

the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

Published From: HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH BHUBANESWAR RANCHI DEHRADUN VIJAYAWADA



'Border issues with India will be resolved through talks'

5

CONFIDENT

INDIA'S FY25 GDP GROWTH WILL SURPASS ECO SURVEY FORECAST: INDUSTRY



8

Director Venkata Satya unveils mystery behind Operation

RAAVAN



11

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The Telangana Congress government must reveal its stance on the new criminal laws (BNS, BNSS & BSA) now being enforced nationwide, that is, whether they intend to implement these new laws. As Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and West Bengal governments oppose these laws, the Congress government must pass a resolution in the Assembly suggesting amendments to the new criminal laws and send the same to the Union Government



- K Taraka Rama Rao, BRS MLA

P2

DON'T MISS...

Matangi predicts ample rainfall...

Matangi Swamalatha predicted ample rainfall and bountiful harvest in Telangana during the Rangam programme at Ujjaini Mahakali temple in Secunderabad on Monday. Standing atop an earthen pot on the premises of Ujjaini Mahakali temple, Swamalatha invoked the Goddess and performed the Rangam in the presence of BC Welfare Minister Ponnampalabharani. She said, "I am very much satisfied with the prayers that the devotees offered. Five weeks of pujas should be performed by women devotees and..."

-PAGE: 3

'Smell of stress from humans...

Dogs too could experience negative emotions, if they 'smell' stress in humans, a study, published in the Scientific Reports journal, has found. It is known that the smell coming from a stressed person 'subconsciously affects' the mental state of people around, including their emotions and choices. The study's researchers, however, wanted to find out if dogs too were affected similarly in response to odours from a stressed human. "Dog owners know how attuned their pets are to their emotions..."

-PAGE: 5

Rich nations' planned carbon...

The European Union's planned carbon tax on energy-intensive goods imported from developing countries is in contravention of the spirit of the Paris Agreement, India said on Monday. The government's 'Economic Survey 2023-24' highlighted that even as developed countries prepare to impose a carbon tax on imports, they are ramping up energy demand like never before due to their obsession with artificial intelligence (AI). "Developing nations are also being threatened with a carbon tax..."

-PAGE: 8

Good for TRP but my relationship...

India's newly-appointed head coach Gautam Gambhir on Monday declared that his much talked about relationship with batting mainstay Virat Kohli "is between the two of us and not for TRPs", asserting that they are going to be 'on same page' in the coming times. Gambhir and Kohli had not been the best of friends, something which was evident from the multiple confrontations between the two in the IPL. However, the duo will now be working together starting with the white-ball tour of..."

-SPORTS



BIG BUDGET DAY

Budget to spur consumer spending

- Finance Minister Nirmala to present 7th straight budget
- Expectations on budget to provide tax relief for middle class
- Budget to lay a roadmap for Viksit Bharat by 2047

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will on Tuesday present her 7th straight Budget that would lay a roadmap for Viksit Bharat (developed India) by 2047,

while giving a glimpse of 10 years' performance. The Finance Minister is expected to take steps to provide economic boost to sustain India's growth momentum. There is expectation that Finance Minister will provide relief on the income tax front to put more money in the hands of the common man and even the

middle class. The Modi government is expected to continue its focus on capital expenditure to drive GDP growth, with special emphasis on infrastructure development. All eyes will be on whether Sitharaman provides the much-expected tax relief for the middle class, leaving more money in their hands, as there is tax buoyancy.

2

Live from Parliament :11a.m.

Eco Survey pegs India GDP growth at 6.5-7%

Backs Chinese investments

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government's pre-Budget Economic Survey on Monday set a conservative growth forecast of 6.5 to 7 per cent for the current fiscal as it flagged the need for creating more jobs in the economy and backed more Chinese direct investments to boost exports. The report, which is authored by the chief economic adviser's office, favoured considering targeting inflation that excludes food, the prices of which are influenced more by supply than demand. It sounded a bell of caution on the soaring stock markets, saying retail investor participation has increased significantly and there are chances of speculations due to overconfidence and expectations of greater returns.

Continued on Page 2

Survey highlights Siddipet's Steel Bank



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Economic Survey report released by Union Government had highlighted the Steel Bank initiative undertaken in Siddipet district. The highlight in the report reads, "Steel (Barthan) Bank21: The idea of Siddhipet district in Telangana".

2

Release LPG subsidy for 'Mahalakshmi' scheme: CM

APPEALS CENTRE TO RELEASE PENDING DUES FOR SUPPLYING PADDY, RICE

- CM Revanth met several central ministers in New Delhi
- Asks Centre to release Rs 16,100 crore under Jal Jeevan Mission
- Demands Rs 4,000 crore for Musi Development Project

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy appealed to Union Jal Shakti Minister CR Patil to allot Rs 10,000 crore for the Musi Riverfront Development Project under the National River Conservation Plan. The Chief Minister briefed the Union Minister about the TG government's Musi River Development Project on a 55-km stretch which is being taken up for the first time in



CM Revanth Reddy calling on Union Minister for Petroleum Hardeep Singh Puri, along with Deputy CM, Bhatti Vikramarka and Cabinet Minister Uttam in Delhi on Monday

the country on such a big scale.

The Chief Minister called on Union Ministers CR Patil, Hardeep Singh Puri and Prahlad Joshi in New Delhi on Monday and brought to

their attention many development related issues.

The CM told the Jal Shakti Minister that the state government had decided to clean up the Musi

2

Revanth meets Cong brass in Delhi, invites them for loan waiver event

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy met the Leader of the Opposition, Rahul Gandhi, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in New Delhi, and invited them to attend a public meeting in Warangal regarding the state's farm loan waiver programme. At the meeting, which comes close



on the heels of the state government initiating the first phase of its farm loan waiver scheme on July 18, the CM emphasised the symbolic importance of Warangal.

2

Ponguleti's company involved in huge scam with foreign bank guarantees: BJP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy's Raghava Constructions is involved in a Euro Exim Bank scam, Bharatiya Janata Legislature Party (BJLP) leader Alleti Maheshwar Reddy said.

He said the Euro Exim Bank gave a guarantee to Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy's Raghava Constructions and that he has evi-



dence about it. Ponguleti has no right to continue in the Cabinet as he is involved in the scam,

2

LS, RS likely to have 20-hr general discussion



P2

Maheshwar said. He said the Telangana Government should order a CBI inquiry into the scam. Speaking to the media on Monday, Maheshwar said this particular bank gave guarantees to 400 contractors. Maheshwar said the money will not liquefy if contractors skip work midway and demanded that the government should cancel all these bank guarantees.

2



Over 11,000 NEET-UG candidates scored zero, negative marks

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More than 11,000 NEET-UG candidates have scored zero or negative marks in the controversy-ridden medical entrance exam this year, according to the centre-wise results announced by the National Testing Agency. The lowest marks scored by any candidate in the crucial exam is -180 at a centre in Bihar. According to an analysis of the city- and centre-wise results released on Saturday by the NTA, over 2,250 candidates have scored zero marks, while over 9,400 candidates have scored marks in negative. There are several candidates at the centre under scanner in Jharkhand's Hazaribagh who have scored less than zero marks. While there are multiple candidates from few centres who have scored zero marks, no clusters are seen as the number of such candidates from each centre is not very high.

2

BRS, YSRCP plan to take political fight to Delhi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former chief ministers K Chandrasekhar Rao of Telangana and YS Jagan Mohan Reddy of Andhra Pradesh are following similar political strategy in facing their respective State governments. Both the former chief ministers want to fight with their State governments with Delhi as a centre. BRS working president K T Rama Rao, along with his party leader CP Radhakrishnan recently and submitted a memoran-



dum complaining against the State government for encouraging the MLAs' defections and protocol violations. In a similar way, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, along with his party

2

leaders, met Andhra Pradesh Governor S Abdul Nazeer recently and complained over the attacks on his party leaders by the ruling TDP leaders.

In the first step both BRS in Telangana and YSR Congress in Andhra Pradesh met the Governors of their respective states and made a complaint against the State governments. In the second step the leaderships of both parties have decided to take the agitation with Delhi as a centre to attract nation-wide attention.

2

TG budget session from today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The implementation of crop loan waiver and other poll 'guarantees' of the Congress government, issues of unemployment and BRS MLAs switching loyalties to the ruling party are likely to be among the major issues during the budget session of the Telangana Assembly beginning Tuesday.

The government is likely to present the budget on July 25. This will be the Congress government's first full budget after assum-

2



ing power in December last year. It had presented an interim budget in February this year.

2

EXCISE CASE

Court takes cognisance of chargesheet against Kavitha

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi court on Monday took cognisance of a supplementary charge sheet filed against jailed BRS leader K Kavitha in the corruption case related to the alleged excise scam. Special judge for Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) cases Kaveri Baweja took note of the chargesheet, observing that there was sufficient evidence to proceed against her in the case. The judge also directed the CBI



to supply copies of the supplementary charge sheet to Kavitha, who was produced before the court through video conference. Kavitha, the daughter of former Telangana chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, has been accused of conspiring with other members of a liquor cartel called "South Group" and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leaders a part of which kickbacks of Rs 100 crore was paid to the Delhi's ruling party in return for liquor licences.

CS ALERTS DISTRICT COLLECTORS

Heavy rain warning for next 3 days

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

State Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari has alerted all district collectors to remain vigilant as the Meteorological Department has forecast heavy rains across the State for the next three days. She mentioned that the Chief Minister has been continuously monitoring the widespread rains of the past week and has instructed officials to take measures to prevent any loss of life or property. Collectors have been directed to set up rehabilitation centres in advance and to work in coordination with the police, irrigation, panchayat raj, fire departments, NDRF and SDRF. DGP Jitender and Planning Secretary Sandeep Sultania



Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari

also participated in the teleconference. They emphasised the importance of taking precautions to prevent breaches in full tanks and ponds. Shanti Kumari advised the collectors to set up special control rooms in all districts and to ensure readiness to provide emergency assistance at any time.

2

Flood warning at Bhadrachalam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Due to continuous rains the flow of floodwaters in the Godavari basin is gradually increasing. The water level in Bhadrachalam town in Bhadrachalam district rose to 48 feet at 2:04 pm on July 22. Collector Jitesh V. Patil has issued the second flood warning. He said that 11,44,645 cucecs of water are being released downstream from the Godavari.

2

TG bureaucrats oppose Smita's stand

NAVEENA GHANATE ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana IAS officers are not in accordance with Member Secretary of the Telangana Finance Commission, Smita Sabharwal's views on reviewing disability quota of Civil Services. A large section of bureaucrats in Telangana believe that Smita is aiming for something else, may be "to be noticed". They said that her statements are highly uncalled for from a working bureaucrat and found it 'highly elitist' and 'discriminatory'. A Senior Bureaucrat said, "IAS is different than being a pilot or surgeon. It's a generalist job. A specially abled person is as capable of doing a field job, long working hours and interacting with people. Providing

reservation to specially abled person is a ray of hope for them. Just because some rogue misused the provision is no justification to question the necessity for it. What's required is a stringent screening mechanism to ensure that genuine deserving candidates join and it's not misused". Bureaucrats said that this is not at all stand of IAS in Telangana. Many bureaucrats said, "Uncalled for and unwarranted". Another IAS officer said, "It is wrong and within IAS nobody wants to take this stand. We have Lokesh Kumar, who was GHMC Commissioner. He works hard, does field work and goes by rule. Can anyone say just because he is differently abled he is corrupt."

2

Harish misleading farmers by criticising CM, Uttam: Beerla

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Government Whip Beerla Ilaiah said that BRS MLA T. Harish Rao is misleading farmers by criticising Chief Minister Reventh Reddy and Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy. Everybody knows whose sin is the Kaleshwaram Project, he added.

He criticised Harish for saying that the government had not repaired the Kaleshwaram Project.

He said that the credit for wasting Rs 1.5 lakh crore in the name of the Kaleshwaram Project goes to KCR and Harish and that Harish is creating drama to escape the consequences of the Kaleshwaram scam.

Recalling that the Medigadda Project sank when KCR was in power, Beerla

asked why Harish and KTR are not speaking about it now. He said the NDSA had warned that water should not be stored in the Medigadda Barrage.

He said that there is a need to store water in the Annaram Barrage and that 73 TMCs of water is going to the sea due to the BRS government's policies.

The Congress government is atoning for the sins of the BRS government committed during its 10-year rule. The government is holding talks with the Centre on how to revive the Medigadda project, Beerla added.

He said the Irrigation Minister has been solving the problems of irrigation projects one after the other and appealed to KCR to come to the Assembly and give suggestions to the government.

KTR asks govt to clarify stance on new crime laws

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS Working President KTR issued an open letter demanding the Telangana government and the ruling Congress to publicly declare their stands on enforcing the new criminal laws.

In his open letter, KTR said the 'draconian' laws, which have elicited substantial opposition from diverse groups, are being condemned for encroaching on fundamental civil rights and personal freedoms. He pointed out that critics fear that these laws could potentially establish a police state within the nation.

He pointed out that the Chief Ministers of West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka have already opposed these laws and emphasised that the Telangana government must take a clear stance to uphold

the State's image as a champion of civil rights.

He said the Telangana government must clarify whether it will implement these new criminal laws or introduce amendments, following the examples set by other states.

KTR demanded immediate action from the Congress government and asked them to send a letter to the Centre demanding amendments to the 'autocratic' sections of these new laws.

He also called for passing a resolution during the Assembly session which would be sent to the Centre. Failure to do so would result in the TG government being perceived as authoritarian and anti-people, he added.

The new criminal laws which replaced the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC),

and the Indian Evidence Act (IEA) with the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA), came into effect nationwide since July 1.

Many provisions in these laws are viewed as serious violations of basic civil rights and personal freedoms. Civil rights activists and legal experts said that these laws disproportionately favour the police and the government, and would suppress legitimate protests.

Key issues highlighted by critics are, Peaceful protests against government actions being criminalised.

of police custody from 15 days to 90 days. Authority granted to the police to seize property without court permission.

Discretionary powers given to investigative agencies for

prosecuting those involved in organised crime.

Ambiguous provisions concerning cybercrimes, hacking and privacy.

The new laws have already led to confusion as cases must be tried under different laws depending on when they were filed.

The reintroduction of the sedition law as 'treason' is particularly concerning, as it could be used to suppress criticism of the government.

The new laws have the potential to usher in a police state, KTR remarked. He noted that since the last seven months, the state government has been using the police extensively to suppress protests by students, youth and social media activists. Under these new laws, such actions could lead to an even more oppressive environment.

GOVT IN LOK SABHA No case made out for special category status to Bihar



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government cited an inter-ministerial group report prepared in 2012 to assert in Lok Sabha on Monday that a case for granting special category status to Bihar is not made out, a day after BJP's allies from Bihar demanded the status for the backward state.

In a written reply in the Lok Sabha on the first day of the Monsoon session, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said special category status was granted in the past by the National Development Council (NDC) to some states which were

characterised by a number of features necessitating special consideration.

These included hilly and difficult terrain, low population density or sizeable share of tribal population, strategic location along borders with neighbouring countries, economic and infrastructural backwardness and non-viable nature of state finances, he said in reply to a question asked by JD(U) member Rampreet Mandal.

The decision was taken based on an integrated consideration of all the factors listed above and the peculiar situation of a state, the minister said.

Cong calls eco survey 'cherry-picked' view

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress alleged on Monday that the Economic Survey released by the government presented a "cherry-picked" view of the economy and claimed that India is experiencing its "most precarious and difficult" economic situation in many years.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Economic Survey 2023-24, along with the statistical appendix, in the Lok Sabha on Monday. The Economic Survey is an annual document presented by the government ahead of the Union Budget to review the state of the economy.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge hit back at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his remarks, alleging that his government "crushed

the aspirations" of 140 crore Indians in the last 10 years.

"You were lamenting today about (your voice) being 'throttled for two-and-a-half hours', but the truth is that -- your government has crushed the aspirations of 140 crore Indians in 10 years! Today's Economic Survey is like a shiny hollow envelope to gloss over the failures of the Modi government!" Kharge said in a post on X.

He also accused Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan of spreading "lies" in the House and shirking responsibility for the National Eligibility-cum Entrance Test (NEET) paper leak. "Today the future of the youth is in limbo. The unemployment rate is at 9.2 per cent. There is a stampede for jobs. The back-breaking inflation has pushed the savings of the country's families to the low-

est level in 50 years. Food inflation is at 9.4 per cent, grain inflation is at 8.75 per cent, pulses inflation is at 16.07 per cent and vegetable inflation is at 29.32 per cent," the Congress chief said.

"Economic Survey says FDI should come from China. Modiji gave a political 'clean chit' to China while insulting the 20 martyrs in Galwan, today his economic survey has given an economic 'clean chit' to China," he said.

Imports of Chinese goods into India have increased by 68 per cent since 2020 and the trade deficit with China has gone up by 75 per cent, the veteran leader said.

"The condition of farmers is bad. Today's news says that now the Modi government wants to re-implement the three anti-farmer black laws through the back door.

We are demanding only funds due to TG, says Minister Ponnam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar said the state government is asking the Centre for funds due to the state in accordance with the federal spirit.

Speaking to the media on Monday, Ponnam said that the Centre should assist the state to manage irrigation projects and appealed to Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha MPs irrespective of political affiliations to try unitedly to get funds from the Centre.

He said the two Telugu states can solve disputes amicably and the Centre's cooperation is required regarding this. He appealed to Union Ministers to bring special funds for the development of tourism in Hyderabad.

Harish criticises govt for delays in waiving farm loans

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS MLA Harish Rao criticised the state government during an informal chat at the BRS LP office, highlighting pressing issues faced by the state.

He claimed that the government is in deep slumber and wakes up only when the BRS exerts pressure. Harish said that only after he raised the topic of sanitation in panchayats did workers get their salaries, although panchayats are still running short of funds.

He recalled that during KCR's rule, Rs 275 crore was released monthly to panchayats without fail. The Congress government failed to release even the Rs 500 crore allotted by the Centre before March, resulting in an additional Rs 750 crore not being released due to elections.

He criticised the government for delaying Asara pen-

sions for two months which were only disbursed after his intervention. Similarly, payments under the mid-day meal scheme for staff were made only after he brought it to the government's attention.

Harish said material component bills amounting to Rs 2,500 crore are pending in the state. Despite the Centre releasing funds, the state has not provided matching grants, affecting many schemes.

He cited the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme for which the Centre released Rs 850 crore, but the state failed to release Rs 350 crore. He emphasised the urgency of spending Central funds within 15 days to avoid interest charges.

The delay in payments has led to small contractors committing suicide and under the 'Mana Ooru, Mana Badi' initiative bills are unpaid leaving even bathrooms closed.

LS, RS likely to have 20-hr general discussion

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha are each likely to have a 20-hour discussion on the Union budget, which Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present on Tuesday, with the Lower House expected to have separate debates covering ministries of railways, education, health, MSME and food processing, sources said.

The business advisory committees (BAC), which have representatives from different parties, of the two Houses met on Monday to finalise the agenda for the session. The government, however, is entitled to introduce any new item, depending upon exigencies, with the permission of the Chair. In Rajya Sabha,

sources said, a discussion for eight hours is likely to be scheduled on the appropriation and finance bills, and a four-hour debate each on four ministries, which are yet to be identified. A Congress MP said his party highlighted its demand for short-duration discussions on issues like the Agnipath scheme and the NEET row during the Lok Sabha BAC meeting. However, it was decided that the discussion related to different ministries would allow all parties to raise their issues.

A government source said a 20-hour time slot for the general discussion on the budget will also provide different parties an opportunity to raise a range of issues to which Sitharaman will reply.

Release LPG..

Continued on Page 1

The CM said that the two famous water bodies can meet the drinking water needs of Hyderabad and also rejuvenate the Musi River by filling them with Godavari water.

The CM appealed to Patil to release funds to Telangana under the Jal Jeevan Mission. According to 2019 statistics, 77.60 per cent of the houses are getting tap water and a recent survey conducted by the state government found that 7.85 lakh houses did not have safe drinking water supply through taps.

The Chief Minister told the Union Minister that Rs 16,100 crore is needed to provide tap water connections to 7.85 lakh houses along with the houses constructed under PMAY (Urban) and rural. The CM brought to the attention of the Union Minister the non-release of

funds to the state although the Jal Jeevan Mission was launched in 2019 and requested release of funds from this year. The CM appealed to the Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri, to provide a facility to pay Rs 500 as gas supply subsidy to Oil Marketing Companies (OMC) in advance in Telangana.

The CM met the Petroleum Minister in Parliament and explained to him that his government had launched a LPG supply scheme under which LPG cylinders are being supplied for Rs 500 as part of the Mahalakshmi scheme and requested the Centre to pay the subsidy in advance to OMCs. LPG agencies have been requested to supply a cylinder for Rs 500 by paying the subsidy amount in advance but the supplying companies did not respond positively.

Ponguleti's...

Continued on Page 1

He said that he has several matters to raise regarding such irregularities and that he would reveal the other names involved during the next press conference. Many big names involved in this scam will come out soon, he said.

Maheshwar demanded that the government should investigate whether the banks actually gave these guarantees or not. The BJP leader said that this is a big scam and many big contractors including Revenue Minister Ponguleti are involved in it. It is painful that Cabinet Minister Ponguleti is involved in this scam, he said. This is a scam linked to bank guarantees worth thousands of crores, he said. He said that the Euro Exim Bank is located in Saint Louis Island and is not governed by any national laws.

TG budget session..

Continued on Page 1

The Assembly is expected to pay homage on Tuesday to BRS MLA G Lasya Nanditha who died in a road accident in February this year before being adjourned for the day.

The Assembly's Business Advisory Committee (BAC) would decide the agenda and the duration of the session. Meanwhile, the Legislative Council session would commence on July 24.

Amid fanfare, the government launched the crop loan waiver scheme last week which would be implemented in two more phases with a total outlay of about Rs 31,000 crore.

While the Congress leaders and activists held celebrations, the opposition BRS and BJP expressed disappointment.

The BRS alleged that the loan waiver did not benefit a

majority of farmers, while BJP National General Secretary and Union MoS (Home) Bandi Sanjay Kumar said the government has failed to disburse the promised amount of 'Rythu Bharosa' (investment support scheme for farmers) during Rabi and Kharif seasons.

The Congress government has also launched other poll promises, including free travel for women in public transport buses, supply of LPG cylinders to poor for Rs 500, free electricity supply up to 200 units to poor and Arogya Sri health scheme of Rs 10 lakh to the poor. The issues of unemployed youth would also figure prominently during the session. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has said the government would announce a 'job calendar' during the budget session.

BRS, YSRCP..

Continued on Page 1

Now YSR Congress party has decided to stage a dharna in Delhi. YSR Congress president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy said that he would stage a dharna in Delhi on July 24 in protest against the sustained attacks on his party workers allegedly by the ruling TDP leaders.

YS Jagan said that there is no law and order in Andhra Pradesh and that he is going to protest on the streets of Delhi. Meanwhile, BRS working president KT Rama Rao said that they will also meet all the constitutional heads in the country, including the President of India to make a complaint against the State government over the attack on the Constitution. The BRS in Telangana and the YSRCP in Andhra Pradesh are facing pressure from their respective.

Heavy rains..

Continued on Page 1

She stressed the need for vigilance in low-lying areas, tank bunds and flood-prone regions, advising the establishment of appropriate security to prevent people from crossing overflowing streams.

DGP Jitender reported that all police commissioners and SPs are working in coordination with district collectors and other government officials, with police officials supervising the situation on the ground. Sandeep Sultanania mentioned the possibility of moderate to heavy rains accompanied by winds of 30 to 40 km/h in several districts over the next three days. The second flood warning has already been issued at Bhadrachalam, and a third warning will be issued if water levels reach 53 feet, according to the Bhadrachalam Kotthagudem Collector. The Collector also

Flood

Authorities have been directed to relocate residents from flood-prone areas to rehabilitation centres.

The Collector urged people to follow the instructions of the district administration. Both the authorities and the public should remain vigilant. He advised people to stay indoors and to call control room numbers in case of any emergency.

reported the submission of preliminary reports on damaged houses and other losses to the government, and the readiness of NDRF and SDRF teams to handle any unforeseen incidents.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha
Tithi: Dwitiya: Jul 22 01:11 PM to Jul 23 10:23 AM
Tritiya: Jul 23 10:23 AM to Jul 24 07:30 AM

Nakshatram: Dhanishtha: Jul 22 10:21 PM to Jul 23 08:18 PM
Shatabhisha: Jul 23 08:18 PM to Jul 24 06:14 PM

Rahukalam: 3:35 PM to 5:12 PM
Vamgamandam: 9:09 AM to 10:46 AM
Varjyam: 02:53 AM to 04:21 AM
Gulika: 12:22 PM to 1:59 PM
Amritakalam: 10:47 AM to 12:15 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:56 AM to 12:48 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Mostly Cloudy
Temp: 28°
Humidity: 78%
Sunrise: 5:53 AM
Sunset: 6:52 PM
Updated: July 22, 2024 5:00 PM

TG bureaucrats..

Continued on Page 1

For every good officer, there might be some corrupt officer. It has nothing to do with disability. When it comes to field work-how many bureaucrats are on field? In fact in the past term, we had orders not to go to field. Bureaucrats are anguished by these remarks. This is attention seeking personal remarks. Already IAS brand is being diluted and now she is further aggravating it". Retired IAS Aknuri Murali said, "Such arrogant people who do not respect the Constitution are our policy-makers. Does she not know that the Persons with Disabilities Act 1995 has been passed by Parliament and according to it there are reservations in the jobs? Or does she

want to humiliate Parliament? Two already working and one recently retired PWD IAS officers (I won't mention the names) The amazing work is visible to our eyes!

How many IAS officers are roaming in the field except the ones who are Collector or Joint Collector. With the support of KCR, she is the only IAS officer who travels in helicopters in the country, that much arrogance is expected".

Smita Sabharwal said in a tweet on X on Monday, "See a lot of outrage on my timeline. I suppose addressing the elephant in the room gets you that reaction. Would request the rights activists to also examine why this quota has still not been implemented in the IPS/ IFOs and certain sectors like defence.

Budget to spur...

Continued on Page 1

Besides, the market also expects staying on the fiscal glide path to lower the fiscal deficit to 4.5 per cent of GDP by 2025-26.

Sitharaman, who would be presenting her seventh straight budget, had in her first Budget in 2019 replaced the leather briefcase -- which had been in use for decades for carrying Budget documents -- with a traditional 'bahi-khata' wrapped in red cloth. This year's Budget would be in paperless form, as done in the last three years.

Here are the key numbers to watch out for the first full Budget of Modi 3.0:

Fiscal Deficit: The budgeted fiscal deficit, which is the difference between the government expenditure and income, for the current fiscal is 5.1 per cent as projected in the

Interim Budget in February, against 5.8 per cent in the last fiscal year. The full Budget is expected to provide better-than-earlier projections as there has been tax buoyancy.

The government has projected fiscal deficit at 4.5 per cent of the GDP in FY26.

Capital Expenditure: The government's planned capital expenditure for this fiscal year is budgeted at Rs 11.1 lakh crore, higher than Rs 9.5 lakh crore in the last fiscal year. The government has been pushing infrastructure creation and also incentivising states to step up capex.

Tax Revenue: The Interim Budget had pegged gross tax revenue at Rs 38.31 lakh crore for 2024-25, an 11.46 per cent growth over the last fiscal. This includes Rs 21.99 lakh crore estimated to come from direct taxes (personal income tax + corporate tax).

Revanth...

Continued on Page 1

As the farm loan waiver was promised by the Congress at a campaign rally in Warangal during the Assembly polls, the party's state unit is planning to hold a public meeting there to highlight its implementation, sources said.

The Telangana government has already credited Rs 6,098 crore to farmers' bank accounts covering loans up to Rs 1 lakh in the first phase. The scheme will be unrolled in three stages, with the second phase targeting loans up to Rs 1.5 lakh by July-end, and the final phase covering loans up to Rs 2 lakh in August. As the Congress government in Telangana moves to fulfil its poll promises, the CM's two-day New Delhi visit appears aimed at garnering Central support and showcasing the party's.

Eco Survey..

Continued on Page 1

The Survey, tabled by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Parliament, projected a 6.5 per cent to 7 per cent GDP growth rate in the current fiscal year that started in April. This is lower than 8.2 per cent growth seen in the previous 2023-24 (April 2023 to March 2024) fiscal and below than RBI's 7.2 per cent estimate for current fiscal. "The Indian economy is on a strong wicket and stable footing, demonstrating resilience in the face of geopolitical challenges," Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran wrote in the preface to the annual report card on the state of the economy. He, however, hastened to add that fears of cheaper imports from countries with excess capacity could limit the formation of private capital.

Survey highlights...

Continued on Page 1

The concept revolves around addressing the challenge of managing plastic waste, particularly disposable utensils, in the Siddipet district through a creative and sustainable solution.

The key outcome has been reduced plastic waste collection, dumping, and burning, with an expected reduction of 6-8 kilograms of plastic waste per event and 28 quintals per month. The initiative of Barthan Bank has been implemented in the local bodies of many other States.

The initiative originated during the Kanti-Velugu program in 2022, a state-wide universal eye testing program where medical camps were held across villages, necessitating daily food arrangements for 15-20 staff members.

Hyd had no bad air days in 2023

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad had no bad air days in 2023 as per the data tabled in Lok Sabha.

The Air Quality Index indicator in terms of Good Days and Bad Days in 2023 has been analysed by the Pollution Control Board. In the year 2023, Hyderabad had 5 good days (0-50 AQI), 283 days were satisfactory (51-100) and 77 days (101-200) were moderate.

There were 40 cities in 14 states in 2023 which had no bad days. Even Bengaluru did not have bad air days in 2023. For Bengaluru, 69 days were good, 259 were satisfactory and 37 were moderate. In Andhra Pradesh, it was Anantapur which had no bad air days with 105 days good, 174 satisfactory and 30 moderate of the analysed 309 days.

There are 10 cities in 5 States with highest percentage of bad days during 2023,



As per the data in Parliament, funds are released under the National Clean Air Programme. In this, for Telangana fund allocated in FY 23-24 was Rs 4.48 crore, fund released is Rs 4.03 crore and fund utilised is Rs 1.98 cr

including greater Noida. According to Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Kirti Vardhan Singh, "Cities/States are not ranked on the basis of air pollution. However, CPCB has identified Non-Attainment Cities (NAC) based on ambient air quality data exceeding National Ambient Air Quality Standards with respect to any one of the notified parameters consecutively for five years."



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Matangi Swarnalatha predicted ample rainfall and bountiful harvest in Telangana during the Rangam programme at Ujjaini Mahakali temple in Secunderabad on Monday. Standing atop an earthen pot on the premises of Ujjaini Mahakali temple, Swarnalatha invoked the Goddess and performed the Rangam in the presence of BC Welfare Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar.

She said, "I am very much satisfied with the prayers that the devotees offered. Five weeks of pujas should be performed by women devotees and naivedyam and coconut should be offered on a daily basis. If you bring offerings (Bonams) with happiness, I will accept them. Women and even young girls can offer me Bonams of any shape or size. I am happy with the arrange-

Matangi predicts ample rainfall and bountiful harvest in TG



ments and rituals that have been performed during the Bonalu celebrations."

Later, she advised people to focus on hard physical work. In regards to lifestyle diseases, Swarnalatha said, "Don't consume medicines blindly.

Instead, go out and do hard work on agricultural fields. Then you will definitely be happy."

Following the Rangam, Potharajus, who are considered as the brothers of the presiding deity Mahankali, per-

formed other rituals. The idol of the Goddess was taken out in a procession, which went around General Bazaar, R P Road and other adjoining areas of Secunderabad. The two days of Lashkar Bonalu ended on a grand note and thousands

Following the Rangam, Potharajus, who are considered as the brothers of the presiding deity Mahankali, performed other rituals. The idol of the Goddess was taken out in a procession, which went around General Bazaar, R P Road and other adjoining areas of Secunderabad

of devotees made a beeline to the Ujjaini Mahakali temple in Secunderabad and offered their prayers to Goddess Mahakali.

FGG proposes steps to tackle stray dog menace

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Forum for Good Governance (FGG) has submitted a set of proposals to the

Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA&UD) department, urging the government to take immediate action to control the stray dog menace in Telangana, particularly within the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) limits. According to a survey conducted by GHMC, there are approximately 4 lakh stray dogs roaming the streets of Hyderabad. Despite efforts to sterilise these animals, the problem persists, with frequent reports of children being attacked by stray dogs.

The Forum has proposed several measures, including invoking Section 249 of the GHMC Act, which permits the destruction of stray dogs. They cited a precedent in the Hakeempet locality where professional hunters were engaged to eliminate wild boars that posed a threat to the community. Similarly, in villages, government-authorised sarpanches have taken action to kill wild boars damaging crops. The Forum also referenced wildlife management practices where overpopulated or dangerous animals, such as elephants and man-eating tigers, are culled.

14,189 separate girls toilets completed in TG

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Out of 15072 approved government schools for separate girls toilets, only 14,189 toilets were completed in Telangana up to June 2024. MPs Selvam G and CN Annadurai raised a question on the details of quantum of funds sanctioned and utilised on major repairs in schools under Samagra Shiksha Scheme during each of the last three years and the status of construction of toilets for women and girls in schools along with time by which they are accessible to them during the Lok Sabha proceedings, for which MP Jayanth Chaudhary gave the data on Monday.

MP Jayanth Chaudhary stated that the Central government is implementing Samagra Shiksha, a centrally-sponsored scheme which subsumes the erstwhile centrally-sponsored schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE) from 2018-19. Samagra Shiksha supports States and UTs for strengthening of existing government schools, and for creation and augmentation of infrastructure facilities including drinking water and toilets in schools based on a gap analysis. The scheme supports creation of infrastructure and basic facilities, including clean drinking water and toilets for students in government schools.

'Disability quota empowers differently abled persons'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Following the question posed by senior bureaucrat Smita Sabharwal through Twitter on whether quota for differently abled is needed, there was an outrage among various sections, especially differently abled communities.

CSB Academy founder and Civil Service Examination coach Bala Latha Mallavarapu gave a strong counterattack to the question by stating that people with disabilities can achieve anything in life as we just want to prove ourselves after facing discrimination in the society.

Addressing a press meet at Somajiguda Press Club on Monday, Bala Latha said, "When Smita Sabharwal posted a tweet asking whether an airline hire a pilot with a disability? Or would you trust a surgeon with a disability?, these statements from one who holds a key position in the government questions her personality. Bala asked whether Smita is opposing the Constitution and the Supreme Court rulings



that provide reservations. "What does she mean by premier services? This question strongly hurts the sentiments of the differently abled communities. Nowadays, we have witnessed many people despite having physical or mental disabilities, have achieved their dreams irrespective of any profession or area. For instance, despite suffering from physical disability, Sudini Jaipal Reddy, former Member of Lok Sabha, has secured the Outstanding Parliamentarian Award. Ira Singhal, senior bureaucrat who secured an IAS post in her first attempt, earned recognition as the first differently abled person to secure the IAS post. This proves differently abled people

can do wonders in their respective fields," she added.

Citing her own journey, Bala Latha said, "Since childhood, I have suffered a lot of discrimination from society. However, ever since I have cracked the Civil Services exam, the perception of people has changed. I have got respect and recognition in society. So, disability quota empowers differently abled communities."

Bala Latha said that Smita Sabharwal has committed violation of code of conduct for government employees, Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016, Indian Code (2023) Section 196, 197 and 198 and Information Technology Act 2000.

G-SPARC meet to be held in Hyd from Oct 3-5

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Health Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha on Monday issued an endorsement letter for the Global South Conference on Infection Prevention, Control and Antimicrobial Stewardship (G-SPARC 2024).

The conference is scheduled to be held from October 3 to 5. In his letter, the Minister said, "G-SPARC 2024 is a timely initiative, a convergence of minds committed to addressing the pressing challenges posed by pandemics, infections and antimicrobial resistance (AMR). We should all recognise that AMR is not an abstract concept but a stark reality. Bacterial AMR alone was directly responsible for 1.27 million global deaths in 2019, and its impact extends beyond mortality. It affects the very fabric of our healthcare systems, making routine medical procedures riskier and threatening the gains of modern medicine."

Prioritise resolution of public appeals: GHMC Commissioner

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Commissioner Amrapali Kata on Monday asked authorities to prioritise the resolution of public appeals.

The Commissioner enquired about the problems of the people from all over the greater region and patiently listened to each one's problem and accepted the appeals. The respective grievances were handed over to the authorities concerned and directed to take immediate action to resolve them.

Some of the petitioners demanded allocation of double bedroom houses. However, Amrapali explained that the two bedroom flats are only being allotted to eligible beneficiaries. The Commissioner further said, "32 pleas were received during the public hearing conducted at the head office, while another 11 pleas were received through telephone. Among the applications received, 15 were of Town Planning, Transport 1, CVO/Revenue 2, CMHO 2,



Sports 2, Engineering Maintenance 3, Veterinary 2, HMWSSB 2, Estates 1 and Housing 2."

"In all, 11 complaints were received over the telephone and were directed to the concerned authorities. A total of 81 applications were received in six zones. Out of that, maximum 42 applications were received in Kukatapally zone. Similarly, Serilingampally received 20 requests, Charminar 8, Secunderabad 7, LB Nagar 1 and Khairatabad 3," the Commissioner con-

cluded. Meanwhile, Commissioner Amrapali has directed the authorities concerned to take measures to control mosquitoes in the city and take strict precautions to prevent the spread of diseases. She held a teleconference with Zonal Commissioners and Additional Commissioners and gave directions on various issues on Monday.

She ordered to apply gambusia and oil balls in mosquito-breeding areas to prevent the growth of mosquitoes. It was advised to observe a dry day every Friday for the prevention of mosquitoes, and to conduct awareness programmes for the people to prevent the spread of seasonal diseases like dengue, chikungunya, typhoid, diarrhoea, toxic fevers during the rainy season. The officials were directed to provide health services to the people. It was advised to monitor regularly to ensure that sanitation is maintained properly. All the officers of the affiliated departments were ordered to work in coordination.

Complaints abound in feedback to HMWSSB

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewage Board (HMWSSB) MD Ashok Reddy made a surprise inspection of HMWSSB Customer Care Centre on Monday. About 5,514 feedback calls were taken out of which three per cent expressed dissatisfaction on the services.

He examined the calls and response from the users by interacting with them and hearing call recordings. There have been complaints of sewage overflow, silt on the road, man holes, no water, low pressure. After solving the issues, the MD ordered to provide accurate information to the consumers and the feedback was taken from the users.

About 14 per cent gave feedback saying that the problem was solved without solving the



problem. In the case of such matters, the officials at the field level have been ordered to visit them directly and see that they are resolved. Apart from providing good services to customers, this inspection was conducted to show transparency and accountability in customer care service activities.

In the month of June, 1,30,899 tankers were booked and 1,86,251 trips were delivered. A total of 75,555 complaints were received in the

month of June, 75,496 of which were resolved. In regards to sewerage overflow, 38,051 complaints were received out of which 38,040 were resolved. In the case of silt on road issues, 7,824 complaints received and all were resolved.

In regards to damage to sewerage manholes, 3,190 complaints were received, out of which, 3,175 were resolved. Out of 1,770 pipeline leakage complaints, 1,763 were resolved.

Pubs under surveillance as TGNAB combats drug abuse

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Anti Narcotics Bureau (TGNAB) has put pubs across the city under surveillance in an effort to combat drug abuse. One of the major drug hauls was carried out at the CAVE pub where 24 people were detained for drug abuse.

Sustained surveillance led to a successful raid on a psychedelic party, 'Forest Alchemy', at CAVE Pub. Out of the attendees, 52 were checked and 33 tested positive for combinations of ganja, cocaine and MDMA, highlighting the pervasive issue of drug use in the city.

Through relentless monitoring and intelligence development, TGNAB has targeted hotspots of drug activity. Three drug abusers were apprehended at Artistry Pub, Novotel HICC, thanks to the actionable



intelligence.

The TGNAB is also focused on creating a drug-free environment in schools and colleges. The anti-narcotics wing has mobilised officers to gather and act on intelligence regarding drug abuse in educational institutions. Collaborating with the government, the bureau has launched awareness campaigns featuring prominent personalities like

Chiranjeevi, Suman and PV Sindhu, appealing to students and parents.

As part of the initiative, inspections have been conducted at schools; coordinated efforts with unit officers and Narcotic Detection Dogs have led to thorough checks of schools and their premises. COPTA regulations are being strictly enforced, booking establishments selling tobacco

products within a 100-meter radius of schools under the Juvenile Justice Act and COPTA Act.

Anti-Drug Committees (ADCs) are being set up in educational institutions as they are pivotal in reporting drug abuse.

The TGNAB has also acted against individuals involved in drug abuse; 25 students of the Symbiosis College were arrested for consuming ocean grown weed. Counselling sessions for these students and their parents are currently being conducted to address the issue and prevent future occurrences. Similarly, six junior doctors from the Osmania General Hospital were caught consuming weed. A formal letter has been written to the Medical Council of India (MCI) to take appropriate action against them.

'5% of Indians speak Austro-Asiatic languages'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

About five per cent Indians speak Austro-asiatic languages, largely by the ancient tribal populations of Odisha, Chattisgarh and Jharkhand and they have retained their languages firmly for the last 4,000 years. However, recently some of these populations have started adopting Indo-European languages.

A study led by Dr Kumarasamy Thangaraj at CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad and Dr Niraj Rai at DST-Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP), Lucknow, shed light on understanding these changes in the



ancient tribes of East India. The findings are published in an international journal, Heliyon, by Cell Press.

The researchers studied four major tribal populations (Bathudi, Bhumij Ho and Mahali) from Odisha. They

examined the genetic affinities of these populations and a few Indo-European speakers from nearby areas. Their findings suggest that the two groups do not mix genetically and suggest that the linguistic mixing between the Austro-Asiatic and Indo-European speakers happened likely due to industrialisation (movement of Indo-European speakers may be from neighbouring states) and modernisation (cultural exchange, may be due to marriage trade/ education) that brought them into close cultural contact with the Austro-Asiatic speakers, and some of them have adapted Indo-European as a primary language.

Restoration of Raj Bhavan's Shah Manzil showcased

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Philanthropist Richard Broyd, Jeffrey Reinke, representative from the World Monuments Fund (WMF), New York, and Malini Thadani, WMF India representative, called on Governor of Telangana, CP Radhakrishnan, on Monday at Raj Bhavan, Hyderabad. The meeting centered on the restoration efforts of the East and West wing, the old physics block, and the chemistry block of Telangana Mahila Viswavidyalayam.

During the discussion, the Governor also showcased the



'Shah Manzil', a heritage building located within the Raj Bhavan and elaborated on the ongoing plans for its restoration. He extended an invitation to the WMF representatives to participate in this significant project.

The meeting was also attended by B Venkatesham, Principal Secretary to the Governor, and Prof. M Vijjalatha, Vice-Chancellor of Telangana Mahila Viswavidyalayam.

Compensation announced to Peddavagu project-hit people

Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy extends financial help to displaced persons from PSR Trust

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on Monday inspected the breach developed to the bund of the Peddavagu project at Gummadapalli village on July 18 on account of heavy inflows into the project under the influence of heavy rains.

Collector Jitesh V Patil, SP Rohit Raj, local MLA J Adinarayana and others accompanied the minister who went round the damaged project area.

Srinivas Reddy said that the extent of the breach developed by the project was big, he said and enquired about how the it suffered the breach.

ater, he went to the houses of 51 Pedavagu project-displaced persons in Koyarapuram, Gummadavalli and Kothuru villages and extended financial support to the victims from PSR Trust. He also visited the bereaved family of Siva, who died of electrocution in the village, and extended financial assistance to the family. He



Minister for Revenue Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy visiting Peddavagu flood-hit areas in Kothagudem district on Monday

consolated the family members and assured them of government support.

Later speaking to the media at Koyarapuram village, he announced compensation of Rs 10,000 per acre to enable farmers to remove the sand casting. In all, 400 acres of land was rendered unfit for cultivation because of sand casting. He announced distribution of

free seeds to cotton and paddy farmers who sustained the paddy and cotton crop loss. Further, he announced Rs 20,000 to each head of cattle washed away in swirling flood waters and Rs 3,000 to each goat or sheep carried away by swirling waters. He promised to give Indiramma Houses to all those who have lost their houses due to floods.

The project would be able to withstand 40,000 cusecs of flood, but it received 70,000 cusecs of inflows. He blamed the negligence on the officials for breach. Had the officials lifted the gates at the right time, major damage to the project would have been prevented. Show-cause notices have been served on officials responsible for the breach. The minister said that he got Rs 8 crore released to undertake immediate repairs to the project by speaking with the CM on the issue.

When the farmers complained to the Minister, Srinivas Reddy ordered officials to probe the encroachment of the Peddavagu project lands. He asked Collector to order a full survey once the rains have subsided.

He thanked the Government of Andhra Pradesh for rescuing 41 agricultural workers stranded in flood waters. He said that he spoke with chief secretary to the AP government who rescued the stranded with the help of a helicopter.

MLA visits low-lying areas, monitors flood situation

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI

Ramagundam MLA Raj Thakur on Monday said that he would take initiative in resolving the problems of the people of the constituency.

He interacted with the people of the constituency in Godavarikhani in Peddapalli district on account of PrajaPalana.

The MLA gave assurance to the people who visited his camp office to get their problems resolved. He responded to the people's representations and directed officials to respond immediately.

The MLA asked the people living in low-lying areas to remain on the alert in view of heavy rains lashing the state.

The MLA later visited the low-lying areas in Antargam and Palakurti.

Receiving the updates on floods at regular intervals, he has been monitoring the flood situation with the help of the officials.

He inspected the internal roads damaged due to rains and directed officials to implement remedial measures.

Apex Committee to formulate action plan on dog menace



Principal Secretary Municipal Administration Dana Kishore holding a high level review meeting with GHMC officials in Hyderabad on Monday

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Principal Secretary Municipal Administration Dana Kishore held a high-level meeting with the officials of GHMC, veterinary department, members of Blue Cross and other animal welfare organisations at the Secretariat on Monday to discuss the issue of dog menace. He announced setting up of an apex committee comprising senior officials of the various government departments and member of the Blue Cross and directed them to formulate an action plan to prevent the dog menace and control the incidents of dog bites.

He underlined the need to take up Information, Education, Communication (IEC) campaign for creating awareness to resident welfare associations, slum-level federations and school children about the dog's behaviour. He directed that animal care centres should be established in all the urban local bodies of the State at the earliest. A training programme for all the sanitary jawans, field sanitary assistants, women self-help groups and mother's groups should be conducted in every ward of the GHMC within next week to create awareness about the street dog menace. Similar training programme should also be conducted in all the ULBs in the State. The GHMC officials were also told to set up couple of shelter homes for stray dogs in the city on a pilot basis.

GHMC Commissioner Amrapali said that the GHMC will take up survey of stray dogs in the city along with a sterilisation drive and anti-rabies vaccination of all the street dogs. She also stated that the GHMC will initiate steps to promote pet dog registration, elimination of garbage vulnerable points to

avoid gathering of street dogs, ensuring proper food waste disposal by hotels, restaurants, function halls, etc and also making availability of crèche mandatory at the construction sites as the children of construction labour are most vulnerable to fatal dog attacks when the parents leave the children along with work.

Members discussed the challenges being faced in handling the stray dog menace. It was felt that coordination of all departments is essential in tackling the stray dog menace. It was also pointed out that there is a need to educate pet dog owners as well as dog feeders.

CDMA VP Gautham, Director Animal Husbandry Gopi, MAUD Additional Secretary Saida, Amala Akkineni from the Blue Cross, doctors from veterinary colleges and GHMC officials attended the meeting.

Three, including computer operator, arrested for issuing fake certificates

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Three persons, including an outsourced computer operator, were on Monday arrested in connection with issuance of fake certificates to non-locals in the office of the Manchal Tahsildar. The arrests followed a complaint from the Tahsildar that brought the fraudulent activities to light.

Manchal Circle Inspector Babya Naik and Sub Inspector Rajnikar produced the accused before the media on Monday. The prime accused Puram Suresh Babu from Vanasthalipuram had been working as an outsourced employee in the Manchal Tahsildar's office. Suresh allegedly conspired with his associates, Goru Ravi Kumar, a private employee, and Patti Ravi Kumar, the manager of a Meeesva



Police producing the accused in fake certificate issuance case before the media in Shadnagar on Monday

Kendra, to issue fake caste and income certificates to non-locals for a fee of Rs. 5,000 each.

The fraudulent scheme involved issuing certificates from the Vanasthalipuram Meeesva Kendra using a single phone number and verifying them as a group without the knowledge of the office operator. The Tahsildar became

suspicious of the activities and filed a complaint with the Manchal police.

Following the complaint, the police registered a case against the computer operator Suresh and the Meeesva manager. An investigation was launched, leading to the arrest of the three accused. They were remanded in judicial custody.

In safe hands of children home after being abandoned by parents

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Female child discrimination seems to be still continuing in parts of the undivided Nalgonda district, particularly in Devarakonda. Devarakonda has been in the news for long time because of female foeticide and abandoning girl child. The girl child thus being abandoned were being left at the mercy of nature.

For the sake of children abandoned by their parents, the state government set up a children's home under the Women and Child Welfare Department in Nalgonda in 2005. Children between 0-6 years of age, orphans, and abandoned children, besides children whose parents died in an accident, and children born outside formal marriage are provided shelter home.

The district administration has been overseeing the adoption of children in the home by childless couples under the



Nalgonda Collector C Narayana Reddy inspecting the children home in Nalgonda

the Juvenile Justice Act.

So far, around 432 children have been admitted to Sishu Griha through Nalgonda District Sishu Griha. A total of 195 girls and 15 boys have

been legally adopted. Of these, 199 were adopted in the country and 11 were adopted by couple from foreign countries.

District Collector C

Narayana Reddy during the inspection of this children's home appreciated the staff for their efforts to keep the children safe. The government has not only made all the arrangements for the care of the children in the children's home, but special arrangements have been made especially to ensure that they do not fall victim to diseases. Apart from installing heaters so that children do not suffer from cold, arrangements have been made so that doctors come to the children's home every day and check.

From morning to afternoon, from noon to evening, 24 hours childcare has been provided.

The district administration has been for years trying to bring a message home to parents to abandon their children at home instead of deserting at dustbins and on roads.

The administration has appealed to people to inform the children home if abandoned child is found.

Official told to implement welfare schemes

PNS ■ MEDAK

Collector Rahul Raj has directed the officials to implement welfare and developmental activities without fail.

In a meeting with district officials held at IDOC conference hall on Monday after the Praja Vaani, he discussed the developmental works taken up by various government departments and their progress, disposal of pending Praja Vaani representations, field visits of the officials, protecting the people from malaria and dengue, Vana Mahotsavam, Mahila Sakti Scheme, Mana Vuru-Mana Badi, integrated residential schools' education, water supply, sanitation and creation of basic amenities among other things.

The first priority to disposal of the pending representations of Praja Vaani in the order of their priority, he said.

He asked the officials of various government departments to undertake field visits and plug the loopholes in their implementation, if any, and strive for the public welfare.

MGU releases PhD entrance examination results

PNS ■ NALGONDA

The results of the PhD entrance examination have been released by Vice-Chancellor Navin Mittal, Registrar Acharya Alvala Ravi, Controller of Examinations G Upendar Reddy and Director of Admissions Acharya Akula Ravi. Director Acharya Akula Ravi said that the details of the results have been made available on the MGU website and the schedule of interviews for admissions will be released in a week.

Later, the results of the degree examinations conducted under the jurisdiction of MGU were also released. Of



MGU Vice Chancellor Navin Mittal releasing PhD entrance exam results of the Ph.D. and Degree examinations.

the total 8,118 students, 3,493 have passed.

As many as 37.47 per cent of students passed in the first semester, 35.65 per cent students passed in the second semester, 40.6.9 per cent stu-

dents passed in the third semester, 41.61 per cent students passed in the fourth semester, 44.8 per cent students passed in the fifth semester and 45.68 per cent students passed in the sixth semester.

All-party meet calls for people's support for Shadnagar development

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar has urged people in the constituency to lend their support in the development of Shadnagar town, keeping the interests of future generations in mind.

During an all-party meeting held at the MLA's camp office on Monday, leaders from various political parties discussed the construction of a 100-foot circle at the town's main intersection.

Shankar emphasised the importance of establishing a circle to accommodate the town's growing population. He noted that discussions with Road and Buildings and Panchayat Raj officials were held to facilitate the expansion. He stressed the need for community and business support in these efforts, highlighting that road widening projects are



Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar addressing an all-party meeting in Shadnagar on Monday

currently underway to alleviate traffic congestion. He assured that efforts would be made to compensate those affected by the construction, and a discussion with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is planned to address these concerns.

Former MLA Bakkani Narasimhulu highlighted the necessity of convincing all parties to work together for the town's development. He acknowledged that some sacrifices might be required but emphasised that following government rules and laws is

essential. Narasimhulu also mentioned the need to explain compensation possibilities clearly to ensure smooth progress.

Former MLA Pratap Reddy argued that developmental projects should not be hindered. He called for community support and adherence to planning measures to ensure successful execution of these projects. Pratap Reddy urged local authorities and the MLA to oversee these developments closely.

Nelli Srivardhan Reddy, a member of the state executive committee of the Bharatiya Janata Party, urged MLA Shankar to present the collective views of all parties to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. He emphasised the importance of public awareness regarding compensation for any damages caused by development works and assured his

ongoing support for these initiatives.

Municipal Chairman K Narendar promised to extend all support for the development of four-way roads in the town square.

CPM leader N Raju stressed the importance of planning and implementing developmental projects that are acceptable to all communities. He called for the establishment of Dr BR Ambedkar's statue in the center of the new circle, naming it Ambedkar Square. Raju assured that the CPM party would fully cooperate in these development efforts.

The meeting saw participation from Town CI Vijay Kumar, Traffic CI Chandrasekar, Former ZPTC Shyamsunder Reddy, R&B DE Ravinder, councilors, and leaders from various political parties, including the Congress, BJP, BRS, and BSP.

Foolproof probe to ensure punishment to criminals: CP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Rachakonda Commissioner of Police (CP) Sudheer Babu directed the staff to set up Accident Analysis and Prevention Teams to identify the accident-prone areas in coordination with other government departments and take preventive measures. He held a special review meeting with DCSB, Additional DCSB, ACSB and Inspector-level officers on Monday at the Commissioner's office, Neredmet.

The Commissioner instructed the police personnel of Rachakonda to adhere to their noble responsibilities and continue delivering best services to the citizens. He instructed the officers to adopt advanced technology and utilise CCTV cameras in the process of



investigation. The concerned authorities were directed to hunt down the inter-state gangs and to be vigilant about the movements of criminals with previous history in Rachakonda and take precautionary measures to prevent them from committing crimes again. He also advised the staff to be friendly with the victims who approach the police with varied problems.

The CP elaborated the significance of visible policing and ordered the victims to reach the victims in the shortest possible time. He instructed the officials to increase foot patrolling and to carry out patrolling by bicycles as well. The higher officials should inspect the stations at regular intervals and mention that the efforts of officials and staff will be rewarded well. Also, the officials and staff with special expertise, interest and experience will be given an opportunity to work in the respective departments as well.

The officials were advised to be transparent, honest and accountable in their duties and to work within the framework of law. They should not be involved in civil disputes.

Women's Commission calls for responsible content creation

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Commission for Women on Monday issued strict guidelines to content creators to abide by social media regulations and legal, moral, and public order standards.

The advent of social media has given rise to a new vertical of dissemination of information. Each individual should ensure that in the garb of 'creative freedom', public order, basic decency, morality and the laws of the land should not be violated.

A series of disturbing events in the recent past concerning a video of a father-daughter duo come to light. "As the chairperson of a body that is

responsible for safeguarding and furthering the interests of the women, I hereby issue the following guidelines."

Public order, basic decency and morality should be prioritised by content creators across platforms, as stated in Article 19 (2); The content created by any person(s) should not amount to an offence as per existing laws concerning the safety of women. In which case, the commission reserves the right to take strong action will be taken against the offender; All creator(s) are expected to be well versed with the 'reasonable restrictions' that 'freedom of expression' is subject to, as laid down by the

Constitution of India & abide by the same; No piece of content (irrespective of platform and format) should affect the operation of any existing law, or prevent the State from making any law; No piece of content should be defamatory in nature or incite violence of any manner; Spreading misinformation or unverified conspiracy theories without expressly mentioning the same make the individual liable for prosecution; The sanctity of the social and secular fabric of the state should be upheld at all costs; Outraging the modesty of a woman, sexual harassment of any kind and inciting violence against individuals/communities are

criminal offences. Any violation on this front will be confronted with prosecution, irrespective of platform; The individual is expected to employ his/her discretion while creating content in order to ensure that the sentiment person/group/gender/community/sex, etc are belittled, supported by facts;

Lastly, as an 'influencer', an individual is expected to fulfil the responsibility that comes with the followers and use the 'influence' for the right cause; As subjective as the definition of 'comedy' or 'dark comedy' could be, the individual is expected to have an understanding of where to draw the line.

INDIA CORNER

Out on bail in molestation case, man tries to kill minor victim

Out on bail in a molestation case, a man allegedly tried to kill the 15-year-old victim, police said on Monday. According to police, the man had molested the girl about two years ago and was sent to jail. After being released on bail, he started pressuring the girl's family to settle the case. On Saturday, when the girl went to attend nature's call, the man molested the minor and tried to strangle her, Chapiya SHO Krishna Gopal Rai said. When the girl did not return home for a long time, her family members searched for her and found her in a field in a semi-conscious state, he said. The victim was rushed to a community health centre and later referred to a private hospital in Ayodhya, Rai said. The SHO said the man had threatened to kill the girl if her family did not comply. A case will be registered in the matter and an investigation will be carried out, he said, adding that no arrest has been made so far.



NGT issues notice over uprooting trees for RRTS tracks

The National Green Tribunal has sought a response from the National Capital Region Transport Corporation and others on a plea stating that the construction of the Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) tracks will uproot 40 trees. It also said that it was not possible to relocate the uprooted trees. The NGT was hearing a petition by Sidhartha Extension Pocket C Residents Welfare Association alleging that the construction of the 82.15 km semi-high speed rail corridor connecting Delhi, Ghaziabad and Meerut will uproot 40 trees, of which 25 were fully grown. In an order passed last week, a bench of NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava said that the plea raised a "substantial issue relating to compliance of the environmental norms and implementation of scheduled enactments." "Issue notice to the respondents (National Capital Region Transport Corporation, Delhi Development Association and Municipal Corporation of Delhi)," said the bench also comprising judicial member A K Tyagi and expert member A Senthil Vel.



Reconsider ban on toddy, Madras High Court tells TN govt

The Madras high court on Monday orally asked the Tamil Nadu government to reconsider the state's ban on sale of toddy. The first bench, comprising Acting Chief Justice D Krishnakumar and Justice K Kumaresh Babu, further observed that it was the right time to reconsider the policy decision as the TASMAR (state-run alcoholic beverages retail chain) has been facing several allegations of corruption. The bench said it was not passing any direction but asking the state to reconsider its policy. The bench made these oral observations while hearing a Public Interest Litigation filed by S Muralidharan, an IT employee of Chennai. The bench also ordered notice to the state government and posted further hearing of the case to July 29. In his PIL, Muralidharan sought to declare as unconstitutional a 1986 amendment made to the Tamil Nadu Prohibition Act for banning toddy and also a 2003 amendment by which TASMAR was given right to sell liquor in the state.



'Border issues with India will be resolved through talks'

PNS ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal's newly-appointed Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli on Monday said that there is an understanding with India to resolve the border issues through diplomatic mechanisms and that Kathmandu was "clear and firm" about its international border.

Responding to questions from lawmakers in the House of Representatives, a day after he comfortably won a vote of confidence, Oli said that the government is firm and clear that the territories lying on the East of Mahakali River, including Limpiyadhura, Kalapani and Lipulek, belong to Nepal as per the Sugauli Treaty of 1816. "The federal parliament and Nepal government are clear and firm about the country's international border," Oli said.

"Nepal has adopted a new map that has been incorporated through the Second Amendment to the Constitution in 2017 and mentioned in its Annex 3 and there has been unprecedented national consensus regarding our international border," Oli said. Oli, 72, was sworn in as Nepal's Prime Minister on July



Responding to questions from lawmakers in the House of Representatives, a day after he comfortably won a vote of confidence, Oli said that the government is firm and clear that the territories lying on the East of Mahakali River, including Limpiyadhura, Kalapani and Lipulek, belong to Nepal as per the Sugauli Treaty of 1816. "The federal parliament and Nepal government are clear and firm about the country's international border," Oli said.

15. "An understanding has been reached between the two countries to sort out border issues through diplomatic mechanisms when the prime ministers of Nepal and India met during high-level visits," he said.

"The issues related to the Nepal-India border were also discussed during the 7th Nepal-India foreign ministerial-level joint commission's meeting held on January 4, and commitment was made to complete the pending works on the remaining sections of the Nepal-India border as soon as possible," he said.

"Ties between the two countries came under severe strain in 2020 after Kathmandu pub-

lished a new political map that showed the three Indian territories - Limpiyadhura, Kalapani and Lipulek - as part of Nepal. India had rejected Nepal's new political map that showed the three Indian territories as part of the Himalayan nation.

"This artificial enlargement of claims is not based on historical fact or evidence and is not tenable. It is also violative of our current understanding to hold talks on outstanding boundary issues," India's External Affairs Ministry said at that time. Land-locked Nepal relies heavily on India for the transportation of goods and services. Nepal is also important for India in the context of its overall strategic interests in the

region, and the leaders of the two countries have often noted the age-old "Roti Beti" relationship.

Nepal shares a border of over 1,850 km with five Indian states - Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Prime Minister Oli also informed the lawmakers that the construction and restoration of border posts along the Nepal-India border was underway. "Construction, restoration, and repair of border pillars, along with technical work such as preparation of no-man's land and cross-holding, are being carried out continuously. Efforts are being made to resume meetings in bilateral harmony," Oli said.

BJP's lamp is flickering, will go off soon: Akhilesh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Samajwadi Party Chief Akhilesh Yadav on Monday took a dig at the BJP over the Kanwar Yatra directives in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, saying the ruling party's lamp is flickering and it will go off soon. He also attacked the Centre after it lifted the ban on government employees to participate in the activities of the RSS, and asserted that communal politics has been rejected by people of the country.

Talking to the media outside Parliament, the Kannauj MP said more such steps are likely to be taken in future by the Centre and BJP-ruled states.

Asked about the Supreme Court's interim stay on the directives by BJP-ruled UP and Uttarakhand asking eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route to display the names of owners, Yadav welcomed the verdict and said people have already rejected communal politics. "Communal politics has been rejected by people, and just as a lamp flickers before it goes off, they (BJP) are flickering before going out. That is why such decisions are being taken," he said.

'Ground reality will open can of worms for Rahul, Akhilesh'

Edu Min Pradhan on paper leak

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rahul Gandhi and "his cabal" are "shedding crocodile tears" and ground reality on paper leaks during the UPA regime and when Akhilesh Yadav was at the helm in UP will open a can of worms for both of them, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said on Monday as the opposition targeted him over the NEET-UG row in Lok Sabha.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi led the opposition attack on the government over the exam paper leak issue in Parliament, saying there is a very serious problem in the country's exam system and that Pradhan has blamed everybody except himself for it.

Hitting back, Pradhan questioned why the Congress-led government "failed" to implement bills to stop malpractices in educational institutions including the Prohibition of Unfair Practices Bill, 2010, when it was in power.

"The LoP and his cabal are all but shedding crocodile tears. The ground reality on



paper leaks during UPA regime and when Shri Akhilesh was at the helm of UP, will open a can of worms for both Shri @RahulGandhi and Shri @yadavakhilesh," Pradhan wrote on X.

"Maybe Rahul Gandhi understands the fundamentals and maths of unfair practices too well. That explains why Congress govt. failed to implement the bills to stop malpractices in educational institutions, including Prohibition of Unfair Practices Bill, 2010.

"Can the LoP tell under what compulsions, pressure and for what considerations did the Congress Party refuse

to bring laws to curb irregularities?" he added.

Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, said it is obvious to the whole country that there is a very serious problem in the examination system, not just in NEET but in all major examinations.

Under opposition fire, Pradhan told Lok Sabha that he was "here at the mercy of my leader, the prime minister" and that his government is collectively answerable.

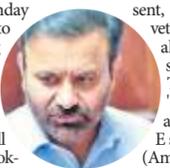
The minister also asserted that there has been no evidence of paper leaks in the last seven years.

K'taka IT industry exerting pressure on govt. to extend working hours of employees: Labour Min

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Labour Minister Santosh Lad on Monday said the proposal to extend the working hours of employees in the IT/ITES/BPO sector has come from the IT industry, and the government will take a decision after looking into opinions shared by all stakeholders including lead-

ers in the field and employees. Stating that the IT employees union has expressed their dissent, he urged industry veterans and captains to also come out and share their views. The proposed 'Karnataka Shops and Commercial Establishments (Amendment) Bill 2024' seeks to normalise a 14-hour work day. The existing act



only allows a maximum of 10 hours work per day including overtime.

"It is not the Minister who has brought himself (the proposed bill). The industry is pressuring. (They) are asking and they want it. Since there is pressure from the industry, the bill has come to us. We are still evaluating it at the Labour department. The question is for all the heads of the industry to discuss this," Lad said.

Raj Bhavan fines 2 TMC MLAs over 'illegal' swearing-in

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Two newly elected Trinamool Congress MLAs, who were sworn in by the West Bengal Assembly Speaker recently, on Monday said they received mails from Raj Bhavan questioning the legality of the process and asking them to pay a fine of Rs 500 each.

Speaker Biman Banerjee had administered the oath to two MLAs - Rayat Hossain Sarkar and Sayantika Banerjee - on July

5 in the assembly, though the Governor had appointed Deputy Speaker Asish Banerjee for the task. Sarkar said the mails informed the two that a fine of Rs 500 was imposed on each of them since, it alleged, their oath-taking and attending assembly session on its first day violated Constitutional norms. The 10-day session of the House began on Monday and was adjourned after obituary references.

Sayantika Banerjee told PTI: "We have met the Speaker and



showed him the mail. He said the Speaker's office is looking into the issue. We understand we have no problem in attending the session as elected representatives after taking oath in the temple of

democracy - the state legislature. To a question, she said she would continue to attend the assembly session.

Asked if she had paid the fine, Banerjee said, "Why should I? Have we done anything illegal or improper?"

The emails said that when the Constitutional head of the state designated someone to administer the oath to the MLAs, the Speaker had no jurisdiction in the matter. The mails also alleged that several clauses were violat-

ed by the two newly elected MLAs by taking oath under the Speaker and attending the House session. While Raj Bhavan sources confirmed that such emails were sent to the MLAs concerned, the Speaker could not be contacted for his comments. The swearing-in of Sarkar and Sayantika Bandopadhyay on July 5 ended the month-long impasse between Raj Bhavan and the assembly over the venue of the ceremony and the administering authority.

Modi wants to politicise govt employees on ideological basis: Congress

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress slammed the BJP-led Centre on Monday over its order removing a ban on the participation of government employees in RSS activities, alleging that Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants to politicise employees on an ideological basis.

The attack by the Congress, which also said the move would be a challenge to the sense of neutrality of public servants, came after a government order about the ban being lifted became public and several oppo-



sition leaders criticised it.

In a post on X, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said on this day in 1947, India adopted its national flag but the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the ideological mentor of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP),

opposed the tricolour and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel had warned the organisation against it.

"Sardar Patel had also banned RSS after Gandhiji's assassination on February 4, 1948. Modiji has lifted a 1966 ban on government servants attending RSS activities, after 58 years," Kharge said.

"We know how BJP is using RSS to institutionally take over all constitutional and autonomous bodies. By lifting the ban on government employees from participating in RSS activities, Modiji wants to politicise government offices and employees on ideological basis," he alleged.

This will be a challenge to the sense of neutrality of public servants in government offices and the supremacy of the Constitution, the Congress chief said.

The government is probably taking these steps because the people of the country defeated its "nefarious intent to change the Constitution," he said.

"The Modi government continues its efforts to take control over constitutional bodies and work its way in through the back door and tamper with the Constitution," Kharge alleged.

High-level panel on exam reforms co-opts 2 IIT academicians

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Centre's high-level panel reviewing the functioning of the National Testing Agency and working on exam reforms has co-opted two IIT Kanpur academicians as members, Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan said on Monday.

The academicians are Amey Karkare, Professor of Computer Science and Engineering, IIT Kanpur and Dr Debapriya Roy, Assistant Professor, IIT Kanpur," Pradhan said in response to a written question in Lok Sabha asked by RSP MP N K Premachandran.

The Ministry had last month notified a seven-member panel

headed by former Indian Space Research Organisation Chairman K Radhakrishnan for making recommendations on reforms in the mechanism of the examination process, improvement in data security protocols and structure and functioning of NTA.

"The committee has also co-opted two more members -- Amey Karkare, Professor of Computer Science and Engineering, IIT Kanpur and Dr Debapriya Roy, Assistant Professor, IIT Kanpur," Pradhan said in response to a written question in Lok Sabha asked by RSP MP N K Premachandran.

Uproar in Rajasthan assembly over power cuts, fuel surcharge



PNS ■ JAIPUR

Rajasthan Assembly on Monday witnessed uproar as the Opposition Congress MLAs raised the issue of power cuts and fuel surcharge levied on electricity bills.

While Congress MLAs raised slogans, Minister of State for Power Heeralal Nagar said that power cuts are happening due to the mismanagement of the previous Congress government.

During the Question Hour and Zero Hour, Congress MLAs Indra Meena, Manish Yadav and Amit Chachan raised this issue. Expressing dissatisfaction over the minister's reply during the Question Hour, Leader of Opposition Tikaram Jyoti said that the answer given to the House is an attempt to mislead the House.

He said, "the minister is saying that power plants are being run at a relatively higher capacity, so why is there no electricity?" After this, Congress MLAs started raising slogans.

During Zero Hour, Amit Chachan raised the issue of a 'fuel surcharge' levied on electricity bills and power cuts. Congress MLAs also raised slogans over this and demanded fuel surcharge withdrawal. Jyoti requested Speaker Vasudev Devnani to direct the government in this regard. Congress MLA Manish Yadav also raised the issue of undeclared power cuts.

Minister of State for Power (Independent Charge) Heeralal Nagar alleged during the Question Hour that due to the 'mismanagement' of the previous government, the people in the state are forced to face power cuts.

Despite this, the state government is constantly trying for an uninterrupted supply of electricity through other measures, including an increase in production in the state.

He said that due to extreme heat and heat waves this year, there has been an unexpected increase of 25 to 28 per cent in the demand for electricity as compared to last year.

'Smell of stress from humans could affect dog's emotions'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Dogs too could experience negative emotions, if they 'smell' stress in humans, a study, published in the Scientific Reports journal, has found.

It is known that the smell coming from a stressed person "subconsciously affects" the mental state of people around, including their emotions and choices.

The study's researchers, however, wanted to find out if dogs too were affected similarly in response to odours from a stressed human.

"Dog owners know how attuned their pets are to their emotions but here we show that even the odour of a stressed,

unfamiliar human affects a dog's emotional state, perception of rewards and ability to learn," Nicola Rooney, a senior lecturer at the University of Bristol, UK, said.

"Working dog handlers often describe stress travelling down the lead, but we've also shown it can also travel through the air," Rooney, lead author of the study, said.

The team tested how a stressed human affected dogs' learning and emotional state, based on the theory that making 'optimistic' or 'pessimistic' choices indicate positive or negative emotions, respectively.

The authors recruited 18 dog-owner partners to participate in a series of trials involv-



ing treats, while being exposed to either no odours or those coming from sweat and breath samples of stressed or relaxed people.

For the trials, the dogs were

trained such that a food bowl placed in one location contained a treat, whereas that placed in another location was empty.

Having learned the difference, the dogs were seen to

become faster when approaching the food bowl with the treat, compared to when going towards the empty one.

Now, the researchers tested how quickly the dogs would approach "new, ambiguous" bowl locations positioned between the original two.

A swift, brisk approach towards the food bowl reflected 'optimism' of finding a treat and thereby, a "positive emotional state," according to the authors.

On the other hand, moving slowly towards the food bowl indicated 'pessimism' regarding finding a treat, thereby betraying the dog's negative emotions, they said.

The authors found that the

smell of stress slowed down the dogs in approaching the food bowl placed in the new locations, suggesting they were pessimistic about finding a treat in it.

The dogs exposed to odours of relaxed people did not show this effect, the authors found. They said that the 'pessimistic' response reflected the dog's negative emotional state and could be the dog's way of conserving energy and avoiding disappointment.

"Understanding how human stress affects dogs' wellbeing is an important consideration for dogs in kennels and when training companion dogs and dogs for working roles such as assistance dogs," Rooney said



www.dailypioneer.com

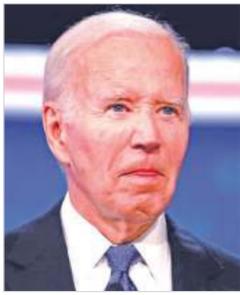
facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

Biden bows out

Joe Biden opts out of the race to US presidential elections, endorses Kamala Harris to take on Trump

Amid speculations about his health, Joe Biden has finally decided to withdraw his candidature from the US Presidential elections. In his place Kamala Harris, the US Vice President is likely to be the Democrat Candidate. It would be now Kamala vs Trump who is seeking re-election after he lost to Joe Biden in the previous election. President Biden, who will be 82 years old by the time of the election, cited personal reflection and a desire to pave the way for new leadership as the primary reasons for his decision. In his address from the White House he expressed confidence in Vice President Kamala's ability to continue the administration's agenda and lead the nation forward. President Biden stated that, after much thought and consideration, he and his wife believed it was time to pass the torch to a new generation of leadership. He mentioned that Vice President Harris had been by his side through the most challenging times of his presidency and that he had seen firsthand her dedication, intelligence, and unwavering commitment to the American people. Kamala's candidacy is historic in many ways. If elected, she would become the first female president, as well as the first Black and South Asian American to hold the office. Harris, who has served as Vice President, has been a prominent figure in the administration, particularly in areas such as criminal justice reform, immigration, and climate change. However, Harris will face significant challenges as she navigates the primary race and potential general election campaign. She will need to address concerns from both progressive and moderate factions within the Democratic Party and present a compelling vision for the future to win over undecided voters. Her campaign is expected to highlight the achievements of the current administration, including economic recovery efforts, the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, and initiatives aimed at promoting social justice and equality. Joe Biden's decision is unprecedented as no presidential candidate have ever opted out so late. Two significant events might have influenced his decision. First, his lacklustre performance in the presidential debate led opponents to question his credentials to lead the country. Second, the assassination attempt on Trump has put him in the limelight and drawn widespread sympathy. These two incidents, though unrelated, may have compelled Democrats to consider other options. On the Republican side, the announcement has prompted a reassessment of strategies. With Biden out of the race, potential Republican candidates will now focus their efforts on countering Kamala's policies. Donald Trump, and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis are among those expected to vie for the Republican nomination. The coming months will reveal how Kamala positions her campaign, addresses the pressing issues facing the country, and seeks to build a broad coalition of support. Her candidacy opens a new chapter in American politics, one that could redefine the future of the Democratic Party and the nation.



Kamala's candidacy is historic in many ways. If elected, she would become the first female president, as well as the first Black and South Asian American to hold the office. Harris, who has served as Vice President, has been a prominent figure in the administration, particularly in areas such as criminal justice reform, immigration, and climate change. However, Harris will face significant challenges as she navigates the primary race and potential general election campaign. She will need to address concerns from both progressive and moderate factions within the Democratic Party and present a compelling vision for the future to win over undecided voters. Her campaign is expected to highlight the achievements of the current administration, including economic recovery efforts, the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, and initiatives aimed at promoting social justice and equality. Joe Biden's decision is unprecedented as no presidential candidate have ever opted out so late. Two significant events might have influenced his decision. First, his lacklustre performance in the presidential debate led opponents to question his credentials to lead the country. Second, the assassination attempt on Trump has put him in the limelight and drawn widespread sympathy. These two incidents, though unrelated, may have compelled Democrats to consider other options. On the Republican side, the announcement has prompted a reassessment of strategies. With Biden out of the race, potential Republican candidates will now focus their efforts on countering Kamala's policies. Donald Trump, and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis are among those expected to vie for the Republican nomination. The coming months will reveal how Kamala positions her campaign, addresses the pressing issues facing the country, and seeks to build a broad coalition of support. Her candidacy opens a new chapter in American politics, one that could redefine the future of the Democratic Party and the nation.

campaign is expected to highlight the achievements of the current administration, including economic recovery efforts, the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, and initiatives aimed at promoting social justice and equality. Joe Biden's decision is unprecedented as no presidential candidate have ever opted out so late. Two significant events might have influenced his decision. First, his lacklustre performance in the presidential debate led opponents to question his credentials to lead the country. Second, the assassination attempt on Trump has put him in the limelight and drawn widespread sympathy. These two incidents, though unrelated, may have compelled Democrats to consider other options. On the Republican side, the announcement has prompted a reassessment of strategies. With Biden out of the race, potential Republican candidates will now focus their efforts on countering Kamala's policies. Donald Trump, and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis are among those expected to vie for the Republican nomination. The coming months will reveal how Kamala positions her campaign, addresses the pressing issues facing the country, and seeks to build a broad coalition of support. Her candidacy opens a new chapter in American politics, one that could redefine the future of the Democratic Party and the nation.

Joe Biden's decision is unprecedented as no presidential candidate have ever opted out so late. Two significant events might have influenced his decision. First, his lacklustre performance in the presidential debate led opponents to question his credentials to lead the country. Second, the assassination attempt on Trump has put him in the limelight and drawn widespread sympathy. These two incidents, though unrelated, may have compelled Democrats to consider other options. On the Republican side, the announcement has prompted a reassessment of strategies. With Biden out of the race, potential Republican candidates will now focus their efforts on countering Kamala's policies. Donald Trump, and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis are among those expected to vie for the Republican nomination. The coming months will reveal how Kamala positions her campaign, addresses the pressing issues facing the country, and seeks to build a broad coalition of support. Her candidacy opens a new chapter in American politics, one that could redefine the future of the Democratic Party and the nation.

Tackling new wave of terror in Jammu

As administrative setups suffer, urgent and coordinated action is imperative to counteract these well-orchestrated threats and restore stability



UMANG KOHLI

There has been a spate of terror attacks in the Jammu Region in the last few months. These terror attacks clearly show that the enemy has changed its tactics to strike into regions that had otherwise become peaceful. After the revocation of Article 370, China and Pakistan felt rattled about the new dynamics. China then tried to capture territory in Leh and Galwan took place. We all know Galwan was a well-planned operation by the PLA. This led to the movement of Indian Army Troops from the hinterland particularly from the Jammu region. The void of boots on the ground in near peace regions of Jammu has led to a vacuum as far as the intelligence network is concerned. Normalcy has to be maintained for some time, also with fewer boots in the Jammu Region the human intelligence that gets developed over some time gets depleted. Most of the army posts in Jammu and Kashmir have an administrative setup based on locals. These locals provide fresh food, logistic support and other admiring material. Even in winter cut-off posts locals provide wood, and admiring backup in both Jammu and Kashmir. Now when troops are depleted all of a sudden, the intelligence gathering in the area dries up. It also leads to a shortage of earning opportunities for the locals making them more vulnerable to the lure of money to facilitate enemy design. This vacuum of this intelligence is being exploited by the enemy and make no mistake China is fully involved in helping Pakistan in this. The attacks are well-planned and deliberate. Pakistan has started refuelling its Over Ground Workers in the Jammu region specifically. There have been a lot of FIRs registered by the army against these OGWs over the years but little or no action has been taken on them. It's about time we took action against these FIRs. Special courts must be set up to fast-track cases filed by the army against underground workers. Many of the men move to Himachal in search of work from Doda during summers. Some of them also



make hideous for terrorists during winter for them to come there and stay during summer. Once the men move out, there are a lot of women in the Doda area who help terrorists. These women give food and information to the terrorists. The terrorists generally hide in Guwardi (resting place Gujars make) and hideouts made during winters in higher reaches of Doda and these women provide them food there. They also provide them with information about force movement and then help them go to the other side of the ridge. Many women work for money yet others get physically involved with these terrorists. The army is not allowed to interrogate these women or to search them. Even after the AFSPA the rules to interact with women are very strict. If the soldiers try to check the movement details of these women, false FIRs are sometimes lodged against them. It would be prudent to provide Special Women Officers in army posts who could search these women and also interro-



THE ENCOUNTERS IN JAMMU REGION IS AN EFFORT BY THE ENEMY TO SHOWCASE THAT THERE IS NO REGION IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR THAT IS PEACEFUL. THEY WANT TO ALSO SHOW THAT THE REVOCATION OF ARTICLE 370 HAS MADE NO DIFFERENCE

gate them. Also, a lot of dog squads could come in handy to chase away these women after smelling them. Till 2003 special women police officers used to stay at far-off army posts in Doda, however as comparative normalcy returned the practice was let go. Special women units in city centres like Doda, Jammu, Udhampur etc could also help. Doda has also had a history of women moving as guides of terrorists. They provide them with local SIM cards which terrorists keep disposing of. The movement of forces from one place to another is also communicated by these OGWs. However, rape of these women by terrorists is not uncommon. One odd local terrorist generally accompanies these Pakistani terrorists to act as a physical guide. Security forces in Jammu and Kashmir work together and police and army share information and intelligence, however when two different organisations share intelligence chances of overlap and double cross increase. It will be prudent to share intel-

ligence but not mix standard operating procedures which may be different for the two organisations. Lungars of jawans of both forces must remain different at all times. Also, each piece of information and intelligence shared must be carefully corroborated by other sources independent of each other. It is also advised not to rush into situations based on half-corked information. The encounters in Jammu region is an effort by the enemy to showcase that there is no region in Jammu and Kashmir that is peaceful. They want to also show that the revocation of Article 370 has made no difference to their effort to bleed India. The entire effort of the enemy is hinged on Foreign Terrorists who are helped by local Over Ground Workers. Hoping fast action is taken against OGWs while the army eliminates these terrorists sent by Pakistan on the instructions of China. (The author has firsthand experience of encounters in Doda Forests for three long years; views are personal)

PICTALK



Artists decorate a wall for the 46th Session of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee, in New Delhi

PTI

A silent revolution in mica mines of Jharkhand

The mica mines in Jharkhand's Koderma district are now free from child labour. This is a significant milestone in the region where child exploitation is rampant

On the 5th of July, the Chairperson of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), Priyank Kanoongo, declared that the mica mines in Jharkhand's Koderma district were free from child labour. NCPCR's announcement holds immense significance given that child labour in Koderma's mica mines has been an open secret for decades. Despite the International Labour Organization considering mining and quarrying as hazardous work and one of the worst forms of child labour child labour continues to persist throughout the world, especially in the marginalised sector. Children's small size makes them ideal for navigating the narrow caves and tunnels of mica extraction. In the wake of stringent environmental regulations including the 1980 Forest Conservation Act, legal mica mining paved the way for illegal trade thriving in Koderma and the rest of the mica belt looping through the dense forests of northern Jharkhand and southern Bihar. I've witnessed this journey up close. I've seen



Koderma transform from a district where every family's children were engaged in mica mining and collection to a district with all children from these mines enrolled in, and going to schools. Back in 2005, while searching for the children involved in mica mining and collection, I was in for a rude shock. The place resembled a parallel universe—schools shut down for months, CRPF battalions camping in schools, curfew-like atmosphere post 5 pm, no roads, mobile towers, electricity or tap water. I realised that the mica, which gave shimmer to our cars, cosmetics and electronic appliances, was coming from a place, which was oblivious to development and rights. Over the last 20 years, over 32,000 children identified as working in mica mining and

collection, withdrawn from work, enrolled and retained in schools through the efforts of NGOs under the Child Labour Free Mica banner. And over 22,000 in the last two years alone. This monumental change was achieved by applying a multipronged strategy at a scale in the targeted geography: Research: Data was gathered to assess the problem and plan their solutions. In 2019, over 20,000 children, a majority of them school dropouts, were found working in mica mines. Participation: Children's councils were formed to allow the participation of children in decision-making on issues they were facing. This model broke the systemic barriers of oppression in access to rights and injustice. Hundreds of awareness programs were organised in mica mining villages to prevent child labour. Protection: Based on information received from credible sources, children were rescued from mines from time to time. Additionally, in 2019, the findings of a study conducted on out-of-school children were submitted to

NCPCR. As a result, the stakeholders were able to monitor the school attendance of children to ensure that rescued children were retained in schools and no child was leaving school to work in mica mines. Partnerships: MoU with the Jharkhand state government, partnership with the NITI Aayog, local NGOs and NCPCR enabled the Child Labour Free Mica program to reach the farthest corners of the mica mining areas in Koderma. Enhancing social security: People in mica mining-dependent villages were connected to social security schemes. Labour cards were made for daily wage labourers; and people were linked with the public distribution system and pension schemes. The above interventions, had following impact: 20,584 children withdrawn from labour and 30,364 children were enrolled in schools- Change is possible, the child labour-free mica program has proved this.

(The author is a child rights activist and founder of Just Rights for Children; views are personal)



BHUVAN RIBHU

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

STUDENT UNREST IN BANGLADESH

Madam — The unrest in Bangladesh due to student protests is a matter of concern for India. Students from Dhaka University are outraged about the government's quota system in education. The dissatisfaction among locals from the Awami League is evident, with reports of killings in the Chittagong district. Quotas and reservations were initially tools to promote equity in society, but their continued existence raises questions about government accountability. This issue is not unique to Bangladesh; India also has a complex reservation and quota system that makes it difficult for average students to access good education and job opportunities. Brilliant students succeed on their own merits, while others rely on quotas, leaving average students frustrated. The governments of India and Bangladesh, along with other countries that adhere to quotas and reservations, need to address this critical issue to prevent future unrest among students. A number of Indian students are still to be evacuated. Their families are anxiously waiting any news about them as most communication channels are blocked. This situation not only highlights the immediate need for safety and support for the students by the Indian government. The international community, including neighboring countries like India, is closely monitoring the situation, recognizing the potential for wider regional implications. It is imperative that the Bangladeshi government takes swift and decisive action to address the students' concerns and restore normalcy to ensure the well-being and future of its young population.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

POLITICAL AGENDAS: A REFLECTIONS

Madam — The All-Party meeting called by the ruling dispensation seems intended to push through its agenda for this

Mumbai's monsoon mayhem



Initial rains inundate low-lying areas and block vehicular traffic, creating chaos on the roads. The widespread presence of potholes on Mumbai roads and highways exacerbates the problem, keeping road users on edge. Subways suffer from poor lighting and potholes, adding to the fears of road users. Waterlogging, traffic snarls, train delays, and fallen trees worsen the situation. The lethargy of BMC workers is evident, and public miseries go unaddressed. It is so unfortunate that the authorities take people for granted and despite enormous resources at their disposal do not act in time. It is now up to the people to take precautions during the rains and help others to avoid mishaps. Helping each other during floods is a practical solution to the pressing problems faced by the people of Mumbai.

C K Subramaniam | Mumbai

session of Parliament without opposition hurdles. Every party, state, and individual leader has a wish list. The former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, who previously demanded Special Category Status for the state before assuming office, was expected to achieve this goal with an absolute majority. However, to everyone's surprise, he never addressed this issue and focused instead on implementing Union government programs. Now, having lost power, he has again raised the issue of Special Category Status for Andhra Pradesh. People have come to understand the leaders and their parties; it is now up to the leaders to understand the people and their demands.

A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

CELEBRATING INDIAN TENNIS LEGENDS

Madam — It was a significant day at Newport, Rhode Island, as Indian tennis legends Leander Adrian Paes and Vijay Amritraj were inducted into the prestigious International Hall of Fame. Leander Paes, a Padma Bhushan and

Padma Shri awardee, is renowned as one of the all-time great doubles players, holding the record for the most doubles wins in Davis Cup. His illustrious career includes eight men's doubles and ten mixed doubles Grand Slam titles. In 1999, he, along with Mahesh Bhupathi, became the first pair in the Open era to reach the finals of all four Grand Slams in men's doubles in the same calendar year. Vijay Amritraj, a Padma Shri awardee, was inducted in the contributor category, recognizing his visionary leadership and transcendent impact on the sport. In 2022, Amritraj was honored in London by the International Tennis Hall of Fame and the International Tennis Federation for his lifetime contributions to tennis. Their achievements continue to inspire and shape the future of tennis. Kudos to both Paes and Amritraj for making India proud.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

It can liberate the mind from perpetual conflict and lead to inner peace



RAVI VALLURI

Recall the iconic lines, of Amitabh Bachchan in the movie Deewar — looks intently at the idol of Lord Shiva and says, “Bahut khush hoge tum!” Bachchan, in the movie, essayed the role of an atheist smuggler. However, eventually, in the final stages of his life, he surrenders to the Supreme Power and seeks forgiveness. True enlightenment is the art of living compassionately. The human mind and heart reach a point of inflexion where an act of pardon remains an inescapable reality.

A prosaic individual might not be able to separate the chaff from the grain. His mind is full of antipathetic thoughts that he cannot transcend the barrier and is unable to exonerate anyone who has inflicted pain or hardship on him. The mind, full of gloom-ridden and obstructive thoughts cannot perceive the divinity in others. It remains perpetually in a state of conflict. Such an emotionally distraught person would castigate even angelic and divine figures out of callowness. Several organised and structured religions lay prominence on the art of forgiveness. If an individual does not rise to the sublime spheres of compassion and forgiveness, then he gets trapped in the whirlpool of cause and effect. The unabated Karmic cycle continues without any resolution.

The pivot is to fortify and protect the human mind to make it robust and compassionate. It attempts to extricate the self from the cause and effect of actions and even non-actions. Action and non-actions of humans indeed leave an indelible impression on the human mind. It would be perspicacious to pose as to how non-actions are also a kind of Karmic activity and in what manner it impacts the human mind and consciousness. Non-action in a way represents not taking up the gauntlet. Sage Ashtavakra, who authored the treatise, Ashtavakra Gita, posits a theory that an individual should break the bondage of guilt and anger to invoke the grace of remission. There is a poignant Zen story that explains the exemplary tenets of compassion and forgiveness. Aeon ago a Zen Master summoned his tutees in a Temple of Knowledge and asked them if they harboured the antipathetic emotion of hatred in their minds. “Yes!” exclaimed the disciples. The Master directed his disciples to place a potato each



in their bag and always travel with it as a reminder that despite the practice of meditation and breathing exercises their prana level was not high enough to expatriate hatred and inculcate compassion. The number of potatoes was to increase depending on the quantum of anger and would be directly proportional to the antipathy in their minds. Some young monks ended up carrying a bagful of potatoes, which over a period became malodorous. In sheer exasperation, the harried disciples sought refuge in the grace of the master to dispense away with the bag. The Zen Master guffawed and chided his students to abandon the negative trait of abhorrence from their minds, lest the malodour of these traits become a burden all through their lives. To lead a warm and healthy life, individuals should embark upon the path of forgiveness and compassion.

This suffuses the mind with immense strength and courage of conviction. It would be insightful for any individual to make positive affirmations, reinforcing love for every animate and inanimate object to build a divine society. Such affirmations would train the mind to remain unruffled and spread the quintessential gospel of forgiveness. Thereby humans would truly embrace fellow beings. If we construe the human mind to be the hardware, compassionate thoughts and forgiveness are part of non-negotiable software.

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views expressed are personal)

A blueprint for boosting rural economic growth



MONICA B SOOD

India’s rural sector stands at a pivotal juncture, poised for transformation through small-scale and green enterprises. It has potential to become India’s growth engine



India’s rural sector must be transformed for inclusive growth and sustainable development. This change relies on small-scale and green enterprises to boost the rural economy, empower women, and employ unskilled workers. By channelling resources such as the extra Rs 1 lakh crore RBI dividends into capital projects and innovative schemes, India can foster self-sustainability in rural areas, mitigate youth distress, and rejuvenate the demand side of the economy.

This comprehensive approach not only addresses immediate employment needs but also lays the foundation for long-term capital formation and environmental preservation.

Incorporation of small-scale and green industries as the engine of growth

Micro enterprises have always been the backbone of the Indian agriculture-based economy. These labour-intensive enterprises perfectly capture the unskilled and semi-skilled manpower from the farming communities, therefore, creating employment and improving existence standards without much training. The development of these industries generates a massive multiplier effect on the creation of other business lines that support them and the general economy. Green industries are therefore leading this change. Encompassing renewable energy, organic farming, and sustainable manufacturing, these sectors offer dual benefits: employment opportunities for production and environmental management.

The establishment of green industries in the rural region targets to solve social problems like climate change and environmental degradation and at the same time create a sustainable means of living. This was done by allowing biogas and biofuel plants, solar energy farms, Ayurvedic and Unani medicine industries, and cooperative organic farming. These measures create employment, lessen the dependency on fossil energy and foster the preservation of the environment.

Women empowerment Out of the total rural population of India, the female population is about 30% which is a great unexplored talent pool. It is shown the pro-



THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GREEN INDUSTRIES IN THE RURAL REGION TARGETS TO SOLVE SOCIAL PROBLEMS LIKE CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AND AT THE SAME TIME CREATE A SUSTAINABLE MEANS OF LIVING

motion of employment and entrepreneurship in these women brings substantial socio-economic returns. Micro and sustainable industries remain essential in empowering women since they create employment, skills development, and business opportunities for women. Self-help groups, women-based cooperatives and micro enterprises are the best way to ensure women’s productive participation in the rural economy. These initiatives exist in areas where women dominate including handicrafting, production in textiles, manufacturing of alternative/Ayurvedic products, processing of raw materials, farming organically, milk production, and food processing. Credit, training, and market linkages also enable women to set up and expand their businesses besides improving on household incomes and community development.

Public private partnerships A Channel for Facilitating PPP for Rural Development PPP is a powerful platform for pooling resources and skills to promote rural development. Thus, PPP models can initiate the development of small and green industries in rural areas with the support of the government and private investors. The government can provide policy support and an environment for development and financial backing while the private players bring in funds, technical expertise, and managerial skills. As per this model, to encourage rural development, a part of ₹1 lakh crore RBI dividends can be spent to co-finance with private entities. It can be used to fund the development of industrial clusters, renewable energy projects, and training institutions with efficient implementation and compliance with social and environmental responsibility.

Capital formation and rural employment

These are two basic objectives of

the growth process that need to be understood and analysed. To sum up, the provision of ₹1 lakh crore RBI dividends for capital investments in the form of sustainable rural development plans provides a strong base. Construction of infrastructure such as roads, bridges, renewable energy facilities, and development of industrial estates can offer employment in the short run as well as in the long run spur economic development. A targeted investment can engage millions annually, thus erasing rural unemployment and distress to a large extent. In this way, employment of non-skilled and semi-skilled people from rural areas is possible, and thus future generations are protected from unemployment migration to urban areas, and rural-urban disparity. The placement of rural youth through placement in local schools, hospitals, and government offices helps in the tackling of manpower issues leading to improved service delivery and welfare of the populace.

Funding rural transformation

Funding the strategic rural development agenda calls for out-of-the-box funding acquisition strategies to tap several sources of funds. To the Rs 1 lakh crore RBI dividends, contributions from CSR, and own finances of panchayats and municipalities, and specific cess on fuel, income tax, and GST can be added. For example, the mandatory 25% contribution from CSR funds can be used to direct corporate money into rural development causes. While a 0.5% cess on luxury items, cars, aeroplane fares and GST can fetch a huge additional amount. However, it revealed that additional resources can be mobilized from the Skill Development Schemes (SKS) and hospital’s SKS funds for support of wages in essential sectors. The introduction of a small cess on share trading can also produce a fairly good revenue for such

a scheme in turn funding the rural employment programme permanently.

Addressing rural unemployment

At the moment, unemployment has touched the figure of 8% in India. 1 per cent of the nation’s unemployed populace is comprised of rural youth. If PM wants to bring the unemployment rate down to 6% and this is considered nearly equal to the employment rate observed in the developed countries, the scheme should ensure employment generation for at least 1 crore rural youth. The scheme should aim at offering low-wage employment to the increase in unemployment among the rural youthful population while at the same time ensuring that such employment offers incentives to make the youth stay in their given community without competing for skilled employment opportunities. This way the scheme means setting wages at ₹10,000 per month with 80:20 work distribution will sustain rural households’ income and at the same time does not hinder organised labour employers markets.

A Roadmap to rural rejuvenation

Additional Rs1 lakh crore of RBI dividends coupled with idea capitalisms as sources of funding open the doors of a scheme that has the potential of providing a road map for rural rejuvenation. As a result, the small-scale industries, green industries, women and unskilled rural labour can make the scheme self-sustainable, reduce unemployment and bring a long-lasting impact on the environment. PPP and the focus on capital development will help the scheme to be sustainable and grow in scale, thus painting a better picture for rural India.

(The writer is Chairperson of the National Unity & Security Council; views are personal)

Bihar again misses out on Olympic representation

Bihar’s chronic issues in sports infrastructure, funding mismanagement, and administrative neglect continue to hinder its representation on the global stage

Bihar is bereft of a berth in the Olympics again. By Gyan Bhadra The last week of this month is going to witness the glistening inaugural ceremony of the Olympic games of 17-days duration in Paris. In its wake sports pundits in India are preempting and counting on their fingers the medal tally Indian athletes will bag for the country. However, at the time of writing this piece, the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs had put its imprimatur on the list of 117 athletes along with 140 supporting staff. Now the question crops up: Is there any athlete from Bihar representing India in the Paris Olympics? The answer is a resounding “no”. As in the Tokyo Olympics; so in the



GYAN BHADRA

Paris Olympics, there is no representation of Bihar’s sportsmen. The reasons behind it are threefold. One, as far as sports infrastructure in Bihar is concerned, there is a lack of an adequate number of stadiums, sports-related training centres and the ablest guidance of coaches. The reasons could be attributed to the fact that government investment in the sports sector is abysmally low. Even central financial

assistance given to the Bihar government to the tune of 50.83 crores as part of the “Khelo India” scheme was seemingly not utilised for either the development of infrastructure or the honing of skills of athletes in the state.

The patterns of allocation of funds to the sports sector are depressingly alarming. It has been observed that money meant for the overall growth of the sports sector is diverted as per the whims and fancies of politicians.

This invariably puts a toll on the sports industry which finds itself in a quandary and struggling always. Two, it goes without saying that the association of politicians with prominent sports bodies is an age-old pastime.



Every politician worth its salt desires to be a member of sports bodies. Whether it be BCCI or sports bodies at the state level, every political leader wants to usurp the cake of huge funds invested in the sports bodies then how could Bihar be left behind? Instead of being deeds heroes, espousing the

cause of sports development in Bihar, politicians, once getting a coveted position in sports bodies, exploit available resources to serve their ends.

Public memory is short. But not so painfully short that it will forget the fact that former Chief Minister Lalu Yadav, when, at the helms of Bihar Cricket Association as President, did not do enough in the realm of training budding talents of Bihar. The lack of Lalu’s political will to promote cricket could be gauged by the fact that during his tenure as BCA president, no cricket player from Bihar had got a berth even in the Ranji Trophy squad; what to talk of big league matches at an international level. Now

sports pundits may arguably put a contention that during Lalu’s tenure as BCA president, Bihar did not have a State Ranji Team as partition of Bihar caused losses to Bihar concerning sports facilities. Jharkhand carried takeaways of a major chunk of sports facilities with itself. However, taking refuge in this excuse by sports pundits held no water for scores of young cricket players then. This is more so because, during that period, RJD was led by Rabri Devi at the helm of state affairs; and Lalu could have done a lot about setting up a proper state Ranji Team and appointing the ablest coaches to train state’s cricket players.

Three, the role of the Bihar

Olympic Association (BOA) in preparing athletes for the Olympic games leaves much to be desired. Going by records, BOA officials do not take the trouble to organise events and trials for grooming athletes to the level of world-level Olympic games. So it springs no surprise that no athlete from Bihar had figured in the list of 117 athlete-member teams for the Paris Olympics.

What is worse, there is a blame game between BOA and the state government over this sorry state of sports affairs. BOA puts the onus on the state government for sheer negligence about the lack of infrastructure and trained coaches.

This results in BOA finding itself unable to organise

events at regular intervals. On the other hand, the state government absolves itself of essential responsibilities about BOA by saying that BOA is an independent entity and the government cannot interfere with its functioning.

In this ongoing war of attrition, budding talented athletes are the losers. Eventually, it could be summed up that the scheme “Medal Lao, Naukri Pao” may seem to be alluring to a large number of youth at first glance. However, due to the lack of necessary sports wherewithals in Bihar, the scheme would not cut much ice with scores of young talents.

(The author is a columnist, views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS

Air India flagship Airbus A350 set to fly to US from Nov

Air India on Monday said its flagship wide-body aircraft Airbus A350 will start operating on ultra-long haul routes from the winter schedule this year, starting with Delhi-New York JFK flight from November 1. From January 2, 2025, the airline's Delhi-Newark flights will also be operated by Airbus A350-900, Air India said. The Tata Group airline has six A350 in its fleet while 34 more are on order. Air India said it will also offer premium economy class, along with business and economy classes, on these flights. These routes are currently being operated by Boeing 777-300ER planes. "This (the introduction of Airbus A350) is a significant leap forward for our US operations that also underscores our commitment to continuous improvement," said Campbell Wilson, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director at Air India. Air India at present operates to five destinations in the US -- New York, Newark, Washington, San Francisco, and Chicago.



Jana SFB Q1 net profit jumps 89% to Rs 171 crore

Jana Small Finance Bank on Monday reported an 89 per cent jump in its post-tax net profit to Rs 171 crore for the April-June quarter. The lender had reported a profit after tax of Rs 90 crore in the year-ago period. The core net interest income grew to Rs 610 crore from Rs 462 crore in the year-ago period on the back of a 25 per cent growth in advances and a 0.4 per cent expansion in the net interest margin to 8 per cent. The non-interest income was flat at Rs 189 crore for the reporting quarter. Amid the sluggish deposit growth in the system, the bank seems to have ducked the trend with a 41 per cent growth in the number. Its gross non-performing assets ratio increased to 2.62 per cent in June against 2.11 per cent at the end of the preceding March quarter, which was attributed to seasonal and event-driven factors by its managing director and chief executive Ajay Kanwal. The overall capital adequacy as of June 30 stood at 19.3 per cent against 18.7 per cent in the year-ago period.



Gold rises Rs 100 to Rs 75,650 per 10 grams amid firm global cues

Gold prices rose by Rs 100 to Rs 75,650 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday on increased buying by jewellers amid a firm global trend. However, silver prices plunged by Rs 600 to Rs 91,000 per kg. In the previous session, it had settled at Rs 91,600 per kg, as per the All India Sarafa Association. On Saturday, the precious metal rates had closed at Rs 75,550 per 10 grams. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also rose by Rs 100 to Rs 75,300 per 10 grams. It had ended at Rs 75,200 per 10 grams in the previous session. Traders attributed the rise in gold prices to fresh demand by local jewellers and a firm trend in the international markets. The white metal has declined Rs 3,400 per kg in the past four sessions since July 18 when it had fallen by Rs 400 to end at Rs 94,000 per kg. Globally, Comex gold is trading higher at US\$ 2,453.60 per ounce, up by US\$ 6.80 per ounce from the previous close.



Will reduce pending litigations under companies law: FM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has taken several steps, including the withdrawal of prosecutions and compoundable cases, to reduce litigations under the companies law, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said Monday.



She said one of the objectives of decriminalisation has also been reduction of litigation burden in judicial courts and shifting the prosecution cases towards adjudication

"Till July 15, 2024, a total of 6,294 applications for withdrawal have been filed before various courts. However, serious or non-compoundable offences will continue to be prosecuted," she said in Lok Sabha.

The minister said the MCA has taken several steps to review pending prosecutions in various courts. In 2017 and

later in 2022, a committee of senior officers of the ministry was set up to give recommendations on withdrawal of prosecutions.

The objective was to free judicial courts from dealing with offences that are procedural and technical in nature to ensure that such courts are able

to focus on serious offences, Sitharaman said, adding it was envisaged that cases of procedural and technical nature may be handled through an adjudication process. She said that to improve ease of doing business and enhance corporate

governance, the MCA has taken several major steps including decriminalisation of 63 offences under the Companies and Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) Acts.

She said one of the objectives of decriminalisation has also been reduction of litigation burden in judicial courts and shifting the prosecution cases towards adjudication.

Zero fee for incorporation of company with authorised capital up to Rs 15 lakh, setting up of a centralised registrar of companies (CRC) for incorporation, setting up of a Central Scrutiny Centre (CSC) for centralised scrutiny of e-forms filed under Straight Through Process (STP), conversion of more than 50 forms to STP which earlier required approval of field offices, setting up of a Central Processing Centre (CPC) for centralised processing of specified non-STP e-forms are some of the steps taken by the government, she said.

Govts should renounce some powers to help improve governance: Eco Survey

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The finance ministry's Economic Survey 2023-24 suggested that governments renounce some of their powers as it would be good for both the governed and the governing.

the social and economic transformation of democratic India is a remarkable success story, the document, authored by a team led by Chief Economic Advisor V. Anantha Nageswaran, stated. "We have come a long way. The economy has grown from



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman tabled the Economic Survey 2023-24 a day before the Union Budget in the Lok Sabha.

While contemplating the challenges that lie ahead, one should not be daunted because

around US\$ 288 billion in FY93 (1992-93) to US\$ 3.6 trillion in FY23," it said.

India has generated more growth per dollar of debt than other comparable nations and abject poverty has all but been eliminated. Human develop-



Confident India's FY25 GDP growth will surpass Eco Survey forecast: Industry

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Industry bodies on Monday expressed confidence that India's GDP growth will surpass the 6.5 to 7 per cent forecast by the Economic Survey, and hoped that the upcoming Budget will roll out measures to help unlock the country's growth potential.

Reacting to the Economic Survey 2023-24, tabled in Parliament, Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General,

CII, stated that it is "pragmatic" in its approach and offers a futuristic vision to move India boldly towards achieving the developed economy status by 2047.

"The survey is positive about the India growth story, and I am confident that India's GDP growth for FY25 will surpass the forecast given in the Survey and basis certain conditions, it has the potential to be at 8 per cent," CII President Sanjiv Puri said.

Sensex, Nifty settle lower ahead of Budget

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended lower on Monday, dragged down by heavy selling pressure in Reliance Industries and Kotak Mahindra Bank ahead of the Budget.

Besides, a weak trend in global equity markets also hit investors sentiment, traders said.

Falling for the second day in a row, the 30-share BSE Sensex fell 102.57 points or 0.13 per cent to settle at 80,502.08. During the session, it tanked 504 points or 0.62 per cent to 80,100.65.

The NSE Nifty dipped 21.65 points or 0.09 per cent to 24,509.25. During the day, it dropped 168.6 points or 0.68 per cent to 24,362.30.

Among the Sensex pack, Reliance Industries declined over 3 per cent after the company reported a 5 per cent drop in its June quarter net profit.

Kotak Mahindra Bank also fell more than 3 per cent after its June quarter earnings failed to cheer investors.

ITC, State Bank of India, HCL Technologies and IndusInd Bank were the other big laggards. NTPC, UltraTech Cement, HDFC Bank and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the gainers.

PE/VC investment rises 8% to US\$ 31.5 bn in Jan-Jun: Report

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Private equity funds and venture capital funds investments have risen 8 per cent year-on-year to US\$ 31.5 billion in the first half of 2024, a report said on Monday. The amount of funds invested is 30 per cent higher than the July-December 2023 period, the report by industry lobby grouping IVCA and consultancy firm EY said.

From a volume perspective, the number of deals increased to 654 during the six months from 441 in the preceding six months and 439 transactions in the year-ago period. "Notwithstanding valuation challenges, India continues to be a bright spot for deal-

making, with its PE/VC ecosystem innovating to find opportunities for investments and make the best of the buoyant exit conditions," the consultancy firm's partner Vivek Soni said.

Pure play PE/VC investments (excluding real estate and infrastructure sectors) at US\$ 18.6 billion in H1 2024 were 20 per cent higher compared to US\$ 15.5 billion in the year-ago period. There were 69 large deals of over US\$ 100

million each totalling US\$ 22.6 billion in the first half of 2024, against 61 large deals aggregating to US\$ 18.1 billion in the preceding six months. These included Brookfield's acquisition of ATC India Tower Corporation for US\$ 2 billion, followed by two US\$ 1.5 billion deals, including Macquarie's acquisition of Vertelo and ADIA and KKR's investment in Reliance Retail Ventures warehousing assets.

Exits were up 18 per cent in terms of value at US\$ 11 billion, compared to the year-ago period's US\$ 9.4 billion, but were down by around a third compared to the preceding six months' US\$ 15.5 billion.

Govt issues guidelines for Rs 4,950 cr incentive to Discoms

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi on Monday said the New & Renewable Energy Ministry has issued guidelines to provide Rs 4,950 crore incentive to discoms under the PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana.

Criteria for incentivising Discoms include achievement of installation of additional grid-connected rooftop solar capacity beyond the baseline level, the New & Renewable Energy Minister said in a post



on X.

"Rs 4,950 crore incentives to Discoms under @PMSuryaGhar. The guidelines have been issued for effective disbursement of incen-

tives," he said. The scheme guidelines for implementation of incentives to Discoms were notified by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) last week on July 18, an official statement said.

The scheme has an outlay of Rs 75,021 crore and will be implemented till FY 2026-27, MNRE said.

Under the scheme, Discoms are designated as state implementation agencies (SIAs) responsible for facilitating var-

ious measures, including net meter availability, timely inspection, and commissioning of installations. The total financial outlay for the 'Incentives to DISCOMS' component is Rs 4,950 crore, subsuming the previous outlay under the Grid Connected Roof Top Solar (GCR) Phase II programme, the statement said.

"The scheme also has the provision of an indicative rewards system to recognise and motivate the field staff of Discoms.

Stock markets close lower on muted earnings, caution ahead of budget

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Stock markets closed lower on Monday with benchmark Sensex dropping 102 points due to selling in index heavy-weight Reliance Industries and Kotak Bank on muted earnings and caution ahead of the Union Budget.

Falling for the second day in a row, the 30-share BSE Sensex dropped by 102.57 points or 0.13 per cent to settle at 80,502.08. The barometer fell by 504 points or 0.62 per cent to hit an intra-day low of 80,100.65 but recovered most of the losses as Infosys and HDFC Bank advanced. The broader Nifty of the NSE dipped 21.65 points or 0.09 per

cent to 24,509.25. During the day, it dropped 168.6 points or 0.68 per cent to 24,362.30.

Rich nations' planned carbon taxes on imports against spirit of Paris Agreement

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The European Union's planned carbon tax on energy-intensive goods imported from developing countries is in contravention of the spirit of the Paris Agreement, India said on Monday.

The government's 'Economic Survey 2023-24' highlighted that even as developed countries prepare to impose a carbon tax on imports, they are ramping up energy demand like never before due to their obsession with artificial intelligence (AI).

"Developing nations are also being threatened with a carbon

tax at the border, in full negation of the spirit of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective national capabilities that was supposed to have undergirded the Paris Agreement," the report on the state of the economy in the previous year said.

This means that India not only has to deal with climate change and undertake energy transition but also confront the protectionism of developed countries, it said. The European Union is on course to implement its Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), and both the United Kingdom and the United States are in different

stages of imposing their versions of it in due course. The EU argues that this mechanism creates a level playing field for domestically manufactured goods, which must adhere to stricter environmental standards, and help reduce emissions from imports. However, other nations, particularly developing countries, worry that this would

harm their economies and make it too expensive to trade with the bloc.

The move has also sparked debate at multilateral forums, including UN climate conferences, with developing countries arguing that, under UN climate change rules, countries cannot dictate how others should reduce emissions.

Govt should actively support MSMEs in digitisation processes

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Confederation of Indian Industry National MSME Council Co-Chairman Ponnuswami on Monday said the government should actively support micro, small and medium enterprises, in their digitisation processes.

Expressing his view on the Economic Survey presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala

he said in a statement. Ponnuswami said MSMEs have plenty of opportunity for growth in Defence, Electronics, EV manufacturing.

Sitharaman, Ponnuswami said there needs to be an effort through close coordination between the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of MSMEs and Ministry of External Affairs to help MSMEs access new markets, especially in the case of first time exporters. "The government needs to continue actively supporting MSMEs in their digitisation processes and implementing Industry 4.0"

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
PUBLIC HEALTH & MUNICIPAL
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Notice No. 827/TUFDCKMCC/2024-25,
Dt. 22-07-2024
Works in Khammam and Jangoan
Districts - 5 Nos of works - Estimated
cost Rs.645.00 Lakhs. 2 Nos of works
for Rs.150.00 Lakhs reserved for SCs.
Download start date and Down load
end date as per uploaded bid
document. Further details can be seen
@ www.tender.telangana.gov.in
Sd/- Superintending Engineer (PH)
UNIT-I, TUFDCC, Warangal
R.O.No: 353-DPCLADVT/110204-25, Dt. 22-07-2024

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
ROADS & BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
NIT Short Tender Notice No. EE/R&B/MDC/02/2024-25 dt. 22.07.2024
Emergency Online tenders are invited under e-procurement platform for Four (04)
works of Annual Maintenance works in Medchal Malkajgiri District for a total ECV of
Rs.36.63 Lakhs by the undersigned. Bid uploading starting date: 23.07.2024 @ 03.30 PM
to closing date: 30.07.2024 @ 03.30 PM. Further details can be seen at e-procurement
market place i.e., www.tender.telangana.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer (R&B)
R.O.No: 357-DPCLADVT/110204-25, Dt. 22-07-2024
Medchal Malkajgiri Dist.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
NIT No. 141E/E/14/GHMC/2024-25 Date: 22-07-2024
Name of work: Various works under Division - 14, KZ, GHMC. Estimate Amount/
ECV: Rs. 31.85 Lakhs, Start date / Last date & time for receipts of Bids:
23-07-2024 @ 11.00 AM / 26-07-2024 @ 11.00 AM. Name & Address of office:
Executive Engineer -14, GHMC, 5th floor, Abids Parking Complex, Abids,
Hyderabad. For further details can be seen at e-procurement website
www.tender.telangana.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer,
R.O.No: 1096-PPCLADVT/110204-25, Dt. 22-07-2024
Division - 14, GHMC.

'I HAD TO CONSULT A THERAPIST BECAUSE GOLU WAS OVERPOWERING SHWETA'

Shweta Tripathi Sharma, better known as "Mirzapur ki Rani," is now overwhelmed with the affection her character Golu Gupta has been showered with, particularly in the aftermath of Season 3. The Pioneer goes into greater detail regarding her character and how it has affected her in this exclusive interview

TEJAL SINHA

The "chulbuli-bubby" Zenia Khan, who we first saw in Disney's *Kya Mast Hai Life* and as Minnie in *Suite Life of Karan and Kabir*, has been a part of the most popular *Mirzapur* franchise. Golu Gupta and has been making "Bhaukaal." Naturally, with the release of the third season of *Mirzapur*, there has been a lot of discussion about the incredibly gifted Shweta Tripathi Sharma and her flexibility and on-screen prowess.

She is now known as "Mirzapur ki Queen" due to the enormous influence her character has had on OTT.

"Even as creators, we never stop learning and developing," an overjoyed Shweta says in an exclusive interview with *The Pioneer*. "We have an obligation to consider the audience and the message we are conveying. It's crucial to explain 'why' a character is acting a specific way rather than just what they are doing, regardless of how the character is written. It is more about the relationships that individuals have than it is about the violence. It talks about how when someone pushes someone else into a corner, they get punished or labelled as monsters. It's about using various powers to win. Madhuri's line, *Hum Yahan Gungi Gudiya, banne nahi aaye hai*, is one of my favourites."

She was called 'Mirzapur ki Queen' and 'Dearest Golu' in a note she got on a napkin a few days ago while out on a date with her spouse. She had just become tearful due to this affection. "Yeah, *Mardon ki duniya main*, there's this one girl who is standing her ground and for me, that is a win. The feeling was really pleasant. Because I can convey to boys and girls alike—through my performances—that your gender or ethnicity will not define you. You won't believe guys are dubbing me 'Golu King' (we laugh), because it's not about what you're doing; it's about how you think and your actions have more meaning and impact."

For all the love that she's been getting, she credits the team and other departments for the same. During this chat, she also highlighted something that we also didn't think of. "In the third season, which I recently watched, Golu is wearing a shirt with grey, pink and blue blocks on it when she returns. I was genuinely curious to know what the designer had in mind for this. That's exactly how I feel in my mind. I possess the strength of both a girl and a boy. Certain small things have a profound effect on us, even though at first we are unable to comprehend them."

She learned from Golu to be "strong-headed" and "honest." And as the character grows across the entire series, we get to experience that. She claims that Golu has actually helped her realise that failure is completely OK since, the next time you try some-

thing new, you'll learn from your mistakes and improve. The *Masaan* actress laughs as we talk about the series' most popular term. "*Mirzapur* has so many different signs of 'Bhaukaals,' but yes, Golu is definitely the biggest 'Bhaukaal' of the series."

There's no denying that Golu has had a big impact on a lot of viewers. "I'm so happy that there are girls on Instagram who dress like Golu." We couldn't agree more with her as she continued, saying, "I feel Golu has become an emotion and Golu exists in all of us. For me, Golu represents a renegade fighter who is aware of the art of combat, the value of listening to one's inner voice and the strengths and flaws of others." Even though her character isn't shown to us for a number of episodes in *Mirzapur*, the scene in which she is threatened, assaulted and tortured by Chote Tyagi (played by Vijay Varma) gives the viewer shivers.

She also says, "I feel in action; your physical fitness really matters," in reference to the action sequence that she brings to the screen. "It takes more than just good looks and attire to be a successful actor. Being prepared is crucial for every action scenario. I made sure that, as soon as I learned about the season, I trained with my amazing trainer, Trivedy Pandey, for a full year. We used to work on everything—from mobility to strength training to floor training. I used to practice yoga as well, and I still do since it's a great way to engage specific muscles."

As our conversation continued, she continued to praise her co-star, Vijay Varma, with whom she had collaborated on both *Kaalkoot* and the series. She describes an event, saying, "You won't believe that while I was performing those scenes, I felt like I was possessed. There was also an incident where set *mai hulchal hua tha*." Vijay said, "Don't talk to Shweta right now; she's in her zone." When your other actors hold you in such high regard that the scene takes on greater significance than it does, it's an amazing feeling. I am therefore supporting Vijay. Whenever I collaborate with him, my work consistently improves."

Without a doubt, both the actors and some of the of the characters have an effect on us as viewers. Golu has been a special character in Shweta's life, but the role has had an effect on her personally.

As we dug deeper into the impact, the *Yeh Kaali Kaali Aankhein* star said, "I went off in another zone. 'Yaar, it's very dark, which is more than bad,' she giggles. "It was difficult for me because *Mirzapur*'s environment is so gloomy, but luckily I was able to recognise it. My husband alerted me to the fact that he could sense someone else more than I did. I was lying down when I realised what had transpired and had the impression that this was Golu and not Shweta when I returned to the sets in Benaras. I used to dress in her style. Accessorising is something I adore wearing. Though I adore DisneyLand vibes, I had a conversation with a therapist after something similar happened to Golu. I wanted to know the truth and was relieved to learn that the character was taking control of me. I hadn't lost Golu at all. That being said, I would repeatedly do it for Golu because I believe that *woh jaan meri leleti hai par mai usko lena nahi deti*. She is worthwhile, after all."



EXPOSING THE TRUTH

Age-related pattern hair loss in women

Traya revealed startling results from a large study that involved 2.8 lakh women in India. According to the poll, medium to advanced widening, or female pattern hair loss, affects 71.19% of Indian women; this indicates that hair loss is a serious issue that affects people of all ages. The survey found that more than half of women between the ages of 36 and 40 are already experiencing medium-to-advanced stages of hair loss. It emphasises the critical need for increased awareness and early intervention because the main underlying causes are stress, low energy and hormone problems. The study revealed that poor energy and stress are common among Indian women. The most shocking finding was that moderate to severe stress affects 88.6% of women who have hair loss. The high stress levels of modern life exacerbate the problem of hair loss, which is significantly influenced by stress and anxiety. The study also discovered a link between poor sleep habits and hair loss, finding that 48.14% of women who have hair loss also have trouble sleeping. Dandruff were out to be a significant factor in hair loss in women, which is consistent with the results of survey on male hair loss. In order to effectively reduce hair loss, it is imperative to manage dandruff, as over 70% of women attribute their hair loss to it, with 22% experiencing severe cases. Moreover, poor

energy levels were observed by 90% of the 2.8 lakh women who took part in the study, highlighting the critical need to combat hair loss from inside. Also, among young women between the ages of 18 and 25, PCOS has been found to be a growing cause of hair loss. Speaking on the findings, Saloni Anand, co-founder of Traya, stated, "Hair loss is predominantly considered to be an issue faced by men, leading many women to ignore or feel uncomfortable discussing it. However, it is a significant and growing concern for women, requiring effective and comprehensive intervention. Our study aims to help women understand the various causes of hair loss and tackle them effectively. The issue is quite complicated for women, where damaged hair strands and low hair volume pose significant problems too. There have also been psychological implications linked to hair loss, such as anxiety and diminished self-esteem." She adds, "In today's fast-paced world, many women encounter early hair loss but turn to quick fixes that offer temporary solutions rather than addressing the root causes. This only prolongs the problem and makes it harder to treat effectively. We wish to educate women on the importance of early and comprehensive treatment, steering them away from superficial solutions and towards long-lasting results."



Conquering fear & embracing challenges

AARTI SREENATH

Aditi Sharma shares her journey from dreaming about *Khatron Ke Khiladi* as a child to conquering its challenges. "I always wanted to do *Khatron Ke Khiladi* since I was a kid," Aditi revealed with excitement. Despite her early industry successes, she only recently had the opportunity to fulfill this dream.

Preparation for the show was no easy feat. Aditi dived into a rigorous regime of calisthenics, weight lifting, functional strength training, yoga and meditation to ensure both her physical and mental readiness. "Yoga and meditation helped me stay mentally strong," she recounted. Every stunt on the show tested her limits, but two in particular stood out. Aditi, who is claustrophobic, faced her fear head-on in a stunt involving scorpions in a box. "I started chanting Shiva's mantra and went into a meditative state. I did the stunt and even though I had just five minutes, I completed it. I was not expecting to succeed," she shared. However, an underwater stunt proved too much, as a high fever and severe cold hindered her performance. "I couldn't stay underwater due to the pressure and my condition," she admitted.

A memorable highlight for Aditi was receiving praise from host Rohit Shetty, who clicked a picture with her. "That moment made me feel very proud," she said, reflecting on the special bond she formed with fellow contestants, particularly Krishna Shroff, Aashish Mehrotra and Nimrit Kaur. Participating in *Khatron Ke Khiladi* had a profound impact on Aditi, both personally and professionally. "People now know me as Aditi Sharma, not just by my character names. It has humbled me and made me more sensible about handling life's challenges," she explained. Overcoming her claustrophobia was a significant personal victory. "I feel proud of myself for conquering that fear," she declared.

Viewers might be surprised to learn just how challenging the show truly is. "It's way more difficult than it looks on TV. The pressure, timing, competition and weather make it a hundred times harder," Aditi revealed.

Looking ahead, Aditi plans to leverage her *Khatron Ke Khiladi* experience in future projects. "Every experience helps. I'm sure this will be valuable in ways I don't yet realise," she mused. Beyond acting, she finds solace in playing the guitar, singing, reading mythology and working out. "I love working out, but I don't post about it until I'm in the shape I imagine for myself," she said.

Balancing professional and personal life is crucial for Aditi. She insists on a 9-to-9 work schedule to ensure time for herself and her loved ones. "As actors, we are sensitive and emotional. I need to remember that Aditi is different from her characters," she emphasised.

Offering advice to aspiring actors, Aditi stressed the importance of hard work and time management. "Set a timeline, have a plan and give your 100%. But have a back-up plan. This industry can be tough," she advised. Reflecting on the reality show experience, she warned of the prevalent politics and favouritism, suggesting that mental strength is key to survival.

She finds inspiration in many, especially older actors who remain dedicated despite challenges. "I admire their professionalism and humility," she said.

Summing up her experience, she described *Khatron Ke Khiladi* as a once-in-a-lifetime adventure filled with learning and unforgettable moments. If she could have any superpower for the show, she would choose to be the smartest person to outwit her opponents. "This game is beyond physical strength; it's mental. I wish to be smart enough to manipulate and win," she concluded.

After a tough day of shooting, Aditi finds relaxation in a Jacuzzi and steam room. "It soothes me after the bruises and challenges," she said, highlighting the importance of self-care amid the intense competition.

ACTRESS ADITI SHARMA EMBARKED ON A NEW ADVENTURE WITH HER ENTRY INTO THE WORLD OF ROHIT SHETTY'S KHATRON KE KHILADI. SHE DISCUSSES HER DREAM COME TRUE MOMENT OF GETTING IN THE SHOW, PREPS AND ALSO DISCUSSES HER FEARS WITH THE PIONEER



DIRECTOR VENKATA SATYA UNVEILS MYSTERY BEHIND OPERATION RAAVAN

K. RAMYA SREE

In the ever-evolving world of cinema, where audiences constantly crave innovation, director Venkata Satya is setting a new benchmark with his latest film, *Operation Raavan*. Starring Rakshit Atluri and Radhika Sarathkumar and produced by Dhyani Atluri, the film promises to captivate viewers with its fresh take on the suspense thriller genre. Set for a grand release worldwide on July 26, *Operation Raavan* is generating significant buzz. We caught up with Venkata Satya to discuss the film's intriguing premise, his directorial journey and what audiences can expect from this cinematic venture.

In an age where psychological nuances are gaining prominence in storytelling, Satya delves into the complexities of human thought in *Operation Raavan*. He explains, "Mythology suggests that our enemies and achieving salvation lies in understanding them. Practices like yoga and meditation aim to control our thoughts. In movies, villains typically engage in wrongful acts driven by their thoughts. I wanted to explore these underlying ideas through *Operation Raavan*."

Drawing inspiration from the epic *Ramayana*, Satya's film offers a contemporary perspective on classic themes. "The *Ramayana* is inherently a thriller," he notes. "In *Operation Raavan*, we incorporate elements like Garudman, Ravana and Guhu, but with a modern twist. Ravana's disguise involves a mask, which is central to our film's title. We explore the psychological aspects of characters, delving into why



Coming up with his new film *Operation Raavan* on July 26, Director Venkata Satya interacts with *The Pioneer*, sharing his directorial journey, film's premise and more about the upcoming film.

some individuals display extreme behaviours in relationships."

Satya's film also reflects on today's societal reactions and judgments.

"We witness varied responses when individuals face challenges. For instance, a boy's unreciprocated love might label him as a 'psycho', just as a girl's subsequent interactions might draw similar judgment. Our movie explores the reasons behind such extreme behaviours and aims to resonate with audiences by presenting a nuanced view of these social dynamics."

Working with his son Rakshit Atluri added a personal dimension to Satya's directorial journey. "Directing Rakshit didn't greatly affect me," he shares. "He was a bit apprehensive during fight scenes and I worried about potential injuries. The fight master reassured me and Rakshit performed admirably. We recently released a single-shot poem by Karuna Sri, showcasing Rakshit's talent. Saravana

Vasudevan's music also complements the film beautifully."

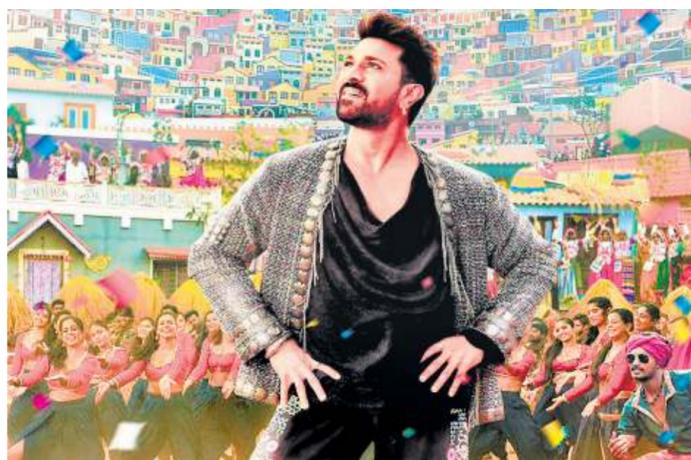
Radhika Sarathkumar's role in the film is pivotal and Satya acknowledges her contribution. "Approaching Radhika with the story was challenging, but once on set, she followed my directions meticulously. Her dedication and willingness to adjust her performance according to my instructions were commendable. Radhika believes *Operation Raavan* will be her most memorable film, given her character's complexity across different time frames."

Satya reflects on the unpredictable nature of filmmaking compared to other industries. "Running a business is more predictable; a well-brewed cup of tea generally pleases the customer. Cinema is an art form with no guarantees—what one person admires, another might not. While there are supporters in business, the film industry often lacks a safety net, leading to complexities."

Despite working with a modest budget, Satya has ensured high technical standards for *Operation Raavan*. "While directors like SS Rajamouli have elevated Telugu cinema to international acclaim with high-budget films, we crafted *Operation Raavan* with a budget of four to five crore rupees. Our focus was on maintaining high technical standards throughout."

In a unique initiative, Satya plans to reward keen-eyed viewers. "We've announced that each of the first thousand audience members who correctly identify the 'psycho' character within an hour of the movie's start will receive a silver coin. It's a fun way to engage with our audience and add an interactive element to the viewing experience."

Looking ahead, Satya reflects on his directorial journey and future plans. "I completed *Operation Raavan* within the planned budget and schedule. Directors like KV Reddy, Aadurthi Subbarao, Rajamouli and Steven Spielberg inspire me greatly. Post-*Operation Raavan*, I'll focus on planning my next project, alongside ongoing work on *Palasa 2*. Our production aims to release one film annually."



Game Changer faces delay

Shankar's highly anticipated political thriller, *Game Changer*, featuring Ram Charan and Kiara Advani, has been generating significant buzz since its announcement. Initially slated for a Dussehra release, the film's release has been postponed. This news was confirmed by producer Dil Raju of Sri Venkateswara Creations during a recent event.

Dil Raju made the announcement at the pre-release event for Dhanush's *Raayan* in Hyderabad, where he was a guest. Amidst the audience's enthusiastic chants of *Game Changer*, Dil Raju responded with a smile, saying, "Game Changer? Let's meet during Christmas."

While it was previously reported that Ram Charan had completed shooting for *Game Changer* in July, it has now been revealed that filming is not yet fully finished. Some segments of the film remain incomplete. The delay is

attributed to Shankar's focus on the post-production of *Indian 2*, starring Kamal Haasan. The director is expected to complete the remaining shoots within a few weeks.

Game Changer boasts a screenplay crafted by Shankar, Vivek Velmurugan and Sai Madhav Burra, with a story penned by Karthik Subbaraj. In the film, Ram Charan plays an IAS officer who ascends to the role of chief minister and is reportedly seen in triple roles.

The cast includes Jayaram, Srikanth, Sunil, SJ Suryah, Anjali, Samuthirakani and Nassar alongside Ram Charan and Kiara Advani. The film features music by S. Thaman, cinematography by Tirru and editing by Shameer Muhammed.

Game Changer will be released in Telugu, Tamil and Hindi, though the official release date is still to be announced.

KANGUVA SINGER ALL PRAISES FOR DSP AHEAD OF FIRST TRACK RELEASE

Studio Green's highly anticipated film *Kanguva*, starring Suriya, is one of the year's biggest cinematic events. As excitement builds, the makers are gearing up to unveil the film's first track, the *Fire Song*, which will be released today (July 23). The new poster featuring Suriya has only intensified the anticipation for this energetic track.

The *Kanguva* team recently shared a video where crew members praised the *Fire Song* for its intense and dynamic energy. In the lead-up to the release, singer B Praak, who recorded the Hindi version of the song, took to social media to express his enthusiasm and gratitude towards Devi Sri Prasad, the composer. He posted, "It's always amazing working with you, Sir @thisisdsp. Thank you for giving me the chance to collaborate with you again on this super song. I never thought I'd sing something like this. People will experience a new vibe in my voice, all thanks to you. What a composition, what music, and what a humble man you are, Sir. Can't wait for *Fire* to drop soon!"

Kanguva is touted as one of the most expensive films of the year, with a staggering budget of over 350 crore, surpassing major hits like *Pushpa* and *Singham*. Filmed across seven countries and featuring one of the largest battle scenes with over 10,000 participants, the movie promises a grand spectacle set in a unique prehistoric period.

Studio Green is preparing for a global release of *Kanguva* on October 10, 2024, having partnered with leading distribution companies to ensure a massive rollout.



'My goal is to release at least six films a year under SMK Films'

The upcoming film *Ram NRI*, starring Ali Reza of *Bigg Boss* fame and Sita Narayanan, was celebrated with a grand pre-release event on Sunday. Directed by N. Lakshmi Nanda, the movie carries the tagline "Power of Relationship" and is produced by Muvva Satyanarayana under Muvva Creations, with SMK Films Singuluri Mohankrishna as the presenter. Set to hit theaters on July 26th, the film's trailer was unveiled during the event. The event featured notable guests including Prasanna Kumar, Lion Sai Venkat, Ramakrishna Goud and Ramasatya Narayana, who shared their thoughts on the film.

SMK Films Singuluri Mohankrishna praised the film's quality, stating, "The movie has come out exceptionally well. I'm grateful to everyone who helped make this release possible. I see echoes of *Uyyala Lampala* and *Shatamanam Bhavati* in this film. My goal is to release at least six films a year under SMK Films. We are committed to supporting smaller films and are working on a solo project with Lakshmi Nanda. I hope the audience appreciates our efforts." Producer Muvva Satyanarayana expressed enthusiasm, stating, "The film has turned out wonderfully. We enjoyed working on it and are optimistic about its success. We hope everyone supports our movie."

'RASHMIKA IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN WIN HEARTS IN 56 WAYS'

Rashmika Mandanna, celebrated for her radiant smile and captivating charisma, is affectionately known as the "golden girl" and "national crush." Her charm and talent have endeared her to audiences across the globe, making her a beloved figure not only for her acting skills but also for her warm and engaging personality. In a recent interaction, actor Vicky Kaushal was touched by a video message from Rashmika. His reaction was heartwarming as he reminisced about their collaboration. Vicky shared,

"Rashmika is the only person who can win hearts in 56 different ways. She is such a sweetheart. We worked together for the first time in our upcoming film *Chaava*, and she brought an incredible amount of positivity to the set. Her heart is as beautiful as her smile."

Rashmika Mandanna's smile has a unique ability to brighten any space, and she has become a symbol of warmth and positivity in the entertainment industry. Her fans cherish her not only for her talent but also for her genuine connection with them. Always keeping her followers updated, Rashmika makes sure they are involved in every step of her personal and professional journey.



Sarath Kumar's new look as 'Nathanadhudu' out

The expectations of Vishnu Manchu's big-scale spectacle and epic actioner, *Kannappa* reached new heights, after the teaser of the movie was launched. Recently, the makers had launched the character poster of actor Sarath Kumar as "Nathanadhudu."

The poster looked extremely ferocious and intriguing. One of the most costly and eagerly awaited Pan India movies is *Kannappa*, which was directed by Mukesh Kumar Singh and produced by Mohan Babu. A strong cast of actors, including Mohan Babu, Prabhas, Akshay Kumar, Mohan Lal and Kajal Aggarwal, also appears in the film.



Dhanush wants to collaborate with Jr NTR for a multi-starrer

Renowned for his stellar acting, Dhanush is currently in the limelight promoting his upcoming film, *Raayan*. With an impressive portfolio in Indian cinema like *SIR*, *Aasuran* and *Aadukalam*, as well as notable international projects, Dhanush continues to capture the audience's attention.

During a recent promotional event for *Raayan*, Dhanush was asked in a rapid-fire round which actor he would like to collaborate with in a multi-starrer. Without missing a beat, Dhanush named the "Man of Masses," NTR Jr. He responded enthusiastically, saying, "Tarak, NTR Jr.," sparking excitement among fans of both actors and fueling speculation about a potential cross-industry collaboration.

NTR Jr., celebrated for his powerful performances and mass appeal, paired with Dhanush, known for his intense acting, could create an electrifying on-screen partnership. Their combined talent and unique skills promise to deliver a cinematic experience that fans would eagerly anticipate. Here's hoping a filmmaker takes note and brings this dream collaboration to life!

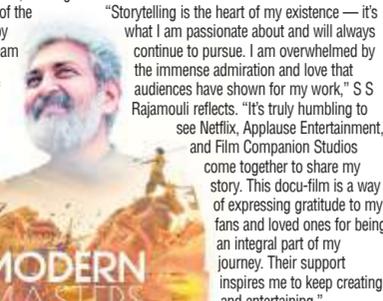
Modern Masters: S S Rajamouli captures a closer look at his journey

Over the years, the visionary S S Rajamouli has captivated millions with his iconic filmography. Quite extraordinarily, he did not attend film school or earn a college degree — instead, he learned storytelling through comic books. On Monday, Netflix, in partnership with Applause Entertainment and Film Companion Studios, has released the trailer for *Modern Masters: S S Rajamouli*, offering a glimpse into the remarkable journey of the celebrated global filmmaker. Directed by Raghav Khanna, the docu-film will stream on August 2.

The fierce, world-famous characters of Rajamouli's films, from *Eega* to *RRR*, reflect the legendary director's unparalleled vision. Not only have his characters made a global impact, but his songs have also made the world groove, earning international acclaim and setting new records in Indian cinema. Hosted by the renowned film critic and journalist Anupama

Chopra, the documentary delves further into Rajamouli's incredible work, spanning from Hyderabad to Hollywood. From his childhood fascinations and family influences to moments of doubt and triumph, the documentary unveils the unseen, human side of the legend, allowing fans to truly get to know the man behind the camera.

"Storytelling is the heart of my existence — it's what I am passionate about and will always continue to pursue. I am overwhelmed by the immense admiration and love that audiences have shown for my work," S S Rajamouli reflects. "It's truly humbling to see Netflix, Applause Entertainment, and Film Companion Studios come together to share my story. This docu-film is a way of expressing gratitude to my fans and loved ones for being an integral part of my journey. Their support inspires me to keep creating and entertaining."



Good for TRP but my relationship with Kohli is personal, declares Gambhir

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's newly-appointed head coach Gautam Gambhir on Monday declared that his much talked about relationship with batting mainstay Virat Kohli "is between the two of us and not for TRPs", asserting that they are going to be "on same page" in the coming times. Gambhir and Kohli had not been the best of friends, something which was evident from the multiple confrontations between the two in the IPL. However, the duo will now be working together starting with the white-ball tour of Sri Lanka from July 27. "Good for the TRP, but my relationship is not public. What kind of a relationship I share with Virat Kohli... I

think it's between two mature individuals," Gambhir said. Gambhir was addressing a press conference along with chief selector Ajit Agarkar ahead of India's tour of Sri Lanka where they will play three T20 Internationals and as many ODIs. In the context of Kohli, Gambhir added, "On the field, everyone has got the right to fight for their own jersey and come back to a winning dressing room. "But at the moment, we're representing India, representing 140 crore Indians and I'm sure we're going to be on the same page and try and make India proud." Kohli, who recently announced retirement from the T20 International format, is part of India's ODI squad



against the island nation and ahead of that, the former India skipper has apparently communicated to the BCCI that he's ready to begin this new phase with a clean slate. Gambhir said the two share a very good relationship (with him) off the field. "...And will continue to do that. But yes, to make it more public, what kind of a relationship... I think it's between two individuals. I've had a lot of chats with him (Kohli)... We've shared messages. "Sometimes, just because we want headlines, it's not important. Right now, the most important thing is we both are going to be working extremely hard to make India proud. And that's our job." THE SUPPORT STAFF QUESTION: Former India

all-rounder Abhishek Nayar and Netherlands batter Ryan ten Doeschate, who worked with Gambhir in the IPL 2024 during his stint as mentor of the Kolkata Knight Riders, are joining the Indian team coaching staff for the Sri Lanka tour. Gambhir said the full details of his support staff will be known only after the Sri Lanka tour. "Really happy with BCCI. They've agreed with most things I've asked for. The crux of the support staff will remain as they are. "The rest of the staff will be finalised after the Sri Lanka tour. (For now) Abhishek and Ryan as assistant coach. T Dilip will continue as fielding coach. Sairaj Bahutule as interim bowling coach for the Sri Lanka tour."

We wanted someone who was likely to be available more often: Agarkar on Suryakumar as T20 captain

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Fitness, feedback from the dressing room and consistent availability swung the pendulum in Suryakumar Yadav's favour when it was decided to appoint him captain of the Indian T20 team ahead of Hardik Pandya, chief selector Ajit Agarkar said here on Monday.

Agarkar was addressing a media conference along with newly-appointed head coach Gautam Gambhir ahead of India's tour of Sri Lanka where the team will play three T20 Internationals and as many ODIs against the hosts starting July 27.

"Why Surya was made captain? Because he is one of the deserving candidates. The one we know has been around the dressing room over the last one year, you get feedback from the dressing room a lot. He has got a good cricketing brain and he is still one of the best T20 batters in the world," Agarkar said during the joint press conference.

"You (would) want a captain that's going to be more likely to play all the games. We think he's a deserving candidate and hopefully we'll see over time how he develops into the role." The chairman of selectors said they wanted a captain with a proven fitness record and not someone who was prone to injuries as Pandya is believed to be.

"But in regards to Hardik (Pandya), he's still a very important player for us and that's what we want him to be that player that he can be because those sorts of skill sets are very difficult to find what he has, Agarkar said.

"Fitness, obviously, has been a challenge for him over the last few years and then it becomes a little bit more difficult for him and even as selectors," he said. "We're trying to now, we've got a bit more time till the next T20 World Cup when we can look at a few things. It's not rushed at the moment."

"We want him to be, you know, as I said, he's an important player for us and hopefully his performances are more important - that was the thought behind it. The fitness is a clear challenge and we want someone who's likely to be available more often than not," Agarkar said.

As regards to former vice-captain KL Rahul being



overlooked, he retorted, "I wasn't there when KL was superseded; I wasn't the selector firstly." "We've got a little bit more time now till the... Since I've come, there's been a 50-overs World Cup, almost followed by the T20 World Cup. Fitness is a concern, not just that, we also feel that Surya has the necessary qualities to be a good captain. "Two years is a long time, so at least it gives us a bit more of a chance to try and look at some things differently. The main thing is we want guys who are available all the time. In this way, we also feel we can manage Hardik a little bit better," he said.

JADEJA WAS NOT DROPPED: Agarkar admitted the selection committee should have clarified that senior all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, who also retired from T20Is after the World Cup, was not "dropped". "It would have been really pointless to take both him and Akshar for this short series. We know what Jaddu has done. He's had a terrific World Cup (T20). So, no, not at all dropped," he said. "All options are open. But there

was (a chance that) either of them would have played all three games if we'd taken both. There's a big test season coming up where he's (Jadeja) likely to feature in a lot of the Tests. I don't think three games would have mattered. "We probably should have clarified that after the selection that he's not getting dropped. He's still within the scheme of things and very important as a player," said the former India pacer.

LEADERSHIP DOOR OPEN FOR RAHUL, RISHABH, PANDYA: Agarkar said the door is not shut for the former deputies like KL Rahul, Rishabh Pant and even Pandya as far as leadership role is concerned. "We need to get him (Pant) back playing, that's the first thing. He's going to be a key to us as a player; hasn't had a lot of cricket. We'll see what he can do," he said. "We don't want to burden somebody again who's just coming back after over a year out of the game. KL has not been part of T20 now for a little while," he said. "We've got a chance to reset the button a little bit. We've got a bit more time to plan. We want

to try and see... I mean, this time (in) T20 (against Afghanistan), frankly, when Hardik did get injured was a little bit of a challenge. "At that point, Rohit wasn't playing but was still around (and) made our life a lot easier that he could come and play. We don't want that situation going forward again," he continued.

CHANCE FOR GILL TO LEARN FROM EXPERIENCE: Agarkar said the selectors wanted vice-captain Shubman Gill to learn from the experience as well as from the senior players. "Shubman is a guy that we feel is a three-format player and seems to have shown a lot of quality over the last year or so that we hear from the dressing room," he said.

"You try and have somebody who can also learn from a couple of the senior guys that are there. "Surya in this instance or Rohit who's still around so we don't face the same challenges (that) suddenly (you are) trying to look for a captain in case there are injuries or loss of form somewhere," he explained. "He's shown some decent leadership qualities. We want to try and get him the experience that he can put forward. There are no guarantees in life but at this point, that's the thought," he said.

PACE BOWLING COMBINATION IN FUTURE: Agarkar admitted that while playing Tests in India the team may not need three seamers but going forward they will be discussing the fast bowling lineup too. "Some of the guys, some of the fast bowlers are at the NCA. We hope that for the next month or so, they'll be back up playing," he said. "I think he has (Mohammed Shami) started to bowl which is a good sign for us. (The) 19th September is the first Test. That was always the goal," he added.

"We don't quite know whether that's the timeline at the moment. That I have to speak to the guys at the NCA but that's the aim. "There are so many Tests coming in India; maybe you don't play three seamers in the eleven. But, going forward, there's a lot of cricket or Test cricket that's coming. We need some conversation around it," he said.

Gambhir-Agarkar in sync: Players won't be allowed to pick and choose series for workload management

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gautam Gambhir's plain-speak and Ajit Agarkar's lucidity is set to make for a heady combo as the new head coach and the chairman of selectors looked completely in sync while spelling out, in no uncertain terms, that days of cherry-picking series by citing workload management could be over.

They explained certain tough calls while in a few times, they were subtle yet said enough to allow people to read between the lines. Physically, neither Gambhir nor Agarkar have an imposing presence but ask anyone in the periphery of Indian cricket and people will swear by the fact that these are two individuals with sharp and informed takes, which don't change readily.

As they put up a united front in their first joint media interaction, it was clear that they were ready to put their money where their mouths were. Technically, it might seem that Agarkar enters his second year of chairmanship but perhaps like Gambhir, this is also a fresh start in which the duo can create a road-map for the 2027 ODI World Cup. So what was the biggest takeaway from the Gambhir-Agarkar joint press briefing ahead of the tour of Sri Lanka? Workload management seems to be the biggest one.

The prickly word in Indian cricket will again dominate air space but this time, it is crystal clear that rules will be different for batters and bowlers. "I've said it before, workload management for someone like (Jasprit) Bumrah is important. If you are a batter who is in good form, might as well play all the games," Gambhir was as straight as ramrod in his reply when asked about his take on the issue. It was widely believed that both ODI and Test captain Rohit Sharma and team's premier batter Virat Kohli will skip the three games in Sri Lanka but their presence ultimately is an indicator that both the seniors will probably play as many series as possible. "Now that Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli will play only two formats, I expect them to be available for most games," Gambhir addressed the issue with a lot of clarity just like chairman Agarkar was up and ready to explain what went against Hardik Pandya, who was considered to be a natural successor to Rohit, at least in the T20 format. "You (would) want a captain that's going to be more likely to play all the games," he couldn't get a more crystal clear answer to a pointed question. What was more refreshing was that unlike selection committee chairmen of the past, Agarkar just didn't go by



his gut feeling about the leadership qualities but also took the view of the change room. "Why Surya was made captain? Because he is one of the deserving candidates. The one we know has been around the dressing room over the last one year, you get feedback from the dressing room a lot. "He has got a good cricketing brain and he is still one of the best T20 batters in the world," Agarkar elaborated. In the 27-minute media conference, one thing was reiterated time and again. Stars can no longer pick and choose. While acknowledging that a player of Pandya's skill-set is a rarity, Agarkar made it clear that the selection committee cannot be taken for granted. "Fitness, obviously, has been a challenge for him over the last few years and then it becomes a little bit more difficult for him and even as selectors," he said. Agarkar handled the tricky query on KL Rahul being ignored for captaincy with similar eloquence. "I wasn't there when KL was superseded; I wasn't the selector firstly."

Then there was the issue of Duleep Trophy and Agarkar was clear that if not all, most of the Indian Test team contenders will be playing at least one match of the tournament before India's rare season of 10 Tests commences on September 19. In case of Ravindra Jadeja, Agarkar was clear that the senior all-rounder wasn't dropped from the ODI team but his explanation did indicate that one might not see two players with pretty identical skill-sets in ODI set-up. "It would have been really pointless to take both him and Akshar for this short series...So, no, not at all dropped," he said on Jadeja. And then Gambhir had to address the elephant in the room - the conjectures about his relationship with Kohli, something the straight-shooter rejected as "good for TRP". Gambhir might be perceived as a 'My Way or High Way' man but his messaging was that he wants to be the agent that keeps the dressing room happy. And what qualifies as a happy dressing room?

Mumbai City FC sign Supratim Das for three years

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Mumbai City FC on Monday announced the signing 19-year-old midfielder Supratim Das on a three-year contract which will keep him at the club till Indian Super League (ISL) 2027. Das is known for his technical abilities, game awareness and "excels at holding the ball under pressure and delivering incisive passes as a midfielder", the club said in a statement.

Das, who is from the Reliance Foundation Young Champs, played a crucial role in winning the sub-junior I-League title in the 2018-2019 season and in their runner-up finish in the MFA



Super Division League during the 2022-23 season. He also participated in the Reliance

Foundation Development League 2022-23 and 2023-24 and earned qualification for the Premier League Next Gen Cup in 2023.

Das has been a part of the RFYC's exposure trips to Spain in 2017, 2018 and 2019 and to Japan earlier this year. "The club is known for developing young talents and it is a fantastic opportunity for me to develop my skills and polish my talent at the top level," Das said. MCFC's head coach Petr Kratky said, "We had our eyes on him for some time and are happy he has decided to join us. His vision, technical ability, and understanding of the game will benefit our team."

Dominant India Women face Nepal, eye semifinal berth in Asia Cup

PTI ■ DAMBULLA

Bouyant India will look to extend their winning run and seal a semifinal berth when they face Nepal in their final Group A Women's T20 Asia Cup match here on Tuesday.

India registered convincing wins in their first two matches of the continental tournament, beating traditional rivals Pakistan and United Arab Emirates by seven wickets and 78 runs respectively to put one foot in the semifinals.

Minnows Nepal hardly have any time to recover from the thrashing they received at the hands of Pakistan in their previous outing on Sunday, the same day when the tournament's overwhelming favourites and defending champions India bulldozed the hapless Emirates side. While India are primed to

enter the last-four, Pakistan improved their net run rate with the comfortable win over Nepal lifting them to the second spot in Group A. India will, however, not be bothered by how the other teams are doing and will look to sustain the momentum they have gained with two convincing victories heading into the semifinals. India have flexed their muscles in both batting and bowling so far in the tournament, and are likely to continue in the same vein come Tuesday. If the swashbuckling opening duo of Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma fired with the bat in the victory over Pakistan, after the bowlers' excellent display, skipper Harmanpreet Kaur and Richa Ghosh led the show in the middle-order in the hammering of the UAE. The big-hitting Ghosh,



especially, was in destructive mood as she carted 64 in just 29 balls while Kaur compiled 66 in 47 deliveries. While Kaur played the anchor's role to perfection, it was Ghosh's blazing knock which helped India score their first-ever 200-plus total in T20Is.

As far as the Indian bowling is concerned, the likes of Renuka Singh, Pooja Vastrakar and Deepti Sharma have been doing a wonderful job of both containing runs and taking wickets. Even Tanuja Kanwar, who was roped in as a replacement for injured off-spinner Shreyanka Patil, performed her duty with aplomb, giving away only 14 runs while taking a wicket in her full quota of four overs. The Indu Barma-led Nepal, which started the tournament with a historic six-wicket victory over the UAE, is well

aware of the task. They will certainly take confidence from their first-ever win in the event but the Himalayan nation will need a lot more than that to even come close to challenging a dominant India.

TEAMS: India (from): Harmanpreet Kaur (C), Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh (wk), Uma Chetry (wk), Pooja Vastrakar, Deepti Sharma, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Singh, D Hemalatha, Asha Sobhana, Radha Yadav, Tanuja Kanwar, Sajana Sajeavan. Nepal (from): Indu Barma (C), Kajol Shrestha, Rubina Chettri, Sabnam Rai, Sita Rana Magar, Rajmati Airee, Puja Mahato, Bimta Rawal, Roma Thapa, Mamta Chaudhary, Kabita Joshi, Kabita Kunwar, Dolly Bhatta, Kritika Marasini, Samjhana Khadka.