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Army fully capable to face all future challenges:
Gen Dwivedi



NATANIA
 CREATING WAVES GLOBALLY WITH HER COLLABS ALONG SELENA GOMEZ & NAOMI



Sudheer Babu to star in a pan-India supernatural mystery THRILLER



QUOTE OF THE DAY
Revanth Reddy if you are really a man, make the six MLAs who joined the Congress from the BRS to resign and contest again. Telangana will defeat all of them. Kavitha akka will come and we both will campaign on the streets of Jagtial in local body elections
 - K Taraka Rama Rao, BRS MLA



DON'T MISS...

Maintain hygiene to keep diarrhoea...

West Godavari District Collector C Naga Rani has underlined the need to maintain hygienic conditions to contain diarrhoea. The Collector flagged off an awareness rally "Stop Diarrhea" taken out here on Monday to create awareness among people to check diarrhoea. The "Stop Diarrhea" awareness rally went through the main road and concluded at the Tahsildar's office. Speaking on the occasion, Collector Naga Rani said that strict measures have been taken to control the diarrhoeal disease in the district as per the orders of the government...

Implementation of new criminal...

The three new criminal laws, which replaced the British-era penal statutes on Monday, have evoked mixed reactions from legal luminaries with some hailing them as 'significant step' towards modernising criminal justice system while others terming them as 'draconian' and 'cosmetic'. The new laws - Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA) -- came into effect across the country from July 1 and replaced the Indian...

Patanjali Foods to sell home...

Baba Ramdev-led Patanjali Ayurved has decided to sell its home and personal care business to listed group firm Patanjali Foods Ltd for Rs 1,100 crore. The acquisition will help edible oil firm Patanjali Foods to become an FMCG company. In a regulator filing, Patanjali Foods informed that the board has approved the "acquisition of the entire non-food business undertaking i.e. hair care, skin care, dental care and home care carried out by Patanjali Ayurved, including but not limited to all movable..."

Six Indians in ICC Team of...

The International Cricket Council has picked six Indians in its 'Team of the Tournament' for the just-concluded T20 World Cup but there was no place for star batter Virat Kohli, who played a match-winning knock in the final against South Africa. In his new role as an opener, Kohli had an underwhelming World Cup before rising to the occasion in the big final where he was adjudged man-of-the-match for his 59-ball 76. India pipped South Africa by seven runs in a sensational comeback in the death overs...

NTR BHAROSA PENSION SCHEME LAUNCHED
Poverty-free AP my dream: CM
 Distributes enhanced pensions to beneficiaries at Penumaka

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu launched the distribution of the NTR Bharosa pension scheme by personally handing out pensions to beneficiaries at Penumaka village in the Mangalagiri Assembly segment on Monday morning. Accompanied by the Minister for HRD, Education, IT, and Electronics, Nara Lokesh, and the local MLA, the Chief Minister drove straight to the hut of Islavath Sai in Penumaka. There, he handed over the pension to her and her parents, Banavath Pamulyanayak and Banavath Sita, all of whom are daily wage earners. Later, at the Praja Vedika, the Chief Minister addressed the gathering, stating, "Real welfare is illuminating the lives of the people. This is the first step towards improving their living standards." He emphasised that the new government had launched the pension distribution scheme as a first step towards fulfilling its promises. Recalling the slogan of TDP founder, the late N.T. Rama Rao, that society is a place of worship and the people are the real gods, Chandrababu Naidu said his government would take this as inspiration.

- Naidu addresses Praja Vedika, emphasising govt's commitment to improving living standards.
- The pension for the physically challenged increased to Rs 6,000 per month.
- Pensions are now being distributed through 1.25 lakh secretariat employees with volunteer assistance.
- Minister Nara Lokesh praised for his electoral victory in Mangalagiri.
- The previous administration criticised for hindering State progress and deterring investors.
- Over Rs 4,408 cr in pensions distributed to 65.31 lakh beneficiaries on Monday.
- Naidu signs significant files on his first day, including Mega DSC and the revival of Anna Canteens.
- Training programmes for youth to be introduced to enhance skills and employment opportunities.



Festive atmosphere in Penumaka
PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 A festive atmosphere prevailed on Monday in Penumaka village of Mangalagiri Assembly constituency, represented by the Minister for IT and Electronics, Nara Lokesh, as the distribution of pensions for beneficiaries began in the morning. Fulfilling a promise made during the recent election campaign to revise the old-age pension from Rs 3,000 to Rs 4,000 per month, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu personally distributed the revised pension amount along with three months' arrears, totalling Rs 7,000 each, in Penumaka.



Atul Singh takes over as DG of ACB

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 Atul Singh has assumed charge as Director General of the Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB), Andhra Pradesh, in Vijayawada. During his interaction with officers and staff on this occasion, he emphasised the importance of maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. He also encouraged them to update their technological skills and remain vigilant against various forms of corruption prevalent in society. Singh directed all officers and staff to respond promptly to public complaints and take timely and appropriate action. Atul Singh, a 1995 batch officer, has previously served in various capacities, including SP Visakhapatnam, SP in Greyhounds, DCP South Zone Hyderabad, and Joint Commissioner of Police Hyderabad and Cyberabad.

'Why is Naidu tight-lipped over Spl Category Status for AP?'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee president YS Sharmila on Monday questioned why NDA 'kingmaker' and Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu is not opening his mouth on Special Category Status (SCS) for the State. Sharmila demanded that the TDP supreme must answer the people for being tight-lipped on SCS. "Nitish Kumar resolved and put forth the SCS demand for Bihar before Modi (Prime Minister Narendra Modi) but Naidu is not even opening his mouth on SCS for AP (Andhra Pradesh)," said Sharmila in a press release.

Bodies of 3 fallen soldiers arrive in V'wada

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 A sombre atmosphere enveloped the International Airport at Gannavaram near Vijayawada as the bodies of three army jawans, M.R. Krishna Reddy, S. Nagaraju, and Subhan Khan, who died in Ladakh, arrived on Monday. The bodies were flown from Delhi to Vijayawada on a special Army aircraft. Family members, officers from various regiments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, as well as officials from the Police, Revenue, Airport, and Protocol departments, received the bodies of the deceased soldiers at the Vijayawada airport. Five soldiers were swept away by



the Shyok River during military training in Ladakh. Among them were Risaldar Muthumalla R. Krishna Reddy, a native of Kalvapalli village in Racherla mandal of Prakasam district; CFN Sadaraboina Nagaraju of Chevendra village in Pedana mandal of Krishna district; and Subhan Khan of Bapatla.

IRONING OUT BIFURCATION ISSUES

Naidu to meet Revanth on July 6?

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has written to Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to discuss issues related to the Reorganisation Act and other matters. In his letter, CM Naidu emphasised that it has been 10 years since the bifurcation of the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh. He noted that there have been multiple discussions concerning issues arising from the Reorganisation Act, which have implications for the welfare and advancement of both states. "It is imperative that we address these issues amicably with utmost diligence and resolve. In light of this, I propose that we meet at your place on the afternoon of July 6, Saturday," Naidu wrote. CM Naidu also extended heartfelt congratulations to CM Revanth Reddy for the remarkable work undertaken in Telangana. He praised Reddy's dedication and leadership, which have significantly contributed to the progress and development of Telangana. Naidu stressed the importance of close collaboration between the Chief Ministers of the Telugu-speaking states to ensure sustained progress and prosperity for both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. He highlighted the shared commitment to cooperative development as crucial to realizing mutual goals of growth and well-being.

CM pulls up min over his wife's spat with police

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has expressed dissatisfaction with the conduct of AP Minister Ram Prasad Reddy's wife, Harita Reddy, towards the police on Monday. The Chief Minister criticised her manner of addressing the police and requested an explanation from Minister Ram Prasad Reddy via phone. He emphasised the importance of showing respect towards police officers and warned that such behaviour, which tarnishes the government's reputation, will not be tolerated. Minister Ram Prasad Reddy has apologised for his wife's actions and assured that steps will be taken to prevent similar incidents in the future. The controversy erupted when Harita Reddy, in Rayachoti, argued with the police, demanding they act as her escort. A video of the altercation has since gone viral on social media.

New criminal laws come into force in AP

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 The three new criminal laws - Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha 2023 and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam 2023 - came into force in Andhra Pradesh on Monday. Andhra Pradesh Director General of Police (DGP) Ch Dwaraka Tirumala Rao said the new laws came into effect on July 1. "... from today they are being implemented across the state," Rao said. In view of the implementation of the new laws, Anakapalli district police conducted an awareness session for all the police officials on Sunday. A similar exercise was also undertaken by Tirupati district police on Sunday. However, the state government is yet to complete the Telugu translation of the three new criminal laws. Earlier, law secretary V Sunita had said only half of the translation work of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha 2023 and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam 2023 has been completed. The three new laws have replaced the old Indian Penal Code (IPC), Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and the Indian Evidence Act.

People like Venkaiah make nation more vibrant: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
 Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday greeted former vice president M Venkaiah Naidu on his 75th birthday, lauding his dedication, adaptability and unwavering commitment to public service. Modi shared an article he wrote on Naidu, a seasoned BJP leader before becoming vice president, as he noted that his journey exemplifies his unique ability to navigate the complexities of Indian politics with ease and humility. He added, "I hope young karyakartas, elected representatives and all those who have a passion to serve learn from his life. It is people like him who make our nation better and more vibrant". Venkaiah Naidu's birthday is an occasion to celebrate a leader whose life journey showcases dedication, adaptability and an unwavering commitment to public service, he added that his eloquence, wit and steadfast focus on developmental issues have earned him respect across party lines. Modi recalled their long association and said he had learnt a lot from him. He said if there is one thing that has remained common in Naidu's life, it is his love for people. Lauding his ideological commitment, he said his brush with activism and politics began in Andhra Pradesh with student politics as a student leader. He said, "Considering his talent, oratory and organisational skills, he would have been welcomed in any political party but he preferred to work with the Sangh Parivar because he was inspired by the vision of Nation First. He was associated with the RSS, ABVP and then strengthened the Jana Sangh and the BJP." work with the Sangh Parivar because he was inspired by the vision of Nation First. He was associated with the RSS, ABVP and then strengthened the Jana Sangh and the BJP." The prime minister also praised the former BJP president's role in the anti-emergency movement and the agitation against the dismissal of the N T Ramarao gov-



"Considering his talent, oratory and organisational skills, he would have been welcomed in any political party but he preferred to work with the Sangh Parivar because he was inspired by the vision of Nation First. He was associated with the RSS, ABVP and then strengthened the Jana Sangh and the BJP."

ernment in Andhra Pradesh. Modi said Naidu, known for his witty wordplay, is certainly a wordsmith but is a "worksmith" as well. He said, "No less than a stalwart like NTR noted his talent and wanted him to join his party but Venkaiah garu refused to deviate from his core ideology. He led the party on the floor of the Assembly and became the AP BJP president." In 2000, when the then prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was keen on inducting Naidu into the government as a minister, the latter conveyed his preference for the Ministry of Rural Development. "This left everyone, including Atalji, puzzled. But Venkaiah garu was clear - he was a kisan putra (farmer's son); he spent his early days in villages. Hence, his area of interest was rural development," Modi said in the write-up.

RAILWAY PROJECTS IN AP

SCR GM briefs CM about progress

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Arun Kumar Jain, General Manager of South Central Railway (SCR), met with Nara Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh...



He advised the trainees to prioritize safety, use rest periods effectively, and report to duty with a calm mind...

Howrah-Chennai Corridor. Jain also stressed the importance of improving punctuality, safety, and loading performance...

Midhun rebuts Dy CM's charge

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In response to comments made by Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan regarding red sandalwood smuggling...

BRS, YSRCP support crucial for BJP in Parliament

SNCN ACHARYULU ■ HYDERABAD

The Telugu regional political parties are facing a strange situation in Parliament. The opposition party in Telangana and ruling party in Andhra Pradesh...



Pradesh there are 25 Lok Sabha seats and the TDP has 16, YSR Congress has four seats, the BJP has three seats and the Jana Sena has two seats...

Kumar is known as master in taking a U turn. Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal United (JDU) has 11 Lok Sabha members...

People like...

Continued from Page 1

The prime minister said as vice president, he undertook various steps that enhanced the dignity of the office...

'Panchayat Raj dept full...

Continued from Page 1

"My goal is to establish the best Panchayat Raj system in AP," he stated, promising that there would be no corruption from his side...

Civil Supplies Minister Nandendra Manohar, during a series of inspections in Kakinada, uncovered a large-scale PDS rice scam...

Bodies of 3...

Continued from Page 1

They were swept away along with two other soldiers of the Indian Army on June 29 while crossing a river on a T-72 Tank near Daulat Beg Oldie...

Rushikonda buildings best suited for IT growth: Experts

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Visakhapatnam's information technology (IT) sector wants the Andhra Pradesh government to convert the controversial seven-block building on Rushikonda Hill into a centre for promoting IT and related industries...



Park Association, emphasised that the State government should dedicate the Rushikonda building to IT promotion and VISA Facilitation Services...

This venue is perfect for hosting summits and meetings with venture capitalists, professional investors who provide capital to high-growth companies...

wise be spent on private hotel accommodations. Additionally, the government could establish incubation centres and startups within the building...

These suggestions gained significant attention following a visit by Bhimili MLA Ganta Srinivasa Rao from the NDA government...

Naidu to...

Continued from Page 1

"I firmly believe that a face-to-face meeting will provide us with the opportunity to engage comprehensively on these critical issues and collaborate effectively towards achieving mutually beneficial solutions for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana...

Minister announces sweeping reforms to revitalise APSRTC

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Minister for Transport, Sports and Youth Services Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy declared a series of sweeping reforms aimed at revitalizing the Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC)...



move marks the beginning of a larger plan to introduce 1,400 new services statewide, many of which are already operational in various districts...

In his address, Minister Reddy revealed a comprehensive strategy to modernize APSRTC services while preserving the organization's core identity...

Minister Reddy shared his connection to the RTC, noting his family's 40-year association with the organization. This deep-rooted relationship gives him a profound understanding of its operations...

Poverty-free AP my dream...

Continued from Page 1

The Chief Minister promised to focus on the poor, stating, "My dream is to see a poverty-free society with no economic imbalances. Our thinking is always innovative..."

mentioned plans to provide training to the youth to enhance their skills and create better employment opportunities...

Chandrababu Naidu praised Minister for HRD, Nara Lokesh, for his victory in Mangalagiri with a majority of over 90,000 votes...

well-being. Later, addressing a meeting organised in Penumaka, Lokesh noted that the TDP last won the Mangalagiri Assembly segment in 1985...

Festive atmosphere in...

Continued from Page 1

The elderly beneficiaries were overjoyed as the Chief Minister launched the pension distribution scheme in the Mangalagiri segment. Two senior citizens of Penumaka warmly welcomed Chandrababu and Lokesh upon their arrival...

Later, addressing a meeting organised in Penumaka, Lokesh noted that the TDP last won the Mangalagiri Assembly segment in 1985...

'Why is Naidu tight-lipped...

Continued from Page 1

Reminding that Naidu is a 'kingmaker' of the NDA government at the Centre, she asked if he "doesn't know" that the capital-less state Andhra Pradesh is "more backward than Bihar"...

Atul Singh takes over as...

Continued from Page 1

He was IGP North Coastal Zone in 2014-15 and served as Commissioner of Police Visakhapatnam during the HUDHUD Cyclone in 2014. He was Chairman of the State Level Police Recruitment Board in 2015-16...

Today Almanac: Krishna Paksha, Ekadashi, Dwadashi, Nakshatram, Rohini, Rahukalam, Yamagandam, Varjyam, Gulika, Amritakalam, Vibhijit Muhurtham, Vijayawada Weather.

2.68 L get hiked pensions in Eluru



PNS ■ ELURU

The distribution of NTR Bharosa Social Security Pensions began in the district on Monday in a big way across the district in which over 2.68 lakh beneficiaries were disbursed pensions.

Housing and I&PR Minister K Parthasarathy, flanked by district Collector Vetri Selvi, launched the distribution of pensions at Pothreddypally village in Nuzvid mandal at 6 am on Monday. The Minister said that over 65.18 lakh beneficiaries were being disbursed about Rs 4,408 crore NTR Bharosa Social Security pensions across the state.

The Minister highlighted that the Chandrababu Naidu headed government has enhanced the pension amount from Rs 3000 and Rs 4000. The beneficiaries were being disbursed Rs 4000 pension and Rs 3,000 dues for April, May and June months. A total of Rs 7,000 was disbursed to each pensioner today, the minister added.

"The YSRCP regime had taken five years to raise the social security pension amount from Rs 2,000 to Rs 3000. But the Chandrababu Naidu-headed government enhanced the pension amount from Rs 3000 to Rs 4000 as per the assurance immediately

after coming to power," the Minister asserted.

The differently-abled people are being disbursed Rs 6000 pension, people who are suffering from diseases like paralysis were extended Rs 5000 to Rs 10,000 and those who are bed-ridden were being disbursed Rs 5000 to Rs 15,000 under the NTR Bharosa social security pension, the Housing Minister said, and claimed that the pensions were seen buoyed after taking the enhanced pensions today.

Minister Parthasarathy assured of extending pensions on the first date of every month at their houses. All eli-

Nuzvid town to get underground drainage system soon

Nuzvid town, which is famous for mango produce, is getting the much-awaited underground drainage system soon.

Disclosing this while addressing a programme organized on the occasion of disbursement of social security pensions in Nuzvid on Monday, Minister for Housing and I&PR K Parthasarathy said that proposals for the construction of an underground drainage system in Nuzvid town are being prepared and the required process would be expedited. "The underground drainage works in Nuzvid town will be executed in a phased manner. The roads will also be reconstructed in the town," he assured.

Minister Parthasarathy also disclosed that drinking water pipeline repair works and the laying of a new pipeline were

being taken up in Nuzvid at a cost of Rs 11 crore. Priority is being given to supply protected drinking water to the people of Nuzvid town, the Minister announced and warned the municipal officials and staff that indifference in supplying protected drinking water would not be tolerated.

He directed the officials concerned to take steps for efficient sanitation in the town without causing inconvenience to the people.

The Ring Roads works would be completed expeditiously and the indoor stadium would be renovated in Nuzvid town, he assured.

Stating that there are 203 Anna canteens in the state of which 183 have their own buildings, the Minister said steps were taken to ensure that all Anna canteens function by August 16.



Maintain hygiene to keep diarrhoea at bay: DC

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

West Godavari District Collector C Naga Rani has underlined the need to maintain hygienic conditions to contain diarrhoea.

The Collector flagged off an awareness rally 'Stop Diarrhoea' taken out here on Monday to create awareness among people to check diarrhoea. The 'Stop Diarrhoea' awareness rally went through the main road and concluded at the Tahsiladar office.

Speaking on the occasion, Collector Naga Rani said that strict measures have been taken to control the diarrhoeal disease in the district as per the orders of the government.

She said that the 'Stop Diarrhoea' programme is being conducted from July 1 to August 31 to prevent diarrhoeal

disease, adding that this disease can be prevented only through awareness. Steps have been taken to organize wide awareness programmes across the district, she said.

The Collector directed the ASHA workers and the ANMs of the district to visit schools and welfare hostels daily and inquire about the health of children. She also ordered them to distribute ORS and zinc tablets to the needy and educate them about cleanliness and health protection.

All steps should be taken to ensure that drinking water does not get contaminated anywhere in the district, she told the medical and health officials and instructed them to supply protected drinking water. Collector Naga Rani stated that various types of diseases like diarrhoea are preva-

lent due to lack of hygiene and asked the officials concerned to take steps to improve sanitation in rural and urban areas.

Apart from making people aware of cleanliness, she suggested prevention of diseases through precautionary measures. "The officials of all departments of the government should work in a coordinated manner to ensure that no diarrhoea deaths take place in the district," the Collector told the officials.

The Collector later released wall posters creating awareness on containing diarrhoea and distributed ORS packets and Zinc tablets. DMHO D Maheswara Rao, District Immunization Officer Deva Sudha Lakshma, Municipal Commissioner M Shyamala and other officials were among those who were present.

AP Women's Commission seeks probe into death of Madarsa student

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Chairperson of the Andhra Pradesh Women's Commission, Gajjala Venkata Lakshmi, has expressed deep concern over the death of 17-year-old Madarsa student Karishma at Luna Centre in Ajith Singh Nagar, Vijayawada. She has announced that the Commission has taken a suo motu case. She announced the decision in a press statement here on Monday.

She said that Karishma's parents raised doubts about her death as there were injuries on her body. She has taken the

Commission takes suo motu case



issue seriously and has written a letter to Director General of Police (DGP) Ch Dwaraka Tirumala Rao, urging him to conduct a detailed probe. She said that the case was sensitive in nature.

Also, she asked for the primary inquiry report from Police Commissioner PHD Ramakrishna. She also demanded that the police conduct a transparent probe to ensure justice for the victim's family.

Lakshmi also urged the State government to take steps to stop the attacks on women in the State. She mentioned the incident in which two women belonging to Kotavoorut of Payakaraupeta constituency of Anaparthi district were raped by the leaders of a local political party.

She said that it is the most despicable act to commit atrocities on women. In a letter, she asked the Anaparthi SP to take immediate action in this incident, arrest the culprits, and send a report to the Commission on the police action.

95% of pensions disbursed: Minister

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Housing and I&PR K Parthasarathy said that on July 1 itself, 95 per cent of the disbursement of Social Security pensions was completed in the State.

Minister K Parthasarathy said here on Monday that in 12 hours, about 61.76 lakh pensioners were paid pension at their houses.

A total amount of Rs 4,170 crore was disbursed to over 61.76 lakh beneficiaries across the state. Disbursing social security pensions to over 61.76 lakh beneficiaries was a record, the Minister claimed.

He said that the disbursement of social security pensions began at 6 am today and continued till evening.

In the previous government, only 85% of pensions were disbursed on the first day despite there being 2.65 lakh volunteers, he claimed, adding that over 1.35 lakh secretariat employees and officials took part in the social security pensions disbursement on Monday.



VMC Commissioner Swapnil Dinakar releasing the poster for the campaign against dengue, malaria, and other seasonal diseases, at the Command Control Room on the VMC premises on Monday

VMC holds door-to-door drive for seasonal diseases

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

To raise awareness among the public on the prevention of dengue, malaria, and seasonal diseases, Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Commissioner Swapnil Dinakar launched posters in the Command Control Room at the main office on Monday.

On this occasion, Commissioner Swapnil stated that during the monsoon season, dengue, malaria, and seasonal diseases are common issues faced by the public. To prevent these, the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation is organising door-to-door campaigns. Health secretaries, malaria workers, and ANMs visit households to educate the public, he said.

Anti-larvae operations, ML oils spray, and Abate sprays are being conducted to control mosquitoes. Efforts are being made to ensure that there is no stagnation of sewage or rainwater to prevent mosquito breeding.

Furthermore, under the 'Stop Diarrhoea' campaign, the public is being educated about diarrhoea prevention. Health secretaries are visiting households to educate people on maintaining a clean environment, ensuring that food items and utensils are cleaned properly, washing hands thoroughly after using the toilet, and preventing water stagnation in homes, he said.

He added that the municipal corporation is supplying safe and uncontaminated drinking water across the city. To ensure

this, water samples are regularly tested, with more than 300 samples collected in each circle and over 1,000 samples across the city being tested continuously. Measures are taken to ensure that drinking water pipelines do not mix with sewage and desludging operations are conducted regularly, he explained.

Participants in the programme included Chief Engineer M. Prabhakar Rao, Chief City Planner GVGVS Prasad, Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) G Srujana, Chief Medical Health Officer Dr P Ratnavali, Deputy City Planner Jubin Cherian Roy, Estate Officer T Srinivas, Accounts Officer Narasimha Murthy, Projects Officer UCD Venkateswara Rao, Biologist Surya Kumar, and others.

City wrestler Rohith selected for Sub Junior Natl Championship



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

S Rohith Kumar, a student of the SKPVV Hindu High School at Kothapet, Vijayawada, has been selected for the Sub Junior National Wrestling Championship to be conducted in Udhamsingh in Uttarakhand from July 5 to 7. He will be representing the Andhra Pradesh State team in the 71 kg Greco-Roman event.

In a press release on Monday, NTR District Wrestling Association in-charge D Srinivasa Rao said that Rohith Kumar was selected for the nationals based on his performance in the recently concluded AP Inter-Districts Wrestling Championship.

Rohith bagged gold medal in the 71 kg Greco-Roman event.

SKPVV Hindu High School committee president T Seshiah, correspondent Gopiseti Malliah, secretary KLV Mohana Rao, HM K Srinivasa Rao and PET MV Satya Prasad congratulated Rohith Kumar.

Collector, MLA Krishna Prasad launch pension distribution

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector Dr G. Srijana, along with Mylavaram MLA Vasantha Krishna Prasad, launched the distribution of hiked NTR Bharosa Social Security Pension to the beneficiaries at the Jakkampudi Colony (YSR gram panchayat) of Vijayawada Rural mandal in the district on Monday. They visited the beneficiaries' houses and distributed the pension amounts.

Speaking on the occasion, Collector Srijana expressed happiness over the successful conduct of the programme in the district. She mentioned that as many as 2,35,477 people are benefiting from Rs. 160 crore distributed in the district. The Village and Ward Secretariat staff, VROs, and other officials visited the beneficiaries' houses from 6 am and handed over the pen-



NTR District Collector Dr G Srijana and Mylavaram MLA Vasantha Krishna Prasad distributing pension to a NTR Bharosa Social Security Pension beneficiary at Jakkampudi Colony near Vijayawada on Monday

sion to them.

In the meantime, MLAs Yalamanchili Satyanarayana Chowdary, alias Sujana Chowdary, Bonda Uma Maheswara Rao, Gadde Rama

Mohana Rao, Tangirala Sowmya, Sriram Rajagopal, and Kolikapudi Srinivasa Rao participated in the distribution of pensions in their respective constituencies.

GST biggest indirect tax reform: DRM

It subsumed many indirect Central and State taxes

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

On the occasion of the eighth anniversary of the Goods and Service Tax, Guntur Railway DRM M Ramakrishna said it is the biggest indirect tax reform India has ever seen.

The Commissioner, CGST Commissionerate, Guntur, organised the programme on Monday. Ramakrishna recalled the words of former Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, while the old India was economically fragmented, the new India created one tax, one market and for one nation through GST implementation. It subsumed many indirect Central and State taxes and removed cascading of taxes



and through digitisation brought transparency. This resulted in substantial increase in tax revenue. The GST revenue in the first month of implementation i.e. July 2017 was about Rs 93,000 crore and it reached to Rs 2.10 lakh crore in April. GST is growing around 12 per cent and it shows the suc-

cess of this new tax in Tax compliance, formalisation and digitisation of the Indian economy.

Guest of honour, A Sridhar Babu, Tobacco Board Executive Director, said that their efforts in combating tax evasion have also yielded significant results. "We have successfully seized foreign cigarettes worth crores of rupees, and in collaboration with Jindal Urban Waste Management (Guntur) Limited, we have taken proactive steps to incinerate these seized cigarettes at Kondaveedu. I extend my sincere appreciation to Jindal Urban Waste Management (Guntur) Limited for their invaluable support in this endeavor."

'Make defectors resign and contest again'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS Working President KTR challenged Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to ask the six BRS MLAs who joined the Congress to resign and seek the people's mandate again.

Addressing BRS's district party meeting in Jagtial, KTR said that Kavitha will soon come out of jail and that they both will campaign on the streets of Jagtial during local body elections.

He also spoke about the defection of Jagtial BRS MLA Sanjay and said that Sanjay was driven by personal gain rather than development concerns. He said that MLC Jeevan Reddy would not allow Sanjay to be given even an MPCT ticket.

KTR declared that BRS would emerge victorious in the upcoming elections and asked party workers to remain steadfast with the party.

He accused the Congress of engineering defections and

BRS MLA KTR challenges CM Revanth



said that the practice of 'Aaya Ram, Gaya Ram' started during Indira Gandhi's time.

He said that in 2004, Congress allied with the BRS but later poached 10 out of its 26 MLAs. Despite this, under KCR's leadership, BRS managed to win Telangana in 2014. He reminded everyone of Revanth's futile attempt to topple the BRS government in 2014.

KTR said that amidst the

instability two-thirds of the Congress MLAs joined the BRS constitutionally and that the party did not violate any Constitutional principles.

He mocked Revanth Reddy who had once suggested to stone MLAs who joined the BRS and asked whether he now intends to stone those who defected to his party recently.

He also pointed out the contradiction between

Revanth's actions and Rahul's statements against party change.

KTR assured BRS workers that they have nothing to fear as the party has secured power twice and is poised for future victories.

He criticised the Congress for failing to deliver on promises like job creation and loan waivers and accused it of duping the public with empty promises.

INDIA CORNER

Assam flood: Over 43 pc of forest camps in Kaziranga submerged

With worsening flood condition in Assam, rising water levels have impacted more than 43 per cent of the 233 forest camps at Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve...



Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani assumes charge as Vice Chief of Army Staff

Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani on Monday assumed charge as the new Vice Chief of the Army Staff. The officer, who was helming the Army's Central Command, succeeded Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi.



Two Indians in Asian Prize for Fiction shortlist

Books by two Indian authors and one writer of Indian origin have made it to the shortlist of the Asian Prize for Fiction, an award which celebrates the nuanced and diverse voices that shape the global literary landscape.



Army fully capable to face all future challenges: Gen Dwivedi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi on Monday said the Army is ready and capable to face all 'current and future' security challenges facing India...



Army is always ready to operate in the full spectrum of conflict, maintaining complete synergy with the Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and other stakeholders...

Rahul accuses Modi govt of pushing Manipur into 'civil war'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi accused the BJP-led government on Monday of pushing Manipur into a 'civil war' due to its policies and politics.

Justice within three years of registering FIR under new laws

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Monday that justice would be delivered up to the level of the Supreme Court in all cases within three years of the registration of an FIR under the new criminal laws.



The home minister said that with the implementation of the three criminal laws, India would have the most modern criminal justice system in the world.



Public flogging: Bengal governor seeks report

BJP slams TMC's 'Taliban rule'

The public flogging of a couple in West Bengal's Uttar Dinajpur district has sparked outrage, with Governor CV Ananda Bose seeking a report from Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee...

'BJP paid heavy price for throttling voice of one MP'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

TMC MP Mahua Moitra hit out at the ruling party for suspending her in the last Lok Sabha session, saying they paid a very heavy price for throttling her voice...

Delhi court sentences Medha Patkar to 5 months in jail

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A court here on Monday sentenced activist Medha Patkar to five months simple imprisonment in a 23-year-old defamation case lodged against her by Delhi Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena...



Implementation of new criminal laws evoke mixed reactions

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The three new criminal laws, which replaced the British-era penal statutes on Monday, have evoked mixed reactions from legal luminaries...



senior advocates Mahesh Jethmalani, also a BJP MP, and Vikas Pahwa.

urged all bar associations across the country to refrain from any immediate agitation or protest against the implementation of the new criminal laws.

India could experience above-normal rainfall in July: IMD

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India could experience above-normal rainfall in July, except for parts of the northeastern region, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Monday.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

Cosmetic makeover

The new criminal laws have retained old laws with minor changes while others could impact civil liberties harshly

India has finally shed its colonial legacy in jurisprudence, embracing a new era with indigenous criminal laws. The big question being asked is whether it has truly moved beyond nomenclature or if it's merely a name change. The archaic Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Indian Evidence Act, and the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) have been replaced by the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam, and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, respectively. This historic change, taking effect from July 1, 2024, has stirred considerable debate among legal experts, practitioners, and the broader public. While some provisions break from the past, others are just old wine in new bottles, adding a layer of confusion in the legal system. The IPC, established in 1860, and the Evidence Act, enacted in 1872, have long been the cornerstones of India's criminal justice system. Both were products of the British colonial administration and have been criticized for their outdated and colonial-era perspectives. The CrPC of 1973 also



formed a significant part of the legal framework governing criminal procedures in India.

The new legal laws Replacing the IPC, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita aims to update and Indianise the criminal code. There are some provisions that are definitely new while others are mere replicas of the old ones. One notable change is the adoption of the definition of terrorism from the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). This new definition encompasses a broad spectrum of activities intended to threaten the unity, integrity, and security of India. However, critics argue that this broader definition could lead to misuse and the criminalisation of legitimate dissent. Another stark

departure is Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam which replaces the Indian Evidence Act and seeks to modernise the rules of evidence in line with contemporary technological advancements. A significant change is the new stance on electronic evidence. Last but not the least, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, replacing the CrPC, introduces several changes aimed at streamlining criminal procedures. The new law redefines the use of handcuffs and expands the scope of police custody beyond the initial 15 days, a change that has sparked considerable concern regarding potential misuse and the risk of increased custodial violence. So far, the legal fraternity has been rather jittery about the new laws. Prominent legal luminaries, State Bar Councils, and Bar Associations have expressed apprehensions about the potential implications of these changes. Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud has commented that the new laws could create a positive impact only if there are concurrent investments in infrastructure development and capacity building for forensic experts and investigating officers. The expanded powers of the police and the handling of electronic evidence are areas of particular concern, highlighting the need for careful implementation and oversight to ensure that the new laws do not lead to increased misuse of power or injustice.

PICTALK



Pilgrims wait in a queue to get themselves registered for the annual Amarnath Yatra, in Jammu

A new dawn in Tibetan diplomacy



PRAFULL GORADIA

A seven-member American delegation led by US House Representatives met with the Dalai Lama, indicating a shift in the US stance on Tibet

A seven-member American delegation led by Michael McCaul, and Nancy Pelosi, both leading lights of the US House of Representatives, recently met the Dalai Lama at Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh; this is a particularly significant event. They delivered a clear message that the USA no longer accepts Tibet as a part of China; and the US Congress will be soon passing an Act to be made into a law, called the "Resolve Tibet-China Act". The delegation told the Tibetan spiritual leader that "things have changed now". This American message has unmistakably resisted in Chinese ears. This US delegation first called on His Holiness at Dharamshala, indicating they were calling on the Tibetan government-in-exile, calling on Prime Minister Narendra Modi only thereafter. The Government of India has not hesitated to welcome the delegation. Xi Jinping may have forgotten that Mao Zedong's regime had first claimed 'sovereignty' over Tibet.

Before long, it asserted that Tibet was a Chinese province, before attempting to erase Tibet's culture, heritage and language. These events have their roots in what happened towards the end of World War II. By allowing Stalin's Red Army to enter Berlin first and occupy it, the US made the Russians believe that they were the prime victors of WWII. In 1949, the Soviet Communist regime, by hook or crook, acquired the atom bomb. This made them believe even more they were now a super-power. Eco-militarily though, the Soviet Union was no 'super' but only a Eurasian power, as it had historically been. Similarly, the US overestimated the Communist Chinese as well. Compared to Chiang Kai Shek and his Kuomintang (KMT) on the mainland, the Maoists were much more committed. That, however, was no reason to dump the KMT as well as Formosa, now Taiwan in the UN as an official member. In fact, India should have been the correct replacement, but the Nehru gov-



ernment was insistent on giving the right of way to Red China, believe it or not. The USA, or at least its State Department continued to believe for years that the Soviets and the Chinese were a single communist bloc. The extent of the animosity between the two was fully realized only after the Sino-Soviet clash along the Ussuri River in 1969.

It was only thereafter that President Nixon decided to call on Chinese Premier Mao Zedong in 1972, which brought a great deal of prestige to Dr. Henry Kissinger. The ultimate beneficiary of this resumption of relations was China, when Deng Xiaoping introduced economic reforms, emphasizing manufacturing and exports. The surplus of trillions of dollars accumulated by China came largely through exports to America. The course of these events explains why the State Department of the USA until now ignored the treatment of the hapless Tibetans by successive Chinese regimes over the last seven decades, beginning in 1959. The question is: is this because of repeated provocations over Taiwan, or could there be some larger reason unknown to us? The intentions should become clearer with the unfolding of time. India's stand has also been important.



XI JINPING MAY HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT MAO ZEDONG'S REGIME HAD FIRST CLAIMED 'SUZERAINTY' OVER TIBET. BEFORE LONG, IT ASSERTED THAT TIBET WAS A CHINESE PROVINCE, BEFORE ATTEMPTING TO ERASE TIBET'S CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LANGUAGE

Unfortunately, the Leftists and communists in the country had clamoured for the (then) newly formed Red Chinese regime, which had requested its recognition within a few days of its winning the civil war. Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Patel, on the other hand, was of the clear view that there was no hurry to recognize the new Chinese regime. In November 1949, Patel invited the American charge d'affaires Donovan to verify if there was an urgency in the recognition of Red China.

Knowing the Sardar through his long correspondence with Jawaharlal Nehru on the subject of China, uppermost in his mind must have been the concern that the Sino-Indian border should be mutually recognized. But Jawaharlal Nehru was in a hurry and without consulting the Sardar, informed the Chinese of India's decision to recognize their regime in the December of that year itself.

While expressing its delight at Nehru's message, China also laid down a few preconditions. India would pass on to the new regime all properties and assets of China. Secondly, India would not recognize any members of the KMT. Thirdly, India should support the expulsion of Nationalist China from the UNO, as well as its replacement by the

communist regime. China's perfidious intentions can be gauged from the fact that its communist regime announced the 'liberation' of Tibet as the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) task just one day before the founding of the People's Republic of China. The Tibetans had expelled the Chinese Amban, although he had been a Kuomintang government appointee. The Chinese blamed India for it, abusing Nehru as "a lackey of British imperialism" and complicit in the British humiliation of China, which Mao sought to reverse. The People's Daily of China in an editorial denounced the concept of suzerainty as feudal and oppressive—the very thing China demanded over Tibet. It even called on the UNO to examine India's relationship with Bhutan. The reality, which the Nehru government chose to ignore despite even Ambassador K.M. Pannikar's warnings was that China was eyeing Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan too. But India's first prime minister, a votary of international peace and brotherhood was oblivious to this. The sufferers were from Tibet and India.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

REFORMING JUSTICE

Madam — India is poised to undergo a transformative shift in its criminal justice system with the implementation of three groundbreaking laws starting July 1st, 2024. However, the primary concern lies in the readiness of our institutions to handle these changes, necessitating a nationwide audit. There has been no thorough assessment of the preparedness across various criminal justice institutions in different states. Additionally, the transition from old laws to new ones is likely to create significant confusion. It would be prudent to postpone the implementation of these laws until a comprehensive and independent audit of institutional readiness is conducted. Alternatively, a phased implementation to test the waters would be a more sensible approach.

Noopur Baruah | Tezpur

A DEMOCRACY IN DISARRAY

Madam — The signs were clear for all to see. We eagerly awaited the end of the elections and patiently anticipated the results. Yet, once Parliament convened, it quickly became apparent that walk-outs and paralysis were the order of the day. The drama of democracy played out in full view, with heightened agitation across the country. On the anniversary of the Emergency, Parliament was divided, and the opposition was relentless in disrupting proceedings at every turn, reflecting the turbulence within our so-called democratic framework. Opposition leaders harshly criticized President Droupadi Murmu's address, dismissing it as a government-scripted speech riddled with falsehoods. They accused the government of imposing an undeclared emergency and challenged its claims of economic growth and investment. Leaders highlighted issues facing farmers, unemployed youth, and recent national events. The true nature of our parliamentarians has been laid bare,

India's T20 World Cup victory



India celebrated a momentous victory over South Africa in the T20 World Cup 2024 final, marking a glorious return to World Cup triumph after a 13-year hiatus since their last ICC trophy win in 2011. Under the astute leadership of Rohit Sharma, the team showcased exceptional prowess

and resilience, dominating the tournament with consecutive victories. This win was particularly poignant as it marked a grand farewell for two Indian cricket stalwarts, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, along with head coach Rahul Dravid, who had not previously won a World Cup trophy. Both Rohit and Virat announced their retirement from T20 internationals, making this victory an emotional and proud moment for all Indians. Rohit's tactical brilliance and Virat's consistent performances have been instrumental in India's cricketing success over the years. Their departure signifies the end of an era. The Indian cricket team displayed outstanding skill and determination, ensuring that they lifted the ICC trophy and gave their beloved captain and star player a memorable send-off. This victory will be cherished as one of the most emotional and proud moments in Indian cricket history. Bishal Kumar Saha, Murshidabad

Bishal Kumar Saha | Murshidabad

with their election appearing to serve only as a means to create chaos, disrupt parliamentary decorum, and hinder smooth functioning. The disarray within Parliament serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need for a recommitment to democratic principles and decorum. The behavior of our elected representatives, which seems aimed more at creating chaos than fostering progress, threatens the very foundation of our democratic institutions. It is imperative that we, as citizens, demand accountability and a return to a more respectful and effective form of governance.

Jayanty Subramaniam | Mumbai

FAREWELL TO A LEGEND

Madam — India's head coach, Rahul Dravid, is not one to seek the spotlight. Yet, it inevitably finds him, whether during his illustrious playing career or his post-retirement role as a coach for both junior and senior Indian cricket teams. As his era of strategic brilliance and mentorship draws to a close, we bid

farewell to a coach whose wisdom has guided Team India to new heights. Dravid's tenure has been marked by unforgettable victories and moments of cricketing genius, from nurturing young talent to instilling a culture of discipline and resilience. His legacy will continue to inspire future generations of cricketers, embodying the values that define our beloved sport. A World Cup win would be the perfect capstone to Rahul Dravid's remarkable journey. As we celebrate Rahul Dravid's contributions to Indian cricket, we also honor a figure whose integrity, dedication, and humility have left an indelible mark on the game. His departure marks the end of an era, but his legacy will continue to inspire and shape the future of Indian cricket for years to come. What a distinguished man and an outstanding cricketer!

Jayanthi S Maniam | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Unveiling the deception: Decoding food labels for healthier choices

It's vital to scrutinise food labels beyond their claims. Decoding the fine print ensures that what we eat aligns with our health goals

Decoding Food Labels As a dietician, I strive to provide the best possible tailored meal plans to my clients, so why would I not stop and flip food packages to scrutinize labels to ensure what goes on my plate and my family's? Albeit, every time I do that I stop to think about the actual intent of documenting the ingredients on the package and I feel deceived. The idea behind all this 'extra work' was to keep the consumer informed and help them make intelligent choices for themselves. But then



pher the truth. These tactics paint a picture of a healthy snack, obscuring the reality which can be quite different. So, does this mean we're doomed to fall victim to marketing tactics? Absolutely not! With a little knowledge, we can become empowered to decode food labels, making informed choices about what purchases we make.

Here are a few key areas to focus on during your next grocery run and fill your shopping cart with what is right for you. As I said earlier, don't allow the food companies to trick you into buying their products just because they claim to be "natural", "low-fat" or "multi-grain". Low fat doesn't alone mean that literally. The term also implies added sugars and the use of unhealthy fillers. For the longest brown

rice has wooed Indian buyers, but this does not mean that brown rice syrup is any good and a healthy replacement for sugar! High fructose corn syrup, agave nectar, palm, etc are scattered through the list of ingredients keeping even the most discerning customer, from grasping the true sugar content. When you see "sugar-free" on the label, know that other forms like sugar alcohol or artificial sweeteners might be in play. The latest in line is, "natural sweeteners" or "fruit extract" which again is sugar; no less, no more.

The biggest gamble lurks in the Serving Sizes. As a standardized directive laid down by the FDA, it is ideally meant to help consumers compare the same products from different brands, empowering them to make the best choice for themselves. But, most manufacturers shrink their serving size per package, compared to what an average consumer would typically eat. Consider finishing a whole bag of munchies in one go while the manufacturer suggests two servings per container. All ingredients are specified per serving and

you ended up twice what you thought was good for you! Ensure you keep a tab of serving size and calculate your portion and calorie/sugar intake accordingly. "Rich in protein", "Fiber-rich" etc are another set of crowd pullers that mostly tend to divert customer's attention from other not-so-healthy ingredients. Bearing these points in mind, your next trip to the supermarket will be a game-changer for your household. Don't get carried away by big claims made on the face of the package, TURN IT AROUND & be sure to read the numbers. Whether it is calories, saturated and trans fats, sodium or added sugars, learn the limits and decide for yourself what suits you best. Employ help from label-reading apps that can demystify tricky labels and provide additional information about ingredients. See-through those marketing gimmicks and bring to the table what is healthier and more wholesome for you and your family.

(The author is a dietician and Clinical Nutritionist Ambassador of FIT INDIA Movement of GOI; views are personal)



KOMAL PATEL



FIRST COLUMN THE EVOLVING PATH TO SUCCESS WITH UPSKILLING

Success is more than just good intentions. It's a journey paved with education and skill



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

The saying "Where there's a will, there's a way" offers a reassuring belief that sheer determination can overcome any obstacle. However, navigating the complexities of real-world success involves more than just good intentions. It requires a foundation built on education, experience, and often, a blend of both. The path to achievement is multifaceted, demanding a strategic combination of willpower, continuous learning, and specialization. Enter the upskilling advocate. These individuals champion the importance of lifelong learning, asserting that the pursuit of new knowledge can unlock doors that even traditional qualifications cannot. The argument holds weight, especially in an era where technology evolves at breakneck speed. The ability to adapt to these changes is crucial. However, the journey of upskilling can sometimes feel like an endless treadmill—each completed course leads to another, creating a perpetual cycle of learning without a clear endpoint. On the other hand, we have the specialist.

Specialists possess targeted expertise, backed by rigorous education in a specific field. Their qualifications often serve as a shortcut past initial professional hurdles, providing a clear and direct path to success. Yet, this path can be fraught with its own challenges. As industries transform and new technologies emerge, specialization that once seemed advantageous may become obsolete. The clear road that once led to career success can abruptly end, leaving the specialist in need of new directions. So, who holds the advantage in this dynamic landscape? The truth, as with many aspects of life, is that the ideal path is a balanced



one. The most successful individuals often embody a blend of both approaches. They possess a solid foundation in a core discipline but are equally committed to continuous learning and adaptation. For instance, someone with a degree in marketing might pursue courses in digital analytics to stay relevant in an increasingly data-driven world. This duality—rooted in depth of knowledge but flexible in acquiring new skills—is what makes them particularly valuable. Employers who recognize the importance of this balance are making the smartest investments.

They seek out candidates who not only have the expertise to excel in their current roles but also the agility to navigate the shifting landscape of the professional world.

These employers understand that a blend of foundational knowledge and a willingness to upskill can create a workforce capable of responding to change with confidence and competence. The key takeaway? While willpower is essential, it must be channeled effectively. Start by building a strong educational foundation in a chosen field, then continually seek opportunities for growth and learning. This approach fosters a mindset of perpetual improvement, positioning individuals to thrive amid the uncertainties of the modern workplace. Yet, the journey doesn't end with acquiring new skills. The future of work demands the ability to unlearn outdated practices and embrace new paradigms. The most successful professionals will be those who approach each challenge with a growth mindset, eager to expand their knowledge and reshape their skills.

They understand that change is the only constant and that adaptability is the ultimate competitive advantage. Rather than seeing your career as a ladder to climb, envision it as traversing a vast, ever-shifting landscape. The willingness to learn and grow continuously is key to unlocking a fulfilling and successful career in an ever-evolving world. So, abandon the notion of being a finished product and embrace the journey of lifelong learning. It's a marathon, not a sprint. With the right mindset, you'll be well-equipped not just to survive but to thrive in the ever-changing world of work. Are you ready for the adventure?

(The writer is an author and has penned three books; views are personal)

Focus shifts to prudent public wealth management



UTTAM GUPTA

The new Govt is overhauling India's disinvestment policy. It is supporting non-profit enterprises, and maintaining a strong presence of State-run firms in strategic sectors

The new National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is reviewing the existing disinvestment policy to shift its focus from selling central public sector undertakings (CPSUs) to 'prudent public wealth management (PWM), supporting not-for-profit enterprises, and ensuring strong presence of state-run firms in strategic sectors'. A CPSU is an undertaking in which the Union government has majority share holding meaning it holds more than 50 percent of its shares. Disinvestment is fancy nomenclature for sale of these shares to private investors. When, disinvestment results in reduction of the government's shareholding in the CPSU to below 50 percent and concomitant transfer of ownership and management control to private entity, this is termed as 'strategic' disinvestment or privatization.

The extant policy on disinvestment was announced by the Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget speech for FY 2021-22.

Under it, CPSUs were classified into two broad categories i.e. strategic and non-strategic. The strategic group covers atomic energy, space and defense; transport and telecommunications; power, petroleum, coal and other minerals; and banking, insurance and financial services. The non-strategic category includes all other sectors viz. industrial and consumer goods, hotel and tourist services, trading, and marketing and so on. The government's intent was to sell all undertakings in the strategic sector with the caveat that at least one (and a maximum of four) will be retained in the public sector.

As for undertakings in non-strategic sectors, it wanted to reduce its shareholding to below 50 percent in 'all' of them. Put simply, they would all be privatized. All loss-making undertakings in this category would be closed.

Also tagged to this policy was government's intent to use the proceeds from disinvestment for meeting its fiscal deficit (excess of total revenue over total expenditure) or FD target. This part was a continuation from the past when the Modi - government started selling its shares in CPSUs in 2015-16 with particular focus on 'strategic' disinvestment. In the backdrop of devastation caused by Covid-19 pandemic and debilitating effect on its finances during 2020-21 (in that year, FD had scaled to 9.2 percent of GDP), in the budget for 2021-22, Sitharaman had put even greater reliance on proceeds of disinvestment by setting an ambitious target of Rs 175,000 crore. During that year, the government had planned big ticket disinvestments such as Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), IDBI Bank, NMDC Steel and Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) and so on.

But, the process has remained stuck in the slow lane even as the targets of proceeds from sales were missed year-after-year. Only during two years viz. 2017-18 and 2018-19, it achieved the target. That was primarily because, in those years, it had conducted two big-ticket sales of its shares from one CPSU to another.

During 2017-18, the government sold



51.11 percent of its shareholding in Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) to the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) yielding Rs 37,000 crore. In the following year, it undertook the sale of its 52.63 percent stake in the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) to the Power Finance Corporation (PFC) yielding Rs 13,000 crore. But, those sales can't be termed as strategic as the purchaser being another CPSU namely ONGC/PFC, the Government continues to have effective ownership over the divested entity viz. HPCL/REC. The results during 2021-22 and 2022-23 were particularly disappointing. During 2021-22, against a target of Rs 175,000 crore, the actual proceeds from disinvestment were a meager Rs 15,440 crore. During 2022-23, against a target of Rs 65,000 crore, the actual was nearly half at Rs 31,059 crore. For 2023-24, the FM had lowered the target to Rs 51,000 crore which during the course of the year was further revised downwards to Rs 30,000 crore. Even against this, the actual proceeds were a meager Rs 14,564 crore.

IN CASES WHERE THE STRATEGIC SALE IS MOOTED, THE GOVT FACES A BIGGER CHALLENGE AS APART FROM A FAVOURABLE MARKET, IT NEEDS BIDDERS WITH DEEP POCKETS

What does the interim Budget for 2024-25 say?

In a briefing following the presentation of the Budget by Sitharaman on February 1, 2024, Finance Secretary TV Somanathan had stated that the "government no longer views disinvestment from the perspective of balancing the budget". Can it be taken to mean that it has shed its age-old stance of using proceeds from share sale for reducing FD. The answer is 'No' as it has set a target of Rs 50,000 crore for 2024-25 under the head "miscellaneous capital receipts" which

includes disinvestment proceeds besides receipts from asset monetization.

The very idea of garnering resources from the sale of government shares in CPSUs is inherently flawed. This is because unlike tax revenue, which can be projected with a degree of certainty based on the existing tax rate and a reasonable assessment of the growth in nominal GDP, the same cannot be said about proceeds from disinvestment. In this case, a lot depends on the market scenario and, in particular, the perception of investors about the company in which share-sale is contemplated.

In cases where the strategic sale is mooted, the Government faces a bigger challenge as apart from a favorable market, it needs bidders with deep pockets. The lengthy and cumbersome process of approval and bureaucratic red tape further undermines the chances of its kicking the ball rolling just around the time when the strategic investors are ready to put in their bids.

The Niti Aayog identifies companies for disinvestment which are then considered by the Core Group of Secretaries on Divestment (CGD), a long-drawn process by itself, which takes it to the Alternative Mechanism (AM) - a group of ministers, including finance, road transport & highways, administrative reforms, etc., for approval. After AM's approval, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) moves a proposal for in-principal approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).

In view of above, the government shouldn't put any number to

receipts from share sale while preparing the budget as the end of the year, slippage is inevitable. Even so, the government's tax revenue is buoyant (for three years in a row since 2021-22, these have exceeded the target) and it is getting higher dividends from CPSUs as also higher dividends from the Reserve Bank of India (for its FY 2023-24, the RBI has made a huge dividend transfer of Rs 210,000 crore to the Centre for latter's use during 2024-25) and public sector banks (PSBs). These positive trends should be good enough for managing fiscal deficits; hence, no need to depend on 'miscellaneous capital receipts'.

What happens to strategic sale? From the emphasis on public wealth management (PWM), strong presence of state-run firms in strategic sectors, one gets sense that the government has completely abandoned the path of privatizing CPSUs in these sectors. As it is, under the 2021-22 policy, it had intended to retain at least one (and a maximum of four) undertakings in the strategic sector. Now, it seems it won't privatize even one. The government's decision to drop its plan for sale of BPCL which was on its agenda since 2019-20 is an indication of things to come.

Changing horses midstream won't be in the best interest of the country. Fundamentally, the State shouldn't be in the business of running enterprises. There always remains a risk of political interference and bureaucratic red tape which can seriously hamper the working of CPSUs. The government should continue the process of share sale and focus on de-bureaucratizing it.

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

Surviving the scorch: Strategies for managing heat waves in India

The summer of 2024 has seen record-breaking temperatures. It is imperative for policymakers to understand the underlying causes and implement effective measures

The country is in the midst of intense heat waves causing severe hardship in the entire North, Central and Western India for more than a month. India may have recorded the hottest-ever temperature in 2024. On 29th May 2024 Delhi recorded 52.3 Degrees Celsius temperature at a weather station in Mungeshpur a suburb of Delhi though later on it was proved that it was slightly on the higher side. Even cooler places like Dehradun have noticed the highest temperature of the last 53 years this year. More than 30 crore people in India are prone to high risk due to lack of means to escape heat waves. The people are feeling severe shortages of power and water and many grids are collapsing due to overload lead-



V K BAHUGUNA

ing to prolonged outages. Several people have died due to heat waves across the country. According to official sources, 150 people have died due to heat waves and around 30,000 people suffered heat stroke from March to mid-June 2024. The people from Delhi and other adjoining areas are rushing to hill stations of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and other hills to escape the heat torture

and in the process causing heavy traffic jams and throwing in disarray the civic amenities in several towns and cities. The River width of Ganga in Varanasi has reduced by 35 % and similar reports are forthcoming of the narrowing of other streams and rivers. The experts have been warning the government and the society at large about the changing weather trends of the country. Now the question for the policymakers, professionals and administrators is to assess the causes of such an unprecedented rise in temperature and how to mop up resources to deal with it. If the mandarins in power in the centre and state do not change the way to deal with it efficiently and effectively many disasters will be ruining the stabil-

ity and cohesiveness in the society. One thing all must learn is the fact that high temperatures are the results of the combined effects of global warming, increasing urbanisation/concretization leading to changing weather patterns. As far as Delhi and nearby areas are concerned the dry and warm westerly winds from Rajasthan and Haryana are the causes of the heat wave. Now these winds continue during the night and do not allow the night temperature to fall and this is further accentuated when these westerly winds lead to cloud formation in the sky which prevents cooling the temperature. To find the solution our planners and civic administrators in cities must meet the challenges of the

'urban heat island effect'. In nature trees and other vegetation in the landscape along with green roofs help in reducing the urban heat island effects by releasing moisture through transpiration, and by shading reflecting the sun radiation back into the atmosphere. Therefore, the massive dense urbanisation, buildings, roads and pavements absorb and retain the heat and hence the urban heat island effect with disastrous consequences. On the other hand, the effects of heat waves in rural areas are different; there is less or minimal heat island effect but the heat effects mostly relate to health issues like severe dehydration, heat stroke, heat exhaustion and gastro-intestinal diseases exacerbated by the long power cuts and water

shortage. India is not the only country affected by heat waves. Europe is also suffering from heat waves since April 2024. The temperature is above 30 degrees Celsius in south Europe, particularly in Spain. This year in Europe the highest temperature was noticed in Zeneca and Bosnia at 33.3 degree Celsius on 14th April 2024. The European country's architecture is such that they cannot cope up well with continuous heat waves. The objective of this article is to stress that in India the Central and State governments should jointly devise a policy to effectively deal with summer weather. The first thing to be done is to declare the temperature beyond a certain limit as a nat-

ural disaster/climate emergency and put in place standard operating procedures to deal with it for the different cities and rural areas. In rural areas, the government must ensure a supply of potable water and electricity as well as a mobile dispensary to provide quick health care services. In each village lakes and ponds should be created compulsorily so that people including farmers and cattle get water. It needs short-term planning risk assessment and early warning systems based on the India Meteorological Department forecast. One of the fundamental requirements is the need to remould the district administration by creating an integrated and holistic approach so that climate-resilient develop-

ment is ensured and preparations are made in advance to deal with any emergent situation. However, real change in the entire civic administration is essential in urban areas. The town and country planning needs complete overhauling as also revisit the power-centric civic bodies. The drainages are in shamble and must be protected so that the next emergency in rainy weather does not derail the life and property. Will the Urban Development Ministry set up a task national force to recommend action? *(The author is the former Director-General of the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education and Chancellor of FRI University; views are personal)*

what's brewing?



Mark Bennington speaks of being typecast in Indian cinema

Mark Bennington's path in Indian showbiz is a riveting story of perseverance. The American actor, who recently appeared in *Maharaj* and *Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar*, discusses his experiences. "There are several obstacles in India. For example, in the West, you never receive a script at the last minute; you have time to develop your character. Here in India, it's often at the last minute, so I'm learning lines on the plane or on my way to the set. Another distinction is that actors in the West seldom negotiate their fees directly; they instead rely on representatives to do it. I only recently got an agent," he explains. When asked about being typecast because of his white ethnicity, Bennington responds, "I usually am offered characters from the British Raj and have turned down several of them. Roles like the one I got on *Saas Bahu Aur Flamingo* (the web show) are extremely rare." He says that his goal is to make the roles he takes on as real and interesting as possible. "Bennington also acknowledges that he may never be able to 'break the ceiling' here, as international performers do in the West."

Neeraj Pandey opens up on not de-aging Tabu & Ajay in AMKDT

The film *Auron Mein Kahan Dum Tha*, starring Tabu and Ajay Devgn, has peaked fans' excitement since its trailer was released. The film follows the romance of Ajay and Tabu's characters, who had to part ways due to their own actions. In a new interview, Neeraj Pandey said why he did not de-age the actors to play them in their younger incarnations, as it would appear 'crazy.' He also stated that there would always be two different sets of performers to portray two age groups. In the interview, Neeraj also stated, "We only did that when it was necessary for the story. Unfortunately, de-aging has become overdone to the point of technological misuse. In this scenario, Ajay and Tabu's characters cannot be aged 21. That would be ridiculous!" Shantanu Maheshwari and Saiee M Manjrekar play younger versions of Ajay and Tabu, respectively. Neeraj also stated that the decision to select younger actors was made from the start. "We were very clear from the start that there would be two different sets of performers to portray two age groups because it matches the plot, which I believe is the beauty of it. After the age of 24, people undergo changes. Our physical appearance changes. Pandey also answered some of the most anticipated questions

about his film." When asked why he chose the title *Auron Mein Kahan Dum Tha* for a love story, he replied, "You have to see the film to understand that, releasing on July 5th." Another user inquired about the film's thrilling elements, saying, "Your movies have always been engaging and edge-of-the-seat thrillers. Can we expect the same from *Auron Mein Kahan Dum Tha*? I am planning to watch it on the first day." Pandey enthusiastically responded with a big "yes." When questioned about what inspired him to make a love story, Pandey shared, "A lot of people have come to me saying they don't find MS Dhoni as a sports movie but a romantic film, and that is surprising. But a story is a story." Describing *Auron Mein Kahan Dum Tha* in three words, he chose, "Life. Love. Eternal." This Reddit AMA session was a delightful experience for all Neeraj Pandey fans as they eagerly waited for the film. *Auron Mein Kahan Dum Tha* is a musical romantic drama spanning 23 years, set between 2000 and 2023. The original soundtrack for the film has been composed by Oscar-winning music director M.M. Keeravani. The film also features a stellar ensemble cast, including Jimmy Shergill, Saiee Manjrekar, and Shantanu Maheshwari.

KAREENA KAPOOR KHAN AND EKTA R KAPOOR REUNITE FOR THE BUCKINGHAM MURDERS



After *Veere Di Wedding* and *Crew*, Kareena Kapoor Khan and Ekta R Kapoor are joining hands again for Hansal Mehta's upcoming *The Buckingham Murders*. While the duo already won the hearts with such comedy dramas, with this they are coming with a murder mystery and it indeed looks interesting. The film will also introduce Kareena Kapoor Khan as a co-producer. The film will be released in cinemas on September 13, 2024. The film has indeed created a stir with the release of its intriguing poster, offering a glimpse into its intense, thrilling world and leaving the audience keeping an eye on the secrets of the murder mystery to unfold. The film started making noise long before its release, screening at the BFI London Film Festival 2023 and being the first film to open at the Jio MAMI Film Festival 2023. The film is going to be an intense thriller film, anticipating agendas and relations that unravels the thrills about a hidden Murder that unleashes a whodunit. Taking to their social media, the makers shared an intriguing poster, announcing the release date of the film. They jotted down the caption - "We're thrilled to announce that *The Buckingham Murders* is coming to theatres on September 13, 2024." Starring an excellent ensemble cast Kareena Kapoor Khan, Ash Tandon, Ranveer Brar, and Keith Allen, *The Buckingham Murders* is directed by Hansal Mehta, written by Aseem Arrora, Kashyap Kapoor, and Raghuvar Raj Kakker. Produced by Balaji Telefilms and TBM Films alongside Shobha Kapoor, Ekta R Kapoor and Kareena Kapoor Khan.

Emma Roberts shares how *Space Cadet* inspired her in real life

Emma Roberts, known for comedies like *We're the Millers* and *Wild Child*, is all set to tickle audiences' funny bones with an inspiring tale of achieving one's dreams in her upcoming Amazon Original Movie, *Space Cadet*. Written and directed by Liz W. Garcia, this classic coming-of-age comedy, with a touch of romance, will remind audiences to chase their greatest dreams, for the sky is truly the limit. The story centres on one of the most unlikely astronaut candidates: Tiffany Rex Simpson (played by Emma Roberts), a Florida-based bartender with a penchant for partying. Rex's life takes an unexpected turn after she finds herself inexplicably admitted into NASA's highly competitive Astronaut Candidate (AsCan) training program. As Rex, Roberts embodies a relatable underdog, a dreamer who dares to take a chance. "I am obsessed with space," Emma Roberts shared with enthusiasm. She elaborated, "When I read the script, it instantly reminded me of some of my favourite movies - stories about young women finding their place in the world, even when it seems impossible. I absolutely fell in love with Rex. She's fun, she's smart, and she's not afraid to be

honest. I couldn't wait to bring her to life." While Rex might not have the customary qualifications on paper, she possesses a unique kind of ingenuity. After all, she's always been known for her unconventional thinking. *Space Cadet* also celebrates the inroads that women have been making and will continue to make into science and engineering, with Rex and other female characters pursuing technology-based careers. Notably, for Roberts, the film inspired possibilities she hadn't seriously considered before. "Working with Liz on this film, I thought, Maybe I could direct something one day," she added. "I had always wanted to, but I never really thought I could until this movie. I think the *Space Cadet* is saying, it's never too late to revisit your dreams. I know it sounds cheesy, but I really do believe that." Besides Emma Roberts (who also serves as an executive producer), the film also stars Tom Hopper, Poppy Liu, and Gabrielle Union in pivotal roles. *Space Cadet* promises viewers a heartwarming and hilarious ride, premiering exclusively on Prime Video on July 4, 2024, in English with dubs in Hindi.



Paul Mescal on 'date' with Gracie Abrams in London



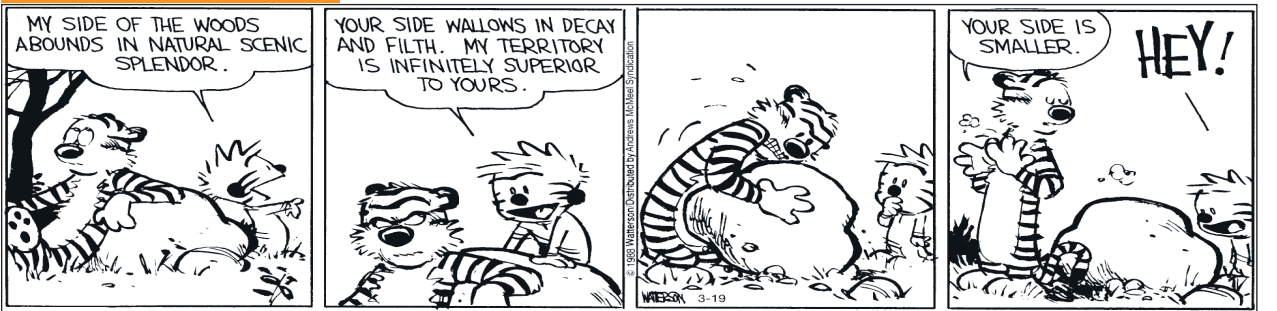
It seems like romance is on the cards for Paul Mescal and Gracie Abrams. The Irish actor and the *us* hitmaker were photographed at BRAT Restaurant in London, according to a TMZ exclusive from June 30. The latest photos of the couple show them sitting at a small table inside a crowded restaurant. They were likely on a dinner date. TMZ stated that they had ordered a couple tiny sharing platters. The latest photographs appear to signal a prospective pair alert. One of the photos on set shows the *All of Us Strangers* actor and the American composer who recently launched her second album, *The Secret of Us*, engaged in a compelling conversation. Meanwhile, another photo shows Mescal leaning across the table to affectionately stroke Abrams' cheek. The pair's London date comes just days after the 24-year-old singer's new album, which features a great collaboration with Taylor Swift—*us*. Her passionate relationship with Swift has grown significantly since she became the standout opening act for the *Lover* singer's pioneering Eras Tour in November 2022.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



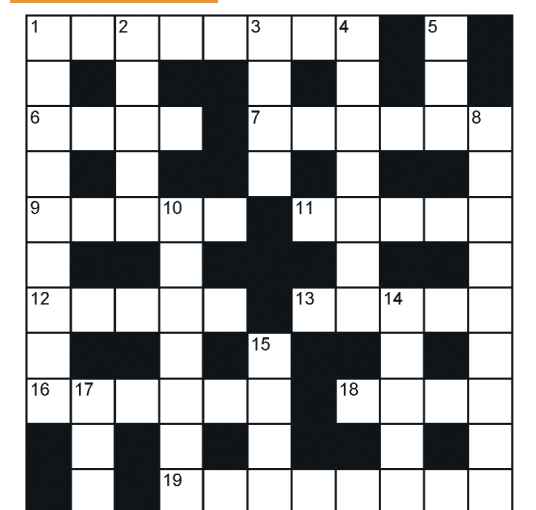
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution

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

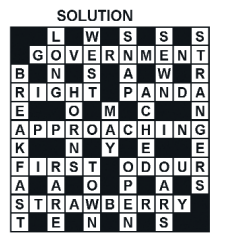
- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
- The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

ACROSS

- A tank for live fish
- Mix this with yellow to get green
- Stopped doing something
- A pale purple colour
- A crown-wearing woman
- A female relation
- Workers sit at these in offices
- Hot coals left after a fire
- A list of restaurant meals
- People who work in classrooms

DOWN

- An emergency vehicle
- Normal
- A feeling that makes you want to scratch
- Check the length of
- A female sheep
- Large extinct animals
- Very old
- A person from Sweden
- The largest continent
- Adult males





ROAD TO GLOBAL RECOGNITION

Natania creating waves globally with her collabs along Selena Gomez & Naomi

every musical opportunity available at the time, including joining a choir to prove to them how serious I was!"

She presently juggles numerous balls, so anyone looking for an answer to issues about abundance of talent should turn to her. The pop singer has been relentlessly pushing her boundaries by accepting new tasks, all while utilising her skills in the entertainment industry. "I constantly create based on feeling and emotion in both realms, trying not to overthink things. I enjoy writing pop music and adding Indian portions to help convey the narrative and heighten the emotion," a Sindhi native adds.

Mumbai Magic, a new song by Desi Trill, takes the city by storm and wraps itself around millions of stories. The song is a joyous celebration of bustle, tradition and hope. The three musicians on the label, Shalmali Kholgade, Subhi and Natania Lalwani, envision a Mumbai in which time-honoured customs coexist with the energy of a contemporary city. The song pays tribute to how the city can inspire and energise people, serving as both a home and a muse, from the colonial gateway of India to the Bandra-Worli Sea Link. Conversely, we hear Natania, who was a member of The Stop Gaps Choral Ensemble, regarded as one of India's most esteemed choirs, go on to say, "I wrote the *Gulzar* song in response to a conversation I had with someone in which I chose to be extremely vulnerable and express my feelings. He had asked for my patience as he talked about his feelings, so that evening I went into the studio and stated, 'He said I have to be patient! *Gulzar* was then born.' She wants to remind people to go boldly and show their hearts by showing them who they really are. That produces only lovely things and life is too short to do anything else. *Gulzar* originated from a deeply intimate event and was a highly personal song. Furthermore, every song that she is releasing as an artist is inspired by a true event or circumstance. Sharing her music with the public and using it as a vehicle for self-expression feels really freeing.

She participated in the Boston Summer Program at the Berklee School of Music in 2010. After that, she relocated to Los Angeles and enrolled at Hollywood, California's Musician's Institute. "There is no set recipe for collaborations; they all happen so differently. I'm lucky to have a fantastic support system around me that helps me get into situations that result in amazing partnerships like these. It constantly serves as a reminder that teamwork is essential to success in all endeavours and I genuinely like assisting other artists in sharing their tales."

Buzz was generated when Natania's single *Mess Me Up* was released on Lowly Palace and Chill Nation. After that, she dropped the single *Yellow Lights*, which became the first cover of the official Spotify playlist *No Borders* and was included on other Spotify and Saavn playlists. More than 1.5 million streams have been received. It made its debut on Rolling Stone and was played on Radio One throughout India. Natania has collaborated with Not Famous on *Kissing Mouths*, Deep Chills on *Feelings and Muscle Memory* since their releases. Additionally, from this, we also learned that, "Normally, I just compose music without considering a particular brand or brief. I'm much more creative when it comes to the lyrical content of those studio sessions, so I always try to think outside the box and attempt something new. It's similar to letting go and seeing what emerges when you step into the creative sandbox."

Thankfully, thus far, brands have appeared to relate to those records of mine."

Her music is entirely focused on her personal experiences, but when she creates for other musicians, she almost acts as a best friend or therapist, helping them go deeply into their tales. It's really a privilege for her to be able to do that! She genuinely thinks that India is about to have its moment. "It's time to go worldwide because India has incredible talent! There seems to have been a change in the way that people want to hear new sounds and this is the ideal moment and place for Indian music to gain popularity," *Four More Shots* fame shared.

"I remember when I didn't have a team at all and I was sending hundreds of emails a day to try and collaborate with artists and I was so disappointed that no one was responding to me," she says, describing a particularly difficult period in her career. "It taught me to try the window if the door won't open and to accept rejections with a grain of salt! As an artist, I believe that persistence is a crucial attribute, as is having a strong enough self-belief to keep continuing."

In this interview, the *Thug Ranjha* fame looks ahead and declares, "I want to do anything and everything! As an artist, my main objective is to express my narrative from the bottom of my heart through music and establish a connection with listeners. I also want to discover methods to work with India to create music that contributes to global cultural moments. Oh and I'd like to receive a Grammy. Working with Naomi Osaka was undoubtedly an eye-opening experience! Beats absolutely adored the record we previously owned and this song was incredibly inspiring. *Shuffle the deck, I'm the queen of the pack* is the opening line and it truly reflects an icon like Naomi, so I'm glad it suited and we got to work together to create a time for her to shine."

To be honest, "*Only Murders in the Building* with Selena Gomez was a really fun project to work on. They liked a song I already had and they thought it was a perfect fit for the scene when Selena Gomez was in an art gallery. I was thrilled that it worked so perfectly there! I was particularly excited about working on *Four More Shots* because Mikey Mcleary had asked me to co-write the theme song, something I had been yearning to do for a long time. After that, I worked with him to compose the music for the entire production and we had to immerse ourselves in the characters' lives and minds. After seeing the episodes, we would modify the songs to reflect the experiences of the characters. It was a lot of joy for me to select a few of the vocalists to perform the songs."



SHIKHA DUGGAL

Joining *Desi Trill* and receiving guidance from Jay Z's Roc Nation, Natania has carved out a successful career for herself by contributing to high-caliber productions like *4 More Shots Please*, *Ruby Gillman*, *Teenage Kraken*, *Joy Ride*, *Wedding Season*, *Industry Promo* and *Only Murders in the Building*, which starred Selena Gomez.

A special interview with Natania Lalwani, currently one of the most in-demand and endearing singers. Her singing style, voice and genuine demeanour captivates the audience at numerous musical venues. Her latest track *Gulzar* is currently trending and meanwhile, her composed *Thank You God* had went viral.

She starts off with gusto, saying, "When I was growing up, my mom used to listen to music a lot. I've always liked music, thanks to artists like Bob Dylan, Cat Stevens, Whitney Houston, Simon & Garfunkel and others. I believe that my passion for Bollywood Shiamak dancing, together with other factors, ultimately shaped my style."

Her most recent body of work includes songwriting credits on *Do It Like That for the Fall Guy*, starring Ryan Gosling and Emily Blunt and her debut worldwide single *Gulzar*, a brand anthem for Naomi Osaka. "I think I had a level of delusion (which I still have, haha), and I didn't really overthink it. I just knew I wanted to go pursue music," the singer-songwriter adds in additional information. "Convincing my parents that sending me across the world was what I really wanted to accomplish was the difficult part at the time. In the end, I took advantage of

Making a niche in the music industry for herself, Natania Lalwani has captivated audience yet again with her tracks *Gulzar* and *Thank You God*. In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, she discusses anything and everything around her music and inspirations.

EMBODYING THE ESSENCE OF PRANIC HEALING

PNS| HYDERABAD

Inspired by the soul's journey toward self-realisation, Niki Hingad, the founder of Thetapegaasi, embraced both art and pranic healing. This intertwining of creativity and healing is a harmonious pursuit of spiritual growth and understanding of oneself.

An internationally acclaimed artist and a pranic healer recognised by the Art Society of India, her work has been showcased in prestigious exhibitions at venues such as Jehangir Art Gallery, as well as in London and Frisco, and has been featured in prominent New York art magazines. Her artistic approach delves into metaphysical themes, particularly the concept of "Shunya," or zero, exploring the depths of existence.

Sharing more in detail on the concept of Shunya or zero influence on her artistic creations, she shares, "I was fortunate to explore the concept of Shunya, delving into its essence of nothingness. I discovered that it forms the foundation of everything, encompassing various levels of truth. For instance, Jainism asserts that shunyata never existed, while Hinduism offers a different perspective. In science, multiplying anything by zero results in zero, and dividing by zero leads to infinity. This profound realm captivated my exploration."

Several pivotal experiences have shaped her dedication to pranic healing over the past 15 years. The intrinsic drive to know herself led Niki to integrate healing with her art. She enthuses, "Understanding and exploring the inner journey is crucial and Pranic Healing has facilitated this for me since I embarked on this path 15 years ago. Witnessing the limitations of conventional medicine in addressing chronic conditions and emotional distress motivated me to seek alternative healing methods. Pranic healing provided a holistic approach that addressed not just the symptoms but also the underlying energetic imbalances, offering profound and lasting relief."

Over the years, working with diverse patients facing critical health issues,

such as cancer, dengue and severe depression, further solidified her commitment to pranic healing. The transformative results that she observed, including significant improvements in health and well-being, reinforced her belief in the effectiveness of this practice. Each success story further fueled her passion and dedication, driving her to deepen her knowledge and refine her techniques.

The COVID-19 pandemic was another pivotal moment that underscored the importance of holistic healing. The widespread impact of the virus on both physical and mental health highlighted the need for effective, natural remedies. Her work during this time, particularly with patients suffering from post-COVID symptoms like anxiety and insomnia, reaffirmed the critical role of pranic healing in providing comprehensive care.

The journey of creating Thetapegaasi, she says, began during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic. She observed the persistent symptoms like anxiety, insomnia and respiratory issues that many individuals faced post-COVID. With over 15 years of experience in pranic healing and a deep understanding of essential oils, she

was inspired to create a brand that could provide natural and effective remedies to address these issues.

She thus aims to harness the essential oils to promote natural healing and wellness. Each product is meticulously crafted with care, enhanced with the energy of crystals to amplify its impact, and sourced globally with ethical precision to ensure the highest quality.

The connection between art and healing practices is straightforward: she can infuse more creativity and thoughtfulness into the process, producing the most impactful outcomes.

And so further, she shares, "Essential oils have always

been a significant part of my healing practice, providing immediate and effective relief for a wide range of health issues. What inspired me to focus specifically on pure essential oils was witnessing their profound impact on both physical and emotional well-being. Essential oils are incredibly versatile; a single drop can uplift a person's mood, ease stress, and promote healing at a cellular level. Their ability to work on multiple levels—physical, emotional, and energetic—aligns perfectly with my holistic wellness approach. In pranic healing, we understand that true health encompasses not just the physical body but also the mind and spirit."

Additionally, her commitment to social responsibility led her to establish an art foundation, introducing art education to children nationwide in collaboration with the JJ School of Arts. She also serves as a director at the Council for Fair Business Practices.

Art and healing intersect profoundly, contributing to social responsibility and community well-being. Art serves as a powerful medium for expression, addressing social issues and fostering empathy through creative exploration. "Art therapy enhances emotional healing by providing a non-verbal outlet for individuals to process experiences and connect with others. Together, art and healing create spaces for connection and dialogue, nurturing inclusive communities and promoting mental well-being while advocating for social change."

Also, as a director at the Council for Fair Business Practices, she aims to promote fair business practices within society. As the director of this institute, she strives to incorporate the voice of holistic practices and wellness into our community.

In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, internationally acclaimed artist Niki Hingad, discusses embracing art and pranic healing with the goodness of essential oils.



Managing hormonal imbalances with Keto

Hormonal imbalances can significantly affect one's health and well-being, leading to issues such as weight gain, fatigue, mood swings, and reproductive challenges. The ketogenic diet, commonly known as keto, has gained attention for its potential benefits in managing these imbalances.

Below we are discussing how keto can play a role in hormone health and how his specially designed Ketorets Method can help.

Understanding the ketogenic diet

The ketogenic diet is a high-fat, low-carbohydrate eating plan that shifts the body's metabolism from relying on glucose for energy to utilising ketones, which are produced from fat. This metabolic state, known as ketosis, can influence several hormonal pathways in the body.

Insulin and glucagon balance

One of the most significant effects of the keto diet is its impact on insulin levels. Insulin is a hormone that regulates blood sugar levels, and its overproduction can lead to insulin resistance, a common precursor to type 2 diabetes and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS). By drastically reducing carbohydrate intake, keto helps lower insulin levels, improving insulin sensitivity and aiding in the management of conditions like PCOS, which is often characterised by insulin resistance and hormonal imbalances.

Impact on ghrelin and leptin

Ghrelin and leptin are hormones that regulate hunger and satiety. A ketogenic diet can help stabilise these hormones, reducing hunger and aiding in weight management. This is particularly beneficial for individuals struggling with hormonal weight gain, as it promotes a more balanced appetite and can support long-term weight loss efforts.

Estrogen and progesterone

For women, the balance of estrogen and progesterone is crucial for reproductive health and overall well-being. Keto's ability to influence insulin and reduce inflammation can have a positive effect on these hormones. Lowering insulin levels helps manage

estrogen dominance, a condition that can cause symptoms like weight gain, bloating, and mood swings. Additionally, the anti-inflammatory properties of a ketogenic diet can support hormonal balance and reduce symptoms associated with menstrual cycles and menopause.

The ketorets method

Rahul Kamra has designed the Ketorets Method, a structured approach that has helped many individuals improve their hormonal health. This method integrates Intermittent Fasting, Circadian Rhythm Hacking, and Caloric Deficit to create a comprehensive plan that addresses hormonal imbalances. The Ketorets Method emphasises the importance of nutrient-dense foods and personalised adjustments to maintain hormonal equilibrium.

Considerations and personalisation

While keto can offer significant benefits for managing hormonal imbalances, Kamra emphasises the importance of personalisation and caution. Each individual's hormonal

landscape is unique, and what works for one person may not work for another. Women, in particular, should pay close attention to their bodies and consult with healthcare providers to ensure their nutritional needs are met. For those with specific conditions like thyroid disorders, it is advised that a well-formulated ketogenic diet that includes a variety of nutrient-dense foods is essential. Ensuring adequate intake of vitamins, minerals, and fiber is crucial to avoid potential deficiencies and support overall health.

The ketogenic diet holds promise as a tool for managing hormonal imbalances, thanks to its effects on insulin, appetite-regulating hormones, and inflammation. However, it's not a one-size-fits-all solution. Personalised approaches, guided by professional advice, can help individuals harness the benefits of keto while maintaining hormonal health and overall well-being.

(The author, Rahul Kamra is the Founder of Ketorets.)



SIX INDIANS IN ICC TEAM OF TOURNAMENT



PTI ■ DUBAI

The International Cricket Council has picked six Indians in its 'Team of the Tournament' for the just-concluded T20 World Cup but there was no place for star batter Virat Kohli, who played a match-winning knock in the final against South Africa. In his new role as an opener, Kohli had an underwhelming World Cup before rising to the occasion in the big final where he was adjudged man-of-the-

match for his 59-ball 76. India pipped South Africa by seven runs in a sensational comeback in the death overs to win their second T20 World Cup title after 17 years. The ICC XI featured Indian skipper Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel and two pacers in Jasprit Bumrah and Arshdeep Singh. Rohit led from the front with 257 runs at a splendid strike-rate of 156.7 in his name. He was the second most leading

run-getter after Afghanistan's Rahmanullah Gurbaz. The Player of the Tournament and India's trump card in their title win, Bumrah returned with 15 wickets. But more than his wickets, his impact in restricting the scoring rate of teams made Bumrah India's most important player right through the tournament. His economy rate of 4.17 was the best ever by any bowler in a single edition of the men's T20 World Cup.

Following their historic semifinal finish, Afghanistan found three players in the ICC team, including left-arm quick Fazalqar Farooqi, who topped the wicket-takers chart jointly with Arshdeep (17 wickets each). Wicketkeeper-batter Rahmanullah Gurbaz, who topped the runs scorers' list with 281 runs as an opener for Afghanistan, also found a place alongside skipper Rashid Khan. The crafty leg-spinner

brilliantly led Afghanistan in their historic run and returned with 14 wickets with a tidy economy of 6.17. Marcus Stoinis of Australia and Nicholas Pooran of the tournament co-hosts West Indies completed the XI. Runners-up South Africa did not find a player in the XI and pacer Anrich Nortje was named the 12th man. Nortje began the tournament with a brilliant 4/7 against Sri Lanka and took at least one wicket in all but one match.

In the final, he was the pick of South Africa's bowlers with figures of 2/26 from his four overs. **ICC TEAM OF THE TOURNAMENT:** Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh (all Indians); Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Rashid Khan, Fazalqar Farooqi (Afghanistan); Marcus Stoinis (Australia) and Nicholas Pooran (West Indies); 12th man: Anrich Nortje.



Seniors will be there in CT and WTC; next T20 captain to be decided by selectors: Shah

PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN

BCCI Secretary Jay Shah on Monday asserted that "seniors will be there" in next year's Champions Trophy and the World Test Championship final if India qualifies for it, while a decision on whether Hardik Pandya succeeds Rohit Sharma as the next T20 captain will be taken solely by the selectors. Talking to select media here, Shah lauded the contribution of senior players in the side's T20 World Cup triumph at the end of which skipper Rohit, senior batting star Virat Kohli and all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja announced their retirement from the shortest format's international assignments. "Transition has already happened with three greats retiring," Shah said when asked about his thoughts on the team's next phase following the retirement of the seasoned trio. "The way this team is progressing, our target is to win the World Test Championship final and Champions Trophy. There will be a similar squad playing there. The seniors will be there," he added. This means that fitness permitting, senior players are likely to be available for the

nine ODI matches that India will play before the Champions Trophy scheduled in February-March in Pakistan. India's ODI assignments before that include three games each against Sri Lanka (away), New Zealand (home) and England (home). On Hardik Pandya's all-round performance in the World Cup and chances of him taking over captaincy from Rohit in the T20 format, Shah said: "Captaincy will be decided by the selectors and we will announce it after discussing with them. "You asked about Hardik, there were lot of questions over his form but we and selectors showed faith in him and he proved himself." Pandya served as Rohit's deputy in the format. India broke the shackles of a tormenting 11-year run during which the side failed to win a single ICC title. After losing two ICC finals over the last 12 months, the trophy drought finally ended here and Shah hoped the winning run will continue. "I would want India to win all the titles. We have the biggest bench strength, only three players from this team are going to Zimbabwe. We can field three teams if the need arises," he said.



All three white ticked off; one red to go, tick it: Dravid to Kohli

PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN

Staying true to his no-nonsense taskmaster image, outgoing India head coach Rahul Dravid had an assignment for star batter Virat Kohli even on his last day at work and within hours of India winning the T20 World Cup. "All three white ticked off, one red to go. Tick it," Dravid told Kohli in a video of the Indian dressing room celebrations shared by the ICC on its Instagram page. By three white he meant the limited-overs global trophies -- the T20 World Cup, the ODI World Cup and the Champions Trophy -- all of which Kohli has collected as a player. What's left now is winning the World Test Championship Final. India have lost the WTC Final twice (against New Zealand in 2021 and Australia in 2023). The 35-year-old Kohli, who retired from T20 Internationals after the World Cup triumph here on Saturday, merely smiled at Dravid as he repeated himself to assert his point, albeit with a warm smile on his face. "Go tick it." The 51-year-old Dravid, who was appointed India coach in 2021, ended his tenure with this event. India defeated South Africa by seven runs in the humdinger to claim their second overall T20 world crown, having won the

title in its inaugural edition in South Africa back in 2007 under Mahendra Singh Dhoni. In the ODI format, India won the 1983 and 2011 World Cups before snaring the 2013 Champions Trophy. The congratulatory video also featured Suryakumar Yadav, whose blunder of a catch to dismiss David Miller proved crucial in the final here. The Mumbaier said it would take him at least two days to fully grasp the enormity of the achievement. "No feelings right now, I don't know what to say," he said. Pacer Arshdeep Singh flaunted a couple of polaroid shots of his, one taken on the morning of the final and the other with the winner's medal around his neck and the trophy in his hands in the afternoon. "This is what belief can do," he said. The Indian team is currently stranded here as Barbados has been shut down due to hurricane Beryl, originating in the Atlantic. The category 4 hurricane has intensified with maximum sustained winds of 210 kmph. The Indian team was supposed to take an Emirates flight from New York via Dubai. A source told PTI that the plan now is to take the team back to India on a charter flight. The Indian contingent, including support staff, families, and officials, consists of about 70 members.

India to tour Australia for multi-format Women A series in August

PTI ■ SYDNEY

India and Australia will lock horns in a multi-format women's A series in Queensland next month, in what is seen as a preparation for the upcoming T20 World Cup in Bangladesh in less than four months' time. The tour will comprise of three T20Is in Brisbane, three ODIs in Mackay and a four-day match at Gold Coast. Cricket Australia on Monday confirmed the schedule and named three Australia A squads for the series. Australia vice-captain Tahlia McGrath will lead the 20-over and 50-over sides, while

Charli Knott will be in charge of the four-day game. "I'm really looking forward to being a part of this series and for the challenge that India A will pose," McGrath said in cricket.com.au. "It presents those of us not playing in The Hundred with the chance to prepare for a huge summer against a strong opposition," she added. Fellow Australia quicks Megan Schutt, Kim Garth and Tayla Vlaeminck will also feature in the white-ball matches, which will be their first hit-out since April's tour of Bangladesh as they begin preparations for the T20 World Cup scheduled in

October. **SCHEDULE** **First T20:** August 7; **Second T20:** August 9; **Third T20:** August 11 (at Allan Border Field). **First one-dayer:** August 14; **Second one-dayer:** August 16; **Third one-dayer:** August 18 (at Great Barrier Reef Arena, Mackay). **Four-day match:** August 22-25, Gold Coast District Cricket Club. **AUSTRALIA A SQUADS** **T20 squad:** Maddy Darke, Sophie Day, Nicole Faltum (wk), Tess Flintoff, Kim Garth, Charli Knott (vc), Katie Mack, Lilly Mills, Grace Parsons, Kate Peterson, Courtney Sippel, Georgia Voll.

Courtney Sippel, Tayla Vlaeminck, Tahlia Wilson. **One-day squad:** Maitlan Brown (2nd and 3rd matches only), Maddy Darke, Sophie Day, Nicole Faltum (wk), Tess Flintoff, Kim Garth, Charli Knott (vc), Katie Mack, Tahlia McGrath (c), Grace Parsons, Megan Schutt (1st match only), Courtney Sippel, Tayla Vlaeminck, Tahlia Wilson. **Four-day squad:** Maitlan Brown, Maddy Darke (wk), Sophie Day, Emma de Brouge, Nicole Faltum (vc), Tess Flintoff, Charli Knott (c), Katie Mack, Lilly Mills, Grace Parsons, Kate Peterson, Courtney Sippel, Georgia Voll.

RCB appoint Karthik as batting coach, mentor

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Former India wicketkeeper-batter Dinesh Karthik, who announced his retirement from all forms of cricket last month, on Monday was appointed as batting coach and mentor by Royal Challengers Bengaluru. "Welcome our keeper in every sense, Dinesh Karthik back into RCB in an all new avatar. DK will be the batting coach and mentor of RCB Men's team," RCB posted on 'X', formerly twitter. "You can take the man out of cricket but not cricket out of the man! Shower him with all the love, 12th Man Army," the post added. "Termining this an exciting opportunity, Karthik stated: "Coaching at a professional level is incredibly exciting for me and is something I'm truly passionate about as a new chapter in my life. Hopefully, the breadth of my experiences as a player can contribute to the development of the group and bring added value. "I believe that cricket success hinges not only on technical proficiency but also on match



intelligence and composure. I am eager to coach and mentor our batting group, helping them to not only refine their method but also to develop the keen match awareness needed to excel under pressure. "It's also great that I can continue my association with RCB as the franchise continues to move from strength to strength," he stated in a release issued by RCB. The cricketer, who is also into commentary, had a spectacular last season for RCB where he played the role of a finisher and scored 326 runs at an average of

36.22 with a massive strike-rate of 187.36. He was given an emotional farewell after RCB lost the Eliminator to Rajasthan Royals. Overall, the wicketkeeper-batter played 257 matches in IPL representing five franchises -- Kolkata Knight Riders, Mumbai Indians, Delhi Daredevils, Kings XI Punjab and RCB. He had amassed 4,842 runs at an average of 26.32. Playing for India, Karthik scored 1,752 runs and struck nine half-centuries in 94 ODI matches. In 26 Tests, Karthik has 1,025 runs to his name, which includes a century against Bangladesh. In 60 T20Is, he has scored 686 runs at an average of 26.38 with a 142-plus strike-rate. Speaking about Karthik's appointment, RCB Director of Cricket Mo Bobat said he will be just as impactful as a coach. "His longevity and track record as a player speaks volumes about his skill and dedication. I know he will bring that same quality and commitment to this new professional chapter," Bobat said.

Stay in moment, keep flexible mindset: Bindra's advice to Paris-bound Indian athletes

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH

As India's first individual Olympic gold-medallist, Abhinav Bindra knows a thing or two about handling big-stage pressure and he has a simple piece of advice for those aiming for the podium in the upcoming Paris Games -- stay in the moment and have a flexible mind. Bindra, who won the yellow metal in men's 10m air rifle event in the 2008 Beijing Olympics, wants Indian athletes to enjoy their time at the world's greatest sporting extravaganza. "I want to wish all the athletes the very best of luck. They've done us all proud already by giving it their all and doing consistently well over so many competitions. And now it's their moment to shine on the world stage," Bindra said during a meet and greet programme organised by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) here on Monday. "The Olympics is the greatest platform to sport in the world, and the whole world is waiting to welcome them. The whole country is waiting for our



athletes to do their best and make us all proud. "I would just want them to give their best to stay in the moment, to remain flexible in mindset and just back the work that they had put in. You know, true confidence comes from the effort that has been put in over a consistent period of time, which I'm sure they have," the 41-year-old added. Two-time Asian Games gold-medallist and Asian champion shot putter Tajinderpal Singh Toor, who is bound for Paris, said star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra's gold-medal winning feat in Tokyo has inspired

other track-and-field athletes. "Our athletes are performing well and they will win medals in the Olympics. Since Neeraj Chopra won the gold medal in the Tokyo Olympics, other athletes also want to win medals for their country," he said. Asian Games silver medallist javelin thrower Kishore Kumar Jena, who will also be participating in the Paris Olympics along side Chopra, hopes India will clinch its best-ever medal haul in athletics in Paris. "We take pride in representing our country. It is a matter of happiness that many have qualified for the Olympics from India, and we hope to win the highest number of medals," he said. "The journey has not been easy, it has involved a lot of hard work, staying away from home, and practising day and night." Jena said he is satisfied with his preparation for the Paris Games. "Preparations are going well, and we are determined to perform at our best and give 100 per cent.

India overcome resilient South Africa to win one-off Test by 10 wickets

PTI ■ CHENNAI

India were made to wait a tad longer for the winning moment by centurion Laura Wolvaardt, but they eventually went past the line convincingly by 10 wickets on the fourth and final day of the one-off Test women's Test against South Africa here on Monday. India were required to chase a modest 37 after bowling out South Africa for 373 in their second innings and the hosts accomplished the task in 9.2 overs without losing a wicket. India had declared their first innings closed at 603 for six. The opening duo of Shubha Sathesh (13 not out) and Shafali Verma (24 not out) steered their side home comfortably. This is India's second 10-wicket triumph in Tests after a scoring a similar win over the Proteas at Paarl in 2002. After getting bundled out 266 in their first innings, South Africa fought well through hundred-makers Wolvaardt (122, 314b, 16x4) and Sune Luus (109, 203b, 18x4) in the second innings.

However, SA could only delay the inevitable. Resuming at the overnight 232 for two, and trailing India by 105 runs, Wolvaardt and Marizanne Kapp appeared to be in good touch. The former brought up her maiden Test century, also becoming the first woman batter to score a Test, ODI and T20I ton in the same year. However, Kapp was soon trapped leg-before by Deepthi Sharma for 31, while Sneha Rana ousted Delmi Tucker for a duck as the tourists slipped to 266 for four. With still work to be done for the South Africans to take the lead, Wolvaardt tried to anchor the innings but was dismissed for 122 when Rajeshwari Gayakwad trapped her in front to reduce the visitors 281 for five. But the Proteas marched on and went past the 300-run mark, their highest team total in Tests against the Indians. The previous best was the 266 that made in their opening innings here. South Africa needed less than 50 runs to take the lead at this stage. Nadine de Klerk and Sinalo Jafa



stuck together until the lunch break and SA were 302 for five then. However, in the post-lunch session, Jafa retired hurt due to cramps, as the visitors sent Anne Dercksen to join De Klerk. But Dercksen departed for five, falling to Pooja Vastrakar with SA

trailing by 27 runs. Meanwhile, the tourists went past 316 to register their highest score in Test cricket, going past the 315 they made against England at Shenley in 2003. Although South Africans closed in on a lead they struggled to get the partnerships going. The next stand was worth 14 runs between De Klerk and Tumi Sekhukhune before the latter was run out for six. Jafa returned to bat, but she could add just nine more runs and departed for 15 and they went to tea at 336 for eight. The hosts eventually conceded the lead in the final session. This was the third instance of India giving away the lead after enforcing a follow-on and the fifth overall. The partnership between De Klerk and Masabata Klaas produced 23 runs before the latter fell to Shafali, who cleaned her up. De Klerk, who was dropped on fifty by Renuka Singh and Vastrakar during a mix-up, brought up her half-century soon but Rajeshwari Gayakwad knocked her out for 61.

'WE STYLED JR NTR'S OSCAR OUTFIT INSPIRED BY HIS ICONIC ROAR IN RRR'

Tollywood's style icon Ashwin Mawle, who has been the stylist for the stars of Telugu cinema, speaks over an exclusive telephonic interaction with *The Pioneer* sharing his journey transitioning from international model, being recognised by Allu Arjun and styling stars representing Telugu cinema on global platform.



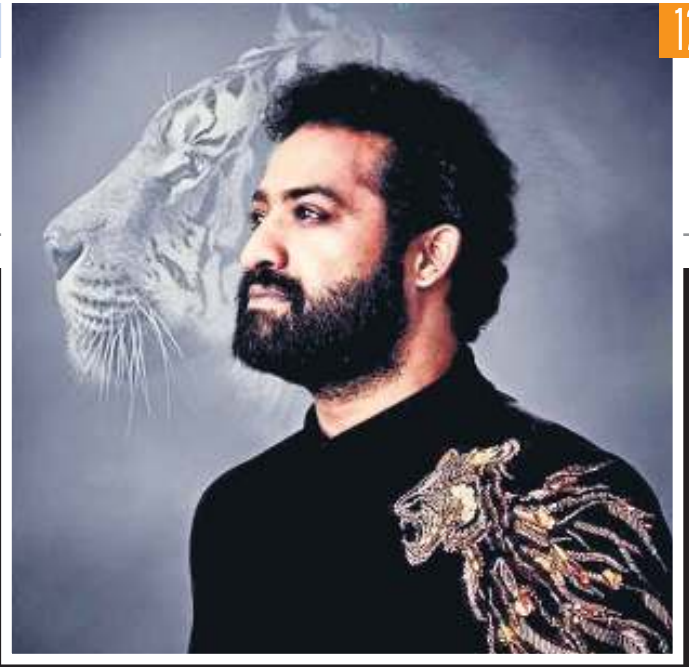
TEJAL SINHA

One are the days when we didn't need the advice of a stylist for our big days. Today, celebrities have their own personal stylists, making them glam barn every time on stage. Well, today we have with us one such stylist, Ashwin Mawle, onboard for our Tollywood segment. You name a celeb and he has worked with them. Ever since being noticed by *Pushpa* star Allu Arjun, he has very well won the title of being Tollywood's BFF stylist. Most recently, he has become the very first stylist from the South to style celebrities for their global awards, including styling Allu Arjun for the National Award and the Berlin Film Festival. But would you believe, if we say, that becoming a stylist happened pretty accidentally in his journey? Initially, at the age of 16, he got an international modelling offer from Switzerland. The Hyderabad-based stylist, via a telephonic call with *The Pioneer*, recalls, "It was a tough decision to make if I had to pursue my studies or to take up this coincidental offer that took me to Switzerland. I was anyways weak at studies; my parents and I had to push me to study, which I failed miserably at. It was a very young decision to make for something that had come to me very coincidentally. I never thought that I could be a model because I was all freckled, pimpled and long-haired, like that teen who was growing into adolescence. But if something was coming my way, I could see that I'd never been abroad by then, and so I thought, if nothing, I'd get a free trip abroad." "I had nothing in my mind; I didn't know what a stylist was," he humorously shares. "I did not know the spelling or anything like a stylist that exists. (we laugh). Like I told you, I was ambitious. I took up

my modelling career by fluke! The only thing in my head was that I'd get to see foreigners (he laughs out loud). I did not see the struggles or anything related to modelling too until I was trained. My agency just told me that you are photogenic and that you can do really well. That was like a learning experience there, but I had no idea what I wanted to do. In my life, many things have been coincidental and very impromptu." Having never been to a fashion school, becoming a stylist too came up very extempore. During his break time in his modelling work, he made sure to visit Hyderabad, or even twice a year. It was during this time that he and actor Allu Arjun became good friends, and it was him who spotted his hidden talent and asked him to style the actor for *Arya 2*. "He told me that I was not supposed to do anything much but just shop for him. He liked the way I used to dress and called me the 'best dressed guy in the city'. I love the way you spare things up and style yourself. I want something like that for me in this movie," he gleefully recalls. He, along with the star, travelled to Dubai for his shopping and it was he who also helped Ashwin out about how to pair certain things for a scene. During this, a buzz happened that Allu Arjun had hired a stylist, and the concept of a stylist was pretty new for South Indian cinema back then. He further recalls, "The buzz also claimed that the stylist was from abroad, though I was from Hyderabad. The curiosity of media and people was x100. When the pre-release stills from the film came out, everybody was like, this (*Arya 2*) has become the most-stylist film of South India back then." After that, he was poured in with a lot of offers. One of which was styling Kajal Aggarwal with 70 costumes in *Darling*. By the time he could realise, months had passed in Hyderabad and he had taken up many

offers and signed a lot of films. He suddenly became the stylist of South Cinema. He realised this was his calling and passion, which were hidden. "Kajal has been a sweetheart and she has been my first best friend in the industry," shares the stylist, who has also styled Jr NTR for the Golden Globe Award and styled megastar Chiranjeevi for the Padmavibhushan Award, as we discuss him styling the *Darling* star for the film. "Though I was a beginner and I didn't know what costume designing for a film was like, she's always been there and taught me. She was the first actress I styled. Styling a male actor was very easy because it was like I was styling myself. However, on the other hand, styling an actress involves a lot of things. Kajal was so helpful and understanding and sometimes she'd simply let my mistakes just go away." The industry, he says, has taught him a lot throughout his career. While there was his initial calling by Allu Arjun, Jr NTR has always been a big supporter in the industry to teach him a lot of things. Then there's director Sukumar, who, to him, was like his school teacher. It was the support he has received from the stars that, he says, has made his journey flow so smoothly. "Jr NTR and I go back almost eight years or even more. I have been styling him in all his films, appearances, projects and advertisements. When it came to the Oscars, it was a surreal moment for all of us. The only thing I knew, even before he told me, was that I had to make something special for him. We had to make sure to create something that made the world turn around and look at him. We sat down and I presented a few of them and he zeroed in like two or three and we locked in Gaurav Gupta to design. We came up with the concept of the most iconic scene in *RRR*, where Jr NTR roars like a tiger. We took that as

inspiration and incorporated it into his black velvet sherwani. This was done in no time by Gaurav Gupta. All thanks to him and his team for creating it in 2 days. And that's how his outfit was the most talked about on the red carpet at the Oscars." Styling for *100% Love* with Naga Chaitanya and Tamannaah was one of his most challenging projects, with the transitions that Tamannaah's character brings into the film. He further credits both actors for making it easier for him to work. Then the next challenging one was *Temper*, since the film demanded a new look for Jr NTR. He also adds that *Nannaku Prematho* was more challenging than *Temper* because it had Jr NTR in a look never seen before. "I took up that challenge to make this look because it was an entire game-changer look for NTR. The pre-planning was certainly challenging, but the outcome was worth it. He gave me the freedom to try out different looks." You go by his portfolio, and just like we mentioned, he has worked with many celebrities. Well, the cutie couple Varun Tej and Lavanya Tripathi, one could just not stop to adore their wedding pictures. And guess what? The couple was styled by none other than Ashwin! "When they called me and my partner, they were like, There's something we wanted to share with you. We, of course, knew what was coming. It took us a couple of months to go to the locations, and we came up with colour palettes and the theme. I gave them a presentation and they just loved it. They just left it to us. It was just not both of them, but we had styled the entire guest list, right from Allu Arjun to the brothers and cousins of the couple. We did almost 90 wedding looks for all of them in just one month." Well, for him, it would be a dream come true to work with Deepika Padukone, Priyanka Chopra and Varun Dhawan as well.



TEASER FOR THE BIRTHDAY BOY LAUNCHED BY MEHAR RAMESH

Bomma Barusu Productions has released a teaser for *The Birthday Boy*, directed by debut NRI team Whisky and partner. Tollywood director Mehar Ramesh unveiled the teaser, appreciating the filmmakers' creative approach. The film will be released on July 19. The teaser features a classic TV broadcast and a joyful birthday party that takes a dark turn when the police arrive. The movie follows five friends as they navigate life in the United States, combining humour, drama and real-world situations. The makers have employed the sync sound (live

recording) technique to ensure authenticity and a realistic mood. Whisky and his producing partner have invested all their savings into this high-quality, technically superior film. To enhance the film's visual appeal, a Hollywood technician from Turkey has also been brought on board for a unique type of colour grading. *The Birthday Boy* promises to be a captivating blend of humour, drama and real-life experiences, brought to life by a passionate team of newcomers.



APSARA RANI TO FRIGHTEN IN RACHARIKAM!

Apsara Rani, Vijay Shankar and Varun Sandesh Starrer's upcoming film *Racharikam* is a first-of-its-kind blood-curdling thriller. This movie is being produced by Eswar under the banner of Chill Bros. Entertainments. This movie is directed by Suresh Lankalapalli, who also provided the story and screenplay. The post-production work for this movie, which has already completed its shooting, is in full swing. The makers are making the movie without compromising anywhere and are set to give a never-before experience to the viewers. Recently, a special poster from the movie featuring heroine Apsara Rani was released, and there was a huge response from the audience. The poster showed Apsara Rani in an aggressive avatar like Kaali Maa, with blood all over the body. As the poster suggests, the movie will have great significance for Apsara Rani. This movie is being made with a thrilling concept, different content and

scenes that will hook the average viewer. The post-production activities of this film are going on at a fast pace in Saradhi Studios. Expectations have been created among the audience about this movie, which is in the final stages. Hyper Aadi, Rangasthalam Mahesh, Vijay Ramaraju, Srikanth Iyengar, Mahboob Basha, Rupesh Marrapu, Prachi Thaker, Latha, Ishwar and others are playing important roles in this film. Varun Sandesh's role in the film will please the mass audience. While Vengi provided the music for this movie, Arya Sai Krishna worked as the cameraman. Ram Prasad provided the dialogue. Chanakya is the executive producer and JP is the editor. The release date of this movie will be announced soon.

Sudheer Babu to star in a pan-India supernatural mystery thriller

Sudheer Babu, the celebrated Telugu star also known as Nawa Dhalapati, will be leading an upcoming supernatural thriller film. This pan-Indian film is set to break new ground with its unparalleled visual effects and a storyline that promises to be larger than life.

Directed by debutant Venkat Kalyan, this film will offer an extraordinary cinematic experience. Sudheer Babu, fresh off the success of his latest theatrical release, *Harom Hara*, which premiered on June 14, 2024, has been widely praised for its intense action sequences and engaging narrative.

This ambitious film will be presented by Prerna Arora. The makers are on the verge of announcing a major heroine from Bollywood who will join this stellar cast. The film will be released around Shivratri in March 2025. This project is set to be the biggest pan-India release, marking a significant milestone in Indian cinema. It will depict an epic battle between good and evil energies, adding depth and intrigue to the story! Sudheer adds, "I've been travelling this path for a year now, delving into this script and genre and I can't wait to share this journey with our audience. Prerna Arora, our dedicated team and I are pouring our hearts into delivering a world-class cinematic experience. We're excited to bring a story that truly resonates and we hope it leaves a lasting impact on everyone who watches."

Demi-Leigh Tebow in Calendar Song captivates all



The anticipation for *Bharateeyudu 2 (Indian 2)*, the highly anticipated vigilante-thriller starring the Universal Star Kamal Haasan, is reaching a fever pitch. The film, directed by the S Shankar, sees Haasan reprise his iconic role as Senapathy, the aged freedom fighter. The excitement surrounding the film reached a new peak with the release of the catchy new single, *Calendar Song*. The song, a vibrant blend of energy and style, is sure to appeal to the masses, featuring a special appearance by Miss Universe 2017, Demi-Leigh Tebow. The visuals, reminiscent of Shankar's visual style, promise a treat for the senses. *Calendar Song*, composed by the musical maestro Anirudh Ravichander, is a mesmerising track featuring enchanting vocals by Sravana Bharagavi. The lyrics, penned by Chandra Bose, add another layer of depth to the song. Produced by Subhaskaran's Red Giant Movies and Lyca Productions, *Bharateeyudu 2* promises a grand cinematic spectacle, blending high-octane action with a powerful message of social justice.



Sriram's Kodi Burra launched with a grand pooja ceremony

Hero Sriram, who has impressed the Telugu audience with films like *Okariki Okaru*, *Rojapulu*, *Snehithulu* and *Raagala 24 Gantallo*, has officially launched his new movie *Kodi Burra* on Monday at the Hyderabad Film Nagar Daiva Sannidhanam temple.

This film is produced by Kancharla Satyanarayana Reddy, Gattu Vijay Goud, Chinni Chandu, Vattam Raghavendra and Samudrala Mahesh Goud under the V4 Creations banner. Chandrasekhar Kanuri serves as the director. Shruti Menon and Aarushi play the heroines. Mahaveer also plays an important role. MLA Malireddy Rangareddy, who was a guest at the *Kodi Burra* movie launching ceremony, turned on the camera. Producer Bekkem Venugopal applauded, while director Bharat Kamma handed over the script afterwards.

Director Chandrasekhar Kanuri stated, "We are excited to begin filming *Kodi Burra*. Sriram, the hero, will be portrayed differently in this film. So far, he has appeared in films about love and romance. Sriram will appear as a police officer in this film! Shruti Menon, the heroine, is playing a doctor." According to hero Sriram, the *Kodi Burra* movie will have a crime thriller narrative. "When you hear the title of our film, you will have a better sense of what it is about. I am delighted to be working on this film with V4 Creations. This is our director Chandrasekhar's fourth film. The *Kodi Burra* movie is being made with an interesting narration to appeal to everyone. Shruti Menon has made films in both Tamil and Malayalam. Now, with this film, she is being introduced to Telugu. I'm happy to be a part of an interesting film."

#BSS11 officially launched

Shine Screens' much-anticipated 8th film, directed by Koushik Pegallapati of *Chaavu Kaburu Challaga* fame, was officially launched on Monday with a grand pooja ceremony at Annapurna Studios. Set in a distinctive world with a captivating premise, this horror-mystery film has already created a buzz with its intriguing first look.

The film stars the action-hulk Bellamkonda Sai Sreenivas and the ever-charming Anupama Parmeswaran in lead roles, promising a gripping narrative that will keep audiences on the edge of their seats. Adding to the buzz around the project, both stars are slated to portray parts they have never played before in their lives.

Regular filming is scheduled to begin on July 11 and will proceed at full speed. With a talented cast and crew and an innovative storyline, this film is sure to capture the attention of cinegoers and leave a significant impact on the audience.

