

Back in 2008-09, we told the Pranab Mukherjee Committee that the BJP would gain strength if statehood is given to TG. Now the question is whether the BRS will merge with the BJP or ally with it. Former MP Vinod's statement says "everything is on the table." You can criticise me, but who is being proven right?



- Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi P4

Jaishankar reaffirms India's continued support to Mauritius



'I WOULD KILL TO BE AN ANTAGONIST NOW': RADHIKKA MADAN



Avika Gor opens up on BTS of SHANMUKHA



DON'T MISS...

254 emergency teams, 238 static...

Monsoon emergency teams are ready to deal with the flood at field level as the weather department has issued a rain forecast in Greater Hyderabad. In all, 254 monsoon emergency teams and 238 static teams have been formed across the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), as per the officials. GHMC Commissioner Amrapali Kata has taken specific measures so that people do not suffer due to flooding in the GHMC area. Both the GHMC and the Zonal Commissioners are constantly issuing orders and...

-PAGE: 3

COVID-19 may enhance...

Contracting COVID-19 may accelerate the onset of visible symptoms of type 1 diabetes in children, an autoimmune condition, according to a study published in The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA). Researchers found that children infected with the virus and in the early stages of type 1 diabetes without displaying symptoms, progressed more rapidly to a clinical onset of the autoimmune disorder. Symptoms of type 1 diabetes can include unusual thirst...

-PAGE: 5

FM participates in customary...

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday participated in a traditional 'halwa' ceremony, marking the final stage for preparation of Union Budget 2024-25 to be unveiled on July 23 in Lok Sabha. The ceremony is a ritual in which traditional dessert 'halwa' is prepared and served to officials and staff members of the finance ministry who are involved in the preparation of the budget. It is organised in the basement of North Block, which houses the ministry in the national capital and is attended by the...

-PAGE: 8

Hardik Pandya to lead India in...

Star all-rounder Hardik Pandya is all set to lead India in the three-match T20 International series against Sri Lanka starting July 27. However, one of the heroes of India's T20 World Cup victory last month will take a break during the three-match ODI series, which is scheduled in August, due to "personal reasons". "Hardik Pandya was India's T20 vice-captain under Rohit Sharma. He is completely fit and available for the three-match T20I series and will lead the side," a senior BCCI source told PTI on conditions of...

-SPORTS

Waiver of farm loans up to Rs 1 lakh from tomorrow

CM REVANTH HOLDS MARATHON COLLECTORS' CONFERENCE AT SECRETARIAT

- August 15 is deadline to dispose of the pending 1.1 lakh Dharani applications
- Arogyasri card for everyone in Telangana
- Use geotagging to protect Govt properties
- Farm loan waiver up to Rs 2 Lakh for families based on passbook
- Develop forest tourism in Adilabad like in Tadoba forests
- Performance of Collectors must be reflected by a decline in Praja Vani applications in Hyd
- Do not harass street food vendors as IT employees with late working hours need them

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government decided to start waiving farm loans of up to Rs 1 lakh from July 18. Money will be credited directly into the bank accounts of farmers. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy



CM Revanth Reddy addressing collectors' meeting held at the Secretariat on Tuesday. Deputy CM Bhatti, Agriculture Minister Uttam and Chief Secretary are also seen in the picture

announced that by the evening of July 18, the money would be credited to the farmers' loan accounts. Clear instructions have been issued to bankers to ensure that the funds allocated for loan waiver are not misappropriated. The government has warned that strict action will be taken against bankers who deposit the loan waiver funds into other accounts. In a first of its kind,

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy held a collectors' conference on Tuesday from 9:30 am to 7 pm. The Chief Minister clarified that the farm loan waiver of up to Rs 2 lakh for families based on passbooks and ration cards is meant only for family identification. The CM directed Collectors to resolve pending Dharani complaints quickly. The government

had organized a special drive from March 1 to March 15 to solve land-related issues. A special committee has already been formed to resolve Dharani problems. Officials informed the Chief Minister that 1,61,760 applications have been disposed of and another 1,15,308 applications are with the government.

2

Justice Narasimha Reddy quits probe panel after SC rap

- SC asks TG govt to change inquiry commission head
- SC says this is not a judicial commission but a commission of inquiry
- Justice Narasimha says he briefed press as reporters were pestering him

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Supreme Court on Tuesday castigated Justice (retd.) L. Narasimha Reddy, the chairperson of the one-man Commission of Inquiry set up to probe alleged irregularities in the power sector during the tenure of former Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao, for making observations about the merits of the matter at a press conference.

Under fire from the Supreme Court, Justice Narasimha Reddy, a former Chief Justice of the Patna High Court, withdrew from the panel, and the bench headed by SC Chief Justice DY Chandrachud asked the Telangana government to name his replacement.

Justice Narasimha's withdrawal came during dramatic proceedings on the plea of former Chief Minister KCR who accused him of bias.



Now KCR has to appear before panel

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former Chief Minister KCR now has to appear before the Commission of Inquiry. The Commission has already issued two notices to KCR. Initially, KCR requested a postponement, but later, he ignored the summons. From the beginning, KCR has been trying to escape the inquiry. As part of this, he argued that the Commission is illegal and should be dissolved.

2

Venkaiiah Chowdary appointed JEO TTD

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Ch Venkaiiah Chowdary, IRS, has been deputed as Joint Executive Officer, Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), Government of Andhra Pradesh for three years in relaxation of the policy.

To this effect, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has



approved the proposal of the Department of Revenue for the deputation of Venkaiiah Chowdary through a letter dated July 16, 2024, issued by Sakshi Mittal, Director Government of India Secretariat of the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet Ministry.

Govt filtering out farmers from farm loan waiver scheme: Eatala

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP's Malkajgiri MP, Eatala Rajender, said the government is filtering out half of the potential farm loan waiver scheme beneficiaries in the name of ration cards, 20 per cent in the name of Income Tax and some others in the name of rescheduling and restructuring of loans.

He said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy who said that he will waive the farm loans of all farmers at one go with Rs 34,000 crore is indirectly saying that he will not imple-



ment the farm loan waiver scheme fully. Speaking to the media at the State BJP office here on Tuesday,

Eatala said that placing conditions in implementing the scheme is nothing but deceiving farmers.

It is not proper for the government to place conditions like ration cards as the government gives ration cards only to a few farmers who have three and a half acres of paddy fields and seven acres of kushki fields.

In fact, people were not given white ration cards in the last 10 years. Moreover, the Congress government is also not issuing ration cards, he pointed out.

Continued on Page 2



Jailed BRS leader K Kavitha taken to DDU Hospital

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BRS leader K Kavitha, who is lodged in Tihar jail here in connection with a money laundering case, was taken to Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital after she developed some gynecological problem and high fever on Tuesday, officials said.

The 46-year-old Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) leader was brought back to prison after undergoing some tests at the hospital, they said. Kavitha was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the Delhi excise policy-linked money laundering case on March 15 from her Banjara Hills residence in Hyderabad. On April 11, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arrested her from Tihar jail in a corruption case linked to the alleged scam.

2

2 BRS MLAs joined Congress due to threats, alleges KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS MLA KTR said the police and DSPs in the constituencies of two defecting BRS MLAs threatened them that their lives would be in danger if they did not change parties. He said that the illegal defections being encouraged by the Congress in the state had been brought to the Speaker's attention.

He reminded the Speaker that according to Supreme Court orders a decision regarding defections must be taken within three months. A complaint has been filed with the



Speaker concerning the nine MLAs who crossed over from the BRS to the Congress, he said.

KTR emphasised the urgency of taking immediate action on the complaint against Danam Nagender

and cited the Supreme Court ruling that disqualified a Congress MLA in Manipur for defecting, stressing that the Speaker is bound by the same judgement.

2

Congress rejects KTR's charge, demands 'proof'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Lashing out at the BRS for alleging that the Congress is inducting BRS MLAs by threatening them, Government Whip Aadi Srinivas challenged the BRS to prove with evidence which MLAs were inducted into the Congress by threats.

He demanded that BRS Working President KTR should reveal how 60 MLAs were threatened and how much money was given to induct MLAs into the BRS since 2014.

Criticising KTR and Harish Rao for speaking about protocol issues, Srinivas asked them to reveal why

they did not speak out when the BRS government failed to follow protocol in the case of the Governor, Revanth Reddy, Seethakka, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy and others. He said that KTR and Harish Rao started speaking about the Constitution and rights only after the people threw them out. He asked KTR and Harish to explain whether they did not remember the BRS government refusing to invite the opposition to BAC meetings.

He asked KTR to explain why the BRS has become zero in Telangana and added that KCR is the one who encouraged defections first.

Set up MSMEs for Mid Manair, Gouravelli land losers: Ponnam

WRITES LETTER TO BANDI SANJAY TO TAKE REQUIRED STEPS



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar appealed to Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, to establish micro, small and medium-scale industries for people displaced by the Mid Manair and Gouravelli projects.

Ponnam sent a letter to Sanjay regarding this on Tuesday. In his letter, Ponnam asked Sanjay to ensure that the Centre allocates adequate funds to Telangana, especially to the Karimnagar Lok Sabha constituency.

Congratulating Sanjay for becoming a Union Minister, Ponnam asked him to get funds from the Centre for the state's development. He appealed to Sanjay to take the initiative to fulfil the assurances given by the Centre to Telangana during the bifurcation. He asked Sanjay to make the Centre set up a Skill Development Centre in Karimnagar and to provide Rs 200 crore as financial assistance to Satavahana University.

2

'Skill development centres to be set up with Rs 300 cr investments'



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In all, 10 renowned universities from around the world have come forward to set up skill development centres across Telangana with an investment of Rs 300 crore, revealed IT and Industries Minister Duddilla

Sridhar Babu. Sridhar Babu met with representatives of the International Startup Foundation (ISF), which operates in 25 countries with its headquarters in Hyderabad, and 'Startup Runway', based in Texas, at his office in the Secretariat on Tuesday. These two

organisations, which promote start-ups globally, have agreements with 10 prestigious skill universities including the University of Texas in America and the London Business School in the UK for training. Representatives from these universities will also participate in the International Startup Foundation conference to be held in the city from September 26-28, Sridhar Babu said.

Under the leadership of ISF Chairman Dr JA Chowdary and Director Sheshadri Vangal, representatives from Richardson City and Frisco City in Texas met with him and expressed interest in jointly undertaking activities in the newly established 'Artificial Intelligence City' in Telangana.

2



KRMB allows AP, TG to take water from NSP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A meeting of the KRMB's Three Member Committee was held on July 15 to allocate water in the Srisailem Dam and Nagarjuna Sagar Project (NSP) among Andhra Pradesh and Telangana for drinking purposes. The Engineer-in-Chief (Irrigation) of Andhra Pradesh had earlier requested the release of five

TMCs water through the Nagarjuna Sagar Right Main Canal to meet the drinking water needs of Palnadu, Guntur, Bapatla and Prakasam districts.

Meanwhile, the Engineer-in-Chief (General) of Telangana stated their requirement for 2.50 TMC from NSP for Palair and Udaya Samudram reservoirs and for Hyderabad.

2

When turncoats make a mockery of the anti-defection law

The true spirit of the country's democracy is at stake if one considers the plethora of defections made ostensibly in the interests of the development of the constituency of the turncoat lawmaker concerned. The common may feel disgusted at the turn events, whether they are pre-poll or post-poll defections. Most of the defections palpably involve nothing but the selfish motive of the defector for obvious personal gains. Disturbingly, every political is countenancing unlawful political activities in its quest for the elusive 'political stability'. The recent developments in Telangana, India's youngest State, mirror the deep-rooted political malaise spreading in various parts of the nation. The Congress party, which had agreed for the bifurcation of the combined Andhra Pradesh, was routed in residual AP following bifurcation. The party did not get a single



seat in the AP Legislative Assembly. People of Telangana too initially rejected the Congress. Only in its third attempt, the Congress could make it in TG. The Congress got a slender margin in the recent TG Legislative Assembly polls, winning only five seats more than the magic figure. The Bharat Rastra Samiti (BRS) immediately began taunting that "the Congress government would last only six months" and predicted former chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao's rule again in TG. So, the Congress seems to have initiated steps to ensure 'political stability'. It has lured legislators from BRS, which had won almost one-third seats (39) in the 119-member House. Legislators belonging to BRS are switching to the ruling Congress. The Congress' high command seems to have given its nod; for, the ultimate purpose is to

Unfortunately, Telangana has become the focal point for horse trading among legislators. Trashing basic morality in politics, both BRS and Congress have resorted to undemocratic practices. During the period of the first Assembly of TG (2014-18), the then TRS government headed by KCR shepherded Congress and TDP MLAs into its fold. TDP Legislature Party evaporated as it were since KCR was determined to see the end of TG's soil.

'strengthen' its unit in the 29th state of India. Unfortunately, Telangana has become the focal point for horse trading among legislators. Trashing basic morality in politics, both BRS and Congress have resorted to undemocratic practices. During the period of the first Assembly of TG (2014-18), the then TRS government headed by KCR shepherded Congress and TDP MLAs into its fold. TDP Legislature Party evaporated as it were since KCR was determined to see the end of

TDP on TG's soil. Although the Congress managed to remain intact as the principal opposition party, it suffered a lot at the hands of TRS. During TRS' second stint of power (2018-23), the pink party (renamed as Bharat Rashtra Samithi) stripped the Congress of the position of principal opposition party. Dalit leader Mallu Bhattivikramarka was stripped of the status of Leader of the Opposition. Earlier, BRS had somehow allowed then LoP K Jana Reddy to continue in



M D RATNA KUMAR
Senior Journalist

that position. In Andhra Pradesh too, such unhealthy practice has been encouraged at the behest of the ruling parties. During the first Assembly (2014-19) of residual AP, then ruling TDP opened its gates for nearly two dozens of MLAs from the principal opposition YSR Congress Party (YSRCP). The same party admitted four legislators from TDP during it rule (2019-24).

However, such legislators, regardless of their party, had a golden chance of not relinquishing their membership of the Legislature in both TG&AP. Their patrons helped them in the process of enjoying the membership of the Legislature, despite their defection. The anti-defection law says that those shifting their loyalty to another party would lose membership of the Legislature. In reality, nothing of this sort takes place. The unhealthy practice of joining other parties after getting elected on the ticket of a particular party dilutes the spirit of true democracy. In the mid 80s, there was talk of morality in politics in the State of Karnataka during the rule of Janata Party leader Ramakrishna Hegde who was known for his integrity. He retained power after dissolving the Assembly on the plank of political stability. His daredevil attempt made him a hero in politics of Karnataka

then. Former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi had brought the anti-defection law to check defections. The law does not allow any legislator to shift his loyalty to another party. Otherwise, he/she would lose membership of the Legislature. The same law, being toothless, has allowed unscrupulous switching of parties. Apparently the resignations submitted by the defectors are put away in iron safes, never to be brought out for acceptance by the presiding officers/speakers of the respective Houses. For example T. Srinivas Yadav, former minister in Chandrababu Naidu's cabinet, had shifted loyalties to TRS in TG. He 'tendered' his resignation and sent it to TGLA's Speaker. But it never came to be accepted. Worse still, the Speaker's secretariat clarified that the resignation letter submitted by Yadav was not with them. Dozens of legislators

who had defected to another party successfully forestalled possible bypolls for their respective seats in the event of their resignations being accepted. The leaders who had encouraged MLAs to shift loyalties assured them of "no-bypolls" to their respective seats. Rulers are often more particular on safeguarding the political future/interests of members who had joined their party after defecting another party. No such turncoat legislator has been disqualified. Such defections are literally mocking the anti-defection law. The law has become toothless due to biased decisions taken by the presiding officers. While publicly advocating stringent actions against defectors, every leader encourages defectors. If the loopholes in the anti-defection law are not plugged, and if unhealthy practices among political parties are not curbed, democracy in India will go for a toss.

'Major flaws, financial burden in Kaleshwaram Project'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a detailed presentation to the PC Ghose Judicial Commission of Inquiry on the Kaleshwaram Project, MoJS advisor Sriram Vedire criticised the project's re-engineering from Pranahita-Yellampalli-Chevella (PYC) to Kaleshwaram, highlighting increased costs and engineering failures. Initially, the project location shifted from Tummidihatti to Medigadda due to various concerns raised by the Central Water Commission (CWC) and disagreements with Maharashtra over land submergence. Vedire countered the GoTS claims, stating the CWC had confirmed water availability at Tummidihatti and questioned why the government abandoned the PYC project, leading to increased expenses of Rs 80,000 crore. Vedire pointed out that the redesigning efforts led to underutilisation of Rs 11,917

core worth of infrastructure developed under the original PYC project. Additionally, the new design and location resulted in increased maintenance costs of Rs 11,000 crore annually. The presentation also emphasised numerous planning, design and construction flaws. The CWC had not approved the designs, which were only reviewed by the Telangana State Central Design Organisation. Key issues included sinking piers, inadequate storage planning, and poor quality control. These problems were exacerbated by insufficient geotechnical investigations and a lack of third-party quality audits. Vedire's report calls for a re-evaluation of the project to address the highlighted failures and ensure proper management and maintenance protocols are in place to avoid further financial and structural setbacks.

Don't confine yourselves to AC rooms, CM tells Collectors

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Tuesday asked Collectors not to confine themselves to their air-conditioned offices but to make field visits and find out people's needs. The Chief Minister said that his government's priority is to deliver welfare-oriented transparent governance. The government is moving forward to achieve sustainable growth. The CM was addressing the Collectors' conference at the Secretariat on Tuesday. Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy inaugurated the Collectors conference while Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka delivered the opening remarks. Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari and all secretaries and Collectors attended the meeting. "This is the second Collectors' conference after we took over. Collectors are the



eyes and ears of the government. The government recently transferred collectors and posted competent officials without any political pressure," the CM said. The Chief Minister reminded that the key responsibility of taking the benefits of government schemes to the needy lies with Collectors. Students of some schools cried when their teachers left after being transferred. Likewise, the people

should also react when collectors are transferred, he said. The CM advised Collectors who hailed from different states to not only learn the local language but also be a part of Telangana culture. The Chief Minister emphasised that all IAS officers should work hard like noted bureaucrats Sankaran and Sreedharan. While taking up works, Collectors should create an impression that the

people's government is functioning, he said. The CM asked all Collectors to organise field visits regularly. As the government accorded top priority to strengthening schools, hostels and hospitals, collectors have been asked to take steps to strengthen the education system. The government is spending Rs 85,000 on each poor student every month in government schools. As part of rebuilding Telangana, district officers are entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring government schools and hospitals regularly. Collectors should address public grievances on the spot during their field visits, the CM said. The CM pointed out that 10 collectors of Telangana excelled in their duties while TG was in United AP. Collectors have been asked to address people's grievances reported in the Praja Vani programme instantly.

PHONE-TAPPING CASE Accused Radha Kishan Rao sent to police custody

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Nampally court granted the police two days custody of former Task force DCP Radha Kishan Rao in an extortion case. He was also accused in the phone-tapping case. The Jubilee Hills Police took him into custody from Chanchalguda prison on Tuesday at around 5 pm and took him to Osmania General Hospital. After conducting medical tests he was shifted to the police station. The case was registered on April 8 on Radha Kishan Rao,

Chandrasekhar Vege, Gattu Mallu, Mallikarjun, Krishna, Gopal, Gopal, Balaji and others. The case was registered by founder of Kria Healthcare, Venu Madhav Chennupati. Meanwhile, the police will reportedly take Gattu Mallu (A3) into custody for questioning. A source said, "Police may arrest Gattu Mallu in the extortion case". Though he was not an accused in the phone-tapping case, his name also surfaced in the case. The case has been registered under 386,365,341,120b,r/w

'Scrap loan waiver guidelines'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Declaring that the guidelines for waiving farm loans are worse than those for gold loans, BRS MLA Harish Rao demanded that the government should scrap the guidelines immediately. Addressing a press conference on Tuesday, Harish criticised the guidelines for focusing more on bureaucratic filters than on providing relief to

farmers. He pointed out that the guidelines prioritised stringent filters instead of helping farmers. He questioned the reliance on ration cards to determine loan waiver eligibility arguing that this could disqualify many farmers. He also objected to the government's decision to prioritise PM Kisan data as that would potentially exclude a large number of farmers.



Jailed BRS leader... Govt.. 2 BRS MLAs joined...

Continued on Page 1

Eatala asked the CM to reveal what he said before the Assembly elections and what he is doing now. He said the Revanth Reddy government has lost public confidence in a short span of time. Eatala said that the CM should concentrate on the farm loan waiver scheme, paying Rs 500 as bonus, paying Rs 2,500 per month to women, Rs 4,000 pension, scooters for college girls and paying Rs 4,000 as unemployment allowance instead of focusing on inducting BRS MLAs.

He urged the Speaker to take a prompt decision in line with Supreme Court guidelines and warned that failing to do so would bring disrespect to the post. KTR read out the Supreme Court's judgement to the Speaker, highlighting the clear directive that complaints received by the Speaker must be decided within three months. He pointed out that the Supreme Court intervened in Manipur and ordered the Speaker to decide within a week when the three-month deadline was over. He criticized Rahul Gandhi for posing as the defender of the Constitution in New Delhi while allowing the Congress to

undermine the Constitution in Telangana. KTR accused Rahul of encouraging defections in Telangana, contrasting this with his stance on defections in other parts of the country. He also informed the Speaker that the Congress had prominently mentioned in its manifesto that membership would be automatically cancelled if an MLA defected. He cited allegations by Congress leader Siddaramaiah in Karnataka, accusing the BJP of attempting to buy Congress MLAs for Rs 50 crore each, and asked how many crores were changing hands in Telangana for purchasing BRS MLAs. KTR reminded the Speaker of Rahul's oath to prevent defections in Goa and noted

that positive decisions were made by Speakers in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh when complaints were filed against Congress MLAs. He urged the Speaker to recognise that government officials are misleading him about the implications of not deciding on the matter. KTR acknowledged the Speaker's clear stance expressed in an interview that candidates should not switch parties after getting elected. He praised the Speaker's thoughtful approach and urged immediate action regarding the complaints filed. Meanwhile, responding to a tweet, KTR expressed his anger over the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) officials' negligence

in addressing local residents' issues. KTR warned that if the issues are not resolved within 48 hours, he would join the local residents in a shramadan (voluntary labour) to solve the problems themselves. He questioned why GHMC is failing to resolve problems immediately after complaints are made. A netizen tweeted KTR, mentioning that despite several complaints to the GHMC Mayor about the overgrowth of trees and snake infestations due to garbage, there has been no action. The netizen further expressed concern that their colony, which houses 50 families, lacks proper roads and water facilities, and that thefts occur frequently at night.

The bench observed that the former judge should not have commented on the merits of the matter before the inquiry had started. Referring to the press conference, the bench said, "Had it just been indicating the modalities followed (by the commission of inquiry), we would have left it at that. Here, it is a little untoward for a person who is a judge. The problem is that there appear to be observations on merits. Let us also face it, it doesn't bind anybody but the inquiry report affects the reputation of a person." The bench underscored the importance of procedural fairness and said it needed to be adhered to. "Justice should be visible in the conduct of the head of the Commission as well," the CJI said.

KRMB allows AP, TG...

Continued on Page 1

Following the committee's recommendations, the water allocation details were decided as follows: Water available in NSP as of July 15 is 4.780 TMC - Water available in Srisaillam Dam as of July 15 is 5.705 TMC - Release from Srisaillam Dam: 5.705 TMC - Net realization from Srisaillam Dam as NSP

considering 10% losses: 5.134 TMC - Total water available for allocation: 9.914 TMC - Allocation for Andhra Pradesh: 4.500 TMC - Allocation for Telangana: 5.414 TMC. The order, issued with specific conditions, emphasised the judicious use of water for drinking purposes only due to acute shortages in common reservoirs.

TODAY ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha
Tithi: Ekadashi: Jul 16 08:34 PM to Jul 17 09:03 PM
Dwadashi: Jul 17 09:03 PM to Jul 18 08:44 PM

Nakshatram: Anuradha: Jul 17 02:13 AM to Jul 18 03:12 AM
Jyeshtha: Jul 18 03:12 AM to Jul 19 03:25 AM

Rahukalam: 12:22 PM to 1:59 PM
Yamagandam: 7:31 AM to 9:08 AM
Varjyam: 08:51 AM to 10:28 AM
Gulika: 10:45 AM to 12:22 PM
Amritakalam: 04:23 PM to 06:03 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham: Nil

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Scattered Showers
Temp: 29°
Humidity: 77%
Sunrise: 5:51 AM
Sunset: 6:54 PM
Updated: July 16, 2024 5:00 PM

Waiver of farm...

The CM also asked officials to mention the reasons for rejecting Dharani applications and set August 15 as the deadline to resolve all pending applications. In the context of increasing encroachment of government lands, the CM alerted Collectors to protect government properties, ponds and water bodies in all districts. The CM asked officials to adopt geo-tagging technology connected with the command control centre to protect government lands. The CM ordered collectors to open Seva centres at the Collectorate on the day of the Praja Vani programme, if required, to address grievances instantly and ensure the centres

Set up MSMEs for..

He appealed to Sanjay to arrange a bi-weekly train from Karimnagar to Tirupati and to speed up track doubling on the Karimnagar-Shirdi route and sanction a National Highway from Kothapally to Jangaon. He also asked Sanjay to bring a Medical College to Husnabad and funds for the development of the Sircilla Textile Park. He also asked Sanjay to ensure that the Centre sanctioned funds for the development of Vemulawada and Kondagattu temples. Ponnamp also asked Sanjay to ensure that the Centre allocates adequate funds for the NLM, PMEG and NHM schemes.

Justice ...

"Justice must be seen to be done. He is heading a Commission of Inquiry and expressed his views on the merits of the probe subject at a press conference. We are giving you (Telangana government) an opportunity to replace the judge in the Commission of Inquiry. Appoint some other judge. There has to be an impression that he made observations on merits," a bench headed by SC Chief Justice Chandrachud said before rising for the lunch break. "The error of approach does not make it a case of bias," senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, representing the Congress government led by Revanth Reddy told the bench also comprising JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra.

'Skill..

He revealed that these representatives will act as intermediaries for American and British companies to invest in AI City and assist in providing marketing facilities for the products of Telangana startup companies in America. He mentioned that their government has already created a startup-friendly environment. The delegation that met Sridhar Babu included former mayor of Frisco City in Texas Maher Maso, representatives from Richardson City Krish Shacklett and Greg Sowell, Startup Runway founder Mahesh Nandyala, COO Ravindra Reddy, Chinmay Das, Jyotsna Kondapalli, Archana Chindam, and Venumadhav Gottipulla from the ISF.

Now KCR...

KCR approached the High Court, seeking a stay on the inquiry notices issued to him. However, the High Court rejected KCR's plea and dismissed his petition. KCR then approached the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court's decision has now become another problem for KCR. The SC ordered the removal of Justice Narasimha Reddy from the post of the Commission Chairman and directed the appointment of another Judge. However, it also clarified that the establishment of the commission is valid. Following the Supreme Court's verdict, Justice Narsimha Reddy immediately stepped down. A new chairman will be appointed soon.

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MONSOON PREPAREDNESS

254 emergency teams, 238 static teams on alert across GHMC area

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Monsoon emergency teams are ready to deal with the flood at field level as the weather department has issued a rain forecast in Greater Hyderabad. In all, 254 monsoon emergency teams and 238 static teams have been formed across the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), as per the officials.

GHMC Commissioner Amrapali Kata has taken specific measures so that people do not suffer due to flooding in the GHMC area. Both the GHMC and the Zonal Commissioners are constantly issuing orders and alerting the traffic jams due to standing water at the water-logging points.

Apart from this, the field-level officials who have neglected the review have been alerted to take action. The field-level authorities appointed monsoon emergency teams to alert the labour and remove the



water from the water-logging points in their respective jurisdictions while floating material due to rain effect will be cleaned by static teams.

Moreover, a vehicle has been prepared to remove the flood without standing water at the water-logging points. As part of the monsoon plan, 29 CRMP and 30 EVDM teams have been deployed.

Meanwhile, the Telangana Health department issued an advisory on Tuesday against

the spread of malaria, dengue, and chikungunya during the monsoon. The IMD-Hyderabad forecast heavy rains in the next five days, which can lower temperatures and increase humidity, creating a breeding ground for mosquitoes and water-borne diseases.

The Health department issued tips to stay healthy during rains and to be cautious from mosquito-borne diseases like malaria, dengue and chikungunya.

To prevent water-borne infections like gastroenteritis, jaundice, typhoid, it is advised to drink and carry filtered/boiled water from home; use bottled water when outside. Use and carry hand sanitizers. Avoid eating outside which is raw or uncovered food. Eat freshly made home-cooked food and dispose leftovers.

Guarding against air-borne infections such as viral fever, conjunctivitis, influenza. It is advised to avoid shaking hands, sharing food, water, or clothes with sick individuals. Wash hands frequently and use hand sanitizers.

Minimise touching public surfaces like door handles and railings. Cover your mouth when sneezing or coughing, and use disposable tissues. Seek medical help if you develop flu-like symptoms or conjunctivitis.

In case of health emergency, it is advised to call 108 ambulance services.

Officials told to desilt nalas regularly

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

City Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi ordered officials to be alert in the wake of rains and desilting should be done as a regular process. She said that silt in the nala should not obstruct the flow.

She held a meeting with officials of the corporation and Borabanda Corporator Baba Fasiuddin over development works of Borabanda division in Serilingampally zone in GHMC head office on Tuesday.

She ordered the officials to remove water hyacinth in lakes.

Meanwhile, Vijayalakshmi facilitated four intermediate students for saving five persons on Sunday.

On Sunday during heavy rain in the city, in Musheerabad a car was swept away with five passengers in flooded water.

DGP's call to prioritise Prajavani applications

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Director General of Police Jitender has issued a directive to Police Commissioners and Superintendents of Police (SPs) to prioritise applications received through the Prajavani programme, a state government initiative aimed at resolving public grievances, on Tuesday.

He instructed officials to promptly address the applications forwarded to their respective districts and commissionerates, highlighting that efficient resolution of these issues would enhance the satisfaction in public.

Furthermore, the DGP directed police officials to promptly register cases based on complaints lodged at police stations and to treat the public with courtesy. He underscored the importance of surprise inspections at police stations by police commissioners and SPs.

Announcing his own plans for district-wise inspections, he urged senior officers to con-



duct similar visits. He issued directives for a review of history-sheets, cautious issuance of arms licences, maintenance of law and order and expeditious handling of cases related to SCs, STs and women. He emphasised the importance of road safety and monitoring the performance of CCTV cameras installed under the 'Nenu Saitam' programme. The DGP suggested conducting crime review meetings to assess the performance of station house officers.

He highlighted the need to curb drug trafficking in the

535 applications received on Tuesday

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In all, 535 grievance applications were received in the Prajavani programme at the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Praja Bhavan Tuesday.

People with various problems presented petitions to the Praja Bhavan officials.

According to officials, 116 applications were related to revenue issues, 88 to the Civil Supplies department, 62 to the Electricity department, 57 to the Home department, 36 to the Panchayat Raj Rural Development department and 176 to other departments.

State and proposed organising special training programmes if required.

AI integrated student GPT tool launched for CA aspirants

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Highlighting that the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) being a helpful tool for chartered accountants, which will not replace human manpower, AI-integrated Student GPT tool system for CA aspirants has been launched for free. The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) conducted the AI Innovation Summit -AIS 2024 at Shilpakala Vedika in the city on Tuesday. It would conclude on Wednesday.

Speaking to the media, president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), CA Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal, stated that the AI-integrated CA GPT will assist in exam preparation by providing comprehensive study materials on a single platform. The GPT tool will be provided free to all 9.85 lakh students.

The integration of AI in areas like finance, education, and healthcare represents significant progress, positioning India as a global leader in this



President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) CA Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal addressing the media on Tuesday

technology. With the world's largest tech-savvy population, our youth must acquire AI proficiency. AI's capability to translate audit reports into local languages exemplifies its transformative potential in enhancing accessibility and understanding, Ranjeet added.

Ranjeet also mentioned that an audit tool for the industry will be designed soon, in collaboration with the government, where ICAI will meet to decide next month. This tool aims to be completely fool-proof and applicable to the

entire industry. He further stated that the government is working on an indigenous LLM model with fraud detection. Highlighting that the CA course has gained global recognition and many Chartered Accountants are contributing globally as CFOs, Ranjeet mentioned that the institute produces between 25,000 to 30,000 students.

He informed that completing the CA degree takes 4.5 years after plus 2, with affordable fees of Rs 75,000 at the ICAI institute.

Cyberabad Police nab job fraudster

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Cyber Crime Sleuths in Cyberabad Commissionerate apprehended an accused named Kilaru Seetaiah in a job fraud, who extorted money from innocent public by giving fake offer letters. The accused is a resident of Nandigam in NTR district, Andhra Pradesh.

The accused manipulated victims and extorted money of Rs 5,64,980 on the pretext of offering them jobs. Police said that the fraudster posed himself as a senior employee at 'Ericsson Global India Pvt Ltd.' He presented fake job offers to victims, detailing non-existent positions and a future joining date.

Police filed seven cases against Seetaiah in Cybercrime police station. The fraudster took the contacts from the Naukari and LinkedIn websites. He got in contact with the victims by posing as a senior employee and could help them to get a job. On believing him, the victims sent the amount.



CAMPUS PLACEMENTS

17 OU MBA students bag HDFC bank jobs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In all, 17 students of MBA and Technology Management departments, Osmania University, bagged HDFC banking jobs on Tuesday. In this regard, OU Registrar Professor Lakshminarayana, along with the faculty congratulated all the students who got the placement.

Prof. Lakshminarayana said, "It is a matter of pride that 17 students of OU MBA, Technology Management got managerial-level jobs in HDFC banking sec-

tor. The students are happy to get a package ranging from Rs 23 lakh to Rs 8 lakh per annum."

On this occasion, under the guidance of HDFC National Vice-President Pawan Kumar, six managers participated and handed over appointment documents to 17 students in the presence of the registrar in the OU administration building.

MBA College Principal, Senior Professor Sriramulu, said that out of 120 students studying in the fourth semester, 109 students have got jobs in different reputed companies and 10

more companies are going to come by the end of this month. "We are happy that our students bagged jobs after going through various interview rounds," he added.

The Registrar specially congratulated the teachers who are teaching the students to enhance the reputation of OU. The Dean of the Department Prof. Venkataiah, HOD Professor Sudha, Chairman Smitha, Placement Officer Jehangir, Dr Vidyasagar Rao and representatives of HDFC participated in the event.

88.31% candidates appear for TG-CPGET 2024

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Osmania University organised the Telangana Common Post Graduate Entrance Test -2024 (TG-CPGET) for admission to various PG and five-year integrated courses from July 6 to 16. A total number of 64,765 (88.31%) candidates appeared for the exam in 45 subjects against a total number of candidates registered 73,342.

The exams were conducted for the admissions for a total of 51 subjects consisting of 47 PG courses - MA/M.Sc/M.Com/M.P.Ed and so on along with four-year integrated courses during the said period in three sessions from 9 am to 11 am, 1 pm to 2:30 pm and 4:30 pm to 6 pm.

However, the exam didn't include subjects like MA Arabic, Kannada, Marathi, Persian, Theatre Arts and M.Sc Electronics.

The tests were conducted in 37 test centres spread in the entire State of Telangana by taking all precautionary measures.

WORLD SNAKE DAY Zoo Park organises awareness drive on snake bite mitigation

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Nehru Zoological Park (NZP) organised snake awareness and snake bite mitigation techniques to zoo staff at its premises on World Snake Day. About 300 zoo staff members comprising animal section, garden section and security section participated in the programme.

Under the guidance of Dr Sunil Hiremath, Director (FAC) and Curator, NZP, Hyd and A Nagamani, Deputy Curator, NZP, Hyd, Ch M Deepak Tarun, EO, NZP, Hyd, conducted the awareness programme and briefed about various types of snakes found in India and

their role in maintaining ecological balance, with special emphasis on mitigating snake bites. Do's and don'ts for snake bites. They also stated that snakes are of two types: venomous and non-venomous. Commonly found venomous snakes are Cobra, Russell's Viper, Saw Scaled Viper and Common Indian Krait, and others are non-venomous snakes.

Nagamani spoke about the importance of identifying and differentiating between venomous and non-venomous snakes for zoo staff and precautions that are to be taken at the workplace to avoid snake bites. She also spoke about the basic first aid for snake bite.

63% of office space in Hyd green-certified

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Over 63% of office space in Hyderabad is green-certified. The city has a total office stock of 152.9 million sqft, with 95.9 million sqft being green-certified, representing a 63% share. Green-certified projects see a 13-15% premium in rental values.

According to Vestian Research, over 65% of Grade A office space in India's top 7 cities is green-certified. Of 1,362 Grade A buildings, 805 (59%) are green-certified, showing India's commitment to sustainable construction.

Assessing real estate companies based on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) is crucial as the sector is India's second-largest employer and accounts for 39% of carbon emissions. The government's push for net-zero emissions by



2070 will shape India's real estate market.

Vestian Research states global occupiers in India's office market prioritise international certifications. LEED certification leads with a 74% share as of Q2 2024. Gold is the most prominent certification, with 49% of buildings LEED Gold-certified and 51% IGBC Gold-certified.

Southern cities like Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad account for 58% of India's total green stock. Bengaluru leads with 172 mil-

lion sq. ft. of green stock. Chennai has the highest percentage share, with 83% of its Grade A stock being green.

Kolkata has 62% of its Grade A office space green-certified, despite having the lowest stock. Pune has the lowest percentage of green-certified office buildings at 56%.

As per the Report, Grade A office buildings under 500,000 sqft account for 47% of green-certified buildings. Buildings over 1 million sqft account for 19%, with 90% being green-certified.

Dance teacher sexually assaults first grade student

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A dreadful incident took place at a private international school in Boduppal, where a dance teacher sexually assaulted a minor girl in his class on Monday. This incident spread shockwaves and tension among the parents on the safety of their children in schools.

After knowing the incident, the victim's family confronted the school administration and thrashed the accused.

Upon receiving the information, the Medipally Police registered a case against the accused under the relevant sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

The officials are carrying out further investigation on this issue.

Probe into conductor's 'misbehavior' with woman

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

After a woman complained in the social media platform X of misbehaviour by a TGSRTC conductor of Farooq Nagar depot on Monday, the corporation ordered an inquiry into the incident on Tuesday.

In X, she posted that no girl should suffer in silence. "I was travelling in the bus 65M/123. The conductor took the chance of the crowded bus and started touching my chest."

Then he directly went down and touched my private parts. I shouted very loudly," she said in anguish on the social media.

She said that she is 21 years old. In a crowded bus, the conductor misbehaved when she was coming back from Manikonda to Himayathnagar. The Women Safety Wing



(WSW) of Telangana replied to her post, "Thank you for bringing it to the police's notice."

As our officer conveyed over the call, necessary action has been initiated by the SHE Teams."

The victim has also complained to the police in Raidurgam police station. The police filed the case under 75 of BNS.

MONSOON REGATTA Govardhan from Telangana in spotlight

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The 15th edition of the Monsoon Regatta by the Telangana Sailing Association and the Yacht Club of Hyderabad saw a challenging day as the largest fleet of the Regatta sailed in the Optimist Class sub-junior category on Tuesday.

According to the Telangana Sailing Association, Tuesday's weather brought stronger winds ranging from 7 to 15 knots, testing the young sailors all-around skills. All fleets completed five races out of the 12 scheduled for

the Monsoon Regatta, keeping the competition wide open.

Govardhan Pallara from Telangana stood in the spotlight with thrilling finishes, dominating the field. He won the second race and secured 8th and 4th places in the first and third races respectively, solidifying his lead among 39 sailors from across India in the competitive Under-16 fleet. Despite his slight build, Govardhan's strategic expertise on the water sets him apart.

The coach, Suheim Sheikh said, Govardhan Pallara is an unusual sailor with a natural knack for the sport, which has



helped him achieve recent victories. He won the Nationals in Shillong in May and the recent ranking Regatta in Secunderabad. Currently, he leads the fleet at the Monsoon Regatta, he added.

Govardhan stated, "We have

completed only 5 races, with 7 more to go. While I know anything can happen, I'll give my best." On Day 2, Shreya Krishna from Tamil Nadu dropped to third overall, while Aakash Tangai of TSC Mysore climbed to second place with two wins.

In the International 420 Mixed class, local pair Vaishnavi Veeravamsam and Shruvan Kathravath of Telangana outperformed their closest rivals, Thanuja Kameshwar and Ganesh Peerkatla, also from Telangana. Divyanshri Mishra and her crew moved to the open class due to age criteria.

Free mock tests for Group II aspirants

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Minorities Study Circle on Tuesday announced that it will conduct a mock test series for Group II service aspirants.

The mock test will be conducted in both offline mode at Telangana Minorities Study Circle, Hyderabad and the online mode for students residing outside Hyderabad. The full length test will be held on August 1 and 2.

The last date of receiving applications is July 30. The registrations can be done at the office of Telangana Minorities Study Circle, Hyderabad.

Ramky Infra to build, operate five STPs along Musi river

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Ramky Infrastructure Limited has received an order from the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) to construct and operate 5 Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) along the south bank of Musi river. This initiative aims to address the long-standing issue of sewage and pollution in the Musi river, a crucial waterway flowing through Hyderabad.

To combat this, the State

and Central governments have sanctioned approximately 70 STPs. Under the Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM), Ramky Infrastructure Limited's subsidiary, Hyderabad STPs Limited, has been charged with a Rs 1,297 crore contract. This includes Rs 908 crore for construction and Rs 389 crore for operation and maintenance over 15 years.

According to HMWSSB, the STPs are designed with a combined capacity of 480.50 million liters per day (MLD) and utilise

Sequential Batch Reactor (SBR) technology, the largest of its kind in India. This technology not only reduces power consumption but also proves to be cost-effective compared to other wastewater treatment methods. Currently, two STPs at Kokapet and Miralam are operational, treating 15 million and 41.50 million liters of wastewater daily, respectively. The Nagole STP, with a capacity of 320 MLD, is also ready for operation, while work continues on the remaining two STPs.

BRS petitions Speaker seeking disqualification of turncoat MLAs

Bharat Rashtra Samithi leaders also represent to Gaddam Prasad on protocol violations

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS party MLAs led by its working president KT Rama Rao gave representation to Speaker Gaddam Prasad on protocol violations and defections. They spoke at the Assembly media point. Sabitha Indra Reddy mentioned that after the Congress party came to power, they brought the violations of the MLAs' protocol to the Speaker's attention. She noted that for the past six months, government officials have been giving priority to defeated Congress MLA candidates in every constituency.

According to her, government programmes are being conducted by defeated Congress candidates without adhering to protocol. She pointed out that in Maheshwaram, a candidate, who lost and finished third in the elections, was brought on stage. Sabitha Indra Reddy stated that defeated Congress candidates are participating in government programmes wearing party scarves. She appealed to the Speaker to protect the rights of elected MLAs. Criticising the Congress government, Sabitha Indra Reddy said that in her constituency,



Former minister Sabitha Indra Reddy and BRS MLA Sunitha Lakshma Reddy speaking at Assembly media point in Hyderabad on Tuesday

even endowment and police officials are telling elected MLAs to adjust. She questioned if this is what is meant by public governance and Indiramma Rajyam, demanding an answer from the Congress party. She suggested that just as defeated candidates in opposition constituencies are given importance, defeated candidates in ruling party constituencies should also be allowed on stage.

She demanded that even the candidate who lost to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy be seated next to him. If necessary, she insisted that the law should

be amended accordingly. Sabitha Indra Reddy mentioned that in several constituencies like Huzurabad, Malkajgiri, Secunderabad, Asifabad, and Maheshwaram, police and government officials are filing cases against local MLAs. She questioned whether raising public issues to the government and officials should result in cases being filed against MLAs. She made it clear that it is the Speaker's responsibility to protect the rights of MLAs and requested orders be issued to the government in this regard.

Former Minister and MLA

Sunitha Lakshma Reddy stated that various representations have been made to the government regarding issues related to the constituency in the past. She mentioned that Congress leaders are coming and conducting programs arbitrarily in government programs, ignoring local MLAs. According to her, government programmes are being conducted with Congress leaders as special guests. She noted that defeated Congress MLA candidates are moving around with red beacons on their vehicles. Sunitha Lakshma Reddy expressed that it seems the government has given instructions to the district machinery in this manner. She requested the Speaker to protect their rights. She also brought to the Speaker's attention the issue of filing cases against MLAs without his knowledge. Sunitha Lakshma Reddy expressed confidence that the Speaker would protect MLAs' rights regarding protocol violations and police cases.

Former Minister and MLA Padma Rao Goud stated that the government is conducting programs allowing defeated candidates to participate at the grassroots level. He suggested to the Speaker that defeated MLAs should also be allowed in the legislative assembly. Padma Rao Goud requested that in the upcoming legislative assembly sessions, the government should bring in defeated Congress candidates into the assembly. He warned that if such protocol violations continue, they will also approach the judiciary. Ends.

Jagga Reddy: Did KTR, Harish follow protocol?

TPCC working president T Jagga Reddy questioned the former Ministers KT Ramarao and T Harish Rao to tell whether they followed the protocol in Malkajgiri Lok Sabha constituency when Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was an MP from the constituency. There is no meaning in demanding that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy extend protocol when KTR and Harish Rao did not adhere to it when BRS was in power, Jagga Reddy observed.

In fact, the BRS leaders lodged a complaint with the Speaker Gaddam Prasada Kumar about providing a seat to former MLA K Lakshma Reddy on Monday. Reacting to it, Jagga Reddy on Tuesday said that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy is also TPCC



president and hence he provided a seat to BRS MLA Sabitha Indra Reddy and as a PCC Chief Revanth Reddy provided a chair to former MLA K Lakshma Reddy. It is better to KTR and Harish Rao if they spoke less about protocol, Jagga Reddy warned.

Jagga Reddy said, "Harish Rao made defeated BRS MLA to lay foundation stones when I was MLA of Sangareddy by keeping me aside. However, Harish Rao is chanting ethics. I was Municipal chairman

when TDP was in power and they used to invite me to the programmes. Even during YSR and Kiran Kumar Reddy governments, the then governments used to provide protocol and appointments to the opposition leaders.

Jagga Reddy said that changing political parties has become a common thing these days and it is no more serious matter. Changing from Congress to BRS and BRS to Congress became common and even people were also not much serious about defections, he said.

Jagga Reddy questioned BJP MP from Malkajgiri Eatala Rajender to tell why he failed to respond on protocol when KCR did not follow protocol. There is no meaning in Eatala's demand on protocol, he said.

No-trust move likely against Nakrekal civic chief soon

PNS ■ NAKREKAL

A no-confidence motion against the BRS chairman of the Nakrekal municipality is likely to be moved very soon, according to sources.

There are total 20 members in the municipal council. Of them, 11 got elected on BRS ticket, while Forward Block has 6. The Congress has two members in the House. Besides, an independent has been elected to the House.

According to guidelines, the no-confidence motion should be moved only after the house completes a tenure of three years. In fact, elections to the town municipality were held in March 2021. However, the subsequent political development led to the independent and two of the Forward Block members joining the BRS.

With the completion of three hours since holding elec-

tions to the municipality, MLA Veeresam group is moving the pawns on the political chess-board swiftly, leading to six BRS ward members joining the Congress. Earlier, three ward members joined the Congress and on Monday, three more, including vice-chairman Merisetty Umarani, joined the Congress party. Meanwhile, four of the Forward Block ward members pledged their support to the Congress, taking the total Congress strength in the municipal council to 12. To carry the no-confidence motion, it required the support of 14 members. Meanwhile, two Forward Block members who joined the BRS signed the letter in support of moving the no-trust move.

The stage is being set for moving the no-confidence motion in a day or two against

the municipal chairman once the requisite number of members joined the Congress. Efforts are under way to woo some of the BRS councillors into the Congress.

The current chairman Rachakonda Srinivas is the close aide of the former MLA Chirumarti Lingaiah. If he were to lose to the no-confidence motion, Chevugoni Srinivas is likely to succeed the present incumbent. Chevugoni Srinivas is a close follower of present MLA Veeresam of Congress and hails from Gowda community.

He was active in politics since the Telangana movement. He was elected municipal councillor twice. The current incumbent vice-chairman Umarani is likely to be continued in the same post to provide adequate representation to Vysya community.

Mission to weed out dubious pensions put on hold

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

District officials, who girded their lions to recover Asara pensions being availed by women pensioners and family pensioners, suspended the operations on directions from Chief Secretary Santi Kumari.

The officials have identified that some women - who are either receiving the pension or family pension at the demise of their husbands -- been availing single woman pension. The officials said that there were 427 such cases. So far, they received Rs 2.5 crore pension under the Asara programme.

Some of them even returned the pension amount. However, still 90 per cent of the total beneficiaries who enjoyed double pensions are yet to respond. Meanwhile, the Chief Secretary asked the officials to suspend serving notices, putting breaks on the activity for the time being.

Under the Asara scheme, the government provides pension every month to widows, single women, the aged, beedi workers, handloom workers. Physically challenged, dialysis patients and filaria patients and the AIDS patients. Only white ration card holders are eligible to apply for the pension. However, because of some political reasons during previous regime identified as beneficiaries under Asara scheme. The officials have set their sights on weeding out such dubious pensioners.

'Acquire new skills; stay updated'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Public Relations Society of India (PRSI), Hyderabad Chapter, in collaboration with NMDC, celebrated World PR Day by organising an event on Tuesday. The 70th edition of PR Voice was released to mark the occasion.

Prof. Joshua Dalrymple, the Dean of the School of Law at Woxsen University, was the distinguished speaker.

Prof. Dalrymple, an established lawyer in the USA, called upon PR professionals to acquire new skills to stay afloat in the menacingly changing technological landscape. He said, "We all are amidst an



information tsunami and the deadly sharks of fake news and misinformation that come with it. There is a need for an intersection of PR and legal frameworks within organisations." He also shared real-world examples that highlighted the importance of synergy between

these two functions. Delving into a case study, he illustrated the practical applications of effective collaboration, demonstrating how strategic communication and legal prudence can work hand-in-hand to safeguard and enhance an organization's reputation. The

Chairman of the PRSI Hyderabad chapter, Dr S Ramu, said that PR professionals with legal degrees have an edge over others in the fast-changing communication landscape.

Head of NMDC Corporate Communication (CC), Jay Prakash said that PR practitioners should develop the habit of multi-tasking to deal with several challenges posed by the information influx.

The Editor of the PR Voice, Y Babji, a practicing advocate himself, said that legal knowledge for PR professionals is a must now. NMDC ADG (CC) Sreenivasa Rao said that PR transformed in a big along with technical revolution.

KTR backs kids of murdered tribal parents

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS working president KT Rama Rao has come forward to support the tribal family that was brutally attacked by a love-crazed assailant a week ago in 16 Chintala Thanda village, Chennaraopet mandal, Warangal district. The attack by the assailant Nagaraju resulted in the death of the parents, Srinivas and Suguna, leaving their two children, Deepika and Madan, orphaned. The children, who were also severely injured in the attack, have since recovered after receiving medical treatment.

Former MLA Peddi Reddy Sudarshan Reddy brought the children to meet KTR on Tuesday. Deeply moved by their plight, KTR assured them of his support and enquired about their health, encourag-

ing them to stay strong. He pledged to personally take responsibility for Deepika and Madan's education.

Suguna, the mother who was killed, was an active BRS worker and also served as a ward member in the village panchayat. KTR announced that the party would provide a financial assistance of Rs. 5 lakh to support the family.

Highlighting the tragic nature of the incident, KTR noted that not only did the children lose their parents, but they also face a long road to recovery. He requested the State government to provide Rs 50 lakh in financial aid to the family as a measure of assurance. KTR also urged Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to instruct the DGP to ensure that the assailant, Nagaraju, receives stringent punishment.

Rajasthan man nabbed for online trading fraud

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Cyber Crime unit of the Hyderabad Police on July 15 arrested a man involved in an online trading fraud worth Rs 45,78,760.

The accused was identified as Tarun Sachdeva, a native of Rajasthan, who duped people on the pretext of providing insurance. Sachdeva shared details of the victims with fraudsters. Complainant Shabnam



Bakshi, who is a resident of Hyderabad, stated that the cyber fraudsters contacted him on the pretext of Punjab National Bank MetLife Insurance Company and Bharti AXA General

Insurance Company, posing as genuine representatives of such companies for the tune of Rs 45,78,760. The Police registered a case vide in FIR NO: 1281/2023, U/Sec 419, 420 IPC and Sec 66 (C) (D) IT Act 2008.

The fraudsters used to download the data of insurance policy holders by searching directories (doctors, software engineers, retired government officials etc). They used to provide such data to their Tele-callers of their call centre "HW Outsourcing & Marketing Pvt Ltd., Delhi) duly instructing them to call & convince the insurance policy holders.

Asaduddin asks BRS to clarify on alliance with BJP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) president Asaduddin Owaisi on Tuesday asked the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) to clarify whether it will forge an alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Referring to media reports, Owaisi asked whether the BRS will be merged with the BJP. "In 2009-10, the AIMIM wrote to the Pranab Mukharjee Committee stating, there was injustice meted out to the Telangana region, it is underdeveloped. The party

further said that if Telangana is created, the BJP will gain strength here. Now that the State has been formed here are news reports on the alliance between BRS and the BJP. Former BRS MP Vinod Kumar has said that everything is on the table and anything can happen. I don't know which party will benefit from the alliance however the prediction made in 2009 seems to be coming true."

The AIMIM president further said that the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) will explore legal avenues regarding the Supreme



Court judgement on maintenance to divorced Muslim women. He was referring to a recent Supreme Court judgement according to which a Muslim woman, divorced through "triple talaq," can seek maintenance from her hus-

band under Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CRPC). The court stated that this "religion-neutral" provision applies to all married women, regardless of their personal law.

A Bench consisting of Justices BV Nagarathna and AG Masih had firmly rejected the argument that Section 125 of the CRPC is inapplicable due to the existence of personal law for Muslims, asserting that the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, does not override the secular provisions of the law.

Observe Muharram peacefully: SP

PNS ■ MEDAK

District Superintendent of Police Uday Kumar Reddy on Tuesday called upon the members of the minority community to observe Muharram peacefully.

The SP said meetings were held with organisers of the event, peace committees were constituted to ensure peace and communal harmony. He insisted that the committees should follow the instructions of the police department without fail.

The SP wanted all the stake-



holders to play their role

responsibly giving no room for any untoward incidents. He asked the police personnel to ensure that the festival is observed in a peaceful atmosphere and wanted them to discharge their allotted duties without showing any dereliction of duty.

He wanted the police force to remain alert and follow directions from the superiors to ensure peace. The people should not face any traffic problems. When the procession is taken out in problematic areas, the police personnel keep a strict vigil on the move-

ments of one and all.

If anyone wields swords and makes provocative signals, vitiating the law and order situation, the police would take severe action as per the law, he said.

He asked the people not to give credence to rumours being circulated on social media. The police will monitor the social media constantly for any violations. He urged the people to inform such provocative messages on social media platforms to the IT cell of the police department by calling 8712657960.

TJUDA slams CM's support to 'training' quacks

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Junior Doctors Association (TJUDA) on Tuesday condemned Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy for his support to training and certification of quacks.

The association cited deaths of patients in Warangal and Parakal after being treated by unqualified practitioners.

"The National Medical Commission (NMC) Act mandates rigorous training, certification, and licencing for all medical practitioners,

prohibiting unqualified practice. Supporting unqualified quacks undermines this framework, violates medical ethics and erodes public trust in healthcare."

"It is important to note that the availability of doctors has significantly increased due to rise in medical seats. We urge the government and the public to utilise the services of these qualified professionals rather than resorting to unqualified practitioners. Additionally, there is a pressing need to empower rural health by improving infra-

structure, providing adequate resources, and ensuring the presence of qualified medical personnel in these areas," said a press release from the TJUDA.

"We call on the Chief Minister to retract any support for unqualified quacks and to enforce the NMC Act. Efforts should focus on public awareness about the dangers of unqualified treatment, consulting licenced healthcare providers and combating AMR through proper antibiotic use," the junior doctors added.

DMHO warns of action against sex determination tests

PNS ■ BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

Bhadradri Kothagudem District Medical and Health Officer Dr L Bhaskar Naik on Tuesday warned of action against those who violate Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PSP-NDT) Act in the district.

Strict action will be taken against those who would conduct sex determination test. An advisory committee meeting was held in this regard. In this committee meeting, it was decided to take strict action against anyone who violated the act and conducted gender determination tests.

Similarly, the committee decided to take strict action against those who perform abortions without proper rea-



Bhadradri Kothagudem District Medical and Health Officer Dr L Bhaskar Naik speaking at a meeting in Kothagudem on Tuesday

son and if permission is given to anyone, it has been decided to give permission to them only if they submit all kinds of certificates. In order to make people aware about this, IEC requested to print and distribute the material.

In this programme Dr Chaitanya, Dr Anusha, Parvathi Advocate, Dr Sri Yadav, MD Azgar Hussain DPRO, MD, Faiyas Mohiddin, P Srinivasa Rao, T VIJAY KUMAR, Baby. These and others participated.

INDIA CORNER

UGC launches project to develop 22,000 books in Indian languages

The Ministry of Education and the University Grants Commission (UGC) launched a project on Tuesday to develop 22,000 books in Indian languages in the next five years. The project, titled ASMITA (Augmenting Study Materials in Indian Languages through Translation and Academic Writing), was launched by Sanjay Murthy, Secretary, Higher Education, and it will be a collaborative effort of the UGC and the Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, a high-powered committee under the ministry, to promote Indian languages in education. "This project aims to create a robust ecosystem for translation and original book writing in Indian languages across various disciplines within higher education. The goal is to produce 1,000 books in 22 languages within five years, resulting in 22,000 books in Bharatiya bhasha," UGC Chairman Jagadeesh Kumar said. Thirteen nodal universities have been identified to lead this project, along with member universities from various regions.



Goa govt working on heritage policy for monuments: Minister

Goa Archaeology Minister Subhash Phal Desai has said his department has started framing a heritage policy for the state with various objectives, including necessary steps to protect monuments from fire. To a question from independent MLA Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco, Phal Desai in a written reply in the Goa assembly on Monday said his department was yet to take up an audit of all the protected monuments/sites in the coastal state. "The department has initiated framing of a heritage policy for Goa," he said. The archaeology department undertakes necessary repairs and restoration of protected monuments wherever necessary, he said. "As part of the heritage policy, the state government intends to undertake necessary steps to protect monuments from fire," the minister said. Responding to another question, Phal Desai said no study has been carried out over fire incidents at historical monuments in Goa.



ED questions Jaffer Sadiq's wife in drugs-linked money-laundering case

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday questioned the wife of expelled DMK functionary Jaffer Sadiq as part of a narcotics-linked money-laundering investigation, official sources said. Amina was interrogated at the agency's zonal office here and it is understood that her statement was recorded by the investigating officer of the case under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the sources said. The session ended early as she sought an exemption due to personal issues. She may be summoned again, the sources said. A court here on Tuesday allowed the ED to take Sadiq (36) into its custody for three days in connection with the case. Sadiq was arrested by the federal agency on June 26 from Delhi's Tihar Jail, where he was lodged in judicial custody in a case registered by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).



Jaishankar reaffirms India's continued support to Mauritius

PNS ■ PORT LOUIS

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday reaffirmed India's "consistent and continued" support to Mauritius in its quest for progress as he held wide-ranging talks with the country's leadership to cement the bilateral ties which are critical for the future of the Indian Ocean region.



Jaishankar is here for a two-day visit for "productive engagements" during which he also reaffirmed India's support to Mauritius on the issue of its territory usurped by the UK, the Chagos Archipelago. The gesture was swiftly appreciated by the island nation. After Jaishankar's re-appointment in the third term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government last month, this visit to the Indian Ocean island nation marks

one of his first bilateral engagements and described as a "testimony of the enduring relationship between India and Mauritius" by the host. Jaishankar said his visit to Mauritius - what he termed as 'this beautiful country' - underscores the strength and depth of the bilateral ties. "It is also an opportunity to underline India's unwavering commitment to its special and

enduring partnership with Mauritius," he said at an event attended by Mauritius Prime Minister Pravin Jugnauth. "India's ties with Mauritius have blossomed into a robust and multifaceted partnership. The bilateral relation with Mauritius serves as a role model for India's successful development collaboration abroad," Jaishankar said. "India remains committed to strengthening this critical partnership that is so important for the future of the Indian Ocean region," he said, amidst the Chinese navy's increasing forays into the region. During the meeting, Jaishankar and PM Jugnauth discussed "various aspects of bilateral ties, including the Development Partnership, Defence and Maritime Cooperation, economic and trade ties, and people-to-people linkages," he said. "I reiterated India's consistent and continued support to Mauritius in its quest for progress and prosperity," he said. Jugnauth posted on X after the meeting and the event: "I am delighted to welcome the Indian Minister of External Affairs @DrSJaishankar. His visit is a testimony of the enduring relationship between India and Mauritius."

Captain among 4 Army personnel killed in Doda encounter

Intense search for terrorists underway

PNS ■ JAMMU

Four Army personnel, including a captain, were killed in a fierce gunfight with heavily armed terrorists of Pakistan-based banned outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) in Doda district, the third major terror incident in Jammu region in three weeks. The attack on Monday night, which came a week after terrorists ambushed an Army patrol vehicle in Kathua district killing five soldiers and injuring as many, has sparked widespread condemnation and protests in Jammu and other regions. Captain Brijesh Thapa from Darjeeling, Naik Dokkari Rajesh from Andhra Pradesh, and Sepoys Bijendra and Ajay Kumar Singh from Rajasthan suffered fatal injuries in the



gunfight in the Desa forest area, where troops from the Rashtriya Rifles and Jammu and Kashmir Police had launched a cordon-and-search operation. Following the encounter, security forces, including Rashtriya Rifles and Special Operations Group of Jammu and Kashmir Police, swiftly launched an extensive operation in the Desa forest belt to flush out terrorists. Defence Minister Rajnath

Singh said he is "deeply saddened" by the loss of lives and asserted that the security forces are committed to eliminating the scourge of terrorism in the region. Chief of Army Staff Gen Upendra Dwivedi also briefed Singh on the anti-terror operation in Doda district. In a statement, the Army said it has been conducting a series of joint and coordinated operations with Jammu and Kashmir Police to eliminate

highly trained and infiltrated from across the border and are moving in the upper reaches of Udhampur, Doda and Kishtwar districts in Jammu region and thereafter to Kashmir. "All formations of northern command are committed to eliminating the scourge of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir for which the relentless operations will continue," the Army said. The opposition parties, meanwhile, attacked the Centre, with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi saying such horrific incidents one after the other are extremely worrying and the Army soldiers and their families are bearing the brunt of "BJP's wrong policies". The Kashmir Tigers, a JeM shadow group, has claimed responsibility for the latest attack.

Cong gave OBC quota to Muslims in Karnataka, BJP won't allow it in Haryana: Shah

PNS ■ MAHENDRAGARH (HARYANA)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday accused the Congress of being anti-backward classes and said if the party comes to power in Haryana, it will snatch the reservation for them and give it to Muslims.



Addressing a 'Backward Classes Samman Sammelan' here, Shah referred to the Kaka Kalelkar Commission formed in the 1950s to provide reservation to Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and said the Congress did not implement its recommendations for years. "In 1980, (the then prime minister) Indira Gandhi put the Mandal Commission in cold storage. In 1990, when it was accepted, Rajiv Gandhi gave a two-and-a-half-hour speech and opposed OBC reservation," the Union minister said. "In Karnataka, the Congress snatched reservation for backward classes and gave it to Muslims. The same will happen here if they come (to power) here," Shah said. "I want to assure you that we (BJP) will not allow Muslim reservation in Haryana. We will protect the rights of back-

ward classes," he said. He asserted that the BJP would form the government in Haryana with a full majority and urged backward classes to vote for the party in the assembly polls. The Haryana Assembly elections are scheduled to be held later this year. When Narendra Modi became prime minister in 2014, he had said that his government is of Dalits, the poor and backward classes, said Shah. He said 27 Union ministers are from backward classes including two from Haryana. Shah also said the Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini-led Haryana government recently took some decisions for

backward classes, including increasing the annual income limit for the creamy layer of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) from Rs 6 lakh to Rs 8 lakh. Earlier in panchayats, Shah said, there was 8 per cent reservation for backward classes in Group A posts. Now, in addition to this, 5 per cent reservation will be provided in Group B posts. In municipal bodies as well, 5 per cent reservation will be introduced while the 8 per cent will remain intact, he said.

3 persons killed, 4 feared dead in landslide in Karnataka

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Three persons were killed and four others feared dead after a massive landslide near Shirur village in Karnataka's Uttara Kannada district on Tuesday, officials said. Karnataka Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda said seven persons, including four members of a family, were feared killed in the landslide on National Highway 66. A police officer told PTI: "We have recovered three bodies so far including that of 47-year-old Lakshman Naik and his 36-year-old wife Shanti Naik who were running an eatery on the National Highway 66. Search operations are underway to trace others who are feared dead." The others who are feared dead are Roshan (11), Avantika (6), and Jagannath (55), the Minister's office said in a statement.

Police sources said parts of a hill collapsed on the roadside eatery. Gowda told the Legislative Assembly that drivers of three gas tankers had stopped by at the eatery for a tea break when mud and rocks plunged down the hill. The landslide, triggered by incessant rains, also swept away two of the three tankers into the Gangavali river flowing on other side of the road.

TN all-party meet decides to knock on SC's doors if needed

PNS ■ CHENNAI

A meeting of the legislative party leaders in the Tamil Nadu Assembly on Tuesday decided to approach the Supreme Court, if necessary, to get Cauvery water for the state from Karnataka and Chief Minister M K Stalin vowed to take all necessary steps and protect the interests of farmers. Addressing an all-party meeting at the Secretariat, Stalin assured that the state government would uphold the rights of farmers of the Cauvery delta region. The government said on July 15 that the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) had directed the release of one TMC ft everyday

CAUVERY WATER

from July 12, 2024 to July 31, 2024. Karnataka had said that it is ready to release 8,000 cusecs of water and not one TMC ft (11,500 cusecs). The CM deplored that Karnataka does not even release a decreased quantum of water stipulated by CWRC. He said since the Karnataka government did not release Cauvery water last year in compliance with a verdict of the Supreme Court, farmers were severely affected. "We secured water only by approaching the Supreme Court. This year, despite the southwest monsoon being favourable, the Karnataka government behaving in this way cannot be accepted." Water Resources Minister Duraimurugan, DMK's P

Wilson (Rajya Sabha MP and senior advocate), R S Bharathi (party organisation secretary), AIADMK's SP Velumani and OS Manian, (both former ministers) took part. Furthermore, the chief minister read out the resolutions, which he said are based on unanimous decisions, "on the basis of views expressed in this meeting." A resolution adopted at the meeting strongly condemned the Karnataka government for refusing to release water as per the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee's directive of one TMC ft every day. Such refusal is tantamount to disrespecting the Supreme Court judgment and Cauvery Tribunal's Final Award.

Having '4 begums, 36 children' wrong: Rajasthan BJP MLA targets Muslims

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Rajasthan MLA Balmukundacharya has said people in "a particular community" have "four begums and 36 children", the second such remark on "population control" in recent days by a BJP leader in the state. Reacting to the remarks, Congress legislator on Tuesday said the ruling party's intention is just to target the Muslim community. "There is a huge problem of increasing population. There is a particular community which has 'char begum aur chhatis bacche'. There are countless such cases. This is wrong. There should

be equal laws for everyone, otherwise how will the country move forward," the BJP MLA was heard saying in a video that surfaced Monday. Talking to reporters in the state assembly building on Tuesday, the BJP MLA insisted that the population control law was a necessity. "There is nothing wrong in the population law. The way the population is increasing, there is a need for more food and housing. This (population) is a hurdle in growth. If we want to become a prosperous and developed country, there should be collective agreement on this and population control law should be made, it will be beneficial for all," he said.



Accelerate efforts to immunize unvaccinated children: WHO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The World Health Organization on Tuesday called on countries in the South-East Asia Region to further strengthen efforts at all levels to identify and immunize unvaccinated and under-vaccinated children. As per the latest global data, in 2023, nearly 3.4 million children in the region did not get all the vaccines offered under the childhood immunization programme. Around 2.7 million among them did not get any vaccines, leaving them vulnerable to life-threatening diseases, WHO said in a statement. "The increasing numbers of unvaccinated and under-vaccinated children calls for urgent and accelerated action. We need to identify where and why these children are missed and prioritize reaching them at the earliest. No child should fall sick or die of any vaccine-

preventable disease when safe and effective vaccines exist to protect them against these deadly diseases," said Saima Wazed, Regional Director of WHO South-East Asia. The region is off track to achieve the 2030 immunization agenda and the regional vaccine action plan to achieve over 90 per cent coverage with three doses of diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus (DTP3) vaccines in all countries, she said. The WHO and UNICEF joint immunization data for 2023 shows DTP1 coverage in the region at 92 per cent, below the pre-pandemic 94 per cent in 2019 and DTP3 coverage, an indicator of full immunization, at 90 per cent, less than pre-pandemic 91 per cent in 2019. Children receiving the first dose of measles vaccine, typically at 9 or 12 months, declined to 91 per cent in 2023 from 94 per cent in 2019.

COVID-19 may enhance symptoms of diabetes in kids

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Contracting COVID-19 may accelerate the onset of visible symptoms of type 1 diabetes in children, an autoimmune condition, according to a study published in The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA). Researchers found that children infected with the virus and in the early stages of type 1 diabetes without displaying symptoms, progressed more rapidly to a clinical onset of the autoimmune disorder. Symptoms of type 1 diabetes can include unusual thirst and hunger, along with frequent urination, fatigue and blurred vision. Treatment typically involves insulin therapy,

requiring regular injections through the day. In an autoimmune disorder, the body's immune system attacks the healthy cells and organs, instead of protecting it against foreign disease-causing agents. Previous studies have found elevated levels of islet autoantibodies in children infected with COVID-19. Produced when insulin-producing cells in the pancreas are damaged, these autoantibodies from one's blood samples can help in diagnosing type 1 diabetes. In this study, the researchers, including those from the Institute of Diabetes Research, Helmholtz Munich, Germany, found that children already having islet autoantibodies



(early stages of type 1 diabetes) developed diagnosable symptoms of the condition at a faster rate after a COVID-19 infection, compared to those not infected.

From the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 until 2023, children participating in the FRIIDA study (for type 1 diabetes) were tested for antibodies produced in

response to COVID-19, along with islet autoantibodies. The researchers thus had "valuable data" on the association between the SARS-CoV-2 virus and type 1 diabetes.

'If my son has committed wrongs, let him be hanged'

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Senior JD(S) MLA H D Revanna on Tuesday told the Karnataka Legislative Assembly that his son and former MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing charges of sexually abusing several women, should be hanged if he has committed wrongs. The emotional former minister also targeted the Director-General of Police, Alok Mohan, calling him "unfit to be a top cop." "If my son has committed wrongs, let him be hanged. I won't say no," Revanna said.

He said, "I have not come here to defend things or to have a discussion. I have been a lawmaker for 25 years. I have spent 40 years in political life. Against me, some woman is brought to the Director-General's office and the DG gets the complaint filed. He is 'nalayak' to be the DG. He is unfit to be DG... This is a shameful government." Members from the ruling Congress side took strong objection to this. Even Chief Minister Siddaramaiah was heard suggesting that Deputy Speaker Ramappa Lamani, who

was in the chair, expunge the comments. Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar said, "He (Revanna) is making allegations against the officials. Let him give notice, and then let him be given a chance for discussion if injustice has happened to him." Revanna made his intervention after Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka drew a comparison between the manner in which Special Investigation Teams (SIT) are probing the Hassan sexual abuse case.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Cycle of terror

Terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir continue unabated, resulting in a heavy toll on lives

In yet another tragic incident four security personnel lost their lives in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), underscoring the persistent instability in the region. Four Indian Army soldiers, including a Major, were killed in action during an encounter with terrorists in Doda district. This incident highlights the ongoing challenges faced by security forces and raises concerns about the broader implications for peace and security in the area. Despite tall claims to restore order, the frequency and intensity of attacks remain alarming. The recent fatalities among security personnel are not isolated incidents but part of a broader pattern of violence that has plagued Jammu and Kashmir in recent times. The shift of terror incidents and targeted killings to Jammu, which had been peaceful for two decades, represents a significant and concerning development. Since 2021, following the abrogation of Article 370, Jammu has seen a troubling rise in terror attacks and targeted killings, leading to an alarming escalation in violence that has destabilized the region.



The counter-terrorism strategies that proved effective in Kashmir may not be suitable for Jammu's unique geopolitical and social landscape. Although past strategic lessons can provide some guidance, the new wave of terror in Jammu requires a new counter-terrorism approach. A notable change is the decline in stone-pelting and social unrest in Kashmir; however, the militancy and terrorist groups that remained active have now relocated to the Jammu region. These groups often receive support from across the border, complicating the security landscape. Despite significant military operations aimed at curbing militancy, the resilience of these groups remains a significant hurdle. The socio-political environment in Jammu and Kashmir also plays a crucial role in perpetuating violence. Historical grievances, political disenfranchisement, and socio-economic challenges contribute to a fertile ground for militancy. Many local youths, feeling marginalised, are drawn into the cycle of violence, further complicating the security situation. Addressing these underlying issues is vital for any long-term solution to the conflict. The loss of security personnel is not just a statistic; it represents the human cost of the ongoing conflict. Each casualty not only affects the families of the deceased but also has a profound impact on the morale of security forces operating in the region. The high casualty rate raises questions about the effectiveness of current strategies and the need for a re-evaluation of approaches to counter-terrorism and internal security. Following the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution, there was a glimmer of hope, but that now appears to be diminishing. Jammu and Kashmir seems to be slipping back into its previous cycle of violence and persecution. To address the unabated violence in Jammu and Kashmir, a multi-faceted approach is essential. This includes not only robust security measures but also concerted efforts towards political dialogue and community engagement.

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PICTALK



A vendor sells Capsicum at Azadpur Mandi, in New Delhi

Cultivating civic sense: The path to a better society

A lack of civic sense results in numerous societal issues, but it can be instilled through awareness and the enforcement of stringent punitive measures

Citizens are one of the four essential elements that define a country, and a responsible citizenry is undoubtedly an asset to any nation. Today, our country boasts state-of-the-art facilities, with concerted efforts being made to upgrade infrastructure, services, logistics, and public transport. Additionally, inclusive and integrated policies are being formulated, and comprehensive citizen-centric actions are being implemented. While the government's efforts are commendable, there is also a need for citizens to shoulder the responsibility of maintaining public goods and ensuring resources are accessible to all, especially the marginalised. Civic sense is the act of considering others in society and having a sense of responsibility towards public goods. It can be described as "a set of perceptions and attitudes that guides an individual's independent actions or actions within a group for the benefit of many and harm towards none." Conversely, a lack of civic



sense signifies disregard for fellow beings, depriving others of a fair chance of accessing what is due to them. Civic sense involves inculcated socially and ethically good behavior, conduct, and approach. Patriotism is deeply rooted among Indians, and we have a strong affinity for our civilizational values and ethos. However many of us are not adept at it, and civic rules are often flouted in some way or another. Examples of this lack of civic sense include vandalism, mishandling public property, disobeying laws, infringing traffic rules, evading taxes, prejudice, intolerance, indiscipline, sectarianism, and insensitivity towards the beliefs and prac-

tices of other social and religious groups. These behaviors create law and order problems and are rooted in disregard for social norms and appropriate behavior. Despite significant improvements in literacy rates in our country over the past few decades, people often remain casual regarding their societal responsibilities. Examples of this include dumping household waste on streets; destroying public property and so on. Such uncivil behavior is rampant and alarming, detrimentally impacting the collective well-being of society. It not only translates into social conflicts but also triggers a vicious cycle, where such behavior, often being an easier way out, is quickly emulated by many, making the problem difficult to address. India witnessed 461,312 road accidents in 2022, resulting in the tragic loss of 168,491 lives. Many of these accidents could have been avoided had people not flouted traffic rules. Similarly, problems arising from adulteration, corruption, and exploitation can be mitigated through a mindful

approach that prioritizes common interest over self-interest. Civic sense is crucial for quality of life and plays an important role in building the reputation of the country. Inculcating civic virtues is not a choice but is essential for addressing both perennial and new problems. Education plays a significant role in civilising people, but the fact that even well-educated individuals living in metropolitan cities often behave in an unruly and uncivilised manner makes it imperative that the desire to perform constructive and positive roles should come "from within." Elders need to set good examples for the young to emulate. Spreading awareness, rewarding good practices, and enforcing stringent punitive actions against law violations can be effective strategies for inculcating civic sense among the people. (The writer is Assistant Professor at Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, Delhi; views are personal)



GURDEEP KAUR

(The writer is Assistant Professor at Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, Delhi; views are personal)

Bypoll results indicate a shifting voter preference



KALYANI SHANKAR

This outcome raises questions about the stability of the Govt, as the BJP grapples with internal and external pressures to maintain its coalition

The recent results of by-elections for 13 seats in various states are essential for understanding what people think of the major political parties. One month after the 2024 elections, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi won a third term, the INDIA bloc's significant victory in securing ten of the 13 seats has shifted the country's politics. This positive result for the INDIA bloc could weaken the ruling coalition's power. The BJP won 240 seats but fell short of the 272-majority mark in the recent Lok Sabha elections. As a result, the party had to seek the support of NDA allies, which could influence its policy decisions and lead to compromises to maintain the coalition. This situation raises concerns about the government's stability. A boost to the Opposition could create unpredictability within the ruling coalition. Despite securing 240 seats in last month's Lok Sabha polls, the BJP fell short of the 272-majority mark. It had to seek the help of the NDA allies. This reliance could sway the BJP's policy decisions. The BJP may have to compromise on specific issues to maintain the coalition. There is also a shadow of uncertainty over the government's stability. A substantial boost to the Opposition can shift the balance of power and create a sense of unease and unpredictability in the ruling coalition. The Election Commission conducts the by-polls when a legislative seat becomes vacant. There could be many reasons for a vacant seat. It could be death, resignation, disqualification, or expulsion of a sitting member. Elections are held to fill empty seats when a member of Parliament resigns or dies. Only voters from the area can vote, and there is no party vote. On Wednesday, by-elections were held for 13 assembly seats in Punjab (1), Himachal Pradesh (3), Uttarakhand (2), West Bengal (4), Madhya Pradesh (1), Bihar (1), and Tamil Nadu (1). The Congress,



TMC, AAP, and DMK are some of the parties that put forward candidates in the by-elections to test their strength. The INDIA bloc's win significantly boosted the Opposition. They have been a crucial test for the INDIA bloc as it faced the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the first electoral battle after the Lok Sabha Elections 2024. The regional chieftains in the Opposition performed exceptionally well. Trinamool Congress, a key player in the INDIA bloc, secured all four seats in Bengal, a significant victory. At the same time, the surging Congress won two seats each in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, further strengthening its position in these states. The DMK won one seat, and AAP captured Jalandhar West. These diverse outcomes hint at potential shifts in power dynamics, adding a layer of uncertainty to the current political scenario. Also, the BJP securing only two seats and an independent candidate winning in Bihar add a layer of complexity. Typically, the party in power wins the by-election seat. The TMC, DMK,



THERE IS ALSO A SHADOW OF UNCERTAINTY OVER THE GOVERNMENT'S STABILITY. A SUBSTANTIAL BOOST TO THE OPPOSITION CAN SHIFT THE BALANCE OF POWER AND CREATE A SENSE OF UNEASE AND UNPREDICTABILITY IN THE RULING COALITION.

Congress, and Aam Admi Party controlled their states. For the TMC, the results were a shot in the arm just a month after it had bagged 29 parliamentary seats, up from 22 in 2019. In Uttarakhand and Bihar, things were different. The candidates from the ruling parties - BJP and JD(U) - lost. Congress won two out of the three by-elections in Himachal. After the results, the party has 40 members again in the 68-member house. This will bring stability to our government. By-elections are a crucial test for political parties and gauge public sentiment and assess their support base. They often use by-elections to test campaign strategies, influencing future elections. If the ruling party wins seats in the by-election, it could increase its overall number of seats and have more influence on the government's stability and decision-making. The BJP still needs to improve its performance despite investigating the reasons for its low number of seats in the Lok Sabha elections. This raises questions and potential strains within the party. There are speculations about

a possible strain between the RSS and the BJP, which could negatively affect the RSS's support for the party, adding to tension and uncertainty in the ruling coalition. The strong performance of the INDIA bloc shows that power dynamics may be shifting. Despite their differences, this success is because the opposition parties continued to work together. Some analysts think that both factors led to their success. The Opposition's strong showing could weaken the ruling coalition's power and strengthen the Opposition's position. The future is difficult to predict at this stage. Winning and losing are part of the game in a democracy. The impact of these events will be more precise in the upcoming assembly polls in Maharashtra and Haryana later this year. The INDIA bloc's strong showing in the by-elections could strengthen the Opposition's position in these forthcoming assembly polls. They will help determine whether the Opposition gains strength or weakens. (The writer is a popular columnist; views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OPPOSITION GAINING GROUND

Madam — The recent state assembly bypolls held on July 10 may not have been critical for the survival of state governments in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu. However, the results were highly anticipated as a potential indicator of shifting political winds, especially after the national elections where the BJP saw a reduced tally and the Congress-led INDIA bloc significantly increased its presence in the Lok Sabha. In these state assembly by-elections, the Congress and its allies achieved significant victories, winning 10 out of 13 seats. The ruling BJP secured only two seats, with an independent candidate winning in Bihar. While these results do not necessarily signal a nationwide trend, the BJP's below-par performance should be a concern for the central ruling party. The Congress and its partners in the INDIA bloc celebrated their success. Congress won two seats each in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, the TMC secured all four seats in West Bengal, AAP won in Jalandhar West, and DMK triumphed in Vikravandi, Tamil Nadu. Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi claimed these results reflect a changing political climate, suggesting the BJP's influence is waning. BJP leaders, however, dismissed these claims, pointing out that the ruling party did not previously hold the 13 contested seats. Bishal kumar Saha | Murshidabad

MANDELA'S LEGACY

Madam — Kudos to Rajdeep Pathak for the article titled "Lessons in forgiveness from Mandela's life" (July 15). On 10th April 1993, the South African Communist leader Chris Hani was murdered by a far-right White. When the newly independent Blacks were seething in anger and were getting ready to massacre the Whites in retaliation, it took Mandela to utter just two firm

AP and Telangana resolve issues



It is heartening that the chief ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have, putting aside their political affiliations, met each other recently to amicably resolve long standing issues that have arisen after the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh. AP Chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu is taking the initiative. Both the sides have agreed upon setting up high-level chief secretarial and ministerial dispute resolution committees that will address grievances. Contentious issues like water shar-

ing and power distribution are not easy to sort out but it is heartening that Naidu and Reddy have made a start.

Both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are claiming power payment "dues" from either side while Telangana appears keen to get more water allocation. Division of assets and liabilities running into a whopping 1.42 lakh crores, some that have been mentioned in the AP Reorganisation Act and a few that have not been stated, figured prominently in the chief ministers' meeting. Telangana's access to the long coastal corridor of AP may be an important issue. It's no wonder that allocation of some important landmark buildings of Hyderabad, that has exclusively become the capital of Telangana from June 2, have already occupied the attention of both chief ministers.

Ganpathi Bhat | Akola

ALCARAZ TRIUMPHS AGAIN

Madam — Winning is a habit, and Alcaraz has mastered the art, clinching the Wimbledon men's singles title for the second time against all odds. Spectators at the Centre Court were treated to vintage tennis in a packed stadium. Alcaraz set the ball rolling, winning the first two sets rather comfortably. The final lasted for 147 minutes, with the defending champion establishing a 5-4 lead and serving for the championship point. However, he committed a couple of double faults, and the set went to a tie-break. The number three seed secured his second Wimbledon title and fourth Grand Slam win with a straight-set victory. Djokovic could not recover from the fierce serve-and-volley game of the Spaniard. Alcaraz played calculated tennis on his fourth match point, ultimately winning the tie-break, set, match, and Championship. C K Subramaniam | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata



FIRST COLUMN THE TRUE MEANING OF SUCCESS

Strive for achieving success that is based on contentment, humility, peace and respect



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

Most of us want to be successful, but not everyone knows what success looks like. The concept of "success" can be a real subject of contention because everyone has their definition of success. Success has different meanings to different people, however, to define it in simple words, it can be said that success is very largely a matter of adjusting one's self to the ever-varying and changing environments of life, in a spirit of harmony and poise. So, is it simply the completion of the next task, another job well done, a promise kept, an exam passed, a medal won or a mountain climbed? Whatever we believe success to be, there is no doubt that it will have a profound influence on our lives.

The great philosopher Lao Tzu said - "When you are content to be simply yourself and don't compare or compete, everyone will respect you." However, what we see today in the so-called modern society is something way too different. If we were to follow the trends of the current world, then success would be measured by acquisition i.e. the more you have the more successful you are. Nowadays even our education systems are geared to producing people whose character and skills are shaped and developed to make more. Similarly, economic growth is the yardstick for national success based on the production and selling of more. And amidst all this, we continue to avoid the connection between the philosophy of more and the unprecedented levels of unhappiness, abuse and breakdown of human relationships worldwide.

Some of us say that because we have more telephones there is more communication between more people in more countries every day than at any other time in history. But communication of what? Electronic symbols, packets of data, cold information? This is far from human communication. We seldom nourish each other at the level of mind and spirit over a telephone. Do we? Off lately we have developed more intimate relationships with our techno-toys than we do with each other. So what exactly does it mean to be successful? At what level, in what context and by whose standards? If we were to live in this question for long enough it would challenge us at the deepest level. It would invite us to



review and probably revise our core values. But we don't want that challenge because it means we might have to change how we think and what we do. So we live instead in avoidance and denial while going with the flow of traditional belief, and then we wonder why both contentment and fulfilment are so elusive. Just imagine for a moment that every school student in the world spent one year discussing and debating the question, "What is success?" inside out, and upside down. What would our children tell us? Would we have the patience and the faith to listen and to learn from them?

Instead of imposing our inherited beliefs, definitions and conditions, would we have the humility to facilitate their discussion and allow them to tell us? Or do we intuitively know they would be wiser than us and therefore pull the carpet from under our comfortable feet? Would we be threatened if their wisdom defined success as a simpler, more considerate, caring, sharing, spiritual state of being and giving, and not a material state of acquisition, accumulation and possession? Would success be less and not more for them? If we were to give ourselves the time to explore this question, we would likely arrive at the fairly obvious insight that success is not a material thing, it is not something that can be possessed, it is a state of being. We might call it contentment, or happiness, or even peace because these are the deepest and most meaningful symptoms of success, but only when they are not dependent on anything outside ourselves. So, let us engage our energies in achieving success that is based on a strong foundation of values like contentment, humility, peace, and respect and inspire the next generation to do so.

(Writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist for publications; views are personal)

Imam Husain dared fighting terrorism



HASAN KHURSHID

The tragic events of Karbala, where Husain and his followers were mercilessly slain, serve as a poignant reminder of the values of justice and unwavering faith in the face of oppression



John Bradshaw once said, "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." Can man stand up to these conditions? "Man can but not necessarily with ease", Imam Husain, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad announced from the battlefield of Karbala (Iraq), on the fateful day of 10th Muharram, 61 A.H. (October 10, 680 A.D.). The pre-Islamic period in Arabia is known as the "age of ignorance". Scudding away from the noble attributes of human principles, the Arabs were treading the path of retrogression and abhorrence. Suffering from the worst evils and vices, these Arabs known as Bedouins (uncivilised rustics) were highly tentative of wrecking vengeance, group quarrels, and tribal animosities leading to bloody warfare that lasted for generations. In the pre-Islamic period, these Arabian Bedouins used to bury their newly born daughters alive out of ego. They had no sense of equality, humanity, decency and brotherhood. In this crucial moment, the Prophet of Islam Hazrat Muhammad brought the message of peace, tolerance, humanity, forbearance, liberty, equality, and brotherhood, assisting to weak and securing justice for the persecuted. The Prophet gradually started transforming the heartless brutes to humane and turn towards peaceful life. The most notorious among them were the Bedouin tribals of "Bani-Omayya" (Omayyads). Omayyads did not tolerate the sojourn of humanity and peace. They violently opposed the Prophet's teachings. Omayya's grandson, Abu Sufiyan, son of Herb, unfurled the flag of revolt against Islamic teachings. They started a campaign of persecution on the Prophet, who was forced to migrate from his home in Mecca to Medina. As such, the year of the Prophet's flight from Mecca to Medina is marked as the beginning of the Hijri era of the Islamic calendar. Still, the Prophet Muhammad was not given any respite or relief. Mohammad was compelled to fight battles many a time. In Medina, the



AFTER THE DEATH OF MUAWIYA, HIS SON ACCURSED YAZID ASCENDED TO THE CALIPHATE SEAT OF SYRIA. HE WAS A HARDCORE TERRORIST AND HAD SURPASSED ALL HIS ANCESTORS IN PRACTISING CRUELTY, VIOLENCE AND CORRUPTION

Prophet established the system for administering the "rule of law" in the light of Islamic jurisprudence, under the command of his son-in-law Hazrat Ali Murtaza. Notwithstanding the bravery of Ali, Omayyads suffered a thorough collapse. The shrewd Abu Sufiyan played a trick to subscribe to Islam outwardly and the Prophet mercifully granted a quarter to Abu Sufiyan and his men. On the contrary, Mohammad realised his duties as Prophet were preparing his two beloved grandsons, 'Hasan' and 'Husain', sons of Ali Murtaza and Fatima Zehra, as perfect specimens of his attainment and imparted to their young minds all the characteristics of his high morality. After the demise of the Holy Prophet Mohammad, the school of Islamic thought, philosophy, culture and administration was shifted to the 'Caliphate' with temporal and ecclesiastical powers. The first three caliphs were: Abubakar, Umar and Usman. The last caliph Imam Ali Murtaza, was assassinated by the henchmen of the conspirator and hypocrite Muawiya son of Abu Sufyan while Hazrat Ali Murtaza was prostrating before Allah in the mosque. After Ali's assassination, Muawiya with the might of a sword, usurped the seat of the Caliphate in Syria and declared himself as the self-appointed caliph. Muawiya, the first ruler of the House of Omayyads displaced the democratic Islamic rule by oligarchical and barbaric despotic rule. After the death of Muawiya, his son accursed Yazid ascended to the Caliphate seat of Syria. He was a hardcore terrorist and had surpassed all his ancestors in prac-

tising cruelty, violence and corruption. Yazid was a libertine and sinner to the extent that the barest mention of his objectionable character is taboo in this civilised society. Yazid was the mammon of unrighteousness, whose lust for power prompted him to beat society into the mould he favoured. Yazid's criminal behaviour indicated the extreme occurrence of vulgar, and inhuman innovations in the established Islamic values. On the contrary Imam Husain was recognised throughout the Arab world for his excellence of behaviour, wisdom, compassion and piety. When Yazid occupied the erstwhile seat of the Caliphate, deceitfully usurped by his father Muawiya, Yazid by terrorising the citizens sought their allegiance to accept him as leader of the faithfully. He then demanded allegiance from Hazrat Imam Husain. Yazid was equipped with all the paraphernalia of power but so long, he didn't get the allegiance of Imam Husain, the grandson of the Prophet, he had no religious sanction to claim the Caliphate. He therefore demanded allegiance from Imam Husain to subscribe to him as the leader of the faithful. When Yazid bargained hard for Imam Husain to choose between allegiance and death, Husain straightaway refused his allegiance, saying, "A person of my kind, can not accept the allegiance of a man of his (Yazid's) kind." Husain knew that recognition of Yazid's immorality would permanently disfigure the "true faith" and a "pseudo-religion" would emerge in the guise of Islam. Had he encountered no opposition, Islam was bound to acclimatise to

the paralysing atonality from Yazid's degenerated symphony. Imam Husain was mercilessly assassinated in the desert of Karbala along with 71 family members and companions on the 10th of Muharram, 61 Hijri (October 10, 680 A.D.), after being kept hungry and thirsty for three days. Their heads were severed from the bodies and were mounted on lancers. Among the slain martyrs was Husain's six-month-old infant son, Ali Asghar, the buoyancy of whose innocent blood reflowed the sinking ship of Islam. Ali Asghar's moon-like innocent severed head was too mounted on a lancer. Asghar's little body among 71 others was too trampled through the hoofs of office horses of Yazid's cavalry. The tents of Husain's household were torched. Daughters and grandchildren of Prophet Mohammad's extended family and the only surviving, ailing son office Imam Husain, were taken captives and paraded from Karbala to Syria, on bare backs of camels, where they appeared before accursed Yazid, the wild beast in human form. 10th Muharram is universally observed by right-thinking and kind-hearted people irrespective of caste, religion or faith. "Never in the fight of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few", said Churchill. The event of Karbala, taking place on 10th Moharram, 61 Hijri, teaches us: Never to support injustice and oppression, no matter, how powerful the oppressor might be. No matter, what incentive, what threat you might be given. *(The writer is a legal journalist and author. The views expressed are personal)*

Indian tourism industry: The challenges, resilience, and future prospects

As the Union Budget 2024 approaches, the Indian tourism industry has high hopes for increased support and strategic initiatives

Tourism has always been a significant contributor to the economic growth and GDP of nations worldwide, and India is no exception. Indian tourism has consistently shown remarkable growth, even though it has not been a primary focus of government policies. There have been improvements in infrastructure and connectivity, but these efforts have been limited.



DIVYA BHATIA

The Indian Tourism and Hospitality industry, faced unprecedented challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. The sharp decline in both domestic and international travel led to a significant downturn. Despite these challenges, the industry began to show signs of recovery in 2023. According

to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), 2023 saw 152 million domestic flyers, an increase of almost 24% from 123 million in 2022, and nearly 6% more than the 144 million in 2019. International travel also showed signs of revival, with 63.9 million international travellers to and from India in 2023, close to the 64.2 million seen in 2019, and 35% more than the 47 million in 2022. Consulting firm McKinsey & Company pro-

jects that India will become the fourth-largest domestic travel market in terms of spending by 2030. Additionally, aviation analytics firm OAG indicates that India is now the third-largest domestic aviation market, after the U.S. and China. The WTTC reported that this sector contributed INR 19.13 trillion (\$230 billion) to the Indian GDP in 2023, marking a nearly 10% increase over 2019 levels. Employment in the industry also saw an 8% rise, reaching 43 million jobs. This highlights the sector's resilience and its vital role in the national economy. They projects that the Indian tourism industry will continue to grow, with contributions to the GDP expected to reach INR 21.15 trillion (\$253 billion) in 2024. Jobs in the

industry are also projected to increase by 2.45 million, accounting for one in every 11 jobs in India. Despite positive indicators, the tourism industry has been largely overlooked in recent government budgets. This lack of support is concerning given the sector's significant contributions to the economy and employment. Substantial investments and strategic initiatives are essential to fully capitalize on the industry's potential and ensure sustained growth. As the Union Budget 2024 approaches, the tourism industry remains hopeful for greater support and investment from the government. **Industry Perspectives** Jyoti Mayal, President, The Travel Agents Association of

India (TAAI) feels that the allocation for overseas promotion and publicity has been drastically reduced to just Rs. 3 crore, down from Rs. 100 crore in the previous year. She says, "The industry eagerly anticipates increased budget allocations to enhance infrastructure, marketing, and skill development. Investments in connectivity, heritage sites, and eco-tourism can propel growth. A focus on sustainable practices, waste management, and conservation efforts aligns with responsible tourism. Simplifying visa requirements and encouraging visa-free entry for tourists visiting India can significantly enhance foreign tourist arrivals". Pradeep Shetty, President, Hotel and Restaurant Association Western India

(HRAWI) says that the tourism and hospitality, accounting for around 10 percent of India's GDP and should be declared a priority sector. "Granting infrastructure status to hotels and convention centers of project cost of Rs 10 crore and above is essential for attracting investments and accelerating growth in the hospitality sector. Abolition of the 18 percent GST category for hotels with room rates above Rs.7500/-, merging it with the 12 percent GST category, would boost both domestic and inbound tourism," he says. Riaz Munshi, President, Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI) says the outbound tourism sector is hoping for positive policy changes. "One key

expectation is the reduction of GST rates on outbound tour packages, making international travel more affordable. Additionally, better Tax Collected at Source (TCS) policies are hoped for as compared to current TCS rates, which are causing financial and administrative problems," says he. Mr Rajiv Mehra, President, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) feels that the adequate funding is needed for promote tourism on global map. He says, "Ministry of Tourism should be given separate substantial funds for marketing and promotion for participation in overseas travel marts along with industry stakeholders, organizing road shows and for MDA Assistance to tour operators".

Mr. Ajay Prakash, President, Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) feels that for all the lip service to the economic and social benefits of tourism, the industry remains sadly neglected. Mere infrastructure development is not enough - the sector needs specific incentives if it is to realize its potential. The travel and tourism industry puts forth its Wishlist every year before the Budget and, come the day, is invariably disappointed. "The highest GST slab should not exceed 10% and travel agents/tour operators should be eligible to claim a setoff. Aviation fuel must be brought under GST to make airfares more affordable," says he. *(The writer is a travel influencer and writes on travel & tourism; views are personal)*

MONEY MATTERS

India's gems, jewellery exports dip 13.44% to Rs 15,939.77 cr: GJEPC

India's overall gems and jewellery exports witnessed an on-year decline of 13.44 per cent in June at Rs 15,939.77 crore (US\$ 1,909.57 million) amid muted demand in overseas markets, according to data by Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC). The total gems and jewellery exports stood at Rs 18,413.88 crore (US\$ 2,240.77 million) during June 2023, the GJEPC data added. "This decline in gems and jewellery exports is owing to the prolonged geopolitical tensions leading to economic uncertainty in the global markets, which has pushed the demand southwards in the overseas markets," former GJEPC chairman and Kama Jewellery Managing Director Colin Shah said. The overall exports of cut and polished diamonds dipped by 25.17 per cent in June to Rs 8,496.87 crore (US\$ 1,017.87 million), compared to Rs 11,354.67 crore (US\$ 1,382.13 million) for the same period of the previous year. Shah said, this was mainly due to the weak demand from the key markets, China being the key one as it accounts for approximately a third of India's cut and polished diamond exports.



Cipla gets Rs 773 cr demand notice from I-T department

Drug major Cipla on Tuesday said it has received Rs 773.44 crore demand notice from the income tax department for assessment years 2015-16 to 2022-23. The I-T Authority, vide assessment and re-assessment orders dated July 12, 2024, has raised additional demand for tax on account of various disallowances of various expenses, the Mumbai-based drugmaker said in a regulatory filing. The Rs 773.44-crore demand excludes any refund in any of the above-mentioned assessment years, it added. "The company believes that the demands under the above referred orders are not tenable in law," Cipla said. The drugmaker has adequate factual and legal grounds to substantiate its position and does not expect any material impact on financial or operations of the company due to the said order, it added. The company will pursue appeals against the said orders under the applicable laws, the drugmaker said. Shares of Cipla on Tuesday settled 0.56 per cent down at Rs 1,507.50 apiece on the BSE.



Tariff hikes to push telcos' ARPU to decadal high of Rs 225 in FY26: Crisil

The near-simultaneous tariff hikes by all major private operators will push up telcos' average revenue per user (ARPU) to a decadal high of over Rs 225 in FY26, domestic ratings agency Crisil said on Tuesday. Credit profiles of telcos will also improve on the higher profitability and the lower capital expenditure, the agency said. The ARPU -- one of the most keenly tracked metric influencing the financial health of an entity -- will increase 25 per cent in FY26 when compared to FY24, it said. "The industry ARPU should dial up to a decadal high of Rs 225-230 by end of next fiscal compared with Rs 182 last fiscal," its deputy chief ratings officer Manish Gupta said. It can be noted that after the formation of the new government following the general elections, the top three private sector telcos hiked their tariff rates by up to 20 per cent. Gupta said the increased data usage following the introduction of the 5G services will also help the ARPUs. He said customers have also been "upgrading" their tariff plans due to higher data consumption arising out of video streaming services usage, social media, and gaming.



Govt likely to scale down fiscal deficit target to 5% or less: ICRA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government is likely to lower fiscal deficit to 4.9-5 per cent of the GDP for this financial year in the upcoming Budget aided by revenue buoyancy.

The government had pegged the fiscal deficit estimate at 5.1 per cent for the current fiscal year when it presented the interim Budget in February.

"The union government is likely to set a fiscal deficit target at 4.9-5 per cent, lower than projected 5.1 per cent of GDP, without compromising the capital expenditure target of Rs 11.1 lakh crore," ICRA Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is set to present the full Budget on July 23. This will be her seventh Budget in a row. This budget aims to set the foundation for India's journey towards becoming a developed nation (Viksit Bharat) by 2047.

The government achieved a



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is set to present the full Budget on July 23. This will be her seventh Budget in a row. This budget aims to set the foundation for India's journey towards becoming a developed nation (Viksit Bharat) by 2047

fiscal deficit of 5.6 per cent of the GDP during the previous financial year.

"There is also a high likelihood of reducing the net market borrowings for the current financial year by Rs 35,000-Rs 55,000 crore vis-à-vis the interim Budget estimate of Rs 11.8

lakh crore, which would augur well for yields, along with the demand boost for G-secs owing to their inclusion in the J P Morgan Government Bond Index," she said.

The incremental revenue receipts of Rs 1.2 lakh crore can be split to increase the revenue

spending and facilitate fiscal consolidation, she said, adding, the government could utilise it for spurring consumption by providing some income tax sops.

She further said that reducing the absolute size of the fiscal deficit will be quite difficult over the next 3-4 years, with the decline in the fiscal deficit-to-GDP ratio largely dependent on the increase in nominal GDP.

If the government continues with capex at 3.4 per cent of GDP over the medium term (in line with the FY2025 Interim Budget), then incremental fiscal consolidation would require a sustained compression in the revenue deficit, she said.

Notably, she said, the government has 'on-budgeted' a large portion of previously off-budget capex; this should be considered while determining the endpoint of the awaited fresh fiscal consolidation roadmap beyond FY26.

Gold rallies Rs 550; silver jumps Rs 400 amid strong global cues

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices rallied by Rs 550 to Rs 75,700 per 10 grams in the local market on Tuesday on the back of fresh buying by jewellers as well as strong trends in the international markets.

According to All India Sarafa Association, the precious metal rates had closed at Rs 75,150 per 10 grams on Monday.



In the national capital, gold of 99.9 per cent and 99.5 per cent purity quoted higher at Rs 75,700 per 10 grams and Rs 75,350 per 10 grams, respectively.

Traders attributed the rise in gold prices to a pick-up in demand by local jewellers and retailers in the domestic market.



GOVT TO RETAILERS

Cut profit margins on pulses; pass on lower wholesale rates

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Tuesday pointed out that retail prices of tur, urad and chana dals have not declined in proportion to about a 4 per cent fall in major wholesale markets in the past one month and asked retailers to charge reasonable profit margins for providing relief to consumers.

The government warned that it would take stern actions against unscrupulous speculation and profiteering by market players.

On Tuesday, the Department of Consumer Affairs organised a meeting with the Retailers Association

The meeting was attended by representatives of RAI, Reliance Retail, D-Mart, Tata Stores, Spencer's, RSPG, and V-Mart, among others. RAI has more than 2,300 members, having over 6,00,000 retail outlets in the country

The meeting, chaired by Nidhi Khare, Secretary, the Department of Consumer Affairs, also reviewed compliance with the stock limits for tur and chana.

The meeting was attended by representatives of RAI, Reliance Retail, D-Mart, Tata Stores, Spencer's, RSPG, and V-Mart, among others. RAI has more than 2,300 members, having over 6,00,000 retail outlets in the country.

According to an official statement, the secretary "informed that prices of chana, tur and urad in major mandis had declined by up to 4 per cent in past one month, but retail prices have not seen similar decline".

of India (RAI) here to discuss the price scenario in respect of pulses.

Sensex, Nifty close at fresh record highs

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Continuing the record-breaking run for the third straight day, benchmark Sensex and Nifty closed at record high levels on Tuesday following buying in FMCG, telecom and select IT shares and FII inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 51.69 points or 0.06 per cent to settle at a new lifetime high of 80,716.55. During the day, it advanced 233.44 points or 0.28 per cent to hit a fresh record high of 80,898.30.

The NSE Nifty rose by 26.30 points or 0.11 per cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 24,613, extending the gaining streak to the third day. Intra-day, it rallied 74.55 points or 0.30 to hit a new record peak of 24,661.25.

Stock markets opened on a firm note and benchmark indices hit intra-day record high levels in the first half.



However, losses in Reliance Industries and Kotak Bank restricted gains and dragged indices from the day's highs.

Sensex and Nifty have been on a record-breaking run since Friday as foreign investors have turned net buyers in the Indian equities amid growing hopes of a rate cut by the US Fed by September. Encouraging quarterly results by blue-chips have also supported the rally despite high valuation concerns, according to analysts.

Powell said that the Fed is becoming more convinced that inflation is headed back to its 2 per cent target and there could be a rate cut before the pace of price rise actually reached that point.

Among Sensex shares, Hindustan Unilever rose the most by 2.7 per cent. Bharti Airtel (2 per cent), Tech Mahindra (1.13 per cent), Infosys (1.09 per cent), Mahindra & Mahindra 0.95 per cent) were among the lead gainers. ICICI Bank, ITC and Asian Paints also advanced.

Govt deposits Rs 92 cr to clear bond interest dues of MTNL

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has stepped in to make a Rs 92 crore payment towards bond dues of MTNL, a government source said, adding that another Rs 64 crore would also be paid in coming days towards interest obligations that are slated to become due in August. The helping hand from the government is significant as it averts a crisis-like situation for the telecom corporation which has been teetering on the brink with regard to its debt obligations, particularly in this case government-guaranteed bonds.

Last week, the debt-laden firm had expressed its inability to make interest payments to cer-

tain bondholders due to paucity of funds.

The government sources said Rs 92 crore is being deposited in an escrow account for payment towards interest on bond dues. Another Rs 64 crore would be paid later this month to clear interest dues that slated to come up in August, sources said. The second semi-annual interest (7.59 per cent) on certain bonds is falling due on July 20, 2024.

Amid mounting financial woes, Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd (MTNL) last week informed in a statutory filing that it is unable to make interest payments to certain bondholders "due to insufficient funds".

Scindia holds talks to chart telecom growth roadmap

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union telecom minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on Tuesday brainstormed with Reliance Jio Chairman Akash Ambani, Bharti Airtel founder and Chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal, and Vodafone Idea MD and CEO Akshaya Moondra to chart growth roadmap for the telecom industry. This was the first meeting of telecom sector leaders with the minister under the third term of the NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

It was also the first meeting with the telecom chiefs following an increase in mobile tariff in the range of 10-27 per cent.

Scindia during the meeting deliberated on fostering growth of the telecom sector in



a collaborative manner while maintaining the interest of consumers and the nation.

"We have identified a rather deep agenda for these committees. Now the members of these committees and we will be working together," Scindia told reporters after the meeting.

Vodafone Idea CEO Akshaya Moondra and indus-

try body Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) Director General S P Kochhar were also present at the meeting of the advisory committee of telecom service providers.

Scindia said there are varied schedules for the first presentation of these committees that will be over the next couple of weeks.

GVK Power and Infrastructure Ltd faces insolvency proceedings

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

GVK Power and Infrastructure Ltd (GVKPIIL) will face insolvency proceedings for failure to pay loans to lenders, a corporate insolvency court has said.

The Hyderabad bench of National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) issued the order on a petition of lenders' group led by ICICI Bank Ltd, GVKPIIL said in a stock exchange filing.

Samsung in talks with component partners to boost ops in India: TM Roh

PNS ■ PARIS

Samsung views India as a crucial market with Noida and Bengaluru becoming one of its biggest R&D centres, and is in talks with Indian component partners to strengthen its operations, a senior official said.

Samsung Electronics President and Head of Mobile eXperience (MX) Business TM Roh was speaking at a media roundtable here on the sidelines of Samsung Unpacked 2024.

"The Indian market is very



important to Samsung. We have operated the manufacturing facility since 1996, and we

also have R&D centres in India. Noida and Bengaluru R&D centres have become one of the

biggest R&D centres of Samsung and MX business.

"They are busy developing flagship products as well as contributing to the development of Galaxy AI technologies," Roh said, adding that these collaborations and efforts will continue in the future.

In January this year, Roh termed India as one of Samsung's important manufacturing bases and said that the Korean electronics major will start manufacturing laptops this year at its Noida facility.

Motilal Oswal MF sells Zomato shares for Rs 646 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Motilal Oswal Mutual Fund on Tuesday divested its stake in online food delivery aggregator Zomato for Rs 646 crore through an open market transaction. According to the block deal data available on the National Stock Exchange (NSE), Motilal Oswal Mutual Fund (MF) sold more than 2.84 crore shares or 0.3 per cent stake in Gurugram-based Zomato.

The shares were disposed of at an average price of Rs 226.85 apiece, taking the transaction value to Rs 645.84 crore.

Brighter outlook for China and India but tepid global growth

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

The International Monetary Fund is upgrading its economic outlook this year for China, India and Europe while modestly lowering expectations for the United States and Japan. But it says worldwide progress against accelerating prices has been slowed by stickier-than-expected inflation for services, from airline travel to restaurant meals.

Overall, the IMF said Tuesday that it still expects the world economy to grow a lackluster 3.2 per cent this year, unchanged from its pre-

vious forecast in April and down a tick from 3.3 per cent growth in 2023. From 2000 through 2019, before the pandemic upended economic activity, global growth had averaged 3.8 per cent a year.

The IMF, a 190-nation lending organisation, works to promote economic growth and financial stability and reduce global poverty. In a blog post that accompanied the latest update to its World Economic Outlook, the IMF's chief economist, Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas, wrote that China and India would account for nearly half of global growth this year.

FINAL STAGE OF BUDGET PREPARATION

FM participates in customary 'halwa' ceremony

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday participated in a traditional halwa ceremony, marking the final stage for preparation of Union Budget 2024-25 to be unveiled on July 23 in Lok Sabha.

The ceremony is a ritual in which traditional dessert halwa is prepared and served to officials and staff members of the finance ministry who are involved in the



preparation of the budget.

It is organised in the basement of North Block, which houses the ministry in the national capital and is attended by the finance minister and other high-ranking officials.

"The final stage of the Budget preparation process for Union Budget 2024-25 commenced with the customary Halwa ceremony in the presence of Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs

Smt. @nsitharaman, in New Delhi, today," the finance ministry said in a post on X.

As part of the ceremony, the finance minister also took a round of the Budget Press and reviewed the preparations besides extending her best wishes to the officials concerned.

Like the previous three full Union Budgets and one Interim, the full Union Budget 2024-25 will also be delivered in paperless form.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA STATE
PUBLIC HEALTH & MUNICIPAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
No.06/SE/PT/UP/DC/UEH-N/WGL/NT/2024-25/ Dt: 15-07-2024
Infrastructure Development Works under TUPDC Assistance. I) In Marhath Municipality Packages - L1/UEH/NT & W for Rs. 1195.00 Lakhs. II) In Peddapally Municipality Package - R for Rs.206.00 Lakhs. III) In Khanapur Municipality Packages - 1, 2, 3&4 for Rs.460.00 Lakhs (Package-4 Reserved for SC).
1) Bid Download Start Date: 16-07-2024 and End Date: 22-07-2024 (For Marhath & Peddapally).
2) Bid Download Start Date: 18-07-2024 and End Date: 25-07-2024 (For Khanapur).
Further details at: www.tender.telanganagov.in
SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
PH/UP/DC, L&H, Warangal.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
NIT No. 05/SE/KPZ/GHMC/2024-25 Date: 16.07.2024
Name of Work: Storm water drains, CC Roads, Estimate Amount / ECV: Rs. 381.00 Lakhs, Start Date / Last Date & Time for Receipt of Bids: 18.07.2024 @ 02.00 PM and 25.07.2024 @ 02.00 PM. Name & Address Officer Cell No.: SE/KPZ, GHMC, 9989930363.
SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
Kukatpally Zone, GHMC
R.D. No: 1845-PP/LAD/NT/12024-25 Dt: 16-07-2024

'I would kill to be an antagonist now': Radhikka Madan

SHIKHA DUGGAL

The weekend profits of *Sarfira*, Radhikka Madan's Hindi remake of Suriya's National Award-winning *Soorarai Pottru*, showed an increase. There has also been a sharp increase in the amount of appreciation she is receiving in addition to the box-office collections. Her outstanding performance is highlighted in every interview with her director, Sudha Kongara, which the entire cast and crew are raving over.

Here we have another exclusive interview with the leading lady of *Sarfira*, who is gaining momentum. Receiving a plethora of praise from critics, a much happier Radhikka declares, "It's all thanks to Sudha Kongara; she took it upon herself to develop my character in a way that wasn't cliché. On *Sarfira*'s sets, I had a sense of empowerment!"

She takes us on a zoom interaction and goes back in time, saying, "I had just finished doing *Sanaa* when I received the script for *Sarfira*. For my part in *Sanaa*, I was in a pretty sad place, so *Sarfira*'s script was a breath of fresh air. While I was doing *Sanaa*, Sudha Kongara took me out of that dark place and reminded me of who the real Radhikka is. I regret having forgotten that aspect of myself."

However, was it necessary for director Sudha to persuade Radhikka so much? "I said yes in the very first hour of reading the *Sarfira* script," the actress proclaimed. "It's a really powerful and inspirational movie. At that particular moment in my personal life, I was held to the same standards of clarity and ambition as my character. I could relate to that!"

We asked *Shiddat* fame about Akshay Kumar's off-screen moments with her because we were quite intrigued about it. She replied, "He didn't even for a second bring the aura of a superstar to the *Sarfira* sets. So gentle, so grounded. Something strange about me is that, when I'm on a movie set, I don't see my co-stars as superstars; instead, I see them as the characters they play beside me. That is all." Because, she recalled, "I experienced the same thing when I was acting with the late Irrfan Khan Saab. I began to sense that he was my dad! That's how it all seeps in—I was crying at my first screening. Playing Ludo together helped Akshay and I become close. Besides, he was always actively divert-

ing my attention to see how concentrated I could be! Even though the director approved of it (she laughed), they were wagering on whether or not I would ask for another take. However, I wish I had Akshay Kumar's level of ease."

The *Angrezi Medium* star remembers several difficult scenes from *Sarfira*'s sets, saying, "I'm a Delhi girl, yet I was meant to play a Marathi lady! People may have wondered how I would carry off playing a Marathi girl when I was offered this job, in my opinion. I faced it head-on because it was a challenge. I enjoy proving people wrong! Please don't categorise me. When I did *Patakha*, the industry only offered me the part of a village belle. However, I broke the mold with another hit. Sudha Kongara was of great assistance to me."

As a matter of fact, "Rani" was Sudha Kongara. I used to simply look up to her working approach whenever I was feeling lost. There she stood, a fiery, passionate and ravenous lady. However, I did my lot to embrace my "Marathi" side by, for instance, listening to only the best Marathi music. I was surprised to see a director with that level of clarity on the *Sarfira* sets. Her ability to control emotions is really motivating!"

The actress concluded by saying, "In love being challenged. Right now, I would kill to be the antagonist! I'd love to break the mold as well, because I get comments about how naive I seem much too often. I want to play a dark character in movies now."

Radhikka Madan talks about her amazing performance in *Sarfira*, her collaboration with director Sudha Kongara and her friendship with co-star Akshay Kumar in this exclusive interview with *The Pioneer*. She shares her ambition to play darker roles in the future and muses on overcoming personal obstacles. Learn about the inspirational path of an actress who redefined her career by breaking the mold!



Anand Iyer joins *Mirzapur* mafia

Anand Iyer, an ad filmmaker turned director for *Mirzapur Season 3*, discusses his journey from ardent fan to essential creator of the critically acclaimed crime thriller in an exclusive interview with *The Pioneer*. Anand explores the evolution of the series, character interactions and the intense anticipation surrounding the upcoming season while thinking back on his inspirations and challenges. Come along as we reveal the behind-the-scenes knowledge that molds *Mirzapur*'s compelling story.



AARTI SREENATH

"Welcome to the club; I'm also a big fan of the show!" Anand Iyer greets us with an enthusiasm that mirrors our own. This mutual admiration for *Mirzapur* is exactly what drew him to be part of the show. As we settle in for the interview, the excitement is palpable.

When asked what inspired him to create this gritty, action-packed crime drama and what



message he hoped to convey, Anand reveals, "Basically, I'm a huge fan of *Mirzapur*. I was a spectator for the first two seasons, just like you. Joining the team was more about fandom than inspiration."

Anand's background as an ad filmmaker for nearly two decades provided a unique perspective on storytelling. "The opportunity to tell a story in a longer format, where you aren't fighting for time or frames, is superb. You have the freedom to let the actors fully express themselves. In ad films, you have to pack so much into a short span, often struggling with constraints like, 'pack it like this, do it that way, you only have two seconds'. Here, it's different. The actors' expressions carry the weight and you can hold onto those moments, letting them convey more than words ever could."

Mirzapur

has become synonymous with the raw essence of Purvanchal. Balancing authenticity with storytelling demands is no easy feat. "The show has its own template set by the first two seasons," Anand says. "I'm the newest entrant, so there wasn't much setting up to do. The cast and crew are like a well-oiled machine, each playing their part seamlessly. Things are already established—the character arcs, the setting. My role was more about nudging the plot gently, making subtle adjustments here and there."

Adjusting to the established team was surprisingly smooth for Anand. "It wasn't difficult to bond because the whole soul of the show comes from the camaraderie between everyone. They accepted me with open arms and I just went with the flow. It's a bunch of lovely people and the respect and affection they have for each other translate on screen. The spirit of collaboration makes the whole process incredibly rewarding."

Season 2 ended with a cliffhanger, leaving fans eagerly anticipating *Season 3*. While Anand remains tight-lipped about specifics, he teases, "The throne is empty and everyone is vying for it. This season is about how each character tries to claim the 'Gaddi'. The cliffhanger at the end of *Season 2*, with its massacre, left many questions unanswered. The contenders for the throne are scattered and now everyone is plotting and planning. The central theme is power—the quest for it and the lengths to which people will go to obtain it."

Directing *Mirzapur* came with its challenges, particularly the statue-breaking sequence shot in Banares. "It was hot and crowded, but the locals were very cooperative, being huge fans of the show themselves. We managed to shoot the entire sequence smoothly. Initially, we planned to shoot one axis in Banares and the reverse axis in Mumbai, but we couldn't figure out how to manage crowd control. Eventually, we

shot everything in Banares. The fans were eager to be part of the process, yet very respectful when we asked them to step aside."

Anand also had to navigate unexpected weather conditions while filming on the ghats of Banares. "It rained and water levels rose, altering our plans. We had designed shots of characters arriving by boat, but with water covering the steps, we had to improvise. The shoot got extended by a day due to these conditions, but the team's dedication made it all work out. These challenges are part of the filmmaking journey and overcoming them brings a unique satisfaction."

To the passionate fanbase of *Mirzapur*, Anand has a simple message: "Just wait for *Season 4* and give as much love as you can. The fans' intense and passionate connection to the show is what drives us. Their love and anticipation fuel our creativity and commitment to deliver an even more gripping story."

The strong and complex women in *Mirzapur* defy stereotypes. "Women are intrinsically strong, often stronger than men. Portraying them in powerful roles was a natural choice. The characters, like Beena and Golu, are written with layers and depth. Beena embodies cerebral strength, while Golu represents physical resilience. These varied portrayals reflect the multifaceted nature of strength in women. It's not about navigating their portrayal; it's about recognising and showcasing their inherent power."

Regarding character development in *Season 3*, Anand explains, "A story must evolve. Characters like Golu and Chote Tyagi had to grow. Each season brings new challenges and growth for them. The script has a life of its own, and the characters evolve with it. If people expect the same dynamics from *Seasons 1* or *2*, they might be surprised. Growth is essential for both the story and the characters. It's about reaching new heights and exploring new facets of their personalities."

Balancing action sequences with character development is crucial. "Season 3 involved a lot of planning and plotting. One memorable action scene was the jail sequence. The show doesn't need constant, high-octane action; it's about when the story needs it. The sporadic but impactful action scenes add to the narrative without overshadowing the character arcs. For instance, the head-chopping scene in the first episode sets the tone without overwhelming the story's progression."

Anand Iyer's passion for *Mirzapur* is perceptible. As he ends the conversation on a sweet note, it's clear that this collaboration between a fan and a creator has only deepened the dark allure of *Mirzapur*. The journey of *Mirzapur* is far from over and with Anand at the helm, fans can expect more gripping tales from the dark heart of Purvanchal.

EMBARRASSED BY SNORING AND BAD BREATH? HERE'S WHAT TO DO

Do you snore? Or does your partner snore all night, making it impossible for you to have a good quality sleep? Did you know that snoring has much more to do than just bother you with the annoying sound? You might wake up in the morning only to feel sleepy throughout the day and no amount of coffee seems to work. Maybe it's time you consulted a dentist! Yes, you read that right—a dentist.

More often than not, your snoring could be a result of what is called sleep apnea. It is a condition in which you're breathing during sleep repeatedly stops and starts. This means you are out of breath every now and then while you sleep. You might find yourself waking in the middle of the night, gasping for air. Well, this happens because your body is not getting enough oxygen.

Sleep apnea and oral health

Do you feel embarrassed about your bad breath? Or do you find your gums bleeding often? What if you are told that all of this is connected? Yes, sleep apnea affects your oral health in ways you might not expect. To begin with, sleep apnea leaves your mouth dry because this condition forces you to breathe with your mouth instead of your nose. When your mouth remains open the whole night, you experience a loss of saliva, which plays a significant role in oral health. Lack of saliva due to sleep apnea takes a toll on your oral health as the flushing action of the saliva is reduced, hence creating a breeding ground for harmful bacteria.

Help is just a dentist's appointment away!

Seeing a dentist could help protect you from the adverse effects of sleep apnea. A dentist will examine you and, based on your condition, provide you with a splint or anti-snoring appliance that is fabricated and made according to your measurements by a dental laboratory. In severe cases, you might need a sleep apnea device along with an ENT opinion. Based on your condition, the dentist might also suggest other corrective measures to get uninterrupted, quality sleep at night.

Along with following your dentist's advice, make sure to stick to the good oral hygiene habits you learned as a kid. They're key to getting that healthy smile. Brush your teeth twice daily with fluoride toothpaste and floss once a day to remove plaque and bacteria from your teeth and gums. To combat the issue of dry mouth, aim for a minimum of 8 glasses of water daily. And always keep a glass of water by your bedside. It is an absolute lifesaver if you wake up with a parched mouth in the middle of the night.

So, there you have the secret formula for a good night's sleep, a confident smile, and an improved quality of life: see a dentist and practice good oral hygiene habits.

(The author Dr. Darshan Doshi, BDS, is a TMJ specialist, aesthetic dentist, implantologist at Beaming Smiles Dental Clinic.)



what's brewing?

Bengal Handloom Art is delighted to announce the official Silk of India poster launch, which was spearheaded by classic Mrs. India Ratna Mehera and organised by Somnath and Abhijit. Models present the newest collections from craftsmen, weavers and up-and-coming talent, ensuring a fashion, creative and inspirational experience that will never be forgotten. The highly anticipated exhibition countdown will commence with the reveal at Sylvan Drive Inn, Journalist colony, Jubilee Hills. From July 19 to July 25, Sri Satya Nigamagam in Srinagar colony will host this much awaited celebration of the rich legacy and exquisite workmanship of handloom weavers.

Hima **Rathna Mehera** **Preity** **Sanjana** **Ashima**

PARTY

Abbu Sai Prakash **Yesheswini**

The inaugural Mr. & Miss Fashion Gala 2024 grand finale was hosted by entertainment and event management firm 3rd Eye Entertainments at T Hub in Hyderabad. Mr. and Miss Fashion Gala 2024 were crowned to be Abbu Sai Prakash Reddy and Yesheswini. One hundred modeling aficionados from all around India attended the much awaited event and thirty finalists were chosen to compete in the grand finale. A group of professionals from the industry, including fashion director and choreographer Vamshi Palle, actress and model Twinkle Kapoor, model and actor Eshwar Sai, and model Sajjad, judged the competition.

As it commemorates its 15th Foundation Day, BRIC-THSTI (Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council-Translational Health Science and Technology Institute) is celebrating a major milestone. This modern Specific Pathogen Free Experimental Animal Facility was officially opened by Hon'ble Minister of State (IC) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr. Jitendra Singh. Along with other dignitaries, the event was graced by Dr. Rajesh S. Gokhale, DG, BRIC & Secretary DBT, Govt. of India; Prof. G. Kartikeyan, Executive Director, BRIC-THSTI; M. V. Santo, Head Admin, BRIC-THSTI; Dr. Amit Awasthi, Senior Professor, BRIC-THSTI and Dr. Amit Kumar Pandey, Associate Professor and In-charge, Experimental Animal Facility.

Photos by- SV Chary

The well-known celebrity hair stylist and Amjad Habib Salons founder, Amjad Habib, is pleased to announce that Amjad Habib Premium Salons would be expanding through franchise into Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. With plans for additional company expansion in and around Vijayawada, their salons, which have a long history spanning a century, are currently open in Vijayawada at Gurunak Colony, above to Starbucks.

Varsha

The Punjabi Food Festival at Cayenne is being held at Mercure Hyderabad KCP till July 21st. This ten-day gastronomic festival offers guests an immersive experience of colorful flavours and cultural traditions while celebrating the rich legacy of Punjabi cuisine.

Bhaskar Ponuganti, an Australian citizen of Indian descent, age 43, underwent a remarkable recuperation at CARE Hospitals, Banjara Hills following a diagnosis of a potentially fatal heart ailment and a history of acute dyspnea. This instance highlights both the human spirit's resiliency and the efficacy of multimodal medical intervention.

FUN

ARCHIE

YOU'RE LATE, ARCHIE! YOUR FRIENDS HAVE ALREADY LEFT!
STORY OF MY LIFE!
THEY WAITED AN EXTRA HOUR BECAUSE THEY HEARD YOU GOT PENTENTION FOR BEING LATE TO SCHOOL!
YEAH! BUT THEN...
I GOT ANOTHER PENTENTION FOR BEING LATE TO PENTENTION!
HENRI SCARPELLI CRAIGS BOLDMAN

CALVIN AND HOBBS

OK, YOU'VE ALL READ THE CHAPTER, SO WHO CAN TELL ME WHAT'S IMPORTANT ABOUT THE BATTLE OF LEXINGTON?
ANYONE?
CALVIN, HOW ABOUT YOU?
HARD TO SAY, MA'AM. I THINK MY CEREBELLUM JUST FUSED.

GARFIELD

MY HOROSCOPE IS INTRIGUING
IT SAYS I'LL MEET SOMEONE STRANGE TODAY
YOU ARE DEFINITELY STRANGE
WE'RE OUT OF CARROT CAKE

REALITY CHECK **SPEED BUMP**

A ROMANTIC JESTER
WAIT - YOU SHOULD SWIRL IT FIRST TO RELEASE THE AROMA AND ENHANCE THE FLAVOR.

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5
		6		
7			8	
	10			
11			12	
		13		15
16				17
				19

NANCY

I'M GOING TO CATCH A WHALE TODAY!
AND NO ONE WILL AFTER TODAY, BECAUSE I WILL HAVE CAUGHT HIM!
NO ONE HAS EVER SEEN A WHALE IN OLD HICKORY LAKE! EVER!

SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

ACROSS

- Further up
- A stopper for a bottle
- Follow orders
- Say again
- Cooked over boiling water
- Not normal
- A hole through a hill
- Your body's covering
- Devours
- A baby's toy
- Baby cat
- Set free from captivity
- An artist
- A stinging plant
- A short coat
- A tied joint in string
- A leg joint

DOWN

- A horse's foot
- Invited visitors
- Opposite of under

SOLUTION

P	R	I	S	O	N	E	R	S
P	U	P	I	L	A	R	G	U
O	L	K	R	H	A			
T	O	Y						
E	R	R	O	R	S	E	D	G
R	A	I	T	R	S			
Y	A	C	H					
E	E	T	A					
A	S	T	R	O	N	O	M	Y

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

GINGER MEGGS

WHAT DID YOU DO EVERY NIGHT WHEN YOU WERE GROUNDED, MATE?
WELL, WITH NO TV OR INTERNET THERE WASN'T MUCH ELSE TO DO... IT GOT PRETTY DESPERATE. IT EVEN GOT TO THE POINT WHERE I DID THE UNTHINKABLE...
GINGER, NO!
YUP... HOMEWORK.

Avika Gor opens up on BTS of *Shanmukha*

PNS | HYDERABAD

The makers of the highly anticipated Telugu thriller fantasy *Shanmukha* recently had a special reason to celebrate. On Avika Gor's birthday, they unveiled her character, Sara, hinting at an unforgettable cinematic journey. Directed by Shanmugam Sappani and produced by Thulasi Ram Sappani under Sapbro Productions, *Shanmukha* is set to captivate audiences with its unique blend of thriller and fantasy elements. With music composed by the acclaimed Ravi Basrur, renowned for his mesmerizing scores, the film is already generating significant buzz.

Avika Gor, known for her versatile performances, steps into the role of Sara, a character brimming with mystery and intrigue. The film's hero, played by Aadi Sai Kumar, adds another layer of excitement to this dynamic narrative.

Reflecting on her experience with the talented team behind *Shanmukha*, Gor shared, "The director had his immense clarity. He knew exactly what he wanted and that makes the actor's job easy. Working with the music director, Ravi sir, I think it's a once-in-a-lifetime kind of an opportunity because he is pretty big in the South and to get a film which has his name along with it, it itself is a big dream come true. So an absolute honour to be a part of a project that he is also a part of. And I can't wait to see the final product because, yes, we work hard as actors, we see how it works. But music after the edit really adds a lot of depth to the movie."

Discussing what audiences can expect from *Shanmukha*, Gor said, "The story has romance, the story has drama. Of course, you know, when it comes to VFX and the thrill and the fantasy element, all of that is of a very, very good level. And the way our director and our makers have created the whole idea, the whole story and the whole film is something that really people will like because it has a lot of emotions, it has a lot of depth to it. And I'm very, very excited because Telugu audiences really like experimental films and experimental concepts. They are just done with the usual

conventional kind of films and they want something out of the box. And I think this one is going to be that in my career because it is very different from what I've done earlier. And even as a concept, it is very thrilling to be a part of something that is so experimental and so huge. And it is definitely going to be something people are going to like. Adi, the hero, has done a very, very good job and I can't wait for people to watch the film and see this side of him and me. Both of us together, I think we've done a really good job in the film."

Expressing her excitement about the film's release, she added, "The most exciting aspect is that Ravi sir's work, the music, is going to be the highlight of the film because we have all watched his work, especially in *KGF* and other films of his. We know that he is a masterclass in himself. And to be a part of something that he's been creating is an honour, as I mentioned. That's definitely going to be the biggest plus of the film. And aside from that, the story, the way it has been narrated, Adi being a really

good actor and the way he has performed. There's a good amount of action, emotion, romance and drama."

Reflecting on memorable moments from the shoot, Gor shared, "I think the most memorable would be going on set and always asking the director and my hero, 'What are we up to today?' That excitement and curiosity of doing something truly unbelievable at times. And just the idea, the title *Shanmukha*, is so meaningful. When you watch the film, you'll realise that every detail—whether through music, acting, or characters—holds a lot of value. It has turned out very, very nice and it's in the process of post-production right now. We cannot wait to share more details."

With such an enthusiastic and talented cast and crew, *Shanmukha* promises to be a remarkable addition to Telugu cinema, blending thriller and fantasy elements in a way that is sure to captivate audiences.



Split personality concept in *Darling* is fantastic: Nani

The excitement surrounding the upcoming Telugu romantic comedy, *Darling*, reached new heights at a star-studded pre-release event, signaling what many expect to be a major success in Telugu cinema. The event was graced by the presence of Natural Star Nani, who took center stage to endorse the film's promising prospects.

Directed by Ashwin Ram and produced by Niranjan Reddy and Sreemathi Chaitanya under the banner of Prime Show Entertainment, *Darling* is creating significant buzz for its unique blend of romance and comedy. The film stars Priyadarshi in the lead role, with Nabha Natesh as his co-star. The movie is scheduled for a worldwide release on July 19, and the pre-release event showcased the film's grand vision and high expectations. Nani highlighted a growing trend of action films in recent times, noting the refreshing return of comedy and love stories with *Darling*. He remarked, "Last year, I came with a love story and emotion in *Hi Nanna*. This year, Darshi is coming with a love story and comedy in *Darling*. This movie should be a big blockbuster." Nani emphasised the importance of diverse genres and expressed his enthusiasm

for Darshi's choice of subjects, stating, "The split personality concept is fantastic. It's like a 'Lady Don'. If done right, it can generate a lot of laughter." He also shared his hopes for the film's success, aligning it with the achievements of Niranjan Reddy and Chaitanya's previous project, *Hanuman*. "I hope that Niranjan sir and Chaitanya's success with *Hanuman* will be replicated with *Darling*," Nani said. He also commended the music of Vivek Sagar, noting his cult following and high expectations for another successful soundtrack. Hero Priyadarshi, who stars in the film, also shared his thoughts at the event. Reflecting on his journey and inspiration, Priyadarshi said, "As a child, I was inspired to become an actor by watching Chiranjeevi garu. Now, Nani is my inspiration. For the current generation wanting to enter cinema without any background, Nani is a great inspiration." Priyadarshi expressed his gratitude for the support and collaboration he received, stating, "I have found a brother in Ashwin. With *Darling*, Telugu cinema is adopting Ashwin. I have learned a lot from him." He also thanked the film's entire team, including Vivek Sagar and others, for their contributions.

THANGALAN REVEALS ITS CONNECTION TO KGF HISTORY AND INDIAN MYTHOLOGY

The highly anticipated trailer for *Thangalaan*, starring Chiyaan Vikram, has just dropped, offering a glimpse into its massive, mystical world. The trailer showcases Vikram's dramatic transformation and hints at an epic narrative blending historical and mythological elements. *Thangalaan* is set against the backdrop of the Kolar Gold Fields (KGF) and integrates aspects of Indian mythology into its storyline. According to sources close to the production, the film explores the real history of KGF while weaving in mythological themes to create a visually stunning experience. The trailer also introduces Malavika Mohanan in an intriguing new role as Aarathi, a sorceress with extraordinary powers. This addition promises an intense confrontation between her character and Vikram's, heightening the film's anticipation. *Thangalaan*, featuring Malavika Mohanan in a key role, is slated for a global release on August 15, 2024. It will be available in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam. The film's music is composed by GV Prakash Kumar.

Zee5 announces a star-studded project

ZEE5 has announced the release of *Manorathangal*, a major Malayalam anthology series set to premiere on August 15. The series is a tribute to the 90-year legacy of literary legend Madath Thekkepattu Vasudevan Nair, affectionately known as M.T.

Featuring nine interconnected stories, *Manorathangal* brings together a stellar lineup of South Indian cinema's finest talents. The anthology showcases stories penned by M.T. Vasudevan Nair himself, exploring the complexities of human nature.

The series includes segments directed by renowned filmmakers such as Priyadarshan, Ranjith, Shyamaprasad and Mahesh Narayanan and stars prominent actors like Mohanlal, Mammootty, Fahadh Faasil and Parvathy Thiruvothu, among others.

The director, Priyadarshan, stated, "Dreaming is a part of life, and I had dreamt of making films. It was a dream come true to make a film with MT Vasudevan Nair. This moment is very special to me as I am now making my 97th film. In the past, I had tried to create a film with MT Vasudevan Nair but couldn't. I had almost given up on that dream, but then this opportunity happened, for which I thank God. I have fulfilled a big dream and have done two films in *Manorathangal*: *Olavum Theeravum* and *Shilalikhithangal*. As Mohanlal mentioned before, my desire to make a film began with reading the script of *Olavum Theeravum*. I thank God for making this dream come true and wish MT Vasudevan Nair a very happy birthday."

Manish Kalra, Chief Business Officer at ZEE5 India, expressed excitement about the project, noting its celebration of M.T.'s literary brilliance and Malayalam cinema's creative excellence. The anthology will also be available in Hindi, Tamil, Kannada and Telugu.

With its star-studded cast and rich storytelling, *Manorathangal* promises to be a landmark addition to Malayalam cinema.



First single from Allari Naresh's *Bachhala Malli* out now

The much-anticipated mass and action entertainer *Bachhala Malli*, starring Allari Naresh, has begun its musical journey with the release of its first single, *Maa Oori Jatharalo*. The film, directed by Subbu Mangadevi and produced by Ramesh Danda and Balaji Gutta under the Hasya Movies banner, is set to hit theaters worldwide in September.

Following a buzzworthy first look and a special birthday glimpse of Allari Naresh, the release of *Maa Oori Jatharalo* has further piqued the audience's interest. The song is a charming blend of folk and funk, composed by Vishal Chandrasekhar, known for his work on *Sita Ramam*. It features the melodic vocals of Gowra Hari, celebrated for his work on *HanuMan* and *Sindhuri Vishal*.

Lyricist Sreemani has beautifully captured the heartfelt bond between Allari Naresh and Amritha Aiyer in the song's lyrics, portraying their deep affec-

tion. The lyrics narrate Naresh's desire to gift something special to his wife, who, in turn, finds joy in simply being with him.

The accompanying visuals are equally captivating, showcasing the on-screen chemistry between Naresh and Aiyer. The song is sure to become a new favorite on your playlist.

Bachhala Malli is directed by Subbu Mangadevi, recognised for *Solo Brathuke So Better* and produced by Ramesh Danda and Balaji Gutta, the team behind hits like *Samajavaragamana* and *Ooru Peru Bhairavakona*. The film features performances by Rohini, Rao Ramesh, Achyuth Kumar, Balagam Jayaram, Hari Teja, Praveen and Viva Harsha.

Cinematography is handled by Richard M Nathan, known for his work on *Maanaadu*, *Rangam* and *Matti Kushi*, with editing by Chota K Prasad and production design by Brahma Kadali. The story and dialogues are written by Subbu Mangadevi, with Vipparthi Madhu providing the screenplay and Viswanetra contributing additional screenplay work. *Bachhala Malli* is scheduled to release in September 2024, and fans can look forward to more updates as the date approaches.



Vishwak Sen adds more charm to *Roti Kapda Romance*

Roti Kapda Romance, the coming-of-age bromantic and romantic comedy, is produced by Bekkem Venugopal and Srujan Kumar Bojjam. Lucky Media of *Hushaaru*, *Cinema Choopistha Mama*, *Mem Vayasuku Vaccham*, *Prema Ishq Kadhal* and *Paagal* fame is poised to score a hit at the box office. The film will hit the screens worldwide on August 2nd.

A song titled *Galeez* from the movie was launched in the presence of Mass Ka Das Vishwak Sen as the chief guest.

Producer Srujan Kumar Bojjam said that everyone enjoyed a recent preview of the movie. "Everyone who saw the song *Galeez* in the movie requested its release. As per everyone's wishes, we have released the song today with Vishwak Sen launching it," the producer added. He expressed his confidence that the film will entertain everyone.

Producer Bekkem Venugopal said that Vishwak Sen always supports him. "Vishwak Sen helps a lot of newcomers. This is a youthful entertainer made with the intention of conveying a new message to the audience. Director Vikram Reddy has made a very impressive film. Recently, a show was held for young people and their feedback made the makers more confident. Harshavardhan Rameshwar's music is a big plus for the film. Rahul Sipligunj sang the song *Galeez* very well," he added.



Ram Pothineni and Kavya Thapar are an absolute mood in *Maar Muntha Chod Chinta*

The anticipation surrounding Puri Jagannadh's *Double ISMART* is skyrocketing. To keep the excitement among fans, the makers are steadily unveiling catchy singles from the upcoming movie. The first track, *Steppa Maar*, became an instant hit and now the makers have released the second single (lyrical video) *Maar Muntha Chod Chinta*. This energetic dance number featuring Ram Pothineni and Kavya Thapar is an absolute banger. In the song, we see both Ram and Kavya performing some epic dance moves that are sure to go viral on the internet with those catchy lines.

Talking about the song, Ram Pothineni shared, "It's a fun dance number composed by Manisharma sir. I was quite excited about making a song using *Maar Muntha Chod Chinta* when Puri sir had shared this thought, as it was from a very popular line from *iSmart Shankar*. It's a peppy dance number and a perfect theatrical song for the audiences to vibe with the energy of the song on the big screen."

The song is sung by Nakash Aziz & Bhoomi Trivedi and the catchy lyrics are by Raqueeb Alam while the music is by Manisharma.

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 was produced by Puri Jagannadh and Charmee Kaur on Puri Connects banner on 15th August 2024.

PIC TALK

Director Sankalp Reddy, known for his work on *Ghazi* and *Antariksham*, has officially launched the trailer for his upcoming film *Just A Minute*. The event also marked the unveiling of the Sudharma Movie Makers banner logo. The highly anticipated film is set to hit cinemas on July 19th. Fans are eagerly awaiting the release, and the new trailer has generated significant buzz.



HARDIK PANDYA TO LEAD INDIA IN T20IS AGAINST SRI LANKA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Star all-rounder Hardik Pandya is all set to lead India in the three-match T20 International series against Sri Lanka starting July 27. However, one of the heroes of India's T20 World Cup victory last month will take a break during the three-match ODI series, which is scheduled in August, due to "personal reasons". "Hardik Pandya was India's T20 vice-captain under Rohit Sharma. He is completely fit and available for the three-match T20I series and will lead the side," a senior BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity. Rohit retired from T20 Internationals at the end of the World Cup. The T20Is against Sri Lanka will run from July 27 to 30 in Pallekele, followed by the ODIs from August 2 to 7 in Colombo. The squad for the series is expected to be announced in the next couple of days. While there is still no clarity on who would be Pandya's deputy, the toss-up is between Shubman Gill, who recently captained India to a 4-1 series win over Zimbabwe, and Suryakumar Yadav, who led the side during the T20Is against South Africa last year. About the ODIs, the official confirmed that Pandya has asked for leave and has already communicated this to regular skipper Rohit Sharma, who is also taking a break from this series.



"The break from ODIs is for very personal reasons. Hardik doesn't have any fitness issue as is being floated in the media," the official said. For the ODIs, KL Rahul, who led in the last ODI series in South Africa, and Gill are in contention for the leadership role.

THRUST ON DOMESTIC AVAILABILITY: BCCI secretary Jay

Shah has made it clear that even star cricketers must make themselves available for domestic engagements when they are free from national duty. But exceptions will be made for the likes of Rohit, Virat Kohli and pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah. The BCCI would, however, want all the other Test specialists to play at least one or not a couple of Duleep Trophy games

in August as a precursor to the Tests against Bangladesh and New Zealand. "This time there is no zonal selection committee for Duleep Trophy. Only national selection committee will pick Duleep teams. "All Test team contenders will be picked. For Rohit, Virat and Bumrah, it will be their choice if they want to play or not," the source added.



Harmanpreet moves to 12th, Shafali 15th in ICC T20 rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

India opener Shafali Verma on Tuesday moved to 15th place while her skipper Harmanpreet Kaur climbed to the 12th spot in the latest ICC T20 rankings, following their strong performances in the series against South Africa. Harmanpreet has moved up three places and now has 613 rating points while Shafali rose two rungs to share the 15th spot with New Zealand's Amelia Kerr and Danni Wyatt

from England. The swashbuckling Smriti Mandhana continues to be the top-ranked Indian batter as she remained static on the fifth spot. In the bowlers' list, the seasoned Deepti Sharma continued her stay at the third place. Radha Yadav moved eight spots to 15th while Pooja Vastrakar climbed up six places to 23rd and Shreyanka Patil rose nine rungs to 60th. England spinner Sarah Glenn

has claimed a new career-high rating of 768 points. She has claimed eight wickets through four matches of England's ongoing T20I series at home against New Zealand. This has allowed the right-armed to maintain her place as the No.2 ranked T20I bowler in the world. The only player in front of Glenn in the ratings is teammate and fellow spinner Sophie Ecclestone and she also has eight scalps from the first four matches of the five-game series.

Lakshya underdog in reasonable Olympics draw, will play freely: Coach Vimal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The presence of some established foes notwithstanding, Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen has got a "fair" draw in his debut Olympics, according to his coach Vimal Kumar, who expects the youngster to play freely in Paris thanks to his "underdog" status and some technical improvements in his overall game. World No. 19 Sen's path to an Olympic medal has multiple hurdles as he will need to get past familiar Indonesian nemesis Jonatan Christie, last Olympics' surprise semifinalist Kevin Cordon from Guatemala, and Julian Carraggi from Belgium in Group L. "I think it (the draw) is very fair, I feel it is a very reasonable draw for him," Vimal, a former India coach, told PTI from Marseille, France

where Sen is currently training ahead of the Paris Olympics. "A couple of times, he has lost to Jonatan Christie in close matches. It's a 50-50 match. You have to convert (chances) if you have to get to the second stage. In my opinion, Lakshya has nothing to lose. He will be the underdog and he can play a lot more freely," he asserted. Describing Sen as a big-match player, Vimal said he expects Sen to trump former Asian Games champion Christie, who was also a part of Indonesia's Thomas Cup-winning team in 2022. Vimal said Sen has worked on his front-court alertness and closing stage composure. The 22-year-old would be aiming to become the first Indian male shuttler to finish on the Olympic podium. India's previous badminton medals at the Games have been clinched by

Saina Nehwal (bronze in 2012, London) and P V Sindhu (silver in 2016, Rio de Janeiro and bronze in 2020, Tokyo). "Jonathan will be the last match of the group and Lakshya should pull through. So I see a lot of positives. Not going to the Canada Open was a dampener but he has overcome that. Being away here in similar conditions will help him," Vimal said referring to Sen being forced out of his title defence in Canada Open owing to visa issues. To prepare the player from Almora, Korea's Yoo Yung-Sung, a two-time men's doubles Olympic silver-medallist, was brought back to polish his net game, improve his on-court pace and dial up the focus in crunch situations. Yung-Sung had worked with Sen in 2022. "We have brought in a lot of speed work into closing stages, we



introduced a lot of double drills in finishing, pushing the pace towards certain points. Last three weeks, Yoo Yung-Sung has been helping us with those drills," Vimal said. Vimal said Sen has also been doing a lot of service variations practice. "(The idea is) basically to bring in

some sort of intensity in the routines. Certain sets of routines that we follow are mostly singles-oriented. He (Sen) worked on those flat exchanges, retrieving and things like approaching the net and being a little more alert at the net," Vimal explained.

For the last one week, Sen has been training at the Halles des Sports Parsemain in Fos-sur-Mer, which is about 45 minutes from Marseille city centre. Sen is also training with the Olympic-bound Popov brothers -- Christo and Toma Junior -- till July 21. Indian shuttlers Kiran George, Ayush Shetty have been roped in too for sparring. "Next week we will be doing one set of tournament practice because he needs that little bit of that match practice. It would have been good to see him in Canada. So next week I want to see how he is implementing what he learned. "Against both the Popov brothers, it will be a good test. So I'll be able to assess him. Once he gets into the village in Paris, we won't get to play much. We will have limited time for practice in the main arena."

Lakshya had struggled through much of 2023 and early part of 2024. He fell behind in the qualification race but turned things around in time with two semifinal finishes at the All England Championship and the French Open to seal his place in the Olympics. "From all that he has survived, he got an opportunity to qualify. He has been practising and has worked on his game. Lakshya has acclimatised to the conditions, he plays well there in those conditions. "We have also got some of that tournament shuttlecock (F-90) because the conditions are a little on the slower side in Paris. So we have been practising with those shuttles," said Vimal, who guided Saina Nehwal to world No. 1 in 2015. Sen, along with his coach, will be leaving for Paris on July 22.

Moudgil overcomes mental demons to secure place in shooting contingent for Paris Games



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Overcoming mental demons after being left out of the Indian team from last year's Asian Games and the World Championships was key to shooter Anjum Moudgil securing a Paris Olympic berth. Former world no.1 Moudgil, a world championships and Commonwealth Games medallist, competed in two events during the last edition in Tokyo. She finished 15th in the 50m rifle 3 position and 18th in the 10m air rifle, but in Paris, she will be featuring in only women's 50m 3 position. By her own admission, the ouster from the Indian team for Worlds and Asian Games due to inconsistent form was an eye opener for her as the 30-year-old worked on bettering her mental toughness besides focussing entirely on her training. "Three years after Tokyo was a roller-coaster ride for me. I have seen tough times but I wanted to comeback stronger. The experiences of Tokyo will surely be of helpful (in Paris)," Moudgil said in a virtual media interaction. "I really took advantage of

quotas and trials, the federation told me not to lose out hope. They understood the things I was going through. I was really confident of making through to the team after I didn't make the team for World Championships and the Asian Games because of just 2 points in the trials. "I was too focussed and positive in giving my best in the trials. I knew my strengths and how to work under pressure and it paid off. "One year after Tokyo, I won couple of medals in World Cups and became world no.1. I did mental training focus, it's been a positive step for me. I now speak up, which is a positive change heading to Paris. I used time to get better and find what works better for me," she added. Understanding the importance of mental health issues, the International Olympic Committee (IOC), has set up the Mentally Fit Helpline, a dedicated, independent and confidential mental health counselling service available to all athletes accredited for the Paris Games. "It's (mental health) so important for all the

federations and IOC to understand. It's important to understand the mental side, understand how it works for an athlete, understand mental toughness. So, it's positive step to see mental helpline being introduced in Paris Olympics," Moudgil said. "Athletes have spoken in the past about mental health issues. It's a common issue which needs to be addressed not only for athletes, but in every profession. "People should respect mental health, and not hide anything. The helpline is a positive step towards admiring mental health issues." India have named a strong 21-member shooting contingent for Paris Games, which includes many youngsters, including 22-year-old Sift Kaur Samra who will be competing alongside Moudgil in 50m 3p event. "There are so many strong, young shooters, it really helps me to push my limit. I would have been stuck if I was not pushed. There is high competition in my event, and it really helped me to push. The reason I am here because of the efforts I have put in over the last 3 years," Moudgil said.

"I am very positive going into Paris with this young contingent. All of them are confident, the team is doing very well. It is positive for each and every shooter, there is no pressure. My expectation is for everyone to give their best, everyone going with positive mindset." Moudgil is counting on her difficult Tokyo experience to shine in Paris. "Competing in one rather than two events both have positive and negative sides, but I am happy. In Tokyo, the environment was different because of Covid. Everything was tentative, we had to appear for Covid test everyday and if you turn positive you are out of the competition. All of these things were disturbances. "The competition is very high in India and the pressure situations we face during trials will definitely help in Olympics. I just wanted to be my best in trials, the fire to perform in trials and the experience of last 15 years really paid off. These things will surely help me in Paris, the experience of playing in the Olympics is there with me," she said. "...We had a different experience in Tokyo because of Covid, we won quotas 3 years before and was waiting as the Games were postponed. But we really don't discuss too much baggage of Tokyo. It's just another big competition and that's what we discuss." Shooting competitions of the Paris Olympics will be held at National Shooting Center in Châteauroux, the capital city of the French department of Indre, central France, which is approximately 270km from Paris. "The preparation is going really well and according to plan. We are Luxembourg for the last phase of our training and preparation before we head to Châteauroux, France on 21st."

Bawa assures India of medal in World Junior squash, Anahat bows out

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's Shaurya Bawa guaranteed himself of a medal as he moved to the semifinals with a hard fought 3-2 win over Malaysian Low Wa-Sern in the World Junior Squash Championships in Houston. The 18-year-old from Delhi, thus, becomes only the second Indian male to reach the semifinals after Kush Kumar, who reached the last four stage in 2014. In a thrilling clash that lasted 80 minutes, Bawa was down 6-

9 and 7-10 in the fifth game but remarkably saved three match balls to eke out a 2-11 11-4 10-12 11-8 12-10 victory in the boys' quarterfinals on Monday. With the win, Bawa set up a semifinal clash with Egyptian top-seed Mohamed Zakaria. Meanwhile, compatriot Anahat Singh bowed out from the girls' quarterfinals for a third straight year. The 16-year-old women's national champion lost a close five-setter to Nadien Elhammamy, with the Egyptian winning 11-8 11-9 5-11 10-12 13-11.

Punjab FC retains five Indian players ahead of upcoming ISL season

PTI ■ MOHALI

Punjab FC on Tuesday announced retaining five Indian players, including midfielder Ashis Pradhan and goal-keeper Ravi Kumar, on multi-year deals for the upcoming Indian Super League season. The other players retained are Ricky Shabong, Manglenthang Kippen, and Suresh Meitei. While Ravi and Pradhan will remain at the club until May 2026, centre back Meitei and midfielder Ricky will be a part of the Punjab FC till May 2027.

Kippen, also a midfielder, will continue till May 2028. "They were key players for the club in the previous season and the club has kept their faith in these players," the club said in a release. Ravi made 47 saves for the club in 16 appearances last season while Meitei made 14 appearances while assisting once for the club. "Pradhan, Shabong and Kippen made 17, 10 and four appearances respectively adding steel and creativity in the middle of the park," the club added.

Olympics-bound javelin thrower Jena says he was on verge of quitting last year

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Asian Games silver medallist javelin thrower Kishore Jena says he was on verge of quitting the sport in 2023 after a string of poor performances but he heeded to his father's advice, leading to a revival of his career. Jena admitted that Neeraj Chopra's Tokyo Olympics gold medal motivated him to achieve more in his sport but he found it difficult to get the big throws and thought of quitting the sport in July last year just before the World Championships. "When Neeraj won at the Olympics, we celebrated and enjoyed his victory. But honestly, the victory also left me dejected because I too was playing the same sport. I felt it was time for me to achieve something in sports," Jena said. "I participated in Lebanon National Championships after a dip in my rankings and produced a throw of 78m. Despite giving it my all, I



couldn't achieve much. I started doubting if all the hard work was worth it. I called my father, who encouraged me to participate in next competition in Sri Lanka," he said in a JioCinema release. Jena won in Lebanon (on July 21) with a throw of 78.96m, which by any standard was a modest performance. In fact, Jena could not breach the 80m mark till the end of 2022. His first 80m-plus throw came in March 2023 during the Indian

Grand Prix in Thiruvananthapuram where he came up with 81.05m effort. "I decided the event in Sri Lanka (July 30) would be my last attempt, after which I would quit and go back to prioritizing work and family. With God's grace, I performed well, producing a throw of 84.38m which led to my qualification for the World Championships." Jena qualified for the Budapest World Championships in

August 2023 through world ranking quota. He could not breach the automatic qualification mark of 85.20m. "I performed well in the World Championships as well, achieving a personal best of 84.77m," said Jena who finished fifth in the final while Chopra won the gold with 88.17m. "I followed it up with another personal best of 87.54m at the Asian Games (in Hangzhou, China where he won a silver behind Chopra) securing my ticket to Paris 2024. I now want to give my best at Paris. I am quite confident. While I haven't set any particular targets, I am aiming to improve my personal best." Jena is currently struggling for form as he has crossed the 80m mark just once in the six events he has taken part after the World Championships. He threw 80.84m to win a bronze medal at the National Interstate Championships in Panchkula in June and that was his season's best so far.