

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**  
 The loan waiver policies implemented in 2018 will continue in 2024. The ration card is used only to determine family units under the loan waiver scheme. The government has full details and once family verification is complete the loan waiver scheme will be extended to others as well. The BRS should appreciate this instead of trying to malign the administration.  
 - Tummala Nageshwara Rao, Minister, Telangana

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**Not afraid of politically malicious criticism, says K'taka CM**

**NEXT ROUND**  
 OF TALKS BETWEEN INDIA, EU LIKELY IN SEPTEMBER

**Maruthi to remix 80's Hindi hit for RAJA SAAB**

**DON'T MISS...**

**Hyd records second highest monthly...**

Hyderabad recorded second highest monthly residential sales at Rs 4,288 crore during June 2024 up by 48% year-on-year (YoY) and by 14% month-on-month (MoM), whilst number of registrations stood at 7,014 units up by 26% YoY and 16% MoM, as per a report by Knight Frank India. The Hyderabad residential market encompasses four districts, namely Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Rangareddy, and Sangareddy, covering home sales relevant to both primary and secondary real estate markets. Since January 2024...

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**Thousands pull chariots in...**

Thousands of devotees pulled the chariots of sibling deities - Lord Jagannath, Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra - on the 'Bahuda Yatra' or return car festival on Monday. Though the pulling of chariots was slated to start at 4 pm, it began ahead of the schedule amid chants of 'Jai Jagannath' and beating of cymbals. Devotees start pulling Lord Balabhadra's chariot 'Taladhwaaja' at 3.25 pm and Devi Subhadra's 'Devadalan' at 4 pm. Pulling of Lord Jagannath's chariot 'Nandighosh' began...

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**9 in 10 use wifi to make calls...**

Around 89 per cent of people surveyed have experienced call drops in the last three months and nine in 10 have used Wi-Fi networks to make calls through calling and messaging apps, online survey firm LocalCircles said on Monday. The survey conducted between March and June claims to have received a total of 32,000 responses across different questions from 362 districts. The number of responses differed from question to question. '89 per cent of subscribers surveyed face call connection and...

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**Remember their faces: Kohli says...**

Indian cricket's reigning superstar Virat Kohli has urged the nation to get behind its Olympic-bound contingent, asking the fans to join him in supporting the athletes as "they inch closer to the podium with dogged determination" in the quadrennial showpiece starting July 26 in Paris. In a little over a minute long video post on social media, featuring some Paris-bound athletes like javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra and boxing hope Nishant Dev, Kohli said it is time for India to be recognised as a global sporting...

-SPORTS



CM Revanth Reddy addressing a meeting held at Secretariat on Monday

**LOCAL BODY POLLS**  
**CM for action plan to increase BC quota**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has directed the drafting of an action plan to increase reservations for BCs in local body elections. On Monday, a review meeting was held at the Secretariat under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, focusing on increasing BC reservations during panchayat elections. During the meeting, the Chief Minister asked officials to reveal details regarding the implementation of reservations in earlier panchayat elections and their potential increase in forthcoming elections. Officials briefed the Chief Minister on the methods followed in earlier panchayat elections and the preparations underway for upcoming ones. Given the approval for caste enumeration, the Chief

Minister enquired how long it would take to proceed with the panchayat elections based on this data. Officials explained that while Karnataka conducted a caste enumeration in 2015 and Bihar in 2023, Andhra Pradesh is yet to disclose its details. They said that the Centre's 2011 caste enumeration format included 53 columns and adding three more columns would take at least five and a half months to complete. The Chief Minister emphasised the need to prepare a swift action plan to conduct elections promptly, ensuring that Central funds for local bodies are not interrupted. A detailed discussion on increasing BC reservations took place during the meeting.

2

**Govt releases Rs 150.57 cr pending bills of panchayat workers**



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Government of Telangana has released an amount of Rs 150,57,59,500 toward payment of salaries of 29,676 multi-purpose workers on Monday. The Finance Commission transferred the grants to the Gram Panchayats. "All the District Panchayat Offices are hereby requested to release the grant to the concerned gram panchayats towards payment of salaries to the multi-purpose workers for whom salary was not paid till May 2024." The government is paying Rs 9,500 monthly salary to every worker. Generally, one worker is appointed for every 500 persons in a village and two workers are appointed if the population is 1,000 persons. These workers clean the roads, clear trash and transport to dump yards, drive water tractors and other vehicles and take up different works in villages. The government released Rs 5,53,47,000 to Adilabad district, Rs 1,48,67,500 to Bhadrachalam, Kothagudem district,

2

**KALESHWARAM PROJECT**  
**Panel grills bureaucrats on irregularities**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose Commission questioned serving IAS and retired IAS officers on Monday regarding the alleged irregularities and financial mismanagement in the execution of the Kaleshwaram Project. The commission summoned senior IAS officials Smita Sabarwal, Rajat Kumar, Vikas Raj, Somesh Kumar, Ramakrishna Rao, Rahul Bojja and Dr SK Joshi who had key roles in the execution of the

Kaleshwaram Project. The inquiry focused on critical decisions and the implementation methods employed during the project's construction. Justice Pinaki Ghose's commission reportedly posed crucial questions regarding the decisions made and the procedures followed in executing the project. Detailed explanations were provided by former officials regarding their involvement and actions taken during their tenure. Continued on Page 2

**KRISHNA WATER SHARING DISPUTE**  
**Tribunal gives AP last chance to reply**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Brijesh Kumar Tribunal (Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal-II) has allowed Andhra Pradesh another four weeks as its last chance to reply to the 'Statement of Case' filed by Telangana regarding the Centre's reference to the tribunal for fresh adjudication of water shares among Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from the en bloc allocation made to united AP. The Tribunal permitted Telangana to file an errata to their Statement of Case directing that a better copy of Annexure-2 be submitted within six

weeks. The tribunal condoned the two-day delay in filing the reply by Andhra Pradesh to Telangana's Statement of Case. Senior Counsel Jaideep Gupta, representing Andhra Pradesh, said that an Advocate on record had been appointed by GO



**TG frames norms for loan waiver**  
**Releases guidelines to be followed for implementation**

- Food Security Card (PDS) database will be used to decide farming families
- No waiver for restructured or rescheduled loans
- Waiver not applicable to loans taken from NHCs, JLAs, RMGs, and LACS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress government of Telangana has framed guidelines for waiving agricultural loans. In the guidelines, the government has made it clear that the Food Security Card (PDS) database maintained by the Civil Supplies Department would be the standard to determine farming families. In such families there will be a house owner, his/her spouse and children, it added. However, the loan waiver will not apply to loans taken from NHCs, JLAs, RMGs, and LACS and restructured or rescheduled loans. The waiver will not apply to crop loans given to companies, firms etc and will cover only crop loans taken through PACS. The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (Agriculture-II) released the guidelines through GO R.No.56732:15-07-2024 and is named the 'Department of Agriculture and Cooperation Crop Loan Waiver Scheme-2024.' The GO said the scheme applies

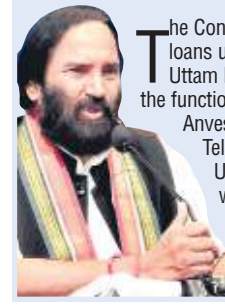


to short-term crop loans taken by farmers from scheduled commercial banks, regional rural banks and district cooperative central banks in Telangana. It covers loans sanctioned

or renewed on or after December 12, 2018, and outstanding as of December 9, 2023.

2

**Uttam: Govt to empower farmers**  
**'Will waive crop loans by Aug 15'**



The Congress Government in Telangana would waive all farm loans up to Rs 2 lakh by August 15. Irrigation Minister Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy reiterated on Monday. He was speaking at the function held in connection with TPCC Kishan Cell President S. Anvesh Reddy assuming office as the Chairman of the Telangana State Seeds Development Corporation Limited. Uttam said the Congress Government is committed to waiving crop loans at one go to free farmers from debt. This would enable lakhs of farmers to use their incomes for growth. Continued on Page 2

**Waive farm loans unconditionally: Alleti**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Criticising the Congress government for imposing conditions to waive farm loans, Bharatiya Janata Legislature Party (BJLP) leader Alleti Maheshwar Reddy asked the government to reveal why it is insisting on conditions as it had assured during the Assembly elections that it would waive farm loans unconditionally. He demanded that the government should implement the farm loan waiver scheme unconditionally. Speaking to the media on Monday at the state BJP office here, Maheshwar said that it is not proper for the government to say that the loan waiver scheme would not apply

to restructured or rescheduled loans as many banks record in the farmers' books that loans were recovered and advanced again. The farmers will become victims due to the mistakes of banks, he said.

2

**Niranjan slams ration card criteria**

Former Minister Singireddy Niranjan Reddy criticised the government's guidelines for the farm loan waiver scheme and opposed the use of criteria like the ration card and PM Kisan data which he claimed limit loan waiver benefits to just a few farmers. He described the guidelines as objectionable and accused the Congress government of making grand promises but delivering only the minimum like digging a mountain to catch a mouse. Continued on Page 2



**One more BRS MLA Mahipal joins Congress**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BRS's Patancheru MLA, Gudem Mahipal Reddy, joined the Congress on Monday. Mahipal is the 10th BRS MLA to join the Congress. With his joining the Congress's strength in the Assembly has increased to 74. He joined the Congress in the presence of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and other leaders including Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas



Reddy, Health Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha, former MLA T. Jagga Reddy and others. Continued on Page 2

**OVERSTAYING OFFICIAL BUNGALOWS**  
**200 ex-MPs served eviction notices**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More than 200 former Lok Sabha MPs, who have yet to vacate their official bungalows in Lutyens' Delhi, have been issued eviction notices, sources in the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry said on Monday. The notices have been issued under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act. According to rules, the former MPs are required to vacate their official bungalows within a month of dissolution of the previous Lok Sabha. "So far, more than 200 former MPs have been issued eviction notices for overstaying. They have been asked to vacate their official bungalows at the earliest. Process to send notices to more former MPs is underway," the sources told PTI.



If they fail to vacate their official accommodation at the earliest, teams of officials will soon be sent for "forceful eviction", the sources said. Although the Lok Sabha Secretariat provides accommodation to the MPs, the Housing and Urban Affairs (HUA) ministry allots bungalows to the Union ministers in Lutyens' Delhi. Eviction proceedings are launched if former ministers and former MPs fail to vacate

their official bungalows within the stipulated time period. Meanwhile, Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has been allotted 83 Lodhi Estate bungalow which was earlier occupied by a former central information commissioner, another source said. The source said no eviction notice has been issued to any former Union minister for overstaying yet. Over four former Union ministers, including Smriti Irani, have vacated their official bungalow in Lutyens' Delhi so far. Irani vacated her official bungalow at 28 Tughlak Crescent in Lutyens' Delhi earlier this month, weeks after she was defeated by Congress leader Kishori Lal Sharma from Amethi parliamentary seat with a margin of over 1.5 lakh votes.

**Police foil Chalo Secretariat protest**

- Govt job hopefuls, student leaders held near Tank Bund
- Protests continue demanding postponement of DSC exams

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Many government job hopefuls, student leaders and unemployed youth were arrested near the Tank Bund on Monday when they tried to besiege the Secretariat during their Chalo Secretariat protest. The protest was organised by student organisations, particularly the All India Students Federation (AISF), and unemployed youth associations demanding postponement of the DSC and Group II exams. When government job hopefuls and students began gathering around the Secretariat, hundreds of



policemen including the Quick Response Team (QRT), Commissioner's Task Force and local police stopped them. The protesters began their march at the GHMC head office by hold-

**The protesters began their march at the GHMC head office by holding placards and raising slogans. The police stopped them at the BRK Bhavan, but they tried to continue their march creating tension.**

ing placards and raising slogans. The police stopped them at the BRK Bhavan, but they tried to continue their march creating tension. Some people managed to rush towards the Secretariat but were stopped by the

police and taken to police stations. The police had set up barricades on roads leading to the Secretariat and baton-wielding policemen were guarding traffic junctions. The police also deployed personnel at Lumbini Park to prevent people from going to Hussainsagar and holding protests there. Continued on Page 2



# KCR family has shares in coaching institute: Madhu

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC Campaign Committee Chairman Madhu Yashki Goud said that brothers-in-law KT Rama Rao and T. Harish Rao had held talks in New Delhi to merge the BRS with the BJP to release BRS MLC Kavitha from jail.

KCR has been seriously trying regarding this. However, there were differences between Union Ministers G. Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay Kumar regarding the BRS's merger with the BJP.

"Kishan said okay for merging the BRS with the BJP but Sanjay is opposing it. However, Sanjay is trying to split the BRS by pulling Harish Rao from the BRS and so Sanjay has been stating that Harish is a good leader," Yashki said.

During a chat with reporters on Monday, Madhu said that KCR supported the BJP in toppling governments in

several states and that the BJP and the BRS are one.

"KCR thinks that he is a 'Dora,' has too many caste feelings and arrogance. KCR said that he would topple the Congress government as he could not accept a farmer's son like Revanth becoming the CM. KCR inducted Congress MLAs by giving them posts and packages but the Congress is not doing that. Now BRS MLAs are joining the Congress due to KCR's arrogance," Madhu said.

"Rahul will amend the Defection Act if he comes to power at the Centre. Current laws facilitate MLAs joining the Congress. We are inducting MLAs from other parties in some situations. The situation seems to be necessary for self-defence. Jagan arrested Chandrababu with Modi's permission. Lokesh went to Delhi and forged an alliance with the BJP," he said.



Madhu Yashki said that the inductions are going on with the permission of AICC and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy focused on governance.

Madhu said that inductions are going on with the permission of the AICC and Chief Minister Revanth.

He said that KTR, Harish Rao and Kavitha have 15 per cent stake in Narayana and Sri Chaitanya Sanstha. Training institutes will gain if exams are postponed by notification. Job

seekers don't want postponement of exams. Training institutes will pocket Rs 100 crore if exams are postponed, Madhu said.

What is the share of KTR, Harish Rao and Kavitha in this Rs 100 crore, he asked.

He said the BRS government created problems for students by not releasing fee reimbursement funds. Students who want to go abroad are facing difficulties as they are unable to pay fees.

"Ex-Minister Mallareddy, Palla Rajeshwaredy and Kavitha's Velocity Colleges looted thousands of crores of fee reimbursement funds with stolen lists of students. Officials who worked under the BRS government are now going abroad offering Rs 100 crore to free them from corruption cases. Revanth is determined to make officials reveal from where the BRS got Rs 1,400 crore," he said.

## FABA Innovation Summit 2024 spotlights Biotech innovation

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Federation of Asian Biotech Associations (FABA), along with Science Gurus and the University of Hyderabad (UoH) on Monday announced the upcoming Innovation Summit 2024, dedicated to spotlighting pioneering advancements in life sciences and biotechnology. The key feature of the event will be Dr Yellapragada Subbarow Awards, instituted to honour remarkable achievements in the field.

The summit hosts Drug Discovery and Development Workshop from August 3-14 in a virtual mode where it features over 30 global experts, offering hands-on experience with industry-leading tools, Whale Tank 2.0 will be organised on August 17 at UoH premises.

It is a startup-investor connect event which provides a platform for emerging biotech companies to pitch to global venture capitalists.

# BJP's tally falls below 90 in RS, but set to rise after bypolls

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



The BJP's tally in Rajya Sabha has dipped below 90 for the first time in several years but the party and its allies are expected to not only recoup their losses but also make some gains when by-elections to fill the existing vacancies are held in the coming weeks.

While the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) is confident of winning two seats each in Bihar, Maharashtra and Assam and one each in Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tripura due to their numerical superiority over the opposition, the four new nominated members are also expected to be pro-treasury benches whenever the government names them.

Though nominated members are usually independent in the House in terms of their party affiliation, they are traditionally supportive of the agenda of the government which picks them.

The current strength of

winning the solitary seat in Haryana where the poll will be held to fill the vacancy caused by the election of its Rajya Sabha MP Deepender Singh Hooda to Lok Sabha.

The Congress, though, hopes that a few MLAs, who are either independent or affiliated to the regional parties and are looking for political alternatives ahead of the assembly polls expected in October, may switch sides and help it make a fight.

The Election Commission (EC) is yet to announce the date for elections to fill the 11 vacancies effected by the resignation of as many members. Ten of them were elected to Lok Sabha while one MP, K Keshava Rao of the BRS, quit after joining the Congress.

Out of the total 19 vacancies in the 245-member Rajya Sabha, four are from Jammu and Kashmir where there is no assembly currently after the erstwhile state was made a Union Territory in 2019.

## Guidelines for employees' transfer in collegiate edn

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has issued transfer guidelines for employees in the department of Collegiate education on Monday.

The Commissioner of Collegiate Education/Commissioner of Technical Education / Director of Intermediate Education will announce the schedule for affecting these transfers from July 16 to 31.

According to the guidelines, it is applicable to both teaching and non-teaching employees working in government degree colleges/polytechnics/junior colleges in the State and shall come into force with immediate effect. Those who have completed five years or above stay in a particular station as on June 30 shall be transferred. Those who have put in more than two years of service in a particular station as on June 30 shall be eligible to apply for transfer.

Also, services rendered in all cadres at a station (city/town/village) will be counted while calculating period of the stay in the particular station.

## BJP, BRS entering into secret pact: Whip

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP and the BRS have been entering into secret deals in Telangana, Government Whip Aadi Srinivas said. BRS leaders KT Rama Rao and T. Harish Rao held talks in New Delhi with the BJP for the same, he

said.

In a video statement issued on Monday, Srinivas said that BRS leaders are extending a friendly hand to the BJP for Kavitha's bail. So Union Minister Sanjay praises Harish Rao and is describing him as a people's leader. The BJP leaders who criticised

Harish are praising him now.

There is a hidden agenda in showering praises on Harish Rao. BJP leaders are trying to make Harish submit his resignation from his MLA post and to contest on a BJP symbol. So Sanjay is saying that Harish will win from Siddipet easily even if he resigns.

## Govt releases...

Continued from page 1

Rs 74,86,000 to Hanumakonda district, Rs 2,21,44,500 to Jagtial district, Rs 1,59,03,000 to Jangoan district, Rs 1,69,29,000 to Jayashankar Bhupalapally district, Rs 68,68,500 to Jogulamba Gadwal district, Rs 3,92,44,500 to Kamareddy district, Rs 4,62,84,000 to Karimnagar district, Rs 7,49,55,000 to Khammam district, Rs 5,71,14,000 to Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district, Rs 8,13,48,500 to Mahabubabad district, Rs 4,13,72,500 to Mahabubnagar district, Rs 6,56,64,000 to Mancherial district, Rs 5,03,97,500 to Medak district, Rs 69,92,000 to Medchal/Malkajigiri district, Rs 40,28,000 to Warangal district and Rs 7,40,14,500 to Vikarabad district.

## Waive farm loans...

Continued from page 1

He said the government has not given new ration cards and is trying to avoid extending the loan waiver scheme to all farmers by placing conditions linked to ration cards. He said that brothers may be on the same ration card and share the land, but they may take separate loans. What will be their condition now, he asked.

"If there is a loan for four people in one ration card and if you give it to one person, the others will lose. A white ration card is for the entire family where one person of the family has a small job. It is not right for the government to place conditions. The government should implement the loan waiver scheme without any conditions," he said.

Responding to the inductions of BRS MLAs by the Congress, Maheshwar said the Congress had inducted BRS MLC Kadiam Srihari who had said that the BRS will topple the Revanth government. He said the Chief Minister had made Srihari issue that statement and later inducted him into the Congress. Maheshwar asked Revanth to explain his statement as the TPCC chief that Congress activists would beat death drums in front of Congress MLAs who defect to the BRS. He also sent an open letter to the Chief Minister regarding the pending bills of panchayats and said the government is not releasing pending bills to panchayats but is releasing hundreds and thousands of crores to companies belonging to Ministers.

## Niranjan slams...

Continued from page 1

He pointed out that the Congress raised hopes among Telangana farmers by promising to waive loans immediately after coming to power. However, the guidelines limit the benefits to just a few contrary to election promises. He criticised the rule excluding farmers who took loans before December 12, 2018, calling it unjustified and said that it prioritises the reduction of the government's financial burden over easing farmers' loan burden.

The announcement of the Food Security Card and PM Kisan Scheme as standards has shattered the hopes of countless farmers, Niranjan said in a statement released here on Monday.

He asked why it took the government seven months to impose these restrictions and accused the government of misleading farmers by promising immediate loan waiver. He pointed out that just a few days ago the CM had announced that the white ration card was not a valid criterion and reversed his statement within four days.

## Air Commodore Hrushikesh is new chief of Begumpet Airforce Station



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Air Commodore Hrushikesh Jagannath Page on Monday took over as Air Officer Commanding of Air Force Station, Begumpet, from Group Captain Manish Kumar. Air Commodore Page was commissioned in the flying branch of the Indian Air Force in 1995 and he is a qualified flying instructor. He is an alumnus of Defence Services Staff College and College of Defence Management. During his career span, the air officer has tenanted important command and staff appointments. Page was the Chief Operations Officer of a front-line base and commanded a remotely piloted Aircraft Squadron.

The officer was Head of the Training Team of Weapon Systems School before assuming the present appointment.

## HYDRA contradicts Rajiv's vision: BRS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS MLA KP Vivekanand Goud said the CM's decision on HYDRA contradicts former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's vision of decentralising power.

Addressing a press conference here on Monday at the Telangana Bhavan in the city, Quthbullapur MLA KP Vivekanand accused Chief Minister Revanth Reddy of making reckless decisions due to inexperience causing hardships to the public.

He particularly criticised the establishment of HYDRA (Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Authority) which aims to protect municipalities, lakes, lands and government assets in the Outer Ring Road area.

Vivekanand claimed that these decisions would weaken local bodies instead of strengthening them. He said the decisions being taken by the CM were contrary to the decentralised governance envisioned by the late Rajiv Gandhi.

The BRS strongly opposes the Congress's decision to exert control over local bodies through HYDRA by



excluding public representatives and local participation, he said.

He said that late Chief Minister NT Rama Rao had established 13 municipalities which later developed into Grade I municipalities and eventually the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad (MCH) in 2007. Under Congress administrations, from 2007 to 2016, people faced hardships. However, KTR imposed governance by increasing zones and circles and delegating powers to deputy commissioners, leading to development in Hyderabad.

He said that in the last seven months, the government's 'reckless' decisions have halted progress affecting Hyderabad's brand image.

## Shift from Tummididi Hatti to Medigadda a 'blunder.' Raghu

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Electricity Department Engineer K. Raghu reported that information regarding the shift from Tummididi Hatti to Medigadda was provided to the Commission. Raghu gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Justice PC commission.

He said that discussions were held on pump houses and a PowerPoint presentation was also delivered.

The BRS government had said that the shift from Tummididi Hatti to Medigadda was due to the absence of water at Tummididi Hatti. However, Raghu presented evidence to the Commission showing that there is indeed water in Tummididi Hatti. The construction of barrages at Medigadda instead of Tummididi Hatti is an "engineering blunder," Raghu said.

He said that costs for constructing barrages and pump houses have substantially increased. The irrigation potential from Medigadda to Yellampalli has effectively become zero.

## One more BRS...

Continued from page 1

The BRS MLA had met Revanth at his residence on Saturday and joined the party on Monday.

Mahipal's decision to join the Congress comes after an Enforcement Directorate raid on his company and his brother in the mining case.

The BRS's LS candidate in Zaheerabad, Gali Anil Kumar, also joined the Congress.

## Police foil Chalo Secretariat...

Continued from page 1

The police deployed mounted units, water cannons and tear gas squads to deal with violence.

Huge police deployments were seen at Ashoknagar, RTC crossroads, Osmania University, Secunderabad PG College, Nizam College and some other places where protests had been held earlier.

Tight security arrangements were made at Dilsukhnagar

which had witnessed protests on Saturday and Sunday night. Police detained Osmania University Student Joint Action Committee leader Rajarao Yadav and others.

The Chief Minister had on Sunday urged students not to come on to the streets but meet ministers to submit their demands.

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka had appealed to job hopefuls and students on Sunday to end

their protests and allow the DSC exams for recruiting 11,000 teachers. He promised that the government would conduct another DSC exam soon to fill another 5,000 to 6,000 posts.

The AISF leaders demanded that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy deliver justice to students. They warned that if their demands were not accepted they would lay a siege on the Assembly building during the Budget session.

## Uttam: Govt to...

Continued from page 1

He said that the process of waiving crop loans has already been initiated, and as announced by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy all crop loans would be waived by August 15. He said the Congress Government is implementing schemes to financially empower farmers and cited the launch of the Rythu Bharosa scheme immediately after taking office in December 2023, which provides investment support of Rs 15,000 per acre per annum to all farmers.

Uttam said the Congress government has decided to complete all irrigation projects with minimal investment to increase the ayacut. He criticised the BRS admin for wasting public funds on redesigning and renaming irrigation projects which did not help

farmers in any way.

He cited the KCR Government's expenditure of over Rs 1 lakh crore on the Kaleshwaram Project which failed to irrigate even one lakh acres. He emphasised that the Congress Government focuses on practical solutions and tangible results instead of hype. Congratulating Anvesh Reddy on his appointment, Uttam expressed the hope that the Telangana State Seeds Development Corporation would become a robust institution supplying quality seeds to farmers.

He criticised the BRS admin for not controlling the distribution of fake seeds which caused losses to farmers. Under the Congress admin strong measures have been implemented to control the menace of counterfeit seeds and fertilisers, he said.

## TG frames norms for...

Continued from page 1

Each farming family is eligible for a loan waiver of up to Rs 2 lakh, including principal and interest outstanding as of December 9, 2023. Under this scheme, the Aadhaar in the farmers' loan accounts submitted by banks should be mapped with the Aadhaar in the passbook database and the Aadhaar in the PDS database to identify beneficiaries. The limit of Rs 2 lakh for waiving farm loans will apply to all identified farming families as of 09-12-2023.

The loan waiver amounts will be credited directly to the farmers' loan accounts through DBT. In the case of PACS, the loan waiver amount is released to the DCCB or the bank branch. The bank will deposit the loan waiver money in the farmer's account in PACS.

The loan waiver money would be credited to the bank accounts of all farming families in ascending order based on the loan amount outstanding on December 9, 2023.

The total loan outstanding for each farmer family as of December 9, 2023, or up to Rs 2 lakh, whichever is less will be credited to the bank account of the farming family.

If a farmer's family has loans exceeding Rs 2 lakh they should first pay the loan above Rs 2 lakh to the bank. After that Rs 2 lakh will be transferred to the loan accounts of the farmer's family. If the loan is more than Rs 2 lakh, the loan taken by the women of the family would be waived first and if there is any balance left, that would be used to waive loans taken by men on a proportionate basis.

The scheme for waiving crop loans up to Rs 2 lakh applies to all farming families owning

land in Telangana who have taken short-term crop loans. The scheme applies to crop loans taken by farmers from scheduled commercial banks, regional rural banks and district cooperative central banks (collectively referred to as banks) located in Telangana.

The scheme is applicable for loans sanctioned or renewed on or after 12-12-2018 and crop loans outstanding as of 09-12-2023. Under this scheme, all farming families are eligible to get their crop loans up to Rs 2 lakh waived. The outstanding principal and applicable interest on it as of 09-12-2023 will be eligible for waiver under the scheme.

The Commissioner and Director of Agriculture (DOA) has been designated as the implementing authority for the Crop Loan Waiver-2024 scheme.

## CM for action...

Continued from page 1

Former minister Jana Reddy elaborated on the procedures followed in United AP to the recent panchayat elections in Telangana, the cases filed in the Supreme Court regarding BC reservations in local body elections in various states, and their outcomes. Subsequently, the Chief Minister responded by advising the preparation of a chronological list of methods followed so far for implementing reservations in panchayat elections.

He suggested consulting former Minister Jana Reddy, Panchayat Raj department experts and former senior officials to clear doubts and to discuss legal matters with the Advocate General. The Chief Minister also directed a study on the reservation practices in other states.



RANGAREDDY IS LEADING CONTRIBUTOR TO REGISTRATIONS

# Hyd records second highest monthly residential sales

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad recorded second highest monthly residential sales at Rs 4,288 crore during June 2024 up by 48% year-on-year (YoY) and by 14% month-on-month (MoM), whilst number of registrations stood at 7,014 units up by 26% YoY and 16% MoM, as per a report by Knight Frank India.



The Hyderabad residential market encompasses four districts, namely Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Rangareddy, and Sangareddy, covering home sales relevant to both primary and secondary real estate markets.

Since January 2024, Hyderabad has seen registrations of 39,220 residential properties which is higher by 15% YoY when compared to the first six months in 2023. The rise, however, is sharper in the cumulative value of the registered properties

in the first six months, which was registered at Rs 24,287 crore indicating a YoY hike of 39% against Rs 17,490 crore worth properties registered between the months of January - June 2023.

This also indicates a rise in the average cost of homes registered in 2024 which was higher by an average 21% against those registered in the first six months of 2023.

However, the share of sales registrations has fallen from 70% in June 2023 to 60% in June 2024. Notably the share of sales registrations for properties costing Rs 1 crore and above has increased to 14% in June 2024, as compared with 9% in June 2023. There's a noticeable trend of homebuyers preferring higher-value homes, which is reflected in the increasing registrations of properties for homes priced over Rs 1 crore.

In June 2024, Hyderabad recorded the largest number of properties under Rs 50 lakh.

registered properties in Hyderabad were concentrated in the range of 1,000 to 2,000 square feet (sq ft) comprising 68% of all registrations. Conversely, there was an increase in demand for larger properties exceeding 2,000 square feet, with registrations rising to 14% in June 2024 from 11% in June 2023.

At a district-level, Rangareddy emerged as the leading contributor to registrations in June 2024, capturing 43% of the market, a sharp increase as compared to the 38% recorded in June 2023. Medchal-Malkajgiri and Hyderabad district accounted for 41% and 16% respectively of the total registrations.

Among the districts, Medchal-Malkajgiri, experienced the sharpest increase of 11% YoY while, Rangareddy and Hyderabad experienced an increase of 8% and 7% YoY respectively.

## Water board starts Nagole STP trial run

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) started Nagole Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) trial run on Monday.

HMWSSB Managing Director Ashok Reddy directed the officials to prepare Nagole STP for opening by the end of July. On Monday, he visited Nagole STP, which is being constructed in package-2 as part of the STP projects.

The project of STPs has been initiated to enable 100% treatment of sewage generated daily. As part of this project, 31 new sewage treatment plants (STP) with a capacity of 1259.50 MLDs will be constructed at a total cost of Rs.3866.41 crore in 3 packages. If the construction of these is completed and made available, Hyderabad will be the first city to treat 100 per cent of the sewage generated daily in South Asia.

## FGG asks TG HC to take action for setting up 55 village courts

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The president of Forum for Good Governance urged the Registrar General to take speedy action for the establishment of 55 Grama Nyayalaya (village courts) in Telangana by giving notice to the Chief Justice of Telangana High Court.

M Padmanabha Reddy, president of Forum of Good Governance, said, "To provide access to inexpensive justice to rural people at their door steps, the Law Commission of India in its 114th report requested the Government of India for establishment of village courts. Accordingly, India Parliament enacted Grama Nyayalaya Act 2008, on August 16, 2009, a general consensus emerged regarding bringing into force the Grama Nyayalaya Act on October 2, 2009 the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Moreover, the Indian government stated that it will meet all the non-recurring expenses relating to establishment of Grama Nyayalaya and 50 per cent of



the recurring expenses."

He also pointed out that in erstwhile AP, no action was taken to establish Grama Nyayalaya. After continuous persuasion from the Forum for Good Governance during the previous Telangana government, GO No. 4, dated February 1, 2019 has accorded sanction for establishment of 55 Grama Nyayalaya in various locations in Telangana. Further the GO No.10, dated February 5, 2020 accorded sanction for appointment of 55 Grama Nyayadhikaries and 225 supporting staff and matter referred to Telangana High Court for further action.

Despite urging the High Court to take action in the establishment of Grama Nyayalaya, the process is still pending since the last four years as per the Registrar Judicial."

"I have also filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the Supreme Court via senior Advocate Prasanth Bhusan and the court directed the Chief Secretaries and Registrar Generals of the High Court to file affidavits in this regard. Justice Gawai and Justice Viswanathan of the Supreme Court stated that Right to Justice includes the right to speedy and affordable access to justice," he added.

## POLICE ANNOUNCES RS 2 LAKH ON TWO ABSCONDING ACCUSED

# Actress Rakul Preet Singh's brother arrested in drugs case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Tollywood actress Rakul Preet Singh's brother Aman Preet Singh and six other drug consumers were arrested on Monday.

The TG Anti-Narcotics Bureau (TGANB), along with Cyberabad Police apprehended five drug dealers, including two African nationals for possessing 199 grams of cocaine worth approximately Rs 35 lakh.

The five accused, including two foreign nationalists are Onuoha Blessing alias Joana Gomes alias and Azeez Noheem Adeshola, and three Indians Allam Satya Venkata Gowtham, Sanaboina Varun Kumar and Mohd Mahaboob Shareef, who were arrested for peddling. Two accused are absconding, who are Divine Ebuka Suezee and Ezeonyili Franklin Uchenna, both are Nigerian nationals.

TGANB announced a reward on those two absconding accused. "Whoever gives any leads for their arrest will be rewarded with Rs 2 lakh." Based on the information from the accused, police



caught seven consumers, including actress's brother Aman Preet Singh. Police are searching for six other consumers. Identified consumers are Aman, Kishan Rathi, Aniketh, Yashwanth, Rohith, Sri Charan, Prasad, Hemanth, Nikhil, Madhu, Raghu, Krishnam Raju and Venkat, all from Hyderabad.

Rajendra Nagar zone Deputy Commissioner of Police Ch Srinivas said that all the consumers have tested positive in cocaine drugs tests, including Aman Preet Singh. "After investigation, we would add some persons into the list," he added.

During the raid, police seized 199 grams of Cocaine,

two passports, two bikes and 10 cell phones from the accused.

The police said that the kingpin of the gang Divine Ebuka Suezee could have left for Nigeria. Now he was running a big drug syndicate in association with the other drug dealers. He sends his main associate Onuoha Blessing from Nigeria to Delhi to transport the drugs to Hyderabad and other cities in India. She travels by both flights and trains and supplies the drugs to the dealers. As of now she has brought large quantities of Cocaine more than 20 times to Hyderabad for the distribution to the drug dealers.

## Prajavani applications should be addressed promptly: GHMC

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Additional Commissioner Nalini Padmavathi ordered the officials to resolve the Prajavani applications as soon as possible.

During the Prajavani programme on Monday, the GHMC received 64 applications from the citizens. Out of them, 28 applications were related to Town Planning, 10 to Revenue department, 7 applications related to Chief Medical and Health Officer (CMHO), five



The GHMC officials receiving applications from the people during Prajavani at GHMC head office on Monday

related to Engineering Works. Additional Commissioner Satyanarayana said that when 8 complaints were

received over the telephone, those were sent to the authorities concerned. Among these, Basti Dawakhana, encroachment of footpaths, installation of statues in front of the house and stray dogs problem.

A total of 102 applications were received in the zones. Out of that, 73 applications were received in the Kukatpally zone, 15 applications in Serilingampally, 5 applications in Charminar, three applications in LB Nagar zone and one request in Khairatabad zone.

## Harish Rao condemns police brutality against unemployed

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Tension prevailed at Chikkadapally Central Library, as the police locked the unemployed students in the library for protesting against the government to defer DSC or Groups exams on Monday.

The police used lathi-charge on them for protesting to defer DSC and Groups exam. Meanwhile, the unemployed candidates staged a

dharna to conduct Group-2 and DSC in December. When the candidates tried to leave the library, the police locked the library gate. The situation became tense when the candidates who continued to protest in the library were arrested.

Siddipet MLA T Harish Rao condemned the police brutality against students studying in Chikkadapally Central Library on Monday via Twitter. Harish Rao

said, "It is evil for the government to behave so brutally against the Groups, DSC candidates and the unemployed. Is this what public governance means? Is this what Indiramma Rajyam means?"

"Today the police are sent to the same library and the backs of the students are being broken. I demand that the Chief Minister take responsibility for this incident and apologise," he added.

## NMC calls for tobacco cessation centres across medical colleges

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The National Medical Council (NMC) on Monday called for establishment of tobacco cessation centres in medical colleges across the country. This initiative aims to strengthen the healthcare infrastructure by integrating specialised services for tobacco cessation into the educational and healthcare framework.

In a statement, the NMC said, "In line with its commitment to promote public health

and combating the adverse effects of tobacco use, the government has decided to establish tobacco cessation centres in medical colleges across the country. This initiative aims to strengthen the healthcare infrastructure by integrating specialised services for tobacco cessation into the educational and healthcare framework."

It further said, "All the hospitals attached to each of the medical

colleges are directed to make provisions for "tobacco cessation centre". This can be a special clinic run by the Department of Psychiatry and/or other departments. These centres should also be established in rural and urban health centres that the college has adopted for training. These centres along with tobacco cessation, will also work as "drug de-addiction centres."

## SAFETY REVIEW MEETING

# SCR to accord priority to safety at RoBs/RuBs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

South Central Railway General Manager Arun Kumar Jain instructed all the officials to take necessary precautions and avoid water accumulation at Road-over-Bridges and Road-under-Bridges (RuBs) during the monsoon season. A drive must be taken up to identify all the vulnerable RuBs where the issue of water-logging problem persists during monsoon. He advised to make adequate pumping arrangements and provision of

water gauges. Round-the-clock manning must be provided at vulnerable RuBs having possibility of flooding. He also reviewed on the status of elimination of level-crossing gates over the zone.

Arun Kumar Jain held a detailed review meeting on safety of train operations across the zone on Monday at Rail Nilayam, Secunderabad. R Dhananjayulu, Additional General Manager, SCR, also participated in the meeting, along with all the principal

heads of departments. Divisional Railway Managers (DRMs) of all six divisions joined the review meeting through video conference.

The General Manager instructed all the Divisional Railway Managers (DRMs) to install CCTV surveillance in the major railway yards to curb miscreant activities and safeguard the railway assets. He reviewed the stock position of smoke detectors and fire extinguishers over the zone and instructed the officials to

ensure sufficient stocks of all fire safety equipment.

Arun Kumar Jain advised the officials that counselling sessions along with practical demonstration about the safety procedures should be arranged to loco pilots, assistant loco pilots, points-men, station masters, guards and other staff members who are involved in the train operations. He directed the officials to strictly adhere to safety procedures to ensure the safe running of the trains.

## MONSOON REGATTA AT HUSSAIN SAGAR

# Govardhan from TG secures 2<sup>nd</sup> position in Under-16

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Sailing Association and the Yacht Club of Hyderabad organised the 15th edition of Monsoon Regatta at Hussain Sagar on Monday. The waters seemed relatively cleaner than ever before and at higher levels due to the incessant rains and the shifty winds thereby making it tricky for most sailors.



Somya Singh of Madhya Pradesh



Shreya Krishna of Tamil Nadu

weather. She also won her protest against Shubham Yadav of Madhya Pradesh, thus retaining her top spot in the Under-16. Deekshita, the top seed sailor, dropped in overall positions and landed on 11th position. Bongur Bunny, erst-

while sailor of Telangana and currently from TSC Mysore, secured third position.

In the ILCA4 Under-18 Class, Somya Singh of Madhya Pradesh was in top form winning all three races for the day followed by Alia Sabreen of

Odisha. However, the gap between them was significant for Somya to have little worry about the next nine races.

Taking the wind shifts like an ace, Eklavya Batham won the day in the ILCA4 Boys followed by Krishna Divakar of TSC

Mysore, who got one win in the Under-18 International 420 Mixed Class. Divyanshi Mishra and Aniraj of Madhya Pradesh beat both local crews skippered by Thanuja Kameshwar and Vaishnavi Veeravamsam to finish at the top of the leader board with little effort.

In the Under-18 29er Skiffs, Malleth Gadham and crew Karthik Korolla from INS Mandovi NBSC, Goa, topped the charts giving little space to competition with two seconds and a win. "We sailed six fleets this Monsoon Regatta, a big jump from the normal three fleets, and the organisation under International Race Officer Shrikant Chaturvedi was clockwork from the word go," said Suheim Sheikh, president of the Telangana Sailing Association.

## TGSRTC plans to hike bus fares: KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Following the footsteps of the Karnataka government, the Telangana government launched the free bus travel facility in the name of Mahalakshmi scheme for women, girls and transgender. However, ever since the launch of free bus travel facility for women in Karnataka, the Karnataka government incurred huge losses. In regards to this aspect, BRS working president KT Rama Rao, via Twitter, stated that Telangana RTC will also plan to increase bus fares.

According to sources, the RTC in Karnataka was at a huge loss of Rs 295 crore and hence it is ready to increase the charges to cover up the losses.

KTR said, "Always remember that when someone says free, they are taking you for a ride. If you are told that it is free, you will never have to pay for it. The day is not far when Telangana RTC will also follow Karnataka's path and increase bus fares."

Meanwhile, after the implementation of this scheme, the traffic in buses increased tremendously.

## 'Dec. 6 continues', Asaduddin reacts to mosque desecration

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) president Asaduddin Owaisi on Monday flayed Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis after a mosque in Kolhapur was attacked. The incident occurred on Sunday when a mob placed a saffron flag atop the mosque and one of the miscreants was seen desecrating a minaret of the mosque. Owaisi took to X, compared the incident to the demolition of the Babri Masjid and said.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA Revenue (Land Acquisition) Department FORM - VII (DECLARATION)												
(See Sub-rule (1) of rule-25 and Section -49(1) of the Act, 2013)												
(The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation & Resettlement Act, 2013)												
Collector's File No.	G1/1345/2019	Date:	09-07-2024	Spl. Dy. Collector File No.	B/35/2023	Date:	29-06-2024	Gazette No.	97/2024	Date:	09-07-2024	
The Government of Telangana/Dist. Collector, Siddipet has decided to acquire Ac. 6.15 guntas in Anikampeta village of Siddipet Rural Mandal of Siddipet district for public purpose for excavation of BR. Distributory of BRAC of Sri Komuravelli Mahasagar Reservoir as part of its Package-12 and for the excavation of minor canal 2R. As the government felt that there is a need to acquire the said land, it issued a notification as per the Section 11 (1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act of 2013.												
The I & CLD (LA) department of the state government, by an order G.O Ms No.35 dated 30-06-2017 exempted the social impact assessment and flood security as per the rule 10-A.												
Therefore, a preliminary notification has been issued to acquire Ac. 6.15 guntas of land in Anikampeta village of Siddipet Rural Mandal of Siddipet district to initiate land acquisition work as shown in the following schedule.												
SCHEDULE												
Village	Verikattapet	Mandal	Thatta	District	Siddipet	Sl. No.	Area in Hectares	Area in Guntas	Name of the Landholder/Enjoyer	Type of Land	Boundaries	Serial No. of the Land
1	785/01	01	Nagulapalli Kishorva (Bhamaiah)	Petta	783/704	Ro	782					
2	785/02	01	Middle Rameshchandra (Malliah)	Petta	783/704	Ro	782					
3	785/03	01	1. Nagulapalli Nagarjuna S/o Narsiah 2. Nagulapalli Baliah S/o Narsiah	Petta	783/704	Ro	782					
4	785/04	01	Middle Jagan (Murthy)	Petta	783/704	Ro	782					Tree Bona Well, and others
5	785/05	01	Boggu Penkiah (Bhagiah)	Petta	786/705	710	790					
6	785/06	01	Boggu Swamy (Kishiah)	Petta	786/705	710	790					
7	785/07	01	Boggu Bhanupati (Velliah)	Petta	786/705	710	790					
8	785/08	01	1. Boggu Penkiah (Bhagiah) (P) 2. Boggu Rakesh (P) 3. Boggu Swamy (Kishiah) (P) 4. Boggu Swamy (Swamy) (P) 5. Boggu Baliah (Malliah) (E)	Petta	786/705	710	790					
9	785/09	01	Boggu Baliah (Chenna Malliah)	Petta	791/706	766	793					
10	785/10	01	Nagulapalli Narsiah (Malliah)	Petta	783/702	752	791					
11	785/11	01	Koyyala Rajalingam (Pochiah)	Petta	791/706	767	802					
12	785/12	01	Koyyala Rajalingam (Pochiah) - (P) Sufian Vajanna (E)	Petta	791/706	767	802					
13	785/13	01	Yengala Vajanna (Narsiah)	Petta	791/706	707	806					
14	785/14	01	Gangula Narsimha Reddy (Narasimha Reddy)	Petta	791/706	80	802					
Total 2.38												



# Tension as Sabitha protests over protocol row

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A protocol row erupted at the Khilla Maisamma Temple in RK Puram Division, Maheshwaram constituency, during the distribution of cheques related to the Bonalu festival. The situation escalated when former minister and BRS MLA Sabitha Indra Reddy protested against the behaviour of the officials by sitting on the ground under the stage.



BRS MLA Sabitha Indra Reddy staging a protest over protocol violation at RK Puram division temple in Hyderabad on Monday

MLA Sabitha expressed her anger when officials stated that only beneficiaries would be allowed inside by the police, a situation never seen before. She warned against inviting individuals without protocol to the stage, threatening further protests if such actions continued. Along with local BRS leaders, Sabitha staged a sit-in protest at the event.

"Change the law in Assembly on protocol if you want those defeated by people to participate", she said. While BRS protests continued, Endowments Department

officials and local Congress party representatives distributed cheques related to the Bonalu festival arrangements to various temple committees.

The temple premises turned into a battleground with parties criticising each other and holding protests. Police were deployed to

ensure no untoward incidents occurred. Tensions rose as MLA Sabitha Indra Reddy protested at the Khilla Maisamma Bonalu cheque dis-

tribution event. Police and the Executive Officer (EO) informed that only those receiving cheques were permitted in the meeting hall, and MLA's followers were not allowed, leading Sabitha to stage a protest by sitting under the stage. Sabitha also protested against allowing those who lost in the MLA elections to the stage, causing further tension at the Khilla Maisamma Temple.

The EO invited Maheshwaram Congress in-charge K Laxma Reddy (KLR) to the cheque distribution stage, leading Sabitha to question how he was allowed despite lacking protocol. This led to a scuffle between BRS and Congress supporters. Chanting "KLR Go Back," BRS members clashed with Congress supporters. The protest continued for half an hour, with both sides shouting slogans. Ultimately, Sabitha Indra Reddy and BRS members moved outside the temple premises to continue their protest, highlighting the escalating tension over protocol issues.

# Komatireddy dismisses BRS criticism of govt as absurd

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkata Reddy, along with Minister Jupalli Krishna Rao, was warmly welcomed by local MLA Veerlapalli Shankar in Shadnagar. The Ministers were in town for launching various developmental and welfare programs. Venkata Reddy announced that Chatan Pally railway over bridge (ROB) would be constructed at a cost of Rs 190 crore. The work on the ROB is set to begin in 15 days.



Ministers Komatireddy Venkatireddy and Jupalli Krishna Rao and MLA Shankar being welcomed in Shadnagar on Monday

Speaking in Shadnagar, he emphasised the government's commitment to complete the infrastructure project. Initially planned at a cost of Rs. 90 crore, the project received an increased budget of Rs. 190 crore thanks to the efforts of MLA Veerlapalli Shankar. The new ROB will be modelled after the Vaidya Junction.

In addition to the ROB, the Minister discussed plans for a

green field highway from Hyderabad to Kurnool. It is estimated to cost Rs 5,000 crore. He mentioned that discussions with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari had been held to facilitate this project, which is expected to greatly improve the transport infrastructure in the region.

He also highlighted the cooperation of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy in initiating large-scale welfare and developmental programmes across var-

ious constituencies. He dismissed the criticism by the BRS against the government as absurd. The government is committed to welfare of people, he asserted.

MLA Veerlapalli Shankar expressed his gratitude to Minister Venkata Reddy for paying attention to the development of Shadnagar constituency. Foundation stone for R & B guest house would be laid soon, he said.

# KTR writes to Speaker over protocol violations against BRS MLAs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Kalvakuntla Taraka Rama Rao, working president of Bharat Rashtara Samithi, has written a letter to Speaker Gaddam Prasad of the Telangana Legislative Assembly, highlighting ongoing violations of protocol and the systematic undermining of the rights of BRS MLAs since the Congress government took power.



In his letter, KT Rama Rao expressed deep concern over what he described as a "troubling culture" where the rights of opposition BRS MLAs are being deliberately trampled. He stated that in instances where there are no ruling party MLAs, the Congress government blatantly violates the rights of opposition members. He accused the Congress government of habitual protocol violations and unconstitutional behaviour, which he asserted is detrimental to democratic principles.

Rama Rao contrasted this with the almost decade-long tenure of the BRS party, during which he claimed such undemocratic practices were never engaged in, and the MLAs elected by the people were always respected. However, he noted that since the Congress party took office, BRS MLAs have been deliberately targeted, with repeated violations of protocol. He pointed out specific instances of protocol violations, including the distribution of welfare scheme cheques, such as Kalyani Lakshmi, by Congress leaders instead of the local MLAs, and development works, including foundation laying and inauguration ceremonies, being conducted without the presence of elect-

ed MLAs. He cited constituencies like Huzurabad, Maheshwaram, and Asifabad as examples where local Congress leaders or defeated candidates are acting as if they are the elected representatives. Furthermore, Rama Rao highlighted that threats from government leaders have coerced officials into following these undemocratic directives. He noted that over the past seven months, there have been continuous instances of protocol violations. Despite efforts by BRS MLAs to bring these issues to the Speaker's attention, access has been limited. Rama Rao urged the Speaker to use his authority to protect the rights and protocol of legislative members, regardless of party affiliations. He called for immediate orders to be issued to the Chief Secretary and all district collectors to ensure that the protocol for BRS MLAs is respected and maintained. He warned that if these issues are not addressed promptly, they will be raised during the upcoming assembly meetings.

# Women empowerment is key to economic growth

PNS ■ BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

Bhadradri District Collector Jitesh V Patel said that Mahila Shakti Scheme was designed to empower women and provide financial stability.

He was participating in Mahila Shakti Scheme Awareness conference organised by the District Rural Development Organisation at the IDOC office on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector explained that the government has launched the Mahila Shakti Scheme with the intention of providing livelihood. He stressed the need to make the scheme a success in the districts. He explained that



Bhadradri District Collector Jitesh V Patel holding a review meeting with officials in Bhadrachalam on Monday

various types of industries would be established through self-cooperative societies and thus the scheme would help the advancement of women. He said that women's associations

would succeed only if they can choose a right industry to set up. It is suggested that small industries can be successful by extensively marketing products produced. He

suggested that women can achieve economic development by establishing small scale industries. For this, he promised to provide necessary training to women's groups for setting up any small scale industries. MPDOs and APMs of all the mandals were directed not to put pressure on the women's groups to achieve the goals, but to encourage them to set up industries.

DRDO Vidyachandana, ZP CEO Chandrasekhar, District Agriculture Department Officer Baburao, Horticulture Department Officer Surya narayana, Animal Husbandry Department Officer Purnam dareshwar and MPDOs, APM, Mahila Sangha members, community coordinators, office bearers and others participated in this programme.

# Man kills wife, attempts suicide

PNS ■ ADILABAD

A man allegedly killed his wife by slitting her throat over a family dispute at Saidapur village under Bela madnal on Monday. Later, the man turned the knife on himself in an attempt to end his life as well.

Police said that Yesula Sunitha (28) died after severe bleeding. Her husband Laxman then attempted suicide by slitting his throat. He was immediately shifted to RIMS-Adilabad where his condition was stated to be stable. Laxman reportedly attacked his wife

after heated arguments with her. His was a love marriage with Sunitha. They had been married for 10 years. The couple has two sons aged 8 and 6. Based on a complaint by Sunitha's father, a murder case was registered against Laxman. Investigation is underway.

# Officials told to address people's problems promptly

PNS ■ SURYAPETA

District Collector Tejas Nandlal Pawar on Monday directed the district officials to take immediate steps to address the problems being faced by the people.



District Collector Tejas Nandlal Pawar, along with Additional Collector BS Latha, at a meeting in Suryapet on Monday

He, along with Additional Collector BS Latha, participated in a public awareness programme held at the IDOC conference hall on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that awareness programmes on public issues should be conducted in all mandals and municipalities and the officials should participate in them. In the district

and staff should follow punctuality, moment register and holiday register must be maintained. As more and more applications are being received on land at the district level, such applications will be sent to the respective mandal Tahsildars for immediate action. The Collector said that 39 representations were received

on land issues in Public Works Department, 17 for DRDO, seven for DWO, 16 for other departments.

DRDO Madhusudan Raju, CPO Kishan, D.E.O Ashok, two Venkataramana, welfare officers Shankar, Anasuraya, Jagadeeswar Reddy, officials of various departments, petitioners and others participated.

# Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple in Yadadri witnesses massive rush

PNS ■ YADADRI BHUVANAGIRI

Devotees thronged the Yadagirigutta Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple on Monday. It is customary to visit the temple every month. More than 10,000 devotees took part in Giri Pradakshina. Extensive campaigning across the country



Devotees visiting Yadadri shrine taking part in Giri Pradakshina on Monday

A large number of devotees participated in the procession on Monday. The two-and-a-half-kilometre trek around the hill began at 6.05 am from the Vaikunta Dwaram. Government Whip Beerla Ilaiah was also present on the occasion. On the occasion of Giri Pradakshina, 2,000 saplings were planted at Vratamandapam, Sanskrit School, Annadana Satram, on both sides of Giripradakshina Road, Goshala in Mallapuram and other places.

All arrangements were made to ensure that the devotees do not face any inconvenience. Meanwhile, Yadagirikonda is crowded with devotees who come

to visit Yadagirigutta Lakshmi narasimha Swamy.

Even though it is the month of Ashada, a large number of devotees

reach Yadagiri in vehicles and visit the Ishta devas. On Sunday alone, about 30,000 devotees came to visit the temple.

# YSRCP plundered AP: CM

NEWS FROM ANDHRA PRADESH

- Releases white paper on natural resources in the past 5 years
- Toll-free number to be set up for land-grabbing complaints

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has accused the previous YSRCP government of extensive exploitation of the State's natural resources. He claimed that lands and minerals were looted, with instances of land grabbing reported in Visakhapatnam, Ongole, and Chittoor under the pretence of house construction.



Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu releasing a white paper at the Secretariat detailing the exploitation of natural resources during the previous administration. The Chief Minister stated, "According to available statistics, 1.75 lakh acres of land, valued at approx-

imately Rs 35,000 crore, were illegally occupied." He assured that stringent action would be taken against those involved in such illegal activities, including the plundering of natural resources and government properties.

Naidu criticised the previous government for squandering Rs 653 crore on issuing new passbooks following a land resurvey and announced the withdrawal of this resurvey. He expressed regret over the complete looting of red sanders stocks, the reduction in vigilance and forest staff, and the illegal grabbing

of quarries. The Chief Minister urged the public, especially those affected, to report land grabbing and other illicit activities of the previous government. A toll-free number will be provided for lodging complaints. He also criticized the allocation of the Forest portfolio to the same minister who oversaw the Mining wing, accusing him of using this position to exploit the state.

Naidu highlighted the case of Ramanaidu Studios in Visakhapatnam, where land previously allocated was reclassified as residential property for personal gain, a matter currently pending before the Supreme Court. He also noted that former MP MVV Satyanarayana attempted to illegally occupy 12.51 acres designated for an old age home, while Sarada Peetham received land at a nominal rate. The Chief Minister lamented that 8,086 acres of land intended for the landless were seized by ineligible parties. He detailed the allocation of land in Kadapa (5,796 acres), Kurnool (1,145 acres), Nandamaya district (3,471 acres), and Nandyal district (318 acres) to favoured individuals, totalling over Rs 1,300 crore.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA  
OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL DEPUTY COLLECTOR (L.A.)  
IPT & RAJNAGARS, KHAMMAM

FORM-VI  
PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION  
(See Sub-Rule (1) of rule-19 and Section -11 of the Act-30/2013)  
District Gazette No: A344/2024 DE: 11-07-2024  
District Collector, Khammam  
Re. No. G11 66629 2324 DE: 11-07-2024  
LAO/SDC (L.A.), IPT & RAJNAGARS, KHAMMAM  
Re.No. C97/2024 DE: 09-07-2024

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana District Collector, Khammam District that a total extent of Acs. 6.33 Gts. Partal Govt land is required in the Thuthakalinganapeta village of Erkoor Mandal of Khammam District for public purpose, namely for the acquisition of canal under Sathya Rama Lih Irrigation Project and the notification is issued under Section 11(1) of the Right Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act-2013 and the Publication is made as shown in the below schedule. There are no families, which are likely to be displaced due to the land acquisition.

In exercise of the power conferred by Section 10A (b) in Chapter IIIA of the RFCTLA & RR (Telangana Amendment), 2016 (Act No 21 of 2017), the Government of Telangana Vide G.O.Ms.No.38 Irrigation & CAD (L.A. & RR/2), Dated:30.08.2017 hereby, exempt the Sathya Rama Lih Irrigation Project from the application of the provision of Chapter II and III of the Rights of Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act 2013.

Therefore, it is notified that for the above said project in Thuthakalinganapeta village of Erkoor Mandal of Khammam District a piece of land measuring an extent of Acs. 6.33 Gts of standard measurement, whose detail description is as following, is under acquisition.

SCHEDULE  
Village: Thuthakalinganapeta, Mandal: Erkoor, District: Khammam

Sl. No	By No. of BSR	As per BSR name	Type of land	Type of title	Area under Acquisition (Ac. Gts)	Name of the acquirer	Structures/ Trees	Beneficiaries
1	43201	144 (Mhctar)	Dry	Partal Land	0.34	Gugulothu Venkateshwar, Sio Sathulu (P & E)	Teak Trees 01 Mango Trees 03	E: Gargath Sika N: Siga S: Gargath Sathulu
2	43201	144 (Mhctar)	Dry	Partal Land	0.24	Gangavathi Bikklu, Sio Vagga (P & E)	Current Poles 02	E: Guguloth Venkateswarlu W: Vagga N: Vagga S: Guguloth Venkateswarlu
3	43201	2 (Mhctar)	Dry	Partal Land	0.02	Bolu Venanna, W/o Venkataramana (P & E)	Teak Trees 04	E: Guguloth Sathulu W: Vagga N: Road S: Bolu Venanna
4	43101	2 (Mhctar)	Dry	Partal Land	0.09	M. Joeber, Sio Janath (P & E)	Teak Trees 04 Poles 05 Sore 01	E: Golla W: Road II & B N: Bolu Venkataramana S: Kuchala Venkateswarlu, Sathyanarayana
5	43101	01 (Mhctar)	Dry	Partal Land	2.30	Mallathu Narasimha Rao, Sio Raajulu (P & E)	2 Bore 3 Meters 3 Current Poles	E: Vagga W: Road N: Mallathu Sathulu S: Sathulu Kishan
6	43201	02 (Mhctar)	Dry	Partal Land	0.09	Manchu Ravi, Sio Ramdas (P & E)	Teak Trees 02	E: Vagga W: Road N: Mallathu Sathulu S: Sathulu Kishan
7	43101	02 (Mhctar)	Dry	Partal Land	0.09	Mallathu Lalitha, W/o Ravi (P & E)	Teak Trees 04 Poles 05 Sore 01	E: Golla W: Road II & B N: Bolu Venkataramana S: Kuchala Venkateswarlu, Sathyanarayana
8	43101	02 (Mhctar)	Dry	Partal Land	0.16	Bhalya Leela, W/o Parthabalu (P & E)	Teak Trees 02 Sore 01	E: Vagga W: Road N: Mallathu Sathulu S: Sathulu Kishan
Total Acc. Gts						6.33		

This notification is made under the provision of Section-11 (1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act-2013 (Act No.30/2013), to all whom it may concern.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the District Collector, Khammam L.A.O and Special Deputy Collector (L.A.), IPT & RAJNAGARS, Khammam on any working day during the working hours.

The Government of Telangana/District Collector-cum-Appropriate Government is pleased to authorize Officer and Special Deputy Collector (L.A.), IPT & RAJNAGARS, Khammam and his staff (Survey team) to enter upon and survey land, take levels of any land, dig or bore into soil and do all other acts required for the proper execution of their work as provided and specified in Section - 12 of the said Act.

Under Section 11(4) of the Act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of land i.e., sale/purchase, etc., or create any encumbrance on such land from the date of publication of such notification without prior approval of the Collector.

Objections to the acquisition if any may be filed by the person interested within 60 days from the date of publication of this notification as provided under Section-15 of the Act before District Collector, Khammam.

Sd/- Land Acquisition Officer / Sd/- Special Deputy Collector (L.A.) IPT & RAJNAGARS, KHAMMAM. Sd/- District Collector Khammam. DPR No.12/LA/PT/2024-25



INDIA CORNER

**Arunachal to bring legislation to curb malpractices in recruitment exams**

The Arunachal Pradesh cabinet on Monday approved a legislation to curb malpractices during recruitment examinations, officials said. The draft bill, which calls for stringent punishment including imprisonment with imposition of fine up to Rs 1 crore, will be tabled in the next session of the assembly commencing from July 19. The bill, after becoming an act, will ensure free and fair selection process of all posts under the state government and detect malpractices, a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said. The cabinet also approved a proposal to bring various categories of posts under the Arunachal Pradesh Staff Selection Board (APSSB) into a common cadre. It was necessitated to ensure a systematic human resource management in the APSSB for a free and fair recruitment process, the statement said.



**China expert Vikram Misri takes charge as India's new foreign secy**

Seasoned diplomat Vikram Misri, widely regarded as an expert on China and national security, assumed charge as India's new foreign secretary on Monday. Misri, a 1989-batch Indian Foreign Service officer who was serving as the deputy national security advisor, succeeded Vinay Kwatra. The 59-year-old assumed charge of the key position at a time India is looking to navigate various geo-political challenges, including its frosty ties with China following the lingering eastern Ladakh border row and the consequences of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. External affairs Minister S Jaishankar congratulated Misri on assuming his new responsibility. "Congratulate Foreign Secretary @VikramMisri as he assumes his new responsibility today. Wish him a productive and successful tenure," he said on X. Misri served in various capacities at the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), in the Prime Minister's Office and in various Indian missions in Europe, Africa, Asia and North America.



**Infiltration taking place from Punjab border, talks on to stem it: J-K DGP**

Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) R R Swain on Monday said an inter-state security meeting has deliberated on the new methods of infiltration by terrorists, who have been entering the state from the Punjab border. "Some infiltration is taking place (through the borderline in Punjab) and it is a commonplace knowledge. We tried to deliberate between ourselves as to the new methods and the modus operandi they are adopting," Swain told reporters on the sidelines of a function at Indian Institute of Management here. "We also talked about tunnels. How to sort it out. We talked about how to address more effectively their use of tunnels to infiltrate," he said. Senior BSF and police officers had gathered at an inter-state security review meeting in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua on Thursday, days after terrorists, who are believed to have infiltrated from across the International Border, ambushed an army patrol.



G20 TASK FORCE REPORT

**India pitches for global adoption of DPI for sustainable growth**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has pitched for global adoption of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) to promote productivity and achieve inclusive and sustainable growth, a G20 Task Force's report prepared by India said.



India's leadership on Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) has been acknowledged globally and in the G20 India Presidency in particular, according to the final 'Report of India's G20 Task Force on DPI' released on Monday.

"Given that DPI has been recognised as a tool for boosting nations' productivity and achieving strong, inclusive and sustainable growth, the time is ripe to initiate discussions to co-create a path toward promoting global adoption of DPI to accelerate countries' socio-economic growth and development," it said.

This should include leverag-

ing the expertise of countries experienced in DPI to assist others in developing their digital public infrastructure, the report of Task Force co-chaired by Amitabh Kant, G20 Sherpa of India, and Nandan Nilekani, co-founder and Chairman of Infosys and the Founding Chairman of UIDAI.

At the same time, the report said, India and other countries with advanced DPI should also focus on building on the

existing DPI, to continue driving inclusion and progress domestically towards more ambitious outcomes.

The work of this task force led to the acceptance of the definition and framework of the DPI during India's G20 Presidency and will be taken forward for implementation during the Brazilian and South African presidencies.

The report also highlighted the need to identify an existing

body of global standards with the scope of multinational presence, to foster and harness the DPI ecosystem across various regions and countries, especially Global South countries.

Many countries are considering how to develop their national digital infrastructure to accelerate economic progress through drastic improvement in provisioning public services, and foster trust between people and institutions by improving transparency and reducing distance, it said.

The report will play a key role in defining the future course of the DPI approach and actions for implementation around the globe, particularly in the Global South.

On the release of the report, the G20 Sherpa of India said, "India did an incredible pole vault in DPI. We achieved in nine years what would have taken 50 years without DPI.



**COUNTERING DRUG TRAFFICKING, ABUSE Shah to chair meet on coordination**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will on Thursday chair the seventh apex level meeting of the Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD) which has been convened to coordinate and synergise efforts of various central and state agencies involved in countering drug trafficking and abuse in India.

At the meeting in Delhi, Shah will launch a national narcotics helpline -- 'MANAS' (Madak Padarth Nisedh Asuchna Kendra) -- and virtually inaugurate the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) zonal office in Srinagar.

**HAL has huge role to play in Make-in-India dream: MoS**



PNS ■ BENGALURU

Union Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth on Monday said that public sector aerospace and defence company Hindustan Aeronautics Limited has a huge role to play in achieving the 'Make in India dream' in Defence, as he called upon the company to contribute towards achieving 'Viksit Bharat'.

Seth visited the HAL facilities here and while addressing HAL's top management, he assured the company of government support. He called upon the Bengaluru-headquartered company to ensure that the various challenges in design and development as well as production and delivery are addressed in time to contribute to achieving Viksit Bharat as envisaged by the government. In an official

statement, the company said, "HAL made the presentation, covering its product profile (the present and the future), current ROH (Repair and Overhaul), aircraft upgrade and modifications, avionics developments, exports, engine production, manned and unmanned aerial vehicles, indigenisation measures, civil MRO (Maintenance, Repair, and Operations) initiatives and support given to various ISRO platforms."

Later, the minister visited HAL's LCA Tejas and Helicopter divisions. C B Ananthkrishnan, CMD (Additional Charge) thanked the minister for the support given by the government and said that HAL has taken proactive measures to overcome the challenges in different areas of its operations

EXPORTS TO RUSSIA

**India looks at various sectors, removal of trade barriers**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is focussing on various sectors like electronics, besides taking up issues of non-trade barriers removal, to boost exports to sanction-hit Russia and move towards achieving the USD 100 billion annual bilateral trade target, a senior government official said on Monday.

An Indian delegation is likely to visit Russia in a follow-up to the recent summit meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"We are focusing on different sectors. There are non-tariff barriers (NTBs), which we have asked Russia to look into, and there will be another visit to Russia. We are looking at better greater market access (to increase India's exports to Russia)," he told reporters here.

India and Russia have set a target of USD 100 billion in annual trade volume by 2030 and

vowed to develop a robust bilateral payment settlement mechanism using national currencies. At present, the bilateral trade stands at about USD 67 billion.



"We are looking at various sets of commodities, for example, electronics, engineering and other products where there can be exports," Barthwal said, adding that Indian marine and pharma exporters face issues in Russia in terms of certification.

He added that India is also looking at tapping export opportunities in sectors where Russia faces sanctions from the Western world. "We are also looking at rupee-rouble trade...so, it is a twin strategy on which we are working," the secretary said. Major items of export from India include electrical machinery, pharmaceuticals, machinery and mechanical appliances, chemicals, iron and steel.

**Not afraid of politically malicious criticism, says K'taka CM**

PNS ■ BENGALURU

With opposition parties targeting his government over alleged financial irregularities in a state-run corporation in both Houses of Karnataka legislature and planning to raise the Mysuru Urban Development Authority 'scam' issue, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said he has answers to their "every word" and it is not in his nature to sit quietly, afraid of politically malicious criticism.



He also accused BJP and JD(S) of adopting "hit and run" tactics by lying before the media, and asserted that it will not be allowed in the House (Legislative Assembly/Council). "How true are the allegations of the opposition parties? How much lies? We will bring it to light in this House. It is not in my nature to sit quietly, afraid of politically malicious criticism," Siddaramaiah said in a post on X.

"BJP and JD(S) leaders, I have an answer for every word of yours. It's not like lying before the media so far, standing somewhere far away and

shooting a bullet in the air. This is the House, your hit and run has no place here," he added. The illegal money transfer issue, involving Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation Ltd, came to the fore, after its accounts superintendent, Chandrashekar P, died by suicide on May 26, leaving behind a death note.

The note alleged unauthorised transfer of Rs 187 crore belonging to the Corporation from its bank account, and from that, Rs 88.62 crore was illegally moved to various accounts allegedly belonging to "well-known" IT companies and a Hyderabad-based cooperative bank among others.

**Govt to cover 25% of kharif paddy area with climate-resilient seeds**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to combat the growing challenges posed by climate change, the government is targeting to bring 25 per cent of the total kharif paddy area under climate-resilient seeds, a senior agriculture ministry official said on Monday.



The move comes as erratic rainfall patterns have become increasingly common in recent years, threatening rice production in the country.

India, the world's second-largest rice producer after China, cultivates paddy on over 410 lakh hectares during the kharif season.

Speaking on the sidelines

of ICAR's 96th Foundation and Technology Day celebrations, ICAR Director General Himanshu Pathak said, "While we have achieved 75 per cent coverage of climate-resilient seeds in wheat cultivation, the adoption in

paddy is still limited." Pathak revealed that ICAR has developed paddy seeds resistant to drought and lodging. These seeds were sown in 16 per cent of the total paddy area during the 2023 kharif season.



**Uddhav victim of betrayal, Modi not my enemy: Shankaracharya**

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Swami Avimuktেশ्वरानंद Saraswati, the Shankaracharya of the Jyotish Peeth in Uttarakhand, who turned down the invitation to the Ram temple consecration ceremony in Ayodhya, on Monday said Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray is a

victim of betrayal. On Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking his blessings when they met at the 'Shubh Ashirwad' ceremony of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant in Mumbai on Saturday, the Shankaracharya said he is Modi's well-wisher.

"Yes, PM Modi came to me and did a 'pranaam'. It is our

rule that we will bless whoever comes to us. Narendra Modi ji is not our enemy. We are his well-wishers and always speak for his welfare. If he makes a mistake, we also point that out to him. He is not our enemy," he said. "Uddhav Thackeray has been betrayed and many people are anguished by it. I met him today as per his

request and told him that people's pain won't subside till he becomes the chief minister again," he told reporters after meeting Thackeray at the latter's residence Matoshree in Bandra. He (Uddhav) said he will do whatever was needed as per our blessings, Swami Avimuktेश्वरानंद Saraswati said.

RETURN CAR FESTIVAL

**Thousands pull chariots in Bahuda yatra**

PNS ■ PURI

Thousands of devotees pulled the chariots of sibling deities - Lord Jagannath, Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra - on the 'Bahuda Yatra' or return car festival on Monday.



Though the pulling of chariots was slated to start at 4 pm, it began ahead of the schedule amid chants of 'Jai Jagannath' and beating of cymbals.

Devotees start pulling Lord Balabhadra's chariot 'Talapadwaja' at 3.25 pm and Devi Subhadra's 'Devadalan' at 4 pm. Pulling of Lord Jagannath's chariot 'Nandighosh' began at 4.15 pm.

The chariot pulling started after Puri's titular king 'Gajapati Maharaj' Divya Singha Deb performed 'cheer-apahana', a ritual during which he swept the three chariots with help of golden broom by sprinkling scared

water. The deities left the Jagannath temple on July 7 during the Rath Yatra and

reached Gundicha temple, considered their birthplace. They stayed there for a week and on Monday are now returning to the Jagannath temple. This journey is known as the 'Bahuda Yatra'.

Earlier, the trinity was ceremonially taken to their respective chariots from the Gundicha Temple in presence of lakhs of devotees.

A total of 180 platoons (1 platoon comprises 30 personnel) of police force and 1,000 officers were deployed to maintain law and

order and crowd management during the 'Bahuda Yatra'.

Additional Director General of Police (Law & Order) Sanjay Kumar said adequate security arrangements have been made and the entire temple town is under CCTV surveillance. Around five lakh people are expected to congregate for the festival.

The deities will remain seated on the chariots in front of the 'Singha Dwar' (Lion's Gate) of the 12th-century shrine on Monday night. The 'Sunabesha' (golden attire) ritual, in which the deities are decked in gold jewellery, will be performed on chariots on July 16.

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**India, US carry out mega wargame in Indian Ocean**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian Navy's frontline warships carried out a mega military exercise with the Theodore Roosevelt carrier strike group of the US in the Indian Ocean, demonstrating the growing strategic congruence between the two sides in the key maritime domain.



The USS Theodore Roosevelt is a Nimitz-class, nuclear-powered, aircraft carrier of the US Navy.

A carrier battle group or carrier strike group is a mega naval fleet comprising an aircraft carrier, accompanied by a large number of destroyers, frigates and other ships.

The Theodore Roosevelt carrier strike group operated alongside forces from the Indian

Navy in the Indian Ocean on July 12, the US embassy said in a readout.

The wargame came amid increasing concerns among democratic countries over China's increasing military muscle-flexing in the larger Indo-Pacific region.

The Indian Navy's deployment included guided missile destroyer INS Visakhapatnam and replenishment ship INS Aditya. "This joint maritime activity advanced interoperability between the two major defence partners and underscores their shared commitment to upholding a free and open Indo-Pacific," the embassy said.





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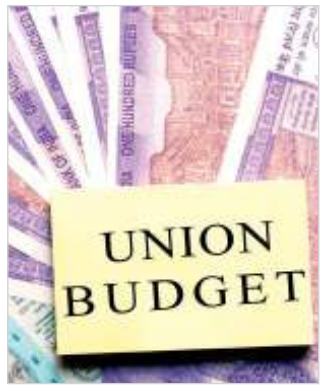
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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Expectations from the budget

### The Union Budget must address infrastructure growth, job creation and clean energy initiatives

The 2024 Union Budget will be presented in the Lok Sabha on July 23rd. This will be the first budget by NDA-3, likely to continue its earlier policies. However, setbacks in the recent elections might lead to course corrections, and some populist measures may be included in the budget by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. As the Union Budget 2024-25 approaches, the Indian economy stands at a pivotal juncture, characterized by robust growth prospects and lingering challenges. The GDP growth forecast remains optimistic, buoyed by a strong recovery in various sectors, particularly manufacturing, services, and technology. However, inflationary pressures, high fiscal deficits, and global economic uncertainties pose significant challenges. The government has made concerted efforts in the past to enhance infrastructure, digitalisation, and clean energy initiatives, reflecting its commitment to sustainable development. Despite these strides, issues like unemployment, income inequality, and rural distress persist, necessitating targeted fiscal measures. The forthcoming budget is expected to address these concerns, aiming to foster economic resilience, stimulate investment, and ensure inclusive growth for the nation. It is an opportunity to streamline the economy and heal ailing sectors. People's prime concerns remain inflation, which can be dexterously handled with tight fiscal planning. The Union Budget under NDA 3.0 must prioritise infrastructure growth and job creation, aiming to boost manufacturing through public-private partnerships. Changes in personal taxation and pension schemes are also expected, focusing on long-term fiscal sustainability and middle-class relief.



There is significant industry expectation for reforms and incentives to bring them back on track. The real estate sector, a major catalyst for economic growth and a vital provider of employment, urgently needs industry status to access lower-cost financing and tax benefits. High taxes on essential materials like cement and steel, particularly the 28% GST on cement must be addressed to sustain growth. India's electric vehicle (EV) sector stands at a crucial juncture, with high expectations for the upcoming budget. The government should prioritise incentivising firms to use EVs for last-mile delivery operations. Reducing GST rates for renewable energy components from the current 18% to 5% could lower the cost structure for green energy projects, promoting faster adoption across the country. The upcoming budget is expected to focus on employee welfare, formal job creation, reducing compliance complexity, and addressing the skill gap. Job creation and equipping people with desired skills, especially in technology, must be focal points. The budget should allocate more funds to tech infrastructure and resources, preparing students for a tech-driven job market and supporting entrepreneurial growth. Overall, the Budget must provide a definitive direction for India's economic agenda, with a strong emphasis on infrastructure, job creation, clean energy, and comprehensive sectoral reforms.

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## PICTALK



Devotees carry idols of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra on the occasion of Ula Rath Yatra in Nadia PTI

## High seas treaty: A crucial step for marine biodiversity protection

### This treaty represents a significant international effort to protect our oceans, promoting equity and cooperation among nations

The world's oceans, vast and mysterious, are crucial to the health of our planet. They regulate the climate, produce half of the oxygen we breathe, and support a rich tapestry of life that is vital to global biodiversity. Marine ecosystems are incredibly diverse, hosting countless species, many of which remain undiscovered. Protecting this biodiversity is not just an ethical obligation but a practical necessity. Healthy marine ecosystems provide essential services, such as carbon sequestration, which helps mitigate climate change. They also support fisheries that millions of people rely on for food and livelihoods. Yet, the high seas—the areas of the ocean that lie beyond national jurisdictions—remain largely unprotected and poorly managed. The significance of the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement comes into the picture here. BBNJ is an international treaty under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement, also



known as the High Seas Treaty, is a significant international treaty aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Areas beyond national jurisdiction cover approximately two-thirds of the ocean's surface and 95% of its volume. These regions offer invaluable benefits to humanity, including ecological, economic, social, cultural, scientific, and food security advantages. However, they are vulnerable to significant threats such as pollution, overexploitation, and the escalating impacts of climate change. The anticipated rise in human demand for marine resources in the coming decades—for food, minerals, and biotechnology—poses a risk of worsening these issues. These areas cover nearly half of the Earth's sur-

face, yet they lack comprehensive legal frameworks to regulate human activities, leaving them vulnerable to overfishing, habitat destruction, pollution, and the impacts of climate change. The BBNJ Agreement aims to ensure marine biological diversity conservation and sustainable use in areas beyond national jurisdiction. One of the most commendable aspects of the BBNJ Agreement is its emphasis on equity. The agreement recognises the differing capacities of developed and developing nations in managing marine resources. It includes provisions for capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology, helping to level the playing field and enable all nations to participate effectively in ocean governance. This is vital for ensuring that the benefits of marine resources are shared fairly. The BBNJ Agreement represents a vision of global stewardship where nations come together to protect the shared heritage of our oceans. It establishes mechanisms for creating marine protected areas (MPAs), conducting environmental impact assess-

ments (EIAs), and sharing marine genetic resources (MGRs) and associated benefits equitably. This holistic approach ensures that conservation efforts are globally coordinated, scientifically informed, and inclusive of all stakeholders. It is a testament to the power of multilateralism in addressing global challenges. While the BBNJ Agreement is a significant step forward, it faces considerable challenges. Ensuring compliance and enforcement in the vast and remote high seas areas will be complex. Effective implementation will require robust monitoring systems, international collaboration, and sufficient funding. Moreover, the agreement must harmonise with existing regional and sectoral bodies to avoid conflicts and duplication of efforts. An international agreement like the BBNJ Agreement, where countries work together for a common goal, is a beacon of hope for resurrecting our planet from the hardships caused by human activities. (The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies; views are personal)

# New army chief follows Zorawar's footsteps

### The ancient Duggar region has produced many of India's bravest warriors and earned the highest number of gallantry awards in the annals of the Indian Armed Forces



BHOPINDER SINGH

Ancient Duggar region (land of warrior-Dogras spanning J&K, Himachal Pradesh, and parts of Punjab) has given maximum sacrifice and earned the highest number of gallantry awards in the annals of the Indian Armed Forces. Geographically, they have been the first line of defence against all invading forces. The noble land birthed the likes of King Porus, and the warrior sans pareil, General Zorawar Singh. Unbeknownst to many, the legendary Zorawar's audacious conquests included regions that are now in Pakistan and China like Gilgit-Baltistan, Skardu, Hunza, to even large swathes of Tibet. With such martial traditions, it is the only region in the country that populates not one but four fiery regiments of the Indian Army i.e., Jammu & Kashmir Rifles, Dogra Regiment, Jammu & Kashmir Light Infantry and Punjab Regiment, besides other arms, and services. But the Jammu & Kashmir Rifles or Jak Rif, has a hallowed place in history and imagination as a proud and direct legate of those Zorawar's dardelvir traditions. The only 'State Force' of the Princely Dogra Kingdom to be fully amalgamated in the Indian Army, they remain the quintessential 'Gentlemen Soldiers' owing to pedigree, immense dignity, and professional restraint in personal conduct, but unmatched ferocity in battle. In 1947 the 'Saviour of Kashmir', Brigadier Rajendra Singh Jamwal, MVC, and his band of 300 indefatigable warriors held off Pakistani tribals for crucial three days to allow the confabulations and the landing of Indian troops in Srinagar. The Maharaja and Commander of J&K State forces had ordered, "Brigadier Rajender Singh is commanded to hold the enemy at Uri at all costs and to the last man" - he did so by paying the "ultimate sacrifice" himself. In another theatre, Brig Sher Jung Thapa, MVC, of the J&K State Forces earned the title of "Hero of Skardu". Even the first Param Vir Chakra of India, Maj Somnath Sharma, was from the Duggar region. Decades later, when the enemy attempted to



cross over yet again, it was the unparalleled heroics of the 13th Jak Rifbattalion, atop the unforgiving heights of the Kargil War that galvanised the nation. Two combatants from the traditional Duggar catchment areas of Palampur and Bilaspur were to send shivers down the spine of the enemy with their regimental war cries of "Durga Mata ki Jai" as they retook Point 5140. Captain Vikram Batra was to immortalise the moment with his "Yeh dil mange more" spirit and Rifleman (later Subedar Major) Sanjay Kumar would fight to defend their land just as their forefathers did, for aeons. Both won Param Vir Chakra. Even the peace-time equivalent of gallantry, Ashok Chakra, was bestowed on 2/Lt (later Maj Gen) Cyrus Pithwalla of 17th Jak Rif, to be the only 'General' officer with the highest gallantry award. It is from this deep fount of distinguished soldiering, that the 30th Chief of Indian Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, takes over the reigns. Commissioned in the 18th Rif battalion, he is the first Army Chief from the decorated Regiment. Understandably, people in the Duggar land (especially those from the Jak Rif fraternity) are justifiably proud. As 97 years

GENERAL DWIVEDI ASSUMES THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT HIS REGIMENTAL FOREFATHERS HELD WITH MUCH APLOMB, ELAN AND PROFESSIONAL ACUMEN THAT BEFITS THEIR MOTTO, PRASHATA RANVIRTA OR VALOUR IN BATTLE IS PRAISEWORTHY!

'young', Major General Goverdhan Singh Jamwal (the only General who was commissioned by Commander-in-Chief of J&K State Forces, Maharaja Hari Singh) extended congratulations and recalled the countless regimental sacrifices that, "made the State as crown of newly independent India". Today, General Dwivedi assumes the responsibility that his regimental forefathers held with much aplomb, elan and professional acumen that befits their motto, Prashata Ranvirta or Valour in battle is Praiseworthy! The General assumes the mantle in most challenging times, but as the Military truism goes, "The harder the conflict, the greater the triumph". With the Indian Army, he takes over the most disciplined, combat-hardened, and restrained institution of the nation - much like his own regimental ethos. Regrettably, such a selfless attitude in a selfish world can often lead to being 'taken for granted' or lead to institutional diminishment. Transmitting that 'voice' for redressal to the powers-that-be will be his foremost challenge. To his singular credit, he has tenanted the most sensitive posts e.g., Army Commander of the Northern Command that dealt with dual nemesis

i.e., China and Pakistan simultaneously, amongst other operational and staff posts. This makes him a worthy leader. In a movingly reassuring optic that is so typical of the Indian Army and its inimitable ways, the good General took blessings of his family elders, laid a wreath for those who went down fighting at the National War Memorial and then exchanged greetings with religious leaders of all faiths and denominations. Much like the multi-religious and multi-castiest denomination of the Duggar land and the combatants-in-arms from his beloved Jak Rif who could be a Sikh like Honorary Captain Sundar Singh (Ashok Chakra), Parsi like Maj Gen Pithwalla (Ashok Chakra) or even the martyr from his battalion i.e. 18th Jak Rif, Rifleman Arif Khan Pathan, who laid down his life on Indo-Pak Line-of-Control (LoC). Jak Rif's pride is the nation's pride. As regimental patriarch, Maj Gen Goverdhan Singh Jamwal dotingly noted, "General Upendra Dwivedi is the product of this great Regiment of General Zorawar Singh. You can expect results". (The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### ROT IN THE SYSTEM

Madam — It is ridiculous that the central institutions are being pulled in for series of alleged discrepancies in the entrance exams one after other. After NEET exam paper leaks, now its time for UPSC exam. Probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar's issue in Pune, is now on the limelight to raise many doubts regarding the UPSC and its selection process which is lenient towards IAS officers daughters and sons. It seems that the rules were bent in favor of her due to the political influence of her father and the impact of nepotism while clearing her medical examination certificate under OBC, PwBD quota, which was accepted despite it was done by the private hospital with an excuse of COVID-19 and posting. It is highly doubtful that she passed the exam under OBC category by misusing the law and fooled the interview board regarding her credentials which is not supposed to fall under OBC, PwBD quota as her asset worth is 22 crore. Her attitude, lavish life and pomposity on her probation period was unethical and disrespect to such highest post in the government. Perhaps, its just because of such candidates the honest and deserving get deprived of a chance to serve the society and nation building. It raises a red flag whether rules were misused in the past as well under the guise of obtaining OBC certificate by showing disability by the candidates who have had political affiliation and support. One hopes for fair and proper investigation of this matter to wipe out the rot in the system.

Janga Bahadur Sunuwar | Jalpaiguri

### RAUT'S UNCHARITABLE COMMENTS

Madam — Shiv Sena (UBT) leader and MP Sanjay Raut now says that Atal Bihari Vajpayee would have imposed emergency in a similar situation. Had Vajpayee told Raut that he would have imposed emergency if he had faced a situation of the kind Indira Gandhi faced? The situation was created by Indira Gandhi herself. Justice Jagmohan Lal Sinha of Allahabad High

## Trump dodges the bullet



In the shooting incident in Pennsylvania at a Trump rally, the Ex president fortunately had a narrow escape. History is replete with attempts at assassination of US presidents. In

fact world over national leaders elsewhere too have been targeted for differing reasons. In the Trump incident, political observers have highlighted increasing and consistent effort at polarisation in the US, fed by hateful political rhetoric in the past few years. Trump as the serving President would refuse to concede defeat in his bid for re-election in 2020, even after losing it by as many as seven million votes. He not only stuck to a theory of conspiracy to deny him a win but created a partisan following that would recklessly storm into the parliament. The Pennsylvania incident must carry a larger and universal lesson. As a leader grows tall his onus to public propriety and temperance in speech, becomes exponential. Else it stands to rapidly fray the socio-politic fabric of a nation.

R N Narayanan | Mumbai

Court held Indira Gandhi guilty for her electoral malpractices. The Allahabad High Court delivered its judgment on June 12, 1975. The adverse judgment against Indira Gandhi threatened her position as Prime Minister. Top national leaders Jayaprakash Narayan, Morarji Desai, Vajpayee, and many others were arrested when Indira Gandhi had the premonition that her power and position would be in peril. The justification given for imposition of emergency was 'the internal disturbance'. Vajpayee did not indulge in electoral malpractices for facing a situation of the kind Indira Gandhi faced. He never hankered after power. Power came in search of him. The thought of Raut that Vajpayee would have imposed emergency if he had faced similar situation makes a laughing stock. What is wrong if Modi calls the day of emergency as the day of murder of the Constitution?

K V Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

### RESPECT GANDHI'S LEGACY

Madam — I want to express my deep concern and disappointment over the recent

removal of the Mahatma Gandhi statue in Doomsday, Assam. The abrupt decision to dismantle this statue, which stood as a symbol of peace and unity at Gandhi Chowk, has understandably sparked widespread outrage among the community, particularly student leaders and local civil society. The statue's removal not only disrespects the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi but also undermines the values of non-violence and harmony that he tirelessly promoted. Such actions can have far-reaching negative impacts on our society, eroding the respect for historical figures who played pivotal roles in shaping our nation. I urge the authorities to reconsider their decision and engage in a dialogue with the community to address their concerns. Restoring the statue or finding a more inclusive solution will help in maintaining social harmony and respecting the sentiments of the people.

Masood Ahmad | Barabanki

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com





## FIRST COLUMN MANY REASONS FOR THANKING GOD

God helps us in many ways, and the least we can do is thank Him for His generosity



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

Anyone, who has even tried to link with God either by praying or by chanting or by any other spiritual practice, would have benefited in some way. Because God can never be a debtor; He doesn't have to be. After all, He is the controller. I do many spiritual activities, and I am rewarded much beyond my expectations. How do I respond? I thank God profusely. This entitles me to more favours from God because thanking God is a high-class spiritual act. Over a long period of being in the shelter of God, many changes have occurred in my life. I am more peaceful; feel more secure; am 'sukhi' (happy); bad times don't last long; help comes, as required; guidance is generally available; etc. There are multiple reasons to thank God. I will detail a few. The first one has to be God's role in keeping the Creation going for our benefit. There have been many wars. But the world remains intact. Because God is the only entity, who could have prevented an all-out war like a nuclear war, which could have destroyed the world. God keeps the Creation going for His parts (The Bhagavad-Geeta 15.7). A businessman tries to keep his business going for his children, grandchildren, etc, but doesn't always succeed, because we all are limited; God is not.

God uses good souls, those who possess divine qualities to keep the Creation going. He rewards them in many ways including a better next birth. Shouldn't we thank God for this 'kripa' (grace)? The second reason to thank God profusely is for protecting good souls from demons. Lord Krishna has stated in verse # 16.6, "There are two types of living beings in this world: possessing divine qualities and having demonic qualities. Every person has either the predominance of divine or demonic qualities." Those with a preponderance of demonic qualities remain engaged in cruel acts. (16.4) There is a good percentage of such people. How do good people, i.e. having a preponderance of divine qualities, escape their attention?

God manages that. I cannot imagine living the way I do, i.e. with freedom and escape from being hurt by them. Believe me, I thank my Lord for this great mercy a lot, knowing how vulnerable I am. My third reason to be thankful to God is for bailing me out of all troubles, which make



their painful appearance due to my past bad/sinful acts, mostly in my past lives. I must have, otherwise I wouldn't be giving birth in this dukhalaya. God has promised this to all those who have God's consciousness. The fourth reason to thank God is for acting as karta (doer) in my life. There are five factors for accomplishing any task. These are: the place of action and the doer and many different kinds of instruments and many different efforts and fifth in this connection is the providence only." (18.14) Only God can control all the five. No human being has control over any other factor except being a doer. And when God is the karta, a task gets surely done. God does this kripa on us whenever He feels that it is according to dharma and we deserve it.

The fifth reason to thank God, especially by me is for God using me as His nimitta (instrument). I am one of many whom God has chosen. I suspect that all good people get this privilege, as Arjuna was. (11.33) The sixth reason to thank God one and all human beings is His mercy in allowing very simple spiritual practices like praying, naman (obedience), chanting and, yes, thanking. Once we begin doing them, God is in the picture. He doesn't wait for us to become His devotees; God begins to help us to become one. Because all these acts signal to God our intention to take His shelter. In my case, God has been micromanaging my life for a long time encouraging me to go on with my spiritual activities like writing spiritual texts such as articles and books. All the religions promote this act of thanking God. If we don't thank when we should we are becoming a debtor. I look for opportunities to thank others, and to God of course. He gives me plenty of reasons to be thankful.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher; views are personal)

# Prioritising growth and regional development



A S MITTAL

The first budget by NDA-3 is anticipated to address the demands of stakeholders and States seeking assistance to bridge regional disparities



The NDA-3 government is gearing up to present its first budget on July 23. This budget carries high expectations as it is anticipated to outline a 5-year economic agenda and is expected to deliver substantially to meet the demands of stakeholders and states seeking assistance. Discussions are underway regarding the reinstatement of special status for states like Bihar and Andhra Pradesh, with demands from Janata Dal (United) and Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in exchange for their support for the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance government. Andhra Pradesh's CM, N. Chandrababu Naidu, has demanded Rs one trillion to support the state's industrial and infrastructure development. The demand for special category status for Bihar and Andhra Pradesh poses the crucial question of why a similar approach should not be adopted to accelerate and expand the industrial growth of Punjab, a landlocked border state. This expectation arises at a critical time when the state is experiencing a significant divergence in its industrial activities due to stagnant growth and reduced exports. These circumstances demand new measures to catapult the state to greater heights. In the mid-nineties, neighbouring hill states like Himachal Pradesh reaped the benefits of a central special industrial package, while Punjab faced significant setbacks as many major players expanded and shifted their operations to the hilly states. The geographical disadvantage of being distant from seaports has led to certain investment disadvantages and stagnant growth in the industrial sector. Today, Punjab demands a level playing field to compete on an equal footing, as its key manufacturing industries have the potential to become an 'Engine of Growth.' Punjab inherited a fragile industrial base at the time of India's partition in 1947, which was further eroded with the creation of Haryana in 1966. The 1980s and 1990s were tumultuous due to terrorism and social unrest, impacting industrial growth in the region. Currently, Punjab only accounts for 5% of industrial units in the country, with a 3.6% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) in the industrial sector over the last five fiscal years. In contrast,



THE DEMAND FOR SPECIAL CATEGORY STATUS FOR BIHAR AND ANDHRA PRADESH POSES THE CRUCIAL QUESTION OF WHY A SIMILAR APPROACH SHOULD NOT BE ADOPTED TO ACCELERATE AND EXPAND THE INDUSTRIAL GROWTH OF PUNJAB, A LANDLOCKED BORDER STATE

neighbouring states like Haryana have demonstrated higher growth rates at 5.9%. Punjab is positioned 10th with a score of 58.95 in the Export Preparedness Index (EPI) ranking 2023, whereas Haryana holds the 5th position with a score of 63.65. It raises concern that Gujarat has the highest number of 8 districts among the top 25 districts in terms of export share, followed by Maharashtra with 5 districts, Haryana with one, and Punjab with none. Moreover, in terms of foreign direct investments (FDI), Punjab ranks 12th, having attracted only 0.49% of FDI. This is in stark contrast to neighbouring Haryana, which ranks sixth with FDI equity inflows accounting for 4.17% of the total inflows. The erosion of industry is a pressing crisis in Punjab. Despite efforts by successive governments to attract investments, significant hurdles such as location disadvantage, law and order and frequent protests persist. One major issue is the location disadvantage, as Punjab's distance from seaports makes its industrial operations non-competitive in the global market. Two years ago, CM Bhagwant Maan announced in the Vision Punjab conclave of ASSOCHAM that Punjab aims to become the first state in the country to own wagons (Punjab on wheels), offering a potential solution to dilute the freight burden. However, the success of this endeavour depends on the support from both the central and state governments. Punjab is an exceptional hub for textile yarn, bicycles, hosiery, tractors, automobile components, sports goods, engineering goods, and leather. These industrial clusters possess immense potential and can be further strengthened. Ludhiana proudly leads as the top producer of blended yarn and hosiery, as well

as the second-largest producer of polyester silk, fibre, and cotton yarn. It dominates woollen knitwear (95%) and hosiery (65%) exports, showcasing its strength in the global market. While China holds a dominant position with a 37% share, India is positioned with a 5% share in the global export market, and there is huge potential for expansion in export markets such as the USA, UAE, UK, Germany, France, and Australia. Ludhiana also commands a remarkable 92% of India's total bicycle parts production and 75% of bicycle production, securing its position as the leading exporter of bicycles from India with an 80% share. While India lags behind China in bicycle exports, there is clear potential to aggressively expand global exports with untapped opportunities in the US, European countries, and Africa as burgeoning bicycle markets. Jalandhar holds a solid 45% share of the total production, with 75% of the country's sports goods being exported from the city. Despite China's dominant position as the largest exporter of sports goods with a share of 42.2%, India's current 0.56% share of global exports signifies the untapped potential for Punjab's growth, with lucrative prospects in the USA, UK, Brazil, Germany, Mexico, South Africa, Colombia, and Argentina. Punjab plays a pivotal role, hosting one-third of total OEMs in the farm equipment segment and serving as the leading tractor manufacturer, contributing one-third to India's production. With a commanding share in exports, Punjab stands tall as the largest exporter. Despite India's current 2.2% share, the potential for over 2 lakh tractors to be exported in the next 3 years to burgeoning markets such as Brazil, Argentina, Turkey, SAARC, and African nations is undeniable. Wish List: Priority Focus on PLI:

The Production Linked Incentives (PLI) scheme should be thoroughly re-evaluated to ensure it delivers the intended impact on competitiveness and scale. Monitoring its progress closely is critical. The slow progress of the PLI scheme, especially in labour-intensive sectors like textiles, automobiles, and components, must be addressed urgently. To achieve broader goals such as enhancing exports, attracting significant investments, and generating employment, expanding PLI to new sectors like bicycles and sports goods is imperative to encompass the maximum number of MSMEs. Assertive GST Rationalization: There is an urgent need to rationalize the current GST structure to eliminate the complex hurdles created by multiple tax slabs. Transitioning from the existing structure to a simplified two or three-slab framework and providing exemptions for previously exempted items such as farm implements is crucial to streamline the system. Critical Focus on Logistics Cost: Competitive and efficient logistics are the foundation for industrial growth. Policy-backed support for state-owned wagons in landlocked border states like Punjab is essential to address the over-freight burden and provide a level playing field to manufacturing hubs. Incentivizing labour-intensive and export-oriented industries in the upcoming budget is vital to driving the country's economic growth and employment generation. (The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika IITL 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. Views expressed are personal)

# Cinema: A potent tool in global politics and cultural diplomacy

In our multipolar world, cinema has become a critical component of soft power, shaping global perceptions through its captivating narratives

Movies have evolved far beyond mere entertainment; they now play a significant role in global politics and cultural relations. Through creative expressions, films harness the ecosystem comprising key stakeholders to nurture and develop soft power dynamics and geopolitical equations. In the realm of geopolitics, movies are more than art; they are potent tools used by countries to showcase their soft power and expand their influence worldwide. Through their film industries, nations share stories that resonate globally, reflecting their identities and serving as diplomatic instruments. Films offer profound insights into the societal dynamics of different countries, profound



CHAITANYA K PRASAD

enhancing communication and ushering in a new era where technology plays a pivotal role in shaping these interactions. The emergence of the new players can be attributed to the concept of Soft Power dynamics. This idea, coined by Joseph S. Nye, describes the ability to attract and persuade through culture, political ideals, and policies. In this context, cinema has become an essential component of Soft Power. Cinema, as a medium and platform, acts as a catalyst to position soft power dynamics, decoding perceptions, perspectives and geopolitical stances globally. The portrayal on the big screen infuses fresh thinking into the policy debate dynamics, global issues and management of ideas in a

global framework, bound by multipolarity and instant communication. Many films in the past have mirrored multidimensional dynamics and impact on different ecosystems, nations and individuals. Cinema and foreign policy interface reinforces the global appeal of a concept, or idea leading to a dynamic framework for cultural diplomacy. Cinema as a medium has added a new tool to the dynamics of bilateralism, the use of creative tools in the portrayal of a new point of view, ideology and intervention along with better cultural understanding. Cinema has emerged as a vehicle of Collaboration, Cooperation, Cohesion, Coordination, and Convergence — the 5Cs of cinema. On the global front, cinema breaks barriers, overcomes obstacles, and thrives on the creativity of both old and new players. It no longer caters solely to Western or Eurocentric narratives but embraces a diverse global perspective, which plays a crucial role in shaping cinema perceptions and adding a soft touch to global power dynamics. The importance of cinema in geopolitics has

grown significantly over recent years, with governments increasingly funding film projects that reflect their national interests and cultural heritage. Many countries use their film industries as a powerful tool for soft power to shape their global impression. The impact of movies is greatly amplified by their global presence, thanks to the rise of streaming services that have revolutionised film distribution, making it easier for films from smaller markets to reach a worldwide audience. Platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hulu have democratised access to movies from various countries, allowing filmmakers worldwide to showcase their cultural stories without relying on traditional distribution.



Cinema transcends power structures by influencing public opinion and shaping international policies through its captivating narratives. Movies serve as platforms for discussions and political analysis, sparking conversations that can drive societal transformation. Filmmakers and actors act as ambassadors with significant sway, using their works to facilitate cultural exchange and international conversations. Cinema has become a platform for new ideas and concepts, driving integration through International Film Festivals. The role of cinema in today's world is incredibly significant. It serves as a diplomatic tool and a compelling medium to communicate ideas through storytelling, influencing inter-

national relationships. Beyond its audience, cinema has a far-reaching impact on global leaders, policymakers, and communities worldwide. It acts as an envoy, spreading messages of peace, empathy, and solidarity through engaging stories that mirror the complexities of human life. There is no doubt that cinema now transcends entertainment in contemporary society. Nations are recognising the power of cinema as a tool to promote their agendas and perspectives on the world stage, underscoring its importance in diplomacy. (The writer is former additional DG, DFF and Festival Director, IFFI; Inputs by Zoya Ahmad and Vaishnavi Srinivasan. Views are personal)



MONEY MATTERS

### TRA launches kit to detect unapproved pesticides in tea leaves

Tea Research Association (TRA), a body set up for scientific development of the industry, said on Monday that an equipment has been devised for the detection of unapproved pesticides in green leaves. TRA secretary and principal officer Joydeep Phukan said that the testing kit will help growers comply with the norms of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, which are in force. The rapid testing kit, ACLIVIA for Tea, is an innovative tool using the Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI), that will facilitate instant tests of green leaves at the factory point before they are sent for manufacturing. The association has partnered with Arogyam Medisoft, a startup incubated in West Bengal, CDAC and Luxmi Tea to validate the equipment, he said. Phukan said there had been a persistent demand from the tea industry for development of a device to detect unapproved pesticides to ensure compliance with the plant protection measures.



### ClaySys Technologies to create 5,000 jobs in India

Kerala-based software consultancy and process automation company, ClaySys Technologies, has announced expansion plans and said it will increase the workforce in India and provide job opportunities for 5,000 people. ClaySys crossed its revenue threshold of Rs 100 crore last year and is expecting a two-fold increase in revenue in the next three years along with acquiring new talents. The company, headquartered in its own campus at Infopark here, said currently it has a workforce of 1,168 employees across various Indian cities and in the US. "As the company prepares for this next phase of growth, we remain committed to leveraging the rich talent pool in Kerala and beyond while continuing to offer a dynamic and rewarding work environment for its employees," Vinod Tharakan, Managing Director of ClaySys Technologies is quoted in a release issued by the company. The company is also providing several perks and benefits for employees, including a unique housing scheme for those who have a long-term association with it.



### Amazon India announces new product ranges, deals for Prime Day 2024

Amazon India on Monday announced new product ranges and major deals for its annual shopping fiesta 'Prime Day 2024' on July 20-21. Industry stalwarts, including Aman Gupta, Co-Founder & CMO boAt; Vishal Shinde, Head of E-Commerce, Agaro; Jai Krishnan, CEO, Samsonite South Asia; and Rahul Pathwa, Director, MX Business from Samsung India were present at the event. Prime Day 2024, scheduled for July 20-21, will not only offer great deals on famous brands across categories, but will also spotlight SMBs (small and medium businesses) and local artisans, a company official said. This Prime Day, Amazon will continue to support SMBs and offer Prime members products from lakhs of sellers, manufacturers, startups & brands, women entrepreneurs, artisans, weavers, and local shops. "During the event, Prime members will have the opportunity to discover deals on unique products across categories including fashion & beauty, electronics, and home decor from sellers under various programmes" Akshay Sahi, Director and Head of Amazon Prime said.



### ICAR to develop 100 new seed varieties, farm technologies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian Council of Agricultural Research is working on plans to develop 100 new seed varieties and an equal number of farm technologies within a 100-day timeframe to bolster India's agricultural sector, a senior agriculture ministry official said on Monday.

The initiative, part of the government's 100-day action plan, primarily focuses on climate-resilient and biofortified seed varieties, besides farm technologies.

ICAR Director General Himanshu Pathak, speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the institute's 96th Foundation and Technology Day celebrations, said, "We're actively working on two key action plans: '100 new seed varieties in 100 days' and '100 technologies in 100 days'."

Pathak indicated that ICAR is seeking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's time to unveil these innovations, likely in mid-September when the 100-day period concludes.

With its workforce of 5,521 scientists nationwide, ICAR is developing new seed varieties across various crops, including rice, wheat, and horticulture.

### TRADE, INVESTMENTS AGREEMENT

## Next round of talks between India, EU likely in September

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior officials of India and the 27-nation European Union (EU) are expected to hold the next round of talks for the proposed free trade agreement, which aims at boosting commerce and investments, in September, an official said.

Joint Secretary in the Department of Commerce Darpan Jain said that the eighth round of talks was concluded on June 28. He said that discussions were held on all 21 chapters in the meeting and progress was made in number of areas such as government procurement, digital trade, technical barriers to trade, goods, and market access.

"We plan to hold more inter-annual meetings in July and August and we intend to have another round (of talks) in the last week of September," Jain told reporters here.

On June 17, 2022, India and the EU formally resumed negotiations on the proposed agreement, after a gap of over eight years. They are negotiating Trade and Investment Agreement, and a pact on Geographical Indications (GI).



India had started negotiations for a trade pact with the EU in 2007, but the talks stalled in 2013 as both sides failed to reach an agreement on key issues, including customs duties on automobiles and spirits and the movement of professionals. The trade agreement with the EU would help India further expand and diversify its

exports of goods and services, including securing the value chains.

India's merchandise exports to EU member countries have increased to US\$ 75.92 billion in 2023-24 from US\$ 74.83 billion in 2022-23. Imports also rose to US\$ 59.38 billion in 2023-24 from US\$ 61 billion in 2022-23.

The EU accounts for over 17 per cent of India's total exports and about 8.8 per cent of the country's total imports. Talking about the proposed trade pact with the UK, another official said that with the new government taking charge in Britain, the two countries will take forward the negotiations.

The official said the new government in the UK will look into the agreement.

The India-UK talks for the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) began in January 2022. The 14th round of talks stalled as the two nations stepped into their general election cycles.

Britain's newly-elected Prime Minister Keir Starmer spoke to Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently and said he stood ready to conclude an FTA that worked for both sides.

## India, EEU bloc finalising broad contours on proposed FTA: Official

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and the five-nation Eurasian Economic Union bloc are working to finalise broad contours and their terms of reference on a proposed free trade agreement, an official said.

The five members of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) are Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce Anant Swarup said that on the EEU proposed free trade agreement (FTA), chief negotiators of both sides have already met and broad contours are being finalised.

"Scope and the ToRs (terms of reference) of the proposed



free trade agreement are under stakeholder consultation internally in India and same with Russia and soon it will be exchanged so that the next steps can take place," he told reporters here.

On the timeline for both sides to formally launch negotiations for the pact, he said that unless there is an understand-

ing on the ToR, the launch date is premature to be decided.

In such agreements, two or more trading partners either eliminate or significantly reduce customs duties on the maximum number of goods traded between them. These agreements provide greater market access to Indian goods and services.

## HC sets aside CBDT decision refusing tax exemption to NOIDA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has set aside an order of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) that refused to grant exemption from tax liability to the New Okhla Industrial Development Authority (NOIDA) on account of its "income" from

loans to various entities.

A bench headed by Justice Yashwant Varma said the board erred in holding that the loans and advances extended by the NOIDA fell within the ambit of commercial activity, and directed the authority to process the exemption request. The court observed that the NOIDA, con-

stituted under the Uttar Pradesh Industrial Area Development (UPIAD) Act, acts as an agent of the government in undertaking planned development of the areas placed under its control and it cannot possibly be viewed as a corporation intended to have been incorporated for a profit or commercial motive.

### Union Budget: Space industry demands tax holidays, PLI scheme

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Import holidays, GST exemption for components of launch vehicles, productivity-linked incentives (PLI) and government stepping in as a customer are some of the expectations of the private space sector from Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as she presents the Union Budget next week.

"More money for space related acquisitions, tax holidays, import holidays, and PLI scheme for space," Pixxel Space co-founder and CEO Awas Ahmed told PTI when asked about his wishlist for the budget.

Industry bodies Indian

Space Association (ISpA) and Satcom Industry Association (SIA-India) have sought greater government expenditure on the space sector in the form of an anchor customer for the nascent private sector.

"ISpA calls for a commitment from the government to procure and adopt space technology solutions across various governance areas such as agriculture, disaster management, infrastructure planning and development monitoring, urban development, and remote area connectivity," ISpA director general Lt Gen Anil K Bhatt (retd) said.

## BoM Q1 profit rises 47% to Rs 1,293 cr on improved interest income

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) on Monday reported 47 per cent jump in net profit at Rs 1,293 crore for June quarter FY25 as bad loans declined and interest income improved.

The Pune-based lender had clocked a net profit of Rs 882 crore in the year-ago period.

Total income in the quarter under review rose to Rs 6,769 crore from Rs 5,417 crore a year ago, the state-owned lender said in a regulatory filing.

Interest earned by the bank grew to Rs 5,875 crore as com-



pared to Rs 4,789 crore in June quarter FY24.

Net Interest Income (NII) rose by 19.63 per cent to Rs 2,799 crore in Q1FY25 as against Rs 2,340 crore in Q1FY24.

The bank's asset quality

improved as gross non-performing assets (NPAs) declined to 1.85 per cent of gross advances at the end of June quarter FY25 from 2.28 per cent a year ago.

Similarly, net NPAs or bad loans, declined to 0.20 per cent as against 0.24 per cent in the year-ago period.

BoM Managing Director and CEO Nidhu Saxena told reporters that Net Interest Margin of the bank improved to 3.97 per cent as against 3.86 per cent at the end of first quarter of previous fiscal.

The outlook for NIM for the current fiscal year is 3.75 per cent as there are indications of rate cut, he said.

On the equity capital raising plan, he said, the bank's board has given approval for raising Rs 5,000 crore during the current financial year.

## Sensex, Nifty race to record closing highs as PSU bank shares shine

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex and Nifty closed at new record high levels on Monday following buying in PSU bank shares and fresh foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 145.52 points or 0.18 per cent to settle at a new record high of 80,664.86. During the day, it advanced 343.2 points or 0.42 per cent to hit a high of 80,862.54.

The NSE Nifty rallied 84.55 points or 0.35 per cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 24,586.70. During the day, it surged 132.9 points or 0.54 per cent to hit a new record peak of 24,635.05.

Among Sensex shares, State Bank of India was the biggest gainer, rising by 2.55 per cent after the bank announced a hike in MCLR-based lending rates for various tenors.

NTPC, UltraTech Cement, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Tata Motors, Maruti and ITC were the other major winners.

On the other hand, Asian Paints, Tata Steel, Axis Bank, JSW Steel, Tech Mahindra and Tata Consultancy Services were among the laggards.

JSW Steel, Tech Mahindra and Tata Consultancy Services were among the laggards.

"The Indian market continues to experience optimism driven by positive expectations from the upcoming Union Budget, robust FII inflows, and better-than-expected results from the IT sector."

"Additionally, the initial results from PSU banks have triggered a strong rally in the PSU index," said Vinod Nair,

Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

Among PSU banks, Indian Overseas Bank rose by 7.35 per cent. Canara Bank, Punjab

National Bank, Uco Bank, Bank of Baroda and Union Bank also advanced.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 0.95 per cent and smallcap index climbed 0.21 per cent.

Among the indices, oil & gas rallied 2.32 per cent, energy (1.61 per cent), realty (1.40 per cent), utilities (1.09 per cent) and healthcare (1 per cent).

Industrials, IT, teck and capital goods were the lag-

### NLC India wins coal mine in Odisha

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned NLC India Ltd on Monday said that it has bagged a coal mine in Odisha.

The coal produced from the mine will address the energy security of the country.

The coal mine has total reserves of around 1.38 billion tonnes with an operable peak-rated capacity of 30 million tonnes per annum (MTPA).

"NLC India Ltd has emerged as the successful bidder for the Machhakata (revised) coal mine in Angul district of Odisha in the eighth round of



commercial coal block e-auction," the company said in a statement.

This is the second coal mine won by the public sector enterprise after North Dhadu coal block (Western Part).

The company said that it is committed to its capacity addition in line with its vision of

achieving more than 100 MTPA by 2030 from the present 50 MTPA.

NLC India's core business is mining and power generation.

Meanwhile, the coal ministry on Monday executed the Coal Mining Development and Production Agreements for three coal mines that were auctioned.

The mines for which agreements were executed are Machhakata (Revised) coal mine, Kudanali Lubri coal mine, and Sakhigopal-B

Kakurhi coal mine, the coal ministry said in a statement.

## Mcap of BSE-listed firms hit new all-time high of Rs 455 L cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms hit a new all-time high of Rs 455 lakh crore on Monday, helped by a record-breaking rally in equities.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 145.52 points or 0.18 per cent to settle at a new closing high of 80,664.86. During the day, it rallied 343.2 points or 0.42 per cent to 80,862.54.

Thanks to the bull run in equities, the market capitalisa-

tion of BSE-listed firms surged to a lifetime high of Rs 4,55,06,566.48 crore (US\$ 5.45 trillion). In two days of market rally, investors' wealth jumped Rs 3.85 lakh crore.

"The Indian market continues to experience optimism driven by positive expectations from the upcoming Union Budget, robust FII inflows, and better-than-expected results from the IT sector. Additionally, the initial results from PSU banks have

triggered a strong rally in the PSU index," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

Among Sensex components, State Bank of India, NTPC, UltraTech Cement, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Tata Motors, Maruti and ITC were the biggest winners.

On the other hand, Asian Paints, Tata Steel, Axis Bank, JSW Steel, Tech Mahindra and Tata Consultancy Services were among the laggards.

### SURVEY FINDS 89% PEOPLE FACING CALL DROPS

## 9 in 10 use wifi to make calls through OTT

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Around 89 per cent of people surveyed have experienced call drops in the last three months and nine in 10 have used Wi-Fi networks to make calls through calling and messaging apps, online survey firm LocalCircles said on Monday.

The survey conducted between March and June claims

to have received a total of 32,000 responses across different questions from 362 districts. The number of responses differed from question to question.

"89 per cent of subscribers surveyed face call connection and drop issues. Out of this 89 per cent, 38 per cent of



them face it with over 20 per cent of their calls," the survey said. In response to the question

on call drop experience, 17 per cent indicated they face issues in more than half of their total phone calls while 21 per cent said that 20-50 per cent of their calls get dropped or disconnected.

"With most mobile subscribers facing call connection and drop issues, nine in 10 are

using OTT (internet calls and messaging apps like WhatsApp) platforms to make some of their calls," LocalCircles Founder Sachin Taparia said.

Mobile subscribers have increased the use of OTT apps for making Wi-Fi calls in the last two years as they face call connectivity and drop issues with their mobile network, the survey said

## Exports rise 2.56% to US\$ 35.2 bn; trade deficit widens to US\$ 20.98 bn

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's merchandise exports in June increased 2.56 per cent to US\$ 35.2 billion despite global challenges, even as the trade deficit widened to US\$ 20.98 billion during the month.

According to the government data released on Monday, imports rose about 5 per cent to US\$ 56.18 billion in June due to the increase in inbound

shipments of crude oil, pulses, and electronic goods. The trade deficit, or the gap

between imports and exports, during June 2023 was US\$ 19.19 billion.

**GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
**PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE**  
 NIT No: 06ZC/TCR24GHMC/2024-25 Dt: 15-07-2024  
 Nature of the Work: Procurement of Man and Machinery along with vehicles for demolition of flyovers  
 Encroachment/ building for a period of 08 months or till completion of contract value which ever is later where ever required in Chammaru Zone, GHMC. Estimate Cost (Rs in Lakhs): Rs.38.27  
 L1, Download Start Date: 16-07-2024 at 02:00 PM, Last Date Receipt of Bids: 19-07-2024 at 02:00 PM, Name & Address Officer, Call No: Sri. G. Hari Kishore, ZCTO, CRZ, GHMC, Hyderabad, Ph No: 9849906768. For further details can be seen at e-procurement @ www.tender.e-procurement.gov.in. Note: 1% EMD should be obtained after the date of tender notice.  
 S.O.No: 1812/PPCL/MDT/1024-25 Dt: 15.07.2024 Sd/- ZCTO, CRZ, GHMC.



## ACTING SCENES TO HEALING DEEDS

Since his most recent reel, Dr. Mickey Dhamejani, who portrayed a youthful Hrithik Roshan in *Koi Mil Gaya*, has gained a lot of attention. He talks to *The Pioneer* exclusively about his acting career, his pursuit of becoming an ophthalmologist and his denial of seeking acting opportunities

TEJAL SINHA

**B**ack in the 2000s, there was this l'il guy who enraptured the hearts of the audience pretty well. His stint as a child actor in *Koi Mil Gaya*, playing the role of young Hrithik Roshan brought him into the eyes of one and all. Dr. Mickey D. Dhamejani is currently all over social media for all the right reasons!

The child actor is now an ophthalmologist. His young beginnings in notable Bollywood films includes *Koi Mil Gaya*, *Krrish*, *Dhai Akshar Prem Ke*, *Ishq Vishq*, *Aitbaar* featuring Mr Bachchan, *Dosti* featuring Akshay Kumar and even ventured into Hollywood with a role in *Eat Pray Love* alongside Julia Roberts. He also showcased his versatility playing memorable roles in TV serials like *Gharwali Uparwali aur Sunny* and a double role in *Phir Bhi Dil Hai Hindustani*.

"I was 5 and back then, the decision was taken by my parents," begins Dr. Mickey in a quick interaction with *The Pioneer*. "I was this cute little child who had this possibility of acting. I used to dance in front of the screens, as described by my father. I used to remove my t-shirt and dance to *Oh Oh Jaane Jaane* and other Anil Kapoor and Salman Khan's songs. I used to always enjoy and be like *aise duniya mai rahunga mai* and that's how it maybe started."

Things since then went on pretty organic for him. All the recognition and things coming his way, he goes on to credit his parents for the same for balancing all very well. However, his mumma made sure his studies weren't effected in any way. Always a top ranker in school and also coming from a family of doctor's education was an important aspect. Even on the sets, he recalls, how his mother used to teach him for the exams.

"That was a lovely time," speaks the *Koi Mil Gaya* star, as he speak of his experience working on the sets of the film. "It was a different role for Hrithik as well. He had to play a certain disabled child and there was a way that he had to speak in, the way he walked and even how his fingers were kept. Before the shoot happened, I used to go to his house in Juhu. He and Rakesh Roshan uncle used to teach me everything. Though it was not a very big part, the interaction became like that with them. I learned from Hrithik Roshan and then I performed. Even on the sets, he used to teach me all the shots. It was amazing and they were very humble people."

Even with *Krrish*, he recalls travelling with them in the same car and flight to Manali. And having to work and share a close association with the 'Roshan's', he shares, "I really look up to them as diligent people. The kind of work that they have done in the industry in their genre is extremely commendable. I really look up to them. They brought in the superhero concept in India. Back then *Koi Mil Gaya* and *Krrish* were genre-defining projects!"

As our exclusive conversation continued, he was only able to recollect his good memories from the projects he had worked on. He has learned a great deal about life from this educational experience. Mickey's passion for education and his parents' aspirations led him to pursue a career in medicine. "I'm a very scientific and logical person. I do my reasoning with a lot of data and that's always the way how I function. That time the decision was made and I wanted to complete my education. And thus, I completed my graduation." Today, a distinguished ophthalmologist, specialising in Refractive cataract and Lasik surgeries, he holds many degrees such as MBBS, MS (Ophthalmology),



FICO (London) and MRCS (Edinburgh). Getting into ophthalmology was a personal encounter for him. As a child, he had a high-powered glasses. Even during the shooting he recalls how it used to get difficult after removing his specs. "My mother was never counselled well by the doctors. Back then, you didn't have Google to search. There was always a lot of stress at home and people used to always misguide her. All of those myths remained unsolved. I've always wanted to learn more about it. My mother had a cataract during my MBBS, which exposes you to all the disciplines, at a very young age. At that point, I realised how vital eyes are and that I needed to pursue an ophthalmology master's degree."

In fact, he also goes on to reveal, "I have my own Lasik done. I have 6/6 vision. Lasik as a concept is very beautiful and again, not very well understood and counselled to the world. People are always afraid of getting an eye surgery done. That is what now I channelise into. If people want to get brid of their glasses, these solutions are amazing."

In a nutshell, he has given so many years into this practice. He aims to become a much-established doctor and have hospitals across the country. Acting does remain his core passion. However, "If a big opportunity comes my way and something that inclines with my values, it's definitely going to be a win-win solution." Dressing up, working environment and creating bonds on the sets is something that he really misses about acting at times.

Talking of his most viral reel, he shares that there was no intention to get viral. It was something, he shares that naturally happened. "I have always been sharing reels around eye care. This was just a thought of putting this in reel and see how it does. My patients did come and tell me *'sir aapko kahin dekha hai'*. And this one Sunday, I told my editor let's just put this and see. The plan was to make a doctor's reel only. And to my surprise, it was all over the media."

In the very same reel, there was a comment saying 'Jaadu came and removed his father's specs in *Koi Mil Gaya* and Jr. Hrithik became an eye doctor.' And an overwhelmed Dr. Mickey laughs his heart out and shares, "I did try to reply to most of them but then it became beyond my reach. It kind of became true also for them. I did have very thick glasses and that scene became true to me after my Lasik, 'mujhe sab dikhra hai' (we laugh). The surgery has now become a matter of magic which happens in minutes these days. It was very real and thus it worked out well."

Presently, he is in the process of understanding what could lead to his goal of eventually becoming this healthcare provider, who is also serving not just one or two hospitals in the city, but is a national-level health provider. He aims to provide quality healthcare to everybody. "Be it Lasik or any eye surgery, the machines are pretty expensive and thus, the treatments get expensive. Not everybody gets access to the latest technologies. What I have figured is if I can manage this sort of a pan-India level, I can give the best of technology at affordable prices."

Meanwhile, as we head towards the end of the chat, he also denies looking for offers in acting at the moment.

## Alert! Dengue puts your brain and nervous system at risk

**D**engue, typically recognised for its flu-like symptoms, can also have severe repercussions for the brain and nervous system, highlighting the need for heightened awareness and timely intervention. While the common symptoms of dengue include high fever, severe headache, pain behind the eyes, joint and muscle pain, rash and mild bleeding, the virus can also lead to much more serious neurological conditions.

One of the significant neurological complications of dengue is encephalitis, which is the inflammation of the brain! Encephalitis can cause severe headaches, confusion, paralysis of body, seizures and even coma. Meningitis, the inflammation of the coverings of the brain and spinal cord, can also occur, leading to symptoms like severe headaches and neck stiffness. Another critical condition is myelitis, which involves the inflammation of the spinal cord, potentially resulting in paralysis and other serious neurological symptoms!

Dengue encephalopathy is a particularly severe manifestation where the brain is directly affected by the virus or the body's immune response to it. Symptoms of dengue encephalopathy include changes in mental state, unusual behaviour and, in extreme cases, unconsciousness. Recognising and treating this condition promptly is crucial to prevent long-term neurological damage.

Additionally, dengue can trigger Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS), an autoimmune disorder where the immune system mistakenly attacks the nerves. This condition results in muscle weakness, paralysis and potentially life-threatening breathing difficulties that require intensive care. The immune response to virus can trigger various secondary demyelinating disorders in brain. The dengue virus can directly infect the nervous system, causing inflammation and nerve damage. Furthermore, the immune response to the virus can lead to excessive inflammation and secondary demyelinating disorders in the brain, resulting in various neurological symptoms.

Dengue also heightens the risk of strokes due to bleeding (hemorrhagic stroke) or blood clots (ischemic stroke). This increased risk arises because dengue affects blood vessels and the blood's ability to clot. Consequently, close monitoring of patients for any signs of stroke is essential.

Early warning signs of dengue-related neurological problems include persistent headaches, stiff neck, confusion, seizures and sudden weakness. Early detection and treatment are vital to prevent long-term neurological damage. Diagnosing dengue-related brain and nerve issues involves clinical evaluation, MRI or CT scans, and lumbar puncture to analyse spinal fluid. Treatment focuses on managing symptoms, reducing inflammation, and providing supportive care, which may include antiviral medications and immunotherapy.

Awareness of the neurological risks associated with dengue is vital for both prevention and early intervention. Preventive measures include controlling mosquito populations, using protective clothing and repellents and eliminating standing water where mosquitoes breed. Educating patients and communities about these risks and ensuring prompt and appropriate treatment can help mitigate severe complications associated with dengue.

Understanding the potential neurological impact of dengue underscores the need for comprehensive medical care and timely intervention. By staying informed and vigilant, we can better protect ourselves and our communities from the serious neurological consequences of dengue. Comprehensive medical care and patient education are essential in addressing the neurological impacts of dengue, highlighting the importance of vigilance and informed action in combating this serious health threat.

(The author, Dr. Pooja Anand, is an Associate consultant, Neurology, at Paras Health.)



AARTI SREENATH

**F**rom the humble environs of Arunachal Pradesh, where he toiled as a labourer's son, to the electrifying world of breaking, Passang Tamang's life trajectory is an evidence to the transformative power of dance. A chance encounter with a breaking jam in Siliguri, while working in a *lachcha paratha* factory, ignited a spark within him that would irrevocably alter his destiny.

"The world didn't accept me until I became a breaker!" Passang confides, his voice a mix of determination and gratitude. Breaking, he found, was more than just a dance form; it was a passport to a world of acceptance, camaraderie and self-discovery.

For Passang, breaking transcended class boundaries. "Dance unites everyone," he explains, "and when I got involved in breaking and met like-minded people, it helped grow my confidence." The dance form offered him a sense of belonging, a brotherhood he cherishes deeply. His crew, he insists, is his "second family," a sanctuary where he is unconditionally accepted.

Passang's journey has been marked by challenges, but his resilience, honed through breaking, has been his steadfast companion. "Breaking makes me feel confident, so I don't feel any hesitation or nervousness," he shares.

The dance form has equipped him with the mental fortitude to navigate life's hurdles with an unwavering spirit. His transformation from a labourer's son in a small town to a prominent figure in a breaking community is a story of sheer determination and passion. The grit and persever-

ance required to master breaking have seeped into his approach to life, enabling him to overcome obstacles that once seemed insurmountable.

In the vibrant streets of Siliguri, Passang's encounter with breaking was serendipitous. The rhythmic beats and dynamic moves of breakers captivated him, offering a glimpse into a world far removed from the confines of the factory. He

began practicing diligently, often late into the night, driven by an unquenchable thirst to master the art. The physical demands of breaking, with its intricate footwork and powerful spins, were initially daunting. However, Passang's unwavering commitment saw him through.

He recalls the countless hours spent perfecting each move; the bruises and aches are merely milestones on his path to mas-

tery. His dedication paid off, as he soon became a recognised figure in the local breaking scene.

Passang's eyes gleam with ambition as he speaks of his aspirations. "I love breaking as an art form that has no boundaries," he declares. He envisions a future where the North East, with its unique blend of cultures, becomes a thriving hub for breaking, mirroring the vibrant scene in

Nepal. His journey to the Top 16 of the India finals of *Red Bull BC One* is just the beginning. The ultimate goal? To stand tall as the world champion!

The support from his crew has been instrumental in his journey. They have become his mentors, friends and family, providing a network of support that extends beyond dance. "My crew is my second family," Passang emphasises. Their shared experi-

ences and collective passion for breaking have forged bonds that are unbreakable. Together, they have navigated the highs and lows of the breaking scene, celebrating victories and learning from setbacks.

As he continues to push the boundaries of his craft, Passang carries with him the hope of inspiring countless others to find their voice, their identity and their place in the world through the rhythm and movement of breaking. His story is inspirational for aspiring breakers, especially those from underprivileged backgrounds. Passang's journey illustrates that, with passion and perseverance, one can transcend their circumstances and achieve greatness.

*Red Bull BC One* is the biggest and most prestigious one-on-one-breaking competition in the world. Every year, thousands of breakers compete for a chance to represent their country at the World Final. For Passang, participating in this competition is more than a personal achievement; it is a testament to his journey and the transformative power of breaking. His progress in the competition reflects not just his skill but also his resilience and unwavering spirit. With every battle, he gets closer to his dream of becoming the World Champion, a title that would signify not just his mastery of breaking but also his triumph over adversity.

As Passang Tamang continues his journey, he remains grounded in his roots, drawing strength from his past while relentlessly pursuing his future. His story is a celebration of the power of dance to break barriers, unite people and transform lives. Through his journey, Passang hopes to inspire others to embrace their passions, overcome their fears and find their place in the world, just as he has found his through the dynamic and exhilarating world of breaking.



## FROM RAGS TO RHYTHM

Bboy Passang faced numerous obstacles in his quest to leave his imprint on the world! He talks about his incredible journey, his discovery of dance's transformational potential and his obsession with the art form with *The Pioneer*.



# what's brewing?



At the opening of TBC with star boy VJ Sunny in Madhapur, Hyderabad, VJ Sunny makes his salon debut. Actors Srikanth, Tarun, and Bigg Boss star Siri Srihan, among the rest, popular in the field were present at the event.

PARTY



Celebrated comedian Saikiran had a blast at the Vivanta Hyderabad Muse Pad event in Begumpet. It served as a stage for aspiring performers and artists to display their skills.

Photos by- SV Chary



Nanda Kishore, who received distinction in the tenth standard, received a bicycle from Dr. G. Mahendra Kumar Reddy, G. Krishnaveni, and Hypno Padma Kamalakar.



The TVS Apache RTR 160 and RTR 160 4V IN Telangana are the "A Blaze of Black" Dark Edition motorcycles that TVS Motor Company introduced.

## FUN

### ARCHIE



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### GARFIELD



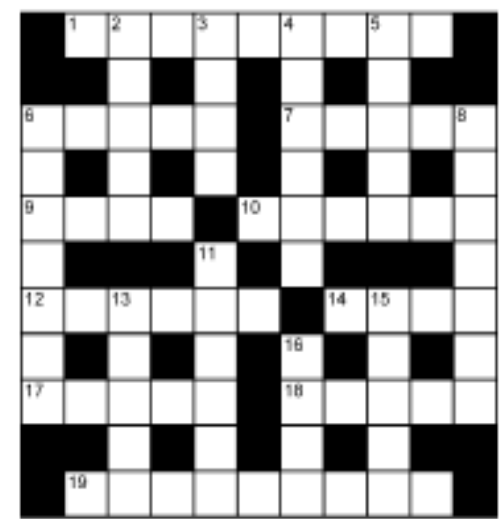
### REALITY CHECK



### SPEED BUMP



### CROSSWORD



### NANCY



### SUDOKU



**Yesterday's solution**

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

**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**

- People in jail
- The centre of your eye
- Have a quarrel
- Things to play with
- Flat dishes
- Mistakes
- The part along the side or end of something
- A boat with sails
- Flour is made from this
- Scientific study of the sun, moon, planets and stars
- Mugs and other things made of baked clay
- The least difficult
- Author
- Speed competitions
- Something you imagine while asleep
- A brother or sister the same age as you

**DOWN**

- Answer
- A fine glossy fabric
- Almost
- Correct

**SOLUTION**

S	O	L	A	R	S			
T	A	N	K	S	H	I	P	T
S	O	A	P	E				
A	N	T	H	E				
N	E	S						
G	L	A	D	P	I	C	N	I
E	W	B	R	E	H			
B	E	A	C	H				
N	U	L	L	R				
F	E	A	T	H	E	R		

### GINGER MEGGS





# MARUTHI TO REMIX 80'S HINDI HIT FOR RAJA SAAB

Prabhas is currently enjoying the success of *Kalki 2898 AD* and he is holidaying abroad. The actor will return back this month and he is expected to resume the shoot of *Raja Saab* directed by Maruthi.

The entire shooting part that does not need Prabhas is completed and the top actor has to allocate 50 days to complete this horror thriller. The film also has ample amount of entertainment throughout.

As per the new update, Maruthi is in plans to remix a super hit Hindi song from the 1980s in *Raja Saab*. The song will come at the right time and Prabhas will shake leg with all the three beauties in the special song. Maruthi and the film's music director Thaman are on a hunt to finalize the number and acquire the rights of the super hit song.

Prabhas will return to his vintage looks, and his character will have a lot of fun, according to Maruthi. The

remix song is expected to be the album's centerpiece. The heroines of *Raja Saab* are Malavika Mohanan, Nidhi

Agerwal and Riddhi Kumar. People Media Factory produced the film, which will be released in the first quarter of 2025. More improvements will be publicly announced by the developers soon. Prabhas will also begin shooting Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Spirit* this year, with Hanu Raghavapudi's *Fauji* scheduled for next year.



# SIVAKARTHIKEYAN REVEALS HIS THIRD CHILD'S NAME

Kollywood star Sivakarthikeyan is currently filming *SK 23* with director A.R. Murugadoss. In June 2024, he and his wife, Aarthi, welcomed a newborn boy. Today, Sivakarthikeyan revealed that they have called their child Pavan

Sivakarthikeyan and released a video of the traditional naming ritual. The actor is happy to have another child, joining his older children, Aradhana and Gagan. On the professional front, Sivakarthikeyan has finished filming *Amaran*, directed by Rajkumar Periasamy, which is set to be released in September 2024.

# Kiran Abbavaram's KA teaser compels all with suspense

On social media, there has been a lot of buzz around Kiran Abbavaram's latest film, *KA*, in recent days. The makers piqued interest with a compelling concept poster and title reveal. To add to the mystery, they released the film's teaser on Kiran Abbavaram's birthday, which is directed by Sujith and Sandeep.

The teaser lives up to the intriguing title, revealing a riveting story set in the village of Krishnagiri. Kiran Abbavaram plays a postman with an unusual propensity of reading other people's letters. However, when night sets, his character takes on a darker tone, including strange killings. The teaser suggests a mix of socio-fantasy elements, accentuated by a mysterious horoscope machine. Audiences can expect a more elaborate trailer soon to provide additional details, which will be accompanied by Sam CS's excellent background score.

Kiran Abbavaram is poised to impress audiences with his performance in this historical mystery thriller, which marks his debut venture into pan-Indian cinema. The female leads of the film include Thanvi Ram, who was well-known in 2018 and Nayan Sarika from *Gam Gam Ganesha*. Vara Laxmi presents *KA*, which is produced by Srichakraas Entertainments, and promises an amazing movie experience.



# Bromance kickstarts shooting

The film *Bromance* began shooting on Monday after a pooja ceremony in Kochi attended by the cast and crew, which included Shyam Mohan and Sangeeth Prathap, who play Arjun, Mathew and Premalu.

*Bromance* is written by Arun, Raveesh Nath and Thomas P Sebastian. Notably, Arun and Raveesh previously worked together on *Jo and Jo* (2022) and *Journey of Love 18+* (2023). The couple also co-wrote the latter's directorial debut, *Samadhana Pusthakam*, which is set to be released in theaters on July 19.

In *Bromance*, Kalabhavan Shajohn and Binu Pappu play major parts. The planned film's technical group includes cinematographer Akhil George, editor Chaman Chakko and music director Govind Vasantha. It is created by Ashiq Usman and distributed by Central Pictures.



# Maar Muntha Chod Chinta promo out now

*Double ISMART*'s second single (promo) *Maar Muntha Chod Chinta* a peppy dance is out. The makers have dropped the promo of the song which gives us a glimpse in to this foot tapping dance number which is nothing less than a party! The film is directed by maverick filmmaker Puri Jagannadh. The duo earlier tasted success together with *iSmart Shankar*, a blockbuster. The movie also stars Sanjay Dutt as the antagonist. Kavya Thapar is the lead actress opposite Ram. *Double ISMART* will be released in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam and Hindi languages. The movie is produced by Puri Jagannadh and Charmee Kaur on Puri Connects banner on August 15 2024.



# Polimera 2 distributor faces serious allegations!

Producer Vamsi Nandipati, a close friend of 'Geetha Arts' producer Bunny Vas, is currently facing claims from the producer who released the *Polimera 2* film.

For the unknown, Vamsi appeared as a distributor and distributed the film *Polimera 2*, created by Goulu Krishna Prasad. And now Vamsi has indicated that he will produce *Polimera 3* on a large scale. Here's the twist. Goulu Krishna Prasad filed a police complaint on Monday, stating that Vamsi Nandipati threatened to kill him after the former urged him to 'share' the proceeds from the release of *Polimera 2*.

Krishna Prasad filed a complaint alleging that despite the film's 30 crores gross, Vamsi Nandipati, who distributed it globally, has not given him any share. "When I confronted him about my share, he threatened to murder me and warned of grave consequences if I filed a complaint."

Krishna Prasad, the producer of *Polimera 2*, has now asked personal security for himself, citing a fear for his life!



# P I C T A L K

Over the past few years, fans of actor Suriya have been indulging in worthy activities such as book donation, blood donation and planting saplings. Last year, when over 2000 fans donated blood on the occasion of his birthday, actor Suriya promised his fans that he will join them next year.

Ahead of his birthday on July 23, actor Suriya donated blood along with his fans.

More than 400 fans have already donated blood on the occasion of their favourite star's birthday. Pictures and videos of the *Kanguva* actor have been going viral over the internet inspiring many more to join the cause and do the good deed.



# Chaithra, Meetha join the starry cast of Siddharth 40

Chaithra Achar, a Kannada actor who has built a name for herself, is preparing to make waves in Tamil cinema with two significant projects. She is currently filming director Raju Murugan's forthcoming project and is about to begin shooting Siddharth's 40th movie today.

The film is directed by Sri Ganesh and produced by Shanthi Talkies, which is known for the popular *Maaveeran* starring Sivakarthikeyan. *Siddharth 40* also stars veteran actors Sarath Kumar and Devayani in key roles.

Chaithra Achar, who stars alongside Siddharth, acknowledged her excitement: "This is the first project I signed in Tamil and it's incredibly special. I'm eager to be a part of a young team and look forward to working with Siddharth. The director is not only competent, but also a wonderful writer and I am excited to work with such a dynamic team. The excitement for this project has been palpable for the last three months and now that production has begun, I couldn't be happier."

Chaithra Achar also has *Uttarakanda* and an upcoming suspense thriller with debutant Hari in Kannada.

Following the news of Sarath Kumar and Devayani joining *Siddharth 40*, the producers also announced the addition of Meetha Raghunath to the cast. Meetha last appeared in the 2023 romantic comedy *Good Night*, opposite Manikandan K.

This will be Shanthi Talkies' second production attempt, following last year's Sivakarthikeyan-starrer *Maaveeran*, which completed one year after its release on Sunday.





# REMEMBER THEIR FACES: KOHLI SAYS GOOD LUCK TO INDIA'S OLYMPIC-BOUND ATHLETES

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian cricket's reigning superstar Virat Kohli has urged the nation to get behind its Olympic-bound contingent, asking the fans to join him in supporting the athletes as "they inch closer to the podium with dogged determination" in the quadrennial showpiece starting July 26 in Paris.

In a little over a minute long video post on social media, featuring some Paris-bound athletes like javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra and boxing hope Nishant Dev, Kohli said it is time for India to be recognised as a global sporting powerhouse.

"There was a time when the world could only think of India as a land of snake charmers and elephants. Over time, that has changed. Today we are known to the world as the largest democracy, a global tech hub," he said.

"We are known for cricket and Bollywood, for start-up unicorns and as the fastest growing economy in the world. So, what is the next big thing



for this great nation? Well, that will be more gold, more silver and more bronze," he added.

He then went on to address Indian sports fans, asking them to support the 118-strong group of athletes, who

would be aiming to better the country's best ever performance of seven medals achieved in the previous

Games in Tokyo.

"Our brothers and sisters are headed to Paris, hungry for medals. A billion of us will be watching them nervous and excited as our athletes set foot in the tracks and fields and courts and rings.

"Every neighbourhood, every corner of India will hear a chorus of voices chanting 'India, India, India'. Join me in remembering their faces as they inch closer to the podium with the dogged determination of waving the Tiranga with pride. Jai Hind and good luck India," Kohli, who is currently in London on a break after India's T20 World Cup triumph in the West Indies last month, said in his monologue.

Most of the Indian competitors are currently training abroad and will head to the French capital from their respective bases.

India's medal hopes will rest on shooting, badminton, wrestling, and boxing aside from the expectations of a second successive podium finish from Chopra, who scripted history with his javelin throw gold in Tokyo.



## It is good thing that everyone performing: Gill on competition for openers' slots

PTI ■ HARARE

The competition for the openers' slots has intensified following India's T20I series win in Zimbabwe and for contender Shubman Gill, that can only be a "good thing".

Gill, who is expected to open alongside Yashasvi Jaiswal in the three T20Is in Sri Lanka later this month, was the leading run getter in the five-match series in Harare. He was not part of the T20 World Cup squad in the USA and the Caribbean.

For the major part of the series, India played as many as four openers in the playing eleven and all of them did well including Gill, Jaiswal, Abhishek Sharma and Rituraj Gaikwad.

Gill captained India's second string team and played as an opener in all the five matches with Jaiswal joining him at the top from the third game onwards.

For the first two games, he opened with Punjab teammate Abhishek Sharma who scored a hundred and a fifty in his debut series. Among the four openers, Gill had the lowest strike rate, 125.92, compared to Jaiswal's 165.88, Gaikwad's 158.33 and Abhishek's 174.64.

"It's a good thing that everyone's performing. It shows that everyone is hungry and nobody is ready to take it easy. For any country or board, that's always a good thing," said Gill on Sunday referring to the openers.

Following the retirement of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli from T20Is, the selectors will have a problem of plenty when it comes to picking the openers for the Sri Lanka series.

"Anyone who got the

opportunity grabbed it with both hands. The openers to bowlers to all-rounders to spinners, everyone made a mark and I think the selectors have now seen everything and it's up to them to name the squad for the next series," he said after India's 4-1 series win over Zimbabwe.

On captaining the team through the series, Gill said he enjoyed every bit of the challenge.

"One thing about captaincy I feel is how much confidence you can show in your players. I try to do that and make them believe that if you try and execute the plans, the results will always follow," Gill said.

"After losing the first match, we were under a bit of pressure. It's not easy to play back to back games and the series was planned in a way that there were two back-to-back games, a couple of days rest and then again back-to-back games.

"It's never easy playing a series like that but I think the way we came back after losing the first T20I was really remarkable." India bounced back to win the series 4-1 after losing the opener.

"Seeing everyone hungry and so quickly adapting to the situation and assessing the conditions was truly spectacular to watch," said Gill. With the ball moving around in the powerplay, the opener thought it was important to be a little cautious early in the innings.

"I think, as per the conditions of the wicket, there were some challenging conditions, especially in the powerplay, the ball was always doing something or the other. As an opening batter, my focus was to see out 4-5 overs and not concede any wicket," he added.

## Our planning is that he will not be there in Pakistan: Bailey on Warner in Champions Trophy

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australian national selector George Bailey has said that the national team plans to move on from the recently-retired David Warner despite the southpaw's desire to be considered for the Champions Trophy in Pakistan next year.

The 37-year-old Warner retired from international cricket following the T20 World Cup in the Americas last month, where the Aussies failed to progress beyond the Super 8 stage. However, he had insisted that he will keep the door open for a return for the Champions Trophy, a One-Day International format ICC event.

"Our understanding is that David is retired, and [he] should be commended on what has been an incredible career across all three formats. Certainly, our planning is that he won't be there in Pakistan," Bailey was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.

Warner had a decent run during the T20 World Cup, finishing as the side's second-highest run-scorer, after Travis Head.

On his remarks on making a comeback during the Champions Trophy, Bailey said that Warner might be "stirring the pot",



with the team planning "to transition to some different players".

"You never know when Bull's joking...think he's just stirring the pot a bit. He's had a wonderful career, can't celebrate it enough, and think as time goes

by, his legacy of what he has done for Australia and we reflect back on that, the legend of a player is only going to continue to grow," added Bailey.

"But, as far as this team goes and the journey to transition to some different players, in his case across all three formats, it's going to be exciting."

The Australians will have a young squad during their upcoming tour of the United Kingdom, which includes limited-overs meetings against Scotland and England.

With the likes of Matthew Wade, Mitchell Starc and Glenn Maxwell missing out, Bailey said the Kangaroos might see a more youthful squad going forward, with an eye on the next T20 World Cup in 2026.

"I don't think there's anyone who's not there that we've put a line through permanently besides David (Warner). This is the way we are going with this squad," he continued.

"The next T20 World Cup is 2026, so I imagine there may be some more changes than what we are seeing in this squad. But specifically, to those guys (Starc and Maxwell), no we haven't had any conversations about where they think their T20 journey may finish.

## Rohit says he will continue to play Tests and ODIs at least for a while



PTI ■ DALLAS (USA)

India captain Rohit Sharma says he will continue to play Test and ODI cricket "at least for a while" after ending his T20 international career with a World Cup win last month.

Rohit has been on a break since the title win in the West Indies and is set to miss the limited-overs tour of Sri Lanka later this month, which includes three ODIs.

"I just said it. I don't look that far ahead. So clearly, you will be seeing me play at least for a while," the 37-year-old said at an event here on Sunday night.

His statement was reiteration of a position he made clear after announcing his T20 retirement after the final in the West Indies in which India defeated South Africa by seven runs.

Earlier this month, BCCI secretary Jay Shah had confirmed that Rohit will captain India in the ongoing World Test Championship cycle and the Champions Trophy next year in February-March.

Rohit had led India in the 2022 T20 World Cup where the team was ousted in the semifinals by eventual champions England.

A year later, India reached the final of the 50-over World Cup at home under his leadership, but succumbed to Australia in the summit clash at Ahmedabad.

Rohit left T20Is with 4231 runs from 159 matches, having made five hundreds and 32 fifties.



## Cummins to miss Australia's limited-overs cricket tour to England and Scotland

AP ■ MELBOURNE

World Cup-winning skipper Pat Cummins will be rested for Australia's upcoming limited-overs tour to Britain and Mitchell Starc will miss the Twenty20 portion of the trip as part of a workload management program.

Australia is scheduled to play three T20s against Scotland and five one-day internationals against England in September. Cricket Australia said Cummins' absence was part of a "pre-planned, long-term load management strategy" as part of preparations for the Champions Trophy next year.

Mitchell Marsh, who led Australia at the recent T20 World Cup in the United States and Caribbean, will be captain for the tour.

Veteran opener David Warner has retired and wicketkeeper Matthew Wade wasn't selected, with selectors looking at the future.

Young batter Jake Fraser-McGurk was included in both the ODI and T20 squads after being a designated traveling reserve for the T20 World Cup.

"This tour gives us a great opportunity to bring in some new players in the absence of David Warner and Matthew Wade, as well as giving some senior players time to prepare for the home summer and a busy first half of next year," George

Bailey, Australia's selection chairman, said. The likes of Fraser-McGurk, Spencer Johnson, Xavier Bartlett and Aaron Hardie "are exciting prospects to join the likes of Cameron Green, Nathan Ellis and Josh Inglis in the white ball setup," Bailey said. "With the Champions Trophy next year... There has been a lot of planning invested into these next six months.

"That has included gradual integration of new players into our white ball squads who have earned international opportunities via excellent form."

Australia is the World Cup champion in the 50-over format and holder of the World Test Championship title, but didn't reach the semifinals of the T20 World Cup.

**T20 squad:** Mitch Marsh (captain), Xavier Bartlett, Cooper Connolly, Tim David, Nathan Ellis, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Cameron Green, Aaron Hardie, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Spencer Johnson, Marcus Stoinis, Adam Zampa.

**ODI squad:** Mitch Marsh (captain), Sean Abbott, Alex Carey, Nathan Ellis, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Aaron Hardie, Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Marnus Labuschagne, Glenn Maxwell, Matthew Short, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Adam Zampa.

# Mental conditioning camp ahead of Paris Olympics will help India handle pressure better: Abhishek

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian men's hockey team forward Abhishek feels the mental conditioning camp the players underwent at renowned adventurer Mike Horn's base in Switzerland ahead of the Paris Olympics has helped them prepare for high-pressure situations.

The Indian team has completed a three-day mental conditioning camp at Horn's base and are slated to play a

few practice matches in the Netherlands before making their way to Paris Games. The expectations from the team will be high after India's bronze medal win at Tokyo Olympics. India will start their Paris Olympics campaign against New Zealand in their first Pool B match.

"After months of focusing on the physical aspect of the game, this camp is exactly what we needed," Abhishek said in a Hockey India release. "The team has been spending time



connecting on and off the field, improving our bond and learning to handle high-pressure situations better," he said.

Abhishek, who has played 74 matches for India since his international debut in 2022, is set for his maiden appearance at the Olympics. "Ever since I was 14, it has been my dream to play for India in the Olympics." Abhishek asserted that he is someone who doesn't buckle under pressure. "The pressure in big tournaments

doesn't deter me or change my approach. I just try to execute on the pitch," he said.

For Abhishek, playing for India in the Olympics will be an achievement which is far beyond what his family had thought.

"When I started doing well in hockey, the most we expected was a government job. Seeing me reach this level is thrilling for them. My brother, especially, has always been my biggest supporter," he said.

# Indian cricket has lot of depth but transition should be gradual: Vikram Rathour

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Outgoing batting coach Vikram Rathour knows that a tough transition period awaits India in the near future but having worked with the available talent pool, he feels the side is well-equipped to handle the phase provided it unfolds in a "controlled and gradual manner".

While Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma will still play ODIs and Tests for now, India will have to grapple with the transition phase in another couple of years when they move towards the last phase of their respective careers?

"It is never going to be easy to replace people of Rohit and Virat's calibre," Rathour, also a former selector, told PTI in an exclusive interview.

"The recently-concluded series against Zimbabwe (on Sunday) gave us some glimpse into how the T20 team will look like in future. But we still have a few years in Test and ODI cricket to get to that point," said one of the key members of Rahul Dravid's coaching team. Having served as both national

selector and one of the coaches of the senior team, Rathour has an inside view of Indian cricket's talent pool and he finds it reassuring.

"I won't be too concerned about it. We have a lot of depth in Indian cricket. There are lots of very talented and skilful players who are coming through the system. The only thing we need to make sure is the transition is done in a controlled manner. It needs to be gradual.

He feels that by the time, Rohit and Kohli bid adieu to all formats, the younger stars would be well-settled, forming the nucleus for the next 10 years.

"I am hoping that by then, players like Shubman Gill, Rishabh Pant, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Dhruv Jurel to name a few, would establish themselves and will make the transition smooth.

"In ODIs also, we have experienced players like Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul and Hardik Pandya to take over," Rathour said in a confident analysis. Just as Kohli and Rohit carried



India's batting on their shoulders for more than a decade, the next decade could well belong to Gill and Jaiswal. "There are many exciting players coming through but these two are equipped to play all three formats for a long time. They are going to be the

backbone of Indian batting in years to come," the former Punjab skipper said.

Rathour was a good sounding board for Dravid in the last three years and when he says that Rinku Singh would make a good Test batter, the statement does carry weight.

"When I see him (Rinku) bat in nets, I can't find any technical reasons why Rinku cannot be a successful Test batter. I understand he has made his name as a terrific finisher in T20 cricket but if you look at his first-class record, he is averaging in high 50s.

"He (Rinku) is also blessed with a very calm temperament. So all these factors indicate that if given an opportunity, he can develop into a Test cricketer," Rathour said.

"ALWAYS TOLD VIRAT TO BELIEVE IN HIS METHODS": One question that Rathour would face at every second press conference during his tenure was Kohli's extended lean patch after the 2019 World Cup and he maintained it was a "phase that everyone has to go through". "There were no technical issues that we worked on specifically during this phase. The constant messaging to him was to keep working hard and believe in his methods. Eventually he came back stronger and an even better player," he said.

**RAHUL GAVE US SPACE AND HONEST FEEDBACK:** Rathour and Dravid made their Test debuts in the same series against England in 1996 and have played against each other in domestic cricket even before that. A three-decade relationship helped when they came together as back-room staff. "Rahul is the best coach that I have worked with, who gives you lots of space to work, is open to suggestions and will provide you an honest feedback. "One of the first discussions we had was about changing the batting template in T20 cricket. We agreed that we needed to bring in more intent and aggression in our batting approach," he revealed. Rathour said a case in point was Axar Patel, who fixed their problem of a decent batting option at number eight. "That made a massive difference and gave the batters in top order lot more freedom to bat." Axar was always a good batter and all he needed was opportunity to express himself fearlessly with an "uncomplicated technique".