

DON'T MISS...

Tenant farmers' crop loans should...

Minister for Housing and I&PR K Parthasarathy underlined the need to increase the crop loans of tenant farmers to Rs 2000 crore. An interaction with the district officials was organised here on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that in the annual credit plan, crop loans to farmers have been targeted at Rs 7,300 crore while the target for tenant farmers' loans is only Rs 250 crore. "More than 75 per cent of the cultivation in Eluru district is carried out by the tenant farmers and keeping this aspect in mind, the target of crop..



-PAGE: 4

Thousands of devotees pulled the chariots of sibling deities - Lord Jagannath, Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra - on the 'Bahuda Yatra' or return car festival on Monday. Though the pulling of chariots was slated to start at 4 pm, it began ahead of the schedule amid chants of 'Jai Jagannath' and beating of cymbals. Devotees start pulling Lord Balabhdra's chariot 'Taladwaja' at 3.25 pm and Devi Subhadra's 'Devadalan' at 4 pm. Pulling of Lord Jagannath's chariot 'Nandighosh' began... -PAGE: 5

9 in 10 use wifi to make calls...

Around 89 per cent of people surveyed have experienced call drops in the last three months and nine in 10 have used Wi-Fi networks to make calls through calling and messaging apps, online survey firm Localcirc Monday. The survey conducted between March and June claims to have received a total of 32 000 responses across different questions from 362 districts. The number of responses differed from question to question. "89 per cent of subscribers surveyed face call connection and .. -PAGE: 8

YSRCP plundered AP: CM

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

PNS VIJAYAWADA

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

Naidu released a white paper at the Secretariat detailing the exploitation of natural resources during the previous administration.

The Chief Minister stated, "According to available statistics, 1.75 lakh acres of land, valued at approx-imately Rs 35,000 crore, were illegally occupied." He assured that stringent action would be taken against those involved in such illegal activities, including the plundering of natural resources and government properties. Naidu criticised the previous government for squandering Rs 653 crore on issuing new passbooks following a land resurvey and announced the withdrawal of this resurvey. He expressed regret over

Naidu criticises the Rs 653 crore expenditure on a land resurvey and announced its withdrawal. The previous administration's handling of red sanders stocks and illegal quarry grabs was condemned

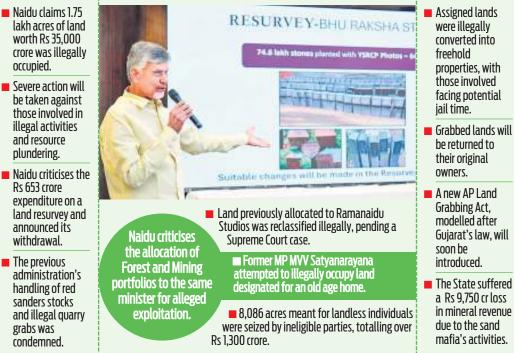
YSRCP's role crucial

in Rajya Sabha

PNS VIJAYAWADA

plundering.

the complete looting of red sanders The Chief Minister urged the pubstocks, the reduction in vigilance and lic, especially those affected, to forest staff, and the illegal grabbing report land grabbing and other illicit activities of the previous gov-



ernment. A toll-free number will be provided for lodging complaints. He accusing him of using this position also criticized the allocation of the Forest portfolio to the same minis-

CM to visit

Delhi today

Chief Minister N Chandrababu

Naidu's second visit to Delhi in less

than two weeks underscores the

importance of his meetings with

leaders

hiel

PNS VIJAYAWADA

national

ter who oversaw the Mining wing, to exploit the state.

3 buried under boulders in mishap at quarry

PNS VIJAYAWADA

In a tragic incident at a quarry in Paritala under Kanchikacherla mandal in NTR district, three persons lost their lives when boulders fell on them during a drilling operation, while another person managed to escape. The vicims nave been identi-



RAPE-CUM-MURDER OF MINOR GIRL Rs 10 lakh ex gratia extended to family

Rs 5 L announced for kin of another raped kid

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Home, Vangalapudi Anitha, has announced an ex gratia of Rs 10 lakh for the family of a 9-year-old girl who was gang-raped and murdered by minor boys in Machumarri, Nandyala district.

The Home Minister also announced Rs 5 lakh ex gratia for the family of a six-month-old baby girl who was raped a close relative in

Ramabhadrapuram, Vizianagaram district. She stated that the Rs 5 lakh would be deposited in the name of the infant. Anitha assured that she would personally hand over the ex gratia amount to the family members soon.

Speaking to the media on Monday, Home Minister Anitha mentioned that the body of the 9-year-old girl, who was gang-raped and murdered by three minor boys in Machumarri village five days ago, has not been found yet. The accused have given the police conflicting accounts about where they disposed of the body. Despite efforts by NDRF teams to search the canal, the body remains untraced.

The Home Minister expressed her



P4

influence of alcohol. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu held a review meeting on Monday regarding the law and order situation. The Chief Minister instructed the police to take stern action against those who commit heinous crimes against women, regardless of who they are, according to the Home

Minister. Home Minister Anitha also lamented the influence of pornographic websites on minor boys and the addiction to ganja and liquor among youths. She urged parents to think carefully before giving mobile phones to their children.

regret over the incident involving a sixmonth-old infant raped by her grand-Continued on Page 2 father in Ramabhadrapuram,



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



of quarries.

With the resignation of these MPs. the BJP now holds 86 seats in the Rajya Sabha, while the NDA alliance as a whole has 101 members. The maiority threshold in the 245-member Rajya Sabha is 113. Currently,

there are 225 members in the Rajya Sabha. The Congress-led INDIA Alliance commands the support of 87 members, including 26 from Congress, 13 from Trinamool Congress, 10 from Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), and 10 from DMK. Additionally, there are BRS members and various nominated MPs and independents.

Following the expiration of the terms of four nominated MPs-Rakesh Sinha, Ram Shakal, Sonal Mansingh, and Mahesh Jathmalani-on Saturday, the BJP's strength in the Rajya Sabha has dropped to 86. These MPs, appointed by President Draupadi Murmu on the advice of the Central Government, had previously supported the NDA coalition in the upper house.

The BJP-led NDA government, which has

assumed power for a third term, has seen a

its majority in the Raiva

With the resignation of these MPs, the BJP now holds 86 seats in the Rajya Sabha, while the NDA alliance as a whole has 101 members. The majority threshold in the 245-member Rajya Sabha is 113. Currently, there are 225 members in the Rajya Sabha. The Congress-led INDIA Alliance commands the support of 87 members, including 26 from Congress, 13 from Trinamool Congress, 10 from Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), and 10 from DMK. Additionally, there are BRS members and various nominated MPs and independents.

The BJP government now depends on non-NDA parties to pass legislation in the upper house. The support of former NDA allies AIADMK in Tamil Nadu and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) has become critical. With AIADMK holding 4 seats and YSRCP holding 11. the combined total with the NDA's 86 seats reaches 101, still 12 seats short of the majority needed. The key question now is whether AIADMK and YSRCP will back the ruling BJP. YSRCP's support is particularly vital, given its position as the fourth largest party in the Rajya Sabha.

Continued on Page 2

Minister will depart for the national capital on Tuesday evening and will remain in Delhi overnight. His schedule includes a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah to address unresolved bifurcation issues, such as the KRMB water distribution between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

With Parliament sessions starting in less than a week, CM Chandrababu is expected to discuss the strength of the NDA in the Rajya Sabha. This is crucial as the NDA currently lacks the necessary numbers to ensure the smooth passage of bills.

fied as Battula Durga Raj (23), BB Naik (42), and Ramdev Bhagel (33). Battula Durga Raj hailed from Cheruvu Madhavaram in G Kondur mandal.

BB Naik was from Odisha, and Ramdev Bhagel was from Chhattisgarh. Both Naik and Bhagel resided in Chevuturu village of G Kondur Mandal. The incident occurred on a Monday while they were working at the quarry.

police, the quarry is located in Paritala and belongs to Pavan Crushers in Donabanda. Four workers were involved in the oper-

ations at the Paritala quarry, engaged in blasting boulders and breaking them into smaller pieces. During the process, a sudden accident occurred where large boul-

According to the ders fell unexpectedly. Durga Raj and Naik, who were drilling the large boulders, along with Bhagel, got trapped under the falling boulders and unfortunately passed away. The police reported that they were found deceased under the boulders.

The fourth worker, Komara Goli, fortunately managed to escape the accident.

National chief secretaries' meet on July 27

PNS VIJAYAWADA

announced that the 4th National Chief Secretaries meeting and the 9th NITI Aayog Governing Council meeting will be held on July 27.

This was stated during a video conference with chief secretaries of

Secretaries' meeting will be provided soon.

initiating preparatory arrangements Bharat) by 2047. for both the National Chief

various states from Delhi on Secretaries' meeting and the NITI to promptly submit action-taken Monday. Gauba mentioned that Aayog's 9th Governing Council reports on the issues discussed during the 3rd National Chief Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba details regarding the location and meeting. Highlighting the signifi-Secretaries' meeting held in December last year. Following duration of the 4th National Chief cance of these meetings, Gauba noted that they are pivotal in this, Gauba discussed several priorachieving the goal of making India He emphasised the importance of a developed country (Vikasit ity issues and measures to be

addressed in the upcoming meet-He directed the chief secretaries ings



I & PR Director meets CM

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Himanshu Shukla, Director of the Information and Public Relations Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu at the Secretariat on Monday.

assumed his role as Director of Information & Public Relations on Friday, July 12.

He officially took charge at the Department met with Chief I&PR head office, located on the second floor of the NTR Administrative Block at Pandit Shukla, a 2013 batch IAS officer, Nehru Bus Stand in Vijayawada.

OVERSTAYING IN OFFICIAL BUNGALOWS Over 200 ex-MPs served eviction notices

PNS NEW DELHI

More than 200 former Lok Sabha MPs, who have yet to vacate their official bungalows in Lutyens' Delhi, have been issued eviction notices, sources in the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry said on Monday.

The notices have been issued under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act.

According to rules, the former MPs are required to vacate their official bungalows within a month of dissolution of the previous Lok Sabha.

"So far, more than 200 former MPs have been issued eviction notices for overstaying. They have been asked to vacate their official bungalows at the earliest. Process to



send notices to more former MPs is eviction", the sources said. underway," the sources said. If they Although the Lok Sabha fail to vacate their official accommo-Secretariat provides accommodation dation at the earliest, teams of offito the MPs, the Housing and Urban cials will soon be sent for "forceful Affairs (HUA) ministry allots bun-

'So far, more than 200 former MPs have been issued eviction notices for overstaying. They have been asked to vacate their official bungalows at the earliest. Process to send notices to more former MPs is underway," the sources said. If they fail to vacate their official accommodation at the earliest, teams of officials will soon be sent for "forceful eviction."

> galows to the Union ministers in Lutyens' Delhi.

Eviction proceedings are launched if former ministers and former MPs fail to vacate their official bungalows

Meanwhile, Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal

within the stipulated time period.

Khattar has been allotted 83 Lodhi Estate bungalow which was earlier occupied by a former central information commissioner, another source said. The source said no eviction notice has been issued to any former Union minister for overstaying yet. Over four former Union ministers, including Smriti Irani, have vacated their official bungalow in Lutyens' Delhi so far.

Irani vacated her official bungalow at 28 Tughlak Crescent in Lutyens' Delhi earlier this month, weeks after she was defeated by Congress leader Kishori Lal Sharma from Amethi parliamentary seat with a margin of over 1.5 lakh votes.

vijayawada 02



Micro-level solutions to textile issues stressed

PNS VIJAYAWADA

In a move to address the challenges faced by the textile sector, the Minister for Handlooms & Textiles, S Savitha, conducted an in-depth meeting with representatives from various textile industries.

The meeting was initiated by K Sunitha, Principal Secretary to the Government (Handlooms & Textiles), who provided an overview of the sector, highlighting its status as the second-largest employment generator in the state. During the meeting,

Minister Savitha acknowledged the industry's issues and emphasised the need for solutions starting at the micro level. She pointed out that the challenges range from cotton production and contamination to the stages of spinning, weaving, and garment manu-facturing. The Minister assured the representatives that the issue of pending incentives would be addressed, consider-



ing the state's financial situation. She reaffirmed the Chief Minister's commitment to improving the ease of doing business and promised to work closely with industry representatives to resolve issues systematically.

The Cotton Buyers Association agreed to purchase only cotton brought to their ginning mills in loose condition and expressed willingness to levy a penalty on cotton brought in plastic bags. They also requested a meeting with officials from the Marketing, CCI, and Agriculture departments, along ginners and the with

Handlooms & Textiles department. Minister Savitha agreed to convene a meeting with the Agriculture Minister, ginners, and the Cotton Corporation of India to address the quality of cotton production and contamination issues comprehensively

Principal Secretary Sunitha emphasized the robust ecosystem in Andhra Pradesh, which includes resources ranging from raw materials like cotton and silk to spinning, weaving, and garment production. Other senior officials from the Department of Handlooms, Handicrafts, and Textiles were also present at the meeting.

Members of the Andhra Pradesh Textile Mills Association, Spinning Mills Association, and Ginning and Cotton Associations participated in the meeting. Representatives from these associations presented several issues, notably the pending incentives which have led to numerous units becoming Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) and many spinning mills ceasing operations. They underscored the problem of the non-availability of quality cotton within the state and requested the formulation of a dedicated Textiles & Apparel

HM steps in to restore meal service at Nakkapalli hospital

PNS ANAKAPALLI

In a remarkable display of responsiveness and commitment to public welfare, the 50bed Nakkapalli hospital resumed providing meals to its patients on Sunday. This prompt action followed a directive from Home Minister Anitha, who swiftly responded to a shocking report published in The Pioneer earlier that same day. The article, titled "Patients go without food for 4 months at Nakkapalli hospital," shed light on the dire situation, prompting immedi-

ate intervention. For four long months, patients at Nakkapalli hospital endured the distress of not receiving regular meals, a critical aspect of their care and recovery. The abrupt halt in food service since April had caused significant hardship, highlighting the urgent need for administrative action.

Home Minister Anitha's response was swift and decisive. She directed hospital offi-

CM to visit...

Continued from Page 1



standing bills to the food contractor. Medical and health

PIONEER

Eswaraprasad and Dr Anusha, resulting in the resumption of mid-day meal services on and staff members Swathi, Suma, Sunday. The revival of the and Sridevi, played pivotal roles meal service was marked by a in ensuring the seamless resumpheartfelt event. TDP mandal tion of meal services. Their efforts, along with the support of TDP leader branch president Koppishetty Venkatesh, alongside dedicated medical staff, personally Kaĥkirala Suresh, underscored

served breakfast and lunch to the patients. The atmosphere was filled with gratitude and issues. The rapid intervention

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The combined efforts of

including super-

intendent Dr

Shirisha, med-

ical officers Dr

the power of community col-

laboration in addressing urgent

Minister reviews APNRT's activities

MPACT

government officials, medical staff, and community leaders have reaffirmed the importance of responsive and compassionate care, ensuring that the most vulnerable are not left to suffer in silence.

> by Home Minister Anitha and the concerted efforts of the hospital staff and local leaders have garnered widespread appreciation. Their actions have not only brought muchneeded relief to the patients of Nakkapalli hospital but also set a commendable example of effective governance and com-

munity spirit. In a time of need, the combined efforts of government officials, medical staff, and community leaders have reaffirmed the importance of responsive and compassionate care, ensuring that the most vulnerable are not left to suffer in silence.

YSRCP's role...

Continued from Page 1

The Biju Janata Dal (BJD), which was a former NDA ally from Odisha, has severed ties with the NDA and made it clear it will not support the BJP. The BJD holds nine Rajya Sabha seats. In the current situation, the support of YSRCP, BJD, and BRS is crucial for passing bills during the upcoming budget sessions of Parliament.

The BJP may also need to rely on the votes of nominated members if AIADMK and YSRCP do not support the NDA. Presently, there are 12 nominated members in the Rajya Sabha. Though they are not allied with any party, they might support the ruling party to pass bills, given their appointments by the government. Additionally, four BRS MPs and independents have become pivotal.

There are currently 20 vacant seats in the Rajya Sabha, with elections for 11 of these positions scheduled for this year. The seats to be filled include two each from Maharashtra, Assam, and Bihar, and one each from Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, and Tripura.

The BJP-led alliance has a strong chance of securing seven seats from Assam, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Tripura, and wo from Maharashtra-I ful, this would add nine seats to the BJP's tally. Combined with the support from nominated members and YSRCP, this could enable the BJP to surpass the majority mark.

Assigned lands should be sold only to Dalits: Visakha Vedika

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

The Visakha Dalita Sanghala Ikhya Vedika has demanded immediate amendments to Government Order No: 596, ensuring that assigned lands can only be sold to Scheduled Castes (SCs). Speaking to the media on Monday, the Vedika's Andhra Pradesh state council convener Boosi Venkata Rao accused the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) government of orchestrating a large-scale scam to loot assigned lands over the past five years.

Venkata Rao alleged that the scam could have been avoided with amendments to the existing Government Order. He highlighted that, even before the GO was issued by the previous administration, coercive agreements were made with weaker sections, acquiring their lands at rock-bottom prices. He specifically named Secr rmer Ch etarv K



released, 34,000 acres of assigned lands were registered across the state, with 2,000 acres in North Andhra alone within just a month, stated Venkata Rao. He called for a thorough investigation into these registrations, suggesting that they were carried out under dubious circumstances to bene-

fit powerful interests. Ŝodadasi Sudhakar, another Vedika representative, decried the injustice, noting that lands worth crores of rupees were taken from SCs for a mere fraction of their value. He stressed the necessity of protecting the rights of the SC community and ensuring they receive fair compensation for their lands. he Vedika members

those involved. Representatives E Sujatha, Omkar, B Kumar, B Bhaskara Rao, and G Prasad joined the media address, reinforcing the demand for justice and transparency in land dealings. The call for amendments

to GO No: 596 and a probe into the alleged scam represents a significant move by the Visakha Dalita Sanghala Ikhya Vedika to safeguard the interests of the SC community and prevent exploitation by powerful entities. The Vedika hopes their demands will lead to legislative changes that protect the rights of marginalized communities in Andhra Pradesh. ensuring that justice prevails. Pho ntion

The NDA has 86 seats but needs 113 to pass legislation in the Rajya Sabha, particularly with four MPs' terms ending on July 13.

During his previous visit, Chandrababu spent three days in Delhi and held extensive discussions with NDA ministers, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, addressing various issues related to Andhra Pradesh's interests in terms of funding, projects, and other mat-

Kondapalli Srinivas, Minister for MSME, SERP, and NRI Empowerment & Relations, Government of Andhra Pradesh, conducted a review on Monday of the initiatives being implemented for the Non-Resident Telugu diaspora. The review focused on the welfare and affairs of expatriates.

S. Suresh Kumar, Principal Secretary GAD (Political), and P. Hemalatha Rani, CEO of APNRTS, provided detailed information on the services available to the NRI community. These include a 24/7 Helpline, repatriation services, provision of ambulances, transportation of mortal remains, and coordination



with Indian embassies abroad, Telugu associations, society coordinators, line departments, AP Bhavan, and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). During the review, Minister

ing to broaden its reach, and developing more programs to benefit expatriates. He emphasized the importance of engag-Srinivas proposed additional ing in meaningful dialogue programs to enhance engagewith the diaspora to better ment with NRIs and strengthunderstand their needs and en their connection with their formulate appropriate plans.

home state. He suggested

increasing awareness about

APNRTS and its services, striv-

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

PNS NEW DELHI

The BIP's tally in Raiva Sabha has dipped below 90 for the first time in several years but the party and its allies are expected to not only recoup but al ma

held in the coming weeks.

and Assam and one each in

Haryana, Madhya Pradesh,

Rajasthan and Tripura due to

their numerical superiority

over the opposition, the four

also expected to be pro-treasury benches whenever the

government names them. Though nominated members are usually independent in member of the opposition the House in terms of their party affiliation they are tra-

new nominated members are BRS but its gain will be cancelled in Rajasthan where the BIP, which has a strong majority, will pick up the seat vacated by K C Venugopal, a senior

party who won the Lok Sabha

natives ahead of the assembly polls expected in October, may switch sides and help it make a fight.

The Election Commission (EC) is yet to announce the date for elections to fill the 11 vacancies effected ignation of as many members. Ten of them were elected to Lok Sabha while one MP, K Keshava Rao of the BRS, quit after joining the Congress. Out of the total 19 vacancies in the 245-member Rajya Sabha, four are from Jammu and Kashmir where there is no assembly currently after the erstwhile state was made a Union Territory in 2019.

cials to restore the meal service relief as patients expressed without delay and ensured the their joy and satisfaction with immediate payment of outthe restored service, which is essential for their well-being.

Key hospital personnel, officials wast-

ed no time in contacting the contractor,

Jawahar Reddy and certain insisted that the new government launch a detailed YSRCP leaders as key figures in the scam, demanding their investigation into the accountability. assigned land scam and take

"As soon as the GO was corrective actions against

YSRCP plundered AP...

Continued from Page 1

Naidu highlighted the case of Ramanaidu Studios in Visakhapatnam, where land previously allocated was reclassified as residential property for personal gain, a matter currently pending before the Supreme Court. He also noted that former MP MVV Satyanarayana attempted to illegally occupy 12.51 acres (318 acres) to favoured individ-

TODAY

ALMANAC	
Month & Paksham:	Sukla Paksha
Tithi: Dashami:	Jul 15 07:19 PM
	to Jul 16 08:34 PM
Ekadashi:	Jul 16 08:34 PM
	to Jul 17 09:03 PM
Nakshatram:	
Vishaka:	Jul 16 12:29 AM
	to Jul 17 02:13 AM
Anuradha:	Jul 17 02:13 AM
	to Jul 18 03:12 AM
Rahukalam:	3:36 PM to 5:13 PM
Yamagandam:	9:08 AM to 10:45 AM
Varjyam:	06:23 AM to 08:03 AM
Gulika:	12:22 PM to 1:59 PM
Amritakalam:	04:47 PM to 06:30 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham:	11:56 AM to 12:48 PM

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Showers Temp: 31°° Humidity: 81% Sunrise: 5:43 AM Sunset: 6:44 PM

Updated: July 15, 2024 5:00 PM

designated for an old age home, while Sarada Peetham received land at a nominal rate. The Chief Minister lamented that 8,086 acres of land intended for the landless were

seized by ineligible parties. He detailed the allocation of land in Kadapa (5,796 acres), Kurnool (1,145 acres), Annamayya district (3,471 acres), and Nandyal district

PNS HYDERABAD

united AP.

in six weeks.

The Brijesh Kumar Tribunal

(Krishna Water Disputes

Tribunal-II) has allowed

Andhra Pradesh another four

weeks as its last chance to

reply to the 'Statement of Case'

uals, totalling over Rs 1,300 crore. He condemned the conversion of assigned lands into freehold properties through threats to officials, asserting that those who purchased these lands illegally would face

imprisonment. Naidu announced that lands grabbed by YSRCP leaders would be returned to their rightful owners. He criticized the Land Titling Act, which he

KRISHNA WATER SHARING DISPUTE

Tribunal gives AP last chance to reply

claimed was implemented based on NITI Aayog guidelines but was never applied nationwide. Consequently, the Act has been repealed.

Representatives of Visakha

Dalita Sanghala Ikhya

Vedika addressing the gath-

ering at a meeting held in

Visakhapatnam on Sunday.

A new AP Land Grabbing Act, modelled after Gujarat's legislation, will be introduced soon.

This Act will require individuals who occupy land illegally to prove ownership. Naidu also highlighted the significant loss of Rs 9,750 crore due to reduced mineral revenue and criticised the sand mafia's impact on the State.

allowing four weeks for both

parties to file their replies and

Man kills wife, attempts suicide PNS 📕 ADILABAD

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

Sunitha (28) died after severe bleeding. Her husband Laxman

then attempted suicide by slitting his throat. He was immediately shifted to RIMS-Adilabad where his condition was stated to be stable. Laxman reportedly attacked his wife after heated arguments with her. His was a love marriage with Sunitha.

They had been married for 10 years. The couple ahs two sons ageed 8 and 6. Based on a complaint

by Sunitha's father, a murder case was registered against Laxman. Investigation is underway.

ditionally supportive of the some gains when by-elections agenda of the government to fill the existing vacancies are which picks them. The current While the BJP-led National strength of Rajya Sabha is 226 with the BJP having 86 fol-Democratic Alliance (NDA) is lowed by 26 of the Congress confident of winning two seats and 13 of the Trinamool each in Bihar, Maharashtra

Congress (TMC). There are currently 19 vacancies. The ruling Congress is looking to win the lone seat in Telangana at the expense of the

om Alappuzha in Kerala The BJP is also confident of winning the solitary seat in Haryana where the poll will be held to fill the vacancy caused by the election of its Rajya Sabha MP Deepender Singh Hooda to Lok Sabha.

The Congress, though, hopes that a few MLAs, who are either independent or affiliated to the regional parties and are looking for political alter-

TERRORISM, SEPARATISM AND EXTREMISM Fight against 3 evils priority in SCO: EAM

all need to be identified and

The minister emphasised

that he "strongly believes" that SCO through the

Regional Anti-Terrorist

Structure (RATS) has a "rea-

sonable standing" to propose

measures against terrorism

Jaishankar said he is happy

that Kazakhstan, during its

chair, negotiated an updated

programme to combat terror-

ism, separatism, and extrem-

ism, which was adopted at the

Astana Summit, according to

the transcript of the interview

shared by the Ministry of

During the SCO New Delhi

on 'Countering

Summit last year, one of the

two joint statements adopted

Radicalisation leading to

Terrorism, Separatism and

Extremism,' which included

various elements of radicali-

sation - including ideology,

media campaign, as well as

in the region.

External Affairs.

was

punished," Jaishankar said.

PNS NEW DELHI

With terrorism becoming a threat to regional and global peace, the perpetrators, facilitators, financiers and sponsors of heinous acts of terrorism "need to be identified and punished," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said, in a veiled jibe at Pakistan.

In a recent interview with Astana-based Kazinform News Agency, he also emphasised that the "fight against the three evils -- terrorism, separatism and extremism -- is a priority in SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation)".

The 24th Meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State was held on July 4 in the Kazakh capital Astana, under the presidency of Kazakhstan. Jaisĥankar led the Indian delegation to the Summit. Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also attended the summit.

"There is no doubt that the major challenge faced by the world today is terrorism. It has become a threat to regional and global peace, and it demands urgent action from all of us," he said. "Combating

terrorism requires a very comradical and terrorist content prehensive approach - not on the internet, he said and just the perpetrators of added, heinous acts of terrorism, but "Kazakhstan, during their the facilitators, financiers and chairmanship, carried forward the spirit of that joint sponsors of terrorism - they

statement. "The updated programme to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism is critical and timely. But I want to emphasise that what is more important is the actual implementation of the programme that we have now successfully drawn up, which includes an unambiguous commitment by all the Member States to getting rid of all forms and manifestations of terrorism in the region, including crossborder terrorism," the Minister said.

Speaking about the impor-tance and potential impact of the two significant initiatives, related to terrorism and the SCO Anti-Drug Strategy, adopted at the Astana Summit, Jaishankar said, "Drug trafficking is another issue that we need to combat together, and is very closely related to two other issues in the region -- terrorism and stability in Afghanistan."

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filed by Telangana regarding the Telangana's Statement of Case. Senior Counsel Jaideep Gupta, Centre's reference to the tribunal for fresh adjudication of representing Andhra Pradesh, said that an Advocate on record water shares among Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from had been appointed by GO issued by the State of Andhra the en bloc allocation made to Pradesh and the Vakalatnama The Tribunal permitted would be filed within a day or Telangana to file an errata to two. Andhra Pradesh requesttheir Statement of Case direct- ed additional time due to recent

ing that a better copy of Annexure-2 be submitted withelections and the resignation of the Advocate General which the Tribunal did not fully accept, noting sufficient time The tribunal condoned the two-day delay in filing the reply by Andhra Pradesh to had already been allocated. Despite previous orders

with Telangana submitting its reply in June 2024, the Tribunal emphasized that continuous requests for extensions could not be accommodated indefinitely

Considering the circumstances, the Tribunal granted Andhra Pradesh a final fourweek extension to submit its reply and warned that failure to do so would result in forfeiting their right to file a reply in future.

Both parties were told to file their Rejoinder Affidavits, if any, within two weeks and thereafter to submit draft issues to assist the Tribunal in framing the case issues. The case is scheduled for further proceedings on August 28 and 29.





vijayawada 03

Central team satisfied with water conservation measures

Team inspects farm ponds, tree plantation, ring trenches, recharge pits and other works at Nunna and Pathapadu

PNS VIJAYAWADA

A Central team comprising Jal Shakti Abhiyan Central Nodal Officer B Madhava Rao (Department of Tele Communication Director) and Technical Officer and Scientist Reshma S Raman Pillai have expressed satisfaction with the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGN-REGA) under the Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain-2024 with the theme 'Nari Shakti se Jal Shakti' in NTR district.

The Central team arrived in NTR district for a three-day visit on Monday. On the first day, they made a field visit to Nunna and Pathapaddu villages of Vijayawada Rural mandal and inspected the digging of the farm pond and ring trench in the Mango Gardens, aimed at improving the groundwater levels and conserving water. During the field visit, the

Central team interacted with the farmers and beneficiaries to get feedback on the ongo-ing schemes. Also, they asked the beneficiaries about the implementation and benefits of the scheme. The team members, along with District Water and Management Agency (DWAMA) Project Director J Sunitha, District Panchayat Officer (DPO) Siva Prasad Yadav, and Rural Water Supply (RWS) Superintending Engineer (SE) Ramana, inspected the canal plantation, drinking water tanks, and recharge pits. Prior to the field visit, the

team members held a meeting ers' agricultural lands, she with NTR District Collector explained.

CRPF cop strangles infant PNS ELURU

In a gruesome incident, a two-month-old infant baby boy at Pashanagaram village in Dharmajigudem mandal on Monday. Police said that the constable accused Challapati Balaji is working in the CRPF battalion. He attended a court case relating to a family dispute in Eluru. He became furious when he saw his wife and father-in-law in the court. He attacked them and severely beat them.



Jal Shakti Abhiyan Central Nodal Officer Madhava Rao and Scientist Reshma S Raman Pillai speaking to DWAMA PD Sunitha RWS SE Ramana and DPO Siva Prasad Yadav about the farm ponds and other water conservation works, at Nunna on Monday

and the programme's district coordinator Dr G Srijana. She explained the MGNREGS and Jal Shakti Abhiyan works and their progress through a PowerPoint presentation. She said that with the col-

laboration of MGNREGS, Water Resources, Forest, Agriculture, Horticulture, Rural Water Supply, Ground Water and other departments, the scheme is being successfully implemented in the district. As a result, rainwater can be conserved from the farm ponds and recharge the groundwater. Farm ponds and ring trenches have been dug in small and marginal farm-

Further, she said 4,804 works worth Rs.60.88 crore have been taken up under the scheme and all these works are progressing. When compared to the 2022-23 financial year, poor rainfall was registered up

to May. Due to excess use of groundwater, the water level dipped to 0.65 metres in Vissannapeta, Reddigudem, and Mylavaram mandals. In the meantime, Jal Shakti Abhiyan's 'Nari Shakti se Jal Shakti' proved to be useful for the upland areas, she said.

Later, Central Nodal Officer beneficiaries, Sambasiva B Madhava Rao expressed Reddy, said that the results of satisfaction over Jal Shakti the farm ponds could be seen Abhiyan's implementation in next year. The ponds are real-NTR district. He commended ly useful for the rythus of the district officials for conupland areas, he said.

YSRCP govt destroyed Polavaram project, says Irrigation Minister

Birth anniversaries of KL Rao, Sir Arthur Cotton, Mokshagundam, Ramakrishnaiah, to be observed officially

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Water Resources Nimmala Ramanaidu has alleged that due to the negligence of the previous YSRCP government, the Polavaram irrigation project was destroyed and as a result, the Diaphragm Wall (D-Wall) was washed away in River Godavari. During the rule of the previous government, no work was done for the Polavaram project, he alleged. Minister Naidu attended the

122nd birth anniversary of former Central Minister Dr KL Rao at the Irrigation Model Guest House opposite the Kanaka Durga Temple in Vijayawada on Monday. On behalf of the State government, Minister Naidu paid floral tributes.

While speaking to the media later, Ramanaidu announced that the State government will be officially observing the birth anniversaries of Dr KL Rao, Sir Arthur Cotton, Mokshagundam Visweswarayya and Ramakrishnaiah every year. During the TDP regime from 2014 to 2019, their birth anniversaries were



MLA Soumya underscores need for percolation pits

PNS VIJAYAWADA

At an event on Monday, Tangirala Soumya, MLA of Nandigama constituency, highlighted the urgent need for increased percolation pits in the region. During the occasion, she unveiled 10,000 brochures sponsored by the NGO Paryavarana Parirakshana Samithi, advocating the cam-paign slogan, "Give priority to Percolation Pits and Save Water for Future Generations."

MLA Soumya stressed the

tive efforts to raise awareness about the importance of perco-

lation pits. Ramireddy Sridhar explained that the proliferation of apartment buildings in Nandigama has significantly depleted the groundwater levels, making it increasingly difficult to access water even with deep borewells. He noted that some families have had to relocate due to water shortages. Sridhar emphasized the necessity of conserving water to meet both current and future

needs. The



observed grandly. However, they were neglected during the YSRCP regime, he commented.

Further, Naidu stated that during the TDP regime, 72 per cent of the Polavaram project works were completed. During the YSRCP rule from 2019 to 24, nothing was done. Except for changing the contracting agency, no work was taken up in the first 13 months, he criticised

from IIT-Hyderabad having reported the destruction of the project, the previous government did not respond. In this context, the TDP government will face all the hurdles that were left by the YSRCP government one by one and strive to complete the Polavaram pro-

Despite an experts' team

Rao, Maruthi Prasad and oth

Vijayawada Central MLA Bonda Uma Maheswara Rao, Water Resources Department Advisor Mamidi Venkateswara Rao, Engineer-in-Chief (Admin) K Srinivas, Hydrology Chief Engineer Srinivas, Kumar, Minor Irrigation CE ject. Later, Minister Naidu felic-Sairam Prasad, Vijayawada itated retired engineers R Satish Circle SE TJH Prasad Babu, Kumar, BSS Srinivas Yadav, DCE S Tirumala Rao, and MV Krishna Rao, KV Krishna others were present.

YSRCP flays TDP govt over white paper on natural resources

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) has criticised the white paper released by Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, which addresses alleged corruption related to land, sand, and mining in Andhra Pradesh.

Former minister Dr Merugu Nagarjuna, speaking at the party's central office on Monday, dismissed the white paper as filled with baseless and false allegations, asserting that Naidu provided no evidence to support his claims. Regarding the issue of Daspalla lands, Dr Nagarjuna

accused Naidu of concealing facts and reminded that the courts, including the Supreme Court, have ruled that these lands do not belong to the government. He noted that the owners of 64 plots have pub-

Dr. Nagarjuna also con-demned Naidu for making unfounded allegations about irregularities in house sites allocated by the YSRCP government. He highlighted that the YSRCP administration had launched an initiative to provide housing for the homeless, allocating 28,000 acres of government land, purchasing another 25,000 acres transparently, pooling an additional 4,557 acres, and issuing pos-sessory certificates for 71,811 acres.

On the topic of sand, Dr. Nagarjuna accused Naidu of allowing illegal sand extraction and receiving no revenue from sand sales during his administration. He contrasted this with the YSRCP government's implementation of a transparent tender process for sand, overseen by a central government agency.

Addressing allegations conmining, Dr Nagarjuna labelled Naidu's claims as false, stating that it was Naidu's associates who had exploited these resources for years. He noted that under the YSRCP government, revenue from minor and major minerals increased significantly due to effective management and reforms.



The Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) Paderu in Andhra Pradesh ed the sea ation of its highly successful 'Super 50' programme. This initiative targets Class 10 tribal students from government schools across 11 mandals in the Alluri Sitarama Raju district, aiming to nurture their academic talents and propel them towards higher educa-

ducting geotagging for all works. During the interaction with the farmers, he enquired

about the benefits of the form

ponds and ring trenches. He

noted the opinions of the farmers regarding the scheme.

Raman Pillai said that Jall

Shakti Abhiyan is implement-

ing the scheme under the

theme 'Catch the Rain' to

recharge groundwater. She appreciated the district officer

for effectively implementing

the programmes. One of the

Technical Officer Reshma S

Later, he went to the house of his wife's younger sister, where he strangled her two-month-old baby boy in Pashanagaram vil-

lage. However, the villagers apprehended the CRPF jawan and thrashed him. The police registered a case and shifted the body of the infant to the GGH in Chintalapudi for postmortem.

Building upon the remarkable achievements of the inaugural batch in the 2023-24 academic year, the program offers unparalleled educational opportunities. The first batch saw a stellar outcome, with 37 out of 50 students gaining admission into prestigious government-run Colleges of Excellence - institutions renowned for preparing students for competitive entrance

exams. ITDA officials are confident that this year's cohort will achieve even greater heights.

The 2024 'Super 50' batch comprises 29 girls, who will receive specialized coaching at



ITDA Project Officer V. Abhishek overseeing the examination for selecting students for the 'Super 50' batch in Paderu, Alluri Sitarama Raju district.

a designated government geted doubt-clearing sessions school. Boys will be trained at a separate facility. This year's selection process witnessed a significant rise in participation, with students from ZP High Schools being incorporated for the first time, essay writing, elocution competitions, sports activities, motivational movie screenexpanding the program's reach. V. Abhishek, Project Officer ings, book reading sessions,

of ITDA Paderu, elaborated on the program's unique peda-gogy. "The curriculum focuses on in-depth mastery of a select number of subjects each day. This is followed by dedicated student hours and tar-

and other engaging activities. These initiatives foster a supportive and enriching environment that cultivates not just academic excellence but also personal growth among the participants.

to ensure comprehensive

understanding," he explained.

goes beyond academics to

promote holistic development.

The program incorporates

The "Super 50" initiative

percolation pits throughout Nandigama town. She urged residents to implement these systems in every household, apartment, office, and industrial premise, warning that failure to comply could lead to necessary actions. Soumya also commended Ramireddy Sridhar, the president of the NGO, for his proac-

tion of several notable figures, Municipal including Commissioner Hema Malini, AE Srinivas, Head of Kakatiya Apollo Organization Kapa Ravindranath, Head of Asara Foundation Vasireddy Vamsi, Urban TDP Councillors, party leaders, and representatives from various voluntary organizations.

licly stated th at they w transferred their lands and requested the issue not be politicized. He also criticized Naidu for remaining silent about the illegal land grabbing by Gitam University, which allegedly acquired 38.6 acres of valuable government land without any action taken during Naidu's tenure.

and Kandrika.

The heavy rains over the

past three days have caused

roadways to become sub-

merged and drains to overflow,

creating widespread inconve-nience for residents. Many

areas of the city are facing dif-ficulties due to severe waterlog-

Rain disrupts life in NTR district

PNS VIJAYAWADA

NTR district experienced heavy rainfall on Monday, with totals reaching approximately 437 mm. This downpour led to substantial water accumulation in several low-lying areas of Vijayawada, notably affecting neighbourhoods such as PNBS, Patamata, Benz Circle, Mogalrajapuram, Kaleswara Rao Market, One Town, Ajith Singh Nagar, Payakapuram,



Vehicle users find it navigating the roads as heavy rain lashed Vijavawada on Mondav

Pic by Ch. Vijava Bhaskar

mm, Reddigudem 32.20 mm Vijayawada Central and Vijayawada West both receiving 30.40 mm, and Vijayawada East, North, and Vijayawada Rural Mandals each recording 29.40 mm. Conversely, no rainfall was recorded in Gampalagudem, Tiruvuru, A Konduru, and Vissannapet.

Rainfall measurements The persistent rain has disrupted agricultural activities across the NTR district varied, with G Konduru recording 59.60 mm, Jaggaiahpet 38.20 and impacted daily life in the affected regions.

Pharma waste mismanagement sparks outrage

Fish killed in Muthyalammapalem beach attributed to pharma wastewater contamination

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Residents of Parawada are grappling with a growing environmental crisis over the improper disposal of chemical waste by pharmaceutical companies. They blame Ramky Pharma, the operator of the Ênvironment Coastal Treatment Plant (CETP) in Pharmacity, for failing to enforce proper waste management protocols. Besides, the Pollution Control Board (PCB) is under fire for inadequate inspections and delayed response times.

The situation has reached a critical juncture with a recent die-off fish in Muthyalammapalem beach attributed directly to pharma wastewater contamination. The Paravada Mallodi Gedda

stream has been severely polluted by these hazardous chemicals.

Meanwhile, unidentified individuals abandoned drums of pharmaceutical waste near Pedamushidivada Zilla Parishad High School, contaminating the Bachala pond. This blatant disregard for environmental safety has sparked outrage among residents. Allegations point towards potential collusion between some pharma companies and lower-level Ramky staff, motivated by the high costs associated with proper waste dispos-al at the CETP. This collusion, if true, would represent a significant breach of environ-

mental regulations. The PCB's response to the crisis has been met with frustration. While water samples



have been collected from cona more positive development, the PCB has filed a complaint taminated areas, including with Parawada Police regard-Mallodi Gedda and the Parawada pond, the results of ing the recent illegal dumping incident. The police have previous tests remain undisassured the public of a thorclosed. This lack of transparency is fuelling public ough investigation and strict anger and hindering efforts to action against the perpetraaddress the issue effectively. In tors

However, residents are urging a thorough and expeditious inquiry into the unauthorised disposal of pharmaceutical waste. They emphasise the need for strict enforcement of environmental regulations across all pharmaceutical firms in the vicinity. It is crucial to promptly release PCB test outcomes and take decisive measures accordingly. Additionally, there is a call for the creation of cost-effective and easily accessible waste management solutions to encourage proper disposal practices among pharmaceutical companies.

The situation in Parawada underscores the urgent need for stricter environmental regulations, improved enforcement mechanisms, and a more transparent and accountable waste management system.

'Increase manhole height to prevent water stagnation'

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) Commissioner in charge Dr A Mahesh has directed the officials concerned to increase the height of the manhole to the road level. Due to the low height, rainwater is being stagnated in the Under Ground (UGD) manholes, he said.

The VMC Commissioner inspected the Raj Bhavan road, Vijaya Talkies road, Eluru road and other areas in the city on Monday. During the field visit to the road in Vijayawada, he instructed the officials to improve sanitation. All three circle's engineering officials will verify the people's problems and address them immediately.



VMC Commissioner Dr Mahesh inspecting the manhole on the Raj Bhavan road in Vijayawada on Monday

Later, he inspected the over-flowing UGD manhole at Vijaya Talkies and directed the officials to immediately find a resolution. Also, water pipeline leakages will be checked and

immediate repairs done. Later, he visited the 27th, 28th, and 29th divisions and checked sanitation maintenance. Also, he inspected the public toilets at Prizerpet in the 49th division.





Siva Kishore takes charge as Eluru SP



PNS ELURU

K P Siva Kishore here on Monday took charge as Eluru district Superintendent of police.

The 2019 IPS officer Shiva Kishore had worked as an Additional Superintendent of Police in the Chintapalli division before he was transferred to Eluru SP. SP Shiva Kishore thanked Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and DGP Dwaraka Tirumala Rao for allowing working as Eluru SP.

Talking to the media on the occasion, SP Shiva Kishore said he would give top priority to maintaining the law and order efficiently. He said that he would strive to speed up the investigation on the atrocities on women.

The police personnel would be instructed to behave politely with those who come to police stations to lodge complaints, he said.

The SP stated that he would take steps to curb road accidents and check cyber crimes.

"Every Monday public grievance day will be organised in the police headquarters to take petitions from the public on their grievances. Stringent steps will be taken to check the transportation, selling and consumption of ganja in the district. The police officials and police personnel will be educated on the new laws," the SP made it clear, adding that the police will respond swiftly on the women missing cases.

PATERNITY ROW Vijayasai sees conspiracy to tarnish his image

"

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) leader and MP V Vijayasai Reddy launched a blistering attack on the coalition government, accus-ing them of orchestrating a malicious smear campaign against his party and its leaders. Speaking to the media here on Monday, Reddy denounced the allegations against him as baseless and vowed to bring those responsible to justice. "Since the coalition government came to power, they have been making baseless accu-sations against YSRCP leaders one after the other. I will not let go of those who made these

unfounded allegations against me," Reddy declared with unwavering determination. Displaying confidence in his party's resilience, Reddy assert-

severe consequences. "Those who indulged in damaging my image, self-respect, and reputa-tion will not be spared," he ed, "We have no fear of anyone. warned. Addressing recent accusations of his alleged close-The YSRCP government will come again, and mid-term elecness to an Endowments tions are imminent.' Reddy condemned those Department official, who is also

JSW GROUP CHAIRMAN MEETS CM

Those who indulged in damaging my image, self-respect, and reputation will not be spared. I will also find out those involved in the conspiracy. A complaint will be lodged with the Human **Rights Commission**, Tribals Commission, ST Commission, Press Council, and Parliament

who have tarnished his image an ST woman, Reddy clarified and reputation, promising that he considers the official as his daughter. "I will also find out those involved in the conspiracy. A complaint will be lodged with the Human Rights Commission, Tribals Commission, ST Commission, Press Council, and Parliament," he stated emphatically.

Criticizing the current media landscape, Reddy lamented that individuals with insufficient education are running media hous-es. He announced plans to launch his channel to counteract the false narratives. He also demanded that reporters seek his version before publishing stories about him. Since the coalition govern-

ment assumed power, Reddy asserted, there has been an intensification of anarchic rule in Andhra Pradesh. "If midterm elections are on the cards or in the next term, YSRCP is sure to come back to power and take action against those violating the norms," he declared confidently. Vijayasai Reddy's aggressive stance highlights the escalating political tensions in Andhra Pradesh as the YSRCP prepares to challenge the coalition government. His unwavering resolve to

defend his party and his reputation signals a contentious political battle ahead.

Tenant farmers' crop loans should

Minister calls on Gurukul school students in hospital

PNS TIRUPATI

Minister for Social Welfare Dola Bala Veeranjaneya Swamy visited Ambedkar Gurukul school students, who fell ill after having contaminated food, in a hospital in Gudur on Monday.

The Minister visited each student who fell ill after tak-ing food in Ambedkar residential school and undergoing treatment in the hospital. He inquired with the doctors about the condition of the students. He directed the doctors to provide the best treatment to the students.

The Minister announced that the Joint Collector would conduct an inquiry on the contaminated food served to the students in the Ambedkar Gurukula School and action would be taken against those responsible for the students falling ill after taking food.

Later, Minister Bala Veeranjaneya Swamy inspected the Ambedkar Gurukula school in Naidupet. He saw the hostel and the kitchen. He interacted with the students



and knew their problems. He instructed the school teachers and staff to keep the school premises and surroundings hygienic and sanitize the premises.

The Social Welfare Minister advised the teachers to treat the students as their children and take responsibility. He also instructed the caretakers to monitor the students con-Collector. stantly. The Minister warned

of taking stringent action if laxity of the school teachers and staff is found. He said that steps would also be taken to ensure that such incidents do not recur in any school in the

MLAs Pasham Sunil Kumar and Nelavela Vijaysri, district Collector S Venkateswarlu and other officials were among those who accompanied the

JSW Group Chairman Sajjan Jindal called on CM Chandrababu Naidu in Vijayawada on Monday. It is stated that the chairman discussed investments in the state with the CM. In reply, CM Chandrababu explained to Jindal that there are good opportunities for investment in AP. He said that if they come up with proposals, they will provide full cooperation from the government



PNS ELURU

Minister for Housing and I&PR K Parthasarathy underlined the need to increase the crop loans of tenant farmers to Rs 2000 crore.

An interaction with the district officials was organised here on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that in the annual credit plan, crop loans to farmers have been targeted at Rs 7,300 crore while the target for tenant farmers' loans is only Rs 250

cials to take steps to ensure timely delivery of seeds and fertilizers to the farmers and sensitize the farmers to reduce the use of chemical fertilizers and increase the use of traditional fertilizers with natural irrigation. Minister Parthasarathy promised to take steps to remove hyacinths from irrigation ponds, canals and drains.

The Minister said that steps should be taken to ensure that all the farmers in the district use the tractors, rotavators and other agricultural machines d as part of agricul tural mechanization to the 419 customized hiring centres in Rythu Seva Kendras in the district. The Minister directed the horticulture officials to provide fruit covers to the mango farmers and to take steps to solve the pest problem

concerned companies directly provide the oil palm plants to the farmers and to look into the matter of providing the related subsidy to the companies.

The Minister ordered the electricity department officials to take steps to divert the electrical wires and ensure that they do not hang low as they cause electrocution of farmers at the orchards. Moreover, there is scope of getting snapped due to heavy wins, he feared.

Collector K Vetri Selvi said that the meeting was organized to explain to the public repre-

2 kg ganja seized, 3 peddlers arrested

PNS GUNTUR

The police seized 2 kg of ganja and arrested three peddlers at Peekalavagu dumping yard here on Monday.

Lalapet Inspector Deva Prabhakar told the media here on Monday that on the directions of Guntur East Sub-division ASP Nachiket Shelke, a police team led by SI M Subba Rao conducted a raid at the dumping yard. They found locals.

three people selling ganja. The police arrested three peddlers including Sheik Karimulla, Challa Ĕeshwara Rao and Battula Shrevana Kumar.

The police also held a minor boy in connection with the selling of ganja. The police seized 2 kg of cannabis from them. The peddlers used to purchase ganja in bulk in AP-Odisha board, bring it to the city and sell it at a higher price to the

2,340 liquor bottles seized, one arrested

AP UTF hails govt move **'Loan waiver** policies of to put GPS on hold **2018 will** PNS VIJAYAWADA

have praised this decision as

continue

PNS HYDERABAD

Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageshwara Rao announced that the loan waiver policies implemented in 2018 will continue in 2024.

He criticised the BRS gov-ernment for initially announcing Rs 20,000 crore under the 2018 loan waiver scheme but releasing only Rs 13,000 crore in the election year of 2023. Despite Rs 1,400 crore being returned there was no response from the BRS administration. Tummala found it ironic that the same leaders are now coming forward to speak.

He clarified that the ration card is used solely to deter-mine family units under the loan waiver scheme. He assured that the Congress government has all the details and that once family verification is complete, the loan waiver scheme will be extended to others as well.

He pointed out that in the first six months of coming to power, the Congress government successfully implemented a Rs 2 lakh loan waiver at one go. Tummala said that former

agriculture and finance ministers - S. Niranjan Reddy and T. Harish Rao - should appreciate this instead of attempting to malign the Congress administration. He emphasised that the

people of Telangana, especially farmers, are witnessing these attempts and will undoubtedly disapprove of such negative

tactics.



The announcement by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu to temporarily suspend the Gazette issued on June 12, which proposed integrating Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS) employees into the Guaranteed Pension

Scheme (GPS), has been met with enthusiasm by AP UTF State president N. Venkateswarlu and General

Secretary KSS Prasad. They the future.

MLA Yarlagadda

Venkata Rao conducts

union's efforts. They also noted that widespread protests by employees and teachers played a crucial role in prompting the govern-

ment to pause the gazette's implementation. The union leaders have urged the government to take the necessary steps to even-Pension Scheme (GPS) in

tually implement the Old

"More than 75 per cent of the cultivation in Eluru district is carried out by the tenant farmers and keeping this aspect in mind, the target of crop loans provided to the tenant farmers should be increased to Rs 2000 crore," the Minister stated, adding that steps should be taken to provide crop loans to the tenant farmers without the consent of the land owner. The Minister told the offi-

of the mango crop. Minister Parthasary directed the officials of the Horticultural Department to

sentatives the implementation of welfare schemes and development works being carried out in the district and to discuss

various issues. MLAs Chintamaneni Prabhakar, Badeti Radha Krishnaiah, Kamineni Srinivas,

Roshan Kumar and Maddipati Venkata Raju also spoke. JC B Lavanya Veni and ITDA PD Surya Teja were take steps to ensure that the among those who were present.



PNS KAKINADA

seized 13 bags which con-tained 2,340 liquor bottles.

The police seized 2,340 liquor bottles which were kept ready to be transported on a boat at Govalanka village on Monday. Police said that on a tip-off, police conducted a raid and ed D Satish in this connection.

The liquor bottles were brought from Yanam illegally and were being transported to Govalanka via Balusu Tippa on a boat. The police arrest-

Identity cards issued to 13 transgender people

PNS ONGOLE

Prakasam District Collector A Thameem Ansariya here on Monday issued identity cards to 13 transgender people.

As many as 13 transgender including people Gopanaboina Manasa, Hapsika, Gangotri Boppana, Maitri K Aaradhya, K Bhargavi, Lalli, Amulya,

Sunitha, Akshaya, Manasa of Ongole town have applied for identify cards through online to the Collector. The Collector, after verification, issued identity cards to

Swarani Ramya Reddy,

the eligible and handed over the cards on Monday. The Collector also handed over a hearing aid to an elderly person Lakshmi Narasimha.



'Mee Kosam'

Krishna District Collector DK Balaji and Gannavaram MLA Yarlagadda Venkata Rao participating in Mee Kosam held at China Avutapalli in Gannavaram on Mondav

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Krishna District Collector DK Balaji, along with Gannavaram MLA Yarlagadda Venkata Rao, conducted the constituencylevel Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS), also known as 'Mee Kosam' at the SM Convention Hall at China Avutapalli on Monday. They received petitions from the public and directed the officials concerned to resolve

It was the first constituency-level Mee Kosam at Gannavaram. So, people from Gannavaram, Bapulapadu, and Unguturu Mandal villages came to the programme and handed over their peti-

MLA Yarlagadda Venkata Rao. Speaking on the occasion, MLA Yarlagadda Venkata Rao asked the officials to implement the Mee Kosam more effectively and it should be accountable to the public. Officials should prepare a plan of action to resolve all petitions on a war-footing, he said. He was happy that Mee Kosam evoked good response from the public

tions to Collector Balaji and

the public. At this stage, officials should concentrate on all petitions and resolve them within the stipulated period. Many people were neglected by the previous government in sanctioning pensions, so they have given petitions, he said.

'Jan Aushadhi Kendra' opened at AIIMS-M'giri

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Apurva Chandra, Secretary of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India, visited AIIMS Mangalagiri on Monday to chair the 10th Standing Finance Committee meeting of the institute. Following the meeting, the Secretary inaugurated several new services at the institute.

Among the new facilities, the Secretary inaugurated the Jan Aushadhi Kendra, which will provide quality generic medicines at affordable prices for patients. Additionally, a state-of-the-art 20-bed Critical Care Unit, equipped with advanced medical technology, was opened.

The Secretary also inaugurated the 2nd MRI & Digital Subtraction Angiography (DSA) Lab, which aims to reduce patient wait times for MRI scans and will support minimally invasive interventional radiology procedures with the addition of a second 3Tesla MRI machine and a DSA lab.

Another significant develop-AIIMS Mangalagiri SMART plies Card E-Payment System. This secure, user-friendly card allows patients to make real-time pay-ments for care services at AIIMS



Mangalagiri. Patients can purchase the card at the cash counter using cash, UPI, debit/credit cards, or net banking, and use it at all patient care

A 24x7 Control Room was also inaugurated to address patient grievances and coordinate patient care issues throughout the hospital. Additionally, the Secretary opened a state-ofthe secretary opened a state-of-the-art 10,000 sq. ft. Central Sterile Supply Department (CSSD), responsible for clean-ing, processing, and sterilizing surgical instruments, treatment trays, and other medical sup-

After the inaugurations, Secretary Chandra reviewed the progress of the project and instructed officials to expedite the full operationalization of

AIIMS Mangalagiri. He also interacted with patients, receiving positive feedback regarding the services provided.

The meeting was attended by Prof. (Dr.) Atul Goel, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare; Jaideep Kumar Mishra, AS & FA, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare; Ankita Mishra Bundela, Joint Secretary, PMSSY; Dr. Satyanarayana K, Director, IIT Tirupati; Dr. B. Reddy Naik, Professor of Zoology, University College of Science, Osmania University Hyderabad; Prof. R. Prof. R. Ex-Dean Raveendran, (Research), **JIPMER** Puducherry; and Dr. Madhabananda Kar, Director & CEO, AIIMS Mangalagiri.

service billing counters.



nation 05

Arunachal to bring legislation to curb malpractices in recruitment exams

he Arunachal Pradesh cabinet on Monday approved a legislation to curb malpractices during recruitment examinations, officials said. The draft bill, which calls for stringent punishment including imprisonment with imposition of fine up to Rs 1 crore, will be tabled in the next session of the assembly commencing from July 19. The bill, after becoming an act, will ensure free and fair selection process of all posts under the state government

and detect malpractices, a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said. The cabinet also approved a proposal to bring various categories of posts under the Arunachal Pradesh Staff Selection Board (APSSB) into a common cadre. It was necessitated to ensure a systematic human resource management in the APSSB for a free and fair recruitment process, the statement said.



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

Seasoned diplomat Vikram Misri, widely regarded as an expert on China and national security, assumed charge as India's new foreign secretary on Monday. Misri, a 1989-batch Indian Foreign Service officer who was serving as the deputy national security advisor, succeeded Vinay Kwatra. The 59-year-old assumed charge of the key position at a time India is looking to navigate various geo-political challenges, including its frosty ties with China following the lingering eastern Ladakh border row and the

consequences of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. External affairs Minister S Jaishankar congratulated Misri on assuming his new responsibility. "Congratulate Foreign Secretary @VikramMisri as he assumes his new responsibility today. Wish him a productive and successful tenure," he said on X. Misri served in various capacities at the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), in the Prime Minister's Office and in various Indian missions in Europe, Africa, Asia and North America



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

ammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) R R Swain on Monday said an inter-state security meeting has deliberated on the new methods of infiltration by Uterrorists, who have been entering the state from the Punjab border. "Some infiltration is taking place (through the borderline in Punjab) and it is a commonplace knowledge. We tried to deliberate between ourselves as to the new methods and the modus

HAL has huge role to play in

Make-in-India dream: MoS

operandi they are adopting," Swain told reporters on the sidelines of a function at Indian Institute of Management here. "We also talked about tunnels. How to sort it out. We talked about how to address more effectively their use of tunnels to infiltrate," he said. Senior BSF and police officers had gathered at an interstate security review meeting in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua on Thursday, days after terrorists, who are believed to have infiltrated from across the International Border, ambushed an army patrol



G20 TASK FORCE REPORT

India pitches for global adoption of DPI for sustainable growth

PNS NEW DELHI

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

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

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

This should include leverag-

ing the expertise of countries existing DPI, to continue driving inclusion and progress

ambitious outcomes.

African presidencies.

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

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

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

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

The report will play a key domestically towards more role in defining the future The work of this task force course of the DPI approach led to the acceptance of the defand actions for implementation inition and framework of the around the globe, particularly DPI during India's G20 in the Global South. Presidency and will be taken

On the release of the report, forward for implementation the G20 Sherpa of India said, during the Brazilian and South "India did an incredible pole vault in DPI. We achieved in The report also highlighted nine years what would have the need to identify an existing taken 50 years without DPI.

Govt to cover 25% of kharif paddy

area with climate-resilient seeds

TRAFFICKING, ABUSE Shah to chair meet on coordination

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

narcotics helpline -- 'MANAS' (Madak Padarth Nisedh Asuchna Kendra) -- and virtually inaugurate the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) zonal office in Srinagar.



PNS BENGALURU

agement, he assured the com-Union Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth on pany of government support. Monday said that public sector aerospace and defence company Hindustan Aeronautics company to ensure that the var-Limited has a huge role to play in achieving the 'Make in India development as well as producdream' in Defence, as he called upon the company to conin time to contribute to achievtribute towards achieving 'Viksit Bharat'. Seth visited the

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

addressing HAL's top man-Later, the minister visited HAL's LCA Tejas and He called upon the Bengaluru-headquartered Helicopter divisions. C B Ananthakrishnan, CMD (Additional Charge) thanked ious challenges in design and the minister for the support given by the government and tion and delivery are addressed said that HAL has taken proactive measures to overcome the ing Viksit Bharat as envisaged challenges in different areas of by the government. In an offiits operations

EXPORTS TO RUSSIA India looks at various sectors, removal of trade barriers

PNS NEW DELHI

India is focussing on various sectors like elec-tronics, besides taking up issues of non-trade barriers removal, to boost

exports to sanction-hit Russia and move towards achieving the USD 100 billion annual bilateral trade

target, a senior government official said on Monday. An Indian delegation is ikelv to visit Russi: in a low-up to the recent summit meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin. "We are focusing on different sectors. There are non-tariff barriers (NTBs), which we have asked Russia to look into, and there will be another visit to Russia. We are looking at better greater market access (to increase India's exports to Russia)," he told reporters here.

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

"We are looking at various sets of commodities, for example, electronics, engineering and other products where there can be exports," Barthwal said. adding that Indian an

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

PNS BENGALURU

With opposition parties targeting his government over alleged irregularities



In a bid to combat the growing challenges posed by climate change, the government is targeting to bring 25 per cent of the total kharif paddy area under climate-resilient seeds,

ilture

PNS NEW DELHI



PNS NEW DELHI

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

He also accused BJP and JD(S) of adopting "hit and run" tactics by lying before the media, and asserted that it will not be allowed in the House (Legislative Assembly/Council).

How true are the allegations of the opposition parties? How much lies? We will bring it to light in this House. It is not in my nature to sit quietly, afraid of politically malicious criticism," Siddaramaiah said in a post on 'X'.

"BJP and JD(S) leaders, I have an answer for every word of yours. It's not like lying before the media so far, standing somewhere far away and shooting a bullet in the air. This is the House, your hit and

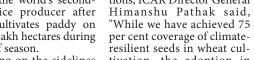
run has no place here," he added. The illegal money transfer issue, involving Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation Ltd, came to the fore, after its accounts superintendent, Chandrashekhar P, died by suicide on May 26, leaving behind a death note.

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

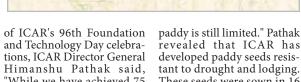
official said on Monday. The move comes as erratic rainfall patterns have become increasingly common in recent years, threatening rice production in the country. India, the world's second-

largest rice producer after China, cultivates paddy on over 410 lakh hectares during the kharif season.

Speaking on the sidelines



tivation, the adoption in



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

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



exporters face issues in Russia in terms of certification.

He added that India is also looking at tapping export opportunities in sectors where

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



Uddhav victim of betrayal, Modi not my enemy: Shankaracharya

PNS MUMBAI

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

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

and did a 'pranaam'. It is our

victim of betrayal. On Prime rule that we will bless whoever comes to us. Narendra Modi ii is not our enemy. We are his well-wishers and always speak for his welfare. If he makes a mistake, we also point that out to him. He is not our enemy," he said. "Uddhav Thackeray has been betrayed and many "Yes, PM Modi came to me people are anguished by it. I ad did a 'pranaam'. It is our met him today as per his

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

RETURN CAR FESTIVAL

Thousands pull chariots in Bahuda yatra

PNS PURI

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

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

Balabhdra's chariot 'Taladwaja' at 3.25 pm and Devi Subhadra's 'Devadalan' at 4 pm. Pulling of Lord Jagannath's chariot 'Nandighosh' began at 4.15 pm.



The chariot pulling started water. after Puri's titular king 'Gajapati Maharaj' Divya The deities left Singha Deb performed 'cheer-apahanra', a ritual during h e Jagannath which he swept the three temple on July chariots with help of golden 7 during the broom by sprinkling scared Rath Yatra and considered their birthplace. They stayed there for a week and on Monday are now returning to the Jagannath temple. This journey is known as the 'Bahuda Yatra'.

Earlier, the trinity was ceremonially taken to their Gundicha Temple in presence of lakhs

The of devotees. A total of 'Sunabesha'

(golden attire) ritual, in which the deities are decked in gold jewellery, will be performed on force and 1,000 officers . chariots on July 16 were deployed to maintain law and

reached Gundicha temple, order and crowd management during the 'Bahuda Yatra Additional Director

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

The deities will remain 180 platoons (1 platoon seated on the chariots in front of the 'Singha Dwar' (Lion's Gate) of the 12th-century comprises shrine on Monday night. The 'Sunabesha' (golden attire) ritual, in which the 30 personnel) of police

deities are decked in gold jewellery, will be performed on chariots on July 16.

India, US carry out mega wargame in Indian Ocean

PNS NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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



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

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

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



VIJAYAWADA | TUESDAY | JULY 16, 2024

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Expectations from the budget

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

The 2024 Union Budget will be presented in the Lok Sabha on July 23rd. This will be the first budget by NDA-3, likely to continue its earlier policies. However, setbacks in the recent elections might lead to course corrections, and some populist measures may be included in the budget by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. As the Union Budget 2024-25 approaches, the Indian economy stands at a pivotal juncture, characterized by robust growth prospects and lingering challenges. The GDP growth forecast remains optimistic, buoyed by a strong recovery in various sectors, particularly manufacturing, services, and technology. However, inflationary pressures, high fiscal deficits, and global economic uncertainties pose significant challenges. The government has made concerted efforts in the past to enhance infrastructure, digitalisation, and clean energy initiatives, reflecting its commitment to sustainable development. Despite these strides, issues like unemployment, income inequality, and rural distress persist, necessitating



targeted fiscal measures. The forthcoming budget is expected to address these concerns, aiming to foster economic resilience, stimulate investment, and ensure inclusive growth for the nation. It is an opportunity to streamline the economy and heal ailing sectors. People's prime concerns remain inflation, which can be dexterously handled with tight fiscal planning. The Union Budget under NDA 3.0 must prioritise infrastructure growth and job creation, aiming to boost manufacturing through public-private partnerships. Changes in personal taxation and pension schemes are also expected, focusing on long-term fiscal sustainability and middle-class relief.

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



New army chief follows Zorawar's footsteps



06

pinion

BHOPINDER SINGH

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

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



cross over yet again, it was the unparalleled heroics of the 13th Jak Rifbattalion, atop the unforgiving heights of the Kargil War that galvanised the nation.

Two combatants from the traditional Duggar catchment areas of Palampur and Bilaspur were to send shivers down the spine of the enemy with their regimental war cries of "Durga Mata ki Jai" as they retook Point 5140. Captain Vikram Batra was to immortalise the moment with his "Yeh dil mange more" spirit and Rifleman (later Subedar Major) Sanjay Kumar would fight to defend their land just as their forefathers did, for aeons.

Both won Param Vir Chakra. Even the peace-time equivalent of gallantry, Ashok Chakra, was bestowed on 2/Lt (later Maj Gen) Cyrus Pithwalla of 17thJak Rif, to be the only 'General' officer with the highest gallantry award.It is from this deep fount of distinguished soldiering, that the 30th Chief of Indian Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, takes over the reigns. Commissioned in the 18th Rif

'voung', Major General Goverdhan Singh Jamwal (the only General who was commissioned by Commanderin-Chief of J&K State Forces, Maharaja Hari Singh) extended congratulations and recalled the countless regimental sacrifices that, "made the State as crown of newly independent India". Today, General Dwivedi

assumes the responsibility that his regimental forefathers held GENERAL DWIVEDI with much aplomb, elan and professional acumen that befits ASSUMES THE their motto, Prashata Ranvirta RESPONSIBILITY or Valour in battle is Praiseworthy!

THAT HIS The General assumes the mantle time in most challenging REGIMENTAL times, but as the Military tru-ism goes, "The harder the conflict, the greater the tri-FOREFATHERS HELD WITH MUCH umph". With the Indian Army, he takes over the most disci-APLOMB, ELAN AND plined, combat-hardened, and PROFESSIONAL restrained institution of the nation - much like his own ACUMEN THAT regimental ethos.

Regrettably, such a selfless **BEFITS THEIR** attitude in a selfish world can MOTTO, PRASHATA often lead to being 'taken for granted' or lead to institution-RANVIRTA OR diminishments. Transmitting that 'voice' for redressal to the powers-that-be will be his foremost challenge. To his singular credit, he has tenanted the most sensitive posts e.g., Army Commander of the Northern Command that dealt with dual nemesis

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

theatre, Brig Sher Jung Thapa, MVC, of the J&K State Forces earned the title of "Hero of Skardu". Even the first Param Vir Chakra of India, Maj Somnath Sharma, was from the Duggarregion. Decades later, when the enemy attempted to

Uri at all costs and to the last man"

- he did so by paying the "ulti-

mate sacrifice" himself. In anoth-

battalion, he is the first Army Chief from the decorated Regiment.

Understandably, people in the Duggar land (especially those from the Jak Rif fraternity) are justifiably proud. As 97 years

VALOUR IN BATTLE IS PRAISEWORTHY! Singh You can expect results (The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

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

High seas treaty: A crucial step for marine biodiversity protection



DHARAMAPALAN This treaty represents a significant international effort to protect our

oceans, promoting equity and cooperation among nations

The world's oceans, vast and mysterious, are crucial to the health of our planet. They regulate the climate, produce half of the oxygen we breathe, and support a rich tapestry of life that is vital to global biodiversity. Marine ecosystems are incredibly diverse, hosting countless species, many of which remain undiscovered. Protecting this biodiversity is not just an ethical obligation but a practical necessity. Healthy marine ecosystems provide essential services, such as carbon sequestration, which helps mitigate climate change.

They also support fisheries that millions of people rely on for food and livelihoods. Yet, the high seas-the areas of the ocean that lie beyond national jurisdictions-remain largely unprotected and poor-ly managed. The significance of the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement comes into the picture here. BBNJ is an international treaty under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNC-LOS). The Biodiversity Bevond National Jurisdiction



known as the High Seas Treaty, is a significant international treaty aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Areas beyond national jurisdiction cover approximately two-thirds of the ocean's surface and 95% of its volume.

These regions offer invaluable benefits to humanity, including ecological, economic, social, cultural, scientific, and food security advantages. However, they are vulnerable to significant threats such as pollution, overexploitation, and the escalating impacts of climate change. The anticipated rise in human demand for marine resources in the coming decades-for food, minerals, and biotechnologyposes a risk of worsening these issues. These areas cover (BBNJ) Agreement, also nearly half of the Earth's sur- environmental impact assess-

face, yet they lack comprehen- ments (EIAs), and sharing sive legal frameworks to regulate human activities, leaving them vulnerable to overfishing, habitat destruction, pollution, and the impacts of cli-mate change. The BBNJ Agreement aims to ensure marine biological diversity conservation and sustainable use in areas beyond national iurisdiction. One of the most commend-

able aspects of the BBNJ Agreement is its emphasis on equity. The agreement recognises the differing capacities of developed and developing nations in managing marine resources. It includes provisions for capacity-building and the trans fer of marine technology, helping to level the playing field and enable all nations to participate effectively in ocean governance. This is vital for ensuring that the benefits of marine resources are shared fairly. The BBNJ Agreement represents a vision of global stewardship where nations come together to protect the shared heritage of our oceans. It establishes mechanisms for creating marine protected areas (MPAs), conducting

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

(The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National *Institute of Advanced* Studies; views are personal)

LETT

n the shooting incident in Pennsylvania at

a Trump rally, the Ex president fortunately

had a narrow escape. History is replete with

attempts at assassination of US presidents. In

Court held Indira Gandhi guilty for her

electoral malpractices. The Allahabad

High Court delivered its judgment on June

12, 1975. The adverse judgment against

Indira Gandhi threatened her position as

in electoral malpractices for facing a situ-

ation of the kind Indira Gandhi faced. He

never hankered after power. Power came

in search of him. The thought of Raut that

Vajpayee would have imposed emergency

if he had faced similar situation makes a

laughing stock. What is wrong if Modi calls

the day of emergency as the day of mur-

ROT IN THE SYSTEM

Madam — It is ridiculous that the central institutions are being pulled in for series of alleged discrepancies in the entrance exams one after other.After NEET exam paper leaks, now its time for UPSC exam. Probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar's issue in Pune, is now on the limelight to raise many doubts regarding the UPSC and its selection process which is lenient towards IAS officers daughters and sons.It seems that the rules were bent in favor of her due to the political influence of her father and the impact of nepotism while clearing her medical examination certifi-cate under OBC, PwBD quota ,which was accepted despite it was done by the private hospital with an excuse of COVID-19 and

posting. It is highly doubtful that she passed the exam under OBC category by misusing the law and fooled the interview board regarding her credentials which is not supposed to fall under OBC, PwBD quota as her asset worth is 22 crore.Her attitude, lavish life and pomposity on her probation period was unethical and disrespect to such highest post in the government. Perhaps, its just because of such candidates the honest and deserving get deprived of a chance to serve the society and nation building. It raises a red flag whether rules were misused in the past as well under the guise of obtaining OBC certificate by showing disability by the candidates who have had political affiliation and support. One hopes for fair and proper investigation of this matter to wipe out the rot in the system.

RAUT'S UNCHARITABLE COMMENTS Madam - Shiv Sena (UBT) leader and MP Sanjay Raut now says that Atal Bihari Vajpayee would have imposed emergency in a similar situation. Had Vajpayee told Raut that he would have imposed emergency if he had faced a situation of the kind Indira Gandhi faced? The situation was

created by Indira Gandhi herself. Justice Madam -- I want to express my deep con-

Trump dodges the bullet

fact world over national leaders elsewhere too have been targeted for differing reasons. In the Trump incident, political observers have highlighted increasing and consistent effort at polarisation in the US, fed by hateful political rhetoric in the past few years.

Trump as the serving President would refuse to concede defeat in his bid for re-election in 2020, even after losing it by as many as seven million votes. He not only stuck to a theory of conspiracy to deny him a win but created a partisan following that would recklessly storm into the parliament.

The Pennsylvania incident must carry a larger and universal lesson. As a leader grows tall his onus to public propriety and temperance in speech, becomes exponential. Else it stands to rapidly fray the socio-politic fabric of a nation

R N Narayanan Mumbai

removal of the Mahatma Gandhi statue in Doomdooma, Assam. The abrupt decision to dismantle this statue, which stood as a symbol of peace and unity at Gandhi Chowk, has understandably sparked widespread outrage among the community, particularly student leaders and local civil soci-

The statue's removal not only disrespects the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi but also undermines the values of non-violence and harmony that he tirelessly promoted. Such actions can have far-reaching negative impacts on our society, eroding the respect for historical figures who played pivotal roles in shaping our nation. I urge the authorities to reconsider their decision and engage in a dialogue with the community to address their concerns. Restoring the statue or finding a more inclusive solution will help in maintaining social harmony and respecting the sentiments of the peo-

K V Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

RESPECT GANDHI'S LEGACY

der of the Constitution?

Jagmohan Lal Sinha of Allahabad High cern and disappointment over the recent

Masood Ahmad | Barabanki

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Prime Minister. Top national leaders Jayaprakash Narayan, Morarji Desai, Vajpayee, and many others were arrested when Indira Gandhi had the premonition that her power and position would be in peril. The justification given for imposition of emergency was 'the internal disturbance'. Vajpayee did not indulge

Janga Bahadur Sunuwar Jalpaiguri

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FIRSTCOLUMN MANY REASONS FOR THANKING GOD

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



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

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

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

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



their painful appearance due to my past bad/sinful acts, mostly in my past lives. I must have, otherwise I wouldn't be giving birth in this dukha*laya*. God has promised this to all those who have God's consciousness. The fourth reason to thank God is for acting as karta (doer) in my life. There are five factors for accomplishing any task. These are: the place of action and the doer and many different kinds of instruments and many different efforts and fifth in this connection is the providence only." (18.14) Only God can control all the five. No human being has control over any other factor except being a doer. And when God is the karta, a task gets surely done. God does this kripa on us whenever He feels that it is according to dharma and we deserve it. The fifth reason to thank God, especially by me is for God using me as His nimitta (instrument). I am one of many whom God has chosen. I suspect that all good people get this privilege, as Arjuna was. (11.33) The sixth reason to thank God one and all human beings is His mercy in allowing very simple spiritual practices like praying, naman (obeisance), chanting and, yes, thanking. Once we begin doing them, God is in the picture. He doesn't wait for us to become His devotees; God begins to help us to become one. Because all these acts signal to God our intention to take His shelter. In my case, God has been micromanaging my life for a long time encouraging me to go on with my spiritual activities like writing spiritual texts such as articles and books. All the religions promote this act of thanking God. If we don't thank when we should we are becoming a debtor. I look for opportunities to thank others, and to God of course. He gives me plenty of reasons to be thankful.

Prioritising growth and regional development



analys \$ 07

A S MITTAL

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



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

neighbouring states like Haryana have demonstrated higher growth rates at 5.9%. Punjabis positioned 10th with a score of 58.95 in the Export Preparedness Index (EPI) ranking 2023, whereas Haryana holds the 5th position with a score of 63.65. It raises concern that Gujarat has the highest number of 8 districts among the top 25 districts in terms of export share, followed by Maharashtra with 5 districts, Haryana with one, and Punjab with none.

Moreover, in terms of foreign direct investments (FDI), Punjab ranks 12th, having attracted only 0.49% of THE DEMAND FOR FDI. This is in stark contrast to SPECIAL nus is in stark contrast to neighbouring Haryana, which ranks sixth with FDI equity inflows accounting for 4.17% of the total inflows. The erosion of industry is a pressing crisis in Burich David a pressing crisis in Punjab. Despite BIHAR AND efforts by successive governments to attract investments, significant hur-

as the second-largest producer of polyester silk, fibre, and cotton yarn. It dominates woollen knitwear (95%) and hosiery (65%) exports, showcasing its strength in the glob-al market. While China holds a dominant position with a 37% share, India is positioned with a 5% share in the global export market, and there is huge potential for expansion in export markets such as the USA, UAE, UK, Germany, France, and Australia.

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

The Production Linked Incentives (PLI) scheme should be thoroughly re-evaluated to ensure it delivers the intended impact on competitiveness and scale. Monitoring its progress closely is critical.

The slow progress of the PLI scheme, especially in labour-intensive sectors like textiles, automobiles, and components, must be addressed urgently. To achieve broader goals such as enhancing exports, attracting significant investments, and generating employment, expanding PLI to new sectors like bicycles and sports goods is imperative to encompass the maximum number of MSMEs.Assertive GST Rationalization: There is an urgent need to rationalize the current GST

structure to eliminate the complex hurdles created by multiple tax slabs. Transitioning from the existing structure to a simplified two or ee-slab framework and provid ing exemptions for previously exempted items such as farm imple ments is crucial to streamline the system. Critical Focus on Logistics Cost: Competitive and efficient logistics are the foundation for industrial growth. Policy-backed support for state-owned wagons in landlocked border states like Punjab is essential to address the over-freight burden and provide a level playing field to manufacturing hubs. Incentivizing labour-intensive and export-oriented industries in the upcoming budget is vital to driving the country's economic growth and employment generation. (The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika ITL Group, Vice-Chairman(Cabinet minister rank) of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council and President of Tractor and Mechanization Association. Views *expressed are personal)*

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

ANDHRA dles such as location disadvantage, law and order and frequent protests PRADESH POSES persist. One major issue is the THE CRUCIAL location disadvantage, as Punjab's distance from seaports makes its QUESTION OF industrial operations non-compet-WHY A SIMILAR itive in the global market. Two years ago, CM Bhagwant Maan APPROACH

announced in the Vision Punjab conclave of ASSOCHAM that SHOULD NOT BE Punjab aims to become the first state ADOPTED TO in the country to own wagons (Punjab on wheels), offering a ACCELERATE AND potential solution to dilute the freight burden.

EXPAND THE However, the success of this endeavour depends on the support from INDUSTRIAL both the central and state govern-**GROWTH OF** ments. Punjab is an exceptional hub for textile yarn, bicycles, hosiery, PUNJAB. A tractors, automobile components, LANDLOCKED sports goods, engineering goods, and leather. BORDER STATE These industrial clusters possess

immense potential and can be further strengthened. Ludhiana proudly leads as the top producer of blended yarn and hosiery, as well

Cinema: A potent tool in global politics and cultural diplomacy

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

ovies have evolved far beyond mere enter-LV Ltainment; they now play a significant role in global politics and cultural relations. Through creative expressions, films harness the ecosystem comprising key stakeholders to nurture and develop soft power dynamics and geopolitical equations. In the realm of geopolitics, movies are more than art; they are potent tools used by countries to showcase their soft power and expand their influence worldwide.

Through their film industries, nations share stories that resonate globally, reflecting their identities and serving as diplomatic instruments. Films offer profound insights into the societal dynamics of different countries, profound



CHAITANYA K PRASAD

y impacting international relations.Today, we live in a multipolar world where power dynamics are fluid, and various stakeholders, perceptions, ideologies, strategies, networks, interfaces, and interactions play a critical role.

The challenge we face today is assembling a complex jigsaw puzzle, where every piece of this puzzle has a vital role to play. Geographical boundaries have blurred exponentially,

enhancing communication and ushering in a new era where technology plays a piv-otal role in shaping these interactions The emergence of the new

players can be attributed to the concept of Soft Power dynamics. This idea, coined by Joseph S. Nye, describes the ability to

attract and persuade through culture, political ideals, and policies. In this context, cinema has become an essential component of Soft Power.

Cinema, as a medium and platform, acts as a catalyst to position soft power dynamics, decoding perceptions, perspectives and geopolitical stances globally. The portrayal on the big screen infuses fresh thinking into the policy debate dynamics, global issues thanks to globalisation, and management of ideas in a

global framework, bound by multipolarity and instant communication.

Many films in the past have mirrored multidimensional dynamics and impact on different ecosystems, nations and individuals. Cinema and foreign policy interface reinforces the global appeal of a concept, or idea leading to a dynamic framework for cultural diplomacy. Cinema as a medium has added a new tool to the dynamics of bilateralism, the use of creative tools in the portrayal of a new point of view, ideology and intervention along with better cultural understanding.

Cinema has emerged as a vehicle of Collaboration, Cooperation, Cohesion, Coordination, and



ema. On the global front, cinema breaks barriers, overcomes obstacles, and thrives on the creativity of both old and new players.

It no longer caters solely to Western or Eurocentric narratives but embraces a diverse global perspective, which plays a crucial role in shaping cinema perceptions and adding a soft touch to global power dynamics. The importance of



The impact of movies is greatly amplified by their global presence, thanks to the rise of streaming services that have revolutionised film distribution, making it easier for films from smaller markets to reach a worldwide audience. Platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hulu have democratised access to movies from various countries, allowing filmmakers worldwide to showcase their cultural stories without relying on Convergence — the 5Cs of cin- cinema in geopolitics has traditional distribution.

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

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

tional DG, DFF and Festival Director, IFFI;

Inputs by Zoya Ahmad and Vaishnavi Srinivasan. Views *are personal)*



Money 08

TRA launches kit to detect unapproved pesticides in tea leaves

ea Research Association (TRA), a body set up for scientific development of the industry, said on Monday that an equipment has been devised for the detection of unapproved pesticides in green leaves. TRA secretary and principal officer Joydeep Phukan said that the testing kit will help growers comply with the norms of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, which are in force. The rapid testing kit, ACLIVIA for Tea, is an innovative tool using the Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence

(AI), that will facilitate instant tests of green leaves at the factory point before they are sent for manufacturing. The association has partnered with Arogyam Medisoft, a startup incubated in West Bengal, CDAC and Luxmi Tea to validate the equipment, he said. Phukan said there had been a persistent demand from the tea industry for development of a device to detect unapproved pesticides to ensure compliance with the plant protection measures.



ClaySys Technologies to create 5,000 jobs in India

rala-based software consultancy and process automation company, ClaySys Technologies, has announced expansion plans and said to win increase the second Technologies, has announced expansion plans and said it will increase the workforce threshold of Rs 100 crore last year and is expecting a two-fold increase in revenue in the next three years along with acquiring new talents. The company, headquartered in its own campus at Infopark here, said currently it has a workforce of 1,168 employees across various Indian cities and in the US. "As the company prepares for this next phase of growth, we remain committed to leveraging the rich talent pool in Kerala and beyond

while continuing to offer a dynamic and rewarding work environment for its employees," Vinod Tharakan, Managing Director of Claysys Technologies is quoted in a release issued by the company. The company is also providing several perks and benefits for employees, including a unique housing scheme for those who have a longterm association with it.



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

mazon India on Monday announced new product ranges and major deals for its annual shopping fiesta 'Prime Day 2024' on July 20-21. Industry stalwarts, including Aman Ashopping fiesta 'Prime Day 2024 on July 20-21. Industry outside a standard of E-Commerce, Agaro; Jai Gupta, Co-Founder & CMO boAt; Vishal Shinde, Head of E-Commerce, Agaro; Jai Krishnan, CEO, Samsonite South Asia; and Rahul Pahwa, Director, MX Business from Samsung India were present at the event. Prime Day 2024, scheduled for July 20-21, will not only offer great deals on famous brands across categories, but will also spotlight SMBs (small and medium businesses) and local artisans, a company official said. "This Prime Day,

Amazon will continue to support SMBs and offer Prime members products from lakhs of sellers, manufacturers, startups & brands, women entrepreneurs, artisans, weavers, and local shops. "During the event, Prime members will have the opportunity to discover deals on unique products across categories including fashion & beauty, electronics, and home decor from sellers under various programmes" Akshav Sahi, Director and Head of Amazon Prime said.



ICAR to develop 100 new seed varieties, farm technologies PNS NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

TRADE, INVESTMENTS AGREEMENT Next round of talks between India, EU likely in September



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

Joint Secretary in the Department of Commerce Darpan Jain said that the eighth round of talks was concluded on June 28.

He said that discussions were held on all 21 chapters in the meeting and progress was made in number of areas such as government procurement, digital trade, technical barriers to trade, goods, and market access.

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

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

India - European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Trade & Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) INKED



India had started negotiaduties on automobiles and tions for a trade pact with the spirits and the movement of EU in 2007, but the talks professionals.

The trade agreement with the EU would help India furstalled in 2013 as both sides failed to reach an agreement on ther expand and diversify its key issues, including customs

exports of goods and services, including securing the value chains

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

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

government in the UK will look into the agreement. The India-UK talks for the

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

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

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

PNS NEW DELHI

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

The five members of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) are Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia.

Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce Anant Swarup said that on the EEU proposed free trade agreement (FTA), chief negotiators of both sides have already met and broad con-

tours are being finalised. "Scope and the ToRs (terms of reference) of the proposed



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

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

is premature to be decided. In such agreements, two or more trading partners either

reporters here.

eliminate or significantly reduce customs duties on the maximum number of goods traded between them. These agreements provide greater market access to Indian goods and services.

HC sets aside CBDT decision refusing tax exemption to NOIDA

PNS NEW DELHI

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

loans to various entities. A bench headed by Justice Yashwant Varma said the board erred in holding that the loans and advances extended by the NOIDA fell within the ambit of commercial activity, and directed the authority to process the

exemption request. The court

observed that the NOIDA, con-

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

Sensex, Nifty race to record closing highs as

Union Budget: Space industry demands tax holidays, PLI scheme Space Association (ISpA)

PNS NEW DELHI

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

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

Industry bodies Indian

State-owned NLC India Ltd on

Monday said that it has bagged

the mine will address the ener-

gy security of the country.

The coal produced from

The coal mine has total

reserves of around 1.38 billion

tonnes with an operatable

peak-rated capacity of 30 mil-

lion tonnes per annum

as the successful bidder for the

Machhakata (revised) coal

mine in Angul district of

Odisha in the eighth round of

"NLC India Ltd has emerged

a coal mine in Odisha.

PNS NEW DELHI

(MTPA)

Association (SIA-India) have sought greater government expenditure on the space sector in the form of an

Satcom

anchor customer for the nascent private sector. "ISpA calls for a commitment from the government to procure and adopt space technology solutions across various governance areas such as agriculture, disaster management, infrastructure planning

and development monitoring, urban development, and remote area connectivity," ISpA director general Lt Gen Anil K Bhatt (retd) said.

under review rose to Rs 6,769 crore from Rs 5,417 crore a year ago, the state-owned lender said in a regulatory filing. Interest earned by the bank

PNS NEW DELHI

grew to Rs 5,875 crore as com-

tion.

auctioned.

Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) on Monday reported 47 per cent jump in net profit at Rs 1,293 crore for June quarter FY25 as bad loans declined and interest income improved. The Pune-based lender had These Barries Hits and the state clocked a net profit of Rs 882

BoM Q1 profit rises 47% to Rs 1,293 cr

on improved interest income

crore in the year-ago period. Total income in the quarter quarter FY24.

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

Q1FY24.

pared to Rs 4,789 crore in June improved as gross non-performing assets (NPAs) declined to 1.85 per cent of gross advances at the end of June quarter FY25 from 2.28

per cent a year ago. Similarly, net NPAs or bad

The bank's asset quality loans, declined to 0.20 per cent

as against 0.24 per cent in the year-ago period.

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

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

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

to hit a high of 80,862.54. the current financial year. Nifty rallied

PSU bank shares shine

PNS MUMBA

Benchmark Sensex and Nifty

closed at new record high

levels on Monday following

buying in PSU bank shares

and fresh foreign fund inflows.

rose by 145.52 points or 0.18

per cent to settle at a new

record high of 80,664.86.

During the day, it advanced

343.2 points or 0.42 per cent

132.9 points or 0.54 per cent

to hit a new record peak of

The NSE

84.55 points or 0.35 per

cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 24,586.70.

During the

day, it surged

24,635.05.

winners.

The 30-share BSE Sensex

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

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

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

Head Research, Geojit Financial Services.

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

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

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 0.95 per cent and smallcap index climbed 0.21 per cent. Among the indices, oil & gas rallied 2.32 per cent, energy (1.61 per cent), realty (1.40 Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj per cent), utilities (1.09 per Finance, Tata Motors, Maruti cent) and healthcare (1 per and ITC were the other major cent)

On the other hand, Asian capital goods were the lag-Paints, Tata Steel, Axis Bank, gards.

NLC India wins coal mine in Odisha Mcap of BSE-listed firms hit new all-time high of Rs 455 L achieving more than 100 MTPA by 2030 from the present 50 MTPA. NLC India's core business is

PNS NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

results from PSU banks have

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

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

On the other hand, Asian Paints, Tata Steel, Axis Bank, JSW Steel, Tech Mahindra and

Tata Consultancy Services were among the laggards.

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

commercial coal block e-auc-

tion," the company said in a

This is the second coal mine

The company said that it is

won by the public sector enter-

prise after North Dhadu coal

committed to its capacity addi-

tion in line with its vision of

block (Western Part).

statement

PNS NEW DELHI

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

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



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

imports and exports, during June 2023 was US\$ 19.19 billion. India's merchandise exports grew 9.1 per cent to US\$ 38.13 billion in May, even as the

trade deficit widened to a seven-month high of US\$ 23.78 billion. Cumulatively, the merchandise exports in April-June this fiscal climbed 5.84 per cent to US\$ 109.96 billion, and imports grew 7.6 per cent to US\$ 172.23 billion.

mining and power genera-

Meanwhile, the coal min-

istry on Monday executed the

Coal Mining Development

and Production Agreements

for three coal mines that were

The mines for which agree-

ments were executed are

Machhakata (Revised) coal

mine, Kudanali Lubri coal

mine, and Sakhigopal-B

Kakurhi coal mine, the coal

ministry said in a statement.

The trade deficit during April-June 2024 widened to US\$ 62.26 billion compared to US\$ 56.16 billion in the same period last year.

SURVEY FINDS 89% PEOPLE FACING CALL DROPS 9 in 10 use wifi to make calls through OTT

PNS NEW DELHI

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

to have received a total of 32,000 responses across different questions from 362 districts. The number of responses differed from question to question. "89 per cent of sub-

scribers surveyed face call connection and drop issues, Out of between March and June claims this 89 per cent, 38 per cent of



them face it with over 20 per cent of their calls," the survey said. In response to the question on call drop experi-ence, 17 per cent indicated they face issues in more than half of their total phone calls while 21 per cent said that 20-50 per cent of their calls get dropped or disconnected.

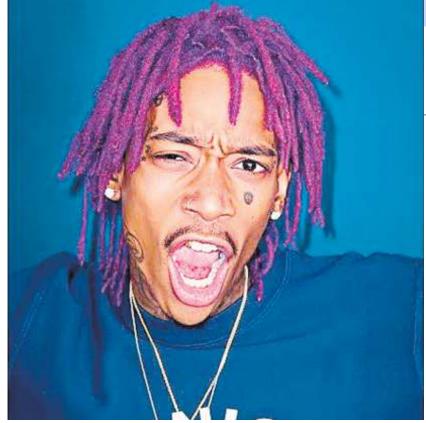
"With most mobile subscribers facing call connection and drop issues, nine in 10 are survey said

messaging apps like WhatsApp) platforms to make some of their calls," LocalCircles Founder Sachin Taparia said. Mobile subscribers have increased the use of OTT apps for making Wi-Fi calls in the last two years as they face call connectivity and drop issues with their mobile network, the

using OTT (internet calls and

Industrials, IT, teck and

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





what's brewing?

Young Sheldon

Vijayawada | Tuesday July 16, 2024

DIRECTOR OF LONGLEGS ON METAMORPHOSIS OF NICOLAS CAGE

N icolas Cage, who plays the evil main character in *Longlegs*, gave the part his all, according to writer-director Osgood Perkins. Perkins called Cage's portrayal of a demon-possessed serial killer "pivotal," calling it both respectful and thought-provoking. Cage's commitment to playing the role authentically gives the movie more depth and drama. His work with Perkins demonstrated his versatility as an actor and greatly enhanced the eerie and gripping storvline of the movie. Speaking with PEOPLE, Osgood 'Oz' Perkins claimed that Nicolas

Cage's involvement in the entertainment sector often stands in stark contrast to the industry's typical rejections and difficulties. Occasionally, he said, the actor would see a script and say 'I'd love this and I want to do this The actor's ability to recall every performance, movie and even song lyrics was compared to a machine by Perkins, who



applauded the actor's extraordinary speed and diligence. With his attitude, Cage shows his unshakable commitment to his work, which sets him apart in a Hollywood defined by uncertainty and disappointments.

Perkins argues that Nicolas Cage's breadth of expertise and refined manner were evident from the beginning when the main character in Longlegs was being created. Perkins recalled, "He had no desire to improvise. He vehemently objected to my suggestion that he say whatever he wanted to say, insisting that he wanted to say exactly what was written." Starring Maika Monroe as an FBI agent like to Jodie Foster's Clarice Starling and Nicolas Cage as a serial murderer akin to Anthony Hopkins' renowned Hannibal Lecter, *Longlegs* is meant to be a playful homage to 1991's The Silence of the Lambs.

American rapper Wiz Khalifa arrested in Romania!

ver the weekend, American rapper Wiz Khalifa was arrested in Romania on accusations of smuggling illegal substances. Reports claims that the incident took place at the Costinesti resort in Constanta county during a music event where Khalifa was performing.

The Directorate for Investigating Organized Crime and Terrorism (DICOT) said in a statement to AFP that Khalifa had more than 18 grams of marijuana on him when he performed at the festival, in addition to using the drug onstage. "We make it clear that the investigated

persons benefit from the procedural rights and guarantees provided by the Code of Criminal Procedure, as well as the presumption of innocence, throughout the

entire criminal process," DICOT stated in a statement. After being placed under cus-tody, Khalifa was eventually freed.

The rapper was seen being led out the festival grounds by a number of Romanian police officers in a video that has

been made public. Khalifa, whose real name is Cameron Jibril Thomaz, said in a post on X that he wasn't disrespecting Romania by lighting up the stage. "They were very respectful and let me go," he wrote. "I'll be back shortly. Next time, though, avoid using a huge a** joint."

ES' MOUNI ECOME LAUREN

he Bollywood actress Lauren Gottlieb, who debuted in the film ABCD: Any Body Can Dance in 2013, will soon be getting married to her longtime partner Tobias Jones. She is also overjoyed that actress and close friend Mouni Roy has consented to be one of her bridesmaids on her special day. On Monday, the actor announced on Instagram that Mouni had accepted to be a bridesmaid in her wedding

and shared photos of the two of them together. Sharing the pictures, Lauren wrote, "She said YES to being my Bridesmaid (heart emoji) @imouniroy Mouni Darling, from the moment we met I knew we were destined to be friends! You love BIG and LOUD and are so unapologetically authentically YOU, and I want to leave you this love one and 2000 and are so unapologenearly authentically 100, and 1 want to leave you this love note as strongly as I've felt your support all these years". "We pick right where we left off when we see each other, regardless of how far apart we are or how long it has been since we spoke," she continued. "I am confident that this is why we will always be friends. When we first started working together of the begins." always be friends. When we first started working together at the beginning of our careers, we were essentially children. We have both discovered the love of our lives and are now comfortable with who we truly are." Here Lauren also admitted that she is very happy to have Mouni in her life, sharing "I'm so grateful to have your guidance on my journey forward as I get married, you are going to be the most stunning Bridesmaid (love emojis).

spinoff announced! he launch date for Georgie & Mandy's First Marriage, a Young Sheldon spinoff, has been revealed by CBS for the upcoming fall season. As per reports that the show's release date is October 17, 2024, at 8:00 p.m. The seven-season run of *Young Sheldon* closed in May and this spinoff picks up where that show left off. It was revealed at a TCA session that

Young Sheldon has confirmed that Zoe Perry, Annie Potts and Raegan Revord will return to the show as Georgie's mother, grandmother and sister, respectively. Iain Armitage has expressed interest in returning to the show, although it is yet unclear if he would play Sheldon Cooper once more. He stated in an interview that he

would be thrilled and delighted to be called back to reprise the role. In addition, he voiced excitement about the next show, saying he can't wait to watch it on his couch. Ăudiences have apparently been thrilled by Montana Jordan

and Emily Osment's performances. Though members from the Cooper

family will feature in Georgie & Mandy's First Marriage, it should be highlighted that the makers want the spinoff to be seen as more than just a straight-forward continuation of Young Sheldon. They intend to preserve its connections to the original series while giving it a unique personality. It seems sense that executive pro-

ducer Steve Holland chose to give Georgie & Mandy's First Marriage a unique feel, especially in light of the show's switch from a single to a multicamera format. This change may help create a different comedy tone and feel from Young Sheldon while preserving the continuity of well-known characters and stories in a comparable environment.

On October 17, 2024, Georgie & Mandy's First Marriage will debut on CBS, so fans should mark their calendars for that date.



ARCHIE







CALVIN AND HOBBES

FUN



GARFIELD







BUT WE CAN

ALWAYS TRY TO MAKE GOOD THINGS

HAPPEN

3

5

1

NANCY



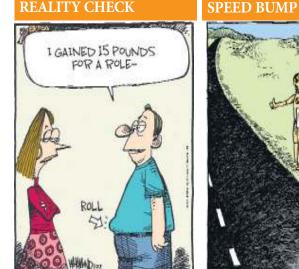


GINGER MEGGS





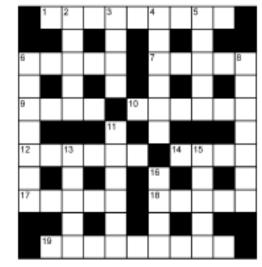




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ACROSS

- 1 People in jail The centre of your eye
- 11 Author Have a quarrel
- 9 Things to play with
- 10 Flat dishes 15 Something you imagine
- while asleep 12 Mistakes 14 The part along the side 16 A brother or sister the
- or end of something same age as you 17 A boat with sails
- 18 Flour is made from this 19 Scientific study of the sun.
- moon, planets and stars

DOWN

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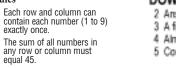


6 Mugs and other things

made of baked clay 8 The least difficult

13 Speed competitions

SOLUTION





3 A fine glossy fabric 5 Correct

the pioneer

General Follow us on @TheDailyPioneer 3 facebook.com/ dailypioneer

Tuesday July 16, 2024

ACTING SCENES g dei HEALIN

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

TEJAL SINHA

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

The child actor is now an ophthalmologist. His young beginnings in notable Bollywood films includes *Koi Mil Gaya*, *Krrish*, *Dhai Akshar Prem Ke*, *Ishq Vishq*, *Aitbaar* featuring Mr Bachchan, *Dosti* featuring Akshay Kumar and even ventured into Hollwood with a role in *Eat*

even ventured into Hollywood with a role in *Eat Pray Love* alongside Julia Roberts. He also showcased his versatlity playing memorable roles in TV serials like *Gharwali Uparwali aur Sunny* and a double role in Phir Bhi Dil Hai Hindustani.

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

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

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

me all the shots. It was amazing and they were very humble people." Even with *Krrish*, he recalls travelling

with them in the same car and flight to Manali. And having to work and share a close association with the 'Roshan's', he shares, "I really look up to them as diligent people. The kind of work that they have done in dustry in their genre is extremely commend able. I really look up to them. They brought in the superhero concept in India. Back then *Koi Mil Gaya* and *Krrish* were genre-defining projects!" As our exclusive conversation continued, he was only able to recollect his good memories from the projects he had worked on. He has learned a great deal about life from this educational experience. Mickey's passion for education and his parents' aspirations led him to pursue a career in medicine. "I'm a very scientific and logical person. I do my reasoning with a lot of data and that's always the way how I function. That time the decision was made and I wanted to complete my education. And thus, I completed my graduation. And thus, r com-pleted my graduation." Today, a distinguished ophthalmologist, specialising in Refractive cataract and Lasik surgeries, he holds many degrees such as MBBS, MS (Ophthalmology),

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

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

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

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

In the very same reel, there was a comment saying 'Jaadu came and removed his father's specs in *Koi Mil Gaya* and Jr. Hrithik became an eye doctor.' And an overwhelmed Dr. Mickey laughs his heart out and shares, "I did try to reply to most of them but then it became beyond my reach. It kind of became true also for them. I did have very thick glasses and that scene became true to me after my Lasik, 'mujhe sab dikhra hai' (we laugh). The surgery has now become a matter of magic which happens in minutes these days. It was very real and thus it worked out well." Presently, he is in the process of understand-ing what could lead to his goal of eventually becoming this healthcare provider, who is also serving not just one or two hospitals in the city, but is a national-level health provider. He aims to provide quality healthcare to everybody. "Be it Lasik or any eye surgery, the machines are pretthe Lasik of any eye surgery, the inactimes are pre-ty expensive and thus, the treatments get expen-sive. Not everybody gets access to the latest tech-nologies. What I have figured is if I can manage this sort at a pan-India level, I can give the best of technology at affordable prices." Meanwhile, as we head towards the end of the

Alert! Dengue puts your brain and nervous system at risk

Dengue, typically recognised for its flu-like symptoms, can also have severe repercussions for the brain and nervous system, highlighting the need for heightened awareness and timely intervention. While the common symptoms of dengue include high fever, severe headache, pain behind the eyes, joint and muscle pain, rash and mild bleeding, the virus can also lead to much more serious neurological conditions.
One of the significant neurological complications of dengue is encephalitis, which is the inflammation of the brain!
Encephalitis can cause severe headaches, confusion,paralysis of body, seizures and even coma. Meningitis, the inflammation of the coverings of the brain and spinal cord, can also occur, leading to symptoms like severe headaches and neck stiffness.
Another critical condition is myelitis, which involves the inflammation of the spinal cord, potentially resulting in paralysis and other serious neurological symptoms!
Dengue encephalopathy is a particularly severe manifestation where the brain is directly affected by the virus or the body's immune response to it. Symptoms of dengue encephalopathy include changes in mental state, unusual behaviour and, in extreme cases, unconsciousness. Recognising and treating this provide a series of the seri

extreme cases, unconsciousness. Recognising and treating this condition promptly is crucial to prevent long-term neurological damage

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

tion and secondary demyelinating disorders in the brain, resul ing in various neurological symptoms. Dengue also heightens the risk of strokes due to bleeding (hemorrhagic stroke) or blood clots (ischemic stroke). This increased risk arises because dengue affects blood vessels and the blood's ability to clot. Consequently, close monitoring of patients for any signs of stroke is essential.

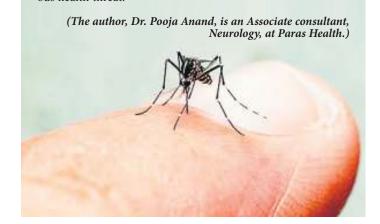
patients for any signs of stroke is essential. Early warning signs of dengue-related neurological problems include persistent headaches, stiff neck, confusion, seizures and sudden weakness. Early detection and treatment are vital to pre-vent long-term neurological damage. Diagnosing dengue-related brain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

providing supportive care, which may include antiviral medica-tions and immunotherapy. Awareness of the neurological risks associated with dengue is vital for both prevention and early intervention. Preventive measures include controlling mosquito populations, using protective clothing and repellents and eliminating standing water where mosquitoes breed. Educating patients and com-munities about these risks and ensuring prompt and appropri-ate treatment can help mitigate severe complications associat-ed with dengue

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



chat, he also denies looking for offers in acting at the moment.



AARTI SREENATH

rom the humble environs of Arunachal Pradesh, where he toiled as a labourer's son, to the electrifying world of breaking, Passang Tamang's life trajectory is an evidence to the transformative power of dance. A chance encounter with a breaking jam in Siliguri, while working in a *lachcha paratha* factory, ignited a spark within him that would irrevocably alter his destiny. "The world didn't accept me until I

became a breaker." Passang confides, his voice a mix of determination and gratitude. Breaking, he found, was more than just a dance form; it was a passport to a world of acceptance, camaraderie and self-discovery.

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

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

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

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

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

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

fecting each move; the bruises and aches are merely milestones on his path to mas-

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

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

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

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

riences and collective passion for breaking have forged bonds that are unbreakable. Together, they have navigated the highs and lows of the breaking scene, celebrating victories and learning from setbacks. As he continues to push the boundaries

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

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

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



sports 11



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

PTI NEW DELHI

Indian cricket's reigning superstar Virat Kohli has urged the nation to get behind its Olympic-bound contingent, asking the fans to join him in supporting the athletes as "they inch closer to the podium with dogged determination" in the quadrennial showpiece starting July $\frac{1}{26}$ in Paris.

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

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

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



more gold, more silver and more sports fans, asking them to support country's best ever performance of from Chopra, who scripted history bronze," he added.

for this great nation? Well, that will be He then went on to address Indian would be aiming to better the

Games in Tokvo.

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

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

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

India's medal hopes will rest on shooting, badminton, wrestling, and boxing aside from the expectations of a second successive podium finish

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

PTI SYDNEY

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

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

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

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

On his remarks on making a comeback during the Champions Trophy, Bailey said that Warner might be "stirring the pot", celebrate it enough, and think as time goes



some different players".

You never know when Bull's joking...think he's just stirring the pot a bit. He's had a wonderful career, can't

by, his legacy of what he has done for Australia and we reflect back on that, the legend of a player is only going to continue to grow," added Bailey. "But, as far as this team goes and the journey to transition to some different players, in his case across all three formats, it's going to be exciting." The Australians will have a young

squad during their upcoming tour of the United Kingdom, which includes limited-overs meetings against Scotland and England.

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

"I don't think there's anyone who's not there that we've put a line through permanently besides David (Warner). This is the way we are going with this squad," he continued. The next T20 World Cup is 2026, so I imagine there may be some more

changes than what we are seeing in this squad. But specifically, to those guys (Starc and Maxwell), no we haven't had any conversations about where they think their T20 journey may finish.



PTI DALLAS (USA)

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

the title win in the West Indies and is set to miss the limitedovers tour of Sri Lanka later this month, which includes three ODIs.

"I just said it. I don't look that Ahmedabad. far ahead. So clearly, you will Rohit left T20Is with 4231 runs be seeing me play at least for a while," the 37-year-old said at from 159 matches, having made five hundreds and 32 an event here on Sunday night. fifties.



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

PTI HARARE

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

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

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

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

For the first two games, he opened with Punjab teammate Earlier this month, BCCI secretary Jay Shah had confirmed that Rohit will Abhishek Sharma who scored a hundred and a fifty in his captain India in the ongoing debut series. Among the four openers, Gill had the lowest World Test Championship cycle and the Champions strike rate, 125.92, compared Trophy next year in Februaryto Jaiswal's 165.88, Gaikwad's 158.33 and Abhishek's 174.64. "It's a good thing that everyone's performing. It shows that everyone is hungry Rohit had led India in the 2022 T20 World Cup where the team was ousted in the semifinals by eventual champions England. and nobody is ready to take it easy. For any country or board, that's always a good thing," A year later, India reached the final of the 50-over World Cup said Gill on Sunday referring to at home under his leadership,

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

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

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

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

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

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

series 4-1 after losing the opener. Seeing everyone hungry and

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

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

continue to play Tests and ODIs at least for a while His statement was reiteration of a position he made clear after announcing his T20 retirement after the final in the West Indies in which India

Rohit says he will





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

AP MELBOURNE

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

three T20s against Scotland and five one-day internationals against England in September. Cricket Australia said Cummins' absence was part of a "preplanned, long-term load management strategy" as part of preparations for the Champions Trophy next year. Mitchell Marsh, who led Australia at the recent T20 World Cup in the United States and Caribbean, will be captain for the tour. Veteran opener David Warner has retired and wicketkeeper Matthew Wade wasn't selected, with selectors looking at the future.

Young batter Jake Fraser-McGurk was included in both the ODI and T20 squads after being a designated traveling reserve for the T20 World Cup. "This tour gives us a great opportunity to bring in some new players in the absence of David Warner and Matthew Wade, as well as giving some senior players time to prepare for the home summer and a busy first half of next year," George Adam Zampa.

Bailey, Australia's selection chairman, said.

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

invested into these next six months. 'That has included gradual inte-

gration of new players into our white ball squads who have earned international opportunities via excellent form. Australia is the World Cup

champion in the 50-over format and holder of the World Test Championship title, but didn't reach the semifinals of the T20 World Cup. **T20 squad:** Mitch Marsh (cap-

tain), Xavier Bartlett, Cooper Connolly, Tim David, Nathan Ellis, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Cameron Green, Aaron Hardie, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Spencer Johnson, Marcus Stoinis, Adam Zampa. ODI squad: Mitch Marsh (captain), Sean Abbott, Alex Carey, Nathan Ellis, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Aaron Hardie, Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Marnus Labuschagne, Glenn Maxwell, Matthew Short, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc,

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

but succumbed to Australia in

at

the summit clash

PTI NEW DELHI

ndian men's hockey team forward Abhishek feels the mental conditioning camp the players underwent at renowned adventurer Mike Horn's base in Switzerland ahead of the Paris Olympics has helped them prepare for highpressure situations. The Indian team has completed a three-day mental conditioning camp at Horn's base and are slated to play a

few practice matches in the Netherlands before making their way to Paris Games. The expectations from the team will be high after India's bronze medal win at Tokyo Olympics. India will start their Paris Olympics campaign against New Zealand in their first Pool B match. "After months of focusing on the physical aspect of the game, this camp is exactly what we needed," Abhishek said in a Hockey India release.

"The team has been spending time



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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

Outgoing batting coach Vikram Rathour knows that a tough transition period awaits India in the near future awaits india in the near future but having worked with the available talent pool, he feels the side is well-equipped to

handle the phase provided it unfolds in a "controlled and gradual manner". While Virat Kohli and Rohit

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Just as Kohli and Rohit carried



India's batting on their backbone of Indian batting in shoulders for more than a vears to come," the former decade, the next decade could Punjab skipper said. well belong to Gill and Jaiswal.

Rathour was a good sounding "There are many exciting board for Dravid in the last players coming through but three years and when he says that Rinku Singh would make a good Test batter, the statement does carry weight.

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

So all these factors indicate that if given an opportunity, he can develop into a Test cricketer," Rathour said.

'ALWAYS TOLD VIRAT TO BELIEVE IN HIS METHODS": One question that Rathour would face at every second press conference during his tenure was Kohli's extended lean patch after the 2019 World Cup and he maintained it was a "phase that everyone has to go through". There were no technical issues

that we worked on specifically during this phase. The constant messaging to him was to keep working hard and believe in his methods. Eventually he came back stronger and an even better player," he said. RAHUL GAVE US SPACE

AND HONEST FEEDBACK" Rathour and Dravid made their Test debuts in the same series against England in 1996 and have played against each other in domestic cricket even before that.

A three-decade relationship helped when they came together as back-room staff.

"Rahul is the best coach that I have worked with, who gives you lots of space to work, is open to suggestions and will provide you an honest feedback. "One of the first discussions we had was about changing the batting template in T20 cricket. We agreed that we needed to bring in more intent and aggression in our batting approach," he revealed. Rathour said a case in point was Axar Patel, who fixed their problem of a decent batting

option at number eight. "That made a massive difference and gave the batters in top order lot more freedom to bat.

Axar was always a good batter and all he needed was opportunity to express himself "uncomplicated technique".

these two are equipped to play all three formats for a long time. They are going to be the





MARUTHI TO REMIX 80'S HINDI HIT FOR

Prabhas is currently enjoying the success of *Kalki 2898 AD* and he is holidaying abroad. The actor will return back this month and he is expected to resume the shoot of *Raja Saab* directed by Maruthi. The entire shooting part that does not need Prabhas is completed and the top actor has to allocate 50 days to complete this horror thriller. The film also has ample amount of enter-tainment throughout abhas is currently enjoying the

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

looks, and his character will have a lot of fun, according to Maruthi. The remix song is expected to be the album's centerpiece. The heroines of Raja Saab are Malavika Mohanan Nidhhi

Agerwal and Riddhi Kumar. People Media Factory produced the film, which will be released in the first quarter of 2025. More improve-ments will be publicly announced by

the developers soon. Prabhas will also begin shooting Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Spirit* this year, with Hanu Raghavapudi's *Fauji* scheduled for next year.



Bromance kickstarts shooting

The film Bromance began shoot-ing on Monday after a pooja ceremo-ny in Kochi attended by the cast and crew, which included Shyam Mohan and Sangeeth Prathap, who play Arjun, Mathew and Premalu.

Bromance is written by Arun, Raveesh Nath and Thomas P Sebastian. Notably, Arun and Raveesh previously worked together on Jo and Jo (2022) and Journey of Love 18+ (2023). The couple also co-wrote the latter's directorial debut, Samadhana Pusthakam, which is set to be released in theaters on July 19. In *Bromance*, Kalabhavan Shajohn and Binu Pappu play major parts. The planned film's technical group includes cinematographer Akhil George, editor Chaman Chakko and music director Govind Vasantha. It is created by Ashiq Usman and distributed by Central Pictures

Maar Muntha Chod Chinta promo out now

SIVAKARTHIKEYAN REVEALS **'HIRD CHILD'S NAM**

K ollywood star Sivakarthikeyan is cur-rently filming *SK 23* with director A.R. Murugadoss. In June 2024, he and his wife, Aarthi, wel-comed a newborn boy. Today, Sivakarthikeyan revealed that they have called their child Pavan

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

tollywood

Kiran Abbavaram's KA teaser compels all with suspense

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

Sujith and Sandeep. The teaser lives up to the intriguing title, revealing a riveting story set in the village of Krishnagiri. Kiran Abbavaram plays a postman with an unusual propensity of reading other people's letters. However, when night sets, his char-acter takes on a darker tone, including strange killings. The teaser suggests a mix of socio-fantasy elements, accentuated by a mysterious horoscope machine. Audiences can expect a more elaborate trailer soon to provide additional details, which will be accompanied by Sam CS's excellent background score. Kiran Abbavaram is poised to impress audiences with his performance in this historical mystery thriller, which marks his debut venture into pan-Indian cinema. The female leads of the film include Thanvi Ram, who was well-known in 2018 and Navan Sarika from *Gam Gamesha*. Vara Laxmi pre-

known in 2018 and Nayan Sarika from *Gam Gam Ganesha*. Vara Laxmi presents *KA*, which is produced by Srichakraas Entertainments, and promises an amazing movie experience.

Polimera 2 distributor faces serious allegations!

er Vamsi Nandinati, a close friend of 'Geeth

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



PIC TALK

Over the past few years, fans of actor Suriya have been indulging in worthy activities such as book donation, blood donation and planting saplings. Last year, when over 2000 fans donated blood on the occasion of his birthday, actor Suriya promised his fans that he will join them next year. Ahead of his birthday on July 23, actor Suriya donated blood along with his fans.

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



Vas, is currently facing claims from the producer who released the Polimera 2 film.

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

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

Krishna Prasad, the producer of *Polimeraa 2*, has now asked personal security for himself, cit-ing a fear for his life!



Chaithra, Meetha join the starry cast of Siddharth 40

haithra Achar, a Kannada actor who has built a name for herself, is preparing to make waves in Tamil cine-ma with two significant projects. She is currently film-

ing director Raju Murugan's forthcoming project and is about to begin shooting Siddharth's 40th movie today. The film is directed by Sri Ganesh and produced by Shanthi Talkies, which is known for the popular Maaveeran starring Sivakarthikeyan. Siddharth 40 also stars veteran actors Sarath Kumar and Devayani in key roles.

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

upcoming suspense thriller with debutant Hari in Kannada.

Following the news of Sarath Kumar and Devayani joining *Siddharth 40*, the producers also announced the addition of Meetha Raghunath to the cast. Meetha last appeared in the 2023 roman-tic comedy *Good Night*, opposite Manikandan K. This will be Shanthi Talkies' second production

attempt, following last year's Sivakarthikeyanstarrer Maaveeran, which completed one year after its release on Sunday.