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'India-US relations will be on a very firm footing'

DESIGNING ICONIC SPACES, FROM SUPREME COURT TO RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN



CITADEL: HONEY BUNNY SAMANTHA IS ACTION QUEEN IN THIS SPY-VERSE

QUOTE OF THE DAY

People are facing hardships due to potholes. Instead of taking immediate action, why are you officials delaying with estimates and tenders? Words aren't enough—we need results. Neighboring states are using advanced jet patching and velocity patching machines to quickly fill potholes, providing better roads to the public. In contrast, Telangana continues with outdated repair methods. Why Rs. 500 crore allocated for road repairs had not been efficiently utilized by R&B officials, as roads worth Rs. 4-5 thousand crore could be repaired

- Komati Reddy Venkatreddy, Minister P2

DON'T MISS...

Cyber security is buzzword for ...

Pointing out cyber security as a buzzword and stressing the need for digital hygiene maintenance as much as we care for our health, IT Minister D Sridhar Babu emphasised that the government is here to understand what you seek and guide us to build a safe, inclusive and strong digital ecosystem. He stressed the importance of cyber security in achieving digital excellence and transformation for all citizens. He was the ...

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Senior citizen reclaims land ...

A senior citizen reclaimed land that was previously registered in his son's name as a gift due to the latter's mistreatment of him at a village in Hanumakonda district. The incident took place in Mustafapur village of Bheemdevarapalli mandal. According to Tahsildar Praveen Kumar, Maddela Raj Komurayya, a resident of Mustafapur, had previously registered a little over 4 acres of land in the name of ...

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Home-cooked meals become ...

Both vegetarian and non-vegetarian home-cooked meals became costlier in October due to a pick up in vegetable prices, a report said on Wednesday. The cost of a vegetarian thali increased by 20 per cent to Rs 33.3 per plate compared to the year-ago period and was also up from Rs 31.3 in September primarily due to the surge in vegetable prices, a division of rating agency Crisis said. The monthly 'roti rice rate' report ...

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Stokes missing as Draca, Netravalkar...

England Test skipper Ben Stokes is missing from the list of 1,574 players while his former teammate James Anderson, Italian quick Thomas Draca and India-born USA medium pacer Saurabh Netravalkar have all registered for the IPL mega auction to be held in Jeddah on November 24 and 25. The list, which will be shortened after the franchises provide their inputs, has all the marquee Indian players who were released from their teams including ...

-SPORTS

DONALD TRUMPS HARRIS, WINS BACK USA PRESIDENCY

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

Former President Donald Trump on Wednesday won the US presidency for a second term in one of the greatest political comebacks in American history, cruising past his Democratic rival Kamala Harris in a bitterly fought election.

The 78-year-old Republican leader cleared the 270 electoral votes needed to clinch the presidency by securing a victory in the key battleground state of Wisconsin.

According to races up to 4 pm (IST), 277 electoral votes had gone to Republican candidate Trump and 224 to Democratic Party's Harris.

Trump addressed his supporters at West Palm Beach in Florida, declaring victory and promising a "golden age of America".

"This will be the golden age of America. America has given us an unprecedented and powerful mandate," Trump declared with his family by his side amid cheers of his jubilant supporters.

"This is a magnificent victory for the

American people. This was a movement like nobody's ever seen before, and frankly, this was, I believe, the greatest political movement of all time. There's never been anything like this in this country, and maybe beyond," Trump said.

"And now it's going to reach a new level of importance because

"Every single day, I will be fighting for you and with every breath in my body, I will not rest until we have delivered the strong, safe and prosperous America that our children deserve and that you deserve. This will truly be the golden age of America"

we're going to help our country heal. We'll help our country...we have a country that needs help, and it needs help very badly," he said.

"We are going to fix our borders. We are going to fix everything about our country. And we made history for a reason tonight, and the reason is going to be just that we overcame obstacles that nobody thought possible, and it is now clear that we've achieved the most incredible political thing."

Trump also promised to usher in a "golden" period in the US.

"I want to thank the American people for the extraordinary honour of being elected your 47th president and your 45th president," he said. "I will fight for you, for your family and your future."

"Every single day, I will be fighting for you and with every breath in my body, I will not rest until we have delivered the strong, safe and prosperous America that our children deserve and that you deserve. This will truly be the golden age of America," he added.

The victory by Trump is largely being seen as a remarkable comeback after he lost the 2020 presidential election to Joe Biden which appeared to be the end of his political career.

Trump won the battleground states of Pennsylvania, Georgia and North Carolina and Wisconsin.

Counting of votes is still underway in some

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Modi calls for boosting Indo-US ties



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday congratulated "friend" Donald Trump on his "historic" presidential polls victory, and said he looks forward to renewing their collaboration to further strengthen the India-US Comprehensive Global and Strategic Partnership. Former US President Trump was cruising towards winning the White House

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QUICK EDIT Trump win a slap in the face of media



BY B KRISHNA PRASAD

Donald Trump's landslide victory in the 2024 US Presidential election makes it clear that a majority of people in American society, irrespective of race, religion, economic status, gender and sexual orientation, voted for him without being swayed by skewed and distorted narratives of most of the United States' mainstream media. In all the swing states, Trump received overwhelming support.

Till yesterday, everyone thought that it would be a close contest, almost neck and neck or going to the wire. But the verdict that came out on Wednesday is clearly one-sided. This means that the bulk of the US media failed to gauge the mood of the public or worse still (God forbid!) misled the world!

Throughout the campaign period, Trump did not get legitimate coverage, leave alone support or endorsements, from the bulk of the influential segments of the US media, except, of course, his own Fox News.

It was rightly described by Elon Musk on his handle in 'X' (formerly Twitter) as "US media news coverage was 84% in favour of Kamal Harris and 89% against Donald Trump". The best example of this biased coverage was when Donald Trump was shot at during an open-air campaign rally near Butler, Pennsylvania on July 13, 2024. Trump was then the presumptive nominee of the Republican Party.

Although the attempt was on the life of a former POTUS, most of the US media reported it as if it was of no significance, going by the headlines and column space. The shocking headlines for the shooting included: 'Simple aberration in a rally: Trump shifted away'; 'Donald Trump was taken away from an election rally after some noise'; 'Donald Trump falls in the rally and he was shifted away'.



Such inconsequential and misleading headlines, given for an assassination bid on a former President of the United States' speak volumes about the skewed coverage in the American media. This also implies that, though the media stooped to that level to support one candidate against another, instead of maintaining absolute neutrality; most of the US citizens relied on their gut feelings, knowledge, and wisdom to cast their vote. They did not rely on information dished out by the mainstream media, but read between the lines of the distorted reportage.

All told, the most important takeaway from the 2024 US Presidential election for enlightened sections of the media is that the media, even in what is considered the most democratic country, cannot influence people's verdict.

TG cancels Keshavapuram Reservoir contract

Unveils new plan to cut costs, extend water supply to city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a significant policy shift, the Telangana government has cancelled the contract for building the Keshavapuram Reservoir, originally a component of the Godavari Phase 2 project to supply drinking water to Hyderabad. This project, initiated by the previous Bharat Rashtra Samithi administration, was designed to transfer the Godavari water from the Kondapochamma Sagar to Keshavapuram and then to Hyderabad.

However, the state government, having scrapped these plans, proposes to adopt a new approach ostensibly to improve efficiency and cut costs.

The contract, previously awarded to Megha Engineering, was annulled through an official order issued by the Department of Municipal Administration and Urban Development. This decision is anticipated to help the government save approximately Rs. 2,000 crore. With the funds so saved, the government now intends to extend the Godavari Phase 2 scheme from Mallannasagar to Osman Sagar and Himayat Sagar reservoirs, aiming to better serve Hyderabad's expanding water needs.



HMWSSB waters down KTR's claims on projects

In response to certain allegations leveled by BRS working president KT Rama Rao regarding the Sunkishala project, the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) provided a detailed clarification on Wednesday.

At a press meet, KTR had questioned the lack of action on the part of the state government against the contractor involved in the collapse of Sunkishala's intake well

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The revised plan includes pumping 15 TMC (thousand million cubic feet) of water from Mallannasagar, with 10 TMC designated for Hyderabad's drinking water requirements and 5 TMC allocated for the twin reservoirs. This change has already received cabinet approval, with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy directing the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board to call for tenders for the updated work in the coming days.

The original alignment involved routing Godavari water from Yellampalli through Mallannasagar to Kondapochamma Sagar and then lifting it to Keshavapuram. However, due to persistent land acquisition challenges and alignment issues, including the previous administration's plan to

Continued on Page 5

KTR to Revanth: Act against 'East India Company'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtra Samithi legislator KT Rama Rao has vehemently opposed Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's handling of Telangana's irrigation and infrastructure projects.

At a press conference here on Wednesday, KTR recalled that Revanth Reddy, while in Opposition, had characterized Megha Engineering as the 'East India Company' and accused it of corruption. KTR questioned why no action had been taken against the company that was once criticized as an 'Andhra company' and an 'East India Company'.

KTR alleged that CM Revanth Reddy had ignored essential projects like the Sunkishala water project, meant to bring water to

Hyderabad, while prioritizing other controversial initiatives. According to KTR, criminal negligence by the 'East India Company' had caused the collapse of the retaining wall at Sunkishala; yet, the government, including the CM, concealed the incident. "I have already demanded a judicial inquiry into this incident and called for the contractor to be blacklisted," he stated, reiterating his call for accountability.

KTR further criticized the Congress for allegedly downplaying incidents, including the Medigadda mishap, while making false claims about the Kaleshwaram project. He pointed out that only four officials had been suspended, while no action had been taken against the company.

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CM briefs Guv on caste survey

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy met with Governor Jishnu Dev Varma at the Raj Bhavan and briefed him on Telangana's ambitious social, economic, educational, employment, political, and caste survey, which began in the state on Wednesday. Revanth was accompanied by Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, MPs Chamal Kiran Kumar Reddy and Balaram Naik, as well as government advisors Vem Narendar Reddy, Shabbir Ali, and Gutta Amit Reddy.

The Chief Minister highlighted the scope of the survey, underscoring its potential to establish Telangana as a model for similar initiatives across the country. "Our aim is to present a comprehensive picture of the state's social and economic landscape, allowing us to identify key areas for growth and reform,"



Revanth noted, expressing his confidence that Telangana's detailed approach could inspire other states.

During the meeting, Revanth conveyed his intention to bring Telangana's survey findings to the attention of the central government, advocating for their inclusion in the national Census scheduled for 2025. He emphasized that this move could enable a more accurate representation of diverse socio-economic dynamics within the country.

Adding a personal touch, the Chief Minister also warmly invited the Governor to his niece's upcoming wedding, reflecting cordial relations between the state's executive and constitutional heads.

Caste Census Survey begins under GHMC limits

3

'MISDEEDS' UNDER BRS RULE

ACB begins regular enquiry into Formula E racing

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has escalated its investigation into alleged irregularities in the organization of the Formula E Car Racing event held during the BRS government's tenure.

The ACB has reportedly initiated a Regular Enquiry (RE) to examine records and determine the nature of the suspected corruption in the project. According to sources, the ACB has identified payments totaling Rs. 55 crore made to foreign entities in connection with the Formula E race.

Within the next two days, the

ACB is reportedly expected to register a formal case, issue notices, and begin questioning individuals involved. Based on records held by the Municipal Administration and Urban Development department, the ACB plans to issue notices to these foreign firms and their representatives.

There are also indications that notices may be sent to key officials from the previous administration who had played significant roles in managing the event. The probe aims to clarify the extent of alleged financial misconduct in organizing the race and address accountability at all levels involved.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Trump wins hands down

Donald Trump makes a sensational comeback in the closely fought US presidential elections

The US presidential election is one of the most influential political events worldwide, with major implications not only for domestic policy but also for international relations, economic stability, and global security. In 2024, the election has been particularly charged, with significant issues driving the race. Though the counting is still on and the winner is yet to be officially announced but going by the trends, Trump has won and he has already claimed victory. Kamala Harris failed to perform in the swing states leading to her defeat. Trump's victory brings a mix of continuity and radical shifts in several key areas. The 2024 US election has revolved around several pressing issues which were important not only for the Americans but for the people across the world. High inflation rates and concerns over economic recovery post-pandemic have been at the forefront. Voters were focused on job security, rising costs of living, and access to affordable healthcare. Trump's stance included pushing for lower taxes, reducing government spending, and deregulation to stimulate growth, which he claims would address inflation and boost job creation. Another major issue that was widely debated was immigration. The debate over immigration intensified, with Trump advocating for stricter border controls and policies aimed at reducing illegal immigration. His focus includes building stronger physical barriers at the US-Mexico border and increasing enforcement, framing immigration as a matter of national security and economic stability. Besides, Healthcare accessibility and costs remain contentious topics. Trump in his campaign emphasised reducing healthcare costs and revisiting the Affordable Care Act. His approach included providing tax credits and fostering competition among providers, but it also drew criticism for potentially reducing access to affordable care for some citizens. Interestingly Trump has taken a critical stance on climate regulations, advocating for energy independence through expanded oil and natural gas production. His stance contrasts with those calling for robust climate action, as he argues that deregulation is essential for economic stability and growth. However the issue that is of utmost importance for the world at large is the US foreign policy. Foreign policy has emerged as a defining factor, particularly in relation to China and Russia. Trump's "America First" strategy focuses on reducing overseas military commitments and renegotiating trade agreements to protect American interests. This stance resonates with some voters concerned about national sovereignty but worries international allies and those advocating for a more collaborative global approach. However, Trump's victory may be well taken in New Delhi as he has had good chemistry with Prime Minister Modi and has supported India's stand. It would be interesting to see how Trump would steer international choppy waters this time as Ukraine war and Palestine issue would be two major issues he would need to handle immediately after assuming the office.



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PICTALK



A photographer takes a photo of a macaque monkey at the Shrine Galtaji temple, in Jaipur

Hazardous Delhi air is putting lives at risk



RAJDEEP PATHAK

As Delhiites face a significant decline in their health and life expectancy due to pollution, there is an urgent need for finding solutions to tackle this menace

Delhi's air quality has reached dangerous levels, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) crossing into the "hazardous" zone shortly after Diwali celebrations. This post-Diwali spike is not new, as the city frequently ranks among the most polluted in the world. In early November 2024, AQI levels in Delhi surged to nearly 500 in some regions, a threshold considered extremely harmful. According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), key areas in Delhi like Anand Vihar, Alipur, and RK Puram reported AQI readings above 300. This rise indicates severe pollution levels far above the World Health Organisation's (WHO) recommended safety limits, posing substantial health risks for millions of residents. The AQI measures air quality on a scale that categorises air quality into six levels: "good," "satisfactory," "moderate," "poor," "very poor," and "hazardous." Readings above 300 signal critical pollution, while values over 400 reach the "severe" range. At such levels, exposure to fine particulate matter (PM2.5) becomes dangerous, as these minuscule particles can infiltrate deep into the lungs, affecting respiratory and cardiovascular health. The factors behind this annual pollution crisis are complex, involving both local and regional contributors. Delhi's high vehicular emissions, industrial output, construction dust, and waste burning are persistent contributors. However, during the harvest season, stubble burning in nearby states like Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh intensifies the problem. In October and November, farmers often burn leftover crop residue, producing vast smoke clouds that drift toward Delhi and blend with local pollutants. Vehicular pollution is another significant factor, with over 15 million registered vehicles in Delhi alone. Despite policies mandating regular Pollution Under Control (PUC) checks, enforcement remains a challenge. Emissions from diesel vehicles and two-wheelers, which lack proper pollution controls, further degrade the air quality. Attempts by the



Delhi Government to curb pollution have included measures like the odd-even traffic scheme, a firecracker ban during festivals, and incentives to use public transport. However, these initiatives have only provided limited relief. Residents continue to experience issues like breathlessness, sore throats, headaches and dry cough, compounded by long-term respiratory conditions. This year, the Supreme Court criticised Delhi's inadequate enforcement of pollution control measures during Diwali, particularly the lack of compliance with firecracker bans. The court expressed frustration over the non-implementation of its orders, highlighting the collective failure to safeguard public health. The Delhi government has also activated the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), designed to address pollution levels as they rise. GRAP consists of multiple stages, with Stage III activated only when AQI reaches "severe" levels. At this stage, vehicle movement and construction activities are restricted, and educational institutions may close to protect students' health. While GRAP has achieved some improvements, its impact is often temporary, as citizens and businesses frequently ignore these directives. The severe air pollution in Delhi has profound effects on public health and quality of life.



THIS YEAR, THE SUPREME COURT CRITICISED DELHI'S INADEQUATE ENFORCEMENT OF POLLUTION CONTROL MEASURES DURING DIWALI, PARTICULARLY THE LACK OF COMPLIANCE WITH FIRECRACKER BANS. THE COURT EXPRESSED FRUSTRATION OVER THE NON-IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS ORDERS

During high-AQI periods, particularly vulnerable groups, like children and the elderly, are advised to stay indoors to avoid severe respiratory and cardiovascular issues. Outdoor activities are restricted, with schools occasionally closed to protect students from toxic air exposure. Additionally, dense smog disrupts transportation, leading to frequent flight and train delays due to poor visibility. As residents increasingly rely on air purifiers to maintain indoor air quality, the economic and psychological impacts of Delhi's air pollution crisis only deepen. In response to the deteriorating situation, the Delhi Government announced a series of measures to tackle pollution. These include developing green pathways, walkways, and open spaces along roads to reduce dust and improve urban greenery. Efforts are underway to enhance municipal waste management, including recycling 100 per cent of construction and demolition waste by 2025. To further manage waste, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi is establishing a fifth recycling unit in Tehkhand, capable of processing 1,000 tons daily. Biomining is also planned at major landfill sites, such as Okhla, Ghazipur, and Bhalswa, to excavate and treat years' worth of accumulated waste. Expanding public transportation is another goal, with

plans to grow Delhi's bus fleet to 10,500 by next year, 80 per cent of which will be electric. This is accompanied by a focus on impounding older, polluting vehicles. Such measures aim to address long-standing pollution sources sustainably. Experts emphasise, however, that reducing air pollution in Delhi will require more than Government policies; public engagement and behavioral change are also essential. A multi-pronged approach is crucial to effectively reduce air pollution. Introducing alternative methods to stubble burning, such as subsidising crop-residue management equipment, is one solution. Increasing urban greenery and limiting industrial emissions are further steps toward a healthier environment. On an individual level, Delhi residents can contribute by using public transportation, minimising car usage, and adopting energy-efficient practices at home. Additionally, improved air quality monitoring and early-warning systems could help raise public awareness and enable quicker responses. India's dedication to conservation aligns with the broader goal of creating a healthier environment for future generations. (The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PAPER BALLOTS OVER MACHINES

Madam — In spite of being at the top of technologically advanced countries, the United States of America falls back on ballot paper voting to root out any suspicion of foul play stemming from voting through EVM. Over the last two decades, the United States has gradually moved back from electronic voting machines to paper ballots. Given ballot paper voting, unlike EVM, builds confidence among voters and opposition party members, it undoubtedly strengthens democracy. Another highly commendable step the USA election authorities have taken. They have printed the ballot papers in all major languages of a state, depending on its demography. While a voter in New York can choose a ballot paper in Bengali instead of English, Chinese, Spanish, and Korean, voters in Illinois can opt for a ballot paper printed in Hindi. It also shows how a democratic country should honour the mother tongue of even those voters who have origins in different countries. These actions reflect the attitude of catering and prioritising the interests of the demos (people) above everything. India needs to get back to ballot paper voting without any delay. It must also be remembered that to impose a language ignoring the major languages spoken in a particular area flouts democratic principles. There is no room for the 'one nation, one language' policy in a multilingual democratic country like India. **Sujit De | Sujit De**

DIVISION OVER CASTE

Madam — Since the last Lok Sabha elections, immediately followed by the state Assembly election and ensuing Assembly in Maharashtra and Jharkhand and by-elections in several states, demand for caste census is in top gear in the Opposition camp, while the BJP has been silent on it and is meekly supportive. Though not constitutionally valid and having no authentic official database of individuals' caste identity, the caste politics in the facade of the caste census is

Prioritise student wellbeing



Student suicides are rising worldwide. Every day, we read news about young students taking their own lives due to overwhelming pressure. Many of these students are studying far from their families, aiming to crack high-stakes exams like JEE, NEET, UPSC, and CA. Parents often send them away at a young age, where they're not fully prepared to handle the intense stress. At a time in life meant for playing, making friends, and

exploring their interests, they are pushed to lock themselves in rooms and study for hours. This isolation and pressure can lead to anxiety, and, tragically, some may feel that ending their lives is the only escape.

Parents should avoid imposing career paths on their children and instead allow them to explore and decide what they want for themselves. Governments can also take steps to address this crisis, such as offering personal counselling sessions for students where they can discuss their struggles and implementing mental health awareness programmes in schools and communities. Ultimately, pressuring children to study hard for the sake of a "better future" can end up damaging their wellbeing and happiness. It's far better to let children decide what they want to work towards rather than forcing them into paths that might not be right for them. **Priya Thakur | Ujjain**

TEMPLE ATTACK CONDEMNED

Madam — The Canadian soil is becoming a battleground for the anti-India sentiments these days, as the Khalistani groups and supporters managed to score win after win in their anti-India agendas. The recent terror attack in the Hindu temple based in Canada is getting a global backlash and condemnation. India is particularly annoyed with the Canadian authorities for not paving the way for the miscreants who are spoiling India's image and hurting Indian sentiments as a whole. We Indians in particular wish strong Canadian intervention and demand speedy justice from the side of Canadian government and authorities as soon as possible. **Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur**

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Why are women overlooked for leadership? It's time for a change!



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

Deep-rooted biases and outdated stereotypes frequently overshadow women's capabilities, despite evidence that women leaders enhance company performance and culture

In India, women are frequently overlooked for management and senior leadership roles despite their proven capabilities in both personal and professional settings. It's a complex issue often attributed to stereotypes, unconscious biases, and a society that still grapples with entrenched gender roles. Yet, if we pause and consider the day-to-day roles women play, particularly in an Indian household, it becomes evident that they possess an array of skills crucial to any organisation's success. Imagine a typical day for a woman managing her household. She coordinates with household help, ensures that her family's needs are met, oversees children's schedules, and often also supports extended family members. Each of these tasks requires quick thinking, negotiation skills, empathy, and time management. Such daily acts of coordination and problem-solving are, at their core, management skills. The inquiry at hand is, why do we fail to acknowledge these abilities when they are



showcased in a professional setting? Do these skills lose their validity simply because they originate from home-based experience? Many argue that women's ability to blend emotional intelligence with logical decision-making makes them especially adept at leadership roles. Their approach is often holistic—they not only focus on completing tasks but also on nurturing relationships, fostering team morale, and ensuring that the process is as smooth as the outcome. Research indicates that companies with gender-diverse leadership teams tend to achieve better financial performance and foster a more satisfied workforce, contributing to a healthier com-

pany culture. Women bring different perspectives and problem-solving approaches, which complement male colleagues' styles. When women are given a seat at the table, companies gain a more nuanced understanding of their markets and customers. And yet, despite clear advantages, women remain vastly underrepresented in senior roles. The reasons are rooted in a long history of gender bias. Women are often pigeonholed as too "emotional" or too "soft" for the challenges of executive positions, while men are assumed to be inherently more decisive and resilient. Yet, resilience is something that women exemplify every day—balancing multiple roles in a society that demands more of them both at home and at work. Change is on the horizon, with many organisations now actively working to bridge the gender gap in leadership. However, it requires a deeper cultural shift to truly unlock the leadership potential of women. Organisations need to embrace mentorship pro-

grams, implement unbiased hiring practices, and encourage flexible work policies that allow women to balance personal and professional responsibilities. Moreover, celebrating women's leadership styles rather than forcing them to fit into traditionally masculine roles can create more authentic, powerful leaders. The argument is simple: women already demonstrate essential leadership skills every day, whether in boardrooms or in households. It's time to recognise their contributions and give them the opportunities they deserve. For any organisation that values growth, empathy, and resilience, overlooking women isn't just unfair—it's a missed opportunity. Let's champion a future where leadership is based on talent and vision, not on outdated biases. Women are ready for the challenge, and it's time we give them the space to lead. (The writer is a motivator and a freelance journalist; views expressed are personal)



FIRST COLUMN

THE ART OF HEALING

True healing must be comprehensive, nurturing both the physical and spiritual self



RAVI VALLURI

Humans are creatures of their habits. I was addicted to smoking, drinking and consuming 'Gutakha'. It had become almost a quotidian habit and had taken a severe toll on my health. Ailments could be self-inflicted or they could be a professional hazard. In all such cases, the victim suffers physically and emotionally. The healing must be both physical and spiritual. I vividly recall how the Sri Lankan cricket team was a victim of terror and violence in Lahore. They underwent therapeutic care by psychiatrists and underwent several mind management and mental strengthening therapies. Similarly, the Tsunami victims of 2004, those affected by the 26/11 Mumbai terror strikes and the earthquake victims of Gujarat (2001) and Uttarakhand (2013) were revived up by the bouquet of self-healing courses by several spiritual organisations and professional help offered by numerous self-help groups. Such tragedies are traumatic experiences. Cities, towns, villages and settlements are razed to rubble.

I come back to my story, where like an ignoramus I started consuming liquor, ignoring all warnings. Thus, my moral compass fell prey to the predilections of a weak mind. It was at this time that my mother, a trained social worker, and a practitioner of Siddha and Pranik healing, refused to entertain my supercilious and specious arguments and extolled certain dormant virtues in me so that I could upend the pyramid. My mother was afflicted by repeated attacks of Paroxysmal Atrial Tachycardia (PAT). This is a type of arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat) that is accompanied by severe sweating, dizziness, palpitations, angina and acute breath-



lessness. I had seen my mother suffering from this condition on several occasions and being admitted to the ICU. However, after undergoing the ten-day Vipassana spiritual sojourn, she recovered from the debilitation. She simultaneously learnt Siddha and Pranik healing, which augured well for her recovery.

These healing techniques along with proper medication and diet helped her in healing. This is the unbounded power and scientific attribute of the breath. Breathing techniques, meditation proper medication and diet are all healthy habits. These can change the traction of our lives and rejuvenate the body and mind. During 'Operation Parakram' our defence forces, after a protracted stay of more than a year at our borders, returned to their cantonments. The fractious behaviour of our unfriendly neighbour did not make them lose their sanity. It is not only the deaths, but defence personnel get maimed during such operations.

Further, their mental state becomes foggy and they become highly irritable. Mere administration of drugs does not act as a panacea. It is medication plus something more to revive their physical and mental bodies. As our defence and para-military forces work in hostile environments it is heartening to know that yoga, Vipassana and Art of Living Courses are conducted for them so that they can maintain physical and mental equilibrium. A soldier asked Gurudev whether he would become passive if he continued with his sadhana, to which Guruji responded, "Most certainly not." Further, he added that Gita Upadesh itself was revealed by Lord Krishna during the Mahabharata war. Arjuna regained the power of discrimination after witnessing the "Divine Spectacle." Be it an individual or a cricket team, those affected by environmental disturbances or our defence forces, all require continuous physical and mental healing to continue their journey. The mystic Rumi has succinctly said, "The wound is the place where the light enters you."

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

CoP 29: A pivotal moment to act on climate crisis



B K SINGH

With the upcoming CoP 29 summit in Azerbaijan, world leaders face mounting pressure to deliver on pledges for climate finance and reduced fossil fuel reliance



Back-to-back hurricanes Helene and Milton originating from the Gulf of Mexico, that have battered the western coast of Florida in the United States have led to political debates and blame games ahead of the US Presidential election. The Republican team targeted the Biden-Harris duo for not doing enough to save lives and restore electricity. More than 200 people have perished in each of the hurricanes and also people have lived without electricity for more than 24 hours. Tropical typhoon Trami over the South China Sea claimed more than 150 lives in the Philippines, and 10 in Vietnam, injured thousands and damaged properties and infrastructures in both countries. Further, the deadliest flood in 50 years in Spain has also claimed more than 250 human lives. As against this, India's disaster management response during cyclones has been praiseworthy.

Whether it was cyclone Nisarga on our West coast in 2020 cyclone Fani in West Bengal in 2019, or the recent Dana in Odisha and West Bengal we have evacuated million of people on each occasion in a record time of 24 to 48 hours and as a result, there has hardly been any loss of life. Recent images from Valencia and other regions of Spain, last month's image from Italy where vehicles were swept away as roads became rivers, and before that similar flooding in France, Poland, Austria, and Czech are reminders of frequent flooding and associated misery to people. The global physics of fossil fuels has destabilised the world. The warmer the atmosphere gets; the more moisture it can hold. This would mean more intense downpours and longer drought.

In Spain, a year's worth of rain was dumped in half a day. While India's track record in dealing with disasters is good, what it should relook is its decisions to sacrifice natural forests for infrastructures, development projects and mining. Consumption of coal, oil and natural gas is swelling worldwide, despite leaders knowing that the surge in emission of greenhouse gases leads to increased warming of the planet and we face more destructive and frequent climatic catastrophes. Forests are the best sink for carbon and sacrificing them for GDP is only



THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO DEVELOPING AND THIRD-WORLD COUNTRIES FOR TRANSITION TO RENEWABLE ENERGY AT SPEED AND SCALE IS ANOTHER KEY TO CLIMATE MITIGATION

to invite more frequent disasters. Earth is already warmed by 1.2 degrees Celsius. The year 2023 has been the warmest in the recorded history of post-industrialisation.

The trend from 2024 till July suggests that we are on course to break the 2023 temperature record. Developed countries are responsible for the warming so far. Scientists are consistently forecasting that beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius warming, part of many countries especially island nations will be submerged in the Sea. United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) has provided a forum for World leaders to meet annually and decide on actions to be taken to keep the warming within 1.5 degrees.

In the annual conference (CoP 25) in Paris in 2015 countries pledged their nationally determined contributions (NDC) to cut the consumption of fossil fuel and to develop renewable energy at speed and scale by 2030. Among G20 countries India is the only one, which is on course to fulfil the pledge. Donald Trump as US President in 2017 refused to toe the line with the Paris Agreement and said that climate is a hoax. No CoP meeting took place till he was in office. Corona pandemic delayed it further even after Biden took over and CoP 26 at Glasgow was held in November 2021.

Here again, leaders reiterated their pledge at Paris and also revived climate finance of \$100 billion that developed countries would contribute towards the cost of climate adaptation in the developing world annually. Another rhetoric was started during CoP 27 at Sharm el Sheikh that developed and some developing countries like China would pay for loss and damage in global south countries. This has again not been complied with. The climate finance of \$100 billion

annually has been agreed upon in Copenhagen CoP in 2009 but has not been complied with so far. African countries and island nations are suffering from extreme climate events like droughts and floods as well as supply chain disruptions owing to geopolitical tensions in West Asia and Ukraine.

Countries like Namibia and Zimbabwe have ordered to cull of thousands of wild elephants (a threatened species) for food. If climate finance and loss and damage funds were made available, there was no need to cull threatened species and endangering the ecological security of the region further. The pledge regarding cutting fossil fuel consumption and transition to renewable energy especially by Western nations and China has been overlooked. There has been unprecedented growth in oil and gas drilling in the US and coal production in China.

Biden and other European leaders are not on course to fulfil their commitment to bring down fossil fuel consumption by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2050. China has pledged net zero by 2060 and India by 2070. Scientists are telling us to keep the warming within 1.5 degrees lest we face the consequences. 2050 and 2060 are far ahead and the question is whether we will be able to stand the disasters till then.

During the nomination as Republican presidential candidate in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Trump in his address said to abandon climate - drill baby drill. He cut jokes in his election rallies saying that if the Sea level rises due to warming, the people will have more buildings facing the Sea. The transfer of technology from developed countries to developing and third-world countries for transition to renewable energy at speed and scale is another key to climate mitigation. India, China and Western nations have gone

ahead substantially, yet they need to step up their efforts.

Renewable energy transition should take place at such a pace that we automatically cut fossil fuel consumption. Countries' demand at Glasgow CoP 26 to 'phase out' fossil fuel did not have total acceptance and was modified to 'phase down' on the insistence of China and the support of India. Further at Dubai CoP 28 another phrase 'transition away from fossil fuel' was agreed upon. Irrespective of the phrases used in the CoP resolutions, leaders are only concerned about the growth and GDP and are not inclined to bring down fossil fuel consumption. CoP 29 is scheduled to commence in Baku, Azerbaijan on November 13th, when world leaders will again take stock of the situation and roll out further actions.

Unfortunately, the host country along with its neighbours Armenia and Georgia is experiencing relatively more warming as compared to the global average. While every nation should put in their efforts to cut emissions, India should have relook at the projects requiring the sacrifice of natural forests, whether for linear infrastructures in the Himalayas, in Western Ghats or deforestation of 130.75 sq km forests for great Nicobar Development projects.

India's track record for growing compensatory afforestation for the trees lost is very poor. Supreme Court recently threatened contempt against agencies for not taking up planting ten times the trees lost in the project. 3700 trees were sacrificed in 2015 for the widening of NH 123 Bharatpur Dholpur road and Apex court's condition to plant up 37000 trees has not been fulfilled so far.

(The writer is retired principal chief conservator of Forests- Head of Forest Force- Karnataka; views are personal)

How AI, big data and personalisation are transforming B-school curricula

From integrating AI into decision-making processes to adding global perspectives, B-schools are merging traditional education with innovative technology

In 2024, technology is influencing every aspect of life, transforming the way we communicate, learn, and run businesses. With advancements in Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, IoT, Big Data, Blockchain, and other digital technologies, we are currently navigating the fourth wave of the industry revolution.

Businesses primarily prioritise automation and machinery to enhance workforce operations, with 88 per cent of small business owners using automation to increase their workforce efficiency, according to an Unmud study. This shift is driving up the demand for digitally literate and tech-savvy professionals in the industry, inspiring business schools to redesign their academic curricula.



PRABHU AGGARWAL

Following are the revolutionary ways technology is reshaping the business industry.

Reshaping Business Education through AI: According to the Future of Jobs Survey, 75 per cent of companies plan to adopt AI technologies in the coming years. This signals a significant shift brought about by technology in business education; the integration of AI and ML

Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning are revolutionising how future business leaders think and make decisions, disrupting the traditional learning models. Emerging technologies such as generative AI provide real-time feedback and high-level interactivity, inspiring B-schools to employ learning approaches to develop AI skills in students, thus, preparing them to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving business landscape. **Integration of Data Analytics into Business Intelligence:** Data has become the primary currency in business intelligence, helping businesses make informed decisions to enhance their growth. Technological trends such as statistical techniques, predictive analysis, machine learning,

and artificial intelligence allow businesses to identify leading patterns and tailor their offerings. As recent studies by Edge Delta point out, more companies will adopt big data and technology, increasing the employment rate by 58 per cent. To help students stay competitive, B-schools actively embed data analysis into their offered curriculum, improving students' data proficiency. Incorporating data analytics into higher education curricula, particularly in PGDM and MBA programmes, will promote innovation and solution-oriented thinking among students. **Experiential Learning and Real-World Applications:** With the rapid inclusion of technology in business, the leading employers are ex-



sively prioritising professionals with industry-ready technical and soft skills. The technologically integrated method of business education complements the traditional teaching pedagogy, preparing students to tackle real-world challenges and provide futuristic solutions. Through industry internships, consultation projects, case studies, and business simulations, B-school students gain hands-on experience and practical skills necessary to

excel in today's competitive job market. While a business degree holds significant importance, practical experience allows students to turn their learnings into actionable solutions.

Personalised Learning Approach: The amalgamation of technology and education has made education personal. The traditional learning model employs a one-size-fits-all approach, ignoring individual learning needs. On the other hand, the modern learning model is tailored to meet individualistic demands, making learning seamless for every student. Through tech-integrated personalised education, students can adapt the learning materials and understand at their own pace. This shift is especially impactful in

business education, where personalised learning helps students stay current with industry trends, bridge the skill gap, and learn based on their proficiency.

Balance Between Human Creativity and Automation: While many view the current era as Industry 4.0, others argue we are swiftly moving towards Industry 5.0. Unlike its predecessor, Industry 5.0 emphasises the well-being of professionals, fostering prosperity beyond jobs and promoting ecologically balanced economic growth. The upcoming industrialisation era envisions close collaboration between humans and AI tools, enhancing operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness. This has led top B-schools to thoughtfully curate the core

management courses, integrating human-centricity, sustainability, and automation.

Bringing Global Perspective to Classrooms: Business challenges today are inherently global in nature, such as sustainability issues, supply chain management, foreign regulations, and cultural diversity. By embedding a global outlook in business education, B-schools equip students with essential tools to effectively address these problems. Facilitating worldly industry collaborations and connecting peers from diverse cultures through virtual modes fosters a deeper business understanding in the students, enabling them to drive positive changes.

(The writer is Dean BMS Hyderabad; views are personal)

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MAHASANGAM OF BIHARI CULTURE IN HYDERABAD

With the gentle rustle of leaves, the soft whisper of prayers and warm rays of the sun dancing across the city, a city that embraces diversity and culture, Hyderabad gears up to celebrate the majestic festival of Chhath Puja, an evidence of Bihar's rich cultural heritage. With Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh's biggest festivals of the year beginning with *Nahay Khay*, *Lohanda* and *Kharna* coming to an end, today we celebrate the main day of this auspicious festival in Hyderabad.

Keeping alive this tradition of the Bihar community, the Bihar Association in Hyderabad plays a pivotal role in recreating the authentic spirit of Chhath Puja in the city, fostering unity, cultural exchange and social bonding. With elaborate rituals, traditional folk songs and cultural events, the association recreates the magical ambience of Bihar's Chhath ghats in Hyderabad. From sunrise to sunset, devotees gather to offer arghya to the Sun God, seeking blessings, prosperity and well-being. As the association celebrates Chhath Puja, it reaffirms its loyalty to preserving Bihar's cultural legacy, fostering a sense of belonging among the Bihar community and enriching Hyderabad's cultural landscape. Established in 1986, the Bihar Association in Hyderabad has been a beacon of community and cultural preservation for the Bihar diaspora. Manvendra Mishra, trustee member and advisor, shares the association's journey.

"The association was started in 1986 when people of the Bihar diaspora were increasing in the city. Our seniors thought, 'Why don't we all come together and make a group of our own?' Mishra recounts. 'Even then, we used to do many social activities and cultural gatherings. However, in the late '90s, the association got dull since the body was not so dynamic. In 2008, it was again reactivated and since then has been rigorously working.'

Looking back at their history, they had their first meeting held at the park of Osmania University. Back then, there were not many Biharis residing here in Hyderabad! It would be a moment of happiness to even know there's anyone, Bihar. Today, the association comprises people from different corners of Bihar, Jharkhand and UP, representing

Behind the vibrant celebrations of Chhath Puja in Hyderabad lies a story of community and culture. Uncovering the spirit of the Bihar community in Hyderabad, *The Pioneer* engages in an exclusive conversation with Manvendra Mishra, Trustee Member and Advisor of Bihar Association, exploring the association's contributions to cultural preservation



all sub-castes of Biharis.

"We organise many gatherings like *Holi Milan*, *Diwali Milan*, so people from the city can get to know each other. We also facilitate marriages within the community, making it easier for people to find suitable matches," explains Mishra. The association's efforts have transformed the community's social landscape.

Coming to the Chhath Puja, the association begins to start preparations for it, about a month back itself. Adding to Manvendra, Binod Kumar Gupta, the treasurer of the association, says, "In all

these places, we've been getting the cleaning and lighting done. We also have got area-wise incharges for the Chhath Puja ghats, where the association takes care of including Tank Bund, Uppal, Nagole, Fox Sagar, Suraram, Miyapur, Patancheru,

Hafeezpet, Durgah, Ameenpur, Mallapur, Hasmathpet, Gangaram, RC Puram, Katedhan, Shamirpet, Nallagandla, Shamshabad, Balanagar, Necklace Road and many other baby ponds in and around the city." Amongst these ghats, the



ghat in Tank Bund, opposite Marriott, has the biggest crowd gathering. Every Ghat has all the facilities for the devotees. "Last year, we invited Kesari Lal and Pawan Singh for the Chhath Puja celebrations. During the chhath puja, one can just not recognise if it's Bihar or Hyderabad," adds Gupta.

Then Mishra continues, "One of our achievements is making a Bihar Bhavan here in Hyderabad. We have approached the government many times; however, we haven't

got it from them yet. The previous government had helped many people get land and had given funds too. Somehow, the Bihar association has still not gotten their chance yet. So what we did was, we ourselves brought a 200 sq. ft. plot and made a 2-story building and named it Bihar Bhavan. We organise our meetings and all of it there itself." The association has played a significant role in transforming the perception of Biharis in Hyderabad. "Earlier, Biharis were associated with low-level jobs," Mishra notes. "Now, many are IAS and IPS officers and business leaders. Arvind Kumar, the former Chief Secretary of Telangana, for example, hails from Bihar." The community's growth is evident in the increasing recognition of Chhath Puja and Bihar culture. "People today eat Litti chokha with so much delight."

The office bearers of the association have made sure to yearly approach the government and make representations about the puja and its importance for the community. This year, the 1st *Argh* will take place on November 7, 2024, from 3:00 pm to 1:00 pm and the 2nd *Argh* will be held on November 8, 2024, from 4:00 am to 8:00 am at Bathukamma Ghat at Tank Bund opposite Marriott hotel, which will mark the presence of Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy, Sanath Nagar MLA Talasani Srinivas Yadav, along with other dignitaries of the association.

As the Bihar Association continues to thrive, its impact extends beyond the community. Manvendra Mishra aptly puts it, "It's heartening to see people from other backgrounds participate in our celebrations." This sentiment encapsulates the association's vision of unity, inclusivity and cultural preservation. As the Bihar Association moves forward, its legacy as a beacon of community spirit and cultural pride will continue to inspire generations to come. Through its various initiatives, including Chhath Puja celebrations, social gatherings and charitable activities, the association has created a sense of belonging among Biharis in Hyderabad. This year, just like previous ones, the city is all set to welcome Bihar superstars and their presence is making the celebrations even livelier.

As the association continues to grow and thrive, its impact extends beyond the community. By promoting cultural exchange and understanding, the Bihar Association has helped break down barriers and build bridges between different communities in Hyderabad. Its efforts have not only preserved Bihar heritage but also contributed to the city's rich culture.

Designing iconic spaces, from Supreme Court to Rashtrapati Bhavan

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We interviewed Dr Masooma Rizvi today because it appears that she has worked on projects that will last a lifetime, including the Supreme Court of India, Rashtrapati Bhavan, the New Parliament Building, 27 airports and a representation of Lord Ram's Return at the Maharishi Valmiki International Airport in Ayodhya Dham. Her work narrates India's fascinating cultural story with passion and elegance, combining tradition and modern flair in a wonderful way! Her creative ventures provide a visual and emotional experience that speaks to the heart and uplifts the spirit by skillfully fusing art and culture.

She explains: "Respect for India's heritage and a desire to create environments that connect our rich cultural history to the present are the driving forces behind my work. Every project should make people feel proud and like they belong, especially those located in iconic locations like Rashtrapati Bhavan or the New Parliament Building. For this reason, I adhere to ideas like Vocal for Local, which guarantees the participation of underrepresented local artists and contributes authentic stories to the venues I curate." She sees art as a bridge that depicts the journey of our nation while bringing disparate cultural components together. The selection of each selected item and space design is based on its capacity to provoke discussion between the past and the present in addition to its aesthetic value. These works of art serve as storytellers in certain respects, emulating the values of fortitude, solidarity, and inventiveness that form the cornerstones of our national identity.

She says: "Maintaining this balance calls on both competence and accountability. My strategy is to see modernity and heritage as complementary forces that may strengthen each other. Every choice is motivated by the desire to respect tradition while embracing modernity, creating spaces that seem timeless and current. I emphasise the enduring qualities of old art forms, techniques and narratives when working on projects that protect India's cultural legacy. But I also make use of contemporary architectural features and materials to guarantee longevity, usefulness and relevance in the modern world." Traditional art is exhibited in ways that align with contemporary space aesthetics, demonstrating the careful integration. For instance, advanced technologies and environmentally friendly materials could be used as the base, with aspects of our history included into the surface design. In addition to maintaining cultural significance, this integration keeps the areas creative and appealing to audiences today.

She adds: "When designing public areas like courts and airports, a whole new design criterion is used. The airports act as entry points to Indian culture and welcome millions of visitors. This calls for striking a delicate balance between unique cultural identity and inclusivity. Accessibility, or areas that are both aesthetically pleasing and physically hospitable to people from all backgrounds, is, in my opinion, the first step in creating an inclusive atmosphere. To ensure that everyone feels included and at ease, this is achieved through clever layout planning, user-friendly design and universal symbols that speak to a variety of demographics." She used a palette of symbols, motifs and colours derived from our background to highlight aspects that encapsulate India's diverse culture and give these locations a distinctively Indian feel. She gave each location a unique character while connecting it to the larger Indian story by fusing regional art forms, such as paintings and sculptures, that represent the local culture. She worked with regional artists and craftspeople to produce décor that honours India's

From airports to iconic government buildings, Dr Masooma Rizvi's work seamlessly integrates art, culture and tradition, reflecting India's diverse story. In this exclusive conversation, she reveals the driving forces behind her creative genius, her approach to inclusive design and her vision for India's evolving national aesthetic



rich cultural heritage while also preserving traditional techniques and environmentally conscious ideals. She clarifies, "By using this method, locations that embody Indian culture are created, allowing tourists to take in a little bit of our nation's depth and artistic diversity. Every visitor will have a memorable and significant experience at these locations, which reflect India's variety and togetherness by fusing historical customs with modern ideas. When creating courts, the subject must be clear and the artwork must be understated. An excellent illustration is the Supreme Court of India Annex, which features themed artwork inspired by the Court's several seminal rulings." Storytelling is essential to her design for the Maharishi Valmiki International Airport in order to create an atmosphere that deeply connects with guests. She tackled this by using visual art that embodies the spirit of the area to weave together historical and cultural narratives. More than merely a stunning feature, the mural of Lord Ram's Return connects visitors to the spiritual and cultural significance of Ayodhya by acting as a narrative thread. After all, the sole reason people travel to



Ayodhya is to worship Lord Ram in his home and it truly does feel like a farewell! "For instance, the 180-foot-long Madhubani panel honours traditional inventiveness while adding a contemporary twist to historical themes and improving the airport's atmosphere. Overseeing a multicultural team of more than 100 painters from several states enabled the blending of regional styles and methods, which enhanced the story. In addition to encouraging inclusivity, this collaborative endeavour honours the diverse fabric of Indian culture and makes sure that each visitor may relate to the tales being told. Consequently, the airport becomes a gateway to understanding and valuing Ayodhya's cultural heritage," she shares.

She believes that women contribute a distinct viewpoint to Indian architectural and cultural spaces, one characterised by empathy, teamwork and a deeper understanding of community needs as a woman in a traditionally male-dominated field. Her own experiences were characterised by doubts about her abilities, particularly when she first began working in architecture. She had to confidently assert her position when others asked her, "Where is the main architect?" She now has a better understanding of the value of representation and the contributions of diverse voices to the design process as a result of the journey.

A more harmonious fusion of traditional and modern architectural styles will characterise India's national aesthetic as it develops and grows. The three main ideas that will characterise this advancement are inclusivity, cultural authenticity and sustainability. Using ancient methods and local resources as inspiration, architects will give priority to eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient designs that blend in with the environment. Future designs will continue to emphasise cultural authenticity by reinterpreting ancient forms and themes from a modern perspective. She concludes, "Lastly, I want my work to make an impression that people will remember and encourage others to share their experiences and opinions. By doing this, I want to rekindle interest in India's cultural treasures, allowing people to engage with our common history more deeply and appreciating the narrative and connecting potential of art and architecture. During Sushma ji's stint as Minister of External Affairs, I incorporated Indian textile themes into architectural spaces in our embassies overseas, giving them a distinctively Indian feel! I encourage women who are just starting out to have huge aspirations and to pursue them with unshakable determination. Even though your path may not always be straightforward, keep in mind that every significant achievement starts with a vision and the will to follow it. Since you may achieve your goals if you are passionate and determined, embrace setbacks as learning opportunities."



Heal, grow, thrive

The state of your mental health affects how you think, feel, and ultimately act. It's crucial that we express these emotions with others daily. We are talking about mental health these days, but are we really taking care of ourselves? It is very difficult to accept the fact that I have some stress or anxiety that needs immediate attention.

Mental health is critically important because it affects every aspect of a person's life, including their emotional well-being, relationships, physical health, and daily functioning. Good mental health helps people cope with stress, make sound decisions, and handle life's challenges with resilience. It supports a sense of inner peace, balance, and emotional stability. This state leads to poor physical health; poor mental health can contribute to physical issues like weakened immune systems, high blood pressure, and chronic diseases. Conversely, good mental health can lead to healthier habits and better overall well-being. It impacts positive relationships, enhances communication, empathy, and emotional connection, which are essential for family, friendships, and work-related interactions. Prevention of disorders: Prioritizing mental health can prevent the development or worsening of mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, or substance abuse. Early intervention and support are key to avoiding long-term consequences.

How can you take care of your mental health?

Asking care of mental health involves adopting techniques and habits that promote emotional well-being and resilience. Here are some effective techniques:

Mindfulness and meditation: Everyone is talking about mindfulness and meditation.

Meditation is a technique that teaches you to control your thought process, and it takes time. It is important to practice in the right way with the right mindset. This involves staying present and fully engaging in the current moment. It can reduce stress and improve emotional regulation.

2. Physical activity: Any physical activity that you like the most and that is easy to adapt to is important. It releases endorphins, the body's natural stress relievers. Whether it's walking, running, yoga, or sports, moving your body can improve mood and reduce anxiety. Outdoor activities are better than indoors.

3. Sleep cycle: A regular sleep routine: Prioritise 7-9 hours of sleep per night and maintain a consistent sleep routine to maintain emotional balance. Avoid screens before bed and inculcate the habit of reading.

4. Healthy diet: Nutrient-rich foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and omega-3 fatty acids, support brain health. Reducing caffeine and sugar can also help prevent mood swings. Drink enough water throughout the day to maintain optimal brain function.

5. Emotional awakening: talk about your feelings, sharing your emotions with friends and family wherever you are comfortable. It is important to take professional help.

8. Relaxation techniques: Deep breathing: Slow, deep breathing helps calm the nervous system, reducing stress and anxiety.

9. Positive thinking and gratitude: By incorporating these techniques into daily life, we can build resilience and maintain better mental health. Your brain is listening to you!

what's brewing?

TASTE THE HEART OF TELANGANA

Introducing AIDU's latest culinary chapter: an authentic Telangana-inspired menu that brings the vibrant flavours of the state to life, nestled within the unique setting surrounded by nature. This new menu is a celebration of Telangana's rich culinary heritage, featuring traditional ingredients and locally-inspired techniques. From the smoky allure of *Kalchina Kodi Kebab* and *Nalla Karam Chicken Wings* to the tender richness of *Karimnagar Lamb Chops*, each dish pays homage to the heart of Telangana. For vegetarians, highlights like *Karivepaku Paneer* and *Palleturi Mushroom Vepudu* bring the depth of regional spices and flavours to the fore. Main courses include Telangana classics such as *Pachi Pulusu with Mudda Pappu*, *Mulakada Mamsam* and the soul-warming *Talakaya Kura*.

The menu also offers a variety of biryanis and rice dishes, including the aromatic *Hyderabadi Chicken Dum Biryani* and the tangy *Gongura Mutton Pulao*, all crafted to evoke the true spirit of Telangana. For a sweet finale, desserts like *Shahi Tukra Tart with Sitafal Cream* and *Double Ka Meetha* add a delectable, regional twist to beloved classics.

The ambience is designed to transport diners into the cultural heart of South India, where each dish is artistically plated on a plantain leaf and set against interiors that reflect southern luxury and warmth.



● Geetha Chowdhary



VIBES has opened its sixth Hyderabad center in Habsiguda through a new franchise with Geetha Chowdhary, expanding access to top wellness and aesthetic services. Equipped with advanced technology, the center offers slimming body contouring, skin rejuvenation and hair care treatments.



● Tejaswi Madivada



● Habiba



● Latha



● Babita Taneja



● Aashi



● Swapna



● Nishat and Bindu

PARTY
Photos by- SV Chary



Student tribe, held an empowering tribe meet in Hyderabad on Wednesday, uniting 1500 students from 60 colleges for a day of networking, learning and inspiration. The event honoured resilience by awarding the Rs 50,000 Diva scholarship to determined students overcoming financial hardships to pursue higher education in memory of Diva, a former student of the tribe.



Johnie Walker Refreshing Mixer presents the *Silhouettes Tour*, featuring the singer, producer and songwriter, Prateek Kuhad. They have orchestrated this musical spectacle to bring the magic and madness of Prateek Kuhad to Hyderabad.



Building blocks groups founded by M. V. Mallikarjuna Reddy, headquartered in Hyderabad has become a leader in plotted real estate development across India. With over 240 projects in regions like Shadnagar, Sadashivpet and Vishakapatnam, it has empowered 1.4 lakh land investors provided financial independence to over 20,000 business associates.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



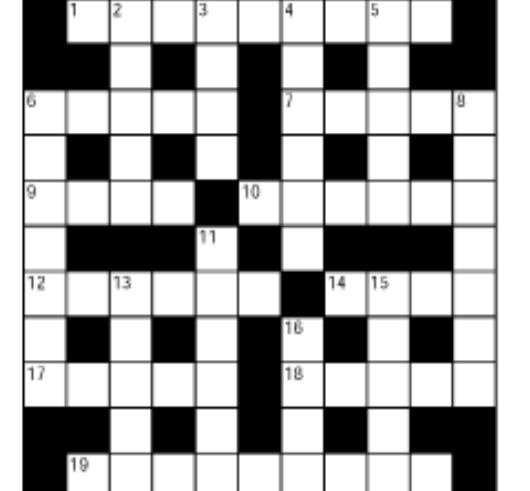
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

- ACROSS**
- A shawl keeps these warm
 - Move along on hands and knees
 - Parts of a skeleton
 - Young males
 - Picture theatre
 - Reply
 - A hard black fuel
 - Vote into power
 - Thoughts
 - Exactly the same
- DOWN**
- Very weighty
 - Crotesque
 - Capital city of the Republic of Ireland
 - Wash the soap out of
 - A green vegetable
 - Housing for horses
 - Defeated
 - How quickly something moves or happens
 - A sung stage drama
 - Short skirt



GINGER MEGGS



CITADEL: HONEY BUNNY SAMANTHA IS ACTION QUEEN IN THIS SPY-VERSE

Plot

Citadel spans two timelines, 1992 and 2000, tracing the story of Honey (Samantha), a small-town woman who moves to Bombay with dreams of becoming an actress. The road to stardom, however, is fraught with obstacles and she finds herself struggling to gain a foothold in the industry. Her boyfriend (Varun Dhawan), who works as a stuntman, harbours a hidden life as an undercover agent. When Honey uncovers his secret, she is drawn to his world, hoping it might bring her the sense of purpose that the film industry hasn't. But when one of their missions goes wrong, the repercussions follow them into the future, forcing them to confront past choices and the stakes they now face.

Performances

Samantha delivers a compelling performance as Honey, portraying her journey from hopeful actress to determined field agent with intensity and grit. Her character's transformation is relatable, infused with resilience that makes her stand out. Varun Dhawan, as her partner leading a double life, balances the demands of action scenes with moments that reveal his character's vulnerability, bringing depth to his role. The supporting cast, comprising seasoned actors, enhances the authenticity of the spy agency environment, especially in high-tension scenes involving covert operations and loyalty tests.

Highlights

Directors Raj & DK infuse *Citadel* with their distinctive style, blending Indian elements into the global spy narrative. Known for their previous successes like *The Family Man* and *Farzi*, they collaborate here with



REVIEW

Directed by: Raj & DK

Produced by: Anthony Russo, Joe Russo, Raj and DK, Mike Larocca, etc.

Cinematographer: Johan Heurlin Aidt

Cast: Samantha, Varun Dhawan, Kay Kay Menon, Simran Bagga, Kashvi Majumdar

Streaming on: Amazon Prime Video

Rating: 3/5

the Russo Brothers (*Avengers: Endgame*), creating a storyline that's rooted in India while appealing internationally. The series examines themes of ambition, secrecy and betrayal, all while exploring the high-stakes world of espionage. Samantha and Varun's chemistry adds a compelling layer, especially in moments charged with trust and tension. The overarching plot keeps viewers engaged with its intrigue and suspense, centering on two opposing agencies vying for groundbreaking technology. A young actor playing a significant role impresses with a standout performance.

Drawbacks

The storyline occasionally leans on familiar spy tropes, making certain plot points feel predictable. The character arcs, though strong, could benefit from a deeper exploration of their psychological struggles, particularly Honey's journey as she transitions from aspiring actress to agent.

Technical aspects

The cinematography effectively immerses viewers in the look and feel of the 1990s and 2000s, capturing both the lively atmosphere of Bombay and the intensity of undercover operations. Action scenes are skillfully choreographed with a focus on realism, though the series sometimes suffers from pacing issues, with certain transitions between timelines feeling abrupt.

Verdict

Citadel offers an engaging spy thriller with standout performances by Samantha, Kay Kay Menon and Varun Dhawan. While some aspects of the storyline feel familiar, the series is visually strong and fast-paced, promising plenty of suspense for fans of espionage.

CHETAN ON TREND OF THRILLERS

Why *Dhoom Dhaam* stands out?



SURESH KAVIRAYANI
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Chetan is known for films like *First Rank Raju*, *Beach Road*, *Rojulu Maaray* and *Gulf*. Now, the actor is playing lead in the film *Dhoom Dhaam* which is hitting the screens on November 8. "The movie is complete entertainment and this is going to be a typical commercial film for me," said Chetan.

The actor said writer Gopi Mohan is his father's friend. "Gopi Mohan is known for his kind of comedy films, so we approached him for a story and he provided this *Dhoom Dhaam*," said Chetan. Sai Kishore is the director, while Hebah Patel is the heroine. "Earlier I tried different concept based films and now for the first time I am trying an entertainment film with this," said the actor. He hopes that this film gives the commercial a break!

The actor is talking about the film and why it got delayed. "At Covid time we discussed this subject and the film has a lot of combination actors, so it takes time," said Chetan. He added that he is a fan of Gopi Mohan's scripts because he creates stories that can be enjoyed by the whole family. Talking about this film, he said that it is based on the concept of a father doing anything for his son and vice versa. "This film has all the commercial ingredients into the narrative. I played a rich, spoiled kid," he said about his character. He added that the first half of the film is going smoothly and in the second half the hilarious scenes start. "Especially after Vennela Kishore entered, the film is a laugh-riot," he said. "There are many popular artists in this film and I made sure to prepare thoroughly to match their performance levels. But the real challenge is to match Vennela Kishore's timing. He is not only quick in his dialogues but also adds his inputs to them spontaneously. So, to match his timing is very difficult, but I manage. He also helped me in between the shots and how to prepare for the scenes," said Chetan about the film. The entire second half is filled with the chaos of a wedding.

Chetan said that though Vennela Kishore is the highlight, he too is along with him in all the scenes. "The story progresses with both of us," he said. "We would discuss the scenes before filming them. It was a pleasure to work with Hebah Patel as well. She is hyper active and full of energy, but when it comes to the camera, she is completely normal and gets into her character," said about his co-star.

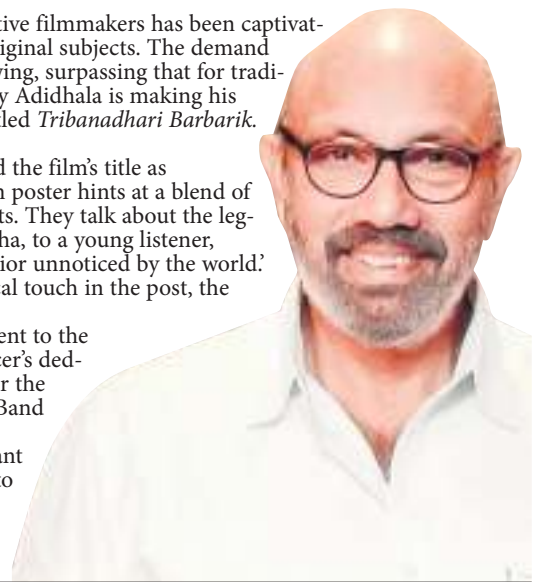
The actor felt happy that the film is releasing through a big distribution house like Mythri Movie Makers. "This movie was made on a grand scale and in terms of quality; the film stands out in every aspect. We have secured good theaters for our release. There was some concern about small dubbed films getting more screens, but we've managed to get the theaters we need," he said. The actor said that he wanted to do differently from film to film. "The present trend in the industry is thrillers and if I had gone that route, it would have been just another thriller, but in a different way. My main aim is that the audience should enjoy it after watching my film. Once this movie is released, I'll start planning my next project," said Chetan.

SATHYARAJ TO PLAY LEAD IN TRIBANADHARI BARBARIK

A new wave of young and innovative filmmakers has been captivating audiences with fresh and original subjects. The demand for content-driven films is growing, surpassing that for traditional commercial fare. Vijayal Reddy Adidhala is making his debut as producer and his first film titled *Tribanadhari Barbarik*. Mohan Srivatsa is the director.

The makers on Wednesday unveiled the film's title as *Tribanadhari Barbarik* and the motion poster hints at a blend of mythology and contemporary elements. They talk about the legend of Barbarik, the son of Ghatotkacha, to a young listener, emphasising his status as 'a great warrior unnoticed by the world.' Though the makers reveal mythological touch in the past, the film's story is a contemporary one.

The motion poster itself is a testament to the director's grand vision and the producer's dedication to high-quality storytelling. For the first time in Indian cinema history, a Band named Infusion Band provides the music! Sathyaraj is playing an important and main role in this film, according to a source. The film's shooting is completed and at present it is in post-production.



NARA ROHITH UNLEASHES INTENSITY IN BHAIRAVAM FIRST LOOK



Director Vijay Kanakamedala of *Naaandi* fame is now coming up with a multi-starrer titled *Bhairavam*. Bellamkonda Sai Sreenivas, Manchu Manoj and Nara Rohith are playing the lead actors in this film, while KK Radhamohan is the producer. The makers released the ferocious look of Nara Rohith from this film. Earlier they released the first look of Bellamkonda Sai Sreenivas and now they released the look of Nara Rohith. Set against a temple backdrop filled with fire, Rohith appears in an action-packed avatar. According to the makers, this particular action part will be one of the major highlights in the movie.

Bhairavam is billed as a neo-noir action drama, featuring a stellar ensemble cast. Manchu Manchu's first look will be revealed soon; the combination of Bellamkonda Sai Sreenivas, Manchu Manchu and Nara Rohith sharing screen space has already sparked excitement among fans and film enthusiasts. According to a source, the film is a remake of the Tamil hit film *Garudan* that was released this year. RS Durai Senthilkumar is the director of this Tamil film, while Soori, Unni Mukundan and Sasikumar played the lead actors.

Virinchi Varma returns with a bang, 8 years later

After directing films like *Uyyala Jampala* and *Majnu*, director Virinchi Varma is coming up with a biopic, *Jitender Reddy*. The film is releasing this Friday and the director said though it is a biopic, the film is a typical commercial thriller film. "Actually I unexpectedly directed it, but at the same time I felt that it was my luck to direct the film," said director Virinchi Varma.

Cinematographer Gnanasekar actually asked Virinchi Varma to do the direction. "When Gnanasekar told me about this film, I had a doubt in the beginning whether I could be directing it or not, but once I met people who are close to Jitender Reddy, I then decided to work on this film," said Virinchi. He added that he put a condition on Gnanasekar. "If Gnanasekar worked as a cinematographer, then I want to direct this film and he agreed to do it; that's how this film was shaped up," said Varma.

Jitender Reddy was a powerful leader in Jagityal of Telangana and died at a young age. His brother Ravinder Reddy now wanted to make a film on his brother and tell the present generation about him. "Initially, we thought of a small budget film, but once we heard the story, the incidents and the character span became huge. In Jitender Reddy's life there were attacks and



killings, so there are a lot of commercial elements in it. So we decided to make it in a big way," said the director, who is directing after an 8-year gap.

The director praises the producer Ravinder Reddy for encouraging him, though the budget is going high. "This is once for a kind of film, so we decided to make it as a tribute to Jitender Reddy," said the director. Virinchi said after actor Rakesh Varre joined him on board, who played the title role, he gets more boost. "He is simply superb and brought life to the character with his performance," said Virinchi.

In the trailer, it shows the differences between RSS, ABVP and Naxals. "Jitender Reddy has some ideology, which he started from his childhood. He joined ABVP and RSS when he was student and at the same time fought against the Naxals. Those incidents shown in this film are more focused on the person's life," said Virinchi.

The director said his career may be at risk if it is a complete political film. "There are few political agendas in the film, but we projected the heroic journey of Jitender Reddy. We are trying to give a message through the film. I made this film like a typical commercial thriller and if you like the film first, then you definitely like Jitender Reddy," said Virinchi Varma.

Stokes missing as Draca, Netravalkar line up in long list for IPL mega auction

PTI ■ MUMBAI

England Test skipper Ben Stokes is missing from the list of 1,574 players while his former teammate James Anderson, Italian quick Thomas Draca and India-born USA medium pacer Saurabh Netravalkar have all registered for the IPL mega auction to be held in Jeddah on November 24 and 25.

The list, which will be shortened after the franchises provide their inputs, has all the marquee Indian players who were released from their teams including Rishabh Pant, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul, R Ashwin and Yuzvendra Chahal. Each of these five cricketers have listed themselves at a base price of Rs 2 crore.

India quick Mohammed Shami, who has been sidelined from action due to various injuries since last November, was also released by his former team Gujarat Titans and has listed himself at Rs 2 crore and so has left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh. Among the other Indian players in the list with the maximum base price of Rs 2 crore are Khaleel Ahmed, Mukesh Kumar, Venkatesh Iyer, Avesh Khan, Deepak Chahar, Ishan Kishan and Bhuvneshwar Kumar.

This list also includes Shardul Thakur, Mohammed Siraj, Devdutt Padikkal, Krunal Pandya, Harshal



Patel, Prasidh Krishna, T Natarajan, Washington Sundar and Umesh Yadav. India batters Sarfaraz Khan and Prithvi Shaw, who were unsold in the last IPL auction, have registered themselves at the base price of Rs 75 lakh each. Stokes, who had decided to give the last season of the IPL a miss in order to manage his workload and



focus on his fitness, has opted out for the 2025 edition as well. The 42-year-Anderson, who retired from Test cricket earlier this year, has registered for the IPL for the first time. The veteran pacer last played a T20 10 years ago in 2014. He has never competed in a global franchise T20 league. He has a base price of Rs 1.25 crore. Netravalkar, who rose to



prominence due to his stupendous performance for USA during the T20 World Cup earlier this year, has also lined up to go under the hammer in Jeddah. The software engineer in Oracle has a base price of Rs 30 lakh. Ace Australian off-spinner Nathan Lyon, who has gone unsold in previous auctions, has also entered the fray with the a base price of Rs

of the tournament with 11 wickets to his name from six innings at an average of 10.63 and an economy of 6.88.

The Italian pacer was recently signed by the Mumbai Indians owned MI Emirates for the upcoming season of the ILT20 in the UAE.

Draca has registered himself at base prices of Rs 30 lakh in the all-rounders' category.

With up to six players permitted to be retained ahead of the mega auction, IPL teams can build a squad of 25 players each and there will be 204 slots available after 46 players were retained by 10 teams put together.

Each team will have a total purse of Rs 120 crore as Punjab Kings have Rs 110.5 crore available with them, followed by Royal Challengers Bengaluru with Rs 83 crore, Delhi Capitals with Rs 73 crore and Gujarat Titans with Rs 69 crore.

Lucknow Super Giants will also have Rs 69 crore in their purse while five-time winners Chennai Super Kings will have Rs 55 crore. Last year's winners Kolkata Knight Riders will come into the auction with Rs 51 crore in purse while five-time champions Mumbai Indians will have Rs 45 crore, last year's runner-up Sunrisers Hyderabad will have Rs 45 crore and Rajasthan Royals will have Rs 41 crore.



Rishabh Pant climbs five places to sixth spot in ICC Test batters' rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

India wicket-keeper batter Rishabh Pant on Wednesday rose five places to sixth spot in the latest ICC Men's Test Batter Rankings following his strong performance in a losing cause in third Test against New Zealand in Mumbai last week. Pant made the jump on the back of a pair of half-centuries during the Mumbai Test, in a sure sign that he is back to his best following a serious car accident, with the attacking left-hander now just one spot behind the career-best fifth position he first occupied in July 2022. The other Indian batter in top Test batter's chart is young left-handed opener Yashvi Jaiswal, who dropped a rung to fourth. New Zealand secured a narrow 25-run victory in Mumbai to claim an unprecedented 3-0 series whitewash over India, with Pant and visiting side's Daryl Mitchell the main beneficiaries in the top 10 Test batter rankings. Mitchell jumped eight places to seventh after scoring 82 in the first innings against India in the Mumbai Test, joining teammate Kane Williamson (second) as the only New

Zealanders inside the top-10. England right-hander Joe Root maintained his healthy lead at the top of the list, with Williamson, Harry Brook (third), Jaiswal (fourth) and Steve Smith (fifth) his closest challengers. India's Shubman Gill (up four places to 16th) also makes some ground on the list for Test batters following a score of 90 in the first innings against New Zealand in Mumbai, while player-of-the-series Will Young of New Zealand gained 29 spots to move to 44th overall. Ravindra Jadeja climbed two spots to sixth in the Test bowler rankings after taking 10 wickets against New Zealand, placing him just behind top-ranked Kagiso Rabada. Australia's Josh Hazlewood occupied the second spot ahead of India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah and Pat Cummins and Ravichandran Ashwin. Teammate Washington Sundar jumped seven places to move to 46th on the same list for Test bowlers, while spin duo Ajaz Patel (up 12 places to 22nd) and Ish Sodhi (up three rungs to equal 70th) are among the gainers from New Zealand.

Ponting predicts 3-1 win for Australia, says India will struggle without Shami

PTI ■ DUBAI

Former captain Ricky Ponting reckons Australia will clinch the Border-Gavaskar Trophy 3-1 against India as the visitors will find taking 20 wickets in a Test as their "biggest challenge" in absence of Mohammed Shami. Australia are keen on ending their barren run in the Border-Gavaskar with India winning each of the four series since 2014-15, including the historic triumphs Down Under in 2018-19 and 2020-21. However, with India suffering the historic low of a first-ever whitewash by 0-3 against New Zealand, Ponting believes the hosts have a better chance of defeating India now. "Probably more so now (than before)," Ponting said about Australia's chances on the ICC Review Show. Shami has been out of action since last November due to injuries and Ponting believes his absence leaves a big hole in India's bowling attack comprising Jasprit Bumrah,

Mohammed Siraj, Akash Deep, Prasidh Krishna and the uncapped Harshit Rana. Ponting said, "Shami just leaves such a big hole in that bowling group. Back then (in August), there was still some conjecture whether Shami would be fit or not." "I think taking 20 wickets in a Test match for India is going to be the biggest challenge. I think they'll bat well enough out here with the current group of batters that they've got." While hailing Australia as a more settled unit, Ponting backed India to not be absolute pushovers when the series gets underway from November 22 in Perth. "I think India will win a Test match somewhere through the five Test matches," Ponting predicted. "But I still think now, Australia probably look a bit more settled, a bit more experienced and we know that they're a very hard team to beat at home. So I'll stick with the 3-1." Ponting feels one among the veteran Steve Smith or the flamboyant Rishabh Pant would be the highest



run-scorers over the five Tests. "Leading run scorer, I'm going to go Steve Smith or Rishabh Pant," Ponting said.

"I think Smith, the fact that he's moved back down from opener to No 4 probably makes it feel like he's got more of a point to prove... that maybe

he shouldn't have gone up to open in the first place," he added. "...And that No 4 is his spot and where he should have probably been the whole time and where he probably finished his career now." Pant, who was the highest run-getter during the series against New Zealand, appeared to be the only in-form batter heading to Australia. "With Rishabh back in the side and probably coming into bat in the middle order when the ball's probably lost a bit of its shine and a bit of its hardness, and the form that he's in, I'll go for him as one of the leading run scorers as well," Ponting said. The legendary Ponting picked Josh Hazlewood to get more wickets for Australia than his fast bowling partners Mitchell Starc and Pat Cummins. "I think Hazlewood out of the Australian quicks, is right at the moment, is probably at the peak of his powers more than the other guys. So I'll go with him for the leading wicket-taker," Ponting said.

India A players protested against replaced ball, claims report

PTI ■ SYDNEY

India A players expressed dissatisfaction over the condition of the replaced ball provided during the final day of play against Australia A in their first unofficial Test, a report has claimed, even as David Warner and Ed Cowan have called on Cricket Australia to clarify what transpired. On the final day of the four-day game in Mackay last week, the umpires provided the Indian players with a different ball to use at the start of play. The Indian players, particularly Ishan Kishan, were unhappy with the decision with the wicketkeeper-batter terming it "a very stupid decision." A report in Sydney Morning Herald said on Wednesday that the argument from the Indian camp was not about the replacement of the ball but the condition of the ball which was provided as replacement.

"What has not been known before now is that the angst on show from India A, led by Ishan, was not because the ball had been changed," the media house said on its website. "Instead, it was because the touring team were unhappy with the condition of the replacement ball: a drama, but not a major one, since umpires and players have debated the condition of replacement balls for decades," it added. The report described umpire Shawn Craig for his "straight shooting" who was heard on the stump mic telling the Indian players, "You scratch it, we change the ball. There will be no more discussion, let's play. This is not a discussion, you will be playing with that ball." Kishan retorted: "So we are going to play with this ball... that's a very stupid decision." Former Australia openers David Warner and Ed Cowan have now called on Cricket



Australia to clarify what transpired on the final day of the match at Mackay. Warner, whose years-long leadership ban has just been lifted by CA, has said the board "squashed" the matter "as quickly as possible" since the Indian senior men's team is bound for a five-Test series Down Under.

"I think the ultimate decision with CA, isn't it? I think they've obviously squashed it as fast as they could, given that India's coming out here this summer," Warner said. "But if the umpires deem that something happened, then I'm sure there'll be a follow-up and I think the umpires or the match referee should be

standing here answering those questions." "I think the match referee should be coming out and addressing his own staff, who are the umpires, and if they're sticking by the umpire's decisions, then you've got to stand up for that. I think that's obviously a statement that CA probably need to release," he added. Warner's former opening partner and current board director of the New South Wales Wales Cowan said the reaction perhaps could've been different if the opposition team wasn't India. "Part of me just thinks if this wasn't India there would be a totally different reaction," Cowan said. "If that was Pakistan A, or England A, or choose any A team, or even a Shield game, the reaction would be totally different and for me, that's the wrong approach." "To be fair, it's just us joining dots. These dots may be

totally incorrect, we'd have imperfect information, but I do think it's on Cricket Australia to clarify this, and it's also probably imperative on the BCCI to clarify this," he said. Hours after the game finished, CA issued a statement saying, "The ball used in the fourth innings of the match was changed due to deterioration. Both teams' captain and manager were informed of the decision prior to the start of play. No further action is being taken." Under the laws of cricket, a five-run penalty is imposed if the umpires change the ball after determining it has been unfairly altered. However, CA's playing conditions include an additional clause that allows the umpires to change the ball without applying penalty runs if it's unclear how the ball became damaged. Australia A were not awarded five penalty

PTI ■ SYDNEY

David Warner was on Wednesday appointed as captain of Big Bash League side Sydney Thunder, returning to a leadership role in Australian cricket six years after being implicated in the ball-tampering scandal on a tour of South Africa. His lifetime leadership ban was overturned by Cricket Australia last month, paving the way for his captaincy before he bids goodbye to competitive cricket. He had retired from the international game after Australia's elimination from the T20 World Cup in the Caribbean in June. Warner, 38, served a one-year ban from the game for his involvement in the Newlands ball-tampering scandal in 2018 alongside Steve Smith and Cameron Bancroft. Returning to the leadership role is a huge moment for Warner and the significance was not lost on the swashbuckling opener who regaled everyone with his explosive batting. "Captaining the Thunder again this season means a lot to me. I

Warner named Sydney Thunder Captain, returns to leadership role in Australian cricket after six years

was part of the team from the start, and now to be back with that 'C' next to my name feels fantastic. I'm looking forward to leading from the front and sharing my experience with the young talent coming through," Warner said in a statement on Wednesday. The former Australian player replaced all-rounded Chris Green as Thunder's captain ahead of this year's campaign. The 2016 BBL winners finished at the bottom of the table in the last edition. Despite CA imposed leadership ban, Warner has captained teams in franchise cricket around the world including Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) and Delhi Capitals (DC) in the IPL. Warner, who has played 110 T20 Internationals for Australia, has previously led Thunder back in 2011.



Warner became eligible for captaincy after Cricket Australia's Code of Conduct Commission revoked the ban citing it has "achieved its purpose", after the combative cricketer had appeared before the independent panel comprising three members. **BACKS MCSWEENEY TO OPEN AGAINST INDIA:** Warner backed Australia A captain Nathan McSweeney to open for Australia in the upcoming five-match Test series against India. Since Warner's retirement from the format in January, Australia have struggled to find a player good enough to fill the huge void at the top of the order. But Warner has picked McSweeney as the man for the challenge against India, terming him a "complete player". "I think McSweeney's got the runs

on the board, but I think you look further down the track as well. I know you've got Marnus (Labuschagne) and Travis Head (Labuschagne) and Travis Head (Labuschagne), but he's got leadership potential as well," Warner was quoted as saying by Fox Sports. "He looks a complete player, and I think he's a good fit with Uzzie (Usman Khawaja) at the top of the order. We're in a good position, and we've got a lot of talent, which is exciting," he added. McSweeney has so far scored 2213 runs in 33 first-class matches at an average of 38.82. The upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy will start on November 22 in Perth, followed by matches in Adelaide (December 6-10), Brisbane (December 14-18), Melbourne (December 26-30), and Sydney (January 3-7).