closing with a premium of more than 284 per cent against the issue price of Rs 40.

'Country's peak power demand may cross 400 GW by FY32'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's peak power demand may surpass the projected 384 GW mark and even cross 400 GW by 2031-32, according to Power Secretary Pankaj Agarwal.

Speaking at the CII-Smart Metering Conference, the official on Tuesday said peak power demand had already reached 250 GW in May.

As per official data, peak demand was around 209 GW on Monday. He further said beneficiaries of PM Surya Ghar Yojana must be provided meters under the RDSS scheme.

Stock broking firms tumble; Angel One tanks nearly 9%

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of stock broking firms declined on Tuesday, a day after markets regulator Sebi directed stock exchanges and other market infrastructure institutions (MIIs) to implement a uniform and equal charge structure for all members rather than varying charges based on their volume or activity.

4.19 per cent, SMC Global Securities went lower by 2.81 per cent, Dolat Algotech declined 2.28 per cent and 5paisa Capital dipped 0.05 per cent on the BSE.

stock exchanges, clearing corporations, and depositories constituted as MIIs to ensure that any charges recovered from the end client are 'True to Label'.

Kotak Mahindra Bank shares decline over 2%; mcap erodes by Rs 7,777 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Kotak Mahindra Bank on Tuesday declined over 2 per cent, wiping out Rs 7,777.33 crore from its market capitalisation as the company's name cropped up in the Adani-Hindenburg row.

ICICI Bank launches Forex Card for students

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Private sector lender ICICI Bank on Tuesday launched a pre-paid Saphiro Forex Card, crafted specifically for students who are going abroad for higher education.

ICICI Bank launches Forex Card for students

The card, powered by Visa, provides exclusive benefits and convenience to students and their parents to manage education-related expenses abroad like admission fees, course-related fees and other day-to-day expenses, including travel, dining and groceries, among others, the bank said in a statement.

The card offers the freedom of loading and transacting in 15 currencies without any cross-currency mark-up charge being levied by the bank, allowing students to conveniently travel across the globe even if they load only one currency on the card, it added.

The card comes with an array of joining benefits up to Rs 15,000, along with exclusive privileges, it said.

Iffco launches campaign to boost nano-fertiliser adoption in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (Iffco) on Tuesday said it has launched a major initiative to promote the use of nano-fertilisers among farmers across India.

The "Nano Fertilizer Usage Promotion Mahaabhiyan" aims to create 200 model nano village clusters, covering 800 villages, where farmers will receive a 25 per cent subsidy on the maximum retail price (MRP) of Nano Urea Plus, Nano DAP, and Sagarika fertilisers, it added.

International toy fair to begin on July 6; over 100 foreign buyers to participate

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More than 300 domestic companies and over 100 foreign buyers from the US, Germany and other countries are expected to participate in the four-day international toy fair beginning on July 6 in the national capital, a statement said on Tuesday.



Gautam said that the 15th Toy Biz International B2B Expo 2024 is the largest fair in South Asia. "It is a big platform for Indian toy makers to showcase their products and capabilities to the global audience. It helps us attract new customers and partners, expand market reach for our toys and boost exports," he said.

Gautam, who is also the CEO of Noida-based Little Genius Toys Pvt Ltd, also suggested the government provide fiscal support to manufacturers in organising these fairs. "At least Rs 1 lakh should be given to all the stalls in these fairs. At present, we are providing hotel accommodation to foreign buyers and ticket cost up to Rs 1 lakh," he added.

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation procurement notices with details on bids and dates.

'I DON'T WANT MY DAUGHTER SEE ME PLAYING NEGATIVE ROLES'

TEJAL SINHA

Every daily soap viewer will remember Sangita Ghosh as Muskaan Mallik in *Mehndi Tere Naam Ki* or Pammi in *Des Mein Niklla Hoga Chand*. These back-to-back shows had made her a household name in the television industry. Well, her stint in the industry goes way beyond that, but hey, why do we talk about it when we have her for an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*? "Oh god, you are making me sit and think about it (we laugh). It's been a long journey, but it has just passed by. Television you work day in and out. You don't realise it. These days, people come up and meet me on sets and say, 'Humne aapka yeh show dekha tha and oh god, you still look the same.' It's then that I realise 'Itne saal hogaye. I need to tell them all, 'Relax guys, don't make me old, tee-hee.'"

However, it's been a rewarding journey for her and considering getting the opportunity to work on shows loved by people with good teams, she says, it's been quite a fulfilling journey with a lot more to come.

Initially, she began her journey as a child actor before she could get her big break at the age of around 23 with *Mehndi Tere Naam Ki*. She did do shows, including *Daraar* and *Adhikaar*, but in a supporting role. Back then, she recalls, "We did not think of it as struggles. I did it because I wanted to do television and amongst many other reasons, I started liking what I was doing. I was not sure what I was going to do. I gave an audition and got selected for one of the roles and that's how the journey started. Struggles, however, if you ask, were reaching the studios on time. I was fortunate that, back then, at that time, I got to work with very good people. Initially, you do have struggles, but I don't want to get into them and glorify them. I don't consider it a struggle, but just like your learning period."

No doubt, vamps and villains play a significant role in television shows, or even films, for that matter. And what is a show with a negative character? If you look back at her stints, she too has played several negative characters, including *Doli Saja Ke*, *Rishton Ka Chakravayuh* and *Divya Drishti*. So is there like another type of fascination for such roles, we wonder and the *Kehta Hai Dil Je Le Zara* actress gleefully shares, "Thank you for reminding me of *Doli* (she giggles). *Doli Saja Ke* was the first show where I played an antagonist! *Doli* was offered to me by Aruna Ji, which was a cameo and I couldn't say no to her. With her itself, I had worked on her shows as a protagonist and she asked me. For her, I can do anything. Even if she asks me to give a passion shot, I'd love to do it. *Rishton Ka Chakravayuh*: I found the role to be very prompt and it didn't bother me that I was not the protagonist of the show. The way the role was narrated, I was just hooked on it."

But with *Divya Drishti*, on the other hand, she did have questions in her mind about how the maker felt that she could do justice to the role! She further continues, "It was a fantasy show and I genuinely didn't think of playing a 'Pisachini'. When I met Mukta, she was like, just do it; you'll have fun. It was something different and I wanted to challenge myself. I didn't know how I would do it, but once I did that show, I had so much fun."

It was so much fun for her on the sets that there were times she'd end up laughing at the dialogue she had to say. Then came *Swaran Ghar*, with whom she wasn't sure about playing a negative character, keeping in mind that she has a daughter now. "I wasn't sure whether I wanted my daughter to see me playing a negative role because, she's just two and a-half. Luckily, she's not watching television and I was like, let's do it until she watches me on-screen! She needs to grow up to know that these are just roles and



Sangita Ghosh, an actress, is well-known in the industry for her ability to bring characters to life on screen. In an exclusive phone conversation with *The Pioneer*, she discusses her journey, her skepticism about portraying unpleasant characters and her thoughts on making movies.

this generally does not happen in real life."

She also recalls one of the incidents when her daughter somehow watched a clip of her feeling playing that character, where she fell dizzy. And her daughter immediately called her, saying, 'Mumma girl gayi'.

Going ahead, she feels very fortunate to be getting to play different lead roles. "We need to look for roles that have a lot of meat. I feel antagonistic roles have a lot of meat, are fun, purposeful and colourful. If you can crack it, then it's a lot of fun to play it," says the *Nach Baliye* star, adding, "I don't think playing negative characters should really impact. Personally, I understand the difference between what's real and what's reel. I always tend to leave it behind. As an actor, I do try to feel the backstory of the character. There are times I ask my director, 'Yeh aurat pagal toh nahi hai na'. However, I believe that there are flaws within everyone and I don't approach any such character with pressure. I try to have fun and bring my own logic to it."

Talking of her negative roles, she's once again seen playing the role of an antagonist, Saroj, in Sun Neo's *Saajha Sindoor*. Getting onboard was no less than a cakewalk for her, having known the makers already. With Nandita, she goes back to a much-long association, right from *Mehndi Tere Naam Ki* to *Des Mein Niklla Hoga Chand* and many more. "I got a chance to work with her after 17 years, so I was in. However, when she told me it was an antagonist, I was in two minds. However, she convinced me that if I'd do it, the role would be something else. Then I knew the writer also and I have been working with him for a long time. He narrated the role, and something just hit within and I was like, Let's do it. There was a lot of back and forth, but again, just because it was a negative role was not the reason, but a lot of things, like thinking about my daughter, I had to leave her in Jaipur and travel to Mumbai. I wanted the role to be worth it for me to leave my daughter and travel. I had immense trust in the team and so I went along."

Working with Sun Neo on Sun TV was again a plus point for her to get on board. She further found it intriguing to play a second wife.

For *Parvarish* fame, it's always been about the role, the production house and the vibe. Sangita, who doesn't limit herself to any genre or character on a concluding note, speaks of why she hasn't worked in films. She humorously shares, "Koi offer hi nahi karta, kya kare. I don't really sit and think much about it, I feel that if it has to come to me, it will. I am okay with giving auditions, but not to prove myself as an actor. If the director thinks I might fit in that role, then that's different, but not to prove my capability. I have worked for so many years. Even if I had to give 100 auditions to play that particular role, I would do it, but sorry, I wouldn't give auditions just to check if I could act or not."

Evicted but unbroken: Payal Malik cheers on her Bigg Boss allies

AARTI SREENATH

In a surprising turn of events, the last eviction from the ongoing season of *Bigg Boss OTT 3* saw the eviction of Payal Malik, leaving many fans in shock and disappointment. However, despite her early exit, Payal expressed her unwavering support for her two 'sher's, Armaan and Kritika Malik. "Though I have been evicted, I feel happy that two of my 'sher's are still in the game. I would definitely support them and hope at least one of them wins the *Bigg Boss* title," she declared with characteristic enthusiasm in this exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*. Talking of *Bigg Boss* as a whole, there's always a debate on whether the show is scripted or not. Well, initially, Payal was also one of them. However, addressing these misconceptions, she shares, "I had a very wrong notion that the show was scripted, but after entering the house, I realised it was all genuine."

Her comments have lent a new level of credibility to the show, which has often been criticised for allegedly manipulating events for dramatic effect. However, her praise for the show's authenticity was tempered by her disappointment over her eviction. "I feel bad that I was evicted at an early stage. The eviction process wasn't genuine at all. I had to leave the house only because of the other contestants," she asserted. This candid admission has sparked discussions among fans and viewers about the fairness of the eviction process!

Throughout her journey, Payal highlighted that though she had Armaan and Kritika, Ranvir Shorey, Sana Maqbool, and Chandrika Dixit, aka the

'Vadapav girl', she felt supported unwaveringly, helping her further navigate the ups and downs of the *Bigg Boss* house.

"When everyone used to dance in the morning and share their stories, it used to be my favourite part of the day," Payal recalled. These moments of camaraderie were a welcome respite from the often tense and competitive atmosphere of the house.

Her advice to the future participants is clear and direct: "Start playing as soon as you enter the house. Don't wait for others to start, or you might get evicted." Payal emphasised the importance of being proactive and strategic from the very beginning, a lesson she learned the hard way through her own experience.

In addition to her reflections on the game, Payal also addressed when asked about a viral video where Sana Maqbool questioned Armaan Malik about their situation, specifically if it would have been acceptable if Payal had gotten married to someone else. He blatantly denied it, to which Payal responded, "Initially, it was difficult for me to accept, but due to certain reasons, I had to. It was a shocker, but later I had no other option."

Sharing the challenges of having her personal life broadcasted so publicly, Payal admitted it was tough initially but has since grown accustomed to it.

"Explaining our situation to new people we meet has become less painful over time, but it still affects me when people are too intrusive. I have now learned to cope with the public interest and maintain my composure." When asked if she would consider returning as a wild card entry, Payal enthusiastically responded, "I would love to make an entrance as a wild card." Her readiness to re-enter the house underscores her competitive spirit and her desire to continue her journey on *Bigg Boss*.

EX-BIGG BOSS OTT 3 PARTICIPANT AND WELL-KNOWN YOUTUBER PAYAL MALIK WAS THE ONE TO BE ELIMINATED FROM THE SHOW. IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE PIONEER, SHE TALKS ABOUT HER EVICTION AND WHAT SHE LEARNED FROM THE SHOW.



Goodness of 'centella asiatica' for overall well-being

Centella Asiatica, commonly known as *Gotu Kola*, is a herb with a rich history in traditional medicine, particularly in Asian cultures. Known for its wide range of benefits for both skin and overall health, Centella Asiatica is often regarded as a powerhouse for wellness and beauty.

For skin benefits, it stands out due to its ability to promote wound healing. Compounds like asiaticoside in the herb boost collagen production and enhance the tensile strength of new skin, aiding in faster recovery from injuries. Its anti-aging properties are equally impressive. Rich in antioxidants, it combats free radicals that cause premature aging. It helps maintain skin elasticity and firmness by stimulating collagen production, thereby reducing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.

A standout feature of it is its ability

to reduce inflammation. This makes it an effective treatment for conditions like eczema, psoriasis and acne. The herb soothes irritated skin and reduces redness, providing relief from discomfort. Additionally, it hydrates and nourishes the skin naturally. Packed with amino acids, beta carotene, fatty acids and phytochemicals, it helps maintain the skin's moisture barrier, leaving it soft and supple.

Centella Asiatica also improves skin tone and texture. Regular use can lead to a more even skin tone and smoother texture. It reduces the appearance of scars and blemishes, contributing to a clearer complexion.

The health benefits of the herb are equally impressive. Traditionally used to boost cognitive function, studies suggest it may enhance memory, improve concentration, and reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. It

is believed to protect brain cells and improve circulation, which can help prevent cognitive decline.

Supporting cardiovascular health is another significant benefit. Centella Asiatica helps strengthen veins and capillaries, improving circulation and reducing the risk of conditions like varicose veins and chronic venous insufficiency. It also promotes digestive health by aiding digestion and alleviating stomach issues such as indigestion and ulcers. Its anti-inflammatory properties soothe the

digestive tract and promote a healthy gut environment.

The herb is known for its anti-anxiety and stress relief properties. As an adaptogen, it helps the body cope with stress, having a calming effect on the nervous system, which can reduce anxiety levels and promote a sense of well-being. Additionally, it boosts the immune system by stimulating the produc-

tion of white blood cells that fight off infections, and its antioxidant properties protect the body from oxidative stress and free radical damage.

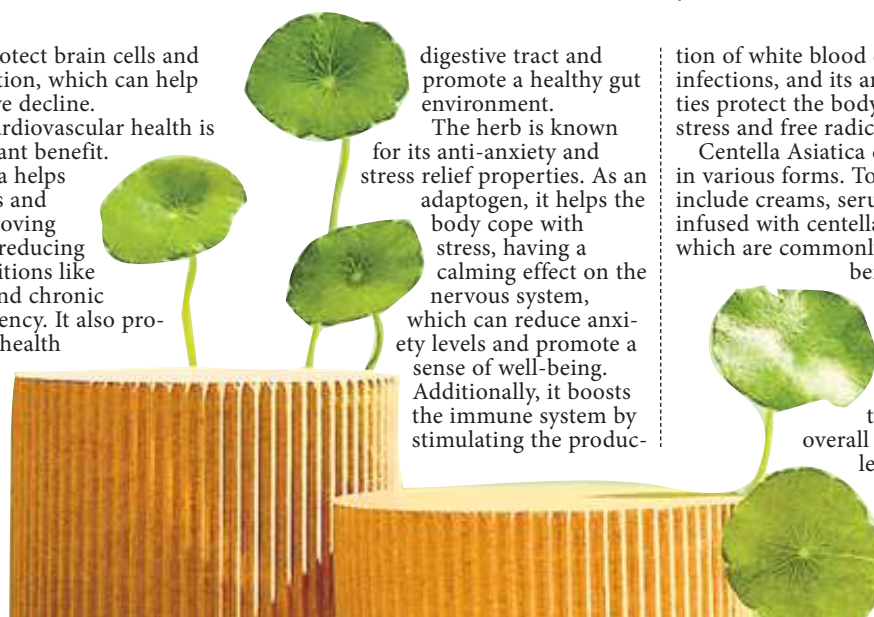
Centella Asiatica can be consumed in various forms. Topical applications include creams, serums and ointments infused with centella asiatica extract, which are commonly used for skin

benefits. Supplements, such as capsules or tablets containing *Gotu Kola* extract, can be taken to improve overall health. Dried leaves can be brewed into teas and liquid extracts can be added to beverages.

Gotu Kola,

embodies a rich tradition of healing and rejuvenation in Asian medicine, offering profound benefits for both skin and health. Its role in promoting wound healing, reducing inflammation, and enhancing cognitive function underscores its versatility and effectiveness. Whether applied topically in skincare products or consumed as a supplement, it continues to prove its value in supporting overall well-being. Embracing this botanical powerhouse can lead to healthier, more resilient skin and a strengthened foundation for holistic health. Integrating centella asiatica into daily routines offers a natural path towards vitality and beauty, rooted in centuries of herbal wisdom and modern scientific validation.

(The author, Dr. Aravind Badiger, is a Technical Director at BDR Pharmaceuticals.)





The HCL Foundation, held the fifth HCLTech Grant Pan-India Symposium 2024 with the theme "Strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions through CSR", at G Narayanamma Institute of Technology and Science (For Women) in Hyderabad.



The newly chosen club president, general secretary and treasurer of the 2024-25 Lions Club of Hyderabad Nava Bharata are Dr. Hypno Padma Kamalakar, B. Vani Vinay and Geetha.



By collaborating with the Indian agricultural organisation TAFE Motors and Tractors Limited, DEUTZ is able to increase its operations in India and take advantage of one of the world's fastest-growing marketplaces. The division of TAFE, the third-biggest tractor producer globally, is TAFE Motors.

PARTY



Tasva has taken on the prestigious task of designing the ceremonial dress for Team India at the upcoming Paris Olympics 2024. Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, launched the Official Ceremonial Dress for Team India in the presence of Indian Olympics Association President, Dr PT Usha. Tasva is all set to bring to Paris, the fashion capital of the world, its fresh take on Indian traditional wear.



At the Atharva Bharat 2024, Suroskie received the esteemed Chanakya Award. Recently, Summit India, in collaboration with the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE), organised the event at the Hotel Le Meridien.



Avaan Excess, a pioneer in excess baggage services and a member of the Avaan India Group has opened its operations at Hyderabad International Airport. Moving forward, Avaan aims to expand its footprint in major airports worldwide.

Tydy is a human resources technology firm that specialises in providing pre-boarding and onboarding experiences for workers from the time of hire until retirement. Phenom announced that it has acquired Tydy. The platform's goal of reducing employee time to productivity and enhancing the user experience for HR professionals on a single platform is strengthened by its fifth acquisition and portfolio addition.



Clinikally partners with Zippee to offer same-day delivery

Clinikally has recently undertaken the strategic step of offering same-day delivery to its customers in collaboration with Zippee. It proves to be a pivotal step in helping Clinikally overcome order fulfillment challenges across the NCR, Haryana, Punjab and other cities while establishing itself as a leading dermatologist and wellness platform.

Supply6 welcomes AB De Villiers as brand ambassador and investor

Supply6, a Bangalore-based health food brand founded by Vaibhav Bhandari and Rahul Jacob, has welcomed former South African international cricketer AB De Villiers as a brand ambassador and investor. Their flagship product, Supply6 360, embodies a holistic approach to nutrition, aligning perfectly with AB De Villiers' 360-degree cricketing prowess. Each product provides varying levels of the six essential pillars of nutrition: protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals and fibre, tailored to meet specific health needs.

Marriott Executive Apartments Hyd unveils 'Altair'

Marriott Executive Apartments Hyderabad announces the unveiling of a brand-new banquet space—Altair—to bring to the city a curated address boasting indoor and outdoor spaces to suit every kind of gathering: whether small or large, or for business or leisure. The space has been fully functional, with a tailored focus on corporate conferences, MICE gatherings, personal celebrations and wedding extravaganzas.

LI S T I N G S

KIET launches an electrical and computer engineering course

KIET Group of Institutions is excited to announce the launch of its new 'Electrical and Computer Engineering' program. Available for students with effect from the academic session 2024-25, the course has been designed to provide in-depth knowledge and hands-on experience in the core subjects of electrical and computer engineering. The program aligns with the institute's vision to achieve excellence in technical education and create industry-ready, competent professionals for the country's socio-economic development.

Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth inks alliance with University of Leeds

Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth announced the signing of a strategic MoU with the University of Leeds, one of the largest universities in the UK. The MoU was signed by and between Prof. Hai-Sui Yu, Interim Vice Chancellor and President, University of Leeds and Dr. Nirimal Coumare V., Director of Hospitals, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth, in the presence of Dr. Prashanth Rajagopalan, Trustee, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth; Dr. Urjitha Rajagopalan, Trustee, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth; Prof. Nihar Ranjan Biswas, Vice Chancellor, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth and Ms. Asha K., General Manager (Admin), Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth.

'My First Library'

MTG Learning Media has launched 'My First Library' to redefine early childhood learning for children aged 1 to 3. This innovative series of ten board books redefines early childhood education with its unique approach to developing strong reading skills. While many books for toddlers aim to entertain and educate, 'My First Library' goes beyond the standard offerings.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



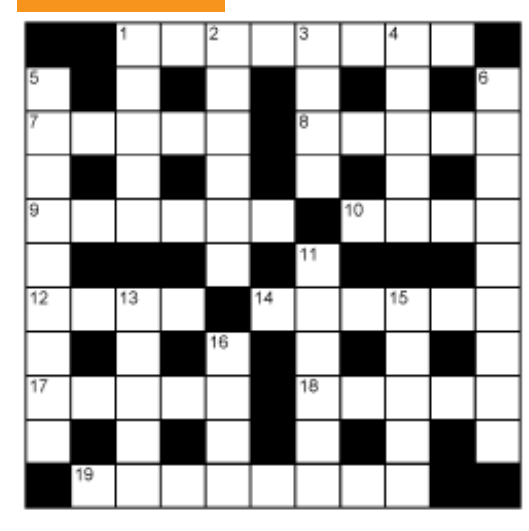
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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**
- Speaks very quietly
 - A builder follows these when building a house
 - The backbone
 - Athens is the capital city of this country
 - Fewer
 - You see with these
 - The large country just north of the USA
 - Weary
 - Near
 - Young people
 - Lift up
 - Food that looks like lots of worms
 - A daily publication
 - A small dish under a cup
 - Garden soil
 - A nut from an oak tree
 - A worshipped statue
- DOWN**
- A huge sea mammal
 - A six-legged creature
 - Shove
- SOLUTION**
- | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | C | A | R | I | A | I | E | |
| M | S | T | E | W | | | | |
| B | L | U | E | C | E | A | S | E |
| U | A | H | S | E | I | | | |
| L | I | A | C | Q | U | E | E | N |
| A | N | O | | | | | | |
| N | I | C | E | D | E | S | K | S |
| C | E | A | M | E | A | | | |
| E | M | B | E | R | S | M | E | N |
| E | N | I | D | R | | | | |
| N | T | E | A | C | H | E | R | S |



'My role in *Viraaji* is unlike any I've played before'

PNS | HYDERABAD

Fresh off the success of his recent film *Nindha*, Varun Sandesh is all set to enthrall audiences once again with his upcoming project, *Viraaji*. Produced by Mahendra Nath Kondla under the M3 Media banner in collaboration with Maha Movies, *Viraaji* marks the directorial debut of Adhyanth Harsha, promising a fresh perspective and a captivating narrative.

The excitement surrounding *Viraaji* peaked with a grand title launch event held at Hyderabad's Prasad Labs on Tuesday, where the team unveiled the film's intriguing title and shared insights into what audiences can expect from this venture.

According to the director, *Viraaji* is a strong title, and the film will showcase Varun Sandesh in a completely new avatar. This film is being made by a

bunch of newcomers and the makers sought support from the audience. "The soon-to-be-revealed first look will undoubtedly impress you. This film is tailor-made for Varun Sandesh," said the director.

In a quick conversation with us, Varun Sandesh revealed his initial reaction to the script, saying, "When Harsha narrated the story of *Viraaji* to me, I was immediately captivated. The first half was intriguing, but it was the second half that truly gripped me. I saw immense potential in the narrative and knew I wanted to be a part of it."

Reflecting on the success of *Nindha*, which marked a significant milestone in his career, Varun Sandesh added, "The response to *Nindha* has been overwhelming, and it has been a great source of motivation for me. Just like *Nindha*, *Viraaji* promises to be a refreshing experience for the audience."

Speaking about his character in



Viraaji, Varun Sandesh teased, "This role is unlike any I've played before. It required extensive preparation, and I can confidently say it's one of my craziest yet. The first look at the film, set to be unveiled on the July 10, will give audiences a glimpse into this exciting journey."



Kubera team teases fans with a sneak peek of Rashmika's character

Sekhar Kammula, a National Award-winning director best known for films like *Fidaa* and *Love Story*, is the director of *Kubera*.

For the first time, Dhanush and filmmaker Sekhar Kammula collaborated on the movie, which has definitely generated excitement among viewers. A sneak peek into Rashmika Mandanna's character in the movie has now been revealed by the directors, who guarantee that it "intrigues with every layer!"

The official Rashmika look teases a character revelation that will happen on July 5, 2024, but does not show her appearance. The character of Nagarjuna Akkineni in the film had already been teased by the directors.

The movie, which also stars Jim Sarbh and Nagarjuna, is produced by Suniel Narang and Puskur Ram Mohan Rao under the auspices of Sree Venkateswara Cinemas LLP, an Asian Group company, in collaboration with Amigos Creations Pvt Ltd, and is presented by Sonali Narang.

Rashmika will next be seen in *Pushpa: The Rise* and was last seen in Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Animal*. In her kitty, she also has *Rainbow*, *The Girlfriend* and *Chaava*.



'Frustrated Anthem' from *Darling* out now!



The upcoming romantic comedy *Darling*, starring Priyadarshi and Nabha Natesh and directed by debutant Aswin Raam, has been generating considerable excitement ahead of its release. Produced by K Niranjan Reddy and Chaitanya of PrimeShow Entertainment, the film has already made waves with its entertaining promos and hit songs. Following the success of its first single, touted as a 'Frustrated Anthem', the makers have now unveiled the film's second single, *Raahi Re*. Unlike its predecessor, *Raahi Re* is a delightful melody that serves as the perfect soundtrack for solo adventures. The accompanying visuals feature Nabha Natesh embarking on a solo trip across various picturesque locations in India, capturing unforgettable moments along the way. Cinematographer Naresh Ramadurai has beautifully captured the essence of these journeys. Nabha Natesh shines in *Raahi Re*, complemented by Vivek Sagar's striking composition and the catchy lyrics penned by Kasarla Shyam. Kapil Kapilan's vocals add a magical touch to the song, ensuring it resonates instantly with listeners, much like the first single. The film *Darling* also features Brahmanandam, Vishnu, Krishna Tej, Ananya Nagalla and several other talented actors in pivotal roles. A team of skilled technicians, including dialogue writer Hemanth, editor Pradeep E Ragav of *Love Today* and production designer Gandhi, contributes to the film's visual and narrative appeal.

Scheduled for a worldwide release on July 19, *Darling* promises to be a refreshing take on romance, infused with humor and memorable musical moments. As anticipation builds, fans of Priyadarshi and Nabha Natesh eagerly await the film's release, anticipating a blend of laughter, romance, and heartwarming melodies.

Russian beauty in *Ninnu Vadalanu*



Brace yourselves for a spine-chilling cinematic experience as *Ninnu Vadalanu*, a gripping horror suspense thriller, prepares to captivate audiences. Directed by Sheraz Mehdil and produced by Ashok Khullar, with co-production by Devendra Negi under the banners of UVT Hollywood Studio (USA) and Shreya Productions, this film promises to be a unique blend of terror and intrigue. Starring Lyuba Palm and Khushbu Jain in pivotal roles, alongside noted actors Gangadhar, Vizag Sharif, Vizag Ravi Teja, Ajay and Ananth, *Ninnu Vadalanu* unfolds its haunting tale against the atmospheric backdrops of Goa and Hyderabad.

Lyuba Palm, hailing from Russia, brings a wealth of international experience to the Telugu film industry. A multifaceted talent, she has not only graced screens but also delved into producing and writing. In Russia, Palm's credits include producing the documentary *Save the Children* and contributing as a writer and producer to the TV series *Love Over Evil*. Now, she steps into the spotlight with *Ninnu Vadalanu*, marking her debut in Telugu cinema.

Commenting on her role and the film, Lyuba Palm shared, "I'm thrilled to be a part of *Ninnu Vadalanu*. It's a genre that challenges me as an artist and the script immediately resonated with me. Working alongside such a talented team has been a rewarding experience."

Rakul Preet Singh is eager to return to her Telugu roots!



Rakul Preet Singh, who made her Hindi film debut with *Yaariyan*, is currently at the peak of her career, with several projects lined up for release. But according to a recent post, Singh might make her comeback with a Telugu film down south. The actress dropped a hint through an Instagram story that has got her fans excited about her upcoming venture. In a recent AMA session, Rakul revealed she is reading Telugu scripts. Talking about the same, she said, "I really miss all my Telugu fans, and I really want to do a Telugu film soon. I'm just waiting for the right script—maybe something that's exciting because I feel the part of me, which is the 'Telugu Amma', is really missing Telugu now, so hopefully soon. I'm reading a couple of things, hopefully soon."

Rakul Preet Singh worked in the Telugu film *Venkatadri Express* and the Tamil film *Thadaiyara Thaakka*, as well as other Tamil and Telugu films like *Loukyam*, *Pandaga Chesko*, *Sarrainodu*, *Dhruva* and *Nannaku Prematho*. Rakul Preet Singh is a renowned name in the South Indian film industry and has marked her presence with her humongous success in films and her remarkable acting.

With a strong lineage in South Indian cinema, one of Bollywood's most admired and prettiest actresses, Rakul Preet Singh, has an incredible slate of films, including the highly anticipated *Indian 2*, which stars the legendary Kamal Haasan. Rakul's *De De Pyaar De 2* has been a major project because of the original installment's success. Her next film, *Mere Husband Ki Biwi*, is slated to release after *De De Pyaar De 2* and *Indian 2*. It looks like a delightful ride. She also has *Ameri* scheduled, which is expected to be an intense drama.

RAM CHARAN, VIKRAM REDDY'S *THE INDIA HOUSE* LAUNCHED

Global star Ram Charan, in collaboration with Vikram Reddy of UV Creations under V Mega Pictures, and Abhishek Agarwal Arts, known for their groundbreaking films, has embarked on a new cinematic journey with the prestigious pan India project, *The India House*. Directed by Ram Vamsi Krishna, the film promises to be a captivating period drama set in 1905, exploring themes of love and revolution. The grand pooja ceremony for *The India House* took place amidst the majestic surroundings of Virupaksha Temple in Hampi (Kishkinda), marking a fitting beginning for this ambitious venture. The event was attended by the core team, including the lead actor Nikhil Siddharth, lead actress Saiee Manjrekar and veteran actor Anupam Kher, who plays a pivotal role in the film.

Ram Charan, expressing his enthusiasm for the project, stated, "I am excited to venture into film production with *The India House*. We aim to deliver cinema that not only entertains but also leaves a lasting impact on audiences worldwide." Vikram Reddy of UV Creations added, "We are proud to partner with Ram Charan in this endeavour to create path-breaking cinema. *The India House* is a testament to our commitment to storytelling that transcends boundaries." Abhishek Agarwal, known for his visionary productions, commented, "We are thrilled to collaborate on *The India House*, a film that promises to captivate audiences with its rich narrative and stellar cast."

Director Ram Vamsi Krishna, known for his creative prowess, shared insights about the film, saying, "It's an honor to helm *The India House*, a project that blends historical intrigue with emotional depth. We have assembled a talented team to bring this epic story to life." The film's regular shoot commences on Wednesday (today), promising to showcase the craftsmanship of seasoned technicians. Cameron Bryson will handle cinematography, capturing the essence of the period setting, while Vishal Abani takes charge as the production designer, ensuring authenticity in every frame.



Raashii Khanna reveals *Talakhon Mein Ek* is 'one of the toughest films' she did

After wreaking havoc with the recently released *Aranmanai 4*, Raashii Khanna is gearing up to feature in *Talakhon Mein Ek*, alongside Vikrant Massey. Khanna, who has never shied away from experimenting with roles and films, opened up about *Talakhon Mein Ek* and said, "It is one of the toughest films I have done." Raashii further shared that she has given her "heart and soul" to the film. The young Pan-Indian actress also assured that the audience would get to see her in a "different" role.

Currently, the versatile powerhouse is basking in the success of her horror comedy *Aranmanai 4*. The film not only ended the dry spell at the Tamil box office but also established Raashii as the golden girl of the industry, who scored her third consecutive hit with the Sundar C directorial.

Beyond *Talakhon Mein Ek*, Raashii will be seen sharing the screen space with Vikrant Massey yet again in their upcoming collaboration *The Sabarmati Report*, which is slated for a theatrical release on August 2. Beyond a lineup of these interesting projects, the actress also has a Telugu film *Telusu Kada* in the pipeline.

Revisiting tragic history of Bengal with *Maa Kaali*

In a bold cinematic endeavour, People Media Factory and director Vijay Yelakanti, known for their upcoming project *Karthikaya 2*, are set to illuminate a significant yet often overlooked chapter of Indian history with *Maa Kaali*. This compelling narrative delves into the harrowing events of the 1946 Calcutta Killings, which marked a pivotal moment leading to India's partition. The film stars Raima Sen and Abhishek Singh, a former IAS officer turned actor, in prominent roles. Unveiling the poster for *Maa Kaali*, the makers have announced the teaser launch scheduled for July 4. This true pan-India film aims to shed light on the tragic events of Direct Action Day and the Naokhali massacres, events that left an indelible mark on Bengal's history.

Director Vijay Yelakanti expressed, "*Maa Kaali* is a tribute to the lives lost during the ruthless massacre driven by power and ambition. The events of August 16, 1946, known as 'The Week of Long Knives', continue to resonate as an untold story of human suffering. Through this film, we strive to give voice to the victims and bring their stories to the forefront."

The film, shot in Hindi and set for release in Bengali and Telugu as well, promises to explore the deep-rooted scars left by communal violence in Bengal. Producer TG Vishwa Prasad and co-producer Vivek Kuchibhotla are confident that *Maa Kaali* will spark important socio-political conversations across the nation. Raima Sen, making a powerful comeback to the big screen, plays a pivotal role in *Maa Kaali*, embodying the spirit of resilience and remembrance amidst historical turmoil. As the teaser launch approaches, anticipation mounts for *Maa Kaali*, a film poised to uncover a chapter of history that demands attention and reflection.



Suhas' next with Dil Raju titled *Janaka Aithe Ganaka*

Dil Raju Productions, renowned for their recent blockbuster *Balagam*, is gearing up for another promising venture titled *Janaka Aithe Ganaka*, featuring the talented actor Suhas in the lead role. This marks the prestigious production house's fourth production, following their successful launch in December last year.

Directed by Sandeep Reddy Bandla, known for his work on *Saifaa* and presented by Shriish, the film has generated buzz with its intriguing premise and impressive cast. Sankeerthana Vipin, known for her elegance, stars opposite Suhas as the female lead, while Harshith Reddy and Hanshitha Reddy are handling the project's production. The announcement of the film's title, *Janaka Aithe Ganaka*, was accompanied by the release of its captivating first look, which hints at a blend of family entertainment and courtroom drama. In the poster, Suhas is depicted holding a slate adorned with the film's title, his expression laden with intrigue. The imagery also features symbols evoking justice, a children's school bag, a school bus and a teddy bear, hinting at the film's thematic depth. Expressing his excitement about the project, Suhas commented, "I'm thrilled to be a part of *Janaka Aithe Ganaka*. It's a departure from my recent roles and promises to offer something unique to audiences. I'm eager for viewers to experience this engaging tale."

The film's teaser, scheduled for release on July 4, is expected to further tantalize audiences with glimpses of its narrative richness and Suhas's compelling portrayal. With cinematography by Sai Sriram and music composed by Vijay Bulganin, known for his work in *Baby*, the technical aspects of the film are poised to elevate its storytelling.



Lot of time for me to sleep, for now I want to live every second of this win: Rohit

PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

Rohit Sharma held the T20 World Cup trophy like a new-born baby as he walked towards the beach here for the triumphant captain's post-tournament photo shoot, a serene smile refusing to leave his face and the feeling of being a world champion yet to fully sink in. He couldn't be faulted for being a bit dazed. After all, a jinx that lasted over a decade had been broken. "It's surreal. It feels like a dream. It feels like it hasn't happened. Although it has happened but it feels like it hasn't happened," Rohit laughed trying to process his thoughts after 24 hours while talking to BCCI.TV. The coastal city of

Bridgetown is battling a hurricane. The same could also be said about the Indian captain, only that his is a battle to control a gamut of emotions threatening to overwhelm him like a huge sea wave every now and then. "Last night we had a good time, we had a blast with the teammates till the early morning," he couldn't stop grinning before becoming a touch emotional. I would say I didn't sleep properly but that's absolutely fine by me. There is a lot of time for me to go back and sleep. "I want to live this moment, each minute, each second that is passing by and will try to make the most of it," he said describing how it felt to lead an Indian team to its first ICC title in 11 years.



"It's been a great moment right from the time the game got over to till now. That's the emotions and feelings you have," said the skipper. His marauding run at the top, especially in the knockouts, fetched Rohit a place in the team of the tournament but all he can think about for now is a sense of joyous relief. "We have dreamt about this for such a long period of time, we worked hard as a unit for such a long period of time and to see this (the trophy) with us, it feels quite relieved as well. "When you have worked hard for something and eventually at the end you get it, feels really, really nice," the skipper reiterated. People were amazed and amused to see Rohit walk to

the 22-yard strip at Kensington Oval and put a tiny speck of soil in his mouth, just like Novak Djokovic does after winning the Wimbledon. The 37-year-old said it was a spur of the moment act. "Nothing was scripted. It was all coming instinctively. I was feeling the moment," Rohit said about his ode to the turf that gave him the best moment of his life. "When I went to the pitch, that pitch gave us this trophy. I will remember that ground forever in my life and that pitch as well. I wanted to have a piece of it with me. "Those moments are very special, the place where all our dreams came true and I wanted something of it," he concluded.

Thanks for that call Ro: Dravid reveals how Rohit stopped him from quitting after ODI WC heartbreak

PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

Had he not received a phone call from India skipper Rohit Sharma, requesting him to continue after the ODI World Cup final defeat, Rahul Dravid wouldn't have been a part of history, the outgoing head coach revealed in his farewell speech to the team after it was crowned T20 world champion here. Dravid's tenure had ended with the ODI World Cup after India lost to Australia in the final despite a 10-match winning run, but the coaching staff got an extension till the end of the T20 World Cup that concluded on Saturday last. While Dravid has not reapplied for the role after India's second T20 World Cup win, he mentioned Rohit's role in urging him to continue as the coach during his speech in the Kensington Oval dressing room after the team's win seven-run win in the final against South Africa on Saturday. "Ro, thank you very much for making that call to me November and asking to continue," Dravid said in a video shared by BCCI on



Tuesday. "I think it's been such a privilege and a pleasure to work with each and everyone of you, but Ro, also thanks for the time...There is a lot of time we have to chat, we have to discuss, we have to agree, we have to disagree at times, but thank you so very much," Dravid said as Rohit laughed. Dravid praised the players for putting up collectively solid performances through the tournament and urged them to celebrate the achievement as

much as they would like. "All of you will remember these moments. We always say, it is not about the runs, it is not about the wickets, you never remember your career but you remember moments like this, so let's really enjoy," Dravid said. "I could not be more proud of you guys, to come back the way you did, the way you fought, the way we worked as a team...The resilience. There has been some disappointment over the years where we have

and everyone of them has made since the time you were kids, for you to be here in the dressing room," Dravid said. "Today, your parents, your wives, your children, your brother, your coaches, so many people have made so many sacrifices and worked so hard with you for you to enjoy this memory in this moment... Really, really proud to have being a part of this memory with you guys," he continued. Usually articulate, Dravid admitted he was falling short of words but praised the team for their respect towards the outgoing coaching staff. "I'm not usually short of words but on a day like today, for me to be part of this, I could not be more grateful for the respect, for the kindness, for the effort that each and everyone of you are shown to me, to my coaching staff to my support staff," he conceded. Dravid also praised the BCCI officials and others for their work behind the scenes. "Behind a great team, there is also a successful organisation and we have to acknowledge the work of BCCI and people behind the scenes for the work they have done," he added.

Gutted, tough pill to swallow: Miller on T20 World Cup final loss

PTI ■ JOHANNESBURG

"Gutted" David Miller said the T20 World Cup final loss to India was a tough blow, but the swashbuckling batter expressed confidence that despite enduring pain the resilient South African team would continue pushing boundaries. Shedding the unwanted tag of perennial "chokers", the Proteas had marched into their maiden T20 World Cup final unbeaten. However, they faltered in the summit clash, losing to India by seven runs. "I am gutted!! Really tough pill to swallow after what transpired 2 days ago. Words don't explain how I am feeling. One thing I do know is how proud I am of this unit," Miller posted an Instagram story late on Monday. Before the final, the Proteas enjoyed a sensational run, eking out wins in the pressure situations to become favourites for the title. "This journey was an incredible one, with highs and lows throughout the entire month. We have endured pain, but I know this team has the



resilience and will keep raising the bar," he wrote. South Africa had looked on course to a memorable win needing 30 runs in as many balls. However, Indian bowlers, led by Jasprit Bumrah, fashioned a remarkable turnaround picking the key wicket of Heinrich Klaasen followed by Marco Jansen. With Miller at the crease and 16 needed off the last over, the Proteas still remained hopeful. But a spectacular catch by Suryakumar Yadav at the boundary ended Miller's innings while deflating hopes of a South African win. It was the closest South Africa had come to winning a title, having made seven semifinal exits in ICC global events.



Praggnanandhaa to take on Bogdan-Daniel; Gukesh up against Vachier-Lagrave

PTI ■ BUCHAREST (ROMANIA)

Grandmaster Praggnanandhaa will look to sharpen his game after squandering winning opportunities when he takes on last-placed Deac Bogdan-Daniel of Romania in the third round of the Superbet Classic Chess tournament. While Praggnanandhaa has not been at his best in better positions, World Championship challenger D Gukesh has survived pretty well despite living dangerously in a couple of games in the tournament, which is a part of the Grand chess tour. With five rounds gone and just four more to come, the two Indians with three points apiece, are within striking distance of the tournament leader Fabiano Caruana of United States who is on 3.5 points. Alireza Firouzja and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France, Russian Ian Nepomniachtchi and American Wesley So share the fourth spot on 2.5 points each, a half point ahead of Dutchman Anish Giri and Uzbek Nodirbek Abdusattorov. Bogdan-Daniel is at the bottom of the table with 1.5 points. Gukesh will have black pieces against Maxime Vachier-Lagrave and it should not be a tall order for the Indian who has been trying various set ups against the King pawn opening. Vachier-Lagrave, on the other hand, will be hoping for a

complicated struggle but the fact that he is not very adventurous when it comes to opening choices makes his task a little more difficult. Praggnanandhaa will not only be favourite but will also be under pressure. In the previous round, the Indian missed out on a straightforward winning manoeuvre against Wesley So while earlier on, Gukesh survived what was a technically difficult but theoretically lost endgame against him. With the white pieces to back him the ball will be in Praggnanandhaa's court to deliver the goods. Bogdan-Daniel is still hunting for an elusive victory with just three draws thus far and the Romanian knows it will not be easy to cross a tiger on the prowl. Caruana has had some good games and will like to continue in similar fashion. The next round is against Ian Nepomniachtchi who has drawn all his games so far in the tournament. **Pairings round 6:** Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra, 2.5) vs D Gukesh (Ind, 3); Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 2) vs Anish Giri (Ned, 2); Alireza Firouzja (Fra, 2.5) vs Wesley So (Usa, 2.5) R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 3) vs Deac Bogdan Daniel (Rou, 1.5); Fabiano Caruana (Usa, 3.5) vs Ian Nepomniachtchi (FID, 2.5).

Laxman-coached India team leave for Zimbabwe, Gill to link up from US

PTI ■ MUMBAI

A young-Indian cricket team under National Cricket Academy head VVS Laxman left for Zimbabwe to play a five-match T20I series starting in Harare on July 6. The team will be led by Shubman Gill while the likes of youngsters Riyan Parag and Abhishek Sharma have been rewarded for their exploits in the last IPL with maiden India call-ups. Skipper Gill, the reserve opener for the T20 World Cup was on a break and will link up with the Zimbabwe-bound squad directly in Harare from the US. The BCCI took to X to post pictures of those who boarded the flight, which includes Sharma, Parag, Rituraj Gaikwad, Avesh Khan, Ravi Bishnoi, Washington Sundar, Tushar Deshpande and NCA head Laxman. Five members of the squad -- Shivam Dube, Sanju Samson, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rinku Singh and Khaleel Ahmed were either part



of the T20 World Cup-winning team or were travelling reserves are stranded in Barbados due to hurricane Beryl. They will join the squad later. With Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja retiring from the shortest format of the game, the T20 series against Zimbabwe will provide the youngsters with the perfect opportunity to cement their places in the team for future series. **India's squad for T20I series against Zimbabwe:** Shubman Gill (Captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rituraj Gaikwad, Abhishek Sharma, Rinku Singh, Sanju Samson (WK), Dhruv Jurel (WK), Shivam Dube, Riyan Parag, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Avesh Khan, Khaleel Ahmed, Mukesh Kumar, Tushar Deshpande.

Indians in County: Sudharsan scores 14 for Surrey, Shaw manages 31 and 37 for Northants

PTI ■ LONDON

Young left-hand batter Sai Sudharsan and the seasoned Prithvi Shaw failed to get big scores in their ongoing English county games for Surrey and Northamptonshire respectively. Both are into their second season with their county sides. In a home game at the Oval against Essex, Surrey scored 262 in their first innings with Sudharsan, who normally bats at the top of the order for Tamil Nadu, coming in at No. 6 and managing 14 off 47 balls with two boundaries. He was dismissed by left-arm medium pacer Paul Walter with former South Africa international Simon Harmer taking the catch. However, Sudharsan is yet to bat in the second essay where Surrey are currently 44 for 3 with a lead of 126 runs after taking an 82-run first innings lead bowling the visitors out for 180.



In another game between Northamptonshire and Sussex, flamboyant right-hander Shaw struck 13 boundaries across two innings -- seven in a 22-ball-31 and another six in 37 off 41 balls, but failed to get a big score. In the first innings, Sussex's second change medium pacer Fynn Hudson-Prentice got his wicket, caught by Jack Carson. Shaw's score was the second highest in his team's dismal first innings performance of 97 all out in little over 20 overs. This was after Sussex had scored 143 in their first innings. In the second innings, Northamptonshire were 137 for four in a chase of 284 with Shaw contributing another quick-fire 37 before left-arm seamer Sean Hunt breached through his defences.



Error-prone Nagal makes first round exit from Wimbledon

PTI ■ LONDON

India's top singles player Sumit Nagal committed 44 unforced errors as he made a first round exit from the Wimbledon, going down in four sets to Miomir Kecmanovic of Serbia here. Making his maiden appearance in the men's singles main draw, Nagal toiled hard for two hours 38 minutes and even managed to take a set off world number 53 Kecmanovic before conceding a 2-6 6-3 6-3 4-6 defeat on Monday night. The 26-year-old, ranked 72 did show flashes of brilliance as hit 47 winners but in general, struggled on the grass court. In the end, he could manage only 104 points against Kecmanovic's 122. The 53rd ranked Serbian fired six aces and only conceded two double faults. This was Kecmanovic's second win in as many matches against Nagal, having beaten the Indian at the ATP 250 event in Cologne, Germany, four years ago. The Paris Olympics bound Nagal is the first Indian in five years to play a Wimbledon men's singles main draw match. Prajnesh Gunneswaran had made a first-round exit in 2019. Nagal is having a dream season as he had also qualified for the main draw of the Australian Open earlier this year. He had stunned 31st-seeded Alexander Bublik of Kazakhstan in the opening round to become the first Indian male tennis player to beat a seeded player in 35 years in a Slam. He had also qualified for the main draw of the Indian Wells Masters and Monte-Carlo Masters, the ATP 1000 events. The Indian has won two Challenger events this season the Heilbronn Challenger and the Chennai Open ATP Challenger. He also competed at the French Open, losing in the opening round.