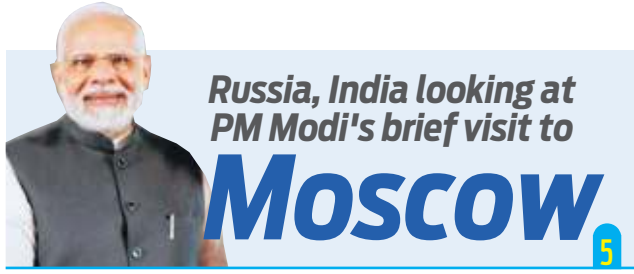


QUOTE OF THE DAY
 The pioneer

I said Jai Bhim, Jai Meem, Jai Telangana and Jai Palestine. Other Members also said different things. How can it be wrong? Tell me the Constitution provision which says so. You should also listen to what others say. I said what I had to. Read what Mahatma Gandhi had said about Palestine

-Asaduddin Owaisi Hyderabad MP



Russia, India looking at PM Modi's brief visit to Moscow



CONSIDERING
 PLI SCHEME FOR GARMENTS SECTOR: TEXTILES MIN



Raashii Khanna wants to work with MB, PRABHAS

DON'T MISS...
 People's complaints remain unresolved...

People who attended the Praja Vani complained about the officials' delay in attending to their requests. Over 687 people have submitted their applications at Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Praja Bhavan on Tuesday, hoping their personal concerns will be solved by the new Congress dispensation. Police job aspirants who were selected and are waiting for appointment letters reached out to Praja Bhavan to submit their grievances. About 35 of them submitted their representation, complaining about the situation at the Praja Vani...

'Non-coffee drinkers at 60%...

Non-coffee drinkers who sat for six or more hours a day were at almost 60 per cent higher risk of dying compared to coffee drinkers sitting for less than six hours, according to a research published in the journal BioMed Central (BMC) Public Health. This indicated an increased risk of dying in sedentary people not consuming coffee, but not among those drinking coffee, researchers following over 10,000 adults in the US for up to 13 years said. The researchers at the Medical College of Soochow...

Elastocalorics, carbon-capturing...

Privacy-enhancing technologies, elastocalorics as sustainable cooling solutions and livestock feed sources from single-cell proteins were listed on Tuesday among the top 10 emerging technologies for addressing global challenges. AI-powered scientific discovery, carbon-capturing microbes, reconfigurable intelligent surfaces and high-altitude platform stations were also featured in the annual list published by the World Economic Forum. The WEF said these top 10 emerging technologies focus...

A lot of credit for my wickets goes...

The pinpoint accuracy of Jasprit Bumrah allows other bowlers in the Indian team to go for wickets even in extreme pressure situations, said pacer Arshdeep Singh. The 25-year-old left-arm pacer is among the leading wicket-takers in the T20 World Cup with 15 scalps in six games at an average of 11.86 and economy rate of 7.41 runs per over. Bumrah, on the other hand, has taken 11 wickets in the same number of games, conceding just 4.08 runs per over, a rarity in the shortest format...

Owaisi says 'Jai Palestine' after taking oath

AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi Tuesday hailed a conflict-hit West Asian country after taking oath as a member of the 18th Lok Sabha, triggering an uproar from the treasury benches that led to the Chair ordering that the remarks be expunged. Owaisi, however, justified his slogans after he came out of the House and told reporters there was nothing wrong in him saying "Jai Bheem, Jai Meem, Jai Palestine" after taking oath as a member of the 18th Lok Sabha, triggering an uproar from the treasury benches that led to the Chair ordering that the remarks be expunged. Owaisi, however, justified his slogans after he came out of the House and told reporters there was nothing wrong in him saying "Jai Bheem, Jai Meem, Jai Palestine" after taking oath as a member of the 18th Lok Sabha, triggering an uproar from the treasury benches that led to the Chair ordering that the remarks be expunged.



It's Birla vs Suresh for LS Speaker post

Efforts to reach consensus fail

BJP's Om Birla will fight it out with Kodikunni Suresh of the Congress for the Lok Sabha Speaker's post after efforts to reach a consensus between the government and the opposition failed on Tuesday. The voting will take place on Wednesday. Both Birla and Suresh filed their nominations as NDA and INDIA bloc candidates, respectively. Birla served as Speaker in the previous Lok Sabha as well and if he wins he would be the first person to get the post for the second term in 25 years. Before filing his nomination, Birla also met Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He has returned to the Lok Sabha for the third time from Kota in Rajasthan, PZ

21 BRS MLAs may join Cong shortly

The main opposition party is going to suffer more shocks as it is learnt that 21 BRS MLAs are going to join the Congress shortly. Gandhi Bhavan sources said that some BRS MLAs may join the Congress en masse, particularly in the GHMC area. Some may join on June 28 or before month-end. Already five BRS MLAs have joined the Congress recently. They are Danam Nagender, Kadiam Srihari, Tellam Venkat Rao, Pocharam Srinivas Reddy and Dr Sanjay Kumar. With the joining of 21 MLAs the Congress objective will be achieved as the total number of BRS MLAs joining the Congress will become 26, that is, two-thirds of the BRS MLAs. The BRS has 38 MLAs and two-thirds means 26 MLAs. Sources said nine BRS MLAs will stay with BRS chief K. Chandrasekhar Rao (Gajwel MLA), T. Harish Rao (Siddipet MLA) and KT Rama Rao (Sircilla MLA). However, it is learnt that some BRS MLAs (three to four) may join the BJP. In fact, not only the BRS MLAs, who are going to join the Congress, but the Congress also is maintaining secrecy as they want to complete 'Operation Akarsh' successfully like KCR's Operation Akarsh of 2019. They will get a chance to stay as a separate group in the Assembly saying that theirs is the original BRSLP. It is learnt that except for one BRS MLA from the GHMC area, all BRS MLAs would be joining the Congress soon.



Sanction funds for panchayat buildings, says Seethakka

operating out of temporary rental accommodations are unable to perform their duties. So she requested the Union Minister to sanction Rs 1,544 crore under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA), that is, Rs 25 lakh per building for the construction of permanent buildings for 6,176 village panchayats. The Union Minister responded positively to Sithakka's request and assured funds for the construction of permanent buildings for village panchayats in Telangana. She said that village panchayats



'TG focusing on healthcare'

CM URGES NADDA TO RELEASE NHM DUES OF RS 693.13 CRORE

- CM tells Union Health Minister that the state government has been implementing the Ayushman Bharat scheme since January.
- Inform him about the establishment of 5,159 Basti Dawakhana in Telangana

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy urged Union Health Minister JP Nadda to release the pending dues of Rs 693.13 crore to Telangana under the National Health Mission (NHM) immediately. The Chief Minister called on Nadda in New Delhi on Tuesday. During the meeting, the CM explained the initiatives taken by the TG government to improve medical facilities and the special focus on strengthening the health sector in the state.



CM Revanth Reddy met Union Health Minister JP Nadda on Tuesday in Delhi

The CM informed the Union Health Minister that the state government has been implementing the Ayushman Bharat scheme since January. The Chief Minister told the Union Minister of the establishment of 5,159 Basti Dawakhana (Ayushman Arogya Mandirs) to provide better healthcare services in rural and urban areas. As the state government is giving top priority to medical services, the CM urged Nadda to extend cooperation to the state and release dues pending under the National Health Mission. The CM brought to the notice of the Union Minister, that for the third and fourth quarters of 2023-24,

under the NHM scheme, dues of Rs 323.73 crore were still pending. Similarly, he said that dues of Rs 138 crore pertaining to the first quarter of 2024-25 were pending and requested Nadda to release these funds immediately. The Chief Minister also asked Nadda to reimburse dues of Rs 231.40 crore for the year 2023-2024, which the state government had spent on infrastructure and maintenance under the NHM. The CM told Nadda that regarding the NHM scheme, the state government is releasing the entire expected Central share of funds along with the state's share from October 2023 to ensure that there is no disruption in extending emergency medical services and to avoid problems for staff. Ministers Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, P. Srinivas Reddy, Rajya Sabha MP Anil Kumar Yadav and the state's Special Representative in New Delhi, AP Jitendar Reddy, were also present at the meeting.



CM's Delhi tour prioritised Telangana

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's New Delhi tour highlighted the state's priorities. During his three-day visit to New Delhi, the CM met Central Ministers regarding issues connected with healthcare, housing development and urban infrastruc-

ture without compromising the state's interests. He was also present during the oath-taking of Telangana's Lok Sabha MPs boosting the morale of the Congress. BJP MP Arvind Dharmapuri said in a tweet, "Today, seated in the public gallery of the Lok Sabha, 2

KCR downplays defections as 4 Reddy MLAs skip meeting

Plans constituency tours to boost morale of cadres

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

There is no need to be unduly concerned about former Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy's decision to change party, BRS chief K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) said. KCR said this came during a meeting at his Erravalli farmhouse in Siddipet district which was attended by several BRS MLAs. During the meeting, KCR hosted a lunch for GHMC MLAs and discussed developments within the BRS. However, four Reddy MLAs from Hyderabad skipped the meeting. They are Malla Reddy (Medhcal), Marri Rajashekar Reddy (Malkajgiri), Sudheer Reddy (LB Nagar) and Bandari Lakshma Reddy (Uppal). Sources said that KCR said he will take up constituency tours to boost the morale of BRS cadres and that he will visit the residences of BRS MLAs.



Moves HC against Narasimha panel

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Justice L. Narasimha Reddy Commission issued notices to former Chief Minister BRS supremo K. Chandrasekhar Rao again. The Commission asked KCR to respond regarding the information it had received and asked him to reply by June 27. 2

Speed up construction of NHs in Telangana

- Minister Venkat urges NHAH chief Santosh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Minister for Roads, Buildings and Cinematography, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, met the Chairman of the National Highway Authority of India (NHAH), Santosh Kumar Yadav, at the NHAH office in New Delhi. During the meeting, the Minister spoke about the unresolved road issues in TG and requested approval for several National Highways. He said the slow pace of National Highway construction in Telangana in the last decade has resulted in the deaths of thousands of people. 2

Rahul to be Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha

-PAGE: 2

BIG BOOST FOR CLIMATE SOLUTION

Electricity made from the heat of the Earth

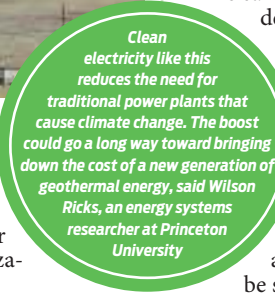
PNS ■ SACRAMENTO (CALIFORNIA)

One method of making electricity cleanly to address climate change has been quietly advancing and on Tuesday it hit a milestone. A California utility is backing the largest new geothermal power development in the US — 400 megawatts of clean electricity from the Earth's heat — enough for some 4,00,000 homes. Southern California Edison will purchase the electricity from Fervo Energy, a Houston-based geothermal company, Fervo announced. The company is drilling up to 125 wells in southwest Utah. Clean electricity like this reduces the need for traditional power plants that cause climate change. The boost



could go a long way toward bringing down the cost of a new generation of geothermal energy, said Wilson Ricks, an energy systems researcher at Princeton University. "If these purchases help to get this

technology off the ground, it could be massively impactful for global decarbonization," he said.



Clean electricity like this reduces the need for traditional power plants that cause climate change. The boost could go a long way toward bringing down the cost of a new generation of geothermal energy, said Wilson Ricks, an energy systems researcher at Princeton University

Decarbonization refers to switching out things that produce carbon dioxide and methane, which cause the climate to change, in favor of machines and methods that don't. Today the world still relies mainly on fossil fuels for round-the-clock power. This new deal shows that clean power can meet a growing demand for electricity, said Sarah Jewett, vice president of strategy at Fervo. "I think that's why it's so exciting. This isn't a niche energy resource going to a niche use," she said. "And that is something we have not had, you know, readily available" and able to be scaled up. 2

Has Cong brass offered Minister post to Jeevan?

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress MLC T. Jeevan Reddy has been declaring since the last two days that he will resign his MLC post as he had been offended by the party's decision to induct the BRS's Jagtial MLA, Dr Sanjay Kumar, without informing him. However, it is learnt that the Congress high command had offered a Minister post to Jeevan Reddy as he had been hoping for a Minister post along with his colleagues and asked him not to resign his MLC post. Congress leaders Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and IT Minister D. Sridhar Babu

and Congress MLAs from the erstwhile Karimnagar district went to his residence on Tuesday in Hyderabad and tried to stop him from quitting. The ministers assured Jeevan that they will talk to the high command and make it give due recognition to him. AICC in-charge General Secretary Deepa Das Munshi also spoke to him from New Delhi and told him that she would discuss matters with him after coming to Hyderabad. It may be recalled that Jeevan Reddy had been expressing unhappiness after former Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy joined the Congress.



BRS circles feel KCR has a key role in national politics

SNCN ACHARYULU
HYDERABAD



Is BRS president and former chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao away from national politics? After the defeat in the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections, KCR has been silent and staying at his farm house in Erravelli. It appears that KCR put politics aside and concentrating on farming at his farm house. BRS circles feel that though their party has no role in the Lok Sabha, there is scope for KCR to play a key role in national politics, because in the Rajya Sabha, BRS has five members, YSR Congress has 11 members and the BJD has 9 members. In the Rajya Sabha, the BJP-led NDA has no majority. If KCR from

Telangana, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy from Andhra Pradesh and Naveen Patnaik from Odisha unite, they can become a third force in the Rajya Sabha with 25 members strength. Odisha former chief minister Naveen Patnaik has taken clear stand against the BJP in the Rajya Sabha and former AP chief minister Jagan

will take anti-BJP stand since in the State, the TDP has joined the NDA or not is not yet clear. The BRS circles feel if these three former chief ministers stand against the BJP some more parties may also join this group. Amid no clear majority to the BJP-led NDA or to the Congress-led INDIA in the Rajya Sabha, if a third force is formed, it will gain importance.

KCR has good relations with Jagan and Naveen Patnaik. Interestingly, both Jagan and Naveen Patnaik were hit by the BJP in the recent Assembly elections. Both Jagan and Naveen Patnaik had moved closely to the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre till the recent Lok Sabha elections. They supported the Central government in

both the Houses in critical times. In spite of this, in Andhra Pradesh the BJP joined hands with the TDP, which is the main political rival of YSR Congress headed by Jagan. In Odisha, bypassing the pre-poll alliance with the BJD headed by Naveen Patnaik, the BJP contested alone in the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. Jagan in Andhra Pradesh and Naveen Patnaik in Odisha lost power in the Assembly elections. Like BRS in Telangana, the BJD in Odisha did not win a single seat in the Lok Sabha elections. The YSRC won four seats in AP. Under the circumstances, if KCR takes the initiative to form the third force in the Rajya Sabha, he can play a role in the national politics, the BRS circles feel.

HC orders stay on KCR's 2011 rail roko case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Justice Vijayan Reddy of the Telangana High court on Tuesday granted a stay on a 2011 case against former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao over a 'rail roko' protest.

The case was registered in the Malkajgiri police station. KCR's name was also mentioned in the FIR along with the charge sheet. Appearing for KCR, Advocate A. Prabhakar Rao said that giving a call by itself is not punishable under the legal sections given in the charge sheet like Sections 145, 148 and 147 of the Railway Act, Section 3 of the Prevention of Damage to Public Property (PDP) Act and other laws.

KCR and Kodanda Ram called for a Rail Roko protest on October 15, 16, and 17 in the year 2011.

Cong onslaught on democracy continues, says KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Forty-nine years ago, the Congress suppressed democratic rights and stifled public voices by imposing an Emergency in India, KTR said in a post on X on Tuesday.



"Decades later, the Congress's onslaught on democracy continues. In Parliament, Congress leaders hold copies of the Constitution. A few kilometres away, in their head office, their leaders encourage defections and kill the spirit of the Constitution," the BRS Working President said. "Revanth spoke about ethics during the poll campaign but

is behaving unethically while in government. In the past, he said it was a crime to win from one party and join another. You condemned defections. You called it a betrayal of party workers who carried the party on their shoulders. You also said that if MLAs change parties they should be stoned to death.

You urged people to chase them out of their villages if they don't resign. But today, you visit the homes of BRS MLAs and encourage them to change sides by draping Congress scarves on them. After delivering grand dialogues about punishing defectors, what temptations are you offering now? So now.

'Revanth made false claims on Sainik School'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former MP B. Vinod Kumar criticised Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and accused him of spreading lies in a Goebelian manner after meeting Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. He pointed out that Revanth had made false statements about Sainik School.

Vinod was speaking at a recent press conference held at the Telangana Bhavan here.

Regional pride marks oath-taking ceremony of TG MPs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Lok Sabha witnessed a wide spectrum of oath-taking rituals as the new MPs undertook their Constitutional duties on the second day of the Parliament session. They exhibited linguistic diversity, patriotism and pride in their regional ethos.

Telangana MPs opted for English, Hindi and Telugu while taking the oath. Many MPs from Telangana shouted "Jai Telangana" while being sworn in.

K. Gopinath, the MP of Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu, surprised everyone by taking the oath in Telugu. He used to speak to former CM Jayalalitha in Telugu and she used to reply in the same lan-

guage. Telangana MPs, Union Ministers Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay Kumar set the tone by taking their oaths in Telugu reaffirming their commitment to parliamentary responsibilities in their native language.

The oath-taking ceremony also saw Adilabad BJP MP Godem Nagesh opting for Hindi, while Peddapalli MP Vamsi Gaddam Krishna chose English and expressed solidarity with the slogan "Jai Hind."

Nizamabad MP Dharmapuri Aravind and Zaheerabad MP Suresh Kumar Shetkar took their oaths in English and Telugu respectively punctuating their declarations with chants of "Jai Hind" and "Jai Telangana."

No right to profess love for Constitution

Modi's dig at Cong on Emergency

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said those who imposed Emergency have no right to profess their love for the Constitution, as top BJP leaders trained their guns on the Congress with two party chief ministers demanding apology from the main opposition party.

As the BJP and the Congress crossed swords on the 49th anniversary of imposition of Emergency, Modi also said that its dark days are a reminder of how the Congress subverted basic free-

doms and trampled over the Constitution which every Indian respects greatly.

The Congress hit back at Modi and accused him of enforcing an "undeclared emergency" in the last 10 years which caused a "deep trauma" to democracy.

On June 25, 1975, the then prime minister Indira Gandhi declared a state of Emergency in the country, suspending civil liberties, jailing opposition leaders and dissidents and effecting press censorship. Emergency was lifted on March 21, 1977.

Rahul Gandhi to be Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will occupy the post of Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and a letter about the decision has been sent to Pro-tem Speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab by the Congress party.

The decision on Rahul Gandhi's appointment as the Leader of Opposition was announced soon after a meeting of the floor leaders of the INDIA bloc at Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge's residence.

AICC general secretary, Organisation, K C Venugopal told the media that CPP chairperson Sonia Gandhi has written to the Pro-tem Speaker about the decision of the

Congress party. "Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson (Sonia Gandhi) wrote to Pro-tem Speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab, informing him of the decision to appoint Rahul Gandhi as the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha," Venugopal told reporters after the meeting.

He said the decision on other appointments will be decided later. He floor leaders of opposition INDIA bloc had got together at the Congress chief's residence to discuss the Speaker's election and sources said they were informed about the "good news". With this decision, Rahul Gandhi finally bites the bullet in taking up this role, as he would now get the status of

a cabinet minister's rank. This will also enhance his position in the protocol list and could be a natural claimant to the post of prime minister of the opposition bloc.

This will be the first constitutional position that Rahul Gandhi will hold in his long political career of over two-and-a-half decades.

Gandhi as the LoP of Lok Sabha would also be a member of important panels on key appointments of Lokpal, CBI chief, Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners, besides the selection of Central Vigilance Commission, the Central Information Commission and the NHRC chief.

HC deals blow to Kejriwal

Stays trial court order on bail

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a blow to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the Delhi High Court on Tuesday stayed the trial court order granting him bail in the money laundering case arising from the alleged excise scam, holding that the lower court did not "appropriately appreciate" the material placed before it by the Enforcement Directorate.

A vacation bench of Justice Sudhir Kumar Jain said the ED's contentions assailing the bail order required serious consideration. "The Vacation (trial) Judge while passing the Impugned.

'Modi must apologise for using Ayodhya for political gains'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Prime Minister Modi committed a 'grave error' by constructing the Ram Temple in Ayodhya with the ulterior motive of making political gains during elections, TPCC Senior Vice-President G. Niranjan said.

He demanded that Modi should apologise to the people and the devotees of Lord Ram for his 'misdeed'.

Addressing the media at the Gandhi Bhavan here on Tuesday, he said the Prime Minister conducted 'pranapathista' of the Bala Ram idol at 'Ayodhya' on January 22, 2024, with much publicity.

"However, the devotees of Ram were shocked after seeing that rainwater was leaking into the shrine. This matter was disclosed on Monday by the head priest of the temple, Acharya Jitender Das. It is said that this rainwater is flowing right in front of the Ram Lalla statue where the priest sits and where VIPs stand for darshan," he said.

Govt to prevent Rythu Bandhu type wasting of funds: Tummala

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress government will formulate strong policies to prevent wasting of public funds as it happened in the case of the Rythu Bandhu scheme, Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageshwara Rao said.

Tummala got to know the views of farmers about the 'Rythu Bharosa' scheme through Rythu Vedikas organised via video conferencing in 110 rural Assembly constituencies which was

held as part of the Rythunestham programme held every Tuesday.

He said the government will replace Rythu Bandhu with the Rythu Bharosa Scheme and that investment assistance will be increased from Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000 per acre. He said that by providing Rythu Bandhu sops to uncultivated lands, public funds of Rs 25,670 crore were wasted. The share of small and marginal farmers who constitute 93 per cent of farmers was not even 68 per

cent in the Rythu Bandhu funds disbursed. Moreover, tenant farmers who constituted 17.5 per cent were completely ignored.

The Minister spoke about farmers from almost all districts and said that it is a good thing to take their opinion directly.

Many farmers said the scheme should provide investment assistance to cultivators as well as the land under cultivation and that the Rythu Bharosa scheme should have a maximum.

Sanction funds for panchayat buildings...

Continued on Page 1

The meeting took place on Tuesday at the Krishna Bhavan in New Delhi. Seethakka presented a replica of the Ashoka Pillar to Rajeev Ranjan Singh and congratulated him on recently assuming charge as the Union Panchayat Raj Minister and expressed her hope that his experience would contribute to the comprehensive development of village

panchayats and bring about changes in the lives of rural people.

Seethakka said that Telangana is at the forefront of promoting decentralised governance through village panchayats and highlighted the need for permanent buildings to improve public services at the village level and to enhance basic infrastructure in rural areas.

CM's Delhi...

Continued on Page 1

Telangana CM Revanth Reddy waved at all the oath-taking MPs from Telangana including BJP Members as a congratulatory gesture. It was indeed an appreciable gesture.

The Chief Minister is actively pursuing cooperation with Union Ministers to resolve issues while maintaining the state's dignity.

During the first day of his New Delhi tour, he met Union Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh and requested the transfer of Defence lands in Hyderabad to address the needs of residential areas and to construct infrastructure projects.

The Chief Minister asked for the allocation of 2.70 lakh houses for Telangana under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) and sought approval for these homes under the Centre's grant of Rs 784.88 crore.

He also discussed the need for expanding the Metro Rail in Hyderabad with Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister.

Electricity...

Continued on Page 1

The first generation of geothermal plants, for example, The Geysers in California, tapped into superheated reservoirs of steam or very hot water close to the Earth's surface. Such reservoirs are relatively rare.

Speed up construction...

Continued on Page 1

He urged the NHAI Chairman to speed up pending projects and to give immediate clearance for the construction of NHs. The Minister specifically requested that the dispute with BOT concessionaire M/s GMR should be resolved so that the Hyderabad-Vijayawada NH-65 Road can be six-laned. This is crucial to reduce traffic congestion, prevent accidents and save lives.

He also called for a quick resolution to NGT-related issues affecting the NH-163 (Hyderabad-Maneguda road) which has delayed the four-laning of the road for over a year. The Minister emphasised the

need to speed up the preparation of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for four-laning the NH-765 (Hyderabad-Kalwakurthi road) as there was heavy traffic and frequent accidents on the road. The NHAI Chairman assured that the DPR preparation would commence immediately. The Minister provided a detailed presentation with maps of various pending road projects in the state and requested that work be initiated as soon as possible.

NHAI Chairman Santosh Kumar Yadav responded positively to the Minister's requests and promised to discuss the issues in detail with officials and resolve them promptly.

Moves HC ...

Continued on Page 1

The Commission issued notices to KCR and ex-minister Jagdish Reddy. However, KCR approached the High Court on Tuesday and requested the court to stay further proceedings of the Justice L. Narasimha Reddy Commission.

The Commission was constituted to inquire into the power purchase agreements and the construction of thermal power plants at Manuguru and Damacherla by the BRS government. The High Court is likely to hear the petition on Thursday. The respondents in this case are the state of Telangana, the Commission of inquiry and Justice L. Narasimha Reddy.

The Congress government constituted a commission on March 14 to conduct an inquiry on power DISCOMs, the Bhadradi Thermal Power Station (BTPS) at Manuguru and the Yadadri Thermal Power Station (YTPS) at Damaracherla.

In the file, KCR had said that in 2014 the allotted power was found inadequate.

TODAY
ALMANAC
Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha
Tithi: Panchami: Jun 25 11:11 PM to Jun 26 08:55 PM
Shashthi: Jun 26 08:55 PM to Jun 27 06:39 PM
Nakshatram: Jun 25 02:32 PM to Jun 26 01:05 PM
Dhanishta: Jun 26 01:05 PM to Jun 27 11:36 AM
Rahukalam: 12:19 PM to 1:56 PM
Yamagandam: 7:25 AM to 9:03 AM
Varjyam: 07:50 PM to 09:20 PM
Gulika: 10:41 AM to 12:19 PM
Amritakalam: None
Abhijit Muhurtham: Nil
HYDERABAD WEATHER
Forecast: Scattered Thunderstorms
Temp: 32°C
Humidity: 65%
Sunrise: 5:44 AM
Sunset: 6:54 PM
Updated: June 25, 2024 5:00 PM

It's Birla vs...

Continued on Page 1

Suresh, an eight-time MP from Kerala, said it is not about winning or losing, but about a convention that Speaker will be of ruling party and deputy speaker will be of opposition.

"Last two Lok Sabhas, they denied us deputy speaker's post because they said you are not recognised as the opposition. Now we are recognised as the opposition, deputy speaker post is our right. But they are not ready to give us. Till 11.50 we were waiting for reply from government's side but they did not give any reply," he told reporters.

Senior BJP leader and Union minister Rajnath

Singh reached out to opposition leaders for their support to Birla, but the Congress wanted the deputy speaker's post for the Opposition in return citing convention and past practices.

There was no deputy speaker in the previous Lok Sabha. Union Ministers Rajiv Ranjan Singh and Piyush Goyal said it was wrong on the part of Opposition to put conditions and Rajnath Singh told them that the issue can be discussed when time comes for election of deputy speaker.

The opposition, however, wanted the post immediately and the NDA would not agree to such conditions, the two ministers told reporters.

KCR...

Continued on Page 1

He stressed the need to protect the party and work hard to strengthen it.

KCR advised everyone not to act hastily and reminded them that similar situations had occurred during the tenure of the late YS Rajasekhara Reddy and that the party did not falter then and should not be fearful now.

He emphasised that the defection of a few MLAs, including former Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy, would not harm the BRS. He assured that continuous meetings with MLAs and MLCs would be held starting Wednesday to address concerns and to strategize future actions. KCR accused Revanth Reddy of failing to fulfil the promises made to the public and said.

Owaisi says 'Jai Palestine'...

Continued on Page 1

Jai Telangana, Jai Palestine".

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, meanwhile, said he has received complaints from some members about the mention of Palestine. Asked about his remarks, Owaisi told reporters, "Other members are also saying different things... How is it wrong? Tell me the provision of the Constitution? You should also listen to what others said. I said what I had to. Read what Mahatma Gandhi had said about Palestine".

Asked why he mentioned Palestine, he said, "They are oppressed people." The All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen leader, who has been elected from the Hyderabad seat for his fifth term, took oath in Urdu. He also recited a prayer before tak-

ing oath. After taking oath, he hailed his state Telangana, Bhimrao Ambedkar, apart from raising the AIMIM's slogan for Muslim, along with the West Asian country.

His remarks led to uproar in the Lower House. Radha Mohan Singh, who was in the Chair at the time, assured the members that anything apart from the oath will not go on record.

The uproar continued for few minutes, after which the oath-taking resumed.

Pro-tem Speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab returned to the Chair soon, and said that only oath or affirmation is being recorded.

"I have said earlier please avoid invoking anything other than oath or affirmation. That is only to be recorded... That should be adhered to," Mahtab

said. Talking to reporters outside Parliament later, Rijiju said he will check the rules regarding remarks.

"We do not have any enmity with Palestine or any other country. The only issue is, while taking the oath, is it proper for any member to raise the slogan praising another country? We will have to check the rules. Some members have come to me and complained about raising of Palestine slogan at the end of oath," Rijiju said.

Union Minister G Kishan Reddy, meanwhile, took a jibe at Owaisi, questioning if he could say "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" (hail mother India).

He said Owaisi's remarks are "totally wrong and against the rules of Parliament". "Living in India, he cannot say 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai', but he can hail

Palestine. Such people are doing anti-Constitutional work in the name of Constitution, that should be understood," BJP leader Amit Malviya, meanwhile, objected to the prayer said by Owaisi.

"Palestine apart, is invoking religious idioms kosher, while taking oath in secular India? Is Owaisi guilty of infusing religion and communalising a solemn occasion?" Malviya said in a post on X. Malviya claimed Owaisi can be disqualified for this. "As per extant rules, Asaduddin Owaisi can be disqualified from his Lok Sabha membership, for demonstrating adherence to a foreign State, that is Palestine."

He posted the clip of the rule that said "any acknowledgement of allegiance or adherence to a foreign state" as one of the factors for disqualifying a member

People's complaints remain unresolved at Praja Vani

**SAMUEL JOSHUA/
RIYA KOMMINENI**
■ HYDERABAD

People who attended the Praja Vani complained about the officials' delay in attending to their requests. Over 687 people have submitted their applications at Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Praja Bhavan on Tuesday, hoping their personal concerns will be solved by the new Congress dispensation.

Police job aspirants who were selected and are waiting for appointment letters reached out to Praja Bhavan to submit their grievances. About 35 of them submitted their representation, complaining about the situation at the Praja Vani.

An aspirant Rajesh said, 170 aspirants who have passed the test and were getting trained have still not received their posting.

Several of them sat on the steps outside the building and have been coming to Praja Vani every week taking turns, urging officials to take action. Rajesh expressed his frustration with the uncertainty he felt with his employment status.



Special Officer D Divya seen receiving applications from the people

In another request, a public park in Malkajgiri has been threatened by encroachment for the past four years. Residents and members of the Gautham Nagar Colony Welfare Association have been fighting for this issue and have approached the officials concerned several times.

Upon asking, V Naasaraiah, general secretary of the association, said he has been coming to the Praja Vani hoping

the issue would finally be resolved, but it was getting delayed. His organisation alleged that the encroachment is a violation of a High Court order that found the encroachment in contempt in 2020 and 2021.

However, no action has been taken since then. According to a brief Naasaraiah filed in the Praja Vani, the park is the only lung space for the colony and that

plot owners will suffer serious loss because of the encroachment.

Meanwhile, 2BHK applicants continue to throng to Praja Vani regularly. Yadagiri from Amberpet said, "Under the previous administration, certain underprivileged individuals were assured of a free double-bedroom flat under the 2BHK scheme. This programme was created in an effort to make Hyderabad a slum-free city."

He said that he has repeatedly visited the Praja Vani and has been asking for the updates, but has not received a positive response.

According to officials, 225 applications related to revenue issues, 59 related to housing, 82 related to the Civil Supplies department, 47 related to the Home department, 40 related to the Panchayati Raj Rural Development department, and 234 related to other departments have been received. Praja Vani Special Officer D Divya and other officers received applications from the public and enquired about their problems.

TJUDA strike hits services at hospitals

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The indefinite strike by Telangana Junior Doctors Association (TJUDA) over unmet demands entered second day on Tuesday.

The junior doctors expressed dismay over the government's response to their demand. "There is no proper clarity on the steps taken to construct roads inside the Kakatiya Medical College or providing security at the government hospitals.

Hence, the protest will continue," the TJUDA leaders said.

In order to address the staff shortage, the government hospitals have cancelled leaves of the senior doctors. However, the arrangement may not be sustainable in the long run.

On Monday, about 200 elective surgeries at Gandhi Hospital and teaching hospitals attached to Osmania Medical College including OGH, Chest Hospital, ENT Hospital in Koti and Niloufer Hospital, had to be postponed due to the indefinite strike call given by the TJUDA.



Govt keen on completing GHMC, Cantt merger: CS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari informed that the Telangana government is keen to complete the process of merger of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) with the Secunderabad Cantonment quickly. Union Defence Secretary A Giridhar on Tuesday held a video conference with senior officials of various State governments and discussed the modalities for excision of civil areas from the limits of cantonments and

merging them with municipalities.

He asked the State government officials to expedite the process of excision of civil areas in the cantonment areas at the earliest as the Union government is determined to abolish the cantonment boards which are the legacies of the British rule in India.

Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari said that the State government has already conveyed its concurrence to the proposal of the Union government for excision of civil areas of Secunderabad Cantonment

Board and merge them with the GHMC. She however noted that the committee constituted by the Central government to finalise the modalities for removal of civil areas has not yet shared its report with the State government.

The State government will work closely with the Central government to expedite the process quickly, she added.

Principal Secretary (MAUD) Danakishore, officials from the municipal administration and Cantonment Board attended the video conference.

Minister Konda Surekha holds review on Bonalu festival

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Minister for Endowments Konda Surekha stated that the process of selecting festival committees for other major temples would be completed in two or three days, during a review meeting with the Commissioners under GHMC in her office at the Secretariat on Tuesday.

The Minister told the officials of the Endowments department that Ashada Bonalu festival should be held to reflect the culture and traditions of Telangana. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has allocated Rs 20 crore for the celebrations. A State-level festival committee consisting of seven members has been formed under the leadership of the Chief Minister to organise the Bonalu in a grand manner. The committee includes Chief Minister, Minister of Revenue, Hyderabad and Rangareddy district in-charge ministers Prabhakar, Sridhar Babu, Rajya Sabha MP Anil Kumar Yadav, Khairatabad



MLA Danam Nagender, and the Chief Secretary. The allocated amount will be used for the decoration of temples, purchase of silk clothes, printing of books giving information about Bonalu, use of elephant services for Ambari, electricity, culture, information and public relations.

The Minister advised the officials to organise Bonalu to reflect the image of the Telangana government. Referring to the issue faced during the offering of Bonalus of Joginis, the officials were directed to arrange separate

queue lines for them. Children and elderly people should be careful. It has been suggested to the authorities to organise hoardings and other promotional programmes to showcase the festival and to take measures to broadcast the Bonalu festival live on DD Yadagiri channel. The officials were ordered to organise the celebrations in Telangana Bhavan at the centre of Delhi to enhance the reputation of Telangana. The Minister took clarification from the officials on the allocation of funds required for these works.

Hyd cops clarify on shop timings

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad Police issued a clarification on closing time for shops after a video of a police official threatening traders with lathi-charge went viral.

The authority took to X and said, "The recent social media news making rounds that city police are closing shops by 10.30 or 11 pm are totally misleading. The shops and establishments will open/close as per the already existing rules only. Hence, the same may be noted by all."

Earlier, AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi demanded that the shops be allowed to remain open until at least 12 midnight and said that big metros across the country allow shops to be open at night.



First Indo-Uzbek Pharma Business Forum to boost trade, investment

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The first Indo-Uzbek Pharma Business Forum, focusing on trade and investment opportunities in the pharmaceutical sector between India and Uzbekistan was held in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

The event was jointly conducted by the Uzbekistan Embassy and the Pharmaceutical Industry Development Agency of Uzbekistan, and Neo Institute of Medical Sciences and Technology Ltd., which was attended by high-level representatives and industry leaders from both nations.

Sardor M Rustambaev, Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to India, stressed on the significance of strengthening ties between India and Uzbekistan, especially in the pharmaceutical sector.

Abdulla Azizov, Director of the Pharmaceutical Industry Development Agency of Uzbekistan, spoke on the current landscape and future prospects of the pharmaceutical industry in Uzbekistan.



Abdulla Azizov, Director of the Pharmaceutical Industry Development Agency of Uzbekistan at the forum

Dr Divya Raj, Indian Representative of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Managing Director of Neo Institute of Medical Sciences and Technology, emphasised the importance of the forum in fostering collaboration and innovation in the pharmaceutical sector. Notably, Neo Institute of Medical Sciences and Technology will represent the Pharmaceutical Industry Development Agency of Uzbekistan (PIDA) in India and assist PIDA in securing investments from Indian pharmaceutical companies.

The forum indulged in discussions on the potential for joint ventures, research collaborations and technology transfers that will benefit both Indian and Uzbek pharmaceutical industries. Additionally, substantial investment interests were expressed, signaling a robust commitment to strengthening economic ties and fostering mutual growth.

Pharmaceutical exports from India are a major contributor to trade between India and Uzbekistan. The bilateral trade volume between the two countries is approximately US\$ 800 million.

Call to digitise records of GHMC assets

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi directed the officials to digitise the properties related to GHMC soon. The Mayor reviewed the state of the assets along with additional commissioners in her chamber on Tuesday.

She directed to take steps to increase the sources of income through the assets of the GHMC. Steps should be taken to prevent open lands of the GHMC from encroachment.

The Mayor asked the officials as to how many community buildings were there in the GHMC limits. She asked them to give a full report detailing what they are being used for. She directed the officials to provide the details of the model market and municipal market rooms and their usage.

The Mayor ordered the officials to prepare all the details of the lease and properties and to attend the next meeting with a complete

DCA seizes overpriced medicine, drugs over misleading claims

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Drug Control Administration (DCA) on Tuesday raided a pharmacy in Sangareddy and seized an overpriced medicine.

DCA officials seized ICONO 200 Capsules' sold under the brand name which is under price control as per Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 and the price of product shall be in accordance with the 'ceiling price' fixed by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), Government of India.

The maximum retail price of the capsules is Rs 44.21 for 10 tablets and Rs 44.12 for each capsule, which is a violation of Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013.

The ceiling price fixed by the Central government, including Wholesale Price Index (WPI) for the product "Itraconazole Capsules 200 mg" is Rs 22.12 for one capsule. The administration stressed that the MRP including 12% GST should not be more than Rs 24.77 for one capsule.

In a raid conducted at a pharmacy in Suryapet, the DCA seized 'Pilesmoon Cream' over misleading claims to cure piles, which is in violation of the Drugs Rules, 1945. The administration said, "The product 'Pilesmoon Cream' is a 'drug' and the claim regarding treating the disease 'piles' is a prohibited claim for a 'drug' as per 'Schedule J' of Drugs Rules.

Police submit corrected chargesheet with evidence

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Nampally court had returned the chargesheet in the phone-tapping case as the police have not provided the details of DVD about the photos of "Musli River, SIB office and intelligence office".

The court returned the chargesheet two times and the police filed the chargesheet three times. First time the court returned it to police on June 18 and the police resubmitted the chargesheet the same day.

On June 18, the court found lapses in the submission and returned it to the police. Some of them are that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) mentioned the FIR number as 243/2034 instead of 243/2024.

Along with them, a letter

PHONE-TAPPING



was dated April 11, 2024, but the police mentioned it as April 16, 2024. Another letter was dated May 20, 2024, but it was mentioned as April 10, 2024.

In the form-60, the total number of papers were four, but the police mentioned it as

six in the chargesheet. After the police resubmitted the chargesheet, the court rejected it again by citing lack of evidence material on June 22.

After making corrections, the police submitted a chargesheet and evidence in two boxes and compact disks (CD) in a plastic cover to the 14th Chief Metropolitan Magistrate on Tuesday afternoon.

While submitting the evidence, Public Prosecutor Samba Shiva Reddy requested the court not to give evidence to the accused.

A source said that it is common to return the chargesheet to the police in court.

But due to the mistakes in the chargesheet, the accused filed a petition for mandatory bail before the court.



Premiere of *Manyam Veerudu* on June 28

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Ministry of Culture, Government of India and Shankarananda Kalakshetra will present the premiere of the theatrical production 'Manyam Veerudu - Alluri Sitaramaraju' on June 28 at 7:00 pm at Ravindra Bharati, Hyderabad. Entry to the premiere is open to all.

Manyam Veerudu - Alluri Sitaramaraju is a dance drama that brings to life the extraordinary bravery, inspiring life of one of India's greatest freedom fighters, Alluri Sitaramaraju.

Classical dancer Ananda Shankar Jayant directed this 45-minute production at the Ravindra Bharati, capturing the unique life story of this remarkable freedom-fighter.

India's DNA not secularism but fraternity: CH Vidyasagar Rao

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Under the auspices of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), Osmania University organised a seminar on Tuesday on the subject of Dictatorship, autocracy and dark days of Emergency at OU Arts College to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the imposition of Emergency in the country.

CH Vidyasagar Rao, the former governor of Maharashtra and an anti-emergency activist, said that on 25th June 1975, Indira Gandhi imposed emergency in this country with dictatorial tendencies, and those who agitated against the emergency were booked under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) and kept in jail for years. It is surprising to see the Congress, which imposed emergency and adopted dictatorial tendencies, is now talking about the Constitution. What was in India's DNA was not secularism but brotherhood.



He also said that it is ironic to talk about the preservation of the Constitution, forgetting the constitutional amendments made by the Congress government during the tenure of Indira Gandhi, which fueled the imposition of emergency. They reminded that many countries like Indonesia consider India as an ancient cultural country and if they adopt the cultural traditions of India, due to some selfish politicians in our country, the country's values will be degraded. When he was the Governor, he had made arrangements to commemorate September 17 officially so that the Government of India had gazetted it. The current students are aware of the many conspiracies going on in India and stand for the country.

TNGOs ask govt to solve pending issues

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Employees Joint Action Committee (JAC) organised a meeting at Telangana Non-Gazetted Officers' (TNGO) Central Association office in Nampally on Tuesday on the problems faced by the employees under the new government.

Jagadeeswar, president of TNGOS Central Association said, "In the past, the formation of JAC played a key role in the formation of Telangana State. Along with the problems of the employees, the JAC of these

It is wrong for the government not give promotions to employees who work for six years

employees fought for the formation of the State. In the new government, there are many pending issues regarding the monthly salaries."

He also demanded to release the arrears of DAs immediately, implementation of the old pension system, employee

health scheme should be introduced and implemented, pending promotions of employees should be given, PRP should be implemented and increased by 50 per cent.

"It is wrong for the government not give promotions to employees who work for six years. The GO of the employees brought in by the previous government should be implemented. Earlier, we staged a dharna even if two DAs did not come, but now even after four DAs did not come, the employees are patient.

The style of the new government is old beer in a new bottles. The State government should take steps to put pressure on the Central government to increase the income tax limit for job pensioners. It should issue an order allowing the Treasury department to extend the deadline of March 31, 2023 to March 31, 2026 for processing the pending bills in the old PRC.

Allowance of medical reimbursement should be extended from March 31, 2024 to March 31, 2026. Steps should be taken to rectify the errors in 317 JV and apply to future recruitments with PO 2018," he added.

Anti-drug abuse rally taken out

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Anti Narcotics Bureau on Tuesday conducted an anti-drug rally at Necklace Road on the occasion of International Day against Drug Abuse.

In all, 2,000 students participated in the rally. Addressing the gathering, TGNB Director Sandeep Shandilya said, "All of us must pledge not to take drugs and guide our near and dear ones to do the same."

Telangana DGP Ravi Gupta said, "The International Day against Drug Abuse is a reminder for all about the drug

menace prevalent across the world. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that it is totally wiped out. It is a major task which can be achieved through the cooperation of the enforcement authorities and the society. Getting addicted to drugs is a disease which will affect the society at large."

Hyderabad Commissioner of Police Kothkoti Srinivas Reddy said, "Consumption of cigarettes and alcohol are harmful to individuals as it may create financial problems to their family, but consumption of drugs leads to destroying young people's future."

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

'E' PROCUREMENT NOTICE

NT No. 67/EE-38/SGZ/GHMC/2024-25, Dt: 24-06-2024 published on 'e' procurement platform. The details can be seen by logging @ <https://tender.approcurement.gov.in>. The date of events is detailed below: **Name of the Work:** 1. Maintenance and Minor repairs to Hari Hara Kala Bhavan and NTPC Building repairs-1 Work, 2. Construction of FRP Messory drain with Precast slabs at Anavilli apartment, Jawahar Nagar-1 Work, 3. CC Road-1 Work, 4. Repairs to duct-line, toilets repairs and other minor repairs to Bhudha bhavan building-1 Work, 5. Demarcating of Existing disused Urinal Blocks and Construction of new urinal blocks at 15A-Morla Market-1 Work, 6. Providing impervious coat to RCC roof slab and other Minor repairs to Bhubhavan building, 7. Construction of sumps, installation of dewatering pumps at Brahmaroad & Mayur Marg on Kuzoorly rala-1 work. **Estimate Amount:** Rs. 127.95 lakhs, **Bid Document Download Start Date & Time:** 25-06-2024 12.00 PM., **Bid Submission Closing Date & Time:** 03-07-2024 12.00 PM., **Name & Address of Officer:** Cell No: RE, Circle- 30, GHMC, Sec: bad, Cell No.s: 7331181426 / 9846606790, Address of the officer concerned Sri. Sureshan, Executive Engineer, Circle-30, Begumpet, Sec:bad Zone, GHMC. Further details can be seen at e-Procurement @ <https://tender.telangana.gov.in> Sd/- Executive Engineer, Circle-30, Begumpet, GHMC. R.O.No: 1096-PP/CLAD/VI/102824-25, Dt: 25-06-2024



'Charity group diverted funds meant for indigent students'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Searches against a Telangana-based charity group has found that about Rs 300 crore worth of foreign funds raised partly from domestic donations in the name of providing free education and meals to down-trodden children were diverted for "unauthorised" purposes, the Enforcement Directorate said on Tuesday.



The raids were undertaken at 11 locations of the Operation Mobilisation (O M) group of charities and its key office-bearers in and around Hyderabad on June 21-22, the federal agency said in a statement.

The money laundering case stems from a state police CID FIR that alleged that the charity group and others raised "substantial" funds of around Rs 300 crore from foreign donors based in the USA, Canada, UK, Australia, Argentina, Denmark, Germany, Finland, Ireland, Malaysia, Norway, Brazil, Czech Republic, France, Romania, Singapore, Sweden and Switzerland in the name of providing free education and meals to Dalit and down-trodden children.

These children, according to the CID FIR, were studying in more than 100 Good Shepherd schools run by the group that is alleged to have "diverted" the said funds for asset creation and other "unauthorised" purposes.

"CID investigation found

that suppressing the fact of sponsorship of students, tuition and other fees ranging from Rs 1,000-Rs 1,500 per month were collected from the students and substantial funds were put into fixed deposits and/or diverted to other related entities of the O M group.

"Funds were also received from the government under the Right to Education Act but the same were not recorded properly and other incomes were grossly under-reported in the books of accounts," the ED alleged.

It said a probe found that several suspicious transactions indicated "diversion" of the funds of the O M group of charities and multiple immovable properties of the key office-bearers of the group that are spread across Telangana, Goa, Kerala, Karnataka and Maharashtra.

"FCRA registrations for most of the group entities were not renewed and to bypass the same, foreign funds received in FCRA registered 'O M Books Foundation' were diverted to other group entities as loans which are yet to be repaid," it claimed.

The office-bearers of the group were employed as consultants with shell entities incorporated in Goa and were receiving salaries, the ED said.

The searches led to the seizure of "incriminating" documents, digital devices, records of "clandestine" transactions, properties and benami companies, the agency said.

Rythu Bharosa: Dy Chief Minister wants officials to collect public opinion

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu suggested collecting farmers' opinions to determine the best way forward on Rythu Bharosa and making farmers participants in the process. He stressed the need to enhance the effectiveness of the scheme.



Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka along with Cabinet colleagues in Hyderabad on Tuesday

Vikramarka and Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao conducted a review meeting on the annual budget proposals with officials from the Agriculture, Marketing, Handloom, and Textile departments.

Agricultural officials expressed that allocating funds for drip irrigation would be beneficial. They reviewed the current expenditures on farmer loan waivers, Rythu Bharosa, and Rythu Bima schemes, and discussed the growing budget in line with election promises.

The Deputy Chief Minister questioned Agriculture officials about the schemes halted since the previous government came into power and the reasons behind their suspension. Minister

Tummala Nageswara Rao advised utilising the funds and schemes available through matching grants from the central government. They discussed the central and state government shares in crop insurance and the tenders to be called for the upcoming season's crop insurance.

The Deputy Chief Minister collected details about agricultural colleges in the joint districts of the state and the districts still lacking such institutions. He inquired into the activities of the Seed Development Corporation and discussed seed development in agricultural colleges. He emphasized the need to focus on actions required for agricultural

development, stating that a developed agricultural sector would increase production, benefiting both the state treasury and farmers. The Deputy CM also reviewed the expenditures in sectors that bring the highest revenue to the state treasury.

The shares of the central and state governments in oil palm cultivation were also discussed. Further discussions were held on the Nethanna Cheyutha and Nethanna Bima schemes, including the central government's share. Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu inquired into the changes in the lives of handloom workers post-state division.

Modern thermal power plant to be established in Ramgundam

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu has announced the construction of a 62.5 MW modern thermal power plant in Ramgundam, fulfilling an election promise. He emphasised that the new supercritical technology thermal power station will address youth employment opportunities locally and help overcome the power shortage in the state. Responding positively to requests from the Ministers and MLAs to complete the long-pending promise, he assured that the historic Ramgundam Thermal Power Station, originally built during the Nizam era, would be reconstructed. The Deputy Chief Minister clarified that all necessary actions will be taken under the leadership of Singareni to construct the pithead plant.

Student commits suicide after failing in exams

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

In a tragic incident, a 17-year-old student, named Akhil, from Thulekalan village under Ibrahimpatnam mandal has committed suicide. Akhil took his own life by hanging after reportedly becoming frustrated over failing his intermediate exams.

The news left his family devastated. The Ibrahimpatnam police registered a case and initiated an investigation into the circumstances surrounding Akhil's death.



Collector asks doctors to provide best medical care to patients

PNS ■ SIDDIPEET

District Collector Manu Choudhary who made a surprise visit to the Government Area Hospital here on Tuesday went round the hospital and directed hospital superintendent, doctors and nurses to discharge their duties properly without causing any inconvenience to the patients.

He offered to provide amenities in the hospital for the benefit of the patients.

He went round all the wards and interacted with patients. He interacted with the patients to enquire about the medical services being provided to them. The patients told the Collector that doctors are regularly visiting them and offer medicines.

The Government Area Hospital here has been providing all amenities to patients.



Siddipet District Collector Manu Choudhary inspecting area hospital in Siddipet on Tuesday

Therefore, they should not approach the private hospital, but should make good use of the amenities at the hospital. The Collector explained to patients.

He asked the hospital authorities about the number of deliveries conducted by the hospital daily, including the C-section deliveries.

To a request from the doctors, Collector assured them that a special birth chair would be provided in the labour ward. He inspected the hospital

toilets. Underlining the importance of the sanitation, he asked the officials in-charge of the sanitation in the hospital to regularly maintain sanitation in the hospital.

He inspected the Telangana diagnostic hub, which has necessary equipment to run the diagnostic tests, and asked the personnel there to give results of the blood tests within the stipulated time. The Arogyasri counter should be accessible to the people.

394 kg of marijuana seized in various cases destroyed

PNS ■ SIDDIPEET

Under the supervision of the marijuana Destruction Committee, headed by Police Commissioner B Anuradha, a total of 394 kg of marijuana, seized in 14 cases during 2023-24, was destroyed. The marijuana was dumped into incinerator.

The Ganja Destruction Committee was formed with DCP S Mallareddy and Siddipet ACP G Madhu.

Speaking on the issue, Anuradha said special teams were constituted in the district to curb the smuggling and peddling of the narcotic substances. Special sniffer dogs will inspect the black spots to detect the smuggling of the drugs. She advised the youth against get-

ting addicted to drugs as it would destroy their lives and also their families.

Parents should keep a strict watch on the movements of their children and keep an eye on the online parcels delivered to their homes. She appealed to the people to cooperate with the police in making the district free from ganja and other narcotic substances.

Additional DCP S Mallareddy, Siddipet ACP Madhu, CCRB Inspector Guruswamy, Inspectors Srinivas, Upender, Srinu, Vidyasagar, Srinu, Reserve Inspector Poornachander Chinnakoduru, SI Balakrishna, SIs Bhaskar Reddy, Mahesh, Tirupati, and police officers and staff participated in this program.



After daring Ponnam, Koushik Reddy swears by Lord at home

PNS ■ HUZURABAD

BRS legislator from Huzurabad Padi Kaushik Reddy on Tuesday dared Minister for Backward Classes Welfare Ponnam Prabhakar to prove his innocence by taking oath in front of the idol of Lord Venkateswara Swamy at a temple, near Apollo Hospital in Jubilee Hills in Hyderabad at exactly 12 noon on Wednesday.

"If he fails to turn up at the temple, it will be deemed that he is involved in collecting money from lorries transporting fly ash, overloaded lorries and thus amassing huge illicit wealth," he said.

Earlier on Tuesday, Kaushik Reddy with wet clothes took oath in front of the deity at his house that the allegation he had made against the Minister was true.

Earlier, he was stopped by the police when he was on his way to Chilpur to take oath in front of Lord Anjaneya Swamy idol there.

Responding to allegations levelled against Ponnam Prabhakar by Padi Kaushik Reddy earlier, Congress leader Pranav Babu dared Kaushik Reddy to take oath in front of the deity at Chilpur. Kaushik Reddy accepted the challenge. A large number of Congress activists and leaders were present near the temple leading to prevalence of tension in the temple area.

The police became alert and took Kaushik Reddy into preventive detention at Veenavanka, forcing him to take oath before in front of an idol at his house.

'Educate people on revolutionary changes taking place in banking sector'

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Telangana Commerce Association president D Chennappa on Tuesday stressed the need to educate people about the revolutionary changes taking place in the banking sector. He was the chief guest at the MGU national seminar on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, he said the banking industry has moved from physical banking (customer walk-ins and face-to-face interactions) to digital platforms which include online banking due to contactless technologies. He said that there are seven major contributors to the facelift not only in the Indian banking sector but also in the economy, which are demography, urbanisation, education, industrialization, digitisation, financial inclusion and global integration.

Prof Akula Ravi, Secretary of the National Seminar said that one should be alert towards cybercrimes and commerce students should create awareness among peo-

ple about their content. Cyber crimes are on the rise due to the increasing use of mobile phones. He said that most of the common people are victims of cyber frauds and cyber criminals are deceiving people by offering attractive offers. Precautions should be taken to prevent cyber crimes. "We have a responsibility to address these issues," he said. He said that the Nalgonda Mahatma Gandhi University will provide Rs 2.5 lakh to the commerce students every year for providing gold schemes to the university toppers and Rs 2 lakh to the university for conducting Prof H Venkateswarlu Memorial Lectures on June 24 every year.

Prof Pradipta Banshee of SKB University, Dr Pandya Naik of Kerala Centre University, Prof RK Tailor of Rajasthan University and Prof Gangadhar, the first former VC of MG University, shared their valuable experience with the students. Prof.Srinivasamurthy, Director, IPE and Mohammed Alimuddin, Regional Manager, SBI spoke on the banking system.



Convenor of the National Seminar Professor Akula Ravi speaking at a National Seminar at Mahatma Gandhi University in Nalgonda on Tuesday

Officials told to curb sand smuggling in district

PNS ■ NALGONDA

District Collector C Narayana Reddy on Tuesday directed the officials to take steps to curb sand smuggling in the district.

On Tuesday, the Collector was holding a video conference with the officials of Revenue, Police and Irrigation the District Collector.

He told the officials that the sand smuggling was rampant in the district. Apart from sand, alluvial soil too was being illegally transported out of the district. He stressed the need to ensure that the people secure sand without any hassle.

The Collector announced that a special team consisting of Revenue Divisional Officer, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Divisional Panchayat Officer and Irrigation official at mandal level to curb sand smuggling.

At the district level, a committee comprising District Collector, district SP, additional SP and Additional



Nalgonda Collector C Narayana Reddy addressing officials through video conference in Nalgonda on Tuesday

Collector would be formed.

The Collector said that it is the responsibility of these teams to ensure that no smuggling takes place from the district. He said that CCTV cameras would be installed at the permitted places where sand mining was being carried out.

Similarly, it has been brought to our notice that illegal silt is being transported from the ponds in the district, and this illegal silt transporta-

tion should also be stopped immediately, he said.

The Collector sought information from Revenue Divisional Officers and Tahsildars about the steps taken to curb sand smuggling. He directed the officials to ensure that there are no complaints regarding the supply of sand.

District Superintendent of Police Sharat Chandra Pawar and officials were present.

Man shows up alive before his 'burial'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a case of mistaken identity of a dead person, a man turned up alive at his "funeral" in Vikarabad district of Telangana where his family and relatives were making arrangements for burial after being informed about his death.

The incident took place in Navandgi village in Basheerabad mandal of Vikarabad district, an official of Government Railway Police (GRP) said on Tuesday.

The man P Yellappa, (40), a daily wage labourer was presumed dead after his family members were informed about his death when a body was

found with a mobile phone on it.

The GRP personnel found the body of an unidentified person on the tracks at Vikarabad railway station on June 22 night, with the head crushed and beyond recognition, the official said.

One mobile phone was found near the body and police officials called up the family members from the phone, who informed that it belonged to Yellappa.

Yellappa's wife and his family members reached the government hospital in Vikarabad on June 23 and "identified" the body to be that of Yellappa, the official said.

After an autopsy, the family members were handed over the body and they took it to their village.

As the family and relatives were making arrangements for the burial, some villagers informed them in the afternoon that they had seen Yellappa alive in Tandur town of the district.

In the meanwhile, Yellappa also returned home to the surprise of the family members.

Yellappa's family members immediately informed the GRP about it, who reached the village and brought back the body and kept it in mortuary at government hospital in Vikarabad, the official said,

adding the deceased man was not identified so far.

The GRP also examined Yellappa and he told them that he had left home as part of work and someone stole his phone when he was sleeping at a bus stop in Tandur on June 20.

His family members told the police that Yellappa used to return home after a week or so after being away on work, the official said.

With regard to the unidentified man, police said he was hit by a train while crossing the tracks at the railway station on June 22 and a case was registered by the GRP. Further probe was on.

BRS govt threw handloom sector into crisis: Tummala

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Agriculture, Handlooms and Textile Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao said the BRS government had thrown the handloom sector into a severe crisis.

The BRS government spoiled the lives of handloom weavers by not paying money after giving orders for clothes.

He said the Congress government has been giving more work to weavers and has been clearing their dues.

He made it clear on Tuesday that the Congress government has been taking steps to improve handloom

weavers' living standards and that the Congress government is firm on fulfilling all the assurances given in its manifesto.

He said that BRS Working President KTR's letter sent on Monday is like a thief shouting 'thief'.

Tummala said that it is ironic that the handloom sector was disrupted at all levels in the last 10 years and is now being politicised in the name of a letter.

He said the BRS government did not care about handloom workers but the Congress government would provide long-term benefits to all handloom workers.

FORM VII (See Sub-Rule (1) of Rule - 25 and Section - 19(1) of the Act 30/2013) GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA REVENUE (LA) DEPARTMENT or Collector/Joint Collector/Special Collector (LA)/SDC (LA) PUBLICATION OF DECLARATION G1847/2024 Date: 14.06.2024 Lr.No.D/52/2023 Date: 23.05.2024					
Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana/District Collector, Nalgonda required an extent of Ac.7.25 gts Government/Assigned land is required in the Kondur Village of Marriguda Mandal, Nalgonda District for public purpose from Km.58.500 to Km. 66.300 of DLIS Main Canal formation of Dindi Main Canal.					
Therefore, declaration is made for the above said project in Kondur Village of Marriguda Mandal, Nalgonda District a piece of land measuring more or less Ac.7.25gts of standard measurement, whose detailed description is as mentioned below, is under acquisition.					
SCHEDULE					
Village: Kondur; Mandal: Marriguda; District: Nalgonda Extent: Ac.7.25 gts.					
Sl. No.	Sy. No., Classification, Description of land i.e. pattar/Inam/ Govt.	Extent	Name of the Pattadar/Employee	Other Particulars such as structures with etc.	
1	2 3	0.07	Akula Raghunadh S/o Chenniah	--	
2	18 18	3.22	Govt. Land	--	
3	81 81	2.08	Chilveru Yellamma W/o Malliah	--	
4	81 81	0.17	Govt. Land	--	
5	114 114	1.11	Govt. Land	--	
Total Extent: Ac. 7.25 gts.					
The declaration is made after hearing of objections of persons interested and due enquiry as provided U/s 15 of the Act. No. 30/2013. The area for acquisition would have no displacement of people and no disturbance to the infrastructure in the vicinity, ecology and minimum adverse impact is foreseen on the affected individual's livelihood. Hence, there is no need to pass a separate R&R award in terms of Section 31 and schedule of the RPCT LA Act, 2013 (Act 30 of 2013).					
Mines of coal, iron - stone, slate or other minerals lying under the said land or any particular portion of the said land, except such parts of the mines and minerals which may be required to be dug or removed or used during the construction phase of the project for the purpose of which the land is being acquired, are not needed.					
A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the Land Acquisition Officer & AMR Project, Unit-II, Nalgonda on any working day.					
Sd/- Special Dy. Collector		Sd/- Additional Collector, Nalgonda,		Sd/- Dist. Collector Nalgonda.	
Nalgonda. DIPR No.03/LA/PP-Pub/2024-25					

INDIA CORNER

Court rejects gangster Abu Salem's plea against prison transfer

Sessions court here on Tuesday rejected gangster Abu Salem's application against his planned transfer from the Talaja prison in Navi Mumbai to another jail in Maharashtra...



10 more fishermen arrested by Sri Lanka, CM tells Centre

Chief Minister M K Stalin on Tuesday flagged the arrest of ten more Tamil Nadu fishermen by Sri Lanka and sought the Centre's intervention to secure the release of 47 fishermen...



52 drug samples fail regulatory body's quality test

India's apex drugs regulatory body has found the samples of around 50 drugs, including that of widely-used paracetamol, pantoprazole and some antibiotics for treating bacterial infections...



Russia looking at Indian PM Modi's brief visit to Moscow

PNS NEW DELHI

India and Russia are looking at the possibility of a brief visit to Moscow by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in early July...



"But we are actively preparing. I will emphasise once again, this visit will take place," he told reporters, replying to a question.

The summit saw both sides sealing 28 MoUs and agreements, besides coming out with a joint statement titled "India-Russia Partnership for Peace, Progress and Prosperity."

Cong crushed spirit of Constitution for maintaining a family in power: Shah

PNS NEW DELHI

Senior BJP leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah came out strongly against the Congress on Tuesday for imposing the Emergency in the country and said the opposition party crushed the spirit of the Constitution...

IAF chief: India must invest in modernisation of armed forces

PNS NEW DELHI

IAF Chief Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari said on Tuesday the contemporary security landscape presents "multi-faceted challenges" from border disputes and terrorism to cyber threats and regional volatility...



third Warfare & Aerospace Strategy Programme (WASP). "This programme has enabled us to refine the definition of scholar warriors," the IAF chief said.

CJI appeals to citizens, lawyers to take part in special Lok Adalat

PNS NEW DELHI

Highlighting the huge backlog of cases, Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Tuesday appealed to all litigants and lawyers to participate in the special Lok Adalat from July 29 to August 3 to facilitate amicable settlement of suitable pending cases.



He said all judges, as people dedicated to the institution of justice, are concerned about the large backlog of cases.

Rahul, Akhilesh, Hema, Kanimozhi take oath

PNS NEW DELHI

Rahul Gandhi, Akhilesh Yadav, Dimple Yadav, Hema Malini, and Kanimozhi Karunanidhi were among the prominent members to be sworn in on the second day of the first session of the 18th Lok Sabha.



Many of the MPs raised "Jai Hind", "Jai Maharashtra", "Jai Bheem" and "Jai Shivaji" slogans after taking oath.

'Ruckus' over hooch tragedy

AIADMK MLAs suspended from TN assembly for a day



Members of the opposition AIADMK in the Tamil Nadu Assembly were suspended for a day on Tuesday for allegedly creating a ruckus after they tried to raise the issue of the Kallakurichi hooch tragedy during Question Hour.

NHRC issues notices to Tamil Nadu govt, DGP

PNS NEW DELHI

The NHRC on Tuesday said it has issued notices to the Tamil Nadu government and police chief in connection with the hooch tragedy in Kallakurichi district and sought a report in a week.

Centre denies Mamata's claim of not including Bengal

PNS KOLKATA

The Centre on Tuesday claimed that the West Bengal government was kept well-informed and actively involved in the review and renewal process of the 'India-Bangladesh Treaty'.

Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, said West Bengal government officers participated in the meetings, held between August 2023 and April 2024, to review the 'India-Bangladesh Treaty' of 1996.

MP ministers to now pay IT; Cabinet revokes 52-yr-old rule

PNS BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh Cabinet on Tuesday decided that state ministers will have to pay their Income Tax, instead of the state government bearing such burden.



Kailash Vijayvargiya said during the cabinet meeting, the chief minister gave a suggestion that the ministers themselves pay their Income Tax.

'Non-coffee drinkers at 60% more risk of dying'

PNS CHENNAI

Members of the opposition AIADMK in the Tamil Nadu Assembly were suspended for a day on Tuesday for allegedly creating a ruckus after they tried to raise the issue of the Kallakurichi hooch tragedy during Question Hour.

The researchers at the Medical College of Soochow University's School of Public Health in China also found that sedentary coffee drinkers were at a 24 per cent lower risk of death compared to non-coffee drinkers sitting for at least six hours a day.

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manifold," the authors wrote in the study. Consuming coffee lowers risk of metabolic problems known to worsen inflammation, which contributes to heightening death risks because of sedentary behaviour, they said.

Compounds present in coffee, including caffeine and polyphenols, are anti-inflammatory in nature. However, how exactly coffee works in the body to lower risk of dying is still unclear, the researchers said.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

A new leaf

The 18th Lok Sabha begins on a promising note amid Opposition challenges to the Government

The much-awaited inaugural session of 18th Lok Sabha started on June 24th. This marks a pivotal moment in India's democratic journey. With the NDA returning to power albeit with lesser seats would make it a much-balanced house than the 17th Lok Sabha in which NDA had brute majority. However, the political landscape has undergone significant shifts which will reflect in the functioning of the new Lok Sabha. Indeed, the priorities set in this session will shape India's trajectory for the next five years. The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha hit the controversy on its very first day. The leaders of the INDIA bloc staged a protest outside Parliament on Monday, coinciding with the oath-taking ceremony of newly elected Members of Parliament. Key figures, including Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, party leader Sonia Gandhi, and Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav, held copies of the Constitution as they demonstrated against the BJP-led NDA government. The swearing-in process for other Union ministers and newly elected MPs was conducted by Pro-tem Speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab. Members of the Congress and the INDIA bloc, who are part of parliamentary panels, opted out of assisting with the oath-taking process for the newly elected MPs. They expressed their dissatisfaction over the appointment of BJP MP Bhartruhari Mahtab as pro-tem Speaker instead of their preferred candidate, eight-time Congress MP K Suresh. This is a first indication that the functioning of this Lok Sabha would not be smooth.



The 18th Lok Sabha's first session will continue until July 3. The election for the Lok Sabha Speaker is set for June 26, and President Murmu will address a joint session of both houses on June 27. Interestingly this session will see the appointment of a Leader of the Opposition for the first time in a decade. The session is expected to be contentious, with the opposition poised to challenge the BJP-led NDA on various issues, including the Speaker election on June 26, paper leaks in NEET-UG and UGC-NET exams, and disputes over the pro-tem Speaker's appointment. The opposition aims to address rising prices, food inflation, fatalities due to extreme heatwaves, and recent 'irregularities' in exam administrations. The 18th Lok Sabha is expected to prioritize measures to boost economic growth, tackle inflation, and create employment opportunities. The new session is also expected to focus on social justice, addressing issues related to inequality and ensuring that the benefits of economic growth reach all sections of society. Besides India's strategic interests and security concerns are expected to be prominent in the 18th Lok Sabha's deliberations in the wake of terrorist attacks in Jammu. Beefing up security and restoring law and order in various parts of the country should be taken up on priority. This session not only sets the legislative framework but also reflects the aspirations of a diverse and dynamic nation, eager to carve out a resilient and equitable path forward in a rapidly changing global landscape.

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PICTALK



An Indian cricket fan blows into a shell horn prior to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match AP/PTI

Lessons from the life of Lord Rama!

Our experiences, coupled with the wisdom imparted through stories told by our elders or discovered in books, often shape us in profound ways

Our experiences, and even the stories narrated by our elders or those read by us, impart a certain wisdom. Many of these get so deeply ingrained in our minds that often we develop characteristics unknown to our conscious self. My mother always kept a copy of Ramcharitmanas in her prayer corner. We would listen wide-eyed to her recitation of the chaupais (a quatrain verse of Indian poetry), my imagination running wild with the story of Lord Rama, and his victory over evil. It remained a story to me in my growing up years, till I joined my railway job. I was the head of my department in a division, sandwiched between two other divisions. My location required me to have smooth coordination with my neighbours. One day I complained to our mutual boss in the headquarters about the non-cooperation of my colleagues from the adjoining divisions, to be snubbed by him, "You are now a senior officer. You should handle these minor issues at your level." I was 29, with a working experience of only 5 years. It did not mat-



ter that I did not consider myself senior enough. It was the position that I held that imparted me the authority and consequently responsibility. The observation had gone home. I was a leader and had to act like one taking every-one with me to attain my goals. As a branch head, I was also responsible for allotting government accommodation to the staff under my control. It was a routine exercise following the waitlist; however, the branch head had the discretionary authority to make an out-of-turn allotment. A few days into my posting, I was approached by the widow of

one staff, supported by a few union leaders, for an out-of-turn allotment on compassionate grounds. I passed the orders. Then I started having doubts, knowing that I would now also be approached by the rival union for favour. I refused the approach several weeks later despite their polite requests to follow the precedence I had set. I learned that it was important to be fair while making decisions. One day a few union leaders came to me quite agitated. They complained about the disrespectful communication by one of my junior officers. The officer had used the Hindi tum (you), instead of the more respectable aap (you), when addressing a staff. I tried to assuage their hurt sentiments by pointing out the north Indian origins of the junior officer, where, in some regions, even the parents are addressed as tum. I learned to respect the local sentiments. I also learned the importance of nurturing relations. Armed with bookish knowledge, I was a novice in the practical professional life. The staff had been dealing with these issues far before I had

joined the engineering college and many even from before I was born. I had no hesitation to sit with them without any biases and learn. I took strength from the stories of Nishad, Shabri, Sugriva, and many others. It was only after I faced difficult situations in my professional life, I understood that the life of Lord Rama as a prince and then king was tough. He had to uphold integrity in his public life even at the cost of personal suffering. He also had to build and nurture new relationships without pre-conceived notions to fight for the good. I had learned important lessons from the stories narrated by my mother. Ramcharitmanas was not just a story, it was a way of life! Following the principles that He lived and fought for on this earth was the true devotion that I could offer. I did not need the sanctuary of a temple to pray!

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)



SANJAY CHANDRA

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(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)

Inordinate delay in naming new army chief

The Govt's decision to extend the tenure of Chief of Army Staff by 30 days, instead of announcing the new appointee has sparked controversy and conjecture



ASHOK K MEHTA

It is intriguing why the appointment of Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi was not announced on 26 May but on 11 June which would have obviated a 30-day extension to COAS Gen Manoj Pande and the unnecessary speculation that followed. Government would not have been deterred by Model Code of Conduct for election as it had already appointed VADM Dinesh Tripathi as Chief of Naval Staff on 19 April. That a supersession was contemplated but not implemented as the '400 paar' goal, even 272 mark were missed probably led to discretion superseding valour. Further NDA allies had already flagged the Agniveer issue!

Strange are the ways of the government. Just six days before Pande's superannuation - bringing the appointment down to wire - it ordered an extension after he had been feted out by his successor on 21 May. The extension was quite baffling. Government officials like Cabinet Secretary, Home Secretary and others (including Director ED) who run government for politicians get extensions as a matter of routine. In the case of ED's Sanjay Mishra, Supreme Court had to intervene to issue a deadline. But bureaucrats have made themselves indispensable like the repetition of NSA shows. The extension to COAS triggered extensive speculation: The last extension was given to COAS Gen Gopal Bewoor who succeeded Field Marshal Manekshaw. This extension ensured that Lt Gen PS Bhagat, a Victoria Cross winner was denied the post of COAS, opening the path for Lt Gen Tappy Raina, a Kashmiri, to get the coveted job. Incidentally, both Bewoor and Bhagat were Rimcollians (studied at RIMC Dehradun) and good friends. Appointments of CDS and COAS have got highly politicised - as their most conspicuous relegation in the seating plan during PM's oath taking ceremony demonstrated. No one but they are to blame. Equally unusual was Defence Minister Minister Rajnath Singh being welcomed back to MOD by CDS Gen Anil Chauhan holding



a bouquet. A soldier's salute is the highest tribute. A month's extension in the armed forces is a first, though in one case, extension was given for one day. The extension will affect the line of succession beyond the present contenders. VCOAS Lt Gen Dwivedi was the seniormost followed by Lt Gen Ajai Singh GoC-in-C Southern Command. Both were batchmates but the tyranny of 'order of merit' while graduating from IMA dictates seniority. Both were to retire on 30 June. Next senior was Northern Army Commander. Lt Gen Suchindra Kumar followed by Lt Gen Raja Subramani of Central Command. Interestingly all the Generals named except the outgoing COAS who is an Engineer officer are Infanteers. Pande is the first Sapper officer to break the glass ceiling. On 1 July the new Army Commanders will be Lt Gens Raja Subramani VCOAS, Devu Sharma AARTRAC, Dhiraj Seth Southern, Sengupta South Western and Manjinder Singh Central. Traditionalists hold that extensions in the military are not par for the course as they disrupt the line of succession and officers should refuse to accept extension. It is the government's prerogative to choose a Service Chief by seniority, merit and deep selection

GOVERNMENTS MUST NOT BE SEEN BREACHING THE SACROSANCT SERVICE RULE BOOK OR INVENTING NEW RULES. INSTANCES OF SUPERSESSON ARE RARE: THE MOST RECENT BEING THE APPOINTMENT OF LATE GEN BIPIN RAWAT AS COAS WHO OVERTOOK TWO SENIOR GENERALS

superseding officers or even recalling the selected from retirement. But service rules should not be tweaked whimsically. In 2014 after BJP won the elections it tried to prevent the ruling UPA from appointing the senior most Gen Dalbir Suhag as COAS. The thing is, Governments must not be seen breaching the sacrosanct service rule book or inventing new rules. Instances of supersession are rare: the most recent being the appointment of late Gen Bipin Rawat as COAS who overtook two senior Generals. Supersessions have happened in the Navy and Air Force also. Admiral Robin Dhawan in 2014 and Admiral Karambir Singh in 2019 superseded their senior VADM's Shekhar Sinha and Bimal Verma. Superseded officers have generally resigned but some continued to serve. So why the one-month extension to Gen Pande. The government wanted to be back in power (as it was on 9 June) before taking any unusual step like deviating from seniority principle. Remember all three - Incumbent Pande, next senior Dwivedi followed by Singh - were all to retire on 30 June. If government had wanted to appoint seniormost Lt Gen Dwivedi as COAS, his name could have been announced on 26 May as it had announced appointment of

VADM Tripathi as CNS on 19 April while moral code of conduct was on. Instead, the government preoccupied with election extended service of Gen Pande giving itself more leeway in naming new COAS. Choices were A) appoint the seniormost Dwivedi, B) retire both Dwivedi and Singh and appoint either Suchindra Kumar or Raja Subramani or And C) supersede Dwivedi and appoint Singh by tweaking the rulebook (one day extension for Singh) or deep-select from other eligible Army Commanders. In the Air Force, service rules were tweaked by MoD in 1988. Air Chief Marshal Polly Mehra retired on 31 July. Air Marshal Nimmi Suri who was to retire on 31 July was given one day extension and appointed Air Chief Marshal and Chief of Air Staff, superseding Air Marshal MM Singh. In another case I believe the forenoon/afternoon tweak was applied which is being replicated now - retiring Gen Pande F/N and appointing Gen Dwivedi in A/N. The extension merely created a storm in a tea cup, the El Nino effect! (The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

COMBATING LONELINESS

Madam - The World Health Organization (WHO) declared loneliness a 'global health threat' in November 2023 and should be commended for launching the WHO Commission on Social Connection to address this issue. Connecting with others has become easier in our modern era of smartphones and the internet. Here are a few practical suggestions to help older individuals combat loneliness: Each apartment complex or neighborhood should have a common room for social gatherings and reading, where people can read newspapers and magazines, chat, discuss general topics, and stay until family members return home from work. Employ a coordinator for the social room to attend to the needs of the elderly, such as running errands, engaging in conversations, and providing a cheerful atmosphere.

A written understanding should be established that discussions in the common room remain private to prevent controversies. Allow lonely individuals from nearby homes to join. Provide cots for naps and encourage bringing lunch boxes. Encourage keeping pets. Promote hobbies such as gardening, puzzle-solving, and reading. Participate in social platforms. Create quiz groups on WhatsApp and other social platforms for daily quizzes, with participants taking turns to pose questions and answers. Make humor and laughter sessions mandatory in every apartment complex, educational institution, and workplace, at least for 10 minutes each morning and evening. The internet offers an endless supply of jokes that are considerate of others' feelings.

PVS Sreelekha | Secundarabad

OPPOSITION TAKES ON GOVT

Madam - The parliamentary session starting on June 24 promises to be significant, as it marks the first time in a decade that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will not govern alone. New mem-

Monetary compensation to housewives



Housewives are just as valuable as their employed male counterparts in families. From managing household chores to planning family events, housewives possess a range of skills that many working men cannot match. Years ago, the Supreme Court challenged the census for categorizing homemakers as 'non-workers' and called for laws to recognize their economic contribution. A woman's

role as a mother, wife, and homemaker should itself be regarded as productive work, transcending mere monetary value. She brings emotional attachment and selfless service to the family. Society often views housewives solely as nurturers, failing to respect them as individuals independent of their familial roles. It took insightful minds and the efforts of many women to rebrand the term 'housewife' to the more respectful 'homemaker.' Unpaid household work by women must be recognized as productive labor, not just as tasks done for the family's welfare. The reality is that in most cases, women have little choice when it comes to housework. It's high time the contributions of homemakers are acknowledged through appropriate monetary compensation. Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

bers of Parliament will take the oath of secrecy, overseen by temporary speaker Bhartruhari Mehtab. The National Democratic Alliance (NDA), including the BJP's 240 members, now totals 294 members, highlighting a shift in the political landscape. The Congress party, with 100 seats, alongside its allies totaling 234 seats, will have a strengthened position, allowing it to assume the role of Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha for the first time in ten years. This change amplifies the opposition's ability to hold the government accountable on issues like inflation, unemployment, and the ongoing violence in Manipur. This 18th Lok Sabha stands out for its strong opposition, and how the ruling party navigates this dynamic will be closely observed in the coming days.

Shantaram Wagh | Pune

INDO-BANGLADESH TIES GET A BOOST

Madam - This has with reference to your editorial "Friend in need" published on June 24. Bangladesh Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina's two-day visit to India highlighted the tight relationship between the two countries. The two countries signed ten agreements and memoranda of understanding, but the agreement struck on India's plan to send a technical team to conserve and manage the Teesta River garnered special notice. The distribution of Teesta River water has been viewed as a problematic issue between the two countries. Considering this, China began to express interest in the management and conservation of the Teesta River in 2020. All parties were aware of the sensitivity of the situation, given India's reservations about it. Looking at countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Maldives, we can see that China's approach was not new. However, given India's good relations with Bangladesh, the issue over Teesta water sharing did not raise suspicions and animosity between the two countries.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN WE ARE PLAYING THE SCRIPT OF LIFE

The world is a stage where we each have a unique, pre-scripted part to play



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJJI

Recently a veteran actor from the Indian film industry was given the Highest Civilian Award for his contribution towards spreading cultural values across the Globe through his acting career. While he was given the award, everyone in the audience stood up to give him a standing ovation with so much love and respect to the legend, who brought so many characters to life on celluloid screen. We all have experienced this euphoria in theatres, while a heroic character makes an entry on screen, there are loud cheers, whistles, applause and more. And at the end of the film, the hero wins the audience's hearts and steals the show. Whether he plays a prince or a pauper, it does not matter as his fans through the theatres to catch a glimpse of him.

The beauty of his performance lies in his ability to internalize the character to the extent that he and his role seem one to his fans. But even while doing it, he is very much conscious of the fact that he is merely an actor in a particular drama, his role is carved, his dialogues are scripted and the costumes are designed for that particular character. Hence, his greatness lies only in playing the role to the best of his capability. On his long journey to stardom, every actor often turns a spectator and critiques his own work so that he can improve upon his act. It is this element of detachment from the different roles he plays that allows him to progress, play multiple roles simultaneously with clarity and then return to his personal life at the end of the day.

Not many of us know that the world cycle is very much similar to this drama in which all of us are actors with unique parts. Everyone is the protagonist in his life and can become a hero who draws applause. However, today we hardly find anyone cheering for the other person. Because, there is great dissatisfaction either with each other's performance or the script. As a result the drama appears to have become a tragedy. There is widespread chaos with actors criticizing each other's performances instead of theirs. The reason for this trouble is that most of us act without the knowledge that the earth is a stage and we have all come here to play our individual roles. Secondly, each actor's role is unique and pre-scripted and hence trying to match it with anybody else's



is futile. Thirdly, the biggest law of the world drama is that it is ever beneficial for everyone. In the absence of this understanding or its consciousness, we get attached to our roles, forget to change our costumes and make-up and lose the flexibility to adapt to each part. Take a simple example of a person who plays a son, a husband, a father, a friend and several other roles at the same time. If he is in the consciousness of being a male, he could dominate his wife at home or look down upon his female staff at office. At work, he would stick to his role of being a boss so much so that he forgets to become their colleague. On the other hand, if he is conscious that he is an actor and must like a hero win everyone's hearts, then he would understand the requirements of his role and become active, accurate and attractive at whatever he does.

Living the peaks and troughs of each character we play, we drain ourselves and are unable to muster enough strength to meet the demands of each role or take well the twists in the scenes, as a result of which there are emotional upheavals and sorrow becomes a regular visitor when the purpose of the drama is to help the actors experience joy and happiness. On the other hand, if we become detached to the roles we play and keep faith in the eternal law that the drama has been scripted for universal benefit, the feeling of loss and gain, comfort and pain would begin to dissolve and our mind would stop to question the developments in every scene. So, the moral of the story is that we should be detached and yet be involved in the part we are playing. That's the quality to be a superstar in this World Drama.

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

Water crisis in Delhi is entirely man-made



UTTAM GUPTA

The ruthless exploitation of natural endowments and that too when resources are being put to misuse is unconscionable

The gravity of water crisis facing Delhiites has forced the Delhi government to approach the Supreme Court (SC) seeking its intervention to direct neighboring states Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Himachal Pradesh (HP) to provide additional raw water supply to the national capital. Initially, the SC directed HP to release 137 cusecs of raw water which translates to 70 million gallons per day (MGD) of more water for the city. It also asked Haryana to make arrangements for ensuring its free flow to Delhi.

But, now with HP claiming that it can't release more than what it is already giving (70 MGD), the top court has directed 'the Upper Yamuna River Board (UYRB) to convene a meeting with all parties and take a decision expeditiously'. The mandate of UYRB is to inter alia regulate the allocation of available water flows amongst the beneficiary States and also monitoring the return flows.

Is Delhi really short of water? According to Delhi's Economic Survey Report 2023, the overall water requirement of the city is 1,290 MGD, with an increase in the summer months. Against this, the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) which has the mandate to manage the water supply in the city (including procurement of raw water from various sources, its processing in water treatment plants or WTPs and its distribution) had said on April 3, 2024 in a written statement that water production in the capital stood at around 990 MGD on average between March end and start of April. The DJB actually produced 1,002 MGD on June 7, 2024.

Further, the Economic Survey of Delhi, 2023-24, says, "As per Outcome Budget (Q2 of 2023-24) of DJB, the total distribution losses are at about 52.35 percent". Distribution losses is a sophisticated nomenclature for pilferage of water supplies by tanker mafia and industries.

The pilferage is happening at all stages of the water supply chain viz. the WTPs, conveyance systems and distribution systems. This couldn't have happened without the connivance of the authorities.

Deduct 52 percent pilferage or 520 MGD from production of around 1000 MGD, the quantity available for consumption by households in Delhi would be 480 MGD. This is barely 37 percent of the demand estimated at 1290 MGD. It sounds bizarre! If, that were the case, nearly 2/3rd of Delhiites would have been without drinking water; a complete disaster. That hasn't happened even as we see people chasing water tankers in several parts of Delhi.

So, what are we missing? There is something fundamentally wrong with the way mandarins in the government estimate the requirement. Ideally, this should be done from the demand side which involves conducting household survey, collecting data on how much each unit needs, aggregating and so on. Instead, they look at the total supply in the past say 2023-24, presume that that much quantity was consumed and apply an incremental factor/percentage increase to arrive at the requirement for 2024-25.

In this process, they end up including even the pilfered quantity in the requirement. It means that 1290 MGD also includes 520 MGD of water plundered by dubious operators from the system



“A SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION TO DELHI WATER WOES REQUIRES THAT THE STATE GOVERNMENT ADDRESSES PILFERAGE ON A WAR FOOTING. YET, ITS OVERWHELMING FOCUS HAS BEEN ON GETTING MORE RAW WATER FROM HARYANA, UTTAR PRADESH, HP ETC.

(assuming that 52 per cent pilferage has continued in the current year). Minus this, the requirement of households was 770 MGD. This being higher than the net availability of 480 MGD, Delhiites are feeling the stress.

Unambiguously, plunder of water by tanker mafia is at the root of Delhi's water woes (last year, Delhiites were spared as the HH demand being muted, the net supply after accounting for the greed of the tanker mafia was sufficient to meet it). But, for this, the entire production of 1000 MGD would have been available for HH consumption resulting in a surplus of 230 MGD (1000-770) forget any shortage that we are experiencing today.

A sustainable solution to Delhi water woes requires that the State government addresses pilferage on a war footing. Yet, its overwhelming focus has been on getting more raw water from Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, HP etc. While, making the demand it is oblivious of the fact that all its nine WTPs are already operating above their installed capacities (yielding a total of around 1000 MGD which is around 47 MGD more than the combined capacity of all nine WTPs) and that the DJB won't be able to deliver more even if it gets more raw water from the neighboring states.

As for addition to the processing capacity, last year, the Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had approved an action plan to increase water production by 131 MGD in the short-term and by 380 MGD in the long-term. It

involved construction of a new plant at Chandrawal, with a capacity of 105 MGD and completion of another plant at Dwarka, which has the potential to increase production by 50 MGD. That plan hasn't made much headway. While, work on Chandrawal plant is yet to start, even the Dwarka project which was to come up by March 2024 is running behind schedule.

Unable to manage water supplies from the rivers viz. Yamuna, Ravi-Beas, Ganga and so on, the Delhi government is now increasing its dependence on groundwater which currently contributes a little more than 10 percent - almost 100 percent increase over the level five years ago. According to the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), over 41 percent of Delhi's total area is overexploited even as it has been drawing more groundwater than it recharges. The total annual groundwater recharge decreased from 0.41 billion cubic meters (bcm) in 2022 to 0.38 bcm in 2023, while the annual extractable groundwater resource available decreased from 0.37 bcm to 0.34 bcm.

This is not a healthy trend. The ruthless exploitation of natural endowments and that too when resources are being put to misuse (read: diversion of water meant for HH consumption to industrial use) is unconscionable. Apart from the huge imbalance between the demand and supply, the gross mismanagement and irregularities in running Delhi's water supply systems is also pushing

DJB to the brink of financial bankruptcy. Pilferage of more than half of water supply means the Board doesn't get any revenue on that much quantity. Then, you have Kejriwal's free scheme that involves no payment for consumption up to 20,000 litres a month per household.

Even for HHs who get the bills and haven't paid for years, the Chief Minister has been trying to get a one time settlement package cleared by the Lieutenant Governor which will tantamount to the State exchequer foregoing thousands of crore. Finally, there are reports of payments having been made by the households albeit to private entities (authorized to collect the money) but never reached the revenue department.

All this has led to a pathetic situation whereby DJB which until a decade back was making profit it today has an accumulated debt of over Rs 70,000 crore. The Board is able to run its operations solely because it can borrow money from banks and other financial institutions (FIs) backed by sovereign State guarantee. Left to fend for itself, it would have collapsed long ago. One shudders to think of what this would entail for water supply to the capital city. The water crisis as also seriousness of problems on other infrastructure fronts such as electricity etc and overall governance issues in Delhi calls for some drastic action by the Centre.

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

Navigating the complexities of drug abuse and illicit trafficking

With a strong emphasis on prevention, awareness, and eliminating stigma, the UN champions a holistic approach to tackling drug abuse

Annually observed on June 26, 'The International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking' was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1987 to combat drug abuse globally. The day serves to highlight the challenges posed by drug abuse and illicit trafficking, stressing the need for international cooperation. The 2024 campaign, "The evidence is clear: invest in prevention", focuses on raising awareness about the importance of providing help and treatment to individuals struggling with drug use. It advocates for a compassionate approach, emphasizing empathy and care over punitive measures. This shift, aims to promote understanding of the negative impacts of drugs on



RAJDEEP PATHAK

personal, social, and spiritual well-being. The campaign also calls for treating people who use drugs with respect and without judgment, aiming to change societal attitudes. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) underscores the significance of eliminating stigma and adopting a people-centered approach based on human rights and evidence-based practices to effectively

combat drug abuse globally. Besides, the primary objective is to address the multifaceted issues of drug abuse and trafficking by raising public awareness, promoting preventive measures, and advocating for robust policies and programs. Educating communities about the severe dangers and consequences of drug abuse and illicit trafficking is essential. Fostering international cooperation is crucial for a comprehensive approach, emphasizing global partnerships and collaboration among law enforcement agencies to dismantle drug trafficking networks. Addressing these objectives will create a more informed, prepared, and united front against the global drug crisis. Going by the 2024 theme -

"The evidence is clear: invest in prevention", the message of the Secretary General of the United Nations António Guterres is pertinent in which he reiterated that drugs inflict profound suffering, deteriorating health and wellbeing, with overdoses claiming countless lives annually. To him, the rise of more lethal synthetic drugs and record-breaking illicit drug production fuels crime and violence globally, impacting the most vulnerable, especially youth. Those struggling with substance abuse face repeated victimization from the drugs, societal stigma, and harsh responses. To break this cycle, 'we must invest in evidence-based prevention programs that safeguard individuals and communities, disrupt illicit

economies, and prioritize rehabilitation, education, and harm reduction'. He cited the example of Portugal saying that prevention is effective. António Guterres said, "As this year's theme reminds us, breaking the cycle of suffering means starting at the beginning, before drugs take hold, by investing in prevention." But what does 'Drug Abuse' actually mean? Drug abuse can be defined as the improper or excessive consumption of illegal drugs or prescription medications for non-therapeutic purposes. Drug abuse severely impacts physical health, manifesting in serious conditions. Reports point that chronic cocaine or methamphetamine abuse leads to cardiovascular issues, including heart disease and

stroke. Smoking drugs like crack cocaine can cause lung cancer, while intravenous drug use increases HIV risk. Other risks, as medical reports point, include nasal damage from snorting, liver and kidney disease from prolonged substance use, and oral cancer from smokeless tobacco. Contaminants in illicit drugs are linked to leukemia, and severe weight loss is common among stimulant addicts. Besides, mental health issues include depression, anxiety, memory and learning problems, insomnia, violent behaviour, delusions, paranoia, confusion, extreme mood swings, and substance dependence. Some report also suggests that the relationships between drug-related crime, crimes that affect the environment,

and convergent crime are complex and evolving. Drug cultivation and trafficking and crimes that affect the environment are surging in the Amazon Basin. Also, the 'UNODC World Drug Report 2023' highlights social and economic inequalities driving drug problems and their environmental and human rights impacts and rising conflicts. Treatment coverage remains low, with only one in five affected receiving help, notably lacking in some regions. Recent data from the Government of India reveals alarming statistics: more than 10% of the population grapples with psychiatric disorders such as depression, neurosis, and psychosis. A substantial segment, comprising 15 individuals per 1000, engages in drug

use, while chronic alcohol addiction affects 25 per 1000 people. The availability of psychiatric and de-addiction beds starkly contrasts with demand, with only 20% of the required facilities accessible nationwide, leaving an alarming 80% shortfall in inpatient care capacity. Following a tailored treatment plan involving detoxification, counseling, and possibly medication is crucial. Lifestyle adjustments such as adopting healthy habits and avoiding triggers support recovery. The way out is, facing the problem, discussing and treating it with experts' guidance, but not being the escapist. (The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS

Gold rises Rs 70; silver plunges Rs 400

Gold prices rose Rs 70 to Rs 72,550 per 10 grams in the local market on Tuesday in line with firm global trends...



Stanley Lifestyles IPO subscribed over 96 times

The initial public offer of luxury furniture brand Stanley Lifestyles got subscribed a whopping 96.25 times on the last day of subscription on Tuesday...



Tech Mahindra to merge Helathnxt with TMA

Indian IT major Tech Mahindra on Tuesday announced the merger of its step-down arm Healthnxt with its wholly-owned subsidiary Tech Mahindra (Americas)...



Considering PLI scheme for garments sector: Textiles Min

PNS NEW DELHI

Textiles Minister Giriraj Singh on Tuesday said the government has approved over Rs 10,000 crore production linked incentive (PLI) scheme for textiles...



Addressing the India International Garment Fair (IGF) here, Singh said that huge opportunities are there to increase exports and the industry should target USD 50 billion worth of shipments in the coming years.

Last year, the cross-border e-commerce trade was about USD 800 billion and it is estimated to reach USD 2 trillion by 2030.

Further, the minister suggested the industry establish their own brands instead of becoming suppliers to global brands...

The ministry is also looking at reviving Scheme for Integrated Textile Parks (SITP). The scheme aims to create new parks of international standards...

AEPC Secretary General Mithileshwar Thakur said that the world economy is expected to register healthy growth and global inflation will also decline steadily...

Industry pitches for tax reduction, rationalisation of duty structure

PNS NEW DELHI

In an effort to boost the economy, representatives of various industries on Tuesday urged Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to reduce the incidence of indirect taxes and rationalise duty structure wherever required.

In a pre-budget meeting with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, FIEO president Ashwani Kumar made a case for an extension of the Interest Equalisation Scheme for the next five years.

"We request the scheme which is valid till 30th June, 2024 may be extended for a period of 5 years. Looking into the rise in interest rates consequent to the increase in Repo rate from 4.4



In a pre-budget meeting with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, FIEO president Ashwani Kumar made a case for an extension of the Interest Equalisation Scheme for the next five years.

per cent to 6.5 per cent in the last 2 years, the subvention rates may be restored back from 3 per cent to 5 per cent for manufacturers in MSMEs," Kumar said.

Kumar also urged for the establishment of an Indian shipping line of global repute to reduce foreign shipping line dependency and save foreign exchange.

Emerging from the nearly two-hour meeting, Ajay Sardana, President & Head of Petchem-Industry Affairs, at Reliance Industries, said there is a need for a review of tariffs on imported goods from China related to the petrochem industry.

"China has created a lot of overcapacity...they are putting a lot of products in India at a very

cheaper price and a lot of dumping is happening. So, what we requested is a review of the tariffs regime so that the domestic capacity can be increased," Sardana said.

"We sought faster and simultaneous environmental clearances and no hindrance in capex," he added.

Representing the services sector, Nasscom Vice President and Head of Public Policy Ashish Aggarwal said, "From the Budget perspective, we are looking for easing the transfer pricing regime as a lot of our industry is not able to benefit from transfer pricing provision."

India's inflation also 'K-shaped'; rural folk more hurt by price-rise: HSBC

PNS MUMBAI

Just like the post-pandemic recovery, the Indian inflation story is also 'K-shaped' and is hurting certain sections more than others, a foreign brokerage said on Tuesday.

Rural consumers are more impacted by price-rise than their urban counterparts, economists at HSBC said, adding it out-



stripped the urban segment by 1.1 percentage point in May, mainly due to higher food inflation.

"The same developments, driving a K-shaped recovery, seem to be driving K-shaped inflation dynamics," they said in a report.

The report by its chief economist Pranjal Bhandari cited the ongoing heat waves, pointing out that higher food and lower

core inflation are coexisting because of crop damage and livestock mortality pushing up the former. The government lent a helping hand by cutting several fuel prices but many of the fuels like petrol, diesel and LPG are not commonly used in rural areas, like they are in urban centres, leading to rural inflation being much higher than urban, it said.

Sensex breaches 78,000 level for 1st time

Nifty at record high as private bank shares shine

PNS MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex breached the historic 78,000 level for the first time while Nifty settled at a new record high on Tuesday on buying in blue-chip bank stocks and Reliance Industries.



State Bank of India, Reliance Industries and Infosys were the biggest gainers.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 712.44 points or 0.92 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 78,053.52. During the day, the benchmark soared 823.63 points or 1 per cent to hit a fresh lifetime high of 78,164.71.

The Sensex breached the 77,000 mark for the first time on June 10. The Nifty went up by 183.45 points or 0.78 per cent to settle at a fresh record high of 23,721.30.

Among the 30 Sensex companies, Axis Bank, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Tech Mahindra, Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Finserv,

Power Grid, Asian Paints, Tata Steel, Nestle, Maruti and JSW Steel were among the laggards.

"A rally in the banking stocks pushed Nifty to hit another record - 34th time this year though a host of other sectors ended in the negative," said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge declined 0.26 per cent while the smallcap index dipped 0.03 per cent.

Abundant opportunities for investors in Rajasthan: CM

PNS JAIPUR

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma expressed confidence in Rajasthan's investment potential, underscoring abundant opportunities for investors in the state.



He reaffirmed the government's commitment to facilitate a conducive environment for both domestic and international investments.

Chairing a high-level meeting focused on preparations for the 'Rajasthan Investment Summit-2024', Sharma directed officials to ensure meticulous planning and rigorous oversight throughout the

event. He stressed that agreements signed during the summit must translate into tangible actions on the ground.

Sharma emphasised on effective coordination between departments for the summit's successful execution, top-notch hospitality

for attending investors. He urged officers to craft a comprehensive action plan to enhance global visibility and discourse surrounding the summit.

Recognising the importance of a streamlined single-window system for investment services, Sharma instructed officials to expedite the resolution of investment cases using available resources efficiently.

He highlighted the global influence of Rajasthan abroad and encouraged their active participation and investment in the state's growth.

Jute crisis deepens as prices fall below MSP amid reduced orders

PNS KOLKATA

The jute industry is faced with a crisis following reduced orders from customers, as prices of the golden fibre plummeted below Rs 5,000 per quintal, while the Minimum Support Price (MSP) is Rs 5,335 per quintal for the 2024-25 season.

This alarming drop in prices has occurred despite projections of reduced production by

the Expert Committee on Jute (ECJ), primarily due to significantly reduced orders for GBT (Gunny Burlap Textile) bags by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State Procuring Agencies (SPAs).

The report identifies technologies poised to significantly influence societies and economies," WEF Managing Director and Head of the Fourth

FMCG sector to have sustained growth rate of 7-9 pc in 2024: Report

PNS NEW DELHI

The FMCG sector is expected to have a sustained growth rate of 7-9 per cent in 2024, supported by government initiatives to stimulate consumption and create job opportunities, a report said.

The FMCG sector's resilience and adaptability, coupled with robust government support and digital transformation initiatives, position it favourably to

navigate through uncertainties and emerge stronger.

"Looking ahead, the FMCG sector in India is poised for sustained growth, with forecasts indicating a 7 to 9 per cent expansion in 2024," a report from ICICI Lombard General Insurance said.

However, the sector faces challenges such as "inflationary pressures, subdued consumer confidence, and prevailing unemployment rates".

Now, the FMCG industry has a "burgeoning economic footprint", which exceeds Rs 9.1 lakh crore and has a "pivotal role" in driving India's economic growth and employment generation, it added. Moreover, the online sales channel for FMCG is also increasing and has been valued at Rs 1.7 lakh crore. Segments such as D2C reflect a "rapid digital transformation and evolving consumer purchase behaviour".

SPECTRUM AUCTION DAY 1

Telcos place bids worth about Rs 11,000 cr in 5 rounds

PNS NEW DELHI

Telecom operators placed bids worth about Rs 11,000 crore on the first day of the spectrum auction that saw five rounds of bidding, according to sources. The government has put over 10,500 Mhz spectrum valued at Rs 96,238 crore on the block. "Telecom operators have placed

bids of around Rs 11,000 crore on Day 1. The auction will resume on Wednesday," a source aware of the development said.

According to the Day 1 spectrum auction report issued by the Department of Telecom, bid-bidings took place mainly in the 900 and 1800 Mhz bands.

Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea are participating in the auction.

Reliance Jio has deposited the highest earnest money of Rs 3,000 crore for the spectrum auction, which provides the company with the firepower to bid for maximum radiowaves among the three telcos.

Bharti Airtel has submitted an EMD of Rs 1,050 crore and Vodafone Idea (VIL) of Rs 300 crore.

Adani to invest Rs 1.3 lakh cr in FY25 across portfolio companies

PNS AHMEDABAD

Adani group plans to invest about Rs 1.3 lakh crore across its portfolio companies this fiscal as it doubles down on its USD 100 billion investment guidance over the next 7-10 years to grow businesses, group CFO said on Tuesday.

The investment across portfolio companies that range from ports to energy, airports, commodities, cement and media will be 70 per cent met through internal cash generation and the

remaining through debt, Group CFO Jughesinder 'Robbie' Singh told reporters here.

The group will look to refinance USD 3-4 billion of debt maturing in the year and raise an additional USD 1 billion in project financing, he said, adding the annual USD 2-2.5 billion of equity infusion by bringing in new investors is also likely to continue.

"This year will be more about asset completion," he said.

Renewable energy firm Adani Green will complete 6-7 GW project, while the solar wafer manufacturing unit will attain scale. Also, the new airport at Mumbai will be completed, he said.

The projected capital expenditure or capex for 2024-25 (April 2024 to March 2025) fiscal is 40 per cent higher than what the portfolio is estimated to have incurred in FY24.

The group had previously guided a USD 100 billion capex over the next 7-10 years. Most of this investment is going to go into the group's fast growing businesses -- renewable, green hydrogen and airports and infrastructure, he said.

Elastocalorics, carbon-capturing microbes among top-10 emerging technologies: WEF

PNS NEW DELHI

Privacy-enhancing technologies, elastocalorics as sustainable cooling solutions and livestock feed sources from single-cell proteins were listed on Tuesday among the top 10 emerging technologies for addressing global challenges.

AI-powered scientific discovery, carbon-capturing microbes, reconfigurable intelligent surfaces and high-altitude platform stations were also featured in the annual list published by the World Economic Forum.

The WEF said these top 10 emerging technologies focus on applications in health, communication, infrastructure and sustainability.

The annual list, which identifies breakthroughs impacting societies and economies with-



Industrial Revolution Jeremy Jurgens said.

"It also spotlights technologies with immense potential for revolutionizing connectivity, addressing the urgent challenges of climate change and driving innovation across various fields," he added.

The technologies featured in the report, produced in collaboration with Frontiers, were identified through a rigorous selection process involving over 300 world-leading academics and experts, including from the Frontiers network worldwide.

The WEF said while artificial intelligence (AI) has been used in research for many years, advances in deep learning, generative AI and foundation models are revolutionizing the scientific discovery process.

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation notice regarding E-Procurement for civil works in Amberpet Circle-16.

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation notice regarding E-Procurement for works in Amberpet Circle-16.

Government of Telangana notice regarding E-Procurement for BT Road/Renewable work.

'I had to perform martial arts sequence on top of a HANGING CLIFF FOR DEVRA O NEAL'

TEJAL SINHA

Not just as an actor but also as a voice artist, Kathak and Bhangra dancer, Anushree Shukla has developed a great sense of love for the arts. Also, as the lead organiser for *Myna Speaks*, an initiative of the Myna Mahila Foundation supported by the Megan Duchess of Sussex and Prince Harry, she has also worked towards discussing women's menstruation issues in India.

She also participated at the Cannes Film Festival this year. As an actor, she has played a gamut of roles, from being a handmaiden to a landowner to a school-going teenager to supernatural characters and characters with mental illnesses in Hindi. She's given so much to her art that one of her roles required learning and rehearsing in Marathi! Meanwhile, as a voice artist, her diversity really just increases. "For an upcoming Netflix film, I've replaced the actor's voice to be British English," reveals Anushree. In *Strange Destiny*, her character required an Arabic accent, which was extremely interesting to perform. She's also voiced an American accent in *Masaba Masaba* and a French accent in *Aranyak*. Speaking of some unique skills she has picked up for her characters, she shares, "The most interesting skill was learning martial arts for my character Devra O Neal, a warrior princess for Paul Hacker's book adaptation, *The Gathering: A Quest for Steel*. We shot the film in Manasa Valley Hills, Hyderabad, the same famous location where *Baahubali* and *KGF* were shot. It was a medieval epic fantasy action, so I had to climb and hike steep rocks, sword fight in large barren lands and perform a martial arts sequence on top of a hanging cliff. Luckily, I love the outdoors and have been hiking, rock climbing for many years, so that experience played to my advantage."

Hosting events across the globe offers unique cultural insights. And for her, it's always interesting travelling to host different events. She recalls, "I was in Assam to host the 4-day Brahmaputra Valley Film Festival and the most important cultural insight a host can adopt is pronunciation and language. Apart from ensuring that the event was running on time, that everyone's bios were correct, humouring the filmy audience and asking insightful Q&A questions, it was very important to learn the correct Assamese pronunciation of films and filmmakers' names." Likewise, at Cannes, she hosted *Tasveer Matchmaking: Find Your Funds*, where they had about 180 filmmakers meet 18 funders, many of whom were from all parts of the world. It's important to ensure that while a lot of the crowd is South Asian and 'Hinglish' comes naturally to her, many might feel excluded, so she was asked to speak only in English. "The same goes for when I hosted the *Tasveer Film Festival* in Seattle. But one commonality amongst all the events is crafting the message in a fun and digestible way for the audience. Also, people love *josh* and dancing."

Well, in this interview, we also mentioned her collaboration with the Myna Mahila Foundation. So we further spoke about the same and she shares, "Well, back in 2019, I worked with Myna's founder, Suhani Jalota, to create *Myna Speaks 2019*. It was a one-of-a-kind event where we spoke about the challenges of menstruation in the urban slums. Brought

Anushree Shukla, the multidimensional personality, talks about wearing several hats, organising events all around the world and some fascinating facts about her podcast, *The Nush Corners*, in an exclusive interview with *The Pioneer*.

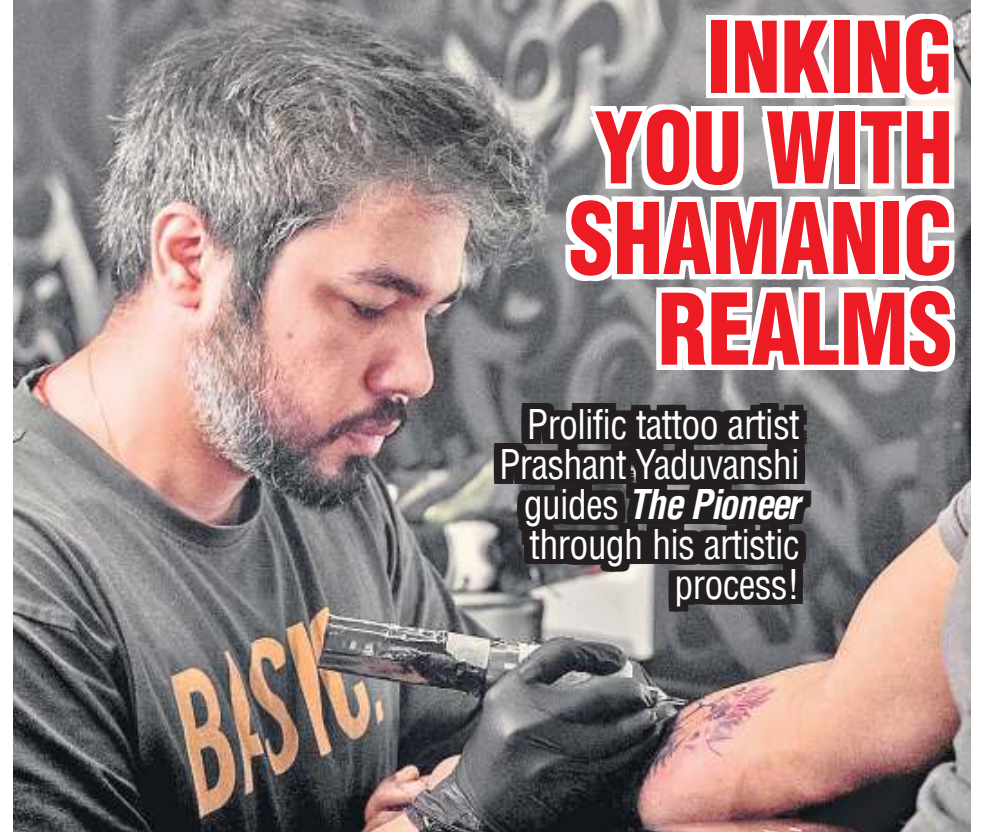


together panelists, industry leaders, advocates and young girls to discuss the health and sanitation issues, social taboos of periods and tangible education-cum-employment opportunities for women in slums. Apart from organising the event, I also hosted it and kept the tone informational and the decorum formal but urgent." In 2023, she started her podcast called *The Nush Corner*, where she interviews actors, directors and film professionals about life, habits and movies. Basically, it is a way for her to showcase her fun personality while doing what she loves best—meeting new people and learning about how they became who they are today. But the challenge she faced was "being my own crew, writer, director, interviewer, coordinator and editor. Luckily, I have the support of the best co-producers and we received immense love and support from our friends, family and audience. But if I were to do it all over again, I wouldn't be so hard on myself every time I was behind schedule or did not edit and post on time. I speculated that every beat and instance would transition perfectly. Sometimes setting unrealistic goals restricts you from completing the very task that gives you joy. *Season 1* features the strongest women I know: Malvika Nair, Salonie Patel, Sonia Rathee, Mona Shetty, Pranati Rai Prakash, Anushree Mehta, Yogita Bihani and Rita Meher. *Season 2*, while in its nascent stages, will now include some of the coolest men I know too."

On the work front, she has played the lead antagonist in a horror short which is in post-production right now and there are talks about developing it into a series! Then there is *Prison*; the film in which she played the lead which was screened at the Kolkata Literary Carnival on a 70-mm screen, it was surreal. "I also directed my first short film, which is in post-production right now and have another project I'm signed onto in the pipeline but can't speak much about," shares the rising star, adding, "Every stage gives you a new sense of ease in your speech, and I've definitely evolved in the way I ask and answer questions. And of course, speaking about what you know and keeping silent when you have nothing to add is always a great approach." She cites the example of one of her favourite films, *Lapata Ladies*, as the perfect prime example of social change as she says, "Without preaching to the audience, it showcased multiple scenarios where women found strength in their independence—financially, physically and educationally."

INKING YOU WITH SHAMANIC REALMS

Prolific tattoo artist Prashant Yaduvanshi guides *The Pioneer* through his artistic process!



SHRADDHA NEWARE

In many different contexts, tattoos represent self-expression, identity, perseverance and confidence. Prashant Yaduvanshi, an accomplished tattoo artist, took up the art form and quickly gained notoriety. Through his art, he conveys his profound connection to the spiritual and shamanic realms.

"At first, I worked under the name Ayahuasca Ink, symbolising the consumption of knowledge and artistic inspiration akin to the transformative experience of Ayahuasca," the tattoo artist says, describing a highly personal quest for meaning and expression. "I accepted tattooing as my identity as I developed, emphasising my responsibility to pass on the knowledge and abilities I have gained along the way."

His intense love of art led him to make the crucial decision to leave his engineering college. He sees tattoos as a significant way to establish a spiritual connection. The founder of Shaman Ink states, "I want to capture the essence of spirituality and transformation, assisting people in healing and discovering a deeper connection with themselves." His upbringing in India also gave him a deep love for narrative and symbolism. The renowned cover-up tattoo artist tells us that symbolism and storytelling are fundamental to his designs, which enable him to produce tattoos that are not only aesthetically striking but also culturally relevant and significant. He discusses how his cultural background has influenced his artistic style! Regarding his abilities to cover up tattoos and blend old ink into fresh, he is apparently a recipient of numerous international awards. He says that integrating technical prowess with creative vision is a complex process. After having a thorough consultation with people, he grasps their goals and narrative. "I study the old tattoo, considering factors like its size, colour and placement," the artist reveals. "I create a design that not only covers the existing tattoo but also enhances it, transforming it into a work of art that people can wear with pride using my proficiency in colour and black-and-grey realism. He claims that the seamless appearance of the cover-up stems from his special ability to conceal darker parts with lighter shades of grey." Instead of being a correction, he continues, "It almost seems like the client's first choice!" The artist continues, "Every element I incorporate holds a significant meaning, transforming the tattoo into a narrative that resonates with the people's life experiences and aspirations," further elaborating on how symbolism forms the foundation of his creations, particularly for cover-ups. In addition to making the designs aesthetically pleasing, he makes sure they offer a sense of completion and fresh starts that are full of meaning for the individual.

The tattoo artist goes on to say, "Through thorough consultations, I build a rapport with people, ensuring their stories and preferences are reflected in the final piece." This further explains the importance of consultations and active listening in his approach to creating individualised tattoo designs. "By actively listening, I am able to distill their ideas into artwork that accurately reflects them."

He must take a very collaborative approach in order to strike a balance between the people's requests and his artistic vision. The artist further shares, "I think it's important to involve people throughout the design process, incorporating their inputs while subtly guiding them towards choices that align with my artistic integrity establishing a synergy that guarantees the people's individuality and creative abilities are harmoniously blended."

He also tells a moving tale about one of his creations: "It's about a person who came to me with a tattoo that symbolised a painful chapter in their life. During our talks, I gained knowledge about their process of recovery and development. We changed the previous tattoo to represent rebirth and tenacity—a phoenix emerging from the ashes. Rewarded with a tearful response from the person, which served as a reminder of the transformational potential of art!"

It's assumed that obstacles are a part of the process for all artists and tattoo artists are no exception. The seasoned tattoo artist tells us of one major obstacle he encounters: "Balancing artistic vision with people's expectations is a significant challenge. To overcome this, it is necessary to ensure that people are aware of the nuances of tattoo art through education and clear communication."

He goes on to say that in order to provide a range of styles and patterns, it is important for him to stay current with emerging techniques. He often attends conferences, workshops and international seminars in order to do this. The winner of the Belgium Tattoo Convention's "Best Cover-up Artist" title also enthuses, "Networking with other artists and engaging in continuous learning through online platforms and courses keeps me at the forefront of the industry." For a tattoo artist, maintaining personal cleanliness and safety are essential. He said that using disposable needles and tubing for every session, together with strict sterilisation methods, are crucial. "I use premium inks that are safe for skin and my studio is always well-sanitised. In addition, I teach people on how to take care of themselves in order to avoid infections and guarantee healthy healing," the tattoo artist adds.

We now learn about his future goals as our conversation draws to a close. With the words, "I want people in India to know that they can receive world-class tattoo artistry right here in their own country," he expresses his desire to mentor up-and-coming artists and encourage others.

UNDERSTANDING SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), also known as sexually transmitted infections (STIs), represent a significant global health challenge primarily transmitted through unprotected sexual contact. This comprehensive article delves into various common STDs, their symptoms, diagnostic methods, prevention strategies and management options.

STDs encompass a broad spectrum of infections, each with distinct characteristics and health implications:

- Gonorrhoea:** Caused by *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, it commonly manifests with urethral discharge and painful urination.
- Syphilis:** Caused by *Treponema pallidum*, syphilis progresses through primary (painless ulcer), secondary (skin rash, mucous membrane lesions) and potentially devastating tertiary stages affecting various organs.
- Lymphogranuloma Venereum:** Caused by *Chlamydia trachomatis* serotypes L1, L2, and L3, it presents with painless genital ulcers and enlargement of groin lymph nodes.
- Chancroid:** Caused by *Haemophilus ducreyi*, it presents with painful genital ulcers and can cause enlargement of groin lymph nodes.
- AIDS (HIV infection):** Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) weakens the immune system, leading to Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), characterised by opportunistic infections and malignancies.
- Genital Herpes:** Caused by Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV), it results in painful genital ulcers and recurrent outbreaks.
- Condyloma Acuminata (Genital warts):** Caused by Human Papillomavirus (HPV), it presents as cauliflower-like growths on genitalia and may lead to various cancers.
- Molluscum Contagiosum:** A viral infection causing small, raised lesions with central dimpling.
- Viral Hepatitis:** Hepatitis B and C viruses can be sexually transmitted, leading to liver inflammation and long-term complications.
- Bacterial Vaginosis (BV):** Characterised by a shift in vaginal flora, leading to discharge and odour.
- Trichomonas Vaginitis:** Caused by *Trichomonas vaginalis*, it results in vaginal discharge and irritation.
- Fungal Vaginitis:** Often caused by *Candida* species, leading to vaginal itching and discharge.
- Scabies:** A skin infestation caused by *Sarcoptes Scabiei* mites, causing intense itching and skin lesions.
- Pediculosis pubis (Pubic lice):** Parasitic infestation causing itching in the genital area.

These infections can present with local symptoms such as ulcers, discharge, and pain, and may lead to systemic complications like pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), infertility and in severe cases, septicemia.

Diagnosis and testing

Diagnosing STDs involves a combination of clinical evaluation and specific laboratory tests:

- Clinical examination:** Helps identify visible symptoms like ulcers, rashes, or discharge.
- Laboratory tests:** Including cultures of vaginal secretions, serological tests like VDRL for syphilis, and nucleic acid amplification tests (NAATs) for HIV and other infections, are crucial for accurate diagnosis.

Prevention strategies

Preventing the transmission of STDs is essential and involves:

- Safe sexual practices:** Including consistent condom use, reducing the number of sexual partners, and avoiding high-risk behaviours.
- Aseptic procedures:** During medical interventions and childbirth to prevent infections.
- Vaccination:** Vaccines are available for hepatitis B and HPV, reducing the risk of liver cancer and cervical cancer, respectively.



Treatment and management

Treatment approaches vary based on the type of infection:

- Viral STIs** like HIV, HSV, and HPV have limited treatment options; management focuses on antiviral therapy to control symptoms and reduce transmission.
- Bacterial infections** such as syphilis and gonorrhoea are treated effectively with antibiotics.
- Treatments** like topical creams or procedures to remove the genital warts are used.

Specific STDs in focus

- Syphilis:** Progresses through distinct stages with varied clinical manifestations and can lead to severe organ damage if untreated.
- Genital herpes (HSV):** Causes recurrent painful lesions and remains incurable, managed with antiviral medications to alleviate symptoms.
- HPV (Human Papillomavirus):** Causes genital warts and increases the risk of cervical, anal, and other cancers; management includes topical treatments and HPV vaccination.
- Pubic lice (Pediculosis pubis):** Requires direct physical contact for transmission and is managed with topical insecticides.

HIV/AIDS: A global challenge

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) remains a significant global health concern due to its profound impact on individuals and communities worldwide. HIV weakens the immune system, making infected individuals susceptible to opportunistic infections and cancers, ultimately progressing to Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), despite advancements in antiretroviral therapy (ART) that can control the virus and improve quality of life, HIV/AIDS continues to pose challenges due to ongoing transmission, stigma associated with the infection and the socioeconomic disparities affecting access to healthcare and prevention services. Efforts to combat HIV include prevention through education, widespread testing, and ensuring access to treatment and support services for all affected populations.

- Transmission modes:** Include sexual intercourse, sharing needles and perinatal transmission from mother to child.
- Diagnostic tests:** Like ELISA, Western blot and HIV RNA PCR are crucial for early detection and management.
- Preventive measures:** Include promoting safer sex practices, routine HIV testing and avoiding breastfeeding for HIV-positive mothers.

In conclusion, understanding and managing STDs require comprehensive strategies encompassing prevention through education, widespread vaccination, prompt diagnosis and effective treatment. While bacterial infections like syphilis and gonorrhoea are treatable with antibiotics, viral STIs such as HIV and HSV present ongoing challenges due to their lifelong nature and limited treatment options. Public health initiatives must emphasise education, access to testing and early intervention to reduce the prevalence and impact of these infections globally. By promoting safer sexual practices and expanding vaccination programs, we can strive towards mitigating the burden of STDs and improving overall public health outcomes worldwide.

(The author, Dr Nirmala Chandrashekar, is a senior consultant in Obstetrics & Gynecology, of Gleneagles BGS Hospital.)

what's brewing?



● Bina Mehta



● Laya



● Hema



● Jayesh Gupta and Taakshi



● Dalia



● Bhaswati

The Hand to Hand handloom exhibition was launched by Tollywood actress Taakshi Chitgopaker at Kalinga Cultural Hall. The Jagdishwar Hastkala-organised expo will close on June 30.

At Taj Krishna, Sutraa Exhibition was launched by socialite Bina Mehta. The exhibition ends on June 27 after three days.



● Kushi



● Rishika Ray



● Mariyam



● Komal



Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) announced the highly anticipated edition of Hyundai India Couture Week in association with Reliance Brands, set to grace the heart of the capital from July 24 to July 31, 2024, at the iconic Taj Palace.

PARTY
Photos by - SV Chary



Magic 106.4 FM, the city's one and only 90's music radio station, organised the finals of *Bala Gana Gandharvulu - Season 4* as a tribute to legendary film singer late SP Bala Subrahmanyam. The grand finale of the competition was held at the Nexus Mall in Kukatpally. Music director Anup Rubens and famous singers Sai Charan and Harini Ivaturi were the judges at the event.

CURTAIN RAISER

Experience the soul of summer under the Mango Tree at Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre. Treat yourself to an exquisite presentation of mango delights meticulously curated by our talented chefs. From tantalising beverages to sumptuous desserts, each dish captures the essence of this seasonal fruit, offering a feast for the senses.

Elevate your dining experience amidst the lush surroundings of our landscaped gardens where sophistication meets culinary excellence.

Where: Under the Mango Tree Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre, Hyderabad, Telangana.

When: Ongoing till 30th June 2024 **Time:** 07.00 PM-11.00 PM

CURTAIN RAISER

Get ready for an electrifying experience with Totem Tribe 2.0 - an Afro House Experience curated by the incredible Rinaa Shah. This one-of-a-kind music event is set to deliver an unforgettable experience. The event highlights includes live DJ performances, tribal dancers and aerial acts, live percussion, carnival atmosphere and special effects night.

Where: Anti-Social, Hyderabad

When: June 28, 2024

Time: 8:00 pm onwards

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



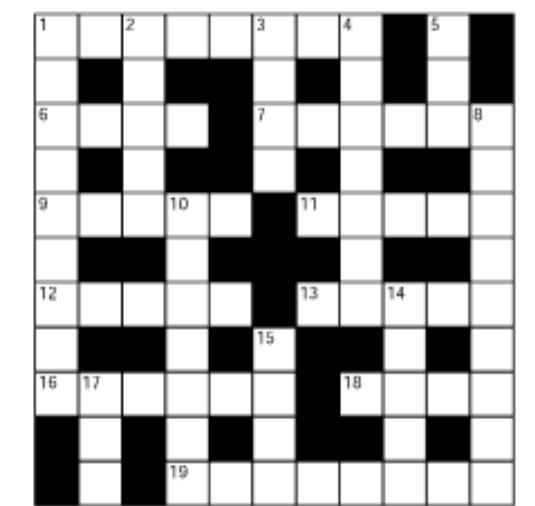
REALITY CHECK



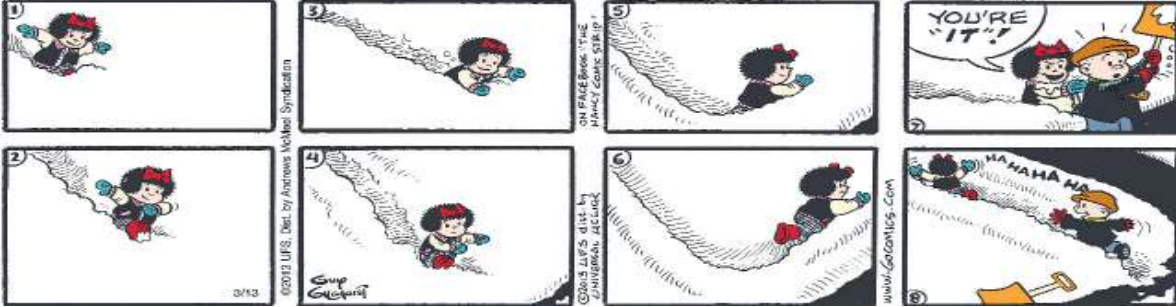
SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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

ACROSS

- Squashes completely
- A red gemstone
- Make tea in this
- Words by which people or places are known
- A striped animal
- Donates
- Defeats
- A red fruit for sandwiches
- A song performed by one
- Sick or injured people are cared for in this place

DOWN

- Two weeks
- A book for photographs
- Has a meal

4 A breed of cat with blue eyes and pale fur
 5 Animals are on show here
 8 This looks like a mushroom but might be poisonous
 10 A hair near your eye
 14 Approximately
 15 Things to play with
 17 This bird hunts at night

SOLUTION

W	F	I	C	S	C					
H	E	L	I	C	T	R				
O	I	L	D	A	R					
D	E	L	I	C	I	O				
S	W	I	T	Z	E	R	L	A	N	D
C	R	I	N	D	I					
O	R	I	G	A	N	A	F	L		
T	R	E	C	A	F	E				
C	H	O	P	S	T	I	C	K	S	
H	W	I	D	E						



AAY releasing on August 15

RANA BACKS NIVETHA THOMAS, PRIYADARSHI

Rana Daggubati presents Nivetha Thomas and Priyadarshi's upcoming film, marking the return of Suresh Productions after a two-year hiatus from the big screen. Known for their 60 years of successful legacy, Suresh Productions collaborates with S Originals and Waltair Productions for this new-age family drama, promising a wholesome entertainment experience. Starring Nivetha Thomas, Priyadarshi, Vishwadev, Gautami and Bhagyaraj in pivotal roles, the film is produced by Rana Daggubati, Srujan Yarabolu and Siddharth Rallapalli. Directed and written by Nanda Kishore Emani, the movie titled 35 - *Chinna Katha Kaadu* was unveiled through an artistically designed poster depicting a family seated on temple stairs. Scheduled for a theatrical release on August 15,

coinciding with Independence Day, the film aims to captivate diverse audiences with its refreshing storyline, featuring nostalgic school episodes as a special highlight. With Vivek Sagar composing music and Niketh Bommi handling cinematography, known for their work in acclaimed films like *Pelli Choopulu* and *Aakasam Nee Haddhu Raa*, respectively, the visual and auditory aspects promise to elevate the viewing experience. 35 - *Chinna Katha Kaadu* will be released simultaneously in Telugu, Tamil and Malayalam, anticipated to become a blockbuster with its blend of clean entertainment and engaging narrative.



Featuring young actors Narne Nithiin and Nayan Sarika in lead roles, *AAY* marks the next successful production from GA2 Pictures. Directed by debutant filmmaker Anji K Maniputhra and produced by Bunny Vas and Vidya Koppineedi, this film has been generating buzz with its captivating promotional content. Already making waves, the film's songs have become chart-toppers and are trending across social media platforms through reels and shorts. With excitement mounting, the makers have officially announced the release date. *AAY*, touted as the ultimate fun entertainer of the season, will hit theatres worldwide on Independence Day, August 15. The decision to release the film on Independence Day is strategic, taking advantage of the extended weekend, with Thursday being a holiday followed by the weekend and Raksha Bandhan on Monday.



The makers, who have been teasing audiences with character teasers and song releases, promise regular updates leading up to the release. Set against the picturesque backdrop of Godavari, *AAY* guarantees a delightful family entertainer that will showcase Narne Nithiin's charm. This ambitious project brings together top-notch acting and technical talents, with ace producer Allu Aravind presenting the film. Art direction by Kiran Kumar Manne, cinematography by Sameer Kalyani and music composed by Ram Miryala add to the film's appeal. Stay tuned for more exciting details about this eagerly anticipated project.

Raashii Khanna wants to work with MB, Prabhas

Raashii Khanna expresses her desire to collaborate with top stars in Tollywood, highlighting her interest in working with Prabhas and Mahesh Babu. Celebrating a decade in Tollywood, Raashii Khanna revealed her wish list of actors she hopes to work with. "I really want to work with Mahesh Babu," she emphasised, citing her admiration for him and their potential on-screen chemistry. She also expressed enthusiasm about collaborating with Prabhas, praising his recent work and eagerly anticipating his upcoming film, *Kalki 2898 AD*. Reflecting on her journey in the Telugu film industry, Raashii Khanna recalled starting without knowing Telugu but having since delivered numerous blockbusters, solidifying her reputation as a versatile actress. Her recent Tamil film, *Aranmanai 4*, not only broke records at the box office but also affirmed her status as a leading figure in Tamil cinema, earning her the title of the 'Golden Girl' of the industry. Looking ahead, Raashii Khanna is poised for the release of her upcoming Hindi film *The Sabarmati Report*, co-starring Vikrant Massey, and *Talaakhon Mein Ek*. She also has a Telugu film titled *Telusu Kada* in the pipeline, showcasing her diverse range and continuing success across multiple film industries.



BARKHA SINGH EYES TOLLYWOOD INDUSTRY

Barkha Singh, a prominent star from the digital realm, recently shared her enthusiasm for the Telugu film industry during an interactive "Ask me anything" session on Instagram. Responding to a fan query about her interest in Tollywood, Barkha enthusiastically replied, "OMG YAAAAA! That would be a dream!" Known for her compelling performances across web series and films, Barkha Singh has amassed a dedicated fan base drawn to her charisma and acting prowess. Her expressed desire to explore Tollywood has sparked excitement among her followers, who eagerly anticipate seeing her make her mark in Telugu cinema! Given Barkha Singh's versatility and screen presence, she is poised to make a seamless transition to Tollywood, captivating audiences with her talent. Fans are optimistic that her interest will lead to exciting collaborations and projects in the near future. Her statement has generated considerable interest, leaving many eager to witness her potential journey into the vibrant world of Telugu cinema. On the professional front, Barkha Singh has already impressed audiences with notable roles. Her work in *Maja Ma*, alongside the Madhuri Dixit Nene, received acclaim. She has also announced her upcoming project *Lafangey* with Amazon miniTV and has several projects slated for release this year, promising further success in her career.



Yes Boss shooting completed

Prominent producer, educationalist, and chairman of KL University, Koneru Satyanarayana, known for producing blockbuster films like *Rakshasudu* and *Khiladi*, is currently busy with his next project, *Yes Boss*, produced under K Studios. Kanchana Koneru is presenting this entertainer. This upcoming film stars the dynamic actor Havish, who was last seen in the mystery thriller *Seven*. Havish made his debut with *Muvvula* and has since delivered notable films such as *Ram Leela* and *Genius*. *Yes Boss*, directed by Ashok of *Bhaagamathie* fame, is a commercial entertainer that marks the first collaboration between actor Havish and filmmaker Ashok. On the occasion of Havish's birthday, the makers unveiled a captivating poster showcasing the actor in a stylish look. The film is expected to be high on entertainment and content, with a release date to be announced soon. Prominent writer Akula Shiva is penning the story and dialogue. Renowned Tollywood comedian Brahmanandam is playing a crucial role, adding a touch of humor to the film. The technical crew includes ace cinematographer Kabir Lal and talented music director Anup Rubens as composers.



Allu Sirish starrer Buddy's trailer is out now

Allu Sirish has joined hands with Tamil director Sam Anton for the upcoming film, *Buddy*. The first look and first single have received a positive response from the audience. Now the team has come up with an exciting trailer. It reveals that a teddy bear is in trouble and asks for help from Aditya Ram (Allu Sirish). The trailer shows how both of them join forces to solve the problem. Allu Sirish plays a pilot in the film, and the core point of the story seems pretty interesting. The trailer is well-edited with exciting elements and from a technical perspective, it looks very good. Gayatri Bhardwaj plays the leading lady in this film, which also stars Prisha Singh, Ajmal Amir, Mukesh Rishi, Mohammed Ali and others in significant roles. Hip-hop Tamizha is composing the music. Renowned production house Studio Green is producing the film. *Buddy* is all set to hit the screens on July 26, 2024.

Shanmukha wraps up shoot, gets ready for post-production

Sapbro Productions has announced the completion of filming for their highly anticipated movie, *Shanmukha*, which stars Aadi Sai Kumar and Avika Gor. Directed by Shanmugam Sappani, the film promises to be a visual spectacle featuring grand sets, striking CGI and a formidable score by the renowned Ravi Basur. The movie was shot on some of the largest sets ever built near Hyderabad, providing the perfect backdrop for its epic story. Director Shanmugam Sappani said, "We have crafted a story that we believe will resonate with audiences, thanks to our talented cast and crew, led by Aadi Sai Kumar and Avika Gor. The film is now moving into post-production, where the focus will be on fine-tuning the visual effects and ensuring the highest quality in every frame." The music for the film is composed by the super-talented Ravi Basur, known for his work on *KGF* and *Salaar*. His compositions are the mainstay of this emotional roller-coaster ride. The film is produced by Thulasiram Sappani, Shanmugam Sappani, and Ramesh Yadav.



PIC TALK

Telangana State Roads, Buildings and Cinematography Minister Komati Reddy Venkat Reddy was the special guest at Kalavedika, Raghavi Media - NTR Film Awards programme. On the name of Viswa Vikhyata, Nata Sarwabhawma, Dr. Nandamuri Tarakarama Rao, Kalavedika (R. V. Ramana Murthy) and Raghavi Media organised NTR Film Awards 2024 for famous film actresses and actors in the field of cinema. The NTR Film Awards ceremony was held at Hotel Dasapalla in Hyderabad in the presence of many celebrities. "On this occasion, we would like to express our gratitude Komati Reddy Venkata Reddy, for accepting our invitation to be the special guest for the function. He agreed to come to this program because of his admiration for NTR. Therefore, on June 29, film celebrities and NTR fans are requested to participate and make this event a success."



Deepika Padukone praises Kalki 2898 AD for its blend of technology, emotional depth

With anticipation soaring for *Kalki 2898 AD*, touted for its cutting-edge CGI and stunning cinematography, expectations are at an all-time high among fans eagerly awaiting its release. The film promises to elevate Indian cinema to global standards, as showcased by its recent trailer release and accompanying series, *The Kalki Chronicles*, which offers exclusive insights into the making of the film. Deepika Padukone, part of the film's esteemed cast, recently discussed the delicate balance achieved between advanced technology and the heartfelt performances in *Kalki 2898 AD*. She lauded the film's technological prowess, highlighting, "For all of us to be part of a movie where I think every kind of technology that is available in the world today is probably at our disposal." Despite the extensive use of cutting-edge technologies like AI, Deepika emphasised the importance of retaining the emotional essence of performances. "With AI and similar advancements, there is a risk of losing the soul of the performances," she observed, while commending director Nag Ashwin for his adept management of this equilibrium. "The fact that we have a director who has used it so intelligently," she added, speaks volumes about the film's approach. *Kalki 2898 AD* features a stellar ensemble cast including Amitabh Bachchan, Kamal Haasan, Prabhas, Deepika Padukone and Disha Patani. Directed by Nag Ashwin and produced by Vyjayanthi Movies, the film is scheduled for release on June 27, promising a cinematic experience that seamlessly merges technological innovation with profound storytelling.



A lot of credit for my wickets goes to Bumrah: Arshdeep

PTI ■ GEORGETOWN (GUYANA)

The pinpoint accuracy of Jasprit Bumrah allows other bowlers in the Indian team to go for wickets even in extreme pressure situations, said pacer Arshdeep Singh. The 25-year-old left-arm pacer is among the leading wicket-takers in the T20 World Cup with 15 scalps in six games at an average of 11.86 and economy rate of 7.41 runs per over. Bumrah, on the other hand, has taken 11 wickets in the same number of games, conceding just 4.08 runs per over, a rarity in the shortest format. "I guess a lot of credit goes to Jasprit because he puts a lot of pressure on the batters. He gives what, three or four runs

in and over," Arshdeep said after the 24-run win over Australia in Saint Lucia on Monday. "So, batsmen are coming hard against me and when they are trying, I just have to try and bowl my best ball and there are a lot of chances of getting wickets there because on the other hand they see the runs are not coming and the asking rate is going high. "So, they take more risk against me and there's a chance always of getting a wicket there. So there's a lot of credit of my wickets that goes to Jasprit," he said. Spinner Kuldeep Yadav once again provided the wickets when the team was in need and only three games into the tournament, he has taken his tally to seven scalps. "Kuldeep is a champion



spinner. Whenever he gets a chance, he delivers and he's always been in the wickets and today as well he was bowling from the tough end and even against the wind, he managed to bowl at around 6 an over and took crucial wickets. "He is a really important player in our team and we are looking forward to take all from him and we hope he takes a lot of wickets," said Arshdeep, who had David Warner caught in the slips on Monday. India face England in the second semi-final here on Thursday and they will have last edition's crushing semifinal loss to the defending champions in mind before taking the field at the Providence Stadium. Asked about his plans for the

semifinals, Arshdeep added: "Right now, I'm not expecting anything out of that game, just we'll have a little celebration after this game and a long travel day ahead. And then we'll see what conditions there are and how we can do our best there." Australia's best bowler on the day, Josh Hazlewood, also gave due credit to Kuldeep and Bumrah, saying they made the difference. "I thought the wicket was - a pretty good wicket it was probably a 190-par score and they got the other side of it and we went underneath. "I thought the chase was well on target for quite a lot of the time there and probably till Kuldeep and Jasprit, their eight overs, probably proved the difference again as they usually," said Hazlewood.



We let down all our fans, I apologise on behalf of team: Shanto

PTI ■ KINGSTOWN

Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto has apologised to the cricket-loving fans of his nation for their shambolic performance in the T20 World Cup and blamed his batting unit for the disappointing run that ended with a defeat against a gritty Afghanistan here. After India beat Australia on Sunday, both Afghanistan and Bangladesh had realistic chance of making the semifinals but it was the Rashid Khan-led team that defended a below par 115 to make the last-four stage. Bangladesh needed to knock off the target in 12.1 overs but there were all out for 105 in rain-marred Super Eight contest. "First of all, I would like to say that as a team, we let down all the fans of Bangladesh who follow us and support us. So, I apologise on behalf of the team. As a batting group, we couldn't give the best to the people of the country," Shanto said at the post-match press conference. "We feel sorry for that. We will try to come out of this situation in the future." Crestfallen he may be, but Shanto drew some positives from the campaign. "The positive side is that the bowlers have bowled very well.

Rishad (Hossain) has bowled very well in almost all matches in a big tournament like this. There were a lot of positives, but as a batting unit, we let down the fans and the people of our country. "We gave them a hard time. But there was no lacking in our efforts. Everyone tried their best. Everyone was honest in their place. But at the end of the day, we couldn't make it. So, on behalf of the team, I apologise," he reiterated. Shanto admitted that they had control of the proceedings against Afghanistan at one stage and should have won. "As a whole bowling unit doing a great job especially, I mentioned Rishad whole tournament he bowled really well, Tanzim Sakib bowled well. I felt all the bowlers did a great job that is we can take forward and as a fielding group I think we felt really well in all the matches, so there are some lot of positive things that we can take going forward. "It's a matter of a lot of frustration and a lot of pain too. Because before coming to play this match, everyone's plan was that we would win the match first. But if such a situation arises, then we will definitely take the chance that we had. But we couldn't take it. And the whole batting line-up made very bad decisions."

Fifties and hundreds do not matter, I want to bat with tempo: Rohit

PTI ■ GROS ISLET (ST LUCIA)

He fell short of a potentially record-shattering hundred, but milestones "don't matter" to India skipper Rohit Sharma, whose sole aim while batting is to "put bowlers under pressure" by hitting them all over the field. Rohit's 92-run knock that came off 41 deliveries steered India to a 24-run win over former champions Australia in their final Super 8 outing of the ongoing T20 World Cup on Monday. The record for the fastest T20 World Cup hundred belongs to West Indian swashbuckler Chris Gayle, who pulled it off in 47 deliveries in the 2016 edition. Expectedly adjudged player of the match for the memorable effort, which was punctuated by eight sixes and seven fours, the 37-year-old said his focus was only on maintaining the "tempo" of the match. India will take on England in the second semifinal on June 27.

"It was a good wicket, and you want to try and back yourself to play those kinds of shots. I've been trying to do that for a few years now, and I'm glad it came off today. The fifties and hundreds don't matter, I wanted to bat with the same tempo and carry on. "You want to make big scores, yes, but at the same time you want to make the bowlers think where the next shot is coming, and I think I managed to do that today," he added. "You need to put the bowlers under pressure, and you need big scores for that. I tried to access all sides of the field, not just one side." Winning was not a 'breeze' for India and Rohit said he had to tweak his batting style to take the wind out of the 2021 champions' sails. Rohit played some delectable strokes on the off side after his opening partner Virat Kohli departed for a duck. With wind a perpetual hindrance, Rohit said he had



to play more strokes on the off side to negate the impact. "I thought right from over number one, there was a strong breeze blowing across. They (Australia) changed their plan, bowling against the breeze, so I realised I had to open up the off side as well," he said. "You've got to factor in the breeze and understand that the bowlers are smart as well

and open up all sides of the field. When you keep an open mind and not just think of one shot, you can access all areas of the field," said the India skipper after the match. "...When you're playing on grounds like this where wind is a factor, anything is possible, but I thought we used the conditions very well. It was very pleasing to see

how we were getting through those overs and getting the wickets at the same time." Rohit also said he knew wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav would be at his potent best in the West Indies after encountering seamer-friendly conditions in the US. Kuldeep repaid his faith with excellent figures of 2/24 in his four overs on Monday. "Kuldeep, we understand the strengths he has, but you have to use it when you need it. The pitches in New York were seamer-friendly, but we knew he would play a big role later." The skipper added that he would like India to continue playing the same way in the knockouts as well. "We don't want to do anything different (in the knockouts). We want to play the same way, understand what the individuals need to do in a given situation, and play freely. "So far we've been doing that consistently, and semifinals, we have to try and do the

same thing. It'll be nice (to play England in the semifinal). Nothing changes for us, we want to focus on what we can do as a team, and take the game on." **MARSH RUES MISSED CHANCES** Australian skipper Mitchell Marsh, who was guilty of grassing a sitter and also failed to build on his good start with the bat, conceded that India were better on the day. "It's disappointing... Today India got the better of us. I think over the course of 40 overs there's a lot of small margins, but honestly, India were the better team," he admitted. "We've seen for 15 years what Rohit Sharma can do in that kind of mood, and he got off to an absolute flier. In a run chase like that, you're in it if you can keep it at tens (10 runs per over) for as long as possible, but India were too good for us."

Warner makes low-key exit from cricket after Afghans beat Bangladesh

PTI ■ KINGSTOWN

Australia batting great David Warner's 15-year-long international career, dotted with glorious achievements and controversies in equal measure, has come to an anticlimactic end after Afghanistan beat Bangladesh, eliminating the former champions from the T20 World Cup at the Super Eight phase. Australia, the 2021 champions, finished at third place in the Super 8s Group 1 table with just two points - from the win against Bangladesh. They had suffered a shocking loss to Afghanistan and a humbling defeat to India. The 37-year-old Warner, who made his international debut in January 2009 in a T20I

match, thus made a low-key exit from international cricket with Australia's 24-run loss to India on June 24 at Gros Islet being his last match. There was no guard of honour or standing ovation, befitting one of Australia's all-time great batters. He made six runs off five balls in the match, edging Arshdeep Singh as Suryakumar Yadav took a low catch. He walked off the pitch with his head down, not knowing whether that was his last game. Warner's retirement has been gradual. He played his final ODI match in the World Cup final win over India in November 2023 and his last Test against Pakistan in January. He has long signalled that this T20 World Cup would be his final tournament. He retires as Australia's highest



scorer and seventh-most prolific batter in the world in T20 format with 3,277 runs from 110 matches, at an average of 33.43 and strike rate of 142.47. He scored one hundred and 28 fifties in the shortest format. From 112 Tests, he has scored 8,786 runs at an average of 44.59 with 26 hundreds and 37

fifties between 2011 and 2024. He also scored 6,932 runs from 161 ODI matches at an average of 45.30 with the help of 22 centuries and 33 half centuries. Warner, who has 49 centuries across formats and close to 19,000 runs in international cricket, had acknowledged that his name will forever be linked to the sandpaper gate scandal that took place at Newlands, Cape Town during a Test match against South Africa in 2018. Warner's involvement in the scandal in the Newlands Test, when Cameron Bancroft used sandpaper to scuff the ball earned him a one-year ban, the same punishment as that of the then skipper Steven Smith. Warner was also banned for life from taking any leadership role in the Australian cricket setup.

Test cricket at very low point in West Indies: Sarwan

PTI ■ GEORGETOWN (GUYANA)

Ramnaresh Sarwan, one of the most prolific batters to have played for the West Indies, is leading a comfortable life after retirement but when one talks him to him about the health of Test cricket in the region, he paints a grim picture, fearful of a talent exodus to the USA. The unexpected growth of T20 cricket and players' preference for the shortest format has put red-ball cricket on the backburner. First-class teams play as little as five games per season, which Sarwan thinks should be increased to at least 10. Speaking to PTI, the 44-year-old also lamented the lack of cricket facilities in the region. He featured in 87 Tests and 181 ODIs aggregating more than 10,000 runs across formats and played alongside fellow Guyanese Shivnarine Chanderpaul and the great Brian Lara for the better part of his career. "Yeah well Test cricket is at a very low point to be honest. Among the games that we are playing again in the Caribbean, I don't think it's sufficient to develop our players but I also think there is this major threat of T20 cricket where a lot of people are showing interest in the shortest format," he said. "I think one of the biggest challenges we've had is facilities in the region. I think the cricket board has been working on it. So we'll see what happens," he added. I see lot of Caribbean players moving to USA Sarwan has nothing against players making money from the plethora of franchise leagues but the lure is impacting the format he loves and took great pride playing. With the way the game is going, Sarwan foresees a mass exodus of the Caribbean players to mainland America where the game has got a major push with hosting of the T20 World Cup and inclusion of the sport in the 2028 LA Olympics programme. "I think having T20 format in the US which is so close to the Caribbean with so many players of course they would have the opportunity now to participate in the short format of the game in the US.



"So you might find a lot of people jumping ship in terms of coming to the US and start participating in T20 and of course try and see if they could find a way in terms of becoming legal in the US and then start hopefully pushing the play in the US," said Sarwan, who also spends a lot of time in the US. The former West Indies captain has lot on his plate. He runs a couple of restaurants in Georgetown, one being an Italian-American joint and the other serves Thai and Indian fusion food. Talking more about Tests, Sarwan, who was known for his sound technique and wrist work, said an immediate solution is not in sight. "I don't think it's something that can be done only in the Caribbean. I think the ICC probably would have to intervene to put a limit in terms of how many T20 tournaments are being played around the world. "Of course you want to have the best players available for all those leagues and of course you also want to be able to represent the countries. So I think it's a major challenge in terms of saying what is the ideal scenario. At some point in time, the ICC probably would have to intervene which I really don't see happening in the near future," said Sarwan. Has the pride of playing for West Indies diminished in the era of T20 leagues? "I don't want to say it's diminished. But probably because of the shorter format of the game, it has taken a lot of players' attention. So, they probably would have worked more in the shorter format rather than the longer format.

Afghanistan's run to semifinals will inspire youth back home, says Rashid

PTI ■ KINGSTOWN

Skipper Rashid Khan believes that Afghanistan's maiden T20 World Cup semifinal qualification, following spectacular wins over New Zealand and Australia along the way, is a momentous feat that will inspire the youth of the strife-torn nation. Afghanistan, who became a full ICC member only in 2017, scripted history by qualifying for their maiden T20 World Cup semifinal with a win over Bangladesh here. "I think the semi-final is going to be a massive, massive like inspiration for the youngsters back home in Afghanistan. That Afghanistan team get into the semis for the first time," Rashid said at the post match press conference. "And we have done it under 19 level, but this level we haven't done that. Even Super Eight was first time for us and then in semis," he added. Moments after the win, visuals of jubilant fans back home celebrating Afghanistan's historic achievement started doing the rounds on social

media. With the feat, Afghanistan have showed how much they have progressed in the white ball formats. At last year's ODI World Cup, they upset defending champions England and former winners Sri Lanka and Pakistan. They are continuing their giant slaying run at the T20 World Cup having beaten heavyweights New Zealand and Australia. "The cricket we have played in the whole tournament so far - I think we deserve to be in the semis. The way everyone took the responsibility of getting into the game and performing best for the team," said Rashid. "So, I don't know how I can describe my feeling but it's a massive achievement for us as a team and as a nation to be in the semis and now looking forward to the semis." The Afghanistan cricket team is a group of individuals who have honed their skills by playing their trade in T20 leagues around the world. But when they come together to play for their country, it's hard to find a more passionate bunch. Afghanistan have found the



perfect head coach in former England cricketer Jonathan Trott, who balances things out with his calm and composed demeanour. The result is a side high on self belief. "To me, there is no good team and bad team. Every team is equal to each other. As long as a day, we took the right decision the right time, and that's where the difference comes when you're a loser. So

other than that, skill-wise, everyone is equal, I think," Rashid said. An unbeaten South African team awaits them in the semifinal. But the Proteas were stretched a few times in the tournament, especially by minnows Nepal, who stumbled at the final juncture, losing by a run. "Well, it's always you get that kind of inspiration for any team you watch on TV and

those small totals when team defend that it gives you lots of things to learn from and definitely the way Nepal performed in the whole competition was something pleasing to see." "They have played great cricket against all the sides they have played. And that's how T20 is all about. You need to have that kind of self-belief that we are capable of beating any side as long we do the right thing in

the right time and we're making sure we keep the thing simple." There was a moment during the game against Bangladesh when Gulbadin Naib dramatically fell on his back, clutching his thigh after Trott signalled his players to slow things down. But minutes later, not only was the all-rounder back on the field but he also went on to take Tanzim Hasan's wicket, causing several former players and commentators to question the genuineness of his discomfort. But Rashid thought to play down the incident. "Well, he had some cramp, I don't know what happened to him and I don't know what's going on in social media but that doesn't matter - it's just the end field injury which comes and then we haven't lost any overs, the rain came and we just went off, it's not something like brought a massive difference in the game. "We came back on field after five minutes and there was no massive difference. For me, it's just like a small injury comes in, then you have to take some time."