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There is a need not to die but live for the country:

Amit Shah

FM WRAPS

UP CONSULTATIONS, BUDGET TO BE PRESENTED ON 23RD



'Music is integral part of Darling's

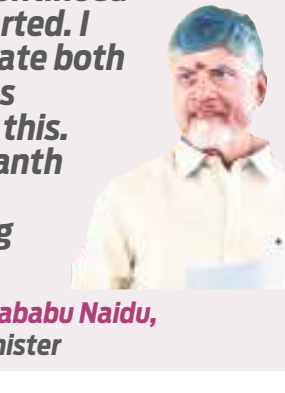
STORYTELLING'



QUOTE OF THE DAY

I made Hyderabad city a centre of the knowledge economy when I was Chief Minister of united Andhra Pradesh. The Congress and the BRS continued what I started. I congratulate both the parties regarding this. Now, Revanth Reddy is continuing this.

— N. Chandrababu Naidu, AP Chief Minister



DON'T MISS...

Free sand policy should be enforced...

District Collector K Vetri Selvi directed the officials concerned to make all arrangements to implement the 'free sand policy' transparently without irregularities. The free sand policy will come into effect in the district on July 8. Collector Vetri Selvi, flanked by MLA Dharma Raju, inspected the sand stock point located at Chebrole in Unguturu mandal on Sunday. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that the state government's ambitious free sand policy would start on July 8th in the district with complete transparency...

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73% Indians read nutritional value...

As many as 73 per cent Indians prefer to read ingredient lists and nutritional value before purchasing any snack, reveals a new survey, highlighting the majority of Indians' growing inclination towards healthy snacking. Based on a survey of over 6,000 people across India, the Healthy Snacking Report 2024, released on Sunday, aims to examine the ever evolving consumption trends in India. "Seventy three per cent of those surveyed prefer to read labels for ingredient lists and nutritional value before making..."

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Hindenburg shared Adani report with...

US short-seller Hindenburg Research had shared an advance copy of its damning report against Adani group with New York-based hedge fund manager Mark Kingdon about two months before publishing it and profited from a deal to share spoils from share price movement, according to market regulator Sebi. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), in its 46-page show cause notice to Hindenburg, detailed how the US short seller, the New York hedge fund and a broker tied to...

-PAGE: 8

Expecting India to win both CT and...

T20 World Cup-winning skipper Rohit Sharma will continue to lead India in the ODI and Test formats BCCI secretary Jay Shah said on Sunday, exuding confidence that the country will win next year's Champions Trophy and World Test Championship under his captaincy. The 37-year-old Rohit, who became the third Indian captain after legendary Kapil Dev and Mahendra Singh Dhoni to win a global trophy, has announced his retirement from the T20 format. "The next stage is the WTC final and the Champions..."

-SPORTS

TDP will regain its past glory in Telangana: Naidu

BATS FOR INCREASED COOPERATION BETWEEN BOTH TELUGU STATES

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP national president and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu asserted that as long as there is a Telugu race, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) will exist in Telangana. He said that the TDP would regain its past glory in Telangana. After becoming Chief Minister for the fourth time, Chandrababu Naidu visited NTR Trust Bhavan in Hyderabad for the first time on Sunday. On this occasion, leaders and activists warmly welcomed him.

Addressing the leaders and cadre present in large numbers, Chandrababu Naidu noted that successive governments have continued the development of Hyderabad city, a process initiated by the TDP during its tenure. The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister expressed a strong desire for cooperation and progress between both Telugu states in all sectors. "Problems should be resolved not by causing disturbances but through dialogue. I am determined to eradicate the evil that caused immense disaster to Andhra Pradesh,"

Chandrababu Naidu stated. He acknowledged the hard work of TDP leaders and cadre, both directly and indirectly, in his victory in the

- Naidu emphasises the continuation of Hyderabad's development initiated by the TDP.
- He stresses the importance of dialogue to resolve issues and eradicate problems in Andhra Pradesh.
- He expresses confidence in the TDP cadre's enthusiasm and their potential to restore the party's former status.
- Naidu recalls reforms by the late NTR that benefited Telangana and the Backward Classes.
- He highlights the active involvement and growing respect for the TDP cadre in Telangana despite not being in power since 2004.
- Naidu reflects on the resilience of Telugu leaders and the support from the community during his arrest.



- He announces the formation of a committee to resolve bilateral issues between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- Naidu acknowledges the support from

- Pawan Kalyan and the BJP to avoid splitting the anti-incumbency vote.
- He expresses confidence in overcoming AP's current crisis and revitalising the State's economy.

last elections, expressing a wish to be born again on Telugu soil if given a rebirth. "With the enthusiasm among the

cadre here, I am confident that the TDP will certainly regain its past glory. **Continued on Page 2**

2 killed, 20 hurt as boiler explodes in cement plant

■ CM seeks detailed report of incident ■ Angry workers stage protest

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a tragic industrial accident, two workers lost their lives and 20 others were injured when a boiler exploded at the Ultratech cement factory in Budawada village, Jaggayyapet mandal, NTR district on Sunday.

The explosion occurred suddenly while workers were on duty, resulting in injuries to 20 individuals. Tragically, two of the injured workers, Paritala Arjun and Avula Venkatesh (37), succumbed to their injuries while undergoing treatment at a private hospital.

Four of the injured workers are reported to be in critical condition. The injured were transported to Manipal and Andhra hospitals in Vijayawada, as well as the Government General Hospital in Jaggayyapet. Some of the injured workers hail from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh. NTR District Collector G. Srijana visited the injured in the hospital and consulted with the medical staff, instructing them to provide the best possible treatment.

Minister for Labour



Vashamshetti Subash stated that the explosion was due to a technical malfunction in the pre-heater.

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu was briefed on the incident by officials. He directed that immediate steps be taken to ensure the injured workers receive the best medical care. The Chief Minister announced that ex gratia payments would be provided by the government and instructed officials to ensure that the factory management also compensates the injured and the families of the deceased. **Continued on Page 2**

Bifurcation issues can be solved only by Telugu CMs

SNCN ACHARYULU ■ HYDERABAD

The meeting of Telugu Chief Ministers ended after deciding to constitute two committees to resolve bifurcation issues.

The Centre and both the Telugu states had constituted many committees to resolve bifurcation issues between the Telugu states. But no committee could resolve the problems as in some cases the Telangana government did not accept suggestions and in some other cases the solutions were not accepted by the Andhra Pradesh government.

The Union Home Ministry also appointed some committees to look into this issue, but it was of no use. However, some issues were resolved when both states came to a consensus.

The meeting of the Telugu Chief Ministers has decided to constitute two committees. One will have officials of both the states and the other ministers of both states. But the issue is in the hands of the two Telugu Chief Ministers as rightly pointed out by Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka after the meeting.

Speaking to the media the TG Deputy Chief Minister said as a first step the official committee will try to resolve issues. If the official committees are not able to do so,



then the ministers' committee will try to resolve the issue. If the ministers' committee also is not able to arrive at a solution then as a final step both Chief Ministers will take a decision.

The Centre, officials of the Centre and both state governments and even ministers cannot solve bifurcation issues going by past experience. This issue can be resolved only by the Chief Ministers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Except for these two nobody can solve this problem.

It is not easy for the two Chief Ministers also because these issues are very sensitive and linked to the sentiments of the people of both states.

Unless both Chief Ministers adopt a give-and-take policy without hurting the sentiments of the people of both states they will not be able to solve bifurcation issues.

Otherwise, the issue of bifurcation will remain unsolved not only for years but for decades.

Lokesh responds to plight of 25 disabled students

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Education Minister Nara Lokesh has directed officials to issue a special Government Order (GO) to address the issue faced by disabled students concerning the Intermediate marks list. Maruti Prithvi Satyadev, from Vijayawada, secured the 170th rank in the disabled quota in this year's JEE Advanced examination. He brought to the minister's attention, through WhatsApp, the problem encountered while uploading the Intermediate certificate. Based on his rank, Satyadev

is eligible for a seat at IIT Chennai.

However, the Intermediate Board has traditionally issued an 'E' (EXEMPTION) in the certificate for the exempted subject for disabled students. During the document verification process, when the intermediate memo was uploaded, it was noted that the memo only listed four subjects, with Mathematics A and Mathematics B considered as one subject. As a result, the intermediate document was not accepted.

When Satyadev contacted IIT Madras regarding this issue, they



stated that admission could only be granted if the certificate included a specific numerical value instead of

'E' for the second language subject. Upon learning of this issue, Minister Lokesh promptly issued instructions to the higher authorities to take necessary measures to ensure that no injustice is done to the affected students.

Thanks to the minister's initiative, a total of 25 disabled students have been admitted to prestigious educational institutes like IITs and NITs across the country. The minister will meet and felicitate the students at his residence in Undavalli on Monday, July 8.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Pawan calls for special initiatives

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has raised concerns over the worsening environmental and health issues in villages due to increasing solid and liquid wastes. He emphasised the need for special initiatives on waste management, advocating for a scientific approach to tackle the problem.

In a directive issued on Sunday, Pawan Kalyan instructed officers from Panchayat Raj, Rural Development, and the Swachh Andhra Corporation to develop an initiative that involves collaboration between voluntary organisations, local communities, and governmental bodies.



This initiative is to be implemented specifically in the Pithapuram and Bhimavaram constituencies with a detailed plan. He stressed the importance of raising public aware-

ness about maintaining cleanliness in villages and educating residents on effective recycling methods for household waste. **Continued on Page 2**

CRDA invites tenders for jungle clearing in Amaravati

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (AP CRDA) has initiated a significant clean-up and development effort in the Amaravati capital region. The CRDA has announced tenders worth Rs 36.50 crores for jungle clearing works across 25,000 acres in 29 villages. The tender process is expected to be completed within a week, and the jungle clearing is likely to be finished within a month, according to CRDA officials.

The TDP-led NDA government has undertaken steps to revamp Amaravati, aiming to give the capital a new look. **Continued on Page 2**

Tigress Julie dies at Tirupati Zoo

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

A five-year-old tigress, Julie, succumbed to ill health at Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park (Tirupati Zoo) here on Sunday, said an official.

The big cat died at 11.30 am and its post-mortem by the SV Veterinary University Pathology team revealed that Julie suffered from intestinal torsion.

"The veterinary doctors determined that the tigress died due to twists in the small intestine," said a Tirupati Zoo official in a press release.

Besides the intestinal condition, the zoo official noted that Julie suffered an injury in the first week of June and a closer examination had discovered that there was an injury to the ventral part of her abdomen. Consequently, Julie did not properly consume food or drink water.



Later, it was also found that the feline suffered stifle joint dislocation and fracture.

Julie did not cooperate with treatment and stopped the proper intake of food, which eventually led to her death.

The tigress was brought to Tirupati Zoo on an animal exchange programme from Lucknow's Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Zoological Park on February 13 this year.

PNS ■ PADERU

Just a day after a report in The Pioneer highlighted the plight of tribals demanding electricity in Chinna Konela and Buruga villages of Ananthagiri mandal, the Andhra Pradesh Eastern Power Distribution Company Limited (APEPDCL) has taken a critical step towards addressing their long-standing demands. The company announced the preparation of estimates for electrification projects, bringing hope to these villages that have been shrouded in darkness for decades.

This marks a significant victory for the tribal communities residing in these villages. Their recent protest, where they marched with torches highlighting the hardships of life without electricity, has proven



to be a catalyst for change. Executive Engineer AVN Appa Rao confirmed that the project has been sanctioned under the Pradhan Mantri Janajati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN) scheme, a testament to the government's commitment to bridging the

gap for underserved tribal communities.

The project promises to be a game-changer for the villages. A 6-km power line will be installed, extending from the nearest existing power source to finally bring electricity to these remote areas.

According to an official statement from the APEPDCL, work has already begun and is expected to be completed within an impressive 15 days. This swift action demonstrates the urgency with which the APEPDCL is addressing the situation. The lack of electricity has had a profound impact on the lives of the villagers. Daily routines were disrupted, with even basic tasks becoming a challenge after sunset. Children's education suffered as studying became difficult without proper lighting.

The absence of electricity also posed a significant threat to health and safety. The darkness increased the risk of encounters with wild animals and snakes, while the reliance on kerosene lamps for light created fire hazards. The lack of power also hindered

the installation of a proper drinking water supply system, forcing villagers to make long and arduous journeys to fetch water. The upcoming electrification project holds immense promise for the future of Chinna Konela and Buruga villages. With access to electricity, homes will be illuminated, children will be able to study effectively at night, and essential appliances can be used to improve the quality of life. This initiative has the potential to empower the communities, opening doors to new opportunities and economic development.

The swift response from the APEPDCL serves as a beacon of hope, signifying a brighter future for these tribal communities who have waited far too long for necessities.

Monday Mirchi

BUREAUCRATS UNDER FIRE AT GHMC MEETING

Kata Amrapali Reddy, the new GHMC Commissioner, may have chosen to break stereotypes by wearing jeans and shirt during her field inspections. But she waded into protocol issues during the proceedings of the recent Greater Hyderabad Municipal Council meeting. Noticing that she was seated while giving her reply to a query, several corporators demanded that she must stand up and respond. Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi then came to her rescue, saying: "She is new to her role and learning". Later, it was made known that Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) Managing Director Ashok Reddy was 'sick' and hence could not attend the meeting. Taking it with a pinch of salt, the Mayor remarked that for several years water board MDs had not been coming to GHMC meetings, but deputing small-time officials who were unable to resolve various issues. Although Amrapali said that he indeed had viral fever and was not feeling well, the Mayor initially demanded that Ashok Reddy call and apologise to the Council. Later, she relented, and said he need not. Attendance of MD apart, almost everybody has issues with the water board and hopefully Ashok Reddy will get well soon and in his new role take the board's functioning to the next level.

SHORTCHANGING IPS OFFICERS IN SHORT SUPPLY

It is one thing to talk about shortage of IPS officers and quite another to short-change the ones available. The Telangana government has highlighted at the Central level that there is shortage of IPS officers allocated to the state. However, some of the available officials have been given administrative positions. For instance, N Prakash Reddy is MD of TG Tourism. Prior to him, Ramesh Naidu, also IPS, held it, having been given the post in January transfers. A V Ranganath has been posted as Commissioner of Enforcement Vigilance and Disaster Management. For newbies, recently Chief Minister Revanth Reddy broached to Union Home Minister Amit Shah the necessity of reviewing the IPS cadre every five years and urged the Minister to conduct a review specifically for Telangana, as the last such exercise was done in 2016. At the time of state bifurcation, Telangana was allocated 61 IPS posts, which are now insufficient given the new state's growing requirements. The Chief Minister has requested an additional 29 IPS posts for Telangana.

THE LORD'S WILL OR POLITICAL CHOICE?

The position of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Executive Officer comes wrapped with a lot of sentiments for aspirants as well as those who reach a step closer to the threshold of the Lord. No wonder, KS Sreenivas Raju, despite his concrete ele-

vation as Advisor to TG government, is apparently unhappy over not becoming TTD EO. Exactly five years ago, he was removed as TTD JEO - a post in which he had served for almost eight years. He then took blessings of the Lord on the premises of the temple and publicly expressed his dissatisfaction at not becoming EO. Reflectively he expressed his gut feeling that it was not in his control and apologised to his followers. That was in 2019, when Sreenivas Raju wielded political clout under the TDP regime. However, he thanked Telangana Chief Minister for giving him Advisor post. For starters, AP cadre retired IAS officer KS Sreenivas Raju has been appointed as Advisor to Government of Telangana (Infrastructure & Projects). He will advise and facilitate the conception and execution of key infrastructure projects and crucial CSR Projects. As for his wistful look at TTD EO position, the whispers in the corridors of power are that perhaps his appointment comes in the wake of invisible political intervention from Andhra Pradesh.

AP CS GETS EXTENSION FOR SIX MONTHS

"Annam udikindani cheppataani ki oka methuku chaalu," goes a Telugu proverb. In administration, a month is more than enough for a seasoned politician to assess the competence of a babu who steps in as a quick replacement. Andhra Pradesh Chief Secretary Neerabh Kumar Prasad (1987 batch) has got extension of service for another six months, effective from July 1, at the behest of AP Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu.

Neerabh Kumar Prasad took over as the Chief Secretary of the state on June 8, 2024, replacing KS Jawahar Reddy (1990 batch IAS) who proceeded on leave after meeting the victorious TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu. A little bird said that CS Prasad, apart from being the seniormost officer, was in the good books of Chandrababu Naidu as an honest administrator.

NEW FACES OVERSHADOW OLD HANDS

At the July 6th meeting of Telugu States' Chief Ministers, called specifically to help resolve bifurcation-related issues, what stood out was the fact that from both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh news faces overshadowed old hands at bifurcation issues. New officials were in the front, while old hands were relegated, going by studied observations in official circles. Over the past 10 years, whenever bifurcation-related meetings were held, officials deemed to be 'experts' on contentious issues were on the forefront. But these officials were not seen at the meeting of the two CMs on July 6th. The only consolation the old hands had was that the newcomers had to rely on documents prepared by them to nail cases before the respective CMs.

--Yours truly

Pawan calls for...

Continued from Page 1

Additionally, he proposed the selection of environmentally conscious individuals as Eco Warriors to actively participate in this programme.

Pawan Kalyan highlighted that the issue of dumping yards is prevalent not only in cities and towns but also in major panchayats. He recounted his observations of the severe dumping yard problem in Bhimavaram town and noted the adverse effects on neighbouring villages due to unsanitary conditions.

He called for the Panchayat Raj and Municipal departments to coordinate closely on waste management and address the issues related to dumping yards. He emphasised the need to cease the practice of dumping garbage along riverbanks, canals, and ponds.

SLRM Project Director C. Srinivasan presented a report on village waste management and proposed organizing public awareness programs to address the issue.

43L tons of sand available in AP, says Minister Kollu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Mines, Geology, and Excise, Kollu Ravindra, has announced that currently, 43 lakh tons of sand is available in the State. To meet the demand for construction activities, the state government plans to excavate an additional one crore tons of sand from the river. This initiative aims to accelerate construction activities across the state.

Minister Kollu Ravindra held a Praja Darbar at the party office in Javvarupet, Machilipatnam, on Sunday, where he received petitions from the public and addressed their concerns. He assured the attendees that their issues would be forwarded to the relevant authorities for resolution.

During the Praja Darbar, the Minister emphasized the launch of the Praja Darbar



program in Machilipatnam, dedicated to addressing public grievances. He criticized the previous YSRCP government for neglecting many issues and promised that his administration would prioritize resolving these matters. The Praja Darbar

will be held every Saturday or Sunday in Machilipatnam.

Minister Kollu Ravindra also highlighted the reintroduction of the Free Sand Policy by the NDA government under the leadership of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. Under

this policy, sand users can transport sand by paying only for loading and signage charges. The announcement of the free sand policy has been well-received by the public.

The Minister acknowledged that people are facing severe problems at the village level, including personal issues that have been pending for years due to the previous administration's neglect. He expressed his commitment to addressing these local issues promptly.

Furthermore, the Minister mentioned that the state government is considering a policy to provide housing for all poor residents. Many people raised the issue of TIDCO houses during the Praja Darbar, and Minister Kollu Ravindra assured that this matter would be resolved within the stipulated period.

IPE Visakhapatnam's permanent campus to open by July 2025

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The Indian Institute of Petroleum & Energy (IPE) is poised for a significant milestone with the anticipated inauguration of its permanent campus in July 2025. This news has generated considerable excitement among the institute's faculty, students, and management. Anakapalli Lok Sabha Member of Parliament, C.M. Ramesh, has taken a proactive approach by advocating for the project's timely completion. He specifically urged the Union Government to expedite Phase-2 construction. The two-phase project, valued at Rs 738 crore, is situated on a 200-acre site in Vangali village, Anakapalli district.

Phase 1, currently underway with an investment of Rs 287.97 crore, is progressing steadily. Phase 2, estimated at Rs 450 crore, awaits initiation. "I recently met with Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri to discuss the project's advancement. During the meeting, I submitted a memorandum requesting the



commencement of Phase-2 works," stated Mr. Ramesh.

According to IPE Director Prof. Shalivahan, Phase-1 construction is about 20-25% complete. "Currently, we have over 300 students at our temporary facility on the Andhra University campus. Phase 1 of the permanent campus can accommodate around 950 students. We're aiming for a July 2025 inauguration to start the 2025-26 academic year from the new campus," he noted.

The project encountered initial delays due to land acquisition challenges. However, construction commenced in

January 2024, marking a significant turning point. To commemorate this achievement, students and faculty members participated in a tree-planting ceremony on the new campus grounds.

Furthermore, on March 2, 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually laid the foundation stone for the greenfield permanent campus.

Phase-1 construction encompasses crucial infrastructure such as academic blocks, student hostels, essential utilities including roads, water supply, electricity, a library, and a guest house. All

elements are targeted for completion to ensure a smooth transition to the new campus by the designated deadline. The establishment of IPE in Andhra Pradesh fulfils a commitment outlined in the A.P. Reorganisation Act. Since October 2016, the institute has been operational from a temporary campus, fostering high-calibre education and research in the energy sector, with a particular focus on green energy solutions.

The Central Public Works Department serves as the project management consultant, while a Mumbai-based architectural firm holds responsibility for the campus master plan. KPC Projects Limited has been contracted for the construction of Phase One. As the July 2025 deadline nears, the IPE community remains optimistic about the project's timely completion.

This permanent campus represents a significant step forward for the institute, solidifying its position as a leading centre for education and research in the field of energy.

KHARGE TO GOVT

Take nation into confidence on border situation at LAC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday reiterated his party's demand that the government must take the nation into confidence on the situation at the border with China.

Kharge shared a media report on X which cited satellite images to claim that China's military is digging in for the long haul in the area around Pangong Lake in eastern Ladakh, having constructed underground bunkers to store weapons and fuel and hardened shelters for armoured vehicles at a key base in the region.

"How can China build a military base near Pangong

Tso on land which was under Indian occupation until May 2020," Kharge said. While there was no immediate reaction from the BJP or the Centre on Kharge's post, the ruling party and government have in the past rejected all allegations on the issue by the Congress. India has asserted with China the importance of achieving "complete disengagement" from the remaining areas in eastern Ladakh for restoring peace and tranquillity.

Home Minister vows swift justice in minor girl's murder case

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In a heartfelt response to the tragic killing of 14-year-old Baddi Darshani, a ninth-grade student from the Koppugundu area in Rambilli mandal in Anapalli district, Home Minister Vangalapati Anitha has expressed profound concern, denouncing the incident as "deeply unfortunate." The young girl's life was tragically cut short on Saturday, sending shockwaves across the state.

Expressing zero tolerance for such heinous acts, Minister Anitha has announced the mobilization of specialized police teams to swiftly capture those responsible for this senseless crime. Emphasizing the need for a thorough investigation, she cautioned against any lapse in handling the case. "I will personally address this matter with Chief Minister Chandrababu to ensure



swift and fair action for the victim's family," affirmed Anitha, underscoring her commitment to deliver swift justice.

Highlighting recent law enforcement successes, Anitha pointed to the rapid arrest of suspects in the recent rape and murder case of a 21-year-old woman in Epurupalem village, Bapatla district, within 36 hours. This underscores the state's determination to combat crime, particularly drug abuse among youth.

The tragic loss of young Darshani has sparked renewed calls for enhanced vigilance and stricter measures to protect vulnerable members of society. As investigations unfold, Anitha has reiterated her promise to uphold justice and security for all citizens of Andhra Pradesh. This incident has not only shocked the community but has also galvanized efforts towards ensuring the safety and well-being of every resident, especially the youth, in the state.

2 killed, 20 hurt...

Continued from Page 1

He demanded a detailed report on the incident and action against those responsible for the blast.

In the aftermath of the explosion, tension escalated at the cement factory as angry workers staged a protest, holding the company management accountable for the accident. They alleged that known technical defects in the pre-heater, which regulates the boiler's heat, were neglected by the management.

TDP for CID probe into TDR bonds scam

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP senior leader Buddha Venkanna has alleged that YS Jagan Mohan Reddy should be arrested in connection with the TDR bonds scandal, accusing him of being the mastermind behind it. He claimed that crores of rupees were looted under the leadership of Karumuri Nageswara Rao.

Speaking to the media in Vijayawada on Sunday, Venkanna also alleged that another scandal had occurred in Tirupati involving former TTD chairman Bhumana Karunakar Reddy. He announced plans to

file a complaint with the CID on Tuesday to investigate these scams.

Venkanna asserted that Rs 700 crore had been misappropriated under the guise of Rs 36 crore worth of road-laying projects in slums and various locations across the state. He alleged that the MLAs could not have exploited the situation to such an extent without directives from then CM YS Jagan. He suggested that interrogating Karumuri Nageswara Rao, Karunakar Reddy, and Kottu Satyanarayana Murthy would reveal the truth. The TDP leader emphasized the need to combat these scam-

dals and investigate the irregularities committed during the YSRCP government. He stated that they would urge the CID to probe these scams, including the involvement of MLAs and officials. Venkanna claimed that if YS Jagan were taken into custody and investigated, the full extent of the fraud would be uncovered. He mentioned that the government exchequer had been defrauded through the bonds, estimating the scam to involve Rs 2,000 crores so far, and predicted that more scams would be exposed upon further investigation. He vowed to continue his fight until the matter is resolved.

Venkanna also commented on the meeting of the chief ministers of the two states, stating that it would benefit the Telugu people. He accused former CM K Chandrasekhara Rao of sending money to YS Jagan Mohan Reddy during the election but claimed the two had not discussed matters in the state's interest. In contrast, he praised Chandrababu for forming committees with ministers and officials for the benefit of the people of Andhra Pradesh. He accused YS Jagan of ruining the state with debt and looting thousands of crores through sand, mining, and liquor.

TDP will regain its past glory in...

Continued from Page 1

Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are like my two eyes, and the TDP will continue to work to protect the interests and welfare of both states. I commit to working for the welfare of the Telugu society till my last breath," he added.

Recalling the reforms introduced by the late NTR, such as nullifying the Patel and Patwari system, Chandrababu Naidu mentioned that these reforms brought true independence to the people of Telangana. He credited the welfare measures introduced by the late NT Rama Rao for the significant progress of the Backward Classes (BCs) in both Telugu states.

Chandrababu Naidu expressed happiness that the TDP cadre in Telangana remains active, despite the party not being in power since 2004. "The respect among the cadre for the TDP is growing daily, and activists still carry the yellow flag despite the lack of proper leadership now," he remarked.

Highlighting the resilience of the Telugu

society and its leaders, including himself, Chandrababu Naidu said that they have overcome various difficulties and emerged stronger. "I will never forget the support you all extended to me in Hyderabad when I was arrested. Over one lakh people gathered at Gachibowli to support me," he recalled. He acknowledged the sacrifices made by great leaders like the late NT Rama Rao and the late PV Narasimha Rao. Chandrababu Naidu pointed out the transformative role of the TDP in the history of Telugus and asked party leaders and activists to remember the state of Hyderabad before 1995. "We developed Hyderabad by laying the foundation for Hi-Tech City, which is now a leading city in the country," he said.

He mentioned that the Outer Ring Road and the International Airport were built with a vision, and the foundation for the knowledge economy was laid. Regretting the significant losses suffered by Andhra Pradesh from 2019 to 2024, he noted that the state is now in deep crisis. However, he assured that he would take all possible

steps to bring Andhra Pradesh out of this crisis.

Chandrababu Naidu announced the formation of a committee to resolve bilateral problems between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. "I know every inch of both Telugu states, from Adilabad to Srikakulam. All activists who have worked hard for the TDP will certainly be encouraged in every possible way," he said.

He also mentioned that Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and Jana Sena chief, Pawan Kalyan, has extended support to the TDP to ensure that the anti-incumbency vote is not divided. Chandrababu Naidu added that the BJP has also come forward to join hands with the parties. He stressed that the time has come to demonstrate the kind of leaders needed in politics, given the destruction caused by an unfit leader in Andhra Pradesh. Despite the state exchequer being empty and the state in distress, Chandrababu Naidu expressed confidence in his ability to bring Andhra Pradesh out of this crisis, as he has done before.

CRDA invites tenders for...

Continued from Page 1

The previous YSRCP government had neglected the capital region, resulting in the overgrowth of bushes and trees. The CRDA is now working to remove this overgrowth. The Executive Committee (EC) has approved these measures, and the call for tenders is imminent.

Prior to the TDP-led NDA government assuming charge after their landslide victory, preliminary cleaning efforts were made in June. Jungle bushes and trees were cleared over five days in 25 key areas of Amaravati, covering 673 acres, including locations such as

Karakatta Road, AP Legislative Assembly, High Court, and residential complexes for MLAs, MLCs, and IAS officers.

Minister Narayana has provided recent instructions to the CRDA, leading to the preparation of detailed estimates for the jungle-clearing works. Contractors will be allotted one month to complete the task. The cleaning efforts will cover 29 villages within the capital region. Additionally, returnable plots have been provided to farmers who contributed their land through land pooling. However, due to the overgrown vegetation, many farmers were unable to locate their plots. Despite multiple

requests from farmers for plot marking, the previous YSRCP government did not address their concerns. The current jungle clearance will include marking plots in LPS layouts.

Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu is determined to complete the Amaravati capital and Polavaram project works. He emphasized that "AP means Amaravati and Polavaram." To advance these projects, the Chief Minister released a white paper detailing the plans for both Amaravati and Polavaram, aiming to resume and complete the works halted during the five years of the YSRCP government.

1,000 acres in Nunna to get Pattiseema water

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Pattiseema Lift Irrigation Scheme (PLIS) will utilise Godavari water to irrigate around 1,000 acres of land in Nunna village, located in the Vijayawada Rural mandal in the NTR district. Due to insufficient rainfall, the three main minor irrigation tanks — Jangamavani Cheruvu, Yerra Cheruvu, and Pullaiah Cheruvu—cannot provide adequate irrigation water for the ayacut in Nunna village.

To support this initiative, TDP Krishna district ex-secretary and senior leader Polareddy Sambhi Reddy generously donated eight motors, worth Rs.10 lakh, to lift the water from the Polavaram Right Main Canal. These motors will fill the three minor irrigation tanks in Nunna village. The motors successfully started lifting the river Godavari water on Sunday. On this occasion, farmers performed special pujas for the motors at the Polavaram canal and began lifting the river Godavari water.

Many streams and bends were closed during the construction of the Polavaram canal, which previously supplied rainwater from the hill-tops to the minor irrigation tanks. This led to severe cultivation problems for farmers in the upland areas. Former TDP MLA Dr Vallabhaneni Vamsi



TDP leader P Sambhi Reddy

Mohan facilitated the irrigation water supply to the minor irrigation tanks by arranging motors to lift the Godavari water.

Since the inception of the Pattiseema Lift Irrigation Scheme, these three minor irrigation tanks have been filled with Godavari water through the Polavaram Right Main Canal. Consequently, farmers in Nunna, Pathapadu, Kundavari Kandrika, P. Nainavaram, and other villages in the Gannavaram Assembly Constituency have been using the Godavari water to cultivate paddy crops for the past ten years.

Previously, former MLA Dr Vallabhaneni Vamsi Mohan had arranged motors to lift the



Godavari water from the Polavaram canal for all villages in the upland area of the Gannavaram Assembly Constituency. However, during the previous government, these motors were only switched on once or twice. In contrast, during the TDP regime from 2014 to 2019, the entire upland area was irrigated with the Pattiseema Lift Irrigation Scheme.

Currently, the Gannavaram constituency requires around 150 motors to lift the river Godavari water from the Polavaram canal to fill the minor irrigation tanks. Gannavaram MLA Yarlagadda Venkata Rao has recently asked the government to support the arrangement of these

motors.

In this situation, TDP senior leader Polareddy Sambhi Reddy, a resident of Nunna village, stepped forward to support the farmers by providing motors worth Rs.10 lakh to lift the water from the Polavaram canal to fill the minor irrigation tanks.

Following the TDP government's resumption of power, Nunna village has begun lifting Godavari water from the Polavaram Right Main Canal to overcome irrigation water scarcity. The farmers of Nunna village have expressed their gratitude to TDP leader Sambhi Reddy for his generous support, which has enabled them to cultivate paddy crops in the Kharif season.

12th C inscription lies in neglect

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

A 12th century inscription lies in utter neglect in Narnepadu village of Muppala mandal in Palnadu district, says Dr E Sivanagi Reddy, archaeologist and CEO, Pleach India Foundation.

Based on the information given by history buffs M Sivasankar and S Chinaramireddy, Dr Reddy rushed to the spot, thoroughly examined the inscription slab and sensitised the villagers on the historical importance and the need to protect it. The villagers informed him that it was thrown outside the temple during the renovation a few years ago.

Dr Sivanagi Reddy revealed



that there are six inscriptions on the slab, two dated 1151 CE, another 1198 CE, one 1266 CE and two more belong to the 12th century with Nandi and Naga sculptures on its top side.

He added that the 1151 CE inscriptions record gift of sheep

towards the perpetual lamps of gods viz., Someswara and Kesavadev of Srinarayana (Narne) by Kommanamata and Prolabamata, ministers of Velanati Chief Gonka-II, and the 1198 CE inscription records a gift of sheep by Valluri

Namayanayaka. A 12th century inscription furnishes information on Gonka-II of the Velanati Telugu Chola branch ruling from Chandolu near Bapatla, His wife Prolabika and appointment of Remmana as the chief of Kammasada (Kammanadu) and excavation of a tank called Dorasamudra in the village and donation of lands for the daily offerings of the gods and Brahmins for their maintenance according to him.

Dr Sivanagi Reddy appealed to the villagers to shift the inscription inside the temple and erect on its own pedestal and arrange a signage with historical details for the benefit of the visitors and preserve it for posterity.

IIM-V launches Exec PhD for working professionals

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Visakhapatnam kicked off its much-awaited Executive PhD (Exec-PhD) program today, marking a significant milestone for the institute. This unique program equips experienced professionals with advanced research skills to tackle complex challenges within their industries. The program attracted a strong pool of applicants, with 16 candidates selected through a rigorous process. The inaugural Exec-PhD Batch of 2024 boasts a highly diverse range of backgrounds. Participants hail from various sectors like manufacturing, IT, consulting, e-commerce, engineering, and construction, and possess an impressive average work experience of over 17 years. Notably, women comprise a significant 25% of the first cohort.

Professor Amit Shankar, Dean of Research and Chairperson of the program, emphasised the program's alignment with the National Education Policy's (NEP) vision.



Call for joint action to eradicate drugs

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

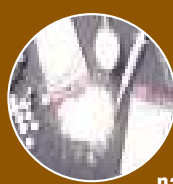
Andhra Pradesh State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (APSCPCR) Kesali Apparao has called for extensive measures and robust collaboration among government departments to combat the drug menace plaguing Visakhapatnam. Speaking at a high-level review meeting organised by the District Women & Child Welfare Department at MVP Colony, Apparao emphasised that achieving a drug-free district is attainable only through better cooperation, coordination, and joint participation via a comprehensive joint action plan.

"Ensuring that no child gets involved in anti-social activities is paramount," Apparao asserted, highlighting the critical importance of protecting the younger generation from



the grip of narcotics. He underscored the State government's high priority on tackling the drug menace, pointing to the recent formation of a Cabinet subcommittee dedicated to discussing and implementing State-wide strategies to combat drug issues.

Apparao stressed the necessity of appointing psychologists in educational institu-



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tions, establishing more counselling and rehabilitation centres, and launching increased awareness campaigns to educate the public on the severe consequences of drug use. "Appointing psychologists in educational institutions is crucial," he stated, adding that comprehensive support systems are essential to aid affected individuals and their families.

Apparao's call to action reflects the urgency and unwavering commitment of the State government to eradicate the drug problem and safeguard the well-being of children and the broader community. The meeting concluded with a call for all relevant stakeholders to intensify their efforts and collaborate in transforming Visakhapatnam into a model drug-free district.

Hold all-party meeting to discuss SCS: CPM

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

CPM State secretary V Srinivasa Rao has demanded that an all-party meeting should be conducted to urge Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu to implement the Special Category Status (SCS) and bifurcation assurances. He praised the Chief Ministers of the Telugu States for taking the initiative to discuss unresolved issues between the two States.

Srinivasa Rao, in a press release here on Sunday, lauded the AP CM and Telangana CM A Revanth Reddy for their bilateral discussions. He expressed hope that these discussions will be transparent. He also criticised the Central government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, for

failing to fulfil bifurcation assurances and neglecting the development of the Telugu States.

He said that the Central government neglected the assurance of granting the Special Category Status to the State and did not resolve the issues of the 9th and 10th Schedule. CPM welcomed the move to hold a CPM's meeting to resolve issues between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Srinivasa Rao also condemned Chandrababu Naidu's statement in an interview with a leading English daily, where he mentioned that the Special Category Status is not important. It is not correct to link the Special Category Status with the State's financial issues, he said.

Nephrologist under scanner in kidney racket case

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

City Police Commissioner Shanka Brata Bagchi has formed a special investigation team on Sunday to tackle a suspected kidney racket operating in the city. This decisive move comes after a complaint was filed by Moola Venkata Satyanarayana Gopi, alleging that a nephrologist and transplant coordinator from a prominent private hospital duped him.

Gopi's wife, Sarada Lakshmi (37), suffers from a severe kidney ailment. As her condition worsened, Gopi sought treatment at a private hospital in Visakhapatnam, hoping for a solution. Dr. Vani, the nephrologist he consulted, reportedly directed him to Anil, a transplant coordinator, instead of laying out all available options including legal and government-approved programs like Jeevandan. This raises questions about whether Dr. Vani prioritized a potentially lucrative transplant over patient well-being and ethical considerations.

Anil, the transplant coordinator, allegedly promised Gopi a kidney donor for a hefty sum of Rs 27 lakh. Desperate to save his wife's life, Gopi paid an advance of Rs 10 lakh in two installments. However, after receiving the money, Anil van-



ished, leaving Gopi with no answers and shattered hope.

When Gopi confronted Dr Vani about Anil's disappearance and the undelivered kidney, she reportedly denied any involvement. This raises concerns about the level of communication and transparency within the hospital. Meanwhile, Anil, when finally reached, offered a dubious explanation, claiming to have forwarded the money to another doctor. He further threatened Gopi to stay away from the hospital, adding another layer of intimidation to the ordeal.

Feeling deceived and helpless, Gopi filed a complaint with the Dwaraka police station. Inspector S. Ramesh confirmed a case being registered against Dr. Vani and Anil under Section 420 r/w 34 of the IPC (cheating and criminal conspiracy). This police action highlights the seriousness of the accusations and Gopi's determination to seek justice.

ENC organises promo run for Vizag Navy Marathon

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The 9th edition of the Vizag Navy Marathon (VNM) is set to be a major highlight in Visakhapatnam's sporting calendar this year. To prepare for the prestigious December 15th event, INS Kalinga collaborated with M/s VTRA

and COMNETCEN, Vizag to organize conditioning and strengthen promotional runs.

Over 600 enthusiastic runners, including residents and Indian Navy personnel, gathered at RK Beach for the promo runs held today. Heritage Narrator Jaishi Hatangadi flagged off the

event amidst a cheering crowd. This initiative provided a valuable platform for the running community and underscored their dedication to gearing up for VNM-2024.

Participants in Visakhapatnam tested their timings and engaged in a rigorous training program at

RK Beach, while Navy personnel participated in similar activities at Dolphin Hill. These sessions aimed not only to enhance physical fitness but also to promote running as a healthy lifestyle choice.

"This year's promo runs have been instrumental in

preparing our runners for the upcoming marathon," remarked a spokesperson from INS Kalinga. "It's inspiring to see such strong participation and enthusiasm from both our city residents and Navy personnel."

With the successful completion of these promo runs,

competitive runners now have a benchmark for their timings and can strive for personal bests leading up to the Vizag Navy Marathon 2024. Anticipation is building for another exhilarating edition of this esteemed sporting event as the countdown to December 15 begins.

Healthy baby born to mother battling blood cancer

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

A team of specialists at King George Hospital (KGH) has successfully managed the high-risk case of a pregnant woman diagnosed with acute leukemia. The patient, a 24-year-old woman from Palasa, Srikakulam district (identity withheld for privacy), delivered a healthy baby boy through a caesarean section.

The critical diagnosis came to light during routine blood tests conducted in the patient's seventh month of pregnancy. She was then referred to KGH, a leading government-run healthcare facility, for specialised treatment.

"Our team at the Department of Medical Oncology, led by Dr K Shilpa, promptly initiated effective treatment under the Aarogyasri healthcare scheme," informed Dr. P. Sivananda, KGH Superintendent. "The treatment plan successfully addressed the patient's leukemia while also managing associated complications like anaemia and thrombocytopenia." To prioritise the well-being of both mother and child,



Diagnosis came to light during routine blood tests conducted in patient's seventh month of pregnancy

the Department of Obstetrics, led by Dr G Soumini, opted for a caesarean section delivery in the ninth month.

"Maternal recovery alongside a healthy newborn delivery in such a complex case with acute leukemia is uncommon," Dr. Sivananda acknowledged. "This successful outcome is a culmination of the exceptional skills and commitment demonstrated by our entire team, including Dr Ravindra, Dr Sharmila, and our esteemed nursing staff."

Lifeguards' heroic efforts prevent tragedies at beaches

Rescued 120 individuals from drowning in the past 18 months

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In a city renowned for its scenic coastline, lifeguards have emerged as unsung heroes, repeatedly averting potential tragedies. On Sunday, the vigilance of lifeguards at RK Beach saved 54-year-old M Seethamma from drowning after she attempted suicide due to family issues. Lifeguards KPC Vasu and Anand were commended for their swift actions, which prevented a tragedy and highlighted the importance of their presence.

This incident is not an isolated one. On June 9, Vasu and Anand also saved 16-year-old K Sudha, who had been swept away by powerful waves while on a family outing. These rescues are part of a larger narrative of dedication and bravery, with lifeguards having saved nearly 120 individuals from drowning in the past 18 months.

The Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) recognised the need for professional lifeguards and employed 47 individuals in November 2022 to ensure the



safety of beachgoers from Bheemili to Appikonda. These lifeguards, having undergone rigorous testing by a team of experts from the National Institute of Water Sports in Goa and local officials, have transformed beach safety.

The impact of these lifeguards is evident. In the past 18 months, they have successfully rescued approximately 120 individuals, significantly reducing the number of drowning deaths. Historically, Vizag beaches recorded about 50 drowning fatalities annually in the absence of lifeguards. This number has dramatically decreased, with most of the 20 drowning deaths in the last period occurring at



night when the lifeguards were off duty.

Speaking to The Pioneer, GVMC's sports director, EA Raju, expressed pride in the lifeguards' achievements. "Nearly 50 lifeguards are on vigil along

the 60 to 70 km stretch from Bheemili to Appikonda. More men are deployed along the main beaches such as RK Beach, Rushikonda, Yarada, and Bheemili. They also retrieve the bodies of those who died by sui-



cide or accidental drowning in the sea and hand them over to their relatives. The guards have been provided with the necessary equipment for rescuing. Our major objective is to make our city beaches safe for tourists and ensure no drowning deaths happen."

The efforts of these lifeguards have not been without challenges. Some lifeguards have reported delays in receiving their salaries due to postponed council meetings. They expressed the need for inclusion in the AP Corporation for Outsourced Services (APCOS) to ensure timely payments and job security. "If we are included in APCOS, there would be no

delay in salaries as the government would handle this component. This would also provide job security. As we were all selected through a rigorous process, we request the government to recognise our services and include us in APCOS. We also request insurance coverage," said some guards.

GVMC plans to call for tenders to build shelters for the guards along the beaches, further supporting their mission to keep the beaches safe. With their relentless dedication, these lifeguards are transforming Visakhapatnam's beaches into safer havens, ensuring that the beauty of the coastline is enjoyed without fear of tragedy.

Free sand policy should be enforced transparently: DC

PNS ■ ELURU

District Collector K Vetri Selvi directed the officials concerned to make all arrangements to implement the 'free sand policy' transparently without irregularities.

The free sand policy will come into effect in the district on July 8 Collector Vetri Selvi, flanked by MLA Dharma Raju, inspected the sand stock point located at Chebrole in Unguturu mandal on Sunday. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that the state government's ambitious free sand policy would start on July 8th in the district with complete transparency.

The Collector examined the sand, stocked at the stock point in the presence of the officials of the Department of Mines. She directed the officials concerned to test the quality of the sand and submit a report.

She instructed the officials to take steps to bring sand to the stock point from the Nidadavolu sand reach and Kukunur sand reach. The officials were ordered to install CC cameras at this sand stock point erect fences around the sand stock point and make a



strict security arrangement by setting a front gate for vehicles.

"The sand distribution at the stock point should begin at 6 am and end at 6 pm every day and the price list should be displayed. According to government guidelines, only 20 tonnes of sand should be given to a person as per the Aadhaar card," Vetri Selvi made it clear.

The Collector also told the Tahsildars and revenue personnel to regularly monitor the sand stock points and the officials were advised to hold the sand distribution programme in coordination with the RDO, Police and Mines Department without any errors.

The Collector directed the authorities concerned to iden-

tify the defects in the sand stored at the stock point and issue a show-cause notice to the concerned Surveyor of Mines if defects were found. Eluru RDO NSK Khajavali, Tahsildar Katta Venkata Shivaiah and mines AD G Sunil Babu were among those who accompanied the Collector.

EPFO, ESIC exams conducted smoothly in city

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) Personal Assistant and Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) Nursing Officer exams conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) passed off peacefully in Vijayawada on Sunday. The NTR district administration had arranged 25 examination centres in Vijayawada for 2,401 EPFO candidates and 5,433 ESIC candidates.

However, the response was poor for the EPFO Personal Assistant exam, with only 426 out of 2,401 candidates (21.91 per cent) appearing for the examination. Meanwhile, 4,075 candidates out of 5,433 (75 per cent) attended the ESIC Nursing Officers exam.

District Collector Dr G Srijana inspected the exam conducted in Vijayawada, visiting the PB Siddhartha Arts and Science College at Mogalrajapuram. She thanked various departments for supporting the district administration in conducting the exams peacefully, including the police, Revenue, Medical and Health, electricity, and RTC.

Nimmala takes part in 'Shramdan' programme at TIDCO colony



PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

Minister for Water Resources Development Nimmala Ramanaidu participated in the removal of weeds and bushes at the TIDCO colony in Palakollu on Sunday.

The Minister along with other activists took part in the 'Shremadanam' and he removed weeds, bushes and wild creepers which grew at the TIDCO colony. The Minister picked up a sickle and pickaxe and took part in cleaning the area by removing the wild creepers and bushes. He

also took part in land levelling work at the colony.

Speaking to the media on the occasion, the Minister alleged that YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's headed government had mortgaged the TIDCO housing project for Rs 6000 crore. Moreover, the funds were diverted to other purposes, he claimed. The YSRCP-led erstwhile government committed an unforgivable sin by mortgaging the TIDCO housing project, he slammed.

The TDP government during 2014-19, had completed 90 percent of the TIDCO houses

but the YSRCP government neglected the housing project by not completing it, he lamented. YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is unfit for politics in a democratic system, the Minister criticised.

Nimmala Ramanaidu assured of completing the TIDCO housing projects across the state and handing over the houses to the beneficiaries at the earliest. Former MLC Angara Rammohan and a host of TDP, JSP and BJP leaders and activists were among those who took part in the 'Shramadan' programme.



Collector announces sand price details

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Level Sand Committee (NTRDLS) Chairperson and District Collector Dr. G Srijana has announced the price details of sand at the stockyards and depots. The sand will be available at prices ranging from Rs. 210 to Rs. 325 per tonne in the district, she said. There are eight stockyards and depots that supply sand to consumers in the district.

Dr. G Srijana released a press statement about the price list of the sand on Sunday. The sand will be available at Rs.325 per tonne at the Keesara stockyard, Rs.313 per tonne at Kanchela and Anumanchipalli, Rs. 252 per tonne at Kodavatikallu, and Rs. 240 per tonne at the Moguluru stockyard.

Additionally, the sand price at Allurupadu is Rs. 234 per tonne, and at Magallu Stockyard, the sand price is Rs.228. Furthermore, the Polampalli stockyard will be supplying sand at Rs. 210 per tonne, the Collector said in the press release.

New general body of Lions Club of Vijayawada takes charge

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The new general body of Lions Club of Vijayawada East took charge and the oath of office was administered by Ln PDG M Venkateswara Rao at a programme here on Sunday. Ln Dr B Hanumaiah was reelected as the president, Ln Raghurama Sarma as secretary, and Ln B Ramesh as treasurer.

On the occasion, Venkateswara Rao said that Lions Club of Vijayawada East has organised a good number of health camps and created awareness among the common people on various diseases and conducted tests and distributed medicines free.

The chief guest of the programme and noted psychiatrist Dr Indla Ramasubba Reddy



briefed how a person can lead a peaceful and happy living. He

said that maintaining good relations with others and spiritual service will keep one happy to lead a better life. The best wealth in life is a good and understanding life partner, which is above education, beauty, wealth and luxury, added Dr Ramasubba Reddy.

Dr Hanumaiah said that in his heart of hearts, he strives for service and wishes to continue forever. He said that in the past they have organised many health camps to educate the poor on healthy living. They have also conducted many eye surgery camps and done cataract surgeries free of cost. Blood donation camps were also held and collected around 110 units.

Revanth Reddy to attend Dr YSR's 75th birth anniversary celebrations



CWC member Gidugu Rudra Raju addressing the media at the Andhra Ratna Bhavan in Vijayawada on Sunday

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Congress Working Committee (CWC) member Gidugu Rudra Raju has said that the Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) will conduct Dr YS Rajasekhara Reddy's 75th birth anniversary celebrations at the CK Convention at Mangalagiri near Vijayawada on July 8. Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka and other ministers will attend the celebrations, he said.

Gidugu Rudra Raju, along with the APCC working president, Sk Mastan Vali addressed the media at the Andhra Ratna Bhavan in Vijayawada on Sunday. Speaking on the occasion, Raju said that the All India Congress Committee (AICC) State affairs in-charge Manickam Tagore will be presiding over the programme.

He said that Dr YSR assumed the Chief Minister chair two times for the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh. Starting from positions in the Youth Congress, Dr YS Rajasekhara Reddy grew in a phased manner to the Chief Minister position. With the efforts of Dr YSR, the Congress Party came to rule two times in the undivided Andhra Pradesh. Dr YSR was a loyalist to the family of Indira Gandhi, he said.

Meanwhile, he said that during the tenure of the Congress party in the combined Andhra Pradesh, the then CM Dr YSR introduced many welfare and developmental schemes. Ex-Chief Minister Dr YS Rajasekhara Reddy did a lot for the development of the combined Andhra Pradesh. As per the directions received from the AICC, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy held discussions with AP Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, he explained.



Heavy rain forecast for AP

PNS ■ GUNTUR

A cyclonic circulation persists over west-central Bay of Bengal off the South Andhra Pradesh coast, currently observed at 5.8 km above mean sea level, as reported by the Meteorological Centre here on Sunday.

Heavy rain is expected at isolated places in north coastal Andhra Pradesh over the next 24 hours. Thunderstorms, accompanied by lightning and strong surface winds with speeds of 30-40 kmph, are likely at isolated places in north coastal Andhra Pradesh, south coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Rayalaseema over the next 48 hours. Further thunderstorms with lightning are forecasted at isolated places in north-coastal Andhra Pradesh, south-coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Rayalaseema from July 9 to 11.

During the next seven days, light to moderate rain or thundershowers are expected at many places, few places, or isolated places in north coastal Andhra Pradesh, south coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Rayalaseema. The Southwest Monsoon remains normal over coastal Andhra Pradesh and weak over Rayalaseema. Rainfall was recorded at a few places over coastal Andhra Pradesh and at one or two places in Rayalaseema during the last 24 hours, according to the report.



Deer rescued from stray dogs

PNS ■ MACHILIPATNAM

A spotted deer strayed into Keesara village from the nearby forest on Sunday. A pack of stray dogs attacked the spotted deer and bit severely.

The villagers noticed the deer being attacked by stray dogs and

rescued it. The deer suffered bleeding injuries in the stray dog attack. The villagers informed the matter to the forest officials and the police. The villagers handed over the spotted deer to the forest officers who provided the deer with medical treatment.

One killed, another injured as bus knocks down bike

PNS ■ NELLORE

One person was killed and another was injured when a private travel bus knocked down a motorcycle at Kommalapudi cross road in Manubolu mandal on Sunday. SI Ajay Kumar said that the deceased Manubolu Suresh Reddy (45) was a pillion rider on the bike being ridden by injured P Prashant.

A private travel Volvo bus knocked down the bike from the rear end killing Manubolu Suresh Reddy instantaneously. The deceased belonged to



Gudur town. The police registered a case and shifted the body to the GGH in Gudur for postmortem.

Kakani demands Naidu to disclose what transpired at meet with Revanth

PNS ■ NELLORE

YSRCP senior leader and former minister Kakani Govardhan Reddy demanded Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu to reveal to the people of the state what he had discussed with Telangana Chief Minister R Revanth Reddy. Talking to the media here on Sunday, Kakani Govardhan Reddy demanded Naidu disclose whether the Telangana State had asked for a 48 per cent share in the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) properties. Naidu has not denied the report so far giving way to doubts, he pointed out.

A lot of hype was created by the media on the discussions between Naidu and Revanth Reddy, he said, demanding that Naidu should disclose the outcome of the negotiations. Naidu did not reveal the issues which were resolved in the discussions with the TS Chief Minister, Kakani said.

The YSRCP senior leader held Chandrababu Naidu



responsible for the bifurcation of the combined AP state.

"Naidu left Hyderabad for Vijayawada abruptly after he was involved in the note for vote case. He had given up AP properties in Telangana due to fear of the case. The pro-TDP media has created hype but Naidu has not achieved anything during his tenure," Kakani slammed.

Kakani also objected to Telangana State's demand to hand over some of the Polavaram backwaters submergence villages. "Naidu assured of creating wealth but his acts are indicating that he is distributing the wealth of AP to the neighbouring state," he flayed.

NDA Govt will solve all issues of RTC staff: Employees Union

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Employees Union State executive committee of the Andhra Pradesh Public Transport Department (APPTD), formerly known as the Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC), expressed its confidence in the NDA government that it will address the employees' issues. The meeting also exuded confidence that the NDA government will fulfil the employees' needs.

The executive committee meeting was held at the union's State office in Vijayawada on Sunday. Andhra Pradesh Joint Action Committee-Amaravati (APJAC-Amaravati) chairman Bopparaju Venkateswarlu attended the meeting as chief guest.

Speaking on the occasion, Bopparaju Venkateswarlu said that they would meet Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu soon and explain the problems of 16 lakh employees in the State. Earlier, they met Deputy



Andhra Pradesh Joint Action Committee-Amaravati chairman Bopparaju Venkateswarlu addressing the APPTD EU meeting in Vijayawada on Sunday

Chief Minister K Pawan Kalyan and urged him to resolve the issues of employees. During the meeting with Pawan Kalyan, the arrears of the 11th PRC since 2018, DA arrears, benefits of the retired employees, and implementing the government schemes for all outsourcing employees were discussed.

He mentioned that they had submitted a letter to Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan regarding the regularisation of

contract employees. He also stated that the same issue would be discussed with the Chief Minister. He assured that the NDA government, led by the TDP, will fulfil all promises made to the employees. However, he explained that they had hoped for a government that would be friendlier to employees.

APPTD (RTC) EU State president P Damodara Rao said that the previous government had to cancel all medical facilities for the RTC employees after the merger of the corporation with the government. Though an amount of Rs.225 to Rs.300 was deducted from the employee's salary for the Employees Health Scheme (EHS), no health facilities have been implemented. For the past five years, compensatory employment has been stalled in the State, he said.

He added that numerous posts of conductor, driver, maintenance etc. are lying vacant in the APSRTC. The NDA government should conduct recruitment to fill all existing vacancies in the RTC, he urged. Also, the corporation should be strengthened and supported financially.

AITUC State general secretary G Obulesu, APSRTC EU State general secretary GV Narasiah, working president P Subrahmanyam, deputy general secretaries P Bhanu Murthy, G Narayana Rao, MD Prasad, leaders K Nageswara Rao, Siddhikh and others were present.



2 arrested with ganja

PNS ■ GUNTUR

The police seized 2 kg of ganja and arrested two persons at Dolas Nagar in Tadepalli mandal on Sunday.

Circle Inspector Kalyan Raju told the media at Tadepalli police station that on a tip-off two persons were selling ganja at Tadepalli railway gate area, a police team conducted at Tadepalli railway gate.

On noticing the police, the drug peddlers fled the scene.

However, the police chased and arrested two of them and seized 2 kg of ganja.

The police gave the names of the arrested as Sheik Subhani and Sheik Khasim. A massive search was launched to arrest those who fled. Some youths are addicted to vices and selling ganja. They bring the ganja from the Odisha border at a cheaper price and sell the same at high prices here. The police seized 2 kg of ganja, and a car from them.

INDIA CORNER

Kerala culls 310 pigs to contain African Swine Fever outbreak

The Centre on Sunday said around 310 pigs have been culled in Kerala's Thrissur district after an outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF). The outbreak was detected in Madakkatharan Panchayath, prompting swift action from the state's Animal Husbandry Department. Rapid Response Teams were deployed to cull and dispose of pigs within a 1 km radius of the epicentre on July 5, the Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying said in a statement. This marks the latest incident in the country's ongoing battle with ASF, which first appeared in the northeastern states of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh in May 2020. Since then, the disease has spread to approximately 24 states and union territories across the country. Further surveillance as per the action plan is to be carried out within a 10 km radius of the epicentre, the ministry said. Despite the outbreak's severity, the government was quick to reassure the public.



India carries out initial trials of indigenous light tank 'Zorawar'

India has carried out initial trials of an indigenous light tank named 'Zorawar' being developed primarily to enhance the Army's overall combat capabilities along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, people familiar with the matter said on Saturday. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and L&T Defence are developing the air-transportable 25-tonne tank that has been designed for rapid deployment largely along the frontier with China, they said. The initial internal trials of the tank took place at a facility in Hazira, Gujarat, less than two years after the ambitious project was sanctioned, the people in the know of the matter said. The Indian Army is looking at deploying over 350 light tanks, mostly in the mountainous border areas, they said. The development of 'Zorawar' is being seen to be aimed at countering China's deployment of tanks of the same categories.



Coastal parts of Kerala, Tamil Nadu warned of sea swells

The coastal areas of Kerala and Tamil Nadu are likely to experience the 'kallakkadal' phenomenon -- the sudden swell of the seas causing rough waves -- and high tides till 11.30 pm on Monday, according to the weather agency. The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) on Sunday sounded an alert to fishermen and coastal residents in the area about the possible sea surge. INCOIS, the central agency that issues weather warnings for fishermen in the country, advised people to safely moor their fishing vessels in the harbour. It advised coastal people, living in accident-prone areas, to relocate to safer places in view of possible danger. It also suggested people completely avoid travelling to beaches and venturing into the sea considering the warning, a statement added.



Expecting a 'very important' visit by PM Narendra Modi

WEST WATCHING IT WITH 'JEALOUSY': KREMLIN

PNS ■ MOSCOW

Russia is expecting a "very important and full-fledged visit" by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Moscow for summit-level talks with President Vladimir Putin, with the Kremlin saying the West was watching the trip with "jealousy". Prime Minister Modi will be in Moscow from July 8 to 9 at the invitation of President Putin for the 22nd India-Russia Annual Summit. It will be Modi's first visit to Russia since Moscow invaded Ukraine in February 2022. The two leaders will review the entire range of multifaceted relations between the two countries and exchange views on contemporary regional and global issues of mutual interest, the Ministry of External



Affairs said in New Delhi on Thursday while announcing the high-level visit starting on Monday. The programme of Prime Minister Modi in Moscow will be extensive and the two leaders will be able to have informal talks, Peskov said in an interview with Russia's state-run VGTRK television channel on Saturday. "Obviously, the

agenda will be extensive, if not to say overbusy. It will be an official visit, and we hope that the heads will be able to talk in an informal way as well," he said. Peskov said that Russian-Indian relations are at the level of strategic partnership. He said that there would be both one-on-one talks in the Kremlin and those involving

delegations. "We are expecting a very important and full-fledged visit, which is so crucial for Russian-Indian relations," he was quoted as saying by the official Tass news agency. Peskov also emphasised that the West is closely and jealously watching Prime Minister Modi's upcoming visit to Russia. "They are jealous — that means they are closely monitoring it. Their close monitoring means they attach great importance to it. And they are not mistaken, there is something to attach great importance to," Peskov said in response to a question about the jealous attitude of Western politicians towards Modi's visit to Russia, the Tass report said. Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022,



'Law Commission should draft crucial bills'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar lashed out at him over his 'part-timers' remark on the new criminal laws, Congress leader P Chidambaram on Sunday said drafting of such crucial bills should have been entrusted to the Law Commission and not to a committee whose members served part time. Chidambaram said in a post on X that the Union home ministry constituted a committee in May 2020 for reforms of criminal laws that had a chairman, convenor and members. Its composition was changed from time to time but, in the end,

JAGANNATH RATH YATRA

Chariot pulling begins in Puri

PNS ■ PURI (ODISHA)

Thousands of people pulled forward giant chariots from the 12th century Jagannath temple in Puri towards Gundicha temple, around 2.5 km away, on Sunday afternoon. The chariot pulling started around 5.20 pm after Puri Shankaracharya Swami Nischalananda Saraswati visited the chariots of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra with his disciples and the Puri's titular king completed the 'Chhera Pahanra' (chariot sweeping) ritual. The wooden horses were fitted to the chariots and the servitor pilots guided the devotees to pull the chariots in the right direction. President Droupadi Murmu performed a 'parikrama' of the three chariots and bowed down before the deities. The President, Odisha Governor Raghuraj Das, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan symbolically started the mammoth exercise by pulling the ropes connecting the principal Jagannath chariot. Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik also had a 'darshan' of the sibling deities. Thousands of people



pulled the nearly 45-foot tall wooden chariot of Lord Balabhadra. It will be followed by pulling of chariots of Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath. Rhythmically beating brass cymbals and hand drums, priests surrounded the gods on the canopied chariots as the procession made its slow way through the main street of the temple town. The air rentured with 'Jai Jagannath' and 'Haribol' as frenzied devotees tried to get a glimpse of the holy occasion. Different artist groups performed 'kirtans' (religious songs) and Odissi dance in front of the chariots before the procession started. Around a million devotees are estimated to have converged on this town for the annual car festival. While most of the devotees were from Odisha and the neighbouring states, many from abroad also joined in what is considered one of the largest religious processions globally. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Mohan Majhi reached in Puri and met Puri Shankaracharya Swami Nischalananda Saraswati. Majhi said he got the opportunity to meet the Puri seer, who advised him to provide service and justice to the poor and destitute of the state. The Shankaracharya has also advised the CM to take steps for the renovation of the Srikhetra Puri and Govardhan peeth. Earlier in the day, Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra ascended their respective chariots after the completion of the three-hour-long 'Pahandi' ritual at 2.15 pm.

INDIA bloc will raise voice in Parl to improve working conditions of loco pilots: Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Sunday flagged the plight of loco pilots and asserted that the INDIA bloc will raise its voice in Parliament to improve their rights and working conditions. Gandhi's remarks on X came as he posted a video of his recent interaction with loco pilots at the New Delhi Railway Station. "In Narendra Modi's government, the train of the life of loco pilots has been completely derailed," the former Congress chief said. He said loco pilots are forced to work 16 hours a day sitting in cabins boiling with heat. "The people on whom millions of lives depend have no confidence in their own lives. Deprived of even basic facilities like urinals, loco pilots have no limit on working hours and neither do they get leaves. Due to which they are getting physically and mentally broken and are falling ill," Gandhi said in his post in Hindi. In such a situation, making loco pilots drive trains is putting their lives and

that of the passengers at risk, he said. The Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) will raise its voice in Parliament to improve the rights and working conditions of loco pilots, Gandhi asserted. "By watching this small discussion, you can also feel their pain," Gandhi said as he shared the video of the interaction. In the video, the loco pilots complain to Gandhi about lack of rest, no leaves and "inhuman working conditions". All India Loco Running Staff Association's South Zone president on Saturday had loco drivers handed a memorandum to Gandhi, blaming poor working conditions for recent train accidents. R Kumaresan, who played a crucial role in organising the interaction between the former Congress president and the loco pilots at the New Delhi Railway Station on Friday, told PTI that they wanted to bring to Gandhi's attention "serious safety issues" faced by drivers and passengers in the Railways.



There is a need not to die but live for the country: Amit Shah

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said there is a need not to die but live for the country as he lauded the Kadva Patidar community for their role in the development of Gujarat. He was speaking at an event after inaugurating a hostel complex for students in Ahmedabad in the presence of Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel. Shah also inaugurated a hospital in the city during the day. The hostel - Amin PJKP Vidyaarthi Bhavan - has been built by the Kadva Patidar community and will accommodate students from all social groups, said its officials. Shah said today there is a need not to die for the country but to live for her. "You may be a good IAS, IPS, CA, doctor, good citizen or housewife, but you need to work for the country," he said. The senior BJP leader said the Kadva Patidar community has contributed a lot to the development of Gujarat.



He was speaking at an event after inaugurating a hostel complex for students in Ahmedabad in the presence of Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel. Shah also inaugurated a hospital in the city during the day

Stress on increasing green cover to tackle soaring summer heat

PNS ■ INDORE

Union Minister Bhupendra Yadav on Sunday stressed the need to increase green cover to deal with soaring temperatures during summer. The Union environment minister joined the ongoing campaign to plant 51 lakh saplings in Indore. Speaking on the occasion, Yadav said humans built concrete cities on the earth but destroyed greenery in the race for development. "This year, we have experienced temperatures soaring to 45 to 50 degrees Celsius in many parts of the country. In the race for develop-

ment, humans have built concrete cities on earth but destroyed the greenery," he said. The "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" campaign launched under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on World Environment Day on June 5 is about respecting Mother Earth. According to officials, the plantation drive in Indore will end on July 14. Yadav planted a sapling at a programme organised at the Border Security Force (BSF) campus in the Bijasan area under the campaign "Apne Indore Ke Liye, Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" in the presence of Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and Cabinet Minister Kailash Vijayvargiya.



Cong govt in K'taka "unnecessarily quarrelling" with Centre: Kumaraswamy

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Union Minister for Steel and Heavy Industries H D Kumaraswamy has accused the Siddaramaiah-led Congress government in Karnataka of "unnecessarily quarrelling" with the Centre and said that it won't help. The JD(S) leader, whose party is part of the ruling NDA at the Centre, also said Prime Minister Narendra and the BJP leadership have confidence in him, and that he wants to fulfill their expectations. "I know this government (in Karnataka is) unnecessarily quarrelling with the Central government. First of all, I request the Karnataka government that -- quarrelling will



not help. Or throwing mud against the Central government will not help. Whatever is the issue, come, discuss with us," Kumaraswamy said. Speaking to PTI videos, he said, "mutually with good confidence, we can do the work successfully. (Instead) every day (they are) criticising in public, daily they are making statements (against the

Centre)...Unnecessarily criticising the Central government without any fault on part of the Central government. The fault is in your (state govt) court only." Noting that there are several issues concerning the state and his top priority remains Karnataka, Kumaraswamy, however said that he is not a "selfish man", as he pointed out that, as a Central Minister, the entire country will also need his attention. "To generate employment for the younger generation is the PM's vision and I have to see about that. Ultimately I want to get some name for the country and the PM. I pray to God to give me the strength to fulfill the PM's vision."

73% Indians read nutritional value of snacks

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 73 per cent Indians prefer to read ingredient lists and nutritional value before purchasing any snack, reveals a new survey, highlighting the majority of Indians' growing inclination towards healthy snacking. Based on a survey of over 6,000 people across India, the Healthy Snacking Report 2024, released on Sunday, aims to examine the ever evolving consumption trends in India. "Seventy three per cent of those surveyed prefer to read labels for ingredient lists and nutritional value before making a purchase. Of this, 93 per cent expressed a desire to transition to healthier options, highlighting a correlation between label reading and con-



scious choices while pushing for transparency," read the

report. The report was released against the backdrop of an increasing number of cases regarding food adulteration that have come to the fore, be it in spices, confectionaries or fast-moving goods. This, according to the report, has triggered a wave of conscious consumption, with shoppers checking food packets for potentially harmful substances. So, with 9 out of 10 respondents looking to find healthier alternatives to traditional snacks, the report records how nearly 60 per cent of Indians are now opting for "natural, additive-free products with wholesome ingredients like nuts, seeds and whole grains". Makhanas (foxnuts) and dry fruits have emerged as stars in

the healthy snacking segment, with 67 per cent of Indians reaching out for a bowl of these nutrient powerhouses. "In a true testament to the growing popularity of makhanas in India, 59 per cent millennials called it their trusted snack, followed by Gen Z (49 per cent) and Gen X (47 per cent), indicating its popularity across people of all ages. Additionally, over 70 per cent revealed that their favourite time to snack was with their evening cup of tea/coffee," it added. That said, the shift towards healthy snacking comes at a cost, which is why over 58 per cent of those surveyed highlighted "high retail costs" as a barrier to making the switch. The consumer insights study was conducted by snacking brand Farmley.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Liberals a the helm

With the Labour Party's victory in the UK, India can anticipate a more favourable stance and pro-India policies

After remaining out of power for more than a decade, the Labour Party led by Keir Starmer is back with a landslide victory in the recently held elections in the UK. Prime Minister Modi was among the first to congratulate Prime Minister Keir and both leaders agreed to work towards more vigour for FTA and strengthening the ties between the two countries. Indeed, it is a big shift in UK politics and many policies and initiatives would be at a stark departure from the previous dispensation. This shift holds great significance, given the Labour Party's decisive victory over the Conservatives in the recent general elections. This change in governance marks a new chapter in the UK's domestic and international policy. For countries like India, with deep historical, economic, and diplomatic ties to the UK, this transition could bring about notable changes. The evolving dynamics of UK-India relations under the new Liberal government could influence various sectors, including trade, education, technology, and immigration. The Labour Party's victory signifies a substantial shift in British politics. The Labour Party is known to be liberal, traditionally more progressive, inclusive and believes in sustainability and international cooperation. Their policies are expected to diverge from the Conservative approach, particularly in areas such as climate change, social justice, and economic reform.



Though Conservatives did not touch upon the UK's ties with India there can be a marked shift in the UK's policies in the months to come. The biggest change may come in the form of immigration laws. India has a sizable population in the UK and getting a Visa and residency status is always on the top agenda of the Indian community in the UK and back home. The next area where substantial change could be witnessed is the economic ties between the two countries. The Liberal Party's commitment to free trade and economic partnerships could enhance bilateral trade, potentially leading to a comprehensive UK-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA). It was the first thing that came up when Prime Minister Modi congratulated the new Prime Minister of the UK Keir Starmer. Indeed, for long, The UK and India have had robust trade relationship, with the UK being one of India's significant trading partners. Under the Conservative government, there were ongoing discussions about a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The Labour Govt's more enthusiastic approach to global trade could accelerate these negotiations. A more collaborative and open approach to foreign policy may lead to deeper strategic ties, particularly in areas like defence, cybersecurity, and counter-terrorism. Greater involvement in global platforms like the Commonwealth, the United Nations, and climate forums, facilitating joint efforts on issues of mutual interest. Besides, India can look forward to the UK's support for India's aspirations for a greater role in international organisations, including a potential permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

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PICTALK



Locals cross a flooded area on a boat, in Balimuk village of Morigaon district

Hinduism and the perception of violence



PRAFULL GORADIA

Each religion's cultural and ethical framework is distinct. Dietary habits and historical contexts have influenced perceptions of violence across different religions



To specifically associate violence—as was done on the floor of the Lok Sabha on July 1, 2024—with Hinduism, showed that not all our leaders have had time to intimately know and understand the Indian ethos. This is understandable if one remembers that Indians can be Hindu, Muslim, Christian (duly baptized) and others. An argument between the honourable Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the leader of the opposition reflected the differences, albeit in a rather acrimonious manner. As the Speaker explained, the Hindu goes to the extent of touching an elder's feet and not merely bending. On the other hand, Islam does not permit bending to anyone, except Allah the Merciful. A Christian is different and shakes hands to convey the warmth of his feelings. The scale of violence indulged in also varies from ethos to ethos. Christians are habituated to meat-eating, except on Fridays, when they do not go beyond a piece of fish. The Muslim also likes his meat without restrictions even on Fridays. This dietary preference might have been forced upon these communities because their origins began in the deserts of West Asia, where vegetation was (and continues to be) sparse. Even Europe, where Christianity flourished, could not easily grow crops during the winter. In the process, the world's consumption of animals is an estimated 100 million

killed a year, according to a database prepared by Poore and Nemecek in 2018. The Hindu, for the information of our leadership, largely grew up where vegetation has been plentiful. He could, therefore, choose to be anything from a strict vegetarian or an omnivore. However, he owes his vegetarianism to his belief in the transmigration of the soul, unlike the Christian who believes in a single life until Doomsday when God would send him to either heaven or hell depending on his performance on earth or even in the grave. The Hindu on the other hand believes that when his father, mother, relations, and near and dear ones depart from the world, it is only their bodies that perish; the soul is imperishable and enters new bodies to carry on with its respective new lives gained after rebirth. The Hindu would, therefore, be afraid that if he or she eats meat, it could be the product of the killing of some deceased relation, who might have been reborn as that particular animal or bird that was killed for his culinary pleasure. I too hesitate to eat meat whenever I imagine how I would feel if my progeny were to be killed for the pleasure of someone else's food. Pray, tell me, who is perpetrating more violence, the meat eater or the vegetarian?



THE HINDU WOULD, THEREFORE, BE AFRAID THAT IF HE OR SHE EATS MEAT, IT COULD BE THE PRODUCT OF THE KILLING OF SOME DECEASED RELATION, WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN REBORN AS THAT PARTICULAR ANIMAL OR BIRD THAT WAS KILLED FOR HIS CULINARY PLEASURE

Incidentally, I am a Hindu. The diet or food habits of an individual, if given to the consumption of meat, may also transfer to his social as well as professional conduct and behaviour. This question is well answered by the history of Europe. This continent, throughout its history, has fought 896 recorded wars. Europeans were fighting and killing each other as tribes, much before the Greek and Roman Empires came into existence. The Athens-Sparta wars, the Peloponnesian War, the expansionist wars of the Roman Empire, etc., are part of Europe's history and need not be retold here. But it is Europe's obsession with war and killing from Achilles to Putin (or Zelensky) that needs to be emphasized and reiterated. From sticks to stone hammers, bronze and later iron and steel, armour and edged weapons like the dagger sword and spear, Europe kept developing and improving the tools of killing. The 19th and 20th centuries saw the explosion of technological development and innovations. The age of iron, steel, coal and steam came to the world. Railways steamships, the telegraph and then the radio, automobiles, machine guns, tanks, airplanes and the submarine came into being. All this enabled European

nation-states to muster, equip, arm, transport and command more men than ever before in their history, with deadlier firepower and killing capacity. In the past 75 years alone, the invention of the atomic bomb, guided missile, the internet and cyber warfare have changed war and its dimensions like nothing else has. Our contention that Europe has been the land of war, war and more war is easily proved by the sheer number of human beings who have perished because of European wars. Even if we were to leave aside all its ancient and medieval wars, the two World Wars (together) alone consumed 130 million lives. Even a relatively small power like Italy under its dictator Benito Mussolini was ready to jump into wars of aggrandizement owing to delusions about its armed might. Those delusions occurred as a result of the phenomenon of "armed suasion": for quite some time Italy was believed to be the most formidable air power in Europe. Be that as it may, there is no denying that Europe, a meat-eating continent has been the land of war. To accuse Hindus of violence, therefore, is nothing but a moral travesty. (The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A STUDY IN CONTRAST

Madam — The recent election results have highlighted a stark contrast between our Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the outgoing Prime Minister of the UK, Rishi Sunak. Modi's victory, despite being well-funded and supported by the media, felt hollow as his party, the BJP, suffered a significant setback, losing 63 seats compared to the last Lok Sabha elections. Despite this, Modi remained publicly unshaken and did not express any remorse or responsibility for the disappointing outcome. The BJP's third consecutive term was celebrated as if it were a gold medal, despite being more akin to a silver. In contrast, Rishi Sunak demonstrated remarkable candor and humility following his party's defeat to Labour. He openly acknowledged his responsibility for the loss, saying, "I take responsibility for the loss... I am sorry." This display of accountability and character stands in stark contrast to Modi's approach. As Bill Courtney wisely noted, "The measure of a man's character is not determined by how he handles his wins, but how he handles his failures." By this standard, Rishi Sunak has demonstrated commendable character, and Modi could benefit from following his example by acknowledging the conditional nature of his victory. Avinash Godbole | Dewas

SPECULATION OVER GOVT'S STABILITY

Madam — In a significant and serious assertion, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad Yadav on Friday predicted the fall of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the Centre by August, anticipating a split among its coalition partners and hinting that elections could be imminent. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP secured 240 seats, falling short of the 272 needed for a majority. Nevertheless, it formed the government with the support of allies such as the Bihar-based Janata Dal (U) and the Andhra Pradesh-based Telugu Desam Party, allowing Narendra Modi to begin his third consecutive term as Prime Minister. Notably, since the inception of

Give substantial compensation to victims



The victims of the Hathras tragedy, predominantly from impoverished backgrounds, have lost their loved ones, leaving them in profound grief and despair. They are in dire need of substantial compensation. Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition, visited their homes and promised generous compensation, which has brought comfort to the bereaved families and gained the goodwill of the community. Such tragic incidents at religious gatherings have repeatedly occurred in the country, causing not only the loss of lives

but also devastating many families. The magnitude of their grief is immeasurable, and the aftermath ripples through entire communities, leaving them to grapple with both emotional and financial burdens.

To prevent future occurrences, these gatherings require essential improvements, including the deployment of security forces, police, ambulances, and the installation of CCTV cameras, to manage the situation effectively before any problems arise. The government must take proactive steps to implement stringent safety protocols and infrastructure enhancements to prevent such incidents from happening again. This is not merely a matter of compensation but of ensuring that the lives and well-being of our citizens are protected and that no family has to endure such unimaginable loss in the future. Jakir Hussain | Kanpur

Modi's third term, several Opposition leaders have voiced concerns that the government may not endure beyond a few months. Lalu's recent statements have intensified such speculation, suggesting a potential political upheaval. Amidst this, there is a possibility that a strategic maneuver might be underway by Nitish Kumar and N. Chandrababu Naidu to destabilize the Modi government if their demands are not met. Both leaders, known for their political agility, may take drastic steps for their political survival, which could potentially lead to the government's collapse. Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

JAILED MPS TAKE OATH

Madam — Jailed MPs Amritpal Singh and Engineer Rashid took their oaths as Lok Sabha members amidst stringent security measures by concerned authorities. Both MPs secured significant victories in their respective constituencies of Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir, marking a triumph of democracy in regions historically marred by unrest.

Under Article 101(4) of the Constitution, MPs must inform the Speaker in writing if unable to attend House proceedings post-oath, subject to scrutiny by the House Committee on Absence of Members. However, a Supreme Court ruling mandates immediate disqualification if an MP receives a prison sentence of two years or more, overturning prior provisions. The impact of Engineer Rashid's victory is pivotal in Kashmir's upcoming assembly elections, necessitating careful handling by the central government to maintain current peace, especially amidst ongoing Amarnath Yatra. Similarly, Amritpal Singh's electoral success in Punjab underscores the need for sensitive management amid recent incidents potentially affecting communal harmony. It is crucial for the central government to approach Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir with utmost delicacy and maturity in light of these developments. Yash Pal Raihan | Jalandhar

The art of listening in a fast-paced world

Prejudices create barriers and divide people; our lives are so frenetic that we lack the time to observe and listen to other voices

We had organised a literature festival a few months back. Almost all the writers spoke about the stories all around us waiting to be put on paper. This set me thinking. If the life of each of us is a palette of stories of different hues, why is it that we do not hear more of these experiences? Does it have something to do with a life that is increasingly running at such a frantic pace that we have no time to observe and listen? Or is it the divides that we carry within us — social, class, caste, age, gender, religion, ideologies, and many more? I have met many people in my life. If I was asked to place them in two distinct categories, I would not hesitate to categorise them as extroverts and introverts. The outspoken are the ones who attract attention. It is the ones shy in expressing sentiments in public, who are a revelation to me. It only needs a nudge for their unexpressed and hence unheard stories to come out. Their life experiences are a myriad of emotions. I remember my first holidays in the mountains.



The adjoining room was occupied by an old couple, who at that time may have been our grandparents' age. One morning, as we sat outside, my parents sipping their tea, the couple also came out. My father asked us to fetch the chairs placed nearby, respecting their old age, and slightly bent backs. Our efforts were brushed aside. "We can still carry our own chairs." Habits inculcated at a young age are difficult to break. I still get up to offer my seat to an older person. My paternal grandfather was hard of hearing. We children had to shout to make him understand. I did not realise that I had started screaming at anybody old, till the time I was told by my maternal

grandmother, "Why do you shout at us. Our hearing is perfectly normal." I now make a conscious effort not to speak loudly to an older person unless asked. My maternal grandfather was paralyzed on one side when he may have been 50. He was extremely slow, but insisted on wearing his clothes without anyone's help, also brushing aside my grandmother's efforts to do so, even if there was a time constraint when going out for a movie show. It is not that only the old want the young to respect their wish to be heard and treated with dignity and respect. I remember a cab driver who only needed a gentle query to tell me that he chose to drive a cab after he retired

to keep himself active and for the opportunity to talk to willing passengers, overriding the objections of his children who were now much better placed than he ever was. Or yet another cab driver, who was bursting to proudly tell anyone willing to listen to him that his daughter had cleared her CA examinations in the first attempt and had been offered a job with one of the Big 4. There are many more who only need a gentle prod to express their unheard stories if only there is someone around to give them time without being judgemental. Their silence is a plea to be encouraged to narrate a life story that many might deem to be common but is no less extraordinary than that of the most successful celebrity. It is also important to be a story-listener! In Bryant H McGill's words, "One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say." (The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)



SANJAY CHANDRA

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FIRST COLUMN

PASSION IS THE CATALYST FOR A FULFILLING LIFE

By prioritising passion, individuals can infuse their lives with purpose and excitement



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

Passion is the powerful force that propels individuals towards their desired objectives, igniting ambition and providing unwavering determination in the face of life's challenges and uncertainties. When someone discovers a pursuit they are truly passionate about, they experience a distinct and unstoppable energy that drives them towards it and motivates them to achieve success. Many individuals find themselves trapped in monotonous routines that weigh them down.

Rise and shine, head to the office, wrap up your tasks, and return to the comfort of your home, only to repeat the routine the following day. Engaging in the same routine day after day can lead to feelings of sadness and discontentment when there is a lack of enthusiasm for one's daily activities. Why bother doing something if it doesn't ignite your passion? I understand that not everyone has the opportunity to pursue their dream career.

Many individuals work tirelessly to establish stability in their lives, with some solely focused on providing for their basic needs. Even in such cases, it is important to prioritise and make time for activities that bring joy and fulfilment. Passion evokes a sense of joy, happiness, and deep satisfaction that emanates from within. Consider my acquaintance, for example. She's immersed in the corporate world, tackling one of those challenging jobs that will provide financial stability but won't ignite her passion. After a long day of work



and on weekends, she dedicates her time to what truly brings her joy: baking.

She radiates enthusiasm as she describes the new recipes she's experimenting with or the joy she feels when she witnesses someone savouring the results of her hard work. It gives her a unique sense of thrill and personal fulfilment that her corporate job fails to deliver. Her unwavering passion keeps her spirits high and provides her with a daily source of motivation, even during the most challenging moments at work.

There's no need to leave your job and venture into uncharted territory abruptly. It's something so small that it can fit into your current routine. Perhaps dedicating a few hours each week to your hobby, taking learning classes, or developing a side hustle could be beneficial. Even though these endeavours may seem modest, they can have a significant impact on your overall health and happiness.

Passion is essential for everyone to lead a fulfilling life, not just a select few. The sense of purpose and the excitement it brings are necessary for keeping our minds and hearts youthful and vibrant. So, if you have a strong passion for something, prioritise and dedicate time to it. You will achieve success by wholeheartedly embracing your pursuits. Indeed, the lengthy voyage can be quite exhausting. The rewards, however, of living a life fueled by passion are immeasurable. Ultimately, it all boils down to passion. Develop it, nourish it, and believe that it will guide you to a happy and prosperous life.

(The writer is a motivator; views are personal)

Kenyan uproar against IMF-backed Ruto tax bill



NILANTHA LANGAMUWA

Amid calls for his resignation, Kenyan President Ruto faces mounting pressure to address the root causes of economic instability and social unrest

Kenya's President William Ruto has finally withdrawn the Finance Bill 2024 following widespread protests triggered by 'Bloody Tuesday', when police fatally shot numerous austerity protesters in Nairobi this week. According to media reports, the bill, influenced by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), proposed significant tax increases amidst soaring food and fuel prices, high unemployment, and perceived governmental corruption and extravagance. The World Bank and IMF are sending conflicting messages to Kenya regarding taxation. While the World Bank cautions that Kenya's unpredictable tax policies are deterring Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), the IMF has praised the government's proposed tax increases in the Finance Bill 2024, suggesting they will significantly expand the tax base.

Last year, the IMF and the World Bank convened their annual joint meeting in Marrakech, marking their return to African soil after nearly five decades. The last occasion these two Bretton Woods institutions convened on African soil was in 1973, during the IMF-World Bank meeting in Nairobi, Kenya. At that time, Kenya's President Jomo Kenyatta (1897-1978) implored the attendees to swiftly address the 'monetary sickness of inflation and instability that has plagued the world.' In recent years, the tragic and grim situation has worsened significantly, with an increase in conflicts reported across the continent. Long-time exploiters like France, along with their alliances, are now confronting significant and formidable challenges. Amid critiques from organisations like Oxfam, who denounced these neo-liberal financial institutions' persistent austerity measures and debt policies, the meeting accentuated the enduring economic challenges facing developing countries. Despite promises of social spending safeguards, exemplified in recent IMF agreements with countries like Pakistan and Sri Lanka, critics argue that these measures perpetuate cycles of dependency and inequality. Amidst global protests demanding alternatives to neoliberal orthodoxy, as Vijay Prashad asserted, the meeting in Morocco underscored a deepening disillusionment with the IMF and World Bank's capacity to address the fundamental economic disparities they perpetuate. It is crucial to remember that these financial institutions are neither charitable nor humanitarian; they operate with the primary goal of profit and the consolidation of their political agendas. Kenya serves as yet another glaring example.

During my conversation with Tom Jalio, a journalist working for The Star, a daily newspaper in Kenya, he said, "President Ruto inherited a highly indebted country, and his attempts to curb borrowing with internal solutions have been seen as overly aggressive. Using his parliamentary majority to push through contentious tax bills for two consecutive years, President Ruto now faces mounting public opposition. Despite heavy security measures, the public outcry against these policies erupted in what President Ruto labelled as treasonous acts—a response that fails to acknowledge the genuine patriotism underlying the protests. As Kenyan literature might suggest, when the detachment of President Ruto affects an entire nation, dismissing dissent as criminality falls



short of addressing the root concerns."

However, protests initially aimed at the Finance Bill have evolved into a broader uprising challenging not just Ruto's administration but the entire 60-year-old post-independence establishment supported by US and NATO powers. Millions nationwide, spanning 37 counties and crossing tribal lines, participated in demonstrations led largely by youth demanding rejection of the bill and Ruto's resignation. The protests culminated tragically with reports of 53 deaths and hundreds injured, with 30 fatalities occurring in Githurai and 23 more across Nairobi and other regions, all due to police use of live ammunition as documented by the Police Reforms Working Group.



RECENT EVENTS IN KENYA HAVE WITNESSED SEVERE REPRESSION REMINISCENT OF HISTORICAL ATROCITIES. TUESDAY'S VIOLENCE, WHERE SECURITY FORCES UNDER PRESIDENT WILLIAM RUTO'S COMMAND FIRED ON PROTESTERS, ECHOES THE BRUTAL 1969 KISUMU MASSACRE

Recent events in Kenya have witnessed severe repression reminiscent of historical atrocities. Tuesday's violence, where security forces under President William Ruto's command fired on protesters, echoes the brutal 1969 Kisumu massacre ordered by President Jomo Kenyatta, highlighting a pattern of state violence against dissent. Ruto's swift shift from threatening violence against protesters to withdrawing the Finance Bill 2024 reflects intense public outcry and tragic losses during demonstrations, initially labelled as treasonous. Despite withdrawing the bill, economic pressures persist.

The proposed austerity measures, influenced by the IMF, aim to tackle fiscal challenges but face widespread opposition due to potential impacts on healthcare, education, and social services. Ruto's manoeuvres to navigate these challenges, including dialogue with youth and stakeholders, stress Kenya's complex political and economic terrain. Opposition led by figures like Raila Odinga, supported by

unions, engages in political manoeuvring amid broader socioeconomic tensions, reflecting ongoing struggles over economic policies and governance.

According to Onyango K'Onyango, a journalist working for one of Kenya's top newspapers, The Nation, he told this writer, "Our Constitution allows for the right to picket and assemble. As one of the most progressive Constitutions in Africa and perhaps the world at large, freedom of expression and association is guaranteed. It was an ill-advised move for the police to use live bullets on peaceful protesters. Whatever happened is unfortunate, but I blame the police for using excessive force and the government for failing to listen to issues raised by our Gen-Z." A chest-thumping government and Parliament is dangerous to a progressive democracy like ours. Arrogance exhibited by pro-government lawmakers and those who surround the president is the cause of all this mayhem. This is the time to embrace a reconciliatory tone, and the President should firmly deal with corruption in his administration. He should order a lifestyle audit and lead by example. The controversial bill should be returned to Parliament accompanied by a memorandum. This is what Kenyans want to hear, not rushing to term their peaceful protest as treasonous and deploying the military."

In Nairobi, escalating tensions between the youth and the government, exacerbated by recent violent incidents, reflect deep-seated bitterness. In my conversation with a freelance journalist, Andrew Mutungwa highlights key grievances: outrage over fatal shootings during protests, President Ruto's divisive portrayal of protesters as criminals undermining their right to assemble peacefully, and a perceived arro-

gance from leadership intensifying feelings of neglect among youth. Mutungwa urges the president to address these issues promptly, calling for action against corruption, criticising wasteful governance practices, and highlighting economic hardships as drivers of widespread discontent and ongoing protests. He warns of potential political instability if grievances are not addressed and acknowledges external influences supporting youth activism, advocating for dialogue and reforms to resolve Kenya's underlying issues. Meanwhile, Erick Gangu, a human rights activist, provides a nuanced perspective on the unfolding events in Kenya. He asserts that the current unrest is primarily an internal affair without external financial or other support, contrary to speculations about foreign influence.

Gangu criticises President Ruto's recent statement as emotionally charged and inappropriate for a figure expected to embody national unity, emphasising that declarations of treason fall under the jurisdiction of the judiciary, not the executive branch. He highlights concerns about pre-demonstration arrests, including doctors and journalists, and condemns these actions as unconstitutional. Despite early attempts in 1993 to establish a dedicated anti-corruption squad within the police, its impact was short-lived as the unit disbanded. The milestone formation of the Kenya Anti-Corruption Authority (KACA) in 1997 was cut short by a 2000 High Court ruling deeming its statutory framework unconstitutional, leading to dissolution. Kenya's ongoing struggle against corruption necessitates sustained institutional reforms and public vigilance for effective resolution.

(The writer is a journalist and author. Views are personal)

Gold ETFs: The modern, convenient safe haven for young investors

Gold Exchange-Traded Funds provide gold's stability without the hassles of physical ownership, while offering the flexibility of stocks

Gold has always been a traditional safe haven particularly in uncertain situations of geo-political tensions, financial and economic turmoil. Many generations have taken advantage of investing in the security of gold. However, even this traditional investment has witnessed considerable changes with the advent of financial innovation.

The newer generation can now take benefit of security provided by gold which is more convenient, cost effective and eliminates the hassles of physical ownership by investing in Gold Exchange-Traded Funds (ETFs). An ETF is an exchange traded passive fund that tracks any index, or a commodity. In this case, a Gold ETF invests in gold bul-



HIMA BINDU KOTA

lion and tracks the physical gold price. One Gold ETF unit is equal to 1 gram of gold and is backed by physical gold of highest purity, making it a dematerialised form of physical gold.

This gives Gold ETFs twin advantage of security of gold investment in combination with flexibility of the stock market, as they are traded on stock exchanges like stocks of any listed companies and can

be traded continuously at market prices. Upon redemption of a Gold ETF, investors receive cash equivalent instead of possession of physical gold.

To take maximum advantage of flexibility and security that a Gold ETF has to offer, it is advisable to take some safeguards to achieve maximum returns. The first lookout for an investor is to choose a Gold ETF with lower expense ratio. Expense ratio is the yearly management fee charged by the fund houses, which is usually a percentage of the fund's assets under management (AUM) and is used by the fund house to cover their administrative, advertising and various other operational costs. A lower expense ratio is significant as it would eat less into the

investors' returns and result in higher net returns for them, maintaining the cost-advantage of Gold ETFs when compared to storage costs and making charges of physical gold. The second precaution for investors is to examine the tracking error.

Tracking error measures how closely the fund mirrors the underlying index or the commodity and how different is its performance from that of the benchmark. A low tracking error signifies how effectively the fund reflects the performance of the underlying asset and a high tracking error indicates a higher deviation. Tracking error is an extremely critical performance metric for investors due to a number of reasons. Firstly, it displays consistency of performance. A



lower tracking error guarantees reliable tracking of the actual price changes of physical gold. Secondly, low tracking error resonates the efficiency of the fund management. This metric can be used by investors to identify the Gold ETFs that have better performance and provide higher returns. Thirdly, lower tracking errors indicate lower costs incurred by the fund managers, thereby leaving higher returns for investors to enjoy.

Having many benefits, one cannot stress enough on the importance of tracking error. It is known that higher expense ratio and management fees can lead to deviation of the performance of Gold ETFs from the underlying assets, i.e., physical gold. In addition, investors should also be aware of the cash holdings of a Gold ETF. Higher cash holdings again lead to deviation in their performances.

Since ETFs are similar to stocks, liquidity is an important metric. Higher the liquidity of a Gold ETF, lower is the performance deviation. Regular rebalancing the portfolios is an important aspect of any fund, and in doing so Gold ETFs incur costs associated with sales/purchase of physical gold. This again contributes

to tracking error. Thirdly, like stocks and commodities, Gold ETFs are subject to market volatility. Since the underlying asset – physical gold – can be volatile due to geo-political conditions, economic and financial factors. Finally, while buying Gold ETFs, one should not forget to factor in the capital gains tax. Long-term capital gains, if held for more than 3 years, are taxed at 20 percent.

The investors, however can take the benefit of indexation. Short-term capital gains as usual are added to income and taxed at applicable tax slab rate. So, it would be prudent to understand the implications of taxation before investing in Gold ETFs. For young and modern investors, investing in Gold ETFs is a modern and

efficient way to invest in gold. For them, Gold ETFs provide a winning combination of traditional security of gold with the benefits of stock market investing. Using an approach of regular and disciplined investing through systematic investment plans (SIPs), young investors can take the advantage of rupee cost averaging and alleviate the impact of market volatility. With varied benefits and much needed flexibility, Gold ETFs can definitely substitute physical gold investment in one's portfolio. Young generation should take advantage of this modern approach to gold investing with a long-term perspective.

(The writer is Associate Professor at Amity University, Noida. The views expressed are personal)

MONEY MATTERS

DoT invites proposals on 'Quantum Standardisation, Testing Labs'

The Department of Telecom has invited research proposals on 'Quantum Standardisation and Testing Labs' from Indian academic institutions or research and development institutions, an official release said on Sunday. The goal is to drive research and development in quantum technologies, ensuring the interoperability, reliability, and security of quantum communication systems. These labs will serve as innovation hubs, uniting quantum technology developers, testing equipment manufacturers, and academic researchers to explore and harness the full potential of quantum technologies for the benefit of all citizens. "The initiative aligns with the Prime Minister's vision for 'Jai Anushandhan', aiming to support research and development in telecom products and technologies that directly enhance the lives of Indian citizens," the release said. It underlines efforts towards making India self-reliant in quantum technologies and setting global benchmarks in this cutting-edge field.



India's coal import rises 5% to 52 MT in Apr-May

India's coal import rose 5.3 per cent to 52.29 million tonnes (MT) in the first two months of the ongoing fiscal as against the year-ago period. The country's coal import was 49.62 MT in April and May in FY24, according to data compiled by mjunction services ltd -- a B2B e-commerce platform from a joint venture between Tata Steel and SAIL. However, coal import in May dropped marginally to 26.19 MT, from 26.57 MT a year earlier. "Coal imports... were down 1.43 per cent as against 26.57 MT imported in May 2023," it said. According to mjunction MD and CEO Vinaya Varma, the demand for imports is likely to remain subdued in the coming weeks due to the onset of monsoon while the production growth should stay healthy in the domestic market. Also, coking coal prices are expected to move up in the seaborne market due to supply tightness and this may impact buyers' interest in the country.



Indian Overseas Bank launches upgradation facility on Savings Scheme

Public sector Indian Overseas Bank has unveiled a slew of upgradation facilities on savings scheme that offer enhanced features to its customers, a top official has said. The city-headquartered bank said the initiative was in the backdrop of simplifying banking processes by leveraging digital technology providing convenience. To be availed through the bank's website, the higher variants of savings account like 'SB Max' and 'SB HNI' offer a host of enhanced facilities and features, including concessions and waiver of various charges providing more value and flexibility solutions to customers. "We are committed to offering a comprehensive self-service model that enhances our customers' banking experience. By leveraging the latest technology, we aim to simplify banking processes and introduce innovative solutions to enhance banking convenience," the bank's Managing Director and CEO Ajay Kumar Srivastava said in a statement on Sunday.



India, UK to hold next round of talks on trade agreement

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the new government taking charge in Britain, senior officials of India and the UK will hold the next round of talks this month for the proposed free trade agreement to resolve the pending issues and close the negotiations, an official said. The India-UK talks for the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) began in January 2022. The 14th round of talks stalled as the two nations stepped into their general election cycles. The official said the two sides are in touch, and the next round would start this month only. Britain's newly-elected Prime Minister Keir Starmer spoke to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday and said he stood ready to conclude an FTA that worked for both sides. The two leaders agreed to work towards the early conclusion of a mutually beneficial



The Indian industry is demanding greater access for its skilled professionals from sectors like IT and healthcare in the UK market, besides market access for several goods at nil customs duty

India-UK FTA.

There are pending issues in both the goods and services sectors. The Indian industry is demanding greater access for its skilled professionals from sectors like IT and healthcare in the UK market, besides

market access for several goods at nil customs duty. On the other hand, the UK is seeking a significant cut in import duties on goods such as scotch whiskey, electric vehicles, lamb meat, chocolates and certain confectionary

items. Britain is also looking for more opportunities for UK services in Indian markets in segments like telecommunications, legal and financial services (banking and insurance). The two countries are also negotiating a bilateral investment treaty (BIT). There are 26 chapters in the agreement, which include goods, services, investments and intellectual property rights. The bilateral trade between India and the UK increased to US\$ 21.34 billion in 2023-24 from 20.36 billion in 2022-23. The Labour Party's election manifesto for the recent polls also committed to clinching the deal. The new Starmer-led government's new Foreign Secretary David Lammy is also on the record saying that he wants to finish the job on the FTA and plans to visit India within the first month of being elected.

Punjab & Sind Bank plans to open 100 branches

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Punjab & Sind Bank plans to open 100 branches across the country in the current financial year as part of the strategy to expand its reach. During the year, the bank also plans to add 100 new ATMs to its network. "With the addition of 100 branches, the total number of branches would reach 1,665 by the end of 2024-25, and similarly, the number of ATMs would touch 1,135," Punjab & Sind Bank Managing Director Swarup Kumar Saha said. The bank will continue to focus on branch expansion, and new branches would come up in areas other than the northern region, he said. Besides, he said, the bank also proposes to expand its reach through the Banking Correspondent (BC) channel.

FM wraps up consultations, budget to be presented on 23rd

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has concluded consultations with various stakeholders, including representatives of industry and social sectors, as part of the budget preparation exercise. Sitharaman will present her seventh Budget on July 23. This would be the first full budget of Modi 3.0 which is going to set the path for Vikshit Bharat (developed India) by 2047. Last month, President Droupadi Murmu, while delivering her address to the joint sitting of Parliament, had said that many historic steps and major economic decisions will be taken in the upcoming budget session. In her first address to the joint sitting of Parliament since the constitution of the 18th Lok Sabha, the President said, "This budget will be an effective document of the government's far-reaching policies and futuristic vision". "Along with major economic and social decisions, many his-



toric steps will also be seen in this budget," she said. The Finance Ministry in a statement said the pre-budget consultations for Union Budget 2024-25 that started from June 19 onward concluded on July 5, 2024. In the course of in-person consultations, more than 120 invitees across 10 stakeholder groups, including experts and representatives from farmer associations and agriculture economists; trade unions; education & health sector; employment & skilling; MSME; trade & services; industry; economists; financial sector & cap-

ital markets; as well as, infrastructure, energy and urban sector, participated in the meetings, it said. These meetings chaired by the Finance Minister witnessed the participation of Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary; Finance Secretary and Secretary Expenditure, T V Somanathan; Economic Affairs Secretary, Ajay Seth, DIPAM Secretary, Tuhin K Pandey, Financial Services Secretary Vivek Joshi and Revenue Secretary, Sanjay Malhotra among others.

FPIs inject Rs 7,900 cr in equities ; investment surpasses Rs 1 L cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign investors infused over Rs 7,900 crore in Indian equities in the first week of the month amid a healthy economic and earnings growth momentum. With this, total FPI investment in equities reached Rs 1.16 lakh crore so far this year, data with the depositories showed. Going forward, the Union Budget and Q1 FY25 earnings could determine the sustainability of FPI flows, experts said. According to the data, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have made a net inflow of Rs

7,962 crore in equities so far this month (till July 5). This came following an inflow of Rs 26,565 crore in equities in June, driven by political stability and a sharp rebound in markets. Before that, FPIs withdrew Rs 25,586 crore in May on poll jitters and over Rs 8,700 crore in April on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and a sustained rise in US bond yields. Some funds were probably waiting on the sidelines for the election event to be over, Milind Muchhala, Executive Director, Julius Baer India, said.

FMCG makers expect single-digit revenue growth, margin improvements

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Fast-moving consumer goods companies expect single-digit volume growth along with expansion in margins during the April-June quarter of this fiscal, helped by a revival in rural demand and a stable urban market. Listed FMCG companies such as Dabur, Marico and Adani Wilmar in their latest quarterly updates have reported a "gradual improvement" in demand trends in the April-June quarter, which was on the expected lines. Home-grown FMCG maker Dabur expects to register mid to high single-digit growth in its consolidated revenue, support-



ed by mid-single-digit volume growth in the domestic market. Marico said its consolidated revenue grew in high single digits in the June quarter, while the domestic business posted a "modest uptick in underlying volume growth" on a sequen-

tial basis. Adani Wilmar, which sells edible oils and has some play in the food products under Fortune brands, has also reported an overall 13 per cent volume growth in the June quarter.

Its food and FMCG business volumes grew by 23 per cent year-on-year, said Adani Wilmar. About margins, the makers expect expansion on a year-on-year basis helped by factors such as benign commodity prices and cost-saving initiatives. "Commodity prices were stable during the quarter," said Dabur, adding, "Gross margins are likely to witness some expansion on account of rollover price increases and cost-saving initiatives." Marico, which owns brands such as Saffola, Parachute, Hair & Care, Nihar and Livon, among others, also expects gross margin to expand on a year-on-year basis.

YEIDA withdraws plea at NCLAT against Ace Infracity bid for Three C Homes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) has withdrawn its appeal before the appellate insolvency tribunal NCLAT against an NCLT order which approved Ace Infracity's bid for Three C Homes. The development comes after YEIDA accepted the proposal by Ace Infracity Developers to pay for compensation to farmers and requested the NCLAT to withdraw its appeal. Both YEIDA and Ace Infracity were in talks for settlement, while the matter was pending before the National Company Law Appellate

Tribunal (NCLAT). On July 4, 2024, YEIDA gave a proposal to pay for compensation for farmers which Ace Infracity accepted during the hearing before NCLAT. "In view of the acceptance of the proposal by the SRA (Ace Infracity), the appellant (YEIDA) is not to proceed with its appeal subject to compliance of the conditions as indicated in the communication dated July 4, 2024, which has been given to counsel for the SRA," NCLAT said. It further noted: "Recording the aforesaid, we are of the view that no useful purpose shall be served in continuing with the appeals.

'Global trends, earnings from TCS, HCLTech to guide markets this week'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Equity markets will take cues from global trends and trading activity of foreign investors, while in the latter part of the week the first quarter earnings from IT majors TCS and HCL Technologies would guide investor sentiments, analysts said. Markets may consolidate after the record rally last week, experts added. "On the domestic front, the Q1 earnings season begins this week. Key companies such as TCS and HCL Technologies



will release their earnings on July 11 and 12, 2024, respectively. Additionally, India's Union budget in July is a key event, with hopes pinned on growth-oriented policies and development of

monsoon season, which will also be significant points of interest for investors and traders," said Pravesh Gour, Senior Technical Analyst, Swastika Investment Ltd. The US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell's testimony is scheduled for July 9, 2024, he added. "Furthermore, the activities of both foreign and domestic institutional investors (FII & DII) will be tracked, along with crude oil prices, to gauge overall market sentiment, Gour said.

NexGen Energia plans to invest Rs 15,000 cr over 10 yrs

PNS ■ NOIDA

Green energy solutions company NexGen Energia plans a Rs 15,000 crore investment to open 5,000 green diesel and compressed biogas (CBG) pumps in the country over the next 10 years. The Noida-based company recently inaugurated its first CBG pump in Mau district in Uttar Pradesh, marking its entry to execute engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) services in the

clean energy sector. "The company's commitment to clean energy goes far beyond this single pump. Plans are afoot to open a total of 5,000 green diesel and CBG pumps across the country in multiple phases over the next 10 years, with each pump costing around Rs 3 crore. In this manner, we are set to invest Rs 15,000 crore in the green energy sector," NexGen Energia Chairman Piyush Dwivedi said.

Efforts on to raise MP budget to Rs 7 L cr in 5 years: CM Yadav

PNS ■ BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has said that efforts are being made to take the state's annual budget to Rs 7 lakh crore in the next five years. The state government on July 3 presented its budget for FY 2024-25 with an outlay of Rs 3.65 lakh crore, marking substantial allocations for infrastructure development and initiatives for women and tribals. This time, the state budget



is 16 per cent more than last year's budget and is development-oriented, Yadav said at a

function of the Central India Chamber of Commerce in Ujjain on Saturday night.

Hindenburg shared Adani report with client two months before publishing it: Sebi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

US short-seller Hindenburg Research had shared an advance copy of its damning report against Adani group with New York-based hedge fund manager Mark Kingdon about two months before publishing it and profited from a deal to share spoils from share price movement, according to market regulator Sebi. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), in its 46-

page show cause notice to Hindenburg, detailed how the US short seller, the New York hedge fund and a broker tied to Kotak Mahindra Bank benefited from the over US\$ 150 billion routs in the market value of Adani group's 10 listed firms post-publication of the report. Sebi charged Hindenburg of making "unfair" profits from "collusion" to use "non-public" and "misleading" information and induce "panic selling" in Adani Group stocks.



Hindenburg, which made public the Sebi notice, in its

response, has described the show cause as an attempt to

"silence and intimidate those who expose corruption and fraud perpetrated by the most powerful individuals in India" and revealed that the vehicle used to beat against Adani's flagship firm Adani Enterprises Ltd belonged to Kotak Mahindra (International) Ltd, a Mauritius-based subsidiary of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. KML's fund placed bets on Adani Enterprises Ltd for its client Kingdon's Kingdon Capital Management.

Accord infra status, don't treat hotels as luxury

Say hospitality players ahead of Budget

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hospitality players want the government to accord infrastructure status to hotels to make investments on new properties more attractive rather than categorising them as luxury or even 'sin goods' in the upcoming Union Budget considering the sector's potential to play a key

role in India's growth. They also want the government to consider incentives in the form of tax breaks or subsidies for adopting sustainable and eco-friendly practices, while asserting that the upcoming budget must accelerate the tourism agenda saying it is an opportunity to make Indian hospitality the emerging engine for GDP

growth and employment generation. The sector is burdened with high taxation, expensive and multifarious licences, approvals and compliances. Hotels are capital intensive with a long gestation period. Cost of operating hotels is high and largely fixed. This makes investments in hotels risky.

what's brewing?



Manisha Koirala reflects on 90s B'wood sexism

Manisha Koirala has been much praised for her performance in the Netflix series *Heeramandi*. Now, she has opened up about the sexism she faced in the 90s Bollywood industry. In an interview, the *Shehzada* actress recalled being advised not to disclose that she drank alcohol or had a boyfriend. "I faced some flak for it because in those days, the heroes could have many girlfriends, and they were called macho men, but the actress was supposed to be this, 'no no no, nobody is touching me' and 'we are very untouched.' It was also misunderstood that (she is) very easy or easy girl to you know... But I took it in my stride. Just because I have a personal life or I have a boyfriend doesn't mean I am going to be unprofessional in my life. I love my work. We had some very warped value systems for actresses, which didn't go well with me." Koirala, who gained fame for

her roles in films like *Saudagar* and *Khamoshi*, shared a specific incident from her early career. "At the time of *Saudagar*, there was a coke mixed with vodka, and I was told by people around me not to tell people that I am drinking vodka because actresses are not meant to be drinking alcohol. I was told to say that I'm drinking coke. I learnt that new thing. I told my mom, 'I am drinking coke,' and she said, 'Listen, if you are drinking vodka, say you are drinking vodka, don't say you are drinking coke, don't lie for such small little things.' If I was dating somebody, I am dating somebody. You want to judge me? Go ahead and judge me but that's me, this is me and I lead my life on my own terms."



BLACK BUTLER ANNOUNCES SEASON 5

Anime enthusiasts, rejoice! The highly-appreciated series *Black Butler* is returning with a new season, as revealed at Anime Expo 2024. The fifth season will cover the *Emerald Witch Arc* and will premiere on Crunchyroll in 2025. Following the conclusion of the fourth season, which delved into the Public School arc, this new installment promises fresh excitement and mystery. Directed by Kenjiro Okada, *Black Butler* first premiered in 2008 and was revived in 2010 due to its positive reception. The series has maintained its popularity, even releasing a film in 2011. The upcoming season will continue under the direction of Clover Works and will feature the original cast, including Maaya Sakamoto as Ciel and Daisuke Ono as Sebastian. In the new season, Sebastian will navigate the eerie forests of Southern Germany to investigate a series of mysterious deaths. The teaser, revealed at Anime Expo, offers a tantalising glimpse into the next arc, showcasing two noblemen entering the cursed woods and encountering a werewolf-like creature. While Crunchyroll has yet to disclose specific details such as the release date, time, and number of episodes, the teaser has already sparked significant anticipation among fans.

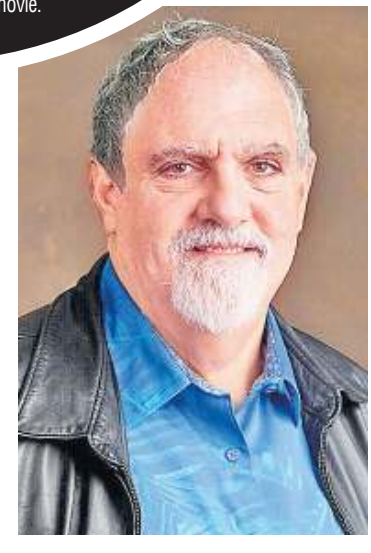


Tahira Kashyap Khurrana's desire to explore man-woman dynamics

Writer-director Tahira Kashyap Khurrana discusses her approach to creating compelling characters in her feature debut *Sharmajee Ki Beti*, which stars Divya Dutta, Sakshi Tanwar and Sayami Kher. Despite knowing that stories about women aged 20-28 are considered "commercially viable" in mainstream cinema, Kashyap Khurrana is driven by the idea of telling "compelling stories" about women at various stages of life. The film is now streaming on Prime Video. "The idea behind the film is to say that these women exist too. Let's not just put them in a box," she says. *Sharmajee Ki Beti* humorously examines the everyday struggles, aspirations, and challenges of women. Hoping for more inclusivity in the industry, she believes that women writers and directors can make a significant difference in storytelling. "Everyone has an individual way of looking at things. Different perspectives should come together; otherwise, only certain notions and ideas will be followed. No matter what space or genre I pick up, there is going to be one common factor: While creating the characters, I won't run down any gender. I don't want to reduce a woman to a carpet. At the same time, I wish to explore the man-woman dynamics," she explains. She believes that with enough women both in front of and behind the camera, labels like "woman director" or "woman screenwriter" will become redundant. Her storytelling comes from her personal experiences and the world she grew up in. "It doesn't matter where these stories are from; the idea is to bring forth as many interesting stories as possible," she says. Known for her short films *Pinni day* and *Toffee*, she chose to portray the characters' struggles without being preachy. "I have had enough lectures from my parents during school and college days even though I was a nerdy kid. In Mumbai, I was teaching. So, I am done with lectures," she says, explaining the humorous tone of her movie.

Oscar-winning producer Jon Landau passes away at 63

Jon Landau, the Oscar-winning producer renowned for his work on three of the biggest blockbusters in cinematic history *Titanic* and two *Avatar* films—has passed away at the age of 63. His family announced his death on Saturday, though the cause was not disclosed. Landau's collaboration with director James Cameron resulted in three Oscar nominations and a Best Picture win for 1997's *Titanic*. Their partnership also produced some of the highest-grossing films of all time, including *Avatar* and its sequel, *Avatar: The Way of Water*. In a heartfelt statement, Cameron described Landau as "a dear friend, and my closest collaborator of 31 years." He added, "A part of myself has been torn away... His zany humor, personal magnetism, great generosity of spirit, and fierce will have held the center of our *Avatar* universe for almost two decades. His legacy is not just the films he produced, but the personal example he set—indomitable, caring, inclusive, tireless, insightful, and utterly unique." Landau began his career in the 1980s as a production manager and steadily rose through the ranks, co-producing *Honey I Shrunk the Kids* and *Dick Tracy*. He took on the role of producer for Cameron's *Titanic*, an epic portrayal of the 1912 maritime disaster. The film was a massive success, becoming the first to cross \$1 billion in global box-office earnings and winning 11 Oscars, including Best Picture. Accepting the award, Landau quipped, "I can't act and I can't compose and I can't do visual effects, so I guess that's why I'm producing." Continuing their partnership, Landau became a top executive at Cameron's Lightstorm Entertainment. In 2009, *Avatar*, a groundbreaking 3D sci-fi epic, surpassed the box-office success of *Titanic* and remains the top-grossing film of all time. Its sequel, *Avatar: The Way of Water*, "is the third highest-grossing film."



Taapsee Pannu opens up on Dhak Dhak co-producers' frustrating behaviour

Taapsee Pannu has opened up that her production venture *Dhak Dhak's* performance upset her and so did the behaviour of the co-producers. Known for her unconventional film choices and willingness to take risks, Pannu turned producer for the first time with director Ajay Bahl's horror thriller *Blurr* in 2022. Following this project, she undertook *Dhak Dhak* in 2023 by bankrolling director Tarun Dubeja's road adventure drama. This project was special because it was headlined by women and featured Ratna Pathak Shah, Dia Mirza, Fatima Sana Shaikh and Sanjana Sanghi in the lead roles. Besides Pannu's Outsiders Films, the film had BLM Pictures and Viacom18 Studios as co-producers. However, the film, which hit the screens in October 2023, failed to attract a significant audience. In an interview, she admitted that the film's performance was upsetting and that the co-producers' behaviour was frustrating. "It was very heartbreaking. I did not become a producer to have an alternate career. I was doing pretty well as an actor. I could have sat quietly or produced films that I act in, which would have been safer. I wanted to produce films I'm not actively part of. *Dhak Dhak* was a step towards that. There were certain commitments made at the time of signing the film, based on the market scenario then. It takes a lot of courage to stick to it even when the market changes. But this is a gambling

business. Two years passed, and the situation changed. Now it's about packaging and selling films. Studios started packaging their films—a big one with a small one—to get a good price and sell to OTTs. They avoid the risk of recovery for a small film because they don't have big names to pull in the audience. They think a big star is a safe option and suggest we sell to OTT for a post-theatrical release. However, OTTs have started saying they can't take every film and don't want to spend on PR for every film. Small films with no stars are difficult to push in the market, so they ask us to release in theaters first and then on OTTs later." She also stated that the co-producers of *Dhak Dhak* didn't support the film fully. "If it's not a big-budget film, studios recover their money before it hits theatres. After that, they make a token release, not wanting to spend on Prints and Advertising. Exhibitors don't want to spend on non-mass masala movies, giving us odd show times and theaters. Then it's abruptly removed mid-week. It was frustrating... We started showing the film 4-5 days after the trailer came out. People offered to help promote it, but I didn't have co-producers standing by me saying, 'We did as much as we could, now leave it to the audience.' Instead, they said, 'Why bother? It's already made its money and will find its audience.'"

FUN

ARCHIE

I HAVE AN ITEM ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL FOR THE FRONT PAGE!
DID YOU DOUBLE-CHECK THE FACTS?
NO! THEN I CAN'T USE IT!
I HAVE AN ITEM ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL FOR THE GOSSIP COLUMN!
RIVERDALE HIGH BLUE AND GOLD
SCARLETT & BOLDWIN

CALVIN AND HOBBS

I'M HOME!
WHAM!
YOU'LL NOTICE I DIDN'T SAY I WAS INSIDE.

GARFIELD

I'M FINALLY GETTING MY MAN CAVE!
IT'S ABOUT TIME!
I ASKED LIZ TO HELP ME DECORATE
UH-OH
I'M THINKING A SCRAPBOOKING TABLE OVER HERE...
GOODBYE MAN CAVE, HELLO CRAFT ROOM

REALITY CHECK

UNFORTUNATELY FOR JOANNE, SHE WAS AFRAID OF BOTH MICE AND GHOSTS.
YOU THOUGHT THE MOUSE TRAP WOULD STOP ME BUT I'VE COME BACK EVEN STRONGER!

SPEED BUMP

NO ONE KNOWS WHEN YOU'RE PLAYING DEAD ON THE INSIDE.

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5
6		7		8
9				
12		13	14	
16	17		18	
				19

NANCY

PIZZA HOUSE TRY OUR NEW ARTISAN PIZZAS
"ARTISAN PIZZAS"?
SHALL WE GO IN AND HAVE RAPHAEL OR MICHELANGELO MAKE OUR PIZZA WITH A SIDE OF DONATELLO HOT WINGS?
ARE WE TALKING ARTISANS OR NINJA TURTLES?

SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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

- Blew up with a bang
- Part of the foot
- Baby cows
- Beneath
- Wool-covered animals
- Melodies
- A garden ornament like a small person
- Leave
- Wound someone with a pointed weapon
- A person who controls the making of a film

DOWN

- Completely tired out
- Beg

3 The floor on a ship
4 A type of sea mammal
5 Tell a fib
8 A month
10 A green gemstone
14 Group of eight
15 Film celebrity
17 A long slippery fish

SOLUTION

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

Actor Karanvir Bohra often loved for his portrayal of negative characters on-screen, interacts with *The Pioneer* over a quick fun chat sharing his kick for these characters, his dream projects and bringing his real side out through reality shows



IT'S A DREAM ROLE FOR ME TO PLAY AN ANTI-VILLAIN IN THE *DON* FRANCHISE.



'Negative characters bring in a lot of meat. I really enjoy playing them'

TEJAL SINHA

It's no easy feat to portray negative characters, especially in Television shows, demanding the actor to delve much deeper into the dark and twisted psyche of the character. It's important to strike a balance between portraying the persona convincingly and getting associated with their villainous emotions too. Talking of villainous characters, one such actor that certainly strikes our minds is none other than Karanvir Bohra. To date remembered for his portrayal of Viraj Dobriyal in *Dil Se Di Dua... Saubhagyaavati Bhava*, there's a different perspective he has, when it comes to these characters.

Be it Prem Yudi in *Kasauti Zindagi Kay*, Kabir from *Just Mohabbat*, Dhruv from *Sharanat*, Rocky of *Naagin* and Bhavar Patil of *Ghum Hai Kisike Pyaar Main*, there's always an impact that he makes sure to bring on-screen. "I've done a lot of diverse characters," begins the *Kismat Konnection* star in a quick telepathic chat with *The Pioneer*. "I choose characters that are character-driven because that brings meat to my role then I can add my nuances and bites."

Always on the verge of bringing his character to life, he's been one of those actors who gives it all to the character.

Throughout his journey, for him it's never been about struggles rather excitement. "I have given so many auditions for ads, tv, movies and every audition I have

been excited, the next audition I have been even more excited and give my best. It's always been like what next can I do. Even to date, I am as excited as taking a boy to a toy shop that's how excited I am to get my roles."

Not long ago, he was seen playing the character of a police inspector Bhanwar Patil and to him, it was a 'dream come true' role to play a cop on-screen.

"Donning the role of an inspector was really special for me, because it was the first time that I played a cop. I've been wanting to play a police officer. I've always been a true Amitabh Bachchan fan. Watching him in *Zanjeer*, as he walks in as a police officer that really inspired me. When I got this opportunity, I was all in. He's a Marathi cop so I had to really work on the nuances, the look and everything. By God's grace, it worked out really well so I was really happy that the first role as a cop, for me it was successful," shares the *Sharanat* actor, who is thrilled with how the show has fared. "All of us had put in our hard-work and the best of efforts to make the show number one. I really want to thank the producers, cast and crew for being with me and believing in me. I'm certainly going to miss the show but I had a really amazing time."

A negative character, yet again in the show, there's a different perception that he has when it comes to playing characters with gray shades. And the *Qubool hai* actor couldn't agree much as he shares, "I am known for the characters I play and most of the times, I have plumped for gray shaded

characters. There's a reason I do that; you get to play layered emotions with these kind of characters. I believe that all of us have a gray shaded character in us. We just keep it underwraps. But what if these characters and gray shaded characters you could just bring that out in the open. I really enjoy them as it gives a lot of meat. In TV, you don't get to play these kind of roles and men, especially don't have these kind of roles. Web has a lot of these kind of roles and shades. Gone are the days when you just had hero, heroine and a villain. Even the protagonist has gray shaded characters so I'm lucky to be in that space."

When we talk of negative characters and his desire to showcase the best of his prowess, he also recalls of the time when he approached Deepika Padukone for the anti-hero character opposite Ranveer Singh in *Don 3*. He believes that there is no shame for an actor to approach people for work. "It's a dream for me to be known as the best anti-hero, the best villain this country has ever seen and what better than being an anti-hero or the villain in this iconic movie *Don*. There's no shame in the game. I will always approach people, producers from our industry or from any other industry for that matter. It is our job as an actor, we should approach them and not just expect that people will come up to you."

The *Bigg Boss 11* fame also believes that we all as a human being, good or bad have a devil and angel within us and we all fight with it every day life on who should win. Characters like Viraj, and with that of

Ranbir Kapoor in *Animal*, the creator made the devil within you really stronger so that came out and that's what people connected.

However, on the contrary, though the image of his negative characters haven't really bothered him, but he shares, "The reason I did *Lock Upp* or *Bigg Boss* was not for my career. My career was and is going good by god's grace. The reason I did these shows was that I wanted a change of my image. My image after *Saubhagyaavati Bhava* was of Viraj Dobriyal. 'Karan' was AKA Viraj Dobriyal. I wanted to shed that image and *Bigg Boss* really helped me, *Khatron Ke Khiladi* and *Jhalak* for that matter helped people see me of who is Karanvir Bohra in real-life; my human side, my family side and loving side."

On the concluding note, also a father of three beautiful daughters, he opens up saying, "Days are over when people wanted boys first to take their lineage forward. Now if you see women don't drop their second name, they don't take their husband's second name or if they take it, they keep their's also. It's not about having a boy anymore but having a child firstly, secondly having a healthy child and thirdly bringing love and harmony in the house with the family. I'm so happy with my three daughters. I was never keen or had kids because we had another boy and that's what people think. We just wanted to have children and we are happy parents of three beautiful daughters. For me they are holy trinity; 'Durga', 'Lakshmi' and 'Saraswati'. What more can I ask for?"

ROLE OF DIET AND EXERCISE IN MAINTAINING TUMMY TUCK

Talking of tummy tuck also known as abdominoplasty, there have been many countless patients undergoing the same. This popular cosmetic procedure aims to improve the appearance of the abdomen by removing excess fat and skin and tightening the abdominal muscles. It is a highly effective solution for individuals who struggle with loose abdominal skin due to aging, weight fluctuations, or pregnancy.

However, many people need to realise that the success of a tummy tuck depends not just on the surgery itself, but also on the aftercare. Today, let's emphasise the vital role of diet and exercise in maintaining tummy tuck results.

Let's start by stating the obvious – a tummy tuck is not a substitute for a healthy lifestyle. It is essential to remember that this surgery is not a shortcut to achieving a flat and toned tummy. It is merely a tool to help you achieve your desired results. And it is up to you to maintain those results through proper diet and exercise.

The Role of a Good diet

The food we put into our bodies has a direct impact on our physical appearance. A balanced and nutritious diet is crucial for maintaining a healthy weight and ensuring long-term results after a tummy tuck. It is essential to follow a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains while avoiding processed and high-fat foods.

Moreover, staying hydrated is vital. Drinking plenty of water helps keep your skin healthy and prevents bloating, which can affect the appearance of your abdomen. So make sure to drink at least 8 glasses of water every day.

Role of Exercise

As we age, our muscles naturally become weaker, and our skin loses its elasticity. This is why exercising is crucial for maintaining the toned appearance achieved through a tummy tuck. Regular exercise will help keep your abdominal muscles strong and prevent excess fat from accumulating in the area.

But it is not just about targeting the abdominal area. A well-rounded exercise routine that includes cardiovascular activities, strength training, and core exercises will help you maintain a healthy weight and overall appearance.

Finally, it is essential to mention that diet and exercise also play a significant role in preventing the need for a revision tummy tuck. Several factors, such as weight gain or pregnancy, can affect the long-term results of a tummy tuck. Following a healthy lifestyle reduces the chances of needing additional surgery to maintain your desired appearance.

In conclusion, a tummy tuck can provide life-changing results, but it requires effort on your part to maintain those results.

(The author, Dr. Anmol Chugh, is a Consultant, Plastics & Aesthetics Centre, at CK Birla Hospital and Director at Imperio Clinics, Gurgaon.)



HYDERABADI STAND-UP COMEDIAN HRIDAY RANJAN, IN AN EXCLUSIVE CHAT WITH *THE PIONEER*, DISCUSSES HIS ART OF CREATING LAUGHS



Transmogrifying triggers into rib-tickling laughs

RASHMI BHUMIREDDY

Everyone in today's times are preoccupied with their jobs and have lost sight of the joy in life. However, we do have people around us who lift our spirits. Well, one amongst them is Hriday Ranjan, who simply just uses his comedy to transform the sufferings into little joys. Hriday initially began his career as a journalist, post his graduation from the University of Hyderabad. He has also worked with media organisations including *The New Indian Express* and *Film Companion* before pursuing his love as a stand-up comedian.

Speaking to *The Pioneer*, also a writer, Hriday began, "My inspiration drives from the freedom of the profession. In stand-up comedy, it's just you, a mic and your thoughts. There is no blame game here and no team to work with. To put it short, no other field offers rich individuality to you than this."

Like many others, his parents wanted him to succeed in the UPSC or get an MBA. But he's never let advice from others influence his judgments; this is especially true in his career. He discovered and accepted his genuine love when he began sharing his

standup videos on YouTube and other social media sites.

Hauling himself through the videos of his motivational stand-up heroes, Eddie Murphy, Bill Burr and Louis CK, Hriday has polished his stand-up comedy. He honed his abilities by observation as well. "I read somewhere that things that anger you make for great comedy," affirms the talented comedian. "I have always tried to notice things that trigger me and tried converting it to standup sets. Interestingly, my favourite shows are those with very few people in the audience. There are shows where the audience comes in disappointed. I take great pleasure in converting them into smiling, laughing faces by the end of the show. Among my shows, my favourite show is where I performed for senior citizens, who were laughing loudly and wiping away tears by the end."

But in his opinion, comedy has certain limitations, particularly in terms of content when it comes to a country like India. Here, we have a concept called 'Clean comedy' - which is comedy without religion, politics, and sex. Ironically, "Those are the topics that I love touching in my standup. For instance, making comedy on politics is like you are testing out the waters. I like asking my audience if they are okay with political humour and performing my jokes anyway. The trick is to make them understand the difference between a joke and a political opinion in a newspaper. We deal in the former."

Standup comedy, according to him is mostly a game

of endurance. "You need to hit an open mic every day, irrespective of where your career is headed. There are days when you question your life choices, but you need to return to the mics the next day, to keep trying out jokes which is the toughest challenge one needs to endure to stay alive in this profession."

Moreover, as a standup comedian one needs to handle negative remarks from the audience. In fact, there was a time when he was backlashed by Pawan Kalyan's fans too. But the negativity didn't let him go down. Initially, "I would get angry. But now I try to understand what is tickling them off. Sometimes, they are trying to seek attention. Most times, they are simply trying to participate in the show. I used to be a teacher, and that taught me how to deal with the troublemakers in class. I use the same skills on stage."

The gagster doesn't consider himself a popular artist at the moment. "It depends! Comedians in the US often perform for decades before making it big. In India, it depends on one video going viral, and you can begin selling tickets."

To all the budding comedians out there, here's some advice from the Hyderabad Farceur. "One has to look for open mics in the city and register for them. Make a plan to hit 10 open mics. Keep repeating your material across the 10 mics. By the end, you will have about three minutes of tight content with you. Continue the process throughout your life. There is no other way to pursue this career."

EXPECTING INDIA TO WIN BOTH CT AND WTC FINAL UNDER ROHIT'S CAPTAINCY: BCCI SECRETARY SHAH

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The 20 World Cup-winning skipper Rohit Sharma will continue to lead India in the ODI and Test formats BCCI secretary Jay Shah said on Sunday, exuding confidence that the country will win next year's Champions Trophy and World Test Championship under his captaincy. The 37-year-old Rohit, who became the third Indian captain after legendary Kapil Dev and Mahendra Singh Dhoni to win a global trophy, has announced his retirement from the T20 format. "The next stage is the WTC final and the Champions Trophy. I have full faith in Rohit Sharma's captaincy, that we will be the champions in both these tournaments," secretary Shah said in a video message. The Champions Trophy, scheduled in Pakistan next

year, will be held after eight years (since 2017 in UK), and even though the draft schedule has been submitted to the ICC, the BCCI hasn't yet given its green light to it. It is understood BCCI will again push for the 'Hybrid Model' like 2023 ODI Asia Cup where India played all its matches, including the ones against Pakistan, in Sri Lanka. Shah's message, in a way, has put to rest speculations about whether Rohit would quit leadership role in other formats. Till Rohit calls it quits, India will once again have split captaincy with Rohit leading in ODIs and Tests while Hardik Pandya is expected to take charge of the T20 outfit. Rohit had also led India to the finals of the WTC and ODI World Cup last year, where India lost the summit clash after winning 10 straight games. Shah dedicated India's T20



World Cup triumph to the three cricketers, who quit the format after the title victory and outgoing coach Rahul Dravid. "I want to dedicate this victory to coach Rahul Dravid, captain Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja. "This was our third final in the last year. We lost the WTC final in June, 2023. In November, 2023 we won hearts after 10 wins but couldn't win the Cup. I had said in Rajkot that we will win the heart and also the Cup on June 24 and install our national flag, and our captain installed the Indian flag," the secretary said. Rohit, Kohli and Jadeja are expected to comeback for the ODI series against Sri Lanka slated for August. India will play six ODIs - three against Sri Lanka in an away series and three at home against England in early February before the Champions Trophy.



Zimbabwe will look to exploit home conditions against India: Spinner Masakadza

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Having hurt the Shubman Gill-led India hard in the opening T20I in Harare, Zimbabwe spinner Wellington Masakadza said the tourists should take the home side lightly at their own risk, and added that they will exploit the home conditions to the maximum to win the five-match series. A new-look India team suffered a 13-run loss to an inexperienced yet spirited Zimbabwe side in an upset of massive proportion. India, who were recently crowned champions in the T20 World Cup albeit with a different set of players, were expected to blow away the Zimbabwean challenge when they restricted the home side to 115 for nine.

(Riyan) Parag and some of the other guys in the side. "It will be a very good challenge. They're (Ravi Bishnoi and Washington Sundar) very good spinners. Bishnoi has just had a very good tournament in the IPL and also Sundar. So it's always a very good challenge to have Asian spinners." With Harare enjoying a winter season as it is in the Southern Hemisphere, the left-arm spinner said the home team pacers, due to their familiarity with the pitch, will likely trouble the Indian batters. "It's winter here and at times it's a bit difficult for batters as the pitch is slowish, with a bit of turn. The seam is always a very big challenge in Harare during winter. So, I think the ball will move a bit and it will spin also," said Masakadza, a veteran of 90 T20Is.

But Zimbabwe wrote their own script, reducing India to 28 for four in the Powerplay and then eventually bowling them out for 102 in 19.5 overs. It was India's first loss in T20Is in 2024 and first against Zimbabwe in eight years. Masakadza, who finished with figures of 1/15 in three overs, said: "We are trying to use our own conditions as much as we can against this Indian side. It's a second-string Indian side, but there are a lot of good players in there. So, we are looking forward to this series," Masakadza said in an interview with PTI Videos facilitated by broadcasters Sony Sports Network. "We've had a few plans in place. We needed them to work and obviously, we are trying to use our own conditions as much as we can against this Indian side." Masakadza, who dismissed tail-ender Avesh Khan on Saturday, said he was eyeing captain Shubman Gill's wicket now. "I'll be looking to take Shubman Gill's big wicket and some of the right-handers,

He added that a series win will be a shot in the arm for Zimbabwe cricket, which has been on the decline for several years. "This series will mean a lot to us. If we manage to win the series, it will be a very big thing in our future." "We're starting a new chapter, we have had our ups and downs in the past. We've just had a new coaching staff. So I just think from now on, this is a big thing for us and we'll be looking forward to making a few plans to get ourselves across the line," said the 30-year-old, who, like his skipper Sikandar Raza, wants to play in the IPL. Pakistan-born Raza played for Punjab Kings this IPL season, scoring 43 runs in two games. On Saturday, he was adjudged 'Player of the Match' for taking three wickets and scoring 17 runs. "Definitely, it's always a good thing to go out there and play in those leagues. I will look to take some wickets in this series. That can be good for me to get a gig (IPL contract)."

Uruguay beats Brazil 4-2 on penalties after scoreless draw, advances to Copa America semifinals

AP ■ LAS VEGAS

Marcelo Bielsa knew what the world's reaction would be after Uruguay and Brazil ground, scrapped and shoved their way through a Copa America quarterfinal match with 41 fouls, four shots on target and no goals in open play. Bielsa knows the beautiful game wasn't so attractive Saturday night, but the famously inventive coach now running Uruguay's bench only cared about the celebrations back home and in the Vegas stands when La Celeste picked up a landmark win. Manuel Ugarte scored the decisive goal in the fifth round of the shootout and Uruguay advanced to the Copa America semifinals with a 4-2 penalty kick victory after the teams played to a scoreless draw. Uruguay and Brazil played a bruising, choppy match with plenty of rough stuff, but little of the impressive soccer for which both South American powerhouses are known. Uruguay's Nahitan Nandez was sent off after a red card in the 74th minute for a dangerous tackle on Rodrigo, but Brazil still couldn't break through its 10-man opponent in the ensuing 21 minutes. "I (prefer) offensive football, but in this match, we created more

opportunities and we defended well," Bielsa said through an interpreter. "We did the things necessary to succeed at this level." Uruguay led 3-1 after three rounds of the shootout when goalkeeper Sergio Rochet stopped Eder Militao and Douglas Luiz hit the post. Alisson Becker saved Jose Maria Gimenez's shot in the fourth round to keep Brazil alive, but Ugarte banged home the clincher. "If you ask me if I'm happy that we only created three goal-scoring opportunities, then no," Bielsa said. "But our opponent only had two goal-scoring opportunities. We had to work hard to create our opportunities ... But that was satisfactory to us." After the third penalty shootout in four Copa America quarterfinal matches, Uruguay advanced to face Colombia in the semifinals on Wednesday night in Charlotte, North Carolina. Colombia routed Panama 5-0 earlier Saturday, extending its unbeaten streak to 27 consecutive matches. "We believe we're in good shape to play against any opponent," Bielsa said. Defending champion Argentina faces Canada in the other semifinal Tuesday in East Rutherford, New Jersey. The final is July 14 in Miami



Gardens. Brazil played without Real Madrid star Vinicius Junior, who watched from the stands under suspension after accumulating two yellow cards. The Selecao already are without Neymar, who hasn't played since tearing a knee ligament last fall during Brazil's loss to Uruguay in a World Cup qualifier. "That victory was Uruguay's first over Brazil in 13 meetings since 2001, but Bielsa's group has now beaten Brazil in back-to-back matches for the first time since 1992. Endrick made his first career start in

place of Vinicius Junior, but the 17-year-old phenomenon headed to Real Madrid later this month couldn't shake Brazil from its offensive funk. Except for a 4-1 win over overmatched Paraguay, Brazil scored one combined goal and earned just one victory in its other three Copa America matches - and the Selecao is headed home despite never trailing in the tournament. "There were positives in every match," coach Dorival Junior said through an interpreter. "It's only natural after a match like this one that something wed consider positive is ruled out. I'm

aware of that. We didn't perform at a high technical level, but I don't throw out any of the matches. There was dedication, fighting spirit. It was always a courageous team. I believe we had more positives than negatives. The fact we didn't seize (the opportunity) despite outnumbering (Uruguay) will be analyzed." Uruguay advanced to the Copa America semifinals for the first time since winning the tournament in 2011, and it knocked Brazil out for the first time in four tries since 1995. Both teams played cautiously and contentiously from the start. During a stoppage in the 17th minute, Ronald Araujo shoulder-checked Endrick to the ground from behind while the teenager complained about an earlier non-call. Raphinha responded by knocking down Araujo, but order was restored. Araujo, the oft-injured Barcelona defender, left the game with an apparent injury to his right leg in the 31st minute. Bielsa later called it a muscle injury. After 35 minutes with few scoring opportunities, the teams traded their best chances 35 seconds apart. Right after Darwin Nunez botched an unobstructed header deep in Brazil's box, Raphinha was stopped at close range by Rochet.

Akanji enduring 'deep emptiness' after penalty failure consigns Swiss to painful loss at Euro 2024



AP ■ DUSSELDORF

That was the instruction on England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford's water bottle as he prepared to face Manuel Akanji for Switzerland's first kick in the penalty shootout at the European Championship. Pickford dived left. And he saved the penalty. Cue jubilation for England and agony for Akanji, with his being the only failure in the shootout as Switzerland missed another chance to advance to the semifinals of a major tournament for the first time. After Switzerland's 5-3 loss in the shootout, a disconsolate Akanji was embraced by his Manchester City teammates John Stones and Phil Foden. "No words of solace can help him," Switzerland coach Murat Yakin said. "Deep emptiness, deep sadness." Switzerland midfielder Remo Freuler was in tears. So was goalkeeper Yann Sommer. History had been in the grasp of the most talented Switzerland squad in a generation, perhaps ever. Leading 1-0 after Brel Embolo's 75th-minute tap-in, the Swiss moved to within 10 minutes of beating England in

Munich. With Schar a regular with Newcastle and with Embolo such a danger up front after regaining his fitness. "It's hard to accept because I think we deserved to go to the semifinal with this team," Switzerland forward Dan Ndoye. "We had the quality to go further. It hurts, it hurts to lose on penalties like that. It's cruel." Switzerland, a country better associated with winter sports, had no place competing with England deep in a major tournament, Yakin said. "Even in this game, some said we were the favorites but we will never be the favorites," he said. "It can be in certain moments that we look like one, but the market value of other teams compared to us is massive." Yet, Switzerland's defense, marshalled superbly by Akanji, was surprisingly comfortable against an England strike force containing superstars like Harry Kane, Jude Bellingham, Bukayo Saka and Foden, and Yakin's team had the better of both the second half and extra time. That was the case even though Khaka, Switzerland's midfield general, was held back by a leg injury that almost ruled him out of the game. "It was a miracle he could even play," Yakin said. Yakin wouldn't be drawn on his future, having been linked to jobs in Saudi Arabia. He has been in charge of the Swiss since August 2021 and proved himself to be a fine tactician, bouncing back well from the humiliation of losing 6-1 to Portugal in the last 16 of the 2022 World Cup. "Unfortunately now my contract has come to an end, but that doesn't mean that there won't be a continuation," Yakin said. "My priority is the national team.

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Netherlands into Euro 2024 semifinal against England after beating Turkey

AP ■ BERLIN

The Netherlands dug deep to come from behind and beat Turkey 2-1 on Saturday and book its place in the European Championship semifinals. An own goal from Mert Muldur in the 76th minute, only six after Stefan De Vrij canceled Samet Akaydin's first-half header for Turkey, was enough for the Dutch in the last of the quarterfinals. "It was really a battle today," De Vrij said. "The Turkish team they have a big heart, a lot of quality. In the end we did well and we deserved the win." The Netherlands turned the game around after after 1.97-meter-tall (6-foot-5) striker Wout Weghorst made his entrance for the second half. "He's always fighting up front, helping the team. And we started to keep the ball, create chances," De Vrij said. "Then we scored two goals and the whole team fought until the end." The Netherlands will face England in the second semifinal in Dortmund on Wednesday. Spain faces France in the first on Tuesday. "The players showed tonight a big heart," Dutch coach Ronald Koeman said. "We had to suffer but finally it's a great success." Turkey was without defender Merih Demiral, who was suspended for two matches by UEFA for making a nationalistic hand gesture after scoring in Tuesday's 2-1 win over Austria. The gesture is used by Turkish nationalists and associated with an ultranationalist group. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was at the



game after he changed his plans because of the diplomatic row with Germany over Demiral's gesture. German interior minister Nancy Faeser had said Demiral used his celebration "as a platform for racism" and federal minister Cem Ozdemir, a German politician of Turkish descent, said the gesture "stands for terror, fascism." Many Turkish fans made the gesture on their way to Berlin's Olympiastadion, and again during Turkey's national anthem before the game. The Dutch made a better start, but Turkey's defenders dug in to limit the impact of Cody Gakpo, Xavi Simons and Memphis Depay. Turkey lined up with five at the back without the ball, as it had in the win against Austria, and gradually improved. Akaydin rewarded a period of

Turkish pressure by scoring in the 35th. Arda Guler delivered a butter-soft cross for the defender to head in off the underside of the crossbar. It set off wild celebrations among Turkey's coaching staff and fans. Guler was swamped in the coaching area with hugs, while fans in the west end of the stadium set off flares. Most stayed standing after the goal. Turkish supporters greatly outnumbered their orange-clad counterparts in a city that's home to a large community of people with Turkish roots. Most are descendants of Turkish "guest workers" who arrived in what was West Germany to help rebuild the post-war economy. Germany is home to some 3 million Turks or people with Turkish roots, making them the country's largest ethnic minority, and the team has enjoyed fevered

support at Euro 2024. Koeman, who won Euro '88 as a player with the Netherlands, reacted to his team's half time deficit by sending on big forward Weghorst, whose presence gave the Dutch wingers a target. Guler hit the post with a free kick, but it was an isolated effort during a period of intense Dutch pressure that finally paid off in the 70th when De Vrij was left free to head in Depay's cross. Suddenly the Dutch supporters could be heard again, and they were cheering again shortly afterward when Gakpo forced the own goal from Muldur by getting in front of the defender to Denzel Dumfries' low cross. "We didn't start the second half very well and fell behind," Turkey captain Hakan Calhanoglu said. "After their second goal, we turned to



Rajawat loses in semifinals of Canada Open

PTI ■ CALGARY

India's campaign at the Canada Open Super 500 badminton tournament ended after Priyanshu Rajawat suffered a straight-game loss to France's Alex Lanier in the men's singles semifinals here. World No. 39 Rajawat went down 17-21 10-21 to Lanier, ranked 37th, in 45 minutes at the Markin MacPhail Centre. The Indian had defeated Lanier at the Madrid Spain Masters qualification round last year in their only meeting. Rajawat, who had stunned Anders Antonsen of Denmark in the quarterfinals, made a positive start, opening up a 3-0 early lead but Lanier was quick to establish a 7-4 lead. The two fought hard and Rajawat did grab the lead a few times but he couldn't sustain the pressure on his opponent, who reeled off five straight points at 15-16 to eventually close out the opening game. Rajawat's game completely fell apart after the change of sides as Lanier zoomed to 8-2 and then 14-3, which proved decisive as the French shut the door on the Indian.

'Music is integral part of *Darling's* storytelling'

K. RAMYA SREE

As the curtains prepare to rise on the much-anticipated romantic comedy *Darling*, producer Chaitanya Reddy offers a peek into the behind the scenes of this heartwarming tale, set to hit theatres on July 19. With stars Priyadarshi and Nabha Natesh leading the charge under the direction of Ashwin Ram, *Darling* promises to blend humour and emotion in a way that resonates with audiences across generations.

Reflecting on the journey from their previous success with *Hanuman*, Chaitanya shares, "After the immense love for *Hanuman*, we wanted to delve into a narrative that captures the essence of everyday relationships. Life after years of marriage can become routine and we felt this story could reconnect families and youth alike through its humour and relatable moments."

When asked about casting Priyadarshi and Nabha Natesh in pivotal roles, Chaitanya explains, "We needed characters with contrasting yet complementary traits. Priyadarshi brings a genuine simplicity, while Nabha embodies a vibrant and socially active persona. Their chemistry and dedication during rehearsals truly brought the characters to life."

Discussing the film's title, Chaitanya reveals, "*Darling* emerged after careful consideration. Initially, we explored several options, including *Vaidis Kolavari*, but *Darling* captured the universal appeal we sought.

The tagline 'Why This Kolavari' adds a touch of nostalgia, making it a complete family entertainer."

Addressing challenges, such as Nabha Natesh's recent accident, Chaitanya assures, "Nabha's recovery was our priority, and we proceeded with production once she was back on her feet. Her resilience and positive spirit enriched her character, adding depth to the story's narrative."

While *Darling* initially releases in Telugu, Chaitanya hints at broader horizons, stating, "We aim to gauge audience response before considering a pan-India release or potential remakes. The support and success of *Hanuman* have inspired us to explore new avenues."

Commenting on the film's music, Chaitanya praises composer Vivek, saying, "Vivek has crafted exceptional songs and background scores that enhance the film's emotional core. Music is integral to our storytelling."

When asked about his dual role in cinema and business, Chaitanya reflects, "Cinema is both an art and a business. While I cherish creating meaningful stories, I find fulfillment in the strategic aspects of film production. It's a blend that complements my background in business administration."

Looking ahead, Chaitanya shares, "We have an exciting lineup of films in various stages of production. Our goal is to release ten films over the next three years, each offering unique narratives and experiences." In closing, Chaitanya expresses gratitude to his team, family, and the audience, emphasising, "Success is a collective effort, and I attribute ours to the support of our team and the unwavering love of our viewers. We're excited to share *Darling* with everyone."

As *Darling* gears up for its theatrical debut, Chaitanya Reddy's passion for storytelling and commitment to quality promise an unforgettable cinematic experience for audiences eager to laugh, love, and cherish every moment on screen.



VISHWAK SEN UNVEILS DARLING TEASER

Vishwak Sen unveiled the theatrical trailer of *Darling*, starring Priyadarshi, Nabha Natesh, and directed by debutant Aswin Raam, under the banner of PrimeShow Entertainment, produced by K Niranjan Reddy and Chaitanya. This unique rom-com has sparked considerable excitement following its hilarious teaser and two super hit songs. Scheduled for release on July 19, the film's trailer was launched today by Vishwak Sen.

The story revolves around a young couple with contrasting personalities. The protagonist, a simple and innocent young man, dreams of marrying a lovely girl and honeymooning in Paris. However, his dreams are shattered when Anandi enters his life as his wife. She torments him daily, crushing his aspirations and turning his life into a nightmare. Initially believed to be possessed, it is later revealed that she suffers from split personality disorder. While the trailer reveals some aspects of the storyline, it hints at surprising twists in the tale. Director Aswin Raam's narrative presents robust

characterisations, with Priyadarshi delivering a standout performance as a youth with romantic aspirations, and Nabha's character exhibiting depth, enriched by her portrayal of split personality disorder. Ananya Nagalla makes a brief appearance, while Brahmanandam leaves his mark in a single sequence. The trailer suggests a promising narrative, promising *Darling* to be a rollercoaster ride of marital antics.

The film benefits from solid technical finesse, with Naresh Ramadurai's cinematography capturing vibrant visuals and Vivek Sagar's score setting the mood. The production standards of PrimeShow Entertainment shine through, complemented by witty dialogues penned by Hemant and sharp editing by Pradeep E Ragav of *Love Today*. Gandhi serves as the production designer.

With the teaser sparking curiosity and the trailer elevating expectations, *Darling* promises to be a delightful blend of comedy and drama, showcasing a marriage like never before.

AS THE PRIYADARSHI AND NABHA NATESH-STARRER *DARLING* IS NEARING ITS RELEASE, PRODUCER CHAITANYA REDDY SHARES SOME BEHIND THE SCENES AND TIDBITS ABOUT THE FILM

Allari Naresh's *Bacchala Malli* dubbing commences

Actor Allari Naresh is set to appear in an intense role in his upcoming movie *Bacchala Malli*. Subbu Mangadevi, known for her stellar performances, takes on the directorial reins. Under the banner of Hasya Movies, renowned for blockbusters like *Samajavaragamana* and *Uru Peera Bhairavakona*, Rajesh Danda and Balaji Gutta are producing this film. Allari Naresh's recent mass-appealing birthday glimpse received tremendous response. The makers have announced the release of *Bacchala Malli* this September. Dubbing for this latest film has already begun.

In this movie, Allari Naresh portrays a character unlike any he has done before. Director Subbu Mangadevi presents him in an avatar audiences

have never seen before, creating a buzz among viewers for this intriguing project.

Rohini, Rao Ramesh, Achyuth Kumar, Balagan Jayaram, Hari Teja, Praveen, Vaiva Harsha and others play other key roles in this film.

Top technicians are involved in the making of this film: Vishal Chandrasekhar, who provided music for *Seetha Ramam*, is composing the music, while Richard M.

Nathan, known for films like *Manaadu*, *Rangam* and *Matti Kushti*, handles the cinematography. Chota K Prasad is the editor, and Brahma Kadali serves as the production designer. Subbu himself has penned the story and dialogues.

Vipparthi Madhu is the screen playwright, and additional screenplay is provided by Vishwanath.



FIRST SINGLE FROM

MR. BACHCHAN TO RELEASE TODAY

Mass Maharaja Ravi Teja has teamed up once again with mass director Harish Shankar for another high-octane entertainer *Mr. Bachchan*. This combination promises an exceptional experience, given their previous successful collaborations. The recent release teaser video garnered tremendous response. The makers are now kickstarting

the music promotions for *Mr. Bachchan*. The first single is going to release today. Star composer Mickey J Meyer has composed an album that is expected to be a chartbuster. In this film, Bhagyashree plays the heroine alongside Ravi Teja, while Jagapathi Babu and Sachin Khedekar essay pivotal roles.

People Media Factory, under the banner of TG Vishva Prasad, is pro-

ducing this project grandly. Vivek Kuchibhotla is co-producing.

Top technicians are involved in this film, including Bosco and Brahma Kadali as the art director, and Ujwal Kulkarni as the editor.

Ravi Teja, Harish Shankar, and an incredible production team are gearing up for a successful combination in *Mr. Bachchan*, and audiences are eagerly anticipating the film's release.

Nag Ashwin unveils Prince and Naresh Agastya's *Kali* teaser

The teaser for the movie *Kali*, starring young heroes Prince and Naresh Agastya, has been released by director Nag Ashwin. Produced by Rudra Creations under the guidance of renowned story writer K. Raghavendra Reddy and directed by Siva Seshu, *Kali* is a psychological thriller whose shooting has been completed. The film is currently undergoing post-production and is set for a grand theatrical release soon. Nag Ashwin praised the teaser, describing it as interesting and impressive, and highlighted director Siva Seshu's introduction of a new concept to Telugu audiences. He extended his best wishes to the entire team of *Kali*.

K. Raghavendra Reddy, the presenter of the film, expressed his happiness in releasing the teaser, emphasising that *Kali* is an intriguing psychological thriller centered around the character of Kali. He mentioned that post-production work is in progress and promised to bring the movie to the audience soon. Producer Leela Gautham Varma thanked Nag Ashwin for taking the time to launch the teaser despite his busy schedule. Writer and director Siva Seshu described *Kali* as a film with a fresh storyline combining elements of mythology and psychological thriller genres. He expressed hopes that *Kali* will provide a unique experience to viewers and announced plans for a grand theatrical release.



The teaser launch event for *Kali* was attended by creative producers Radhakrishna Tathineni, Dharam Kumar TR, Executive Producer Phanindra, and others.

In the teaser, Shivaram (played by Prince) contemplates suicide due to disillusionment with the selfish world. However, just as he prepares to hang himself, a stranger (Naresh Agastya) arrives at his doorstep and reveals intimate details about Shivaram's life. Shivaram is left puzzled about how the stranger knows so much about him, especially concerning incidents only known to him and his wife. The teaser concludes with intriguing questions: Why did Shivaram, previously happily married, contemplate suicide? Who is this stranger, and how does he seem to know everything about Shivaram? Moreover, why does he appear to have a dead body that resembles Shivaram?

Vijay Antony's *Toofan* trailer out now

Vijay Antony's poetic action film *Toofan* trailer introduction event was celebrated grandly in Hyderabad, heralding its upcoming grand theatrical release on July 26.

Toofan marks the collaboration of director Vijay Milton with Vijay Antony once again, following their successful ventures *Paghavan* and *Hathya*. Produced by Kamal Bora, D. Lalitha, B. Pradeep and Pankaj Bora under Infinity Film Ventures, the film promises a compelling blend of action and emotion. At the event, key figures shared their excitement. Lyricist Bhagyashree welcomed the attendees, praising the lead actors Megha Akash and Vijay Antony. *Toofan* holds promise akin to Vijay Antony's acclaimed *Bichchagadu*, promising a similar impact. Director Vijay Milton thanked the producers and cast for their trust,



lauding Megha Akash's stellar performance and Bhagyashree's eloquent Telugu lyrics, confident that *Toofan* will resonate strongly with the audience.

Megha Akash, thrilled by the support, described *Toofan* as a significant project filled with love, romance, action, and stirring music, eagerly anticipating its theatrical release. Vijay Antony, appreciative of the overwhelming response, eagerly anticipated the Hyderabad live concert and emphasized the film's visual allure and fresh narrative. He praised director Vijay Milton's dual talent as a director and cinematographer and anticipated that audiences would relish *Toofan*.

Adore the innocent cop Charulatha from *Saripodhaa Sanivaaram*

The Pan India adrenaline-filled action-adventure *Saripodhaa Sanivaaram* stars Priyanka Mohan playing the heroine opposite Natural Star Nani. This is her second movie with Nani, after *Gang Leader*. On Sunday, the makers unleashed the first look of Priyanka Mohan.

The first look poster presents Priyanka Mohan as an innocent cop named Charulatha. She looks fit in the character and is seen flashing a beautiful smile on her face. Dressed in a khaki outfit, Priyanka walks on the road with a bag on her shoulder. Priyanka's character is going to be very significant in the movie.

Vivek Athreya is directing, while DVV Danayya and Kalyan Dasari are bankrolling the movie on a high budget with rich production and technical standards under the banner of DVV Entertainment. The movie has SJ Suryah in a pivotal role.

Murali G is the director of photography, wherein Jakes Bejoy composes the music. Karthika Srinivas is the editor of this Pan India film that will be released in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, and Hindi languages on August 29, 2024.

Saripodhaa Sanivaaram is in the last leg of shooting.



ANJALI'S NEXT IS A GRIPPING MYSTERY THRILLER

Anjali's captivating web series *Bahishkarana* has unveiled its stunning teaser, promising an enthralling narrative that will stream on ZEE5 starting July 19. Directed by Mukesh Prajapati and produced by Prashanti Maliseti under Pixel Pictures Pvt Ltd, *Bahishkarana* marks ZEE5's latest original Telugu series, poised to captivate audiences with its exploration of transformation and destiny interwoven into a rich tapestry of storytelling. The series features a stellar ensemble cast led by the extraordinary Anjali, alongside Ravindra Vijay, Ananya Nagalla, Shritej, Shanmukh, Mahboob Basha, and Chaitanya Sagiraju. *Bahishkarana* delves into the profound journey of a courtesan in search of true happiness, navigating personal growth amidst the complex web of societal expectations. Renowned director Harish Shankar unveiled the teaser, which opens with a haunting statement: "This world surrenders to two things... one to money... two to infection." This sets the stage for Anjali's character, whose outward innocence masks a darker past thrusting her into the world of prostitution. The teaser hints at a gripping backstory, shrouded in mystery, inviting viewers to peel back the layers of Anjali's character. Anjali's portrayal in the teaser showcases her exceptional acting prowess,



setting the stage for her character's transformative journey throughout the series. She embodies a character of profound duality—both a source of solace and an omen of doom—a juxtaposition promising compelling character dynamics.

Ananya Nagalla adds depth to the series with her talent, playing a pivotal role that complements Anjali's character arc. Together, they lead an ensemble cast delivering powerful performances, enriching the narrative with emotional depth and dramatic tension.

Bahishkarana unfolds across six episodes, immersing viewers in a village embroiled in a high-stakes revenge drama. The narrative centers on a forbidden love affair that challenges societal norms and prejudices. The couple's relationship, scorned and disgraced, becomes a catalyst for a story rich in emotional depth and gripping twists.

As anticipation mounts for the series' release, viewers eagerly await unraveling the mysteries surrounding Anjali's character and the motivations driving her actions. *Bahishkarana* promises more than mere entertainment; it offers a profound exploration of human emotions, societal norms, and the transformative power of love and revenge.