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DON'T MISS...

Water Board eases certificate process

The Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) has streamlined the process for issuing water feasibility certificates, bringing relief to new building developers within the Greater Hyderabad limits. This move aims to reduce delays and make obtaining these essential documents more convenient. To secure permissions from the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) for new building constructions, owners are required to ...

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Tension prevails at RGUKT

Tension prevailed as the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) called for a protest over the suicide of a student at Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge Technologies (RGUKT) and Technologies Basar. In response to the call by the ABVP, the police tightened security around the campus. A three-tier security system was put in place at the main gate. As students and ABVP activists started gathering from various areas, heavy police deployment was witnessed at the Basara railway station and the Goddess Amma temple. Those ...

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BJP fulfils what it guarantees: Shah

Taking potshots at the Congress, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday claimed that the party's leader Rahul Gandhi believes in flying abroad after making promises, while it is only the BJP that fulfils what its guarantees. Addressing a rally at Madhupur in Deoghar district, the Union Home Minister said that while terrorists not only attacked India but also enjoyed bharani after killing people during the UPA rule, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wiped out terrorists through ...

-NATION

'Delhi-NCR 6th most expensive office mkt

Delhi-NCR is the sixth most expensive office location in the Asia Pacific region, with an average monthly rental of Rs 340 per sq ft, while Mumbai ranked eighth in the list, according to Knight Frank India. Real estate consultant Knight Frank, in its latest edition of the Asia-Pacific Prime Office Rental Index for Q3 (July-September) 2024, said Delhi-NCR is the 6th most expensive office space rental market across the APAC region. Hong Kong SAR continues to be APAC's most expensive office market during the third quarter of this calendar year. Prime rents in the NCR remained stable in Q3 2024, while Mumbai and Bengaluru saw year-on-year (YoY) increases of 5 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively, driven by strong demand from corporate ...

-MONEY

We glowed TG, will guide Maha

PNS ■ NAGPUR

Addressing the election campaign meetings of the Congress in Maharashtra, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that Congress activists worked hard and finished BRS supremo K. Chandrasekhar Rao in Telangana. "Today his name and symbol do not exist in Telangana," he said.

He called upon the people of Maharashtra to unite against the "two Gujarat slaves" during his campaign in the state.

Addressing massive crowds at Chandrapur, Rajura and Digras, Revanth urged voters to take inspiration from the legacies of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Jyotiba Phule and BR Ambedkar and defeat 'anti-democratic' forces.

He emphasised that with one decisive vote, the people of Maharashtra could not only ensure the victory of Congress candidates but also stop the influence of Gujarat-based political dominance.

Revanth showcases success of guarantees

Says Congress finished KCR in TG



Telangana CM Revanth Reddy addressing massive crowds in Chandrapur, Rajura, and Digras constituencies in Maharashtra on Saturday

"Despite being separate states, deep cultural and historical bonds. Together, we can uproot the Gujarat

slaves who are exploiting people," he stated. He pledged to take responsibility for the development of Maharashtra's constituencies along with elected MLAs. "Elect your MLA and allow me, the neighbouring Chief Minister, to ensure the progress of your state," he assured, adding that Telangana's six guarantees would soon 'illuminate' Maharashtra under a Congress-led government.

Highlighting Telangana's social welfare initiatives, Revanth elaborated on measures like farm loan waivers costing Rs 18,000 crore, 50,000 government jobs in a year, free bus travel for women, and 200 units of free electricity for poor households. "These are not just promises. They are realities in Telangana, and they can become realities in Maharashtra too," he added.

The Chief Minister did not hold back in criticising Maharashtra's Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar.

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KTR welcomes Congress leader from Rajendranagar Malladri Naidu in the presence of MLA Sabita Indra Reddy and her son Karthik Reddy & ex Home Minister Mahmood Ali

'A move to mask failures'

KTR targets CM over Gandhi statue issue

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtra Samithi working president KT Rama Rao lashed out at Congress Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's governance and political strategy through a symbolic reference to the statue of Mahatma Gandhi being installed here. KTR was speaking at an event held on Saturday marking the induction of senior Congress leaders Malladri Naidu and Sheikh

Arif into the BRS. He began by questioning the Congress-led government's decision to install a massive statue of Mahatma Gandhi while failing to fulfil its basic promises.

"Mahatma Gandhi did not believe in installing statues but in serving the poor. His great-grandson Tushar Gandhi also said the same. But here, in the name of Gandhi, they play double games," said KTR.

Continued on Page 2



WYRA RIVER CHECK DAM CONSTRUCTION

TG govt accords administrative approval

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Government has sanctioned administrative approval for the construction of a check dam across the Wyra River near Siripuram village in the Madhira Mandal of Khammam district.

The project, which originally received approval for Rs 471 lakh, has now been revised to Rs 685.20 lakh to accommodate enhanced project requirements.

In a recent GO (Rt. No. 314), the government approved the revised estimates submitted by the Chief Engineer (MI), Hyderabad, based on designs from the Central Design Organisation. The project will be executed under the designated head of account to meet the expen-

diture guidelines outlined in the earlier GO (Ms. No. 12).

The Chief Engineer (I), Khammam, must ensure the accuracy of quantities, data and provisions made in the revised estimate. Hydrological clearances and feasibility reports must be obtained from competent authorities. Care must be taken to avoid overlapping with the water spread areas of adjacent check dams.

The sanctioned expenditure will be debited under the specified account, and the Chief Engineer (MI), Hyderabad, has been directed to take action to ensure smooth implementation. The government emphasised that all project-related activities must adhere to financial and technical guidelines.

Lagacherla victims file complaint with SC/ST Commission, detail atrocities

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The victims of the Lagacherla incident have filed a formal complaint with the SC/ST Commission, alleging police atrocities, including sexual harassment and verbal abuse.

The complaint was supported by BRS leaders, including MLC Satyavathi Rathod and RS Praveen Kumar, who accompanied the victims detailing the assaults.

BRS MLC Satyavathi Rathod and RS Praveen Kumar strongly condemned the alleged sexual assaults by the police on women in Laxmicherla, claiming that under the pretext of arresting farmers police barged into homes at midnight, verbally abused women and subjected them to sexual harassment.

The victims recounted their experiences, expressing deep anguish.

Continued on Page 2



Will make TG leader in palm oil cultivation, says Tummala

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

The Minister for Agriculture, Tummala Nageswara Rao, emphasised the government's commitment to making Telangana the leader in oil palm cultivation during a review meeting held with oil palm companies.

Expressing dissatisfaction over the progress of certain companies, he warned that the permissions of under-performing firms would be cancelled and reallocated to TG Oil Fed.

He said the government aims to expand oil palm cultivation to one lakh acres in 2024-25. "We have already planted oil palms in around

25,470 acres this year and plans to achieve the target by February," he said.

Highlighting company-specific progress, Tummala directed firms to speed up efforts and establish processing units in their allocated factory zones by the end of next year. He also instructed companies to maintain nurseries, provide quality saplings to farmers, and focus on disease-resistant varieties to improve yields.

"Oil palm cultivation should be profitable for farmers, and companies must ensure that technical support and training are provided to prevent diseases like Ganoderma," he added.

Continued on Page 2

BC Commission plans public hearings from tomorrow

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Backward Classes Commission will conduct the second phase of its public hearings across the state from November 18 to 26. The Commission has asked the public and caste organisations to actively participate in the hearings.

The Commission plans to collect petitions, suggestions and recommendations to assess the status of Backward Classes in education and employment. After the successful first round held in Adilabad, Nizamabad, Sangareddy, Karimnagar and Hanmakonda from October 28 to November 2, the Commission will now visit five more erstwhile district headquarters.

The scheduled dates for the hearings are Nalgonda on November 18, Khammam on Nov 19, Rangareddy on Nov 21, Mahbubnagar on Nov 22, and Hyderabad on Nov 23. For those unable to attend hearings at the district level, additional sessions will be held at the Commission office in Khairatabad on November 25 and 26. Individuals who cannot attend in person can submit their representations by post to the Commission office. The representations must reach the Commission office by 5 pm on November 26.

PHONE TAPPING CASE Police quiz former BRS MLA Jaipal

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a significant development in the phone tapping case, former Kalwakurthy BRS MLA Jaipal Yadav appeared before the Jubilee Hills ACP on Saturday for questioning. The police recorded Jaipal Yadav's statement during the interrogation which lasted approximately two hours.

Speaking to the media after the questioning, Jaipal clarified that he was issued notices regarding the tapping of two phone numbers he gave to Tirupatanna, an Additional SP.

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Rammurthy Naidu passes away

Babu rushes to Hyd from Delhi

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Rammurthy Naidu, the younger brother of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, passed away at the age of 72. He had been battling a prolonged illness and was admitted to a hospital three days ago. He passed away at 12:45 pm in Hyderabad while on a ventilator.

Naidu was initially brought to AIG Hospital in Gachibowli, Hyderabad, on November 14 after suffering a cardiac arrest.

Arrangements are being made for his last rites in his native village, Naravari Palli, in the Chandragiri constituency of Tirupati district, which will be held on Sunday.

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863 houses okayed for those who gave land for Kakatiya Mega Textile Park

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has sanctioned 863 houses under the Indiramma Indlu Housing Scheme for those who gave up for the Kakatiya Mega Textile Park in Warangal district. These houses are being provided under the State Reserve Quota (SRQ) with relaxed eligibility criteria as a special case.

The proposal, submitted by the Collector of Warangal, sought approval to extend the housing scheme to affected landowners.

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Priority for water connections to edu institutions: Raja Narasimha



PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

Health Minister Damodara Raja Narasimha reviewed the progress of the Rural Water Supply (RWS) Department at a meeting held on Saturday with SE Raghuvaker and executive engineers Vijayalakshmi, Nagabhushanam, Sampath and Pasha and other officials.

The Minister emphasised the need for providing immediate water connections to all government schools, colleges and other educational institutions in the district.

Highlighting complaints regarding insufficient water connections in residential educational institutions, the Minister directed officials to address

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OBTUSE ANGLE



Silt chambers mandatory for high-rises, bldgs

Notices issued to buildings lacking silt chambers setting Dec-end deadline

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) has made the installation of silt chambers mandatory for commercial establishments and multi-storied residential buildings to ensure smooth sewage flow and to prevent clogging caused by non-degradable waste.

The move comes as part of the Board's 90-day special drive to tackle sewage overflow issues and modernise the city's drainage

infrastructure.

With Hyderabad's rapid expansion up to the Outer Ring Road, sewage generation has increased significantly. HMWSSB's initiative, which includes manhole-to-manhole de-silting, revealed that non-degradable waste like food items, plastic bottles and napkins are major culprits causing blockages and overflows.

The HMWSSB is prioritising installations of silt chambers in all high sewage-generating establishments like hotels, malls, hospitals



and residential complexes. Silt chambers will filter solid waste at the source, allowing only liquid sewage to enter the main pipelines, thereby preventing disruptions in flow. Notices have already been issued to several buildings lacking silt chambers, with a deadline of December-end for compliance. Violators will face strict action.

Many older sewerage pipelines are under strain due to the replacement of independent houses with large multi-storied buildings. The HMWSSB has directed

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BRS and Congress spar over graft charges, giving BJP leverage in TG

The ruling Congress and the opposition Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) parties in Telangana are embroiled in a political battle, each attempting to corner the other with allegations of corruption. The irony lies in how both parties, in their zealous pursuit of power, have inadvertently given the Bharatiya Janata Party significant leverage over them. These developments have created a scenario where the BJP, both at the state level through the Governor's office and at the national level through central ministries, has become an influential player in determining the outcomes of these high-stakes political confrontations.

Congress goes after BRS over Formula E race allegations. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy of the Congress has initiated a series of probes aimed squarely at the alleged financial misdeeds and administrative irregularities of the previous BRS administration, particu-

larly targeting former CM K Chandrasekhar Rao, the BRS leader, and his son, KT Rama Rao (KTR). One of the most significant accusations involves the 2024 Formula E race, proposed to be hosted in Hyderabad by the previous BRS government. This ambitious project became a symbol of Telangana's drive to establish itself on the global sports map. However, the alleged payment of Rs. 55 crore to the race organizers by the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA), authorized solely by KTR in his capacity as the then Municipal Administration minister, has now become a focal point of controversy.

The Congress government contends that KTR sanctioned this substantial payment without cabinet approval, bypassing necessary procedural checks. It accuses KTR of misusing public funds and violating administrative protocols to facilitate the deal, allegedly benefiting

The Congress government contends that KTR sanctioned this substantial payment without cabinet approval, bypassing necessary procedural checks. It accuses KTR of misusing public funds and violating administrative protocols to facilitate the deal, allegedly benefiting private parties.

private parties. Telangana's Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), tasked with investigating the case, has since approached Governor Jishnu Dev Varma for approval to register a formal case against KTR.

Under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 2018, the Governor's consent is required to proceed with a corruption case against a serving or former public official for actions taken during their official capacity. The Governor, a BJP appointee, has sent the

ACB's request for legal review. Many now see the Governor's eventual decision as a key indicator of how the BJP may approach its role in this unfolding drama.

In response, BRS has retaliated with its own corruption allegations against Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, focusing on the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) scheme. The central government-sponsored initiative seeks to revamp urban infrastructure, improve sewage sys-



RAMESH KANDULA
Chief Editor Swatantra TV and author

tems, and enhance drinking water supply in urban local bodies. KTR has alleged that Revanth Reddy manipulated the tender process to award a substantial contract to Shodha Infrastructure, a company owned by Revanth's brother-in-law, S. Srujan Reddy. To bolster his case, KTR recently visited Delhi, where he presented a memorandum to Union Minister

Manohar Lal Khattar, urging the central government to investigate the alleged misconduct. The demand for a central inquiry is a calculated move, as the BJP-led government at the Center now holds the power to decide whether to investigate Congress's chief minister, bringing the BJP back into a position of strategic control.

The BJP's role: A balancing act with strategic leverage. These accusations have, in a twist of political irony, handed the BJP considerable influence over both Telangana's Congress and BRS parties. With the ACB's request pending approval from the BJP-appointed Governor and the plea to initiate a probe into Revanth's actions awaiting a decision from the BJP's central administration, the Congress and BRS have unwittingly left their fates partially in the hands of their common political opponent. BJP's strategic leverage is further augmented

by the fact that these corruption probes play well with its national narrative of rooting out corruption. Any action the BJP takes in these matters could be spun as an effort to cleanse Telangana politics, contrasting with what it may portray as the corruption-ridden administrations of the Congress and the BRS.

Both Congress and BRS have historically locked horns in Telangana, each vying for the influential urban voter base and the powerful rural constituencies. However, the present corruption allegations may tarnish their public images, diluting their respective appeals and creating a space for the BJP to enter Telangana's political mainstream.

The Congress and the BRS find themselves caught in an endless cycle of one-upmanship, aiming to expose each other's administrative failings while risking their credibility. However, these recent developments highlight how vulnera-

ble both parties are to political countermeasures. Any misstep or further escalation could allow the BJP to drive a wedge between the Congress and the BRS, potentially drawing disillusioned voters away from both parties.

For now, it remains to be seen whether the BJP will leverage its newfound influence to escalate these investigations or adopt a wait-and-watch approach to further observe how the two Telangana rivals weaken each other. What is certain, however, is that the tit-for-tat political game has now entered a new stage where the ruling Congress and opposition BRS no longer have the autonomy to resolve their disputes solely within the state's jurisdiction. They are now at the mercy of national politics and the strategic calculations of the BJP, a reminder of how political battles at the state level can have far-reaching implications in the broader landscape of Indian politics.

Revanth uniting divided BRS house

The Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) has contrasting sides to it. When it was in power, it looked more like a divided house, with its key leaders not tolerating one another's presence in the same room. Today, adverse circumstances have brought in the bonding factor to keep it remarkably united, say insiders who have tracked the party from its heyday. As times have changed, so has their camaraderie. Ever since Revanth Reddy became the Chief Minister, the top leaders of BRS seem to have buried their hatchet, at least for public consumption. It took nearly eleven months of political turbulence and promptings for compromise for these leaders to stand shoulder to shoulder. What caused this miraculous turnaround? Some say it is not just the charm of opposition politics but also the looming specter of raids and arrests. The raid on the house of the brother-in-law of BRS working president KT Rama Rao was apparently the final straw for the party circles as well as the cadre, who realized that the heat was directed not just at a few individuals but the extended Kalvakuntla family. The constant threat of 'arresting' KTR in various 'scams' under lens has had the unintended consequence of forging a unity among even reluctant big rivals, let alone the rank and file. However, the Congress continues to pitch chinks in the armour by claiming that power struggle between Harish Rao and KTR is still on in BRS. So, at least for the sake of galleries, both the leaders are referring to each other in their speeches and press meets to tone down the narrative. Politics, after all, makes strange bedfellows.

gests that Joginapally Santosh Kumar, once a visible and prominent figure in BRS, might be losing ground in the party with party supremo K Chandrasekhar Rao, who had been his pillar of support, largely confined to his residence and keeping a low profile these days. Whatever it be, Santosh's absence from key activities has raised eyebrows. Adding to the intrigue, Armoor ex-MLA Jeevan Reddy is rumored to be acting as a point of contact for KCR, sparking speculation about shifts in party dynamics. Although the reasons for this perceived sidelining remain unclear, some

is still played at high decibel levels by overenthusiastic officials at official events and functions in which Chief Minister Revanth Reddy participates. This sounds irritating to those participants who are not exactly the Chief Minister's fans or officials who carry favour with him. At times, people wonder whether the ongoing programme is official or a party show with an official tag. "It has been creating irritable sound syndrome", commented one of the participants at a programme organized at RTA office recently for 'handing over AMVI appointment orders'. Others, particularly journalists, say they have been experiencing 'misophonia or hyperacusis' due to the frequent playing of the song that sounds jarring for them. Another journalist commented: "It is unethical to play the song in official programmes."

REPORTERS' DIARY

insiders hint that KCR might be reconsidering past actions associated with nephew. Among rumors that fly fast and thick, the wildest one about Santosh Kumar is that he has amicable ties with Revanth Reddy. However, not all BRS leaders are convinced of any significant fallout. They argue that, with KCR staying out of the spotlight, Santosh's reduced visibility might simply be consequential. For that matter, Santosh hasn't entirely stepped away from public initiatives, going by his occasional travels on plantation drives.

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Driverless car and untracked issues

Does a driverless car have anything to do with discussions in the Assembly? Apparently not, but with artificial intelligence breathing down the necks of human beings, maybe parallels can be drawn if the discussion in the House takes members nowhere. A driverless car is a vehicle that uses a combination of sensors, cameras, radar and artificial intelligence to travel between destinations without a human operator. But, during a Zero Hour debate in the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, TDP legislator Koonna Ravi Kumar likened the session to a 'driverless car'. For, he claimed, the Ministers were unaware of the issues being raised and that they were not taking responsibility for addressing the problems. In response, Minister Atchannaidu, defending the government, stated that he was personally keeping track of the issues and that members' concerns would be addressed. As if on autopilot, Speaker Ch Ayyanapaduru then chipped in, saying that the MLA, being seated in the last row, was not in a position to understand what was happening in the session.

Quality food eludes even MLAs

Food safety authorities in various states are conducting raids to regulate standards in hotels, restaurants and other eateries with promising results. Still, contractors preparing food that is served to members of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly seem to be befikar. After the Assembly session began on November 11, there have been several complaints regarding the quality of food served to the members. Assembly Speaker Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu expressed his concern after reports emerged that the food served to the legislators was of poor taste and quality. Mentioning that food being served to MLAs must meet certain standards, he warned the food contractors to improve the quality of food served or face consequences. Noticeably, even the food served to scribes during the session has been of poor quality. Understandably, it was not specifically addressed.

(With inputs from Naveena Ghanate, K Venkateswarlu and Pradeep Kumar)

From a rallying cry to a jarring song

No doubt the song "Moodu rangula jenda patti singamole vachinaadu..." sung by Nalgonda Gaddar created a record on YouTube with 300K views and became a rallying cry during the TG Assembly elections. During that period, it was played everywhere across the state i.e. wherever then TPCC president A Revanth Reddy participated, be it public meetings or rallies. However, the song

BJP and Congress: Allies in tango against BRS

In the intricate web of Telangana politics, an intriguing dynamic has emerged between the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress. Despite their long-standing rivalry, both parties see a common adversary in the Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS). This shared opposition has resulted in instances of alignment in their actions. Within Congress circles, there is a jest that the BJP often articulates the Congress's stance more effectively than Congress leaders themselves. This sentiment is exemplified by BJP MPs, who, at times, seems to champion Congress viewpoints with greater clarity. Such observations highlight the nuanced interplay between the two parties as they navigate their mutual opposition to the BRS. However, the BJP is not without its internal challenges. The party has faced criticism, with members occasionally adopting divergent positions. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has pointedly referred to certain BJP factions as "nakili BJP" (fake BJP), underscoring perceived inconsistencies within the party. Despite these complexities, the core supporters of both the BJP and Congress remain steadfast in their belief that the two parties are not in collusion. The political tango continues, with each party striving to assert its dominance while contending with both internal dynamics and external alliances.

Is Santosh santusht in BRS?

The political buzz in Telangana sug-

Silt chambers ...

Continued from page 1 residents and building owners to upgrade pipelines to accommodate increased sewage loads. Notices have been issued to ensure pipeline sizes are enhanced to meet current requirements, minimizing overflow and choking issues.

The HMWSSB is promoting the construction of community silt chambers to address sewage issues in colonies and smaller residential areas. These chambers, servicing multiple houses, will prevent solid waste from entering the main sewer lines and simplify maintenance.

Rammurthy Naidu...

Continued from page 1 Rammurthy Naidu served as an MLA for the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) from 1994 to 1999. Later, he joined the Congress Party in 2002 but returned to TDP before stepping away from active politics due to health issues. He is survived by his two sons, Nara Girish and actor Nara Rohit.

BJP leaders take 'Musi nidra' at 20 places



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Accepting the challenge thrown by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, BJP leaders conducted 'Musi Nidra' at 20 places across the Musi River area on Saturday night by sleeping in the houses of the poor living in the Musi River's catchment area.

The leaders, Telangana BJP chief G. Kishan Reddy (Tulsiram Nagar), Dr K. Laxman (Old Malakpet, Shalivahana Nagar), Konda Vishweshwar Reddy (Hydershahkot), Eatala Rajender (Dwaraka Puram Colony, Ganesh Nagar, Phanigiri Colony), Katipally Venkataramana Reddy (Gowliguda), NVSS Prabhakar (Ramanthapur), Dharna Rao (Asad Baba Nagar), Chada Suresh Reddy (New Maruthi Nagar, Satya Nagar), BB Patil (Afzalgunj), Setearam Naik (Jummeerat Bazaar), Chintala Ramachandra Reddy (Kamala Nagar),

Endala Laxminarayana (Jiyaguda), Prem Singh Rathod (Karwan), KS Ratnam (Shashtri Nagar), Krishna Yadav (Ambedkar Nagar), N. Ramchander Rao (Ghatkesar), Premender Reddy (Attapur), Amarsingh Khilawat (Puranapool Darwaja), Janardhan Reddy (Hyderguda), and D. Pradeep Kumar (Langar Houz) took part in the 'Musi Nidra'.

Addressing the gathering after launching the Musi Nidra programme, Telangana BJP President G. Kishan Reddy said that the Congress government has been issuing statements saying that it will demolish the houses of the poor living on both sides of the Musi catchment area. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has been saying that the government will demolish the houses even if anyone comes forward to block the bulldozers, he said.

Kishan said the BJP injected confidence among the victims in the last four months and staged a dharna at Dharna Chowk.

"On Saturday, we are sleeping in the houses of Musi Project victims. The people are afraid of Chief Minister's statements. They are becoming ill with tension thinking when the bulldozer will come and when it will demolish their houses," he said.

KTR did not meet Union Minister Khattar: Vishweshwar

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Making it clear that BRS Working President KT Rama Rao did not meet Union Power and Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, the BJP's Chevella MP, Konda Vishweshwar Reddy, asked where are the photos of KTR meeting the Union Minister.

Addressing the media on Saturday, Vishweshwar said that KTR had taken an appointment to meet Khattar. He said that no BJP leader met KTR in

New Delhi or gave an appointment to KTR. He added that he had gone to Khattar's office and enquired with his assistant.

"KTR met Congress leaders in New Delhi. Telangana Congress leaders are interested in arresting KTR but Congress's top leaders are preventing the Telangana Congress government from arresting KTR," Vishweshwar said.

It may be recalled that KTR went to New Delhi recently to file a complaint with Manohar Lal Khattar alleging that corruption took place while allotting Amrut Scheme tenders.

863 houses okayed ...

Continued from page 1 Each beneficiary will receive a grant of Rs 5 lakh under the scheme for constructing their own houses.

As per the recommendation of the Managing Director of the Telangana Housing

Corporation, the government approved the proposal after a thorough examination. The decision to relax eligibility norms aims to ensure quick rehabilitation for all displaced individuals.

The MD of the Telangana Housing Corporation Limited and the Collector of Warangal have been asked to take steps to implement this order.

We glowed TG ...

Continued from page 1 Referring to them as "Gujarat slaves," he accused them of 'betraying the people and 'selling out' Maharashtra's resources to Gujarat's corporate giants.

"Mumbai, a symbol of Maharashtra's pride, must not be allowed to fall into the hands of outsiders," he warned, citing the entry of corporate players from Gujarat as a 'threat to local interests'.

He said that Adani eyeing Dharavi slum as he cannot get land elsewhere in Mumbai. "Adani and Pradhani came from Gujarat to 'loot' Mumbai. Double engine means Adani and Pradhani. Ajith Pawar recently said that Adani was with them when they were trying to deceive Sharad Pawar," the CM said.

Revanth also called out the Centre's failure to provide jobs and accused Prime Minister Modi of neglecting other states. "While Telangana created 50,000 jobs in a year, what has Gujarat achieved?" he asked. Revanth's rallies and roadshows in Nagpur and nearby constituencies drew public participation. Crowds chanted "Revanth Anna" as the Chief Minister addressed their concerns and criticised the BJP and its allies. Local youth thronged to greet him, take selfies and interact with the leader, reflecting the massive support he had.

Maha Vikas Aghadi candidates expressed confidence that Revanth's campaigning would not only ensure their victory but also deliver massive majorities.

Lagacherla ...

Continued from page 1 They demanded immediate registration of SC/ST atrocity and rape cases against the accused police officers.

SC/ST Commission Chairman Bakki Venkataiah assured strict action against those responsible for the alleged assaults. He announced that the Commission would visit Lagacherla soon to investigate the matter. He reiterated the Commission's commitment to protecting SC/ST communities and ensuring justice for those whose lands and rights are being violated due to industrial projects like the pharma village.

Will make ...

Continued from page 1 Tummala said that oil palm prices have increased to Rs 19,144 per tonne, a significant rise of around Rs 6,000 within a year. "The government is trying to stabilize prices above Rs 20,000 per tonne to ensure farmers' welfare," he said. Companies were also advised to improve efficiency in plantation expansion and provide quality services to farmers.

Priority for ...

Continued from page 1 the issue without delay. "Considering the growing student population, additional water connections must be provided immediately," he said.

He also reviewed the functioning of Mission Bhagiratha and asked officials to ensure timely repairs of water treatment plants and supply systems. Stressing the importance of proactive planning, he directed the department to prevent drinking water shortages during the summer.

When officials raised concerns about pending bills under RWS, he immediately discussed the matter with the Collector and ordered the release of funds at the earliest.

He also emphasised the need for regular payment of salaries to outsourced staff and employees on contract working for Mission Bhagiratha and asked officials to coordinate with manpower agencies and ensure timely salary payment.

'A move to ...

Continued from page 1 emphasising the irony of using Gandhi's name for what he said were political distractions. KTR did not mince words in targeting Revanth Reddy, whom he accused of double standards and deception. He ridiculed the Congress' plans for a massive Gandhi statue at Babu Ghat, calling it a political move to mask its failures. "A follower of Godse can never truly respect Gandhi. Don't use the Gandhi statue for your Shikhandi politics of Musi rejuvenation," he said.

Highlighting the achievements of the BRS under KCR's leadership, KTR contrasted them with the unfulfilled promises of the Congress. He claimed that the Congress government had failed to implement key welfare schemes like waiving the loans of farmers and had not paid the promised financial assistance.

Police quizz ...

Continued from page 1 He said that these numbers were shared as part of efforts to resolve a family dispute. "The contacts I provided are not connected to politics. I approached Tirupatanna because he belongs to my community, and together we resolved the family issue. The police questioned me about the phone numbers and I presented evidence. I cooperated with the inquiry and will continue to do so if called again." This matter has no political implications," Jaipal stated.

TODAY	
ALMANAC	
Month & Paksham:	Krishna Paksha
Tithi:	Dvitiya: Nov 16 11:50 PM
	to Nov 17 09:06 PM
	to Nov 17 09:06 PM
	to Nov 18 06:56 PM
Nakshatram:	
Rohini:	Nov 16 07:28 PM
	to Nov 17 05:22 PM
Mrigashirsha:	Nov 17 05:22 PM
	to Nov 18 03:48 PM
Rahukalam:	4:12 PM to 5:36 PM
Yamagandam:	12:01 PM to 1:24 PM
Varjyam:	10:36 PM to 12:06 AM
Gulika:	2:48 PM to 4:12 PM
Amritakalam:	02:27 PM to 03:55 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham:	11:37 AM to 12:22 PM
HYDERABAD WEATHER	
Forecast:	Sunny
Temp:	31°C
Humidity:	42%
Sunrise:	6:22 AM
Sunset:	5:40 PM
Updated:	November 16, 2024 5:00 PM

Vault Brewery Hyderabad

Get ready for an epic night of beats! DJ Oliver Huntemann is taking over Vault Brewery on Saturday.

Venue

Vault Brewery, Hyderabad
November 16 | 7pm onwards - November 17 | 12noon

Geetha Madhuri live

Geetha Madhuri Live at 360 Club and Kitchen. Get ready for a mesmerizing evening with the renowned Telugu playback singer, Geetha Madhuri!

Venue

360 Club & Kitchen, Hyderabad
November 16 | 8pm - November 17 | 12noon

Open Mic By Kya Bolte Hyderabad

Comedy: Join Kya Bolte Hyderabad for an open mic happening. Hosted by our favorite host Neha!

Venue

Redbrick Offices - Maximus 2A, Hyderabad
November 16 | 6:30pm

Shaam-e-Rekhta Festival

A magical evening dedicated to rich heritage of Urdu poetry and culture hosted by Rekhta Foundation.

Venue

Paiga Palace, Hyderabad
November 16, 6 pm onwards

Comic Con India

This year for the first time, the Hyderabad Comic Con will extend across three action-packed days, offering an extraordinary experience for anime, gaming, and pop culture lovers.

Venue

HITEX Exhibition Centre, Hyderabad
November 15, 16 and 17

Entrepreneurs Meetup

By We Founders Collab, Hyderabad

Venue

The Headquarters, Space Orbit, Hyderabad
November 23

Dimsum & Bao

Exiting selection of steamed buns

Venue

Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel,
Till November 24th. 3pm to 6.30 pm.

Standup Comedy

Vivek Muralidharan brings in his signature show "Death by Laughter", where he brings his newest material to stage.

Venue

Multiple venues, till November 24

City Pioneer

sunday pioneer

HYDERABAD | SUNDAY | NOVEMBER 17, 2024

03



Water feasibility certificate process simplified

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) has streamlined the process for issuing water feasibility certificates, bringing relief to new building developers within the Greater Hyderabad limits. This move aims to reduce delays and make obtaining these essential documents more convenient.

To secure permissions from the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) for new building constructions, owners are required to submit water feasibility certificates issued by the Water Board along with electricity feasibility certificates. Previously, these certificates were issued by Circle General Managers (CGMs) at local Water Board offices, often leading to delays due to procedural bottlenecks. To address this, the Water Board has centralised the issuance process at its head office in Khairatabad.

A dedicated committee has been formed to handle the issuance of water feasibility certificates. Applicants must first submit their requests to the local CGMs, who will review the applications over six days and forward them to the committee at the Khairatabad head office. Applicants are required to make payments within 30 days of submission, following which the committee, led by the Revenue Department's Chief General Manager (CGM), will issue certificates within five working days after thorough scrutiny.

This revamped process has already shown results, with 19 water feasibility certificates issued in November. The Water Board expects this centralized approach to significantly reduce delays and enhance efficiency, benefiting builders and ensuring smoother documentation for construction approvals.

Focus on establishing new SHGs: Dana Kishore to officials

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Principal Secretary of the Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MAUD) Department Dana Kishore has directed officials to prioritise the establishment of new Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and ensure that all eligible women are enrolled as members. He emphasised the importance of identifying eligible women who are not part of any SHGs and forming new groups to strengthen economic and social development.

During a review meeting held at the MAUD office conference hall on Saturday, Dana Kishore discussed SHG bank linkage targets, the formation of new groups, entrepreneurship development, and related initiatives with GHMC and MEPMA officials. He urged officials to focus on strengthening existing groups while creating new ones and encouraged women's participation in SHGs as a means of achieving economic independence and empowerment. He instructed the District Collectors and municipal commissioners to conduct meetings and form new SHGs. The Principal Secretary highlighted that SHGs play a crucial role in

fostering women's social and economic progress, contributing significantly to their self-reliance and overall development.

Dana Kishore proposed an orientation programme for TMCs, community organisers, RPs, GHMC PDs, and MEPMA project officers to ensure effective implementation. He set a deadline of December for the formation of new SHGs and completion of member registrations. These new SHGs are to be linked with Area Level Federations (ALFs) and Town Federations to ensure proper integration.

The Principal Secretary stressed need to achieve bank linkage targets by providing loans to SHGs as per defined goals. He directed the preparation of a monthly action plan and set a target of disbursing loans worth Rs 200 crore monthly through GHMC bank linkages. He also emphasised introducing business orientation programs for matured SHGs and promoting women entrepreneurs. Workshops with bankers were recommended to facilitate this process.

Dana Kishore suggested identifying local NGOs and civil society organizations to support



Principal Secretary of the Municipal Administration and Urban Development Dana Kishore holding a review meeting in Hyderabad on Saturday

entrepreneurship development. He called for NGO mapping at the DC and PD levels to streamline efforts. Additionally, he proposed conducting workshops for GHMC zonal commissioners, deputy commissioners, municipal commissioners, CSOs, NGOs, bankers, ACLBs, and PDs.

Dana Kishore also highlighted the importance of preparation for the carnival scheduled for December 7-9 at Tank Bund and instructed officials to plan activities accordingly. He emphasized

the need to train SHGs and existing federations through dedicated training centers and banks with specialized modules. Twenty trainers will be identified to train members of community-based organizations, ALFs, and TLFs.

The Principal Secretary directed DCs and municipal commissioners to regularly attend TLF and ALF meetings and oversee bank linkages, fund disbursements, and training for SHGs. MAUD Deputy Secretary

Priyanka will monitor these activities, ensuring robust implementation of SHG-related initiatives in coordination with GHMC's UCD division.

Participants in the meeting included CDMA Director Sridevi, MAUD Deputy Secretary Priyanka, GHMC Additional Commissioner (UCD) Chandrakant Reddy, Joint Commissioner Venkateswara Rao, and MEPMA State Mission Coordinators Padma, along with other GHMC project directors.

City students explore Australian government festival

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

City students explored the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) "Festival of Australia 2024" at ITC Kohenuur on Saturday. The event featured Australia's top 20 institutions, universities, retail, and trade partners. It also highlighted premium Australian food and beverage products for Indian consumers.

This event allowed Indian students and parents to meet Australian university representatives and discuss courses aligned with their career goals.



City students at the Australian Trade and Investment Commission's Festival in Hyderabad on Saturday

seek in foreign education.

Many students enjoyed dishes prepared with premium Australian ingredients during live cooking demos. The Australian Food Pavilion showcased products like honey, nutrition bars, sauces, cheese, seafood, lamb, and more.

When asked, Trade and Investment Commissioner, Vik Singh shared that is the first-ever festival conducted to promote Australia's education and cuisine in the city of Hyderabad. He emphasized on opportunities for Indian students to interact with university officials and explore courses.

A panel discussion was held with representatives from Indian schools, Australian universities, and industry partners to understand what students

Lallaguda Church gets eviction notice

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Sacred Heart Church at Lallaguda, which is a century old one, is now facing uncertainty due to an eviction notice from the South Central Railway (SCR). According to the SCR, the church must be vacated within one month. Notice said, "Failure to comply with this directive will necessitate eviction proceedings under the provisions of the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971 and legal action may be initiated against you." The construction of the church began after the Railways allotted land in February 1927, with formal approval granted in March of the same year. The church, shaped like a cross, cost Rs 7,000 to build, of which Rs 1,000 was contributed by the Nizam.

Justice Amarnath Goud honoured for resolving over 91,000 cases

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Justice T Amarnath Goud, currently serving on the Tripura High Court and formerly a judge of the Telangana High Court, was honoured with the Wonder Book of Records International Certificate by the Governor of Telangana Jishnu Dev Varma. This

recognition celebrates his remarkable achievement of adjudicating 91,157 cases between 2017 and 2024, averaging 109 cases per day—the highest number recorded. During his tenure in Telangana, Justice Goud resolved approximately 40% of the court's pending cases, and in Tripura, he addressed over 65% of the backlog.



Police hold coordination meeting with church representatives

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The North Zone Police conducted a co-ordination and awareness meeting on Saturday with over 80 representatives from various church managements within the zone. The meeting aimed to address concerns regarding security, hygiene, community welfare, and preventive measures, ensuring the safety and well-being of congregants and the surrounding community.

The police emphasised the need for robust security measures, including the installation of CCTV cameras at strategic locations like entrances and high-traffic areas. Church managements were also advised to ensure the presence of trained watchmen during

services and special events to deter criminal activities and safeguard attendees. Concerns over improper disposal of food waste were raised. Police advised frequent garbage removal, particularly of non-vegetarian remains, to prevent health hazards, control stray dog activity, and maintain the sanctity of religious spaces.

Recognising the growing issue of substance abuse and the impact of social media on youth, the police urged church leaders to actively counsel children and young adults. Discussions centered on educating the community about the dangers of drugs, cyber-crime, and harmful online behavior, promoting positive decision-making among the youth.

Palapitta STP at Kondapur to be completed by Dec 15

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Executive Director of Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB), Mayank Mittal, visited the under-construction Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) at Palapitta Cycling Park in Kondapur. During the inspection, Technical Director Ravi Kumar provided detailed insights into the progress, technology, and operational procedures involved in the STP's construction and wastewater treatment process.

Mittal emphasised the need to complete the STP construction by December 15, ensuring it is operational on schedule. He also instructed

officials to prioritise beautification efforts, including landscaping and gardening, to enhance the aesthetics of the facility and its surroundings. The STP is designed to implement advanced wastewater treatment technology, making it a significant step toward sustainable urban wastewater management. Officials assured that the project is on track to meet the stipulated deadline.

The inspection was attended by Technical Director Ravi Kumar, STP CDM Padmaja, and representatives from the construction agency. The initiative underscores HMWSSB's commitment to improving sewage infrastructure and environmental sustainability in Hyderabad.

National Education Policy is research-centric

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Emphasising that emerging technologies are looking at India rather than the West, the government is viewing the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 not as a policy but as a collective vision for research-centric growth. Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan, gave a keynote address at the Indian School of Business (ISB) Forum Insights 2024 on Friday.

Addressing the forum, Dharmendra Pradhan expressed his desire to be an ISB student and emphasised "Educate to innovate." He highlighted that India's economy would reach 5 trillion dollars in four years, with AI and SDGs



ISB Dean Madan Pillutla felicitating Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan at ISB Insights Forum in Hyderabad on Saturday

playing a key role. The Union Minister mentioned that 46 percent of global digital payments come from India and noted that India has continued growing at 7-8 per cent despite the Covid-19 crisis. He empha-

sized that NEP 2020 is research-centric, stressing the importance of multidisciplinary education, and stated that Hyderabad and ISB should lead innovation. Pradhan highlighted India's role as a skill and talent hub, its global outlook, and the government's focus on infrastructure and green

Meanwhile, CEO of NITI Aayog, BVR Subrahmanyam, noted that while the government cannot offer monetary incentives, it can provide non-monetary ones. He stated that India has become a major hub for fintech innovations over the last 10 years. Discussing Vision for India 2047, Subrahmanyam emphasized that the entire system is working toward this goal. He compared India's situ-

ation in 1947, facing major challenges, to today's position as the world's fifth-largest economy. He highlighted Aadhaar as a digital identity system for 140 crore people in the country. He noted that India is now digitally and financially connected through digital identity, which has led to innovations like UPI. He mentioned that 45 to 48% of global financial transactions happen in India, with 10 billion transactions a month, growing rapidly in volume. Subrahmanyam stated that there is no need to borrow money if your cash flow serves as collateral. He explained that micro-lenders can offer loans without collateral if you have a six-month cash flow record with a daily turnover of Rs. 5,000.

Two cybercriminals from Maharashtra arrested

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Cybercrime Police arrested two individuals involved in an online part-time job scam that duped innocent people by promising high returns on small investments. The accused, identified as Krishna Babanrao Pawar (43) and Ramakant Jivan Dhanawate (30), both residents of Kopergaon in Ahmदनगर district of Maharashtra, were apprehended on November 15, while operating from Gachibowli here.

The case came to light after a Hyderabad resident lodged a complaint. The victim received a Telegram message offering a lucrative part-time job and was directed to register on a specif-

ic website. Initially, the victim was encouraged to invest small amounts and received returns, which built trust. Subsequently, the fraudsters convinced the victim to invest a total of Rs 1,61,378. Although the website displayed profits, the victim was not allowed to withdraw the funds, leading to the realization that it was a scam.

A case was registered under relevant sections of the IT Act and other laws applied. The investigation revealed that the modus operandi of the accused and their involvement in similar fraud cases. The accused colluded with cyber fraudsters to send deceptive messages via Telegram. Victims were lured into registering on fraudulent

websites and creating accounts. They initially received small returns to build trust, but were later pressured to invest larger sums, which were never returned. The accused were involved in 140 cases across India, including 9 cases in Telangana. The police seized a laptop, 10 mobile phones, 9 debit cards, 11 cheque books and three shell company stamps.

The Cybercrime Police issued an advisory, cautioning people not to trust fraudulent phone calls or online job offers that promise high returns with minimal investment. The public is urged to verify the legitimacy of websites and avoid sharing sensitive information.

CARRYING FORWARD THE RICH MUSICAL TRADITION OF SAINT TYAGARAJA

Modumudi Sudhakar, takes his lineage (6th generation) of classical vocal musicians tracing back to Saint Tyagaraja, himself being the grandson of 'Gayaka Sarvabhoudha' Parupalli Rama krishnaiah Pantulu. Sudhakar is a top-ranking Carnatic vocalist who has established himself in the musical firmament not just as a singer with a mellifluous voice but also as composer of the highest order in the light and devotional music genre. He has composed over 1,000 musical compositions which have become popular through All India Radio, Doordarshan and other channels over the past four decades. His guru is Padma Sri Annavarapu Ramaswamy, the disciple of Ramakrishnaiah Pantulu. Sudhakar has enthralled global

audiences in over 5,000 concerts, including the prestigious Cleveland Music Festival, USA. He received the title 'Suswara Sudha Gana Prapoorna' from Suswara Academy of Music, Dallas, USA, apart from many other honours, including Sri Nedinuri Krishnamurthy Memorial Award from



Visakha Music and Dance Academy. His enthusiasm for promoting classical music made him establish 'Swarajhari' in 1988, which has been a veritable venue for budding musicians and also a rendezvous for well-known stalwarts in the field. Sudhakar is an Asthana Vidwan of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham and a member of the expert committee of the Performing Arts Grant Scheme

(PAGS) of the Central government and of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) projects. He established Gayaka Sarvabhoudha Sangeeta Parishad to organise an annual music festival in memory of his grandfather Parupalli. Apart from giving regular vocal concerts, he also came up with 'Endaro Mahanubhavulu', 'Vaggeyakara Vibhavam' and 'Ramayana Gana Lahari' devotional music albums.

Music is in the genes of his family. His wife Anjana and daughter Sruthi Ranjani are also good classical singers, who presented a number of vocal concerts in the State. Anjana is an A grade artiste in AIR in light music category, while Shruti Ranjani is a B Tech stu-

dent. Reminiscing about the great moments in his life, he recalled the 130th birth anniversary of Ramakrishnaiah Pantulu held in Ghantasala Government Music College in Vijayawada in 2012 which he had organized in a grand manner for five days. On the ultimate day, his Guru Annavarapu Ramaswamy had given a scintillating violin concert and even before the concert ended, he called Sudhakar on to the stage.

To his surprise, his guru honoured him with silk clothes and the golden wrist band that he was wearing and blessed him. With utmost humility, Sudhakar says that it was best honour that he had received in his lifetime.

VENKOB R BALANTRAPU
Senior Journalist
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SIRCILLA TEXTILE INDUSTRY

Govt will extend support to face competition

PNS ■ RAJANNA SIRCILLA

Vemulawada MLA and Government whip Aadi Srinivas has advised the textile industry at Sircilla to face competition with the market and achieve growth.

At a meeting held at Integrated District Offices' Complex here on Saturday, he reviewed the issue of the Sircilla textile industry. Handlooms and Textiles Principal Secretary Shailaja Raamiyer, Collector Sandeep Kumar Jha, Additional Collector KheemyaNaik, TESCO General Manager Ashok Rao and representatives of the power loom, handloom owners of Sircilla.

He announced that the government would place an order for 66 lakh meters of cloth under RVM. Further, the Government Whip disclosed that the government's idea of gifting two saris per year to the members of self-help groups. The designs of saris have been completed and the orders for weaving the saris would be placed soon with the weavers.



Government Whip Aadi Srinivas, along with Handlooms and Textiles Principal Secretary Shailaja Raamiyer holding a review meeting in Sircilla on Saturday

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, Handlooms and Textiles Minister Nageswara Rao in the presence of Minister Ponnamb Prabhakar and Information Technology Minister D Sridhar Babu sanctioned Rs 50 crore to set up a yarn bank in Sircilla for the

development of the textile industry. The yarn would be supplied to the weavers on 80% credit basis. Extending power to the power loom units on subsidy basis would be brought to the attention of the government. The issue of completing the

work on the construction of Padmasali Association building, which remained suspended, would be taken to the notice of the government, he said adding that development of Sircilla district would not come to a grinding halt under any circumstances.

He asked the weavers of Sircilla to forge ahead with confidence as the state government has been initiating all measures to safeguard the interests of the textile industry here.

Principal Secretary to Handlooms and Textiles Industry has advised the textile industry here to adopt modern methods. The state government has plans to provide work to the textile units here for at least 6 months in a year, she said, asking the textile units to generate work for the next six months from the private sector. A meeting is scheduled to be held soon with wholesale traders of textiles to discuss with them about their cloth requirements, she said.

She appealed to the textile units to develop making good use of the yarn bank here and achieve self-sufficiency. The government released dues to the textile industry here to the tune of Rs150-200 crore and also the yarn subsidy to the weavers. Efforts are under way to resolve other problems, she said.

Eco-friendly plastic carry bag producing unit inaugurated



MLAs Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy and Arikapudi Gandhi inaugurating eco-friendly carry bags production unit at Choutupalli on Saturday

PNS ■ CHOUTUPPALI/YADADRI BHUVANAGIRI

At the inauguration of a new industry producing eco-friendly, pollution-free carry bags, MLC Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy emphasised the need for promoting activities that benefit the public. He also highlighted the rising pollution levels in the environment and stressed that each individual should play a role in creating a cleaner and healthier society.

The new industry, Ramani Industries, which manufactures eco-friendly carry bags, was inaugurated by Rajgopal Reddy, along with Sherlingampally MLA Arikapudi Gandhi, at the Industrial Park in Dandu Malkapuram in Choutupalli Mandal, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District.

Speaking at the event, Rajgopal Reddy pointed out that plastic carry bags have been causing severe environmental pollution—affecting the soil, water, and air.

He praised the innovative technology developed by DRDO to produce carry bags

that do not harm the environment. The new bags, being produced by Ramani Industries, will help reduce pollution and contribute positively to environmental protection.

He congratulated the management of Ramani Industries for their efforts and commitment to environmental sustainability.

He assured full support to individuals and companies working towards creating a positive impact on nature. Expressing concern over the rising pollution levels in society, he noted that it has led to an increase in diseases, which is alarming and heartbreaking. He called on everyone to take responsibility and contribute towards environmental protection.

The event was attended by Nirmala Jaggareddy, Chairman of the Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation, Sudhir Reddy, Chairman of the Telangana Industrial Federation, Veerabrahmam, Scientist from DRDO, and several industrialists.

SERIES OF SUICIDES IN RGUKT

Tension prevails as students protest

PNS ■ BASARA

Tension prevailed as the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) called for a protest over the suicide of a student at Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge and Technologies (RGUKT) and Technologies Basara.

In response to the call by the ABVP, the police tightened security around the campus. A three-tier security system was put in place at the main gate. As students and ABVP activists started gathering from various areas, heavy police deployment was witnessed at the Basara railway station and the Goddess Amma temple. Those arriving at the railways station



Police whisking away an ABVP activist as students staged a protest in front of the Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge and Technologies in Basara on Saturday

from various places were detained and taken to nearby police stations. Devotees visiting the temple were also detained. Police imposed restrictions on media representatives, seizing their mobile phones and deleting videos.

It may be recalled that on November 11, Swathi Priya, a second-year student of the PUC at RGUKT, committed suicide. On Monday morning, despite the efforts by the police to stop the students from staging a protest in front of the RGUKT campus, ABVP activists gathered at the university. The police whisked away the protesters and ferried them to the nearest police station.

RTC driver's sticky fingers caught on camera

PNS ■ NIZAMABAD

Passengers on Road Transport Corporation (RTC) buses often endure significant discomfort due to overcrowding, with limited space to sit or even stand. In such conditions, it is common for passengers to place their bags at various locations—on overhead racks, under seats, or in spaces near the driver—while they stand throughout the journey. Sometimes, in the rush to disembark, passengers forget their belongings behind.

Typically, after passengers have exited, RTC staff will inspect any forgotten items. Valuable possessions are handed over to the police, while ordinary bags are stored at the depot in an attempt to return them to their rightful owners. However, an incident in Nizamabad took a disturbing turn when a driver took advantage of such a situation recently.

A woman, traveling from Warangal to Nizamabad, had placed her bag behind the driver's seat to keep it secure. Little did she know that the driver, noticing the gold jewelry inside her bag, saw an opportunity to steal it. As the bus continued its route, the driver quietly took the jewelry, unaware that a fellow passenger had witnessed the theft and recorded it on their phone. The incident, which was captured on video, has raised concerns about the integrity of RTC staff and calls for more stringent measures to prevent such thefts in the future. The woman, whose jewelry was stolen, is expected to file a formal complaint with the authorities.

Tight security arrangements at Group-III exam centres

PNS ■ NALGONDA

District Superintendent of Police Sharath Chandra Pawar has announced that tight security arrangements have been made to prevent any untoward incidents at the Group-III written exam centres. The exam is scheduled to be held on Sunday.

In a statement, the SP mentioned that the police took all necessary steps to ensure the safety and smooth conduct of the exams.

A total of 88 exam centres have been set up across the district, with 60 centres in Nalgonda town and 28 centres in Miryalaguda town. A total of 28,353 candidates will be taking the exams. Security will be heightened with the implementation of 163 BNSS 144 Section from 6 am to 8 pm on both

days. The SP further stated that all nearby photocopy centres, internet centres, and loudspeakers around the exam centres will be shut during the exam hours. Additionally, the area within a 500 metre radius of the exam centers will be restricted to the public, ensuring a secure environment for the exams.

Candidates attending the exam are advised to reach the centres on time, as mentioned on their hall tickets. The SP also cautioned that candidates are not allowed to carry mobile phones, tablets, pen drives, Bluetooth devices, electronic watches, calculators, wallets, or any such items into the exam halls. Strict checks will be conducted at the main gate of each exam center, and candidates are urged to cooperate with the police personnel carrying out these checks.

Police probing harassment angle in latest suicide

PNS ■ NIRMAL

The series of student suicides at Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge and Technologies (RGUKT) has sparked a wave of protests. A PUC-second year student from Armoor in Nizamabad district, Swathi Priya (17), tragically took her life. This incident has now become a sensation. On November 11, she hanged herself in her room from a ceiling fan. Now, shocking details are emerging in this suicide case.

Before her death, Swathi Priya had written a six-page suicide note, which is

now going viral on social media and causing a stir. On one hand, her final words to her parents, saying, "Mom, Dad, I could not live up to the expectations you had for me. Please forgive me," are heartbreaking. On the other hand, she mentioned the reasons behind her suicide, which has created a lot of controversy.

In the note, she mentioned that on October 4, a senior student had called her and verbally abused her, threatening to harass her at the college. Despite reporting this to the college authorities, she claimed that no action was taken. This revelation in the six-page

suicide note has gone viral. Student organisations and citizens are demanding strict action against those responsible for her death.

The police, according to the source, registered a case against a few University Administrative Officers. Along with them, two students who allegedly harassed Swathi Priya have also been named in the FIR. Allegations have surfaced that these two students had been tormenting her for several days, leading to her mental distress and ultimately her suicide.

However, it is noteworthy that although Swathi Priya mentioned in her suicide

note that she was being harassed by a senior student, she did not reveal his name. This has led some to speculate that personal issues might have driven her to take the drastic step. Authorities raised suspicions that Swathi Priya might have been suffering from mental stress.

In light of these allegations, the case has taken a new turn with police filing charges against the campus authorities for neglecting her complaints. On Wednesday, November 13, District Superintendent of Police Janaki Sharmila and ASP Avinash Kumar visited Basara IIT on Saturday.

Public hearing on Nov 17 over local body quota

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

A public hearing on the reservation issue on local body reservations will be held on November 17. Dedicated Backward Classes Commission Chairman B Venkateshwar Rao will hold the public hearing. The public hearing will be conducted from 11:30 am to 3 pm at the Khammam District Collectorate Conference Hall. It aims to gather the views of the people from Khammam and Bhadradi Kothagudem districts.

During this programme, individuals and registered or unregistered associations of various castes are invited to present information and materials to the Dedicated Commission. They are encouraged to make submissions, requests, and recommendations to the Commission regarding the reservation issue in local bodies, particularly highlighting the necessary reservations for different castes. The District BC Development Officer mentioned this in her statement.

Tiger kills bull in Keremeri mandal

PNS ■ KUMRAM BHEEM ASIFABAD

In the surrounding areas of Keremeri mandal in Kumram Bheem Asifabad district, tiger's movement has stocked fears among people. Reports of the tiger's movements have been circulating for the past four days, and the presence of big cat was confirmed on Friday evening when it attacked and killed a bull.

Following this, Forest Department officials set up cameras and deployed special



trackers to monitor the tiger's movements. The local residents have been alerted and advised not to venture alone into the forested areas or near-by bushes.

Importance of safeguarding rights of senior citizens stressed

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

The Legal Aid Society of ICFAI Law School, IFHE, Hyderabad, conducted a comprehensive Legal Awareness programme aimed at protecting the rights of senior citizens. The event took place at the Mandal Parishad Primary School in Athvelly Village, drawing attention to the welfare of the elderly in the community.

Prof Y Pratap Reddy, Dean of ICFAI Law School, inaugurated the session by welcoming the guests and commending the efforts of the legal aid members for their outreach initiatives in Athvelly village. He emphasised the signifi-

cance of empowering senior citizens with legal knowledge to safeguard their rights.

The programme featured J Jeevan Kumar, Additional District and Sessions Judge and Chairman of the Mandal Legal Services Committee at Medchal Court, as the Chief Guest. He addressed the senior citizens present, providing valuable insights into the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007. Jeevan Kumar elaborated on the legal provisions aimed at securing the well-being of the elderly, stressing the importance of their protection.

Following this, the Guest of Honour, Dilip Kumar, 9th

Magistrate Metropolitan Judge at Medchal Court, highlighted various government assistance schemes available for senior citizens. He emphasised the need for increased awareness and accessibility to these programmes, which are designed to support the elderly population.

Adding an interactive element to the event, a poster presentation on senior citizens' rights was displayed, drawing from the Indian Constitution and the National Policy on Older Persons. The session aimed to educate participants about their entitlements and legal protections.

Final-year BALLB students, G Sree Medha Gupta

and Nithin, took the stage to discuss specialised assistance programmes for elderly individuals, offering detailed explanations on various support mechanisms. The programme concluded with a thought-provoking drama performed by the legal aid members, depicting scenarios where measures are taken to safeguard the life and property of senior citizens from potential abuse or neglect by caregivers.

The event underscored the commitment of ICFAI Law School's Legal Aid Society to advocate for senior citizens' rights, promoting legal literacy and ensuring the well-being of the elderly in the community.



Participants at the Legal Awareness Programme organised by Legal Aid Society of ICFAI Law School at Athvelly village in RR district on Saturday

ACROSS THE STATES



Badal resigns as SAD chief amid party setbacks

Sukhbir Singh Badal, who had been declared 'tankhaiya' (guilty of religious misconduct) by the Akal Takht, tendered his resignation on Saturday as the Shiromani Akali Dal president, a position he held since 2008. Badal's resignation paves the way for the election of the new party chief. The resignation of Badal (62), who is the son of five-time Punjab chief minister late Parkash Singh Badal, came amid vociferous demand by several rebel party leaders including former MP Prem Singh Chandumajra, former SGPC chief Bibi Jagir Kaur who wanted him to step down for the party's consistent dismal performance in the state assembly as well as parliamentary elections. Badal submitted his resignation to the party's working committee, said party leader Daljit Singh Cheema.



Army chief to visit Nepal to boost military ties

Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi will embark on a four-day visit to Nepal starting November 20 to explore ways to further expand the already close defence and strategic ties between the two countries and review the evolving regional security situation. In Kathmandu, Gen. Dwivedi will be conferred the honorary rank of 'General of the Nepal Army' by Nepalese President Ramchandra Paudel in continuation of an age-old tradition that first started in 1950, reflecting the strong ties between the two militaries. The Army chief's visit to Nepal from November 20 to November 24 will mark another significant chapter in the evolving military diplomacy between the two neighbouring countries, sources in the defence establishment said. It is expected to strengthen the defence ties, paving the way for continued collaboration on multiple fronts, including military exercises, training programmes and strategic discussions on regional security concerns, they said.



Will expose BJP on Waqf issue: DK Shivakumar

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Saturday said his party would expose the BJP on the Waqf issue as changes in revenue records favouring the Waqf Board were effected only during the Saffron party's regime. While the BJP is all set to mount pressure on the Congress government by holding a mega protest and a month long march on the Waqf issue, Shivakumar claimed that during its tenure, the BJP regime started changing the revenue records of rights, tenancy and crops in favour of the Waqf Board and many properties also were transferred in the name of that board. The BJP's opposition on the matter was 'foolishness' as the government had all the related documents to pin them down, the Deputy CM told reporters. "We will expose them," he asserted and added that they came to know such aspects only later. Also, the issue did not get into public domain as everyone was busy with the recent elections.

'Focus should be on de-escalation'

EAM Jaishankar on eastern Ladakh row with China

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The disengagement part of the "problem" with China along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh has been put at rest and the focus should now be on de-escalation, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday. Jaishankar said it is "reasonable" to expect some improvement in the relations between India and China following the final round of disengagement but hesitated to say that there could be a reset of the ties.



"I see disengagement as disengagement; nothing more, nothing less. If you look at our current situation with China, we have an issue where our troops are uncomfortably close along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) which required us to disengage," he said at the HT Leadership Summit.

The understanding between India and China on October 21 was the last of the disengagement agreements, Jaishankar said. "So that with its implementation, the disengagement part of the problem is at rest," he said.

Jaishankar's remarks came in response to a question on whether the disengagement of troops by the two sides last month was the beginning of a reset of the Sino-Indian ties. The external affairs minister said the current situation of the relationship does not warrant such a conclusion. Indian and Chinese militaries completed the disengagement exercise in Demchok and Depsang in eastern Ladakh along the LAC last month after the two sides reached an agreement to resolve the festering border row.

The two sides also resumed patrolling activities in the two areas after a gap of almost four-and-a-half years.

In his remarks, Jaishankar said de-escalation should be the next step following the completion of the disengagement process.

"Where the disengagement will lead us, it is a reasonable supposition that there will be some improvement in the ties," he said.

On the overall India-China ties, Jaishankar delved into various factors and said it is a "complicated" relationship.

To another question on whether the economic and security wings of the government have divergent views on China as this year's Economic Survey appeared to pitch for greater economic engagement with the neighbouring country, Jaishankar said there could be different points of view but overall relationship is guided by a policy decision.

'Modi eliminated 'freedom of speech'

Jails those who point out his mistakes: Kharage

PNS ■ RANCHI



Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge launched a fresh attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing him of "eliminating freedom of speech" and imprisoning those who speak out against his mistakes.

Kharge also labelled former Jharkhand Chief Minister Champai Soren, who joined the BJP from JMM, a "traitor," claiming there were many such people who betrayed those who nurtured them.

"PM Modi has eliminated 'freedom of speech' from the country; he jails those who point out his mistakes. You are snatching people's rights. Is this democracy that you jail a tribal CM? They want to crush us, but we will keep raising our heads," Kharge said while addressing a rally in Ranchi's Ormanjhi.

He alleged that Modi maintains silence when Dalits, tribals and minorities are oppressed in the country.

Kharge also criticised the arrogance of BJP leaders, saying, "Rahul and I hold cabinet ranks, but we don't enjoy the privileges of leaders like Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan or Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma."

Kharge said, "There are many traitors like Champai Soren who proved unfaithful to those who nurtured them" and warned the people of Jharkhand being cautious alleging that "Modiji will betray you, hand over your 'Jal, Jungle, Jameen' to industrialists."

'Strength lies in unity, Cong indulging in divisive politics'

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Saturday said saints in India have for 1,000 years spoken about the power and strength in unity, accusing Congress of indulging in divisive politics. Shekhawat, who is in the state to canvas for candidates of the Mahayuti ahead of the Nov 20 Maharashtra elections, said from the time of Independence, the grand old party committed a sin of dividing people on religious, economic, and caste lines.

The Union minister for culture and tourism said leaders from the ruling Mahayuti who have distanced themselves from the BJP's "batoge toh katoge" (if divided, we will perish) and "ek hai toh safe hai" (we are safe if we are united) rhetoric have the right to do so.



Modi, Shah spreading anti-reservation lie against Rahul: Priyanka

PNS ■ SHIRDI/KOLHAPUR

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Saturday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah of spreading lies that Rahul Gandhi is against reservations.

Modi and Shah are scared of Rahul Gandhi because he wants a caste census to be conducted, she alleged while canvassing for MVA for the

November 20 Maharashtra assembly elections.

Priyanka addressed rallies in Shirdi and Kolhapur. She claimed projects of Rs 10 lakh crore were snatched from Maharashtra, which caused loss of 8 lakh jobs and shutting down of 6,000 businesses.

The statue of Shivaji Maharaj outside Parliament was removed. The statue installed in Sindhudurg, collapsed as corruption took place in its construction.

Tribals being sweet talked into changing faith: Dhankhar

PNS ■ UDAIPUR

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Saturday said "malicious" attempts were being made to convert the tribals with blandishments.

"There is an attempt to change the faith (of tribes) by talking with them sweetly, pretending to be well-wishers, luring and tempting. I consider this a malicious attempt," he said.

"I am seeing a systematic, conspiratorial and alluring process in the country that needs to be curbed," he said.

Dhankhar was addressing a function on the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda at Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram Vidyalaya premises in Udaipur. He said that tribal culture should be respected at the national and international levels.



our foundation. When the foundation is shaken, no building is safe," he said. Dhankhar said that today India is changing and the right people are getting a place in India.

"Droupadi Murmu becoming the President is a symbol of tribal pride. Murmu is the President, a farmer's son is the

Vice President, and the prime minister is from the Other Backward Classes," he said, adding that such a balance was also there in the PM's cabinet. On Bhagwan Birsa Munda, Dhankhar said, "What Bhagwan Birsa Munda did for the freedom of the country, for the tribe, for the soil is unimaginable."

BJP fulfils what it guarantees: Shah

Alleges Rahul makes promises, flies abroad

PNS ■ MADHUPUR (JHARKHAND)

Taking potshots at the Congress, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday claimed that the party's leader Rahul Gandhi believes in flying abroad after making promises, while it is only the BJP that fulfils what its guarantees.

Addressing a rally at Madhupur in Deoghar district, the Union Home Minister said that while terrorists not only attacked India but also enjoyed biryani after killing people during the UPA rule, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wiped out terrorists through surgical and air strikes.

"Rahul baba makes promises one after another, but after

making promises he flies abroad... But on the other hand, PM Modi's promise is like one etched on stone (patthar ki lakeer). He fulfils what he promises. BJP fulfils its



guarantees and only we can shape Jharkhand. The Congress, JMM and RJD can never work in the interest of the state," he said.

Alleging that the ruling

JMM-led coalition has turned infiltrators into its 'vote-bank', Shah declared that illegal immigration will be checked once the BJP is voted to power in the state.

"Infiltrators are posing a threat not only to the tribals but also to the state's youth by snatching jobs and fuelling crime. The Jharkhand High Court had directed to identify and deport infiltrators. While the Centre agreed, the Hemant Soren government in the state didn't," he claimed.

Shah said that the Jharkhand elections are not to change MLAs, the chief minister or the government but to shape the future of youth and poor and to check corruption.



JNU to teach Indian knowledge traditions across all disciplines

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Students across all disciplines at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), including engineering and management, will study traditional Indian knowledge as part of a newly introduced elective course, according to varsity sources.

The course will be offered across all schools and centres, with each department customising the content to suit its specific field.

"Indian Knowledge Traditions" refer to indigenous systems of knowledge developed in India over cen-

turies, covering areas like Vedic sciences, ancient engineering, traditional medicine and philosophical texts.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has been advocating for the inclusion of IKT in academic curricula as part of its efforts to acquaint students with India's intellectual heritage and values.

At JNU, engineering students will study traditional practices of engineering, while management students may delve into ancient economic and administrative systems under the new course, the source said.

Those dreaming of J-K's independence unaware of ground realities: Farooq

PNS ■ JAMMU

Asserting that Jammu and Kashmir will remain an integral part of India, National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Saturday said those nurturing illogical dreams of independence should shun it as they are unaware of the ground realities.

The veteran politician said the fact that the Indian cricket team is not likely to visit Pakistan for the Champions Trophy early next year shows the strained relations between the two countries. Talking to reporters on the sidelines of a private function here, Abdullah also expressed grief over the death of children in a fire at a medical college in Uttar Pradesh's Jhansi district.

DELHI POLLUTION

Old age homes intensify measures to protect residents

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In response to the city's deteriorating air quality, Delhi's old age homes are prioritising the safety of their most vulnerable residents by imposing strict restrictions on outdoor activities during peak pollution hours, mandating mask use, and keeping oxygen cylinders on standby for emergencies.

As Delhi's air quality index (AQI) oscillates between the "very poor" and "severe" categories, it poses serious health risks, including respiratory illnesses from prolonged exposure, to the residents of the city, especially the elderly.

While healthy individuals are affected, those with pre-existing conditions face severe



impacts, according to the Central Pollution Control Board. Old age homes across the city are intensifying measures to protect their residents who are most vulnerable to respiratory and cardiovascular

As Delhi's air quality index (AQI) oscillates between the "very poor" and "severe" categories, it poses serious health risks, including respiratory illnesses from prolonged exposure, to the residents of the city, especially the elderly

strictly prohibited from venturing out during peak pollution hours, especially in the morning and evening. "If they must go out for medical appointments, they are instructed to minimise outdoor time and wear masks

for protection," he added.

Rajeshwari, a caregiver at the Sai Sahara old age home highlighted the additional precautions being taken.

"We are focusing on maintaining a healthy diet for the residents and have restricted outdoor activities, including morning walks, due to the severe air quality," she said.

As viral infections are prevalent due to the changing weather, the residents' interaction with outsiders has been minimised to prevent the spread of infections, she said.

"Given the vulnerability of this age group, even a minor viral infection could have severe consequences. Therefore, we are taking extra precautions to ensure their safety," she added.

PNS ■ BIJNOR (UP)

Seven people, including a newly-wed couple, returning from Jharkhand died while two others were injured when a car hit a tempo from behind while overtaking another vehicle, police said on Saturday.

After being hit by the car, the tempo rammed into an electric pole around 2 am on Saturday near the fire station of Dhampur on the Dehradun-Nainital Highway, Superintendent of Police Abhishek said.

The tempo passengers were thrown on the ground by the impact of the accident, he said. Jha said that all six people including the bride and groom died on the spot while the

tempo driver Ajab Singh died while being taken for treatment.

Two persons who were



moving in the car have been injured, police said, adding the bodies of the deceased have

been sent for post-mortem examination.

Khurshid (65) of Tewari village of Dhampur was returning with his daughter-in-law Khushi (22) after getting his son Visal (25) married in Jharkhand. Khurshid's brother-in-law Mumtaz (45), Mumtaz's wife Ruby (32) and daughter Bushra (10) were also with them, the police said.

The SP said these people had come to Moradabad by train. From there they were going back to the village by a tempo.

Other passengers, Sohail and Aman, were badly injured and they are being treated.

According to the police, prima facie the cause of the incident was dense fog.

Chef Pillai takes you to experience Kerala's rich flavours with modern twists at his first-ever North India pop-up at The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi, writes ABHI SINGHAL

SAVOURING KERALA'S RICH FLAVOURS



Dispelling the long-held notion that South Indian cuisine revolves solely around idli, dosa, and sambar, 21 Michelin-star Chef Suresh Pillai brought a culinary extravaganza to North India with his first-ever pop-up at The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi. The experience was a symphony of Kerala's authentic flavours, masterfully infused with Chef Pillai's signature modern tweaks and twists. From the aromatic embrace of the South spices to the delicate finesse of seafood delicacies, the pop-up menu was an ode to South India's rich gastronomic heritage taste. The extraordinary culinary journey took the eaters through the vibrant flavours of Kerala, in collaboration with renowned Restaurant Chef Pillai (RCP). The mouth-watering dishes were a presentation through an exclusive 10-course tasting menu curated by Chef Pillai. It all started with the welcome drink of the season, *Aarambam*, a bit of a sour drink. The meticulously curated vegetarian and non-vegetarian menus transported guests straight to the heart of Kerala, offering a true taste of the region's culinary treasures. Each dish was crafted with precision and passion, showcasing the soul of Kerala's



“ THE METICULOUSLY CURATED VEGETARIAN AND NON-VEGETARIAN MENUS TRANSPORTED GUESTS STRAIGHT TO THE HEART OF KERALA, OFFERING A TRUE TASTE OF THE REGION'S CULINARY TREASURES ”

cuisine, from its spices blending to its delicate yet robust flavours. For the Hors d'oeuvres, there was the mouth watery *Sambharam Kadumanga*, blending the Kerala summer butter milk & pickled mango inside paani poori. One sitting in North India would never imagine blending paani poori with a South Indian twist, which stole the show. “We created a menu from the Kerala essence, for example, our paani poori, one of the starters, actually, it's a North Indian paani poori out of it's a buttermilk we used to serve in Kerala along with a mango pickle. So the puri, we stuff with the mango and the cold buttermilk generally you say chach,” explained Chef Suresh Pillai, excited about his first pop up in the north side. As guests savoured the thoughtfully crafted hors d'oeuvres, the starters gracefully took center stage, led by the *Pazham Pori Chaat*. This Kerala-inspired masterpiece featured golden, batter-fried banana fritters a bit crispy on the outside, tender within, elevated by a drizzle of honey-yogurt blend that perfectly balanced sweetness and creaminess. Following this, guests were treated to *Cauliflower Porippu*, a dish that beautifully showcased Kerala's rich spicy taste. Crispy, marinated cauliflower florets were deep-fried to golden perfection and then stir-fried with *thenga porippu*—an aromatic blend of grated coconut, fragrant curry leaves, and a hint of chili powder. The starters in both the vegetarian and the non-vegetarian segments were a delightful interplay of textures and flavours, with the crunch of the cauliflower perfectly complementing the earthy, spicysweet coconut mixture. The main course featured Chef Suresh Pillai's signature dishes recommended by himself, offering both vegetarian and non-vegetarian options that embodied the essence of Kerala's culinary artistry. For vegetarians, there was *Paneer Nirvana*: tender marinated cottage cheese, pan-fried to perfection, and then slow-cooked in creamy coconut milk. The dish was elevated with the earthy flavours of ginger, green chilies, and aromatic curry leaves, all beautifully encased in a banana leaf for a touch of traditional authenticity. For non-



Coconut Pudding, a light and fluffy treat infused with the delicate flavour and soft flesh of the tender coconut, alongside the *Coco Nutty Choco Brownie*, a decadent eggless chocolate dessert enriched with crunchy nuts and fragrant coconut, served with a scoop of creamy ice cream. Non-vegetarian diners were treated to the *Palada Cheesecake*, a unique fusion dessert layering the traditional *Kerala Palada* (rice flakes) flavour atop a crisp, crusty base, offering a delightful blend of tradition and sophistication to end the meal on a sweet note. The evening was further elevated by a curated selection of handcrafted cocktails, each a testament to artistry in mixology. Highlights included the refreshing *Toki Highball*, blending Toki Suntory Whisky with soda water and a grapefruit twist, and the zesty *Toki Orchard Sour*, featuring green apple, lemon, and a silky egg white foam. Gin enthusiasts indulged in the crisp *Roku Gin & Tonic* with ginger accents and the floral *Roku Hibiscus Highball* with hibiscus cordial and fizz. Whiskey lovers relished the bold *Jim Beam Orange Fashioned* with aromatic bitters, while the indulgent *Haku Caramel Espresso Martini*, combining Haku Japanese Craft Vodka with caramel and espresso, provided a decadent finish to the cocktail lineup. Chef Suresh Pillai's pop-up at The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi was an experience that will redefine the perception of South Indian cuisine. With his signature modern twists on Kerala's rich culinary traditions, Chef Pillai transported guests on a culinary journey that celebrated both the simplicity and complexity of Kerala's vibrant flavours.

The Vibrant Flavours OF KOREA

Le Meridien brings Korea's rich flavours, authentic dishes, and timeless traditions to the heart of New Delhi

TEAM AGENDA

Korean food is a vibrant and flavourful cuisine celebrated for its unique balance of colors, textures, and tastes. Rooted in centuries-old traditions, it emphasises fresh, seasonal ingredients, often fermented, to create deep, savoury flavours and nutritional richness. The Korean dining experience is distinctive, with meals commonly featuring a variety of side dishes, or *banchan*, that range from spicy kimchi to delicate pickled vegetables. Key staples like rice, vegetables, and meats are skilfully combined with ingredients like gochujang (a spicy-sweet red pepper paste) and doenjang (fermented soybean paste) to create dishes that are as visually stunning as they are delicious. From the sizzling sounds of bulgogi on a grill to the comforting warmth of a bubbling *jjigae* stew, Korean food offers a sensory journey into a culture that values harmony, balance, and bold, memorable flavours. Food lovers in New Delhi had a culinary treat from Korea right in New Delhi as Le Meridien celebrated the unique flavours of Korean cuisine with its much-anticipated Korean Food Festival. Running till November 17th, 2024, this gastronomic event was an immersive dining experience, highlighting traditional and contemporary Korean dishes at its 'The One' restaurant. The festival is a feature of Le Meridien New Delhi's annual '+1 Celebrating Flavours of the Globe' initiative under the '+1 for the Leap Year' campaign, bringing exotic, authentic global flavours to the heart of India. The Korean Food Festival's dinner buffet had been meticulously curated by Chef Young-Hwan Jang, Chef de Partie at AC Hotel by Marriott Seoul Gangnam. With over two decades of culinary expertise and a deep-rooted passion for Korean cuisine, Chef Jang has flown in from Seoul to offer guests an authentic taste of his homeland, blending



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traditional Korean staples with innovative techniques to appeal to a global palate. “We are thrilled to showcase the diverse and flavourful cuisine of Korea through this festival,” said Meena Bhatia, Vice President and General Manager of Le Meridien New Delhi. “This event aligns perfectly with our +1 Celebrating Flavours of the Globe initiative, a highlight of our annual '+1 for the Leap Year' initiative, and we believe it will offer our guests a truly unforgettable dining experience,” she added. The menu showcased a range of traditional Korean dishes, crafted to deliver the distinctive flavours and textures that define this cuisine. Guests can look forward to sampling dishes like *Acorn Salad*, a refreshing and nutritious delicacy; *Gimbap Avocado*, Korea's beloved seaweed rice rolls with a modern twist; *Spring Onion Pancake*, a savoury delight that's perfect for

sharing; the spicy and comforting *Stir-fried Rice Cake (Tteokbokki)*; and a cooling *Chilled Seafood Salad*, perfect for Delhi's warm evenings. Each dish on the buffet spread has been carefully prepared by Chef Jang to ensure an authentic taste of Korea. “I am excited to bring the vibrant flavours of Korea to Le Meridien New Delhi,” shared Chef Young-Hwan Jang. “Through this festival, we aim to introduce guests to the diverse range of Korean dishes, from classic comfort foods to innovative culinary creations,” he quips with a smile. This unique dining experience went beyond just food—it invited guests to embark on a journey through Korea's rich culinary heritage. From the spicy and savoury flavours that Korean cuisine is known for, to innovative twists on traditional dishes, the festival offers a deep and delicious dive into Korean culture and flavours.



A Meal Worth Revisiting

Located in Sector 66, Gurugram, Poiz is an inviting dining destination that combines a vibrant atmosphere with a diverse menu. After three visits, it's evident that Poiz offers a delightful experience for food enthusiasts and social diners alike, writes PAWAN SONI

It's rare for me to visit a restaurant multiple times before writing a review, but Poiz, a beautiful new addition to the dining scene, compelled me to return three times to fully capture its essence. Poiz boasts an artistic, expansive interior, blending elegant indoor seating with a spacious patio featuring its own bar and an inviting open dining area. While many restaurants of this size tend to cater heavily to the nightlife crowd, Poiz strikes a perfect balance: a well-curated bar selection with inventive cocktails for the social set, and a menu that delights families and party goers alike. Certain dishes have become my go-to orders, each offering something special. The *Lychee Chaat*, a Thai-inspired creation, is an absolute must-try. Bits of lychee and avocado sit atop a crispy rice puff base, accompanied by a flavourful *Nam Jim* sauce - one bite, and you won't want to stop. The *Chicken Chilli Dim Sum* features a delicate wrapper and pairs perfectly with the accompanying sauces. Another standout is the *Taiwanese Mushrooms*, crisp-coated and served with pickled chilli and a sweet-sour



sauce, accented by crunchy peanuts for extra texture. Not every dish was flawless. The nachos were slightly too salty for my taste. However, the ramen from their global menu made up for it with its rich, layered flavours. It's a generous portion, perfect for a hearty appetite or sharing with friends. My companions thoroughly enjoyed the *Lamb Adana Kebab* as much as they did the sushi. While Poiz has a wide range of Indian dishes, I found myself drawn to the global offerings, including their expertly crafted *Neapolitan pizza*. A meal here would be incomplete without the *Belgian Nutella Chocolate*. This dessert not only excels in taste but also impresses in presentation. The smooth *Belgian chocolate* and *Nutella sweetness* are cleverly balanced with blueberries and hazelnuts, creating a perfect finale.

For those in the area, Poiz is well worth a visit. Ratings: (Out of 5) Food: 4.25 Ambience: 4.25 Service: 4.0 Drinks: 4.0 Overall: 4.25 Address: Poiz, 2nd Floor, AIPL Joy Street, Sector 66, Gurugram



A SPIRITUAL GETAWAY

Kurukshetra, one of Hinduism's most revered pilgrimage destinations, is where ancient spirituality converges with modern comforts, writes **SANTANU GANGULY**

Though Kurukshetra is a significant pilgrimage site for Hindus and is located close to Delhi, it has not always attracted large numbers of visitors. Mentioned in various Hindu scriptures, particularly the Mahabharata, Kurukshetra holds great spiritual importance. According to Acharya Some Nath Gautam, priest at the Katyayani Temple, visiting all the ancient temples here would require at least a year. This journey, known as the Kurukshetra 84 Kos Parikrama, encompasses numerous sacred and historical sites. However, modern pilgrims often focus on the most important temples, holy places, and archaeological monuments due to time constraints.

The city offers a variety of accommodation options, from budget-friendly 2- and 3- star hotels to numerous dharamshalas. For those seeking luxury, the Noormahal Palace in Karnal stands out as Haryana's only 5-star hotel, offering exceptional amenities such as a spa, jacuzzi, modern gym, and fine dining. Blending heritage with modern comforts, this ultra-luxurious hotel features the Frontier Mail restaurant, housed in a life-sized train compartment from the historic Frontier Mail. The restaurant's ambience evokes the 19th century, with interiors reflecting the Mumbai-Peshawar route.

A visit to Kurukshetra typically begins at Brahma Sarovar, Asia's largest man-made water body, stretching 3,600 feet long, 1,500 feet wide, and 45 feet deep. According to Hindu mythology, the lake was created by Lord Brahma at the dawn of the universe. Brahma Sarovar, along with the nearby Sannihit Sarovar, is fed by underground channels from the Bhakra Nangal Dam.

The ancient Shiva Temple here is believed to have been established by Lord Shiva himself. Between the two lakes lies the



A VISIT TO KURUKSHETRA TYPICALLY BEGINS AT BRAHMA SAROVAR, ASIA'S LARGEST MAN-MADE WATER BODY, STRETCHING 3,600 FEET LONG, 1,500 FEET WIDE, AND 45 FEET DEEP. ACCORDING TO HINDU MYTHOLOGY, THE LAKE WAS CREATED BY LORD BRAHMA AT THE DAWN OF THE UNIVERSE.

Mata Katyayani Temple, which features an impressive bronze sculpture of Arjuna and Lord Krishna on a chariot, crafted by renowned sculptor Ram Vanji Sutar. This sculpture has become a popular photography spot. Another notable site is the ancient Chandra Kup, a well where, according to legend, water turns into milk during a lunar eclipse. It is also said to be the place where Draupadi washed her hair after the infamous bloodshed by

Dushasana. The Kali Kamli Temple, built by Kali Kamli Baba of Bengal in the 19th century, is a siddha peeth located near Brahma Sarovar. Devi Kup, also known as the BhadraKali Temple, is one of the 51 Shakti Peethas and Haryana's only such temple. Pandit Satpal Sharma explains that the temple holds significance for Lord Krishna and Balarama, who visited before the Kurukshetra War. Devotees continue to donate clay, ceramic, or silver horses here, a tradition rooted in sacred history. Special pujas for Maa Kali and Lord Shani are held every Saturday.

The Sthanu Mahadev Temple is another important site, where Lord Krishna and the Pandavas sought Lord Shiva's blessings before the war. Nearby, the historical Harsh ka Tilla and Sheikh Chilli's Tomb offer fascinating insights into the region's past. History enthusiasts can also explore the Sri Krishna Museum and Kurukshetra Panorama, which showcases key artifacts. For children and astronomy lovers, the Kalpana Chawla Planetarium provides a fun and educational experience.

In the coming years, the ISKCON Temple, currently under construction and expected to be completed by 2026, will be a must-visit site. At Jyotisar, where Lord Krishna delivered the Bhagavad Gita to Arjuna, visitors can enjoy an impressive light and sound show, which reflects on the water of a fountain, creating an unforgettable experience.

Additionally, the 50-foot Vishwarup Darshan statue of Lord Krishna, designed by Ram V. Sutar comes alive every evening for visitors.

For a 2-3 day weekend trip, Kurukshetra offers the perfect blend of spiritual significance, historical landmarks, and modern luxury, making it an ideal destination for travellers.



EXPLORING DAMAN

A Coastal Escape with Cultural Riches

Nestled between Gujarat and Maharashtra, Daman enchants travellers with its unique blend of colonial allure, scenic beaches, and relaxed vibe, writes **NEETA LAL**

The lovely city of Daman, an erstwhile Portuguese colony, offers a unique blend of colonial charm with a laid-back vibe. The administrative capital of the union territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, it is located between Gujarat and Maharashtra and attracts high footfall from a diverse set of travellers. Peppered with colonial buildings showcasing a rich syncretic culture, the city's stately Nani Daman Fort and the Church of Bom Jesus give one a taste of history, while Jampore Beach and Devka Beach make for Instagram-friendly settings for a day of relaxation.

But perhaps what makes Daman such a terrific destination for weekend getaways is its tourism infrastructure, including smooth interconnecting motorways, buzzy restaurants, and good hotels. Our abode for a staycation is the award-winning The Deltin Daman, the city's only five-star hotel. Known for its stellar service and facilities, it mercifully comes without the high tariff of upscale hotels in Mumbai and other metros. A world-class spa, gourmet cuisine at its multiple restaurants, a large swimming pool, health club, gym, and plush accommodation ticked all the boxes for a fabulous and memorable stay. For business travellers, the hotel houses 30,000 sq ft of business space catering to large events such as corporate conferences and weddings. The hotel's sustainability efforts are also commendable, with strict



procedures in place to prevent water waste in kitchens, guest rooms, and laundry, along with recycling used water for its expansive gardens. As the Deltin group is synonymous with world-class casinos, the theme is reflected in the hotel's design and architectural elements. Its stunning lobby flaunts a chandelier featuring hearts, spades, diamonds, and clubs (the four suits in a deck of cards) strung together. This theme is also reflected in the glass walls enclosing the lobby. The hotel's ergonomic and well-furnished rooms are equipped with HD TVs, HD satellite programming, mini-bars, high-speed internet connectivity, in-room safes, 24x7 room service, and early check-in options, among others. Our Presidential Suite also came with an efficient butler who took care of our every need, including



restaurant and spa bookings as well as sightseeing tours. Close proximity to Jampore Beach, Mirasol Water Park, Devka Beach, Dominican Monastery, and Moti Daman Fort made our local explorations seamless and pleasurable.



What's a good vacation without good food? Indeed, for gastronomes like us, the hotel turned out to be a delight with three award-winning restaurants to explore. One of our lunches was at the Emperor restaurant, which features an extensive menu with Korean, Chinese, Thai, and Japanese offerings. Interestingly, the chefs here have reinvented many dishes to offer an imaginative take on classics. Thus, our fusion lunch featured pillow soft lotus stem and chicken Chettinad baos as well as black sesame chicken tikka baos. The prawn and chicken dim sums were similarly delicious, while the garlic-infused noodles and chicken in Hainanese sauce transported us to China, sans passports and air tickets! Another lunch at The Vegas all-day dining was also a treat for the taste buds. The spacious eatery offers multi-cuisine buffets with a vast selection of salads, Indian and continental dishes, desserts, and more. The buffet includes a separate section for Jain food – so vegetarians can rejoice too. Being unabashed carnivores, we dug

into flavour-packed laal maas, piping hot breads, gobi and bhindi sabzi, raita, and salad. Dessert was the creamiest ras malai on this side of the Daman Ganga river, garnished with a silver varq and date syrup! Semi-comatose from so much good food, we pledged to skip dinner. But that was not to be, as we were informed that the chefs had prepared choice delicacies for us at the poolside Mediterranean-inspired BBQ and grill restaurant, Sky High. After eyeing the selection of inventive dips with Middle Eastern snacks, empanadas, and pizzas with innovative toppings, our pledge to "go easy" on food went out the window!

To slake our thirst, we visited Whiskys Bar, which offers an exclusive collection of single malts. The Poolside Bar and Juice Bar kept us refreshed with health drinks and fresh juices. There's no shortage of entertainment at the hotel either. The Den – an atmospheric indoor family space – features foosball, billiards, carom, chess, and more. There's even a creche for young parents who want to leave their little ones under supervised care while they unwind. The property's three azure swimming pools (including a kids' pool) are a major attraction. After a quick swim on day two, we headed to the spa, where a rejuvenating body massage and

facial left us feeling reborn! After spending three wonderful days at The Deltin Daman, we're led to wonder how, in today's fiercely competitive hospitality landscape, the hotel consistently maintains such high standards. "As ours is the only five-star hotel in Daman, our top-notch service and facilities are unmatched by any other hotel in the area," says the hotel's dynamic general manager, Akarsh Mathur. "We cater to all requirements, whether it's a weekend getaway or an ideal wedding, by customising our services to suit all needs. Our spacious rooms are the largest in their category, and our ample indoor and outdoor event spaces, as well as our large river-shaped swimming pool, are among the features that make our hotel a top choice for discerning guests. Our F&B has also received rave reviews." Mathur believes that with higher disposable incomes and "revenge travel," Indian guests are prepared to pay competitive rates for excellent services. "The demand for upscale local tourism destinations has grown exponentially, and hotels no longer have to rely on foreign tourists from overseas to fill their rooms. If you provide great service and pay attention to guests' needs, the property will always be buzzing," he adds. Indeed, who can fault that flawless logic?

Neeta Lal is an international award-nominated, Delhi-based editor and senior journalist.

IN BRIEF



Okta India to hire over 200 new employees

Authentication solutions provider Okta on Saturday said the company is planning to hire more than 200 people over the next year mainly for engineering and developing solutions. The company has tripled its workforce to 300 over the past year and is planning to increase the number to more than 500 employees over the next year, Okta said in a statement. "India is a key element of our growth and innovation strategy. Over the past year, we've tripled our workforce and now we're launching a new Innovation Centre in Bengaluru. We're excited by the impact Okta is having on India and India is having on Okta," said Ben Goodman, Senior Vice President and General Manager of Asia Pacific and Japan at Okta. Okta India is helping develop the next wave of secure identity innovations and solving top-of-mind cybersecurity challenges for businesses in India and globally, Shekar Koppula, Site Lead for Okta India said.



Cedar-IBSi Capital to fund startups in fintech sector

Cedar-IBSi Capital on Saturday said it is looking to invest in 10-15 startups working in the banking and insurance technology segment to expand its footprint in the country. "The fund plans to build a portfolio of the companies, allocating a budget within the range of Rs 4-10 crore, with an intensified focus on financially strengthening 8 to 10 high-performing companies," it said. The fund has already gathered commitments in the range of Rs 50-75 crore from its Rs 240 crore early-stage fund launched in 2023, it added. "We are focusing on investing in startups which offer unique products and innovative tech to help improve efficiency at financial institutions. We have made our first investment in Cogniqnest, an intelligent document processing tech company and are looking forward to announcing our second investment shortly," Sahil Anand, Founder and Managing Partner, Cedar-IBSi Capital, said.



DVC signs PPA with GUVNL, to supply 559 MW of electricity

Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) on Saturday said it has inked a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Limited (GUVNL) for 559 MW to meet the rising electricity demand in Gujarat. DVC in a statement said the agreement, approved by the Ministry of Power, will facilitate the supply of 359 MW from DVC's upcoming Durgapur Thermal Power Station (1x800 MW) in West Bengal and 200 MW from its Koderma Thermal Power Station Phase II in Jharkhand. The signing ceremony was attended by DVC Chairman S Suresh Kumar, Member (Finance) Arup Sarkar along with key officials from both companies. DVC said the agreement was formalised during DVC's Consumer Meet 2024, a two-day event (Nov 15-16) bringing together representatives from DVC's nationwide beneficiaries. These include DISCOMs in states such as Kerala, Punjab, Karnataka, Haryana, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, and West Bengal, as well as critical infrastructure clients like Indian Railways.

'Think out of the box, adapt to changing tech landscape'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) Girish Chandra Murmu on Saturday urged officers to think out of the box, experiment with new techniques, and adapt to the changing technological and governance environment.

With the increasing use of AI and emerging technologies to provide services, he said there are numerous risks, ranging from privacy breaches and algorithmic biases to social exclusion.

"...as an organisation, we are deeply cognisant of these developments and are engaging closely with emerging technological trends for enhancing the effectiveness of auditing and accounting practices in such a landscape," he said at the 4th Audit Diwas celebrations here.

Murmu emphasised that in



the quest for strengthening auditing and accounting practices, "all offices of the CAG's organisation are encouraged to think out-of-the-box and adapt to changing technological and governance environment" by experimenting with new techniques, which help in nurturing creativity in methodologies, economy in operations and result in better execution of functions.

Inaugurating the 4th Audit Diwas celebrations, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla lauded the CAG's rich legacy, highlighting its evolution into a globally recognised institution known for its distinctiveness and credibility.

He also praised the CAG's proactive adoption of emerging technologies, including

Artificial Intelligence, which has strengthened its audit processes and enhanced transparency.

The speaker stressed that auditing has transformed over the years and become a guiding force in improving financial discipline, transparency and governance.

Birla also highlighted the critical role of parliamentary committees, chaired by senior opposition members, in scrutinising audit reports, fostering constructive discussions and ensuring financial accountability.

In his speech, Murmu elaborated on the institution's focus on audits of social relevance that have a bearing on people's lives and livelihoods.

He also mentioned the institutional mechanism, which was set up to synchronise the audit efforts right through the audit process.

Candidates partly responsible for falling prey to job scams: Report

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Over 75 per cent of respondents feel that candidates are partly responsible for falling prey to scams due to their failure to verify company's credentials before making payments or sharing sensitive personal information, a report said on Saturday.

A substantial 75 per cent of surveyed employees indicated that many job seekers fail to exercise the necessary caution when engaging with potential frauds posing as employers or recruiters, the report by workforce staffing and HR services provider Genius Consultants said. The report by Genius Consultants is based on a survey of 1,427 employees across sectors including FMCG, Technology, Manufacturing,

Telecom, E-Commerce, Logistics, Real Estate, and BFSI (Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance).

Further, the report revealed that while 28 per cent of respondents believed that there have been serious steps taken by the government or regulatory bodies to curb such frauds, a significant 55 per cent disagreed saying there has been inadequate efforts and a lack of stringent measures.

Over 87 per cent respondents believe that job frauds are largely perpetrated by scammers who exploit the job market for their financial gain, while only 7 per cent pointed to hackers as the primary source of fraud, highlighting the difference between traditional scams and cybercrimes, said the report.



Ramoji group launches millet products

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Ramoji Group on Saturday announced the launch of a range of millets products under the Sabala brand.

"Sabala represents the wholesomeness of millets and a commitment to healthier living. It is bridging the gap between traditional Indian grains and modern recipes through innovation. It characterises our steadfast resolve to blend balanced nutrition with great flavour,"

Sahari Cherukuri, Director of Sabala Millets, said. In its first phase, 45 products and variants have been launched from khichdi of various states to millet-based cookies, health bars, munchies and noodles, enriching the food category in India, the company said.

The products range under the Sabala Millets - Bharat Ka Super Food. has been launched on the 88th birth anniversary of the Ramoji Group's founder Ramoji Rao Garu, it added.



Vedanta group to increase production across segments, says Anil Agarwal



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Vedanta Chairman Anil Agarwal on Saturday said the metal and mining conglomerate looks to increase production across segments including crude oil and zinc.

"We are going to produce five hundred thousand barrels of oil and gas...so many other things they are doing, but these are the major thing for me to do..." Agarwal said at the HT Leadership Summit 2024 here.

He also termed the closure of Tuticorin copper plant in Tamil Nadu as one of his smallest failures as a businessman. "Tuticorin is one of the smallest failures. More failure you have, the more success you will get.

UNDECLARED FOREIGN ASSETS IN ITR

CBDT launches campaign to intimate taxpayers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The income tax department on Saturday said it has launched a campaign to send messages to taxpayers who have not disclosed high-value foreign income or assets in their ITRs for AY 2024-25.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has launched a Compliance-Cum-Awareness Campaign for Assessment Year (AY) 2024-25 to assist taxpayers in accurately completing Schedule Foreign Assets (Schedule FA) and

reporting income from foreign sources (Schedule FSI) in their income tax returns (ITR).

In a statement, CBDT said informational messages will be sent via SMS and email to resident taxpayers who have already submitted their ITRs for AY 2024-25. These messages are intended for individuals identified through information received under bilateral and multilateral agreements, suggesting that they may hold foreign accounts or assets, or have received

income from foreign jurisdictions. The purpose is to remind and guide those who may not have fully completed Schedule Foreign Assets in their submitted ITR for AY 2024-25, especially in cases involving high-value foreign assets, it added.

By using technology and leveraging data obtained through the Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI), the department is working to create a more efficient, taxpayer-friendly system, CBDT said.

Airlines to start new flights from Bhubaneswar, Jharsuguda

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In a boost to the economic development of Odisha, some airlines have agreed to introduce new flights from airports in Bhubaneswar and Jharsuguda, the Chief Minister's Office said on Friday. The new flights are expected from Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar and Vir Surendra Sai Airport in Jharsuguda. "The

communication system is being strengthened. The path of progress is widening. Direct flights will start from Bhubaneswar Biju Patnaik International Airport to Indore, Dehradun, Kochi, Jaipur, Lucknow and Jharsuguda Vir Surendra Sai Airport to Hyderabad, Raipur, Lucknow, Mumbai. It will give a new direction to the economic development of the state," the CMO said in a post on X.

Aditya Ultra Steel to set up 5 MW solar plant

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rolled steel products manufacturer Aditya Ultra Steel Ltd has reported a net profit of Rs 5.87 crore for April-September period of 2024-25 and also announced setting up a 5 MW solar plant at Rajkot in Gujarat.

The company in a statement on Saturday said its revenue from operations stood at Rs 312.39 crore in the first six months of 2024-25. Operating profit stood at Rs 10.50 crore in the period under review.

The rolled steel products maker, which sells products under the Kamdhenu brand, listed on NSE SME platform in September following its around Rs 46 crore IPO. The company had reported revenue of Rs 587.80 crore in FY24 while profit was Rs 7.69 crore in the fiscal.

SPH Aviation, GDX Security partner to boost drone-based aviation security

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

SPH Aviation, a subsidiary of AVPL International, has signed a partnership agreement with security firm GDX Security Solutions to integrate drone technology into aviation security operations and establish training programmes for drone pilots in India.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) between SPH Aviation and GDX Security, which has an annual revenue of Rs 2,000 crore, aims to set up remote pilot training organisations and launch drone-as-a-service solutions.

SPH Aviation will train GDX security personnel as certified drone pilots under Indian aviation regulator DGCA guidelines and help establish training facilities. The companies will also collaborate on research and development projects for custom



drone security solutions, a statement said.

"This initiative not only strengthens expertise within our industry but also addresses the growing need for skilled drone operators," said Preeti Sharma, director at SPH Aviation.

Founded in 2022, SPH Aviation operates three DGCA-approved drone train-

ing centres and has trained over 500 pilots. GDX Security, established in 1987, provides security services to government bodies, banks and industrial firms across India.

The partnership comes as India's drone sector sees rapid growth with increasing demand for trained operators and advanced security applications.

First-ever tech delegation from UK to visit Kolkata

PNS ■ KOLKATA

A trade delegation from the UK, focussed exclusively on the technology sector, will visit Kolkata on November 18-19 for the first time, the British Deputy High Commission here said in a statement on Friday.

The tech delegation comprises 17 leading UK organisations, all of which are at the forefront of technological innovation in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and semiconductors.

It is the first-ever tech team from the European country, the statement said.

British Deputy High Commissioner to East and North-East India Andrew Fleming said, "I am delighted to welcome a trade delegation from the UK focussed exclusively on the technology sector."

This visit underscores the growing relationship between the UK and India in the tech space and specifically the existing and emerging opportunities in East and Northeast India, he said.

"I believe interactions with state governments and industry will foster new partnerships and strengthen our collaboration, especially in the AI

and semiconductor industries," the senior diplomat said.

The British Deputy High Commission Kolkata, in collaboration with IT industry body National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) and city-based firm Asterix Innovations which gives consultancy inputs to Indian and overseas companies, will host a series of high-level activities, including roundtable discussions, business-to-business (B2B) meetings and networking sessions with Indian stakeholders.

These engagements are designed to identify new opportunities for collaboration, research, innovation and investment, paving the way for future joint ventures and expanding the tech partnership between the two nations, the statement said.

"We aim to forge strategic partnerships between the UK companies and Indian stakeholders...The visit will provide a platform for the UK businesses to engage with regional governments and industry leaders, creating the potential for collaboration in areas such as AI, semiconductor research, development, and manufacturing," it added.



'Delhi-NCR 6th most expensive office market in Asia Pacific'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi-NCR is the sixth most expensive office location in the Asia Pacific region, with an average monthly rental of Rs 340 per sq ft, while Mumbai ranked eighth in the list, according to Knight Frank India.

Real estate consultant Knight Frank, in its latest edition of the Asia-Pacific Prime Office Rental Index for Q3 (July-September) 2024, said Delhi-NCR is the 6th most expensive office space rental market across the APAC region.

Hong Kong SAR continues to be APAC's most expensive office market during the third

quarter of this calendar year. Prime rents in the NCR remained stable in Q3 2024, while Mumbai and Bengaluru saw year-on-year (YoY) increases of 5 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively, driven by strong demand from corporates and limited new supply.

The prime office market of Delhi-NCR continued to see rental values maintain levels seen in the past four quarters.

The prime office rent of the region was recorded at Rs 340 per sq ft per month, making it the 6th most expensive office market in the APAC zone.

The prime office rent of Mumbai was recorded at Rs 317 per sq a month and stood



at the 8th most expensive commercial market in the APAC region. Bengaluru ranked 18th on

the list and is one of the least expensive prime office markets. The prime office rent of the city was recorded at Rs 138 per sq

ft per month.

Knight Frank India Chairman and Managing Director Shishir Bajjal said,

"The resilience of the Indian economy continues to attract strong global corporate interest as reflected in the sustained demand across India's major office markets".

He said the quarterly transaction volumes have reached record highs and are likely to exceed annual benchmarks in 2024 while rental rates remain stable.

"This positive outlook, supported by consistent physical occupancy, steady rent levels since 2022, and rising demand in 2024, underscores our confidence in the sustained strength of the Indian office market in the near to medium term," Bajjal said.

the pioneer agenda

"Hum Dono" was accepted in a very big way. It was the official entry at the 1962 Berlin Film Festival
— Dev Anand



In the enchanting Coastal city of Goa, where the sea whispers the dream and the sand carries the tale, the grand curtains would be raised for the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) for the world. The IFFI is the only South Asian festival accredited by the International Federation of Film Producers' Associations (FIAPF).

Now, being held in Goa since 2004, IFFI is not only the grand festival for the films showcase but it's a platform, where Indian cinema interacts with world cinema, where filmmakers connect with audiences, and where the magic of storytelling is truly celebrated.

This year, IFFI has received 1,676 submissions from 101 countries, highlighting its expanding global influence after all these years. The International Film Festival of India 2024 will showcase over 180 international films from 81 countries, including 15 world premieres, 3 international premieres, 40 Asian premieres, and 106 Indian premieres. Featuring celebrated titles and award-winning films from around the world, this year's festival promises to make a powerful impression on audiences and on the world of cinema.

Talking about the past, the journey of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) dates back to 1952 when India was struggling to find its cinematic voice post-independence. The Government of India had organised the first IFFI which was held in Mumbai, and it showcased 40 films from 23 countries. The IFFI 1952 marked the first time India had its own international film festival, bringing global cinema to Indian shores. The initial editions of IFFI were held across various Indian cities, including Delhi, Chennai, and Kolkata, with the festival traveling from one city to another to reach a broader audience. The past 20 years spent by IFFI in Goa, contributed to Goa being the official place for the IFFI keeping in mind the advantage of its cultural vibrancy and scenic beauty. IFFI is a unique one distinct from other film festivals worldwide. Known as the "Film Festival of Goa," IFFI blends seamlessly with Goa's local culture, attracting an international audience to India's favourite tourist destination.

Goa's vibrant art scene, beach culture, and heritage architecture complement the festival's spirit, creating an inviting space where cinema lovers from all corners of the world can gather for a shared celebration. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, in collaboration with the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) and the Entertainment Society of Goa (ESG), is set to host the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa from 20th to 28th November 2024.

With IFFI continuously taking place in Goa, has helped the state develop a thriving ecosystem that supports film tourism. Local businesses, artists, and artisans benefit from the influx of visitors, and the festival has become a key driver of economic and cultural growth in the region. During the curtain raiser event for the IFFI in New Delhi, Dr. L. Murugan, highlighted the festival's prestigious role on the global stage. He said, "IFFI has become a landmark event, not just for India but internationally, comparable to global festivals such as Cannes."

The 55th edition of IFFI in 2024 will showcase the theme of 'Young Filmmakers' - "The Future is Now". The theme asks to embrace the timeless and the young talent in our country and recognising their potential in shaping the future of creativity. The initiative of the Creative Minds of Tomorrow platform has been enhanced to support 100 young talents from 75 in the previous editions. 400 young film students, from Film Schools across the country, are being facilitated by the Ministry to attend IFFI.

The festival will give tributes to cinema legends, and retrospectives on iconic careers. The Country Focus section will allow viewers to experience the best of international cinema, linking to cultural exchange. The Country of Focus for IFFI 2024 will be Australia. This will be made sure by a dedicated package of Australian films giving a strong presence at the festival. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed between Screen Australia & NFDC, for participation by leading Australian filmmakers in the festival and the Film Bazaar, and a showcase by AusFilm, promoting Australia's unique filming locations & co-productions.

Apart from Australia, in partnership with the British Film Institute, the United Kingdom will be showcased as the "Treaty Country," presenting British cinema through a carefully crafted package. Celebration of the pioneers is very important to lead the way, give examples, and keep the generations inspired by looking over to the people who have done it no others. Like every other year, the stars of the cinema, keeping up with the entertainment industry would be facilitated by awards at the IFFI 2024. The IFFI's prestigious Golden Peacock Award,

As every year, uniting global storytellers, the International Film Festival of India 2024, is an allure and will transform Goa into a vibrant heaven for film enthusiasts, cinema pioneers, and aspiring young talents, writes ABHI SINGHAL

GRAND CELEBRATION OF CINEMA



Also, through workshops, masterclasses, panel discussions, and networking events, IFFI 2024 will provide a learning platform for aspiring filmmakers, creating an inclusive space for cinematic celebration and growth.

Panel Discussions like *Women Safety and Cinema* with renowned panelists Imtiaz Ali, Suhasini Manirathnam, Kushboo Sundar, Bhumi Pednekar; *Stories that Travel*, a panel that would explore the art of storytelling that travels beyond its origins, addressing the themes, techniques, and emotional core that allow films to reach and impact diverse audiences worldwide with Farrukh Dhondy, Anna Saura, Tanishta Chatterjee, Vani Tripathi Tikoo and Lucy Walker. Each panel discussion would be a new learning for all present at the festival. *Culture As Context for Cinematic Storytelling* with panelist Dr. Sachidanad Joshi, Anish Tripathi, Bharat Bala will be a major learning experience for the audience.

Mastering the Unseen with Manoj Bajpayee, Sunil Srinivasan; *Centenary Special: ANR - Celebrating the Life and Works of Akkineni Nageswara Rao*. This centenary special will celebrate the legendary actor & producer Akkineni Nageswara Rao (ANR), whose contributions to Indian cinema have been unparalleled, with celebrated actor and his son Nagarjuna being the speaker; *From Big Screen to Streaming* in conversation with Manisha Koirala and Vikramaditya Motwane; *Celebrating the Life and Works of Raj Kapoor - 'The Greatest Showman'* with Ranbir Kapoor; *Empowering Change: Women Leading the Way in Cinema* with giving women led hits Kriti Sanon and Rudrani Chatteraj. Addition will be *Lata Mangeshkar Memorial Talk: Musical Theatre in India* with A R Rahman.

Masterclasses by the pioneers in the cinema industry, giving insights about the highs and lows will be conducted every year on all the days of the 7-day festival. *Power of Failure, a masterclass by Anupam Kher* will be sharing his journey, highlighting how failures acted as the catalyst for his growth and success. Another one by Philip Noyce on *How to Succeed in New Hollywood*. To all this will be the addition of Stephen Woolley an English filmmaker giving a masterclass on *Film Production and its Stages* will be valuable. The National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) will also be hosting the much-anticipated *Film Bazaar* from November 20 to 24, transforming Goa into a bustling hub for filmmakers, producers, distributors, and cinema enthusiasts from across the globe. Since its inception, *Film Bazaar* has established itself as South Asia's premier film market, providing a platform for fresh voices and unique cinematic narratives from the region to take the global stage.

The *Film Bazaar* has since grown to become the international film market for South Asia. It serves as a meeting place for prospective creative and financial cooperation between South Asian and foreign filmmakers, producers, sales representatives, and festival programmers. From November 20 to 24, 2024, the 18th *Film Bazaar* at IFFI 2024 will take place at the Marriott Resort in Goa. This year, the IFFI promises not just a cinematic showcase but a festival brimming with cultural exchange, artistic celebration, and an unwavering commitment to the future of films in the country and globally. From illuminating conversations to inspiring mentorship and unforgettable screenings, IFFI 2024 is set to transcend expectations, offering a truly transformative experience for film lovers worldwide.

granted for *Best Film* will remain one of the most revered honours, while the *Silver Peacock Awards* for *Best Director, Actor, and Actress* highlight individual excellence. In recent years, IFFI has expanded its awards to reflect evolving cinematic trends. A new award of *Best Debut Indian Director* has been an addition this year to recognise young filmmaking talent across India. The *ICFT UNESCO Gandhi Medal* honours films promoting peace and tolerance, and the *Special Jury Award* highlights outstanding narrative and technical achievements, often bringing unique works into the spotlight.

The festival's commitment to fresh talent shines through the *Best Debut Feature Film* award, which encourages bold new voices, while the Indian Panorama section fosters Indian cinematic diversity. To embrace modern storytelling forms, IFFI introduced awards for animation, VR, and documentaries, alongside the "Excellence in Film Craft" award for behind-the-scenes talent. The *Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award* will be awarded to the Philip Noyce of Australia.

This year, new categories—such as the "Innovative Use of Technology" and a sustainability-focused award—honour advancements like CGI and address global issues, positioning IFFI as a festival at the

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RESTORED CLASSICS OF THEIR ICONIC FILMS, INCLUDING AWARA (1951), HUM DONO (1961), DEVADASU (1953), DADASAHEB PHALKE'S KALIYA MARDAN (1919), AMITABH BACHCHAN'S DEBUT MOVIE SAAT HINDUSTANI (1969), AND SEEMABADDHA (1971) WILL BE SCREENED AT THE FESTIVAL.
”

forefront of positive change. Screenings, as usual, will remain a core attraction, with highly anticipated films like the world premiere of *Zero Se Restart* on 21st November 2024 in INOX Panjim, *Jab Khuli Kitaab* by Saurabh Shukla on 26th November 2024 in INOX Panjim, Asia premiere of *Hazaar Vela Sholay Pehlila Manus* on 24th November 2024 in INOX Panjim, Asia premiere of *The Mehta Boys*, directed by Boman Irani on 25th November 2024 in INOX Panjim.

Michael Gracey's Better Man, an Australian film that provides an engrossing look at the life of music artist Robbie Williams, who is played as a chimpanzee by Jonno Davies in a ground-breaking motion-capture performance, will have its Asia premiere to kick off the festival. The honours of the opening feature film of the 55th edition of the IFFI will be done by *Swatantrya Veer Savarkar*, directed by Randeep Hooda, a powerful portrayal of a revolutionary figure. Adding to that the opening non-feature film will be *Ghar Jaisa Kuch* directed by Harsh Sangani. Restored classics of their iconic films, including *Awara* (1951), *Hum Dono* (1961), *Devadasu* (1953), *Dadasaheb Phalke's Kaliya Mardan* (1919), *Amitabh Bachchan's debut movie Saat Hindustani* (1969), and *Seemabaddha* (1971) will be screened at the

ART, CULTURE AND NATURE RECOALESCE AT JEHANGIR ART GALLERY



AARTI SREENATH
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Art, culture and the whispers of a river older than the Ganga flow through the REVA exhibition, where four artists, Anurag Jadia, Trapti Gupta, Vandita Shrivastava and Praveen Khare, have come together to celebrate the life and legacy of the sacred Narmada River. This exhibition, held at the Jehangir Art Gallery, showcased works that delved into the personal, cultural and spiritual connections these artists hold with Madhya Pradesh and its timeless river, the Narmada.

While each artist is united by a deep-rooted connection to Madhya Pradesh, not all have painted the Narmada directly on canvas before. "The theme of the Narmada felt natural and fitting for our collective work," says Anurag Jadia, whose previous pieces were inspired by landscapes more broadly but now channel the essence of the Narmada's flow and presence.

Anurag's work is inspired by landscapes where mountains and rivers coalesce, such as those in Uttarakhand. These landscapes reveal shapes hidden in the stones and clouds—a face here, an animal's outline there. He captures this interplay of imagination and natural beauty in his paintings, combining recognisable landscapes with scenes drawn from his mind's eye. His art is both familiar and ethereal, a testimony to his journeys into the wild, where nature and creativity meet. For Anurag, REVA has been a unique chance to honour the Narmada and the civilisations that thrived along its banks, despite it not being a direct subject in his previous works.

Vandita Shrivastava, an artist from Indore, brings a different but equally profound approach with her creation of "Mandita," a form blending Indian folk traditions and her own artistic signature. A fusion of the traditional 'Mandna' style with her name, Vandita's Mandita features bold line work and textures inspired by folk art and a harmonious palette that draws



from daily life—birds, nature and even the changing moods of the moon. In her pieces, the moon takes on various personas, embodying the richness of Indian folklore and spirituality.

"The Narmada, as an ancestral river, carries with it generations of our stories," Vandita explains. While she had previously painted broader themes of folklore and culture, the Narmada has become a new focal point in this exhibition, giving her work fresh layers of cultural depth. Her pieces invite viewers to reconnect with heritage and tradition, encouraging a sense of belonging that feels increasingly rare today.

Praveen Khare, a botanical artist with a background in science, brought a unique lens to REVA, bridging botany and narrative art. Known for his precise line work, his ink-and-paper pieces are a tribute to Kalidasa, the legendary poet of Ujjain, whose tales also draw from the inspiration of rivers. Though his art has long celebrated nature, she acknowledges that working on a Narmada-inspired theme was a fresh exploration. His pieces reflect the river's cultural essence but also embrace ecological and mythological themes that connect deeply with Indian history.

Trapti Gupta, captures the innocence and camaraderie of youth in her work, with scenes depicting friends and siblings in black and white. "The theme of continuity is central to my work, as it is with the Narmada," Trapti says, describing her evolving journey as an artist. Her previous work hadn't directly focused on the Narmada, but for REVA, she used the river as a metaphor for the purity and joy of childhood, bringing a fresh angle to her usual ink-and-pencil depictions.

For these artists, REVA is not just an exhibition; it's a mission to remind future generations of their roots. "In cities, we've become so detached from our soil, our seeds," Vandita reflects. "Through art, we can reconnect with the values and traditions that are embedded in our past." Each artist feels the urgency to preserve this cultural wealth, with this exhibition serving as a bridge for viewers, especially young visitors, to rediscover India's ancient heritage.

The timeless spirit of the Narmada River, flowing through the heart of Madhya Pradesh, is brought to life in the REVA exhibition at Jehangir Art Gallery. Curated by four talented artists—Anurag Jadia, Trapti Gupta, Vandita Shrivastava and Praveen Khare—the exhibition explored their deep-rooted personal, cultural and spiritual connections with the sacred river. Through diverse artistic expressions, the artists celebrated the Narmada's profound influence on landscape, folklore, spirituality and daily life, inviting viewers on a journey to reconnect with an ancient heritage that continues to shape India's identity today. With each piece, the exhibition not only honoured the river's legacy but also spoke to the urgent need to preserve our cultural roots for future generations

INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY SPECIAL

Every year on November 19th, International Men's Day is observed to acknowledge and celebrate the accomplishments, contributions and general well-being of men worldwide. What better way to express gratitude than with a well-considered gift? This year, let's honour the men who motivate us by selecting presents that highlight their accomplishments, speak to their passions and promote their wellbeing!

CELEBRATE MEN'S DAY WITH STYLE

As International Men's Day approaches, it's the perfect opportunity to celebrate the men who inspire us. For the pair that loves thrill and precision, the Pitstop Collection is a unique gift choice. Inspired by the energy of motorsports, it includes India's first racing chronograph, powered by the Seiko Mecaquartz VK63—a blend of quartz accuracy with mechanical chronograph features.

Starting at Rs. 15,900



PERFECT POUR FOR INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY

For a standout gift this International Men's Day, Nicobar Gin brings both craftsmanship and distinct flavour, making it perfect for gin enthusiasts and connoisseurs alike. This premium gin balances floral notes of elderflower and hibiscus with the spice of grains of paradise, while the infusion of three distinct types of juniper gives it a robust, layered profile. It is ideal for savouring neat or in refined cocktails, making it a memorable gift that celebrates the artistry of fine spirits.

Available for INR 2,360

GIVE HIM GIFT OF CARE

Whether it's the brother who's been your lifelong confidant, the husband who fills your days with love and companionship, or the father whose wisdom has guided you, this day is a chance to celebrate their unique qualities and unwavering presence. The O3+ D-tan pack makes an ideal choice for your friends, brothers, husband, or any loved ones who enjoy looking and feeling their best.

This innovative skincare solution is expertly crafted to remove tan and reveal a brighter, healthier complexion. Packed with natural ingredients, it gently fades sunspots and evens out skin tone, helping to restore a natural, vibrant glow.

Price: Rs. 830

TRAVEL WITH PURPOSE

This International Men's Day, upperscale empowers today's modern man to travel with purpose, combining style, sustainability and functionality. It is redefining the travel gear experience by offering a range of eco-friendly products designed for the conscious traveller! From GRS-certified laptop bags to versatile backpacks and durable duffels, each product is thoughtfully crafted with high-performance materials that support a greener planet without compromising on style or durability.

GIFT ESSENCE OF ADVENTURE THIS MEN'S DAY

This Men's Day, surprise the special men in your life with the Mamaearth perfume gift set for men – a perfect duo for those who seek both elegance and adventure. Into the Woods offers a rich, earthy blend of geranium, rose and oud wood, capturing the essence of nature's allure. Into the Waves infuses invigorating notes of bergamot, aqua and musk, bringing the freshness of the ocean to every day. Safe for skin and clothes, this set is a meaningful way to remind the men in your life to embrace their unique journey, wherever it takes them.

PERFECT GIFT FOR SPECIAL MEN IN YOUR LIFE

Show your appreciation with a thoughtful gift from thinKitchen®. Elevate Men's day with the Dartington Wine Bar White Wine Glasses Set of 2. Celebrated for their exquisite British craftsmanship since 1967, its elegant design and exceptional artistry make these glasses a perfect gift. Handcrafted in the picturesque North Devon hills, this set embodies sophistication and warmth, making it an ideal addition to gatherings or a thoughtful gesture for loved ones.

INR 3,699

MIX IT UP THIS MEN'S DAY

Elevate his mixology skills with the BarCraft 6 Pc Cocktail Set. This set includes six essential cocktail tools and a recipe booklet, perfect for making gourmet cocktails at home. With a stylish wood and brass look, it adds a vintage touch to any home bar. Packaged in an attractive gift box, it's an ideal Men's Day gift for any cocktail enthusiast.

Price: INR 7,799



GIVE HIS WARDROBE WINTER MAKEOVER



Give your partner wardrobe a fashion makeover with timeless pieces from AGTHEXCEPTIONAL AW'24 winter collection *Glint*. The collection embraces a new experience with a diverse range of hoodies and jackets with rich autumn earthy hues that compliments Indian winter. The impeccable tailoring, timeless styles and plush fabrics of design pieces make a perfect gift choice for the men you adore.

HOROSCOPE



ARIES

Your ambition will be boosted by supportive siblings and favourable conditions. Face family issues with resilience and thoughtful planning to ensure success. Focus on growth.



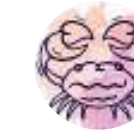
TAURUS

Your humour and energy will win hearts. Love shines brightly and family brings happiness. Embrace travel, relaxation and new challenges to enhance vitality and ease uncertainty.



GEMINI

You may develop a deep bond with a close someone. Family and romance bring happiness, but busy schedules might get in the way. Be gentle with loved ones, and do not be arrogant.



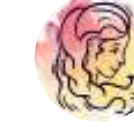
CANCER

Manage emotions thoughtfully. Balance professional and personal risks with priority to the family. Use your energy well, and welcome positive changes and joyful moments in life.



LEO

Your drive and resilience power your success. Rely on trusted friends and seek support when making decisions. Family ties may seem distant. So make sure to balance work with family.



VRIGO

Stay optimistic and focused to enhance success. Siblings will support you to reach your goals. Avoid being overly critical to prevent delays and be open to changes and new projects.



LIBRA

Balance family time with relationship challenges. Embrace loyalty and collaboration, avoiding pride and laziness. Stay open to unexpected connections. New experiences await.



SCORPIO

Maintain a positive impression. Cherish promising love prospects and embrace family time for renewal. Balance reliability with your eccentricities and face challenges calmly.



SAGITTARIUS

Embrace charm and confidence as you tackle challenges, but avoid pride. Seek security guidance, and focus your energy on work and family harmony. Sibling clashes may occur.



CAPRICORN

Balance humility with pride for personal growth. Loyalty and generosity will strengthen friendships. Nurture family bonds and be open to heartfelt pleas. Unexpected expenses may arise.



AQUARIUS

Rely on trusted support and stay calm under pressure. Joy will come through introspection. Encourage discipline for personal growth, balance drive with patience, and offer support to family.



PISCES

Focus on health and studies during this crucial time. Manage your emotions, and embrace your confident nature. Stay calm under pressure. Nostalgia abounds as siblings reconcile.

CHAT-O-CINO

'IT WAS MY SONGS THAT OPENED DOORS TO HINDI FILMS'

TEJAL SINHA
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Jassie Gill is a name that needs no introduction. With a string of hit songs and films under his belt, he has become a force to be reckoned with in the entertainment industry. But despite all the fame and adoration, Gill remains humble and grounded, still driven by the passion that first led him to pursue a career in music.

With his mesmerising voice, captivating stage presence and undeniable charm, he has emerged as a powerhouse in the Punjabi entertainment industry. His artistic journey commenced with his debut album, *Batchmate*, in 2011, which paved the way for blockbuster hits like *Bapu Zimidar*, *Guitar Sikhda*, *Panga*, *Att Karti* and *Laden*. Jassie's successful foray into acting has seen him deliver memorable performances in films like *Mr. & Mrs. 420*, *Dildariyan* and *Panga*, alongside Bollywood stalwarts like Kangana Ranaut and the Salman Khan-starrer *Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan*.

Reflecting on his remarkable career, in this chat with *The Pioneer*, he expresses his gratitude and passion, which was also palpable in his voice. "The journey has been nearly 14 incredible years and I'm grateful to be part of this industry," he began, his eyes lighting up with excitement. "From starting in music to stepping into acting and now exploring new horizons in music production, every moment has been a learning experience. I truly love what I do and it's been an amazing ride so far!" Initially, music wasn't the *Mundeyan Ton Bachke Rahin* star's first choice. He considered alternative career paths, like driving a taxi or truck in Canada, due to the daunting task of navigating the music industry. Yes, dear readers, you read that right! As he recounted the early days of his career, his voice was filled with a mix of nostalgia and determination. "When I first started out, the music industry was a vastly different landscape. Creating an album seemed overwhelming and costly, especially since single tracks weren't really a thing—artists needed to produce a full 10-track album." He paused, reflecting on the uncertainty of those times. "I always kept a backup plan in mind, like driving a taxi or truck in Canada." But of course his passion for music ultimately won out. "But as they say, when you truly want something and work hard for it, doors eventually open," he said with a smile. "So, I moved to Canada and spent three months washing cars, saving every dollar I could. I poured everything I earned into my music—and that's where the journey truly began." He attributed his success to trusting his instincts. "When I was new to the industry, I had no idea what would work or what wouldn't, but I trusted myself and made my own choices. I don't seek a lot of advice or second-guess my path—I lead with my instincts. No matter the outcome, I stay true to my vision and thankfully, it has always brought success."

The seeds of Gill's remarkable music career were sown in the unlikeliest of places—his college classroom. "During my graduation, I chose music as a subject because of my deep interest, even though I wasn't a particularly studious student. I didn't know what the course would cover when I opted for it, but it turned out to be a great foundation for my career." His eyes lit up as he recalled the impact of his college days on his music journey. "The basic knowledge I gained proved invaluable in my early years as a singer. It all started in college—I began singing, built confidence and received appreciation from others.

With a discography boasting blockbuster hits and a filmography featuring critically acclaimed performances, Jassie Gill is the epitome of artistic versatility. Jassie Gill, the name synonymous with Punjabi entertainment's finest, sits down with *The Pioneer* for a heart-to-heart conversation, offering a rare glimpse into the mind of a creative genius



That encouragement pushed me to keep performing, and that's how my journey truly began."

The *Panga* fame's versatility as an artist is undeniable, with a massive following that adores him equally for his music and acting. When asked about his acting career, Jassie revealed that it was a completely new territory for him. "Music was always something I felt confident about—I knew how to navigate that space. But acting was a completely new territory for me; I had no idea where to start or how it would unfold."

However, his experience in creating music videos proved to be a valuable stepping stone. "Many of them, like *Bapu Zimidar* and *Vich Pardesa*, had strong storylines. We began incorporating short narratives into these videos to give the songs more meaning. Through these roles, I gained acting experience, which eventually led to my first offer for a Punjabi movie."

Continuing to hone his craft, he found himself growing more passionate about acting. "Over time, I found myself truly enjoying acting and the audience's appreciation motivated me even more. When people love your work, you can't help but give it your all. With dedication and God's blessings, I reached Mumbai and ventured into Hindi films too. Now, acting is something I genuinely love doing."

The Punjabi entertainment industry has witnessed a significant surge in popularity over the years, with talented artists like Diljit Dosanjh, B Praak and Gurnazar gaining widespread recognition. As someone who has successfully navigated both the singing and acting worlds, he offered his thoughts on this phenomenon. "When I first started singing, my goal was simply to become known as a singer in my village," he humbly recalled, his voice filled with gratitude. "I never imagined

that my music would become so popular, not just across India but globally. I'm truly grateful to God for giving me this opportunity and the privilege to be part of this industry. I began at a time when both I and the industry grew together, step by step. Today, Punjabi music is recognised everywhere and even people from the South know Punjabi singers. It makes me proud to come from here and to have contributed to the industry with music that's been heard far beyond Punjab—it's truly amazing."

When asked to pinpoint the turning point in his illustrious career, the *Channo Kamli Yaar Di* star's response was refreshingly candid. Despite having worked in notable films like *Happy Phir Bhaag Jaayegi*, *Panga* and *Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan*, he attributed his true turning point to his music rather than his film career. "Honestly, the true turning point in my career has always been my music, not the films," he confessed. "It was my songs that opened doors to Hindi films." Going ahead, he elaborated on how his music videos paved the way for film opportunities, citing the example of *Happy Phir Bhaag Jaayegi*, which was offered to him after the film's director, Mudassar Aziz, saw him play a similar character in one of his music videos. "After that came *Panga* and several other film opportunities," he added. "So, it's clear—music has always been the key turning point in my journey."

For our star of the day, creativity is a continuous journey, not a destination. As he navigates the ever-changing landscapes of music and film, he remains committed to innovation and experimentation. He delved into his creative process, making it clear that innovation and experimentation are at the forefront of his artistic endeavours. "Music is constantly evolving and I make it a point to evolve with it. I enjoy experimenting with new things, like music production and creating unique sounds. In the beginning, I mostly composed my own songs and I still do for some of my projects today. I'm always striving to enhance and innovate in my music. I love exploring and experimenting with sound, coming up with fresh ideas, arranging new elements, and collaborating with music producers to bring it all to life," sighs the *Marjawaan* singer.

Jassie's commitment to pushing boundaries extends beyond music to his acting career as well. "In acting, I take a similar approach, challenging myself continually," he explained. Despite never having formal acting training, Jassie has honed his craft through hands-on experience and collaborations with esteemed actors and directors. "I've had the privilege of working with almost everyone in Punjab and collaborating with seasoned actors like Salman Khan, Kangana Ranaut and top-tier directors in Bollywood," he shared. These experiences have not only boosted his confidence but also fueled his passion for continuous improvement. With a slew of exciting projects on the horizon, including the threequel of a Punjabi movie in which he played a female character, Jassie is more motivated than ever to keep exploring and growing as an artist.

As the curtains close on this interview, Jassie Gill looks to the future; he's excited about the prospects ahead. "I'm currently focused on my music, experimenting and striving to create something unique and special. One of the great things today is that we don't have to approach labels to release our tracks—we have our own label and the freedom to create whatever we want. That's exactly what I'm doing right now. I also have some exciting Bollywood opportunities in the works, which I'm really looking forward to," he signed off.

TRENDING

TULSI GABBARD



Tulsi Gabbard, a former Democratic congresswoman, was selected by U.S. President-elect Donald Trump on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, to be the head of national intelligence in his cabinet.

MIKE TYSON SLAPPED JAKE PAUL



At their final weigh-in before their eagerly awaited heavyweight bout at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, legendary boxer Mike Tyson smacked Jake Paul.

I WANT TO TALK



With his next movie, *I Want To Talk*, which was directed by Soojit Sircar, Abhishek is having a lot of success in his career. Even while he hasn't commented on the personal rumours, Abhishek just made his first public statement at the movie's music launch.

SAHIBA

This period-themed music video features Vijay Deverakonda and Radhika Madan opposite each other. The nearly 45-second clip begins with a black-and-white shot of Vijay riding a horse along the beach.



PAUL AND ANDREW SHARED TOUCHING REUNION



Actors Paul Mescal and Andrew Scott experienced a beautiful reunion on the red carpet during the *Gladiator 2* premiere, in which Mescal plays the lead.

Revisiting history with authentic accents and emotional depth

AARTI SREENATH
aarti.sreenath9@gmail.com

Plot

Sony LIV's *Freedom at Midnight* brings to life the intense final chapters of India's freedom struggle, diving deep into the conflicts, ambitions and monumental decisions that shaped the nation. Set in the pre-independence era, the show offers a riveting portrayal of leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Abul Kalam Azad, Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Lord Mountbatten, unraveling their powerful, often contradictory roles in the fight for independence.

The narrative goes beyond historical events to capture the raw emotions and political dynamics within the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, exposing the internal conflicts and manipulations that arose as partition loomed closer. Mountbatten's controversial partition plan, which eventually reshaped the subcontinent, is presented with a critical eye, shedding light on the sacrifices, resilience, and horrors faced by ordinary Indians.

The series digs into how key figures, from Congress leaders to Muslim League representatives, wrestled with their visions for India's future amidst communal tensions and ideological divides. With dramatic depictions of behind-the-scenes strategies, intense debates, and unforeseen betrayals, *Freedom at Midnight* gives a balanced yet compelling view of the price paid for independence. The series draws inspiration from the highly regarded book *Freedom at Midnight* by Dominique Lapierre and Larry Collins, offering a nuanced depiction that delves deeper than mere historical events. It captures the emotional weight and ideological conflicts of the time. Produced by Applause Entertainment and Emmay Entertainment, with Quais Wasiq's cinematography, the show aspires to authentic storytelling and



Creator: Nikhhil Advani
Produced by: Monisha Advani, Madhu Bhojwani
Cinematography: Malay Prakash
Cast: Arif Zakaria, Chirag Vohra, Sidhant Gupta, Ira Dubey, RJ Malishka, Rajendra Chawla, Luke McGibney
Streaming on: Sony LIV
Rating: 3.5

quality production, making it a standout in the Indian OTT historical drama genre.

Highlights

The show's depiction of Jawaharlal Nehru's first address as Prime Minister captures the weight of the moment; it gave me goosebumps, complete with authentic accents and period-appropriate gravitas that make it feel as if history is unfolding right before your eyes. The dialogues between Nehru and Gandhi are portrayed with intensity and depth, reflecting their ideological debates and personal bonds. These interactions lend authenticity to the series, emphasising the complexity of their relationship and the divergent yet overlapping visions they held for India's future. The background music is immersive and evocative, enhancing the emotional highs and lows of the story. The BGM is subtle yet impactful, setting the tone for significant moments like Gandhi's charkha scene and the tense build-up to the announcement of independence. The series includes stunningly symmetrical frames and artistic lighting, which accentuates the historical weight of pivotal scenes. The scenes depicting atrocities, such as the Direct Action Day sequence and the Indigo farmers' protest, capture the painful realities faced by ordinary citizens with haunting clarity. The show's choice to portray the Rawalpindi riots in black-and-white adds a nostalgic yet somber feel, immersing the viewer in the gravity of the situation while also

providing a stylistic nod to historical archives. With scenes like the Durga Puja celebration, the show faithfully represents the diversity of experiences and sentiments across India during the independence struggle. These cultural nuances add richness to the narrative. The show also seamlessly blends real-life photographs of Gandhi with dramatized sequences, such as his time in jail, making the portrayal both educational and authentic.

Drawbacks

While *Freedom at Midnight* delivers a richly detailed narrative, the slow pacing might not appeal to all viewers. Its meticulous approach to historical events means it often lingers on certain scenes, potentially losing momentum for those who prefer a more fast-paced viewing experience. Additionally, some sequences seem to overly idealise figures like Nehru and Gandhi, casting them in an almost heroic light that may feel exaggerated to some. This portrayal could come across as a somewhat one-sided depiction, potentially oversimplifying the complex and often conflicting ideologies of the time.

Performances

In *Freedom at Midnight*, the cast delivers powerful performances that bring India's independence era to life. Chirag Vohra as Gandhi and Arif Zakaria as Jinnah are standouts, fully embodying the essence of these iconic leaders. Vohra's portrayal of Gandhi, from



the precise cadence of his accent to his mannerisms, is incredibly authentic, evoking the Mahatma's resilience and unwavering spirit. Zakaria as Jinnah is equally compelling, capturing the political complexities and personal struggles of the leader with striking realism.

Sidhant Gupta as Nehru brings warmth and dignity, blending Nehru's idealism with his deep-rooted concern for India's future. Ira Dubey's portrayal of Fatima Jinnah offers a nuanced perspective on the familial and political aspects of the independence struggle, while RJ Malishka and Luke McGibney add depth to the cast, representing various facets of the era's intense negotiations and emotional turbulence.

However, Rajendra Chawla's portrayal of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is truly the standout. His expressions, tone, and powerful presence elevate the show, portraying Patel's grit and unwavering commitment to a united India. His performance captures Patel's subtle emotional depth and iron-willed resolve, making him the undeniable star of the series.

The visual authenticity of the sets and costumes transports viewers to 1940s India. Each frame is a meticulous recreation of the era, from the political chambers to the crowded streets, enhancing the historical experience. The attention to period-accurate details, from attire to body language, makes it feel like witnessing India's freedom struggle unfold firsthand. The thoughtful representation of each leader's unique speech pat-

terns, physical presence, and dialect completes this immersive portrayal of history.

Technical Aspects

Freedom at Midnight excels in its technical craftsmanship, creating an immersive experience through visual storytelling and meticulous cinematography. The use of color psychology stands out, with warm, earthy tones capturing the gravitas of the pre-independence era and cooler shades during moments of tension, creating a sense of historic authenticity. Shadow and lighting are used masterfully to evoke emotion; the cinematographer plays with silhouettes, especially in scenes with Gandhi, enhancing the symbolic weight of these characters and making the sequences feel lifelike.

Moving shots are well executed, adding a sense of fluidity that draws viewers into the narrative's ebb and flow. The camera work is precise, creating symmetry within the frames that feels both deliberate and visually satisfying. This symmetry, coupled with thoughtful blocking, gives scenes a painterly quality that's rare in historical dramas. Symbolism through visuals is also handled with finesse, reinforcing themes without feeling heavy-handed; for example, scenes with Gandhi at the charkha evoke resilience, while the court scene with farmers protesting with indigo-stained hands speaks volumes about colonial exploitation. These technical elements come together beautifully to transport the audience into the 1940s, making the historical drama not just a story to watch but a sensory journey into the era itself. Malay Prakash needs to be applauded for the amazing job!

Verdict

Freedom at Midnight is a meticulously crafted historical drama that brings India's independence struggle to life with rich detail and stunning visuals. Though it may feel slow-paced for some viewers, the show excels in authenticity and technical finesse, making it a worthwhile watch for those interested in a deep, evocative portrayal of this pivotal era.



EXTENDING YOUTHFUL ACTIVISM CREATIVELY FOR BIG SCREEN

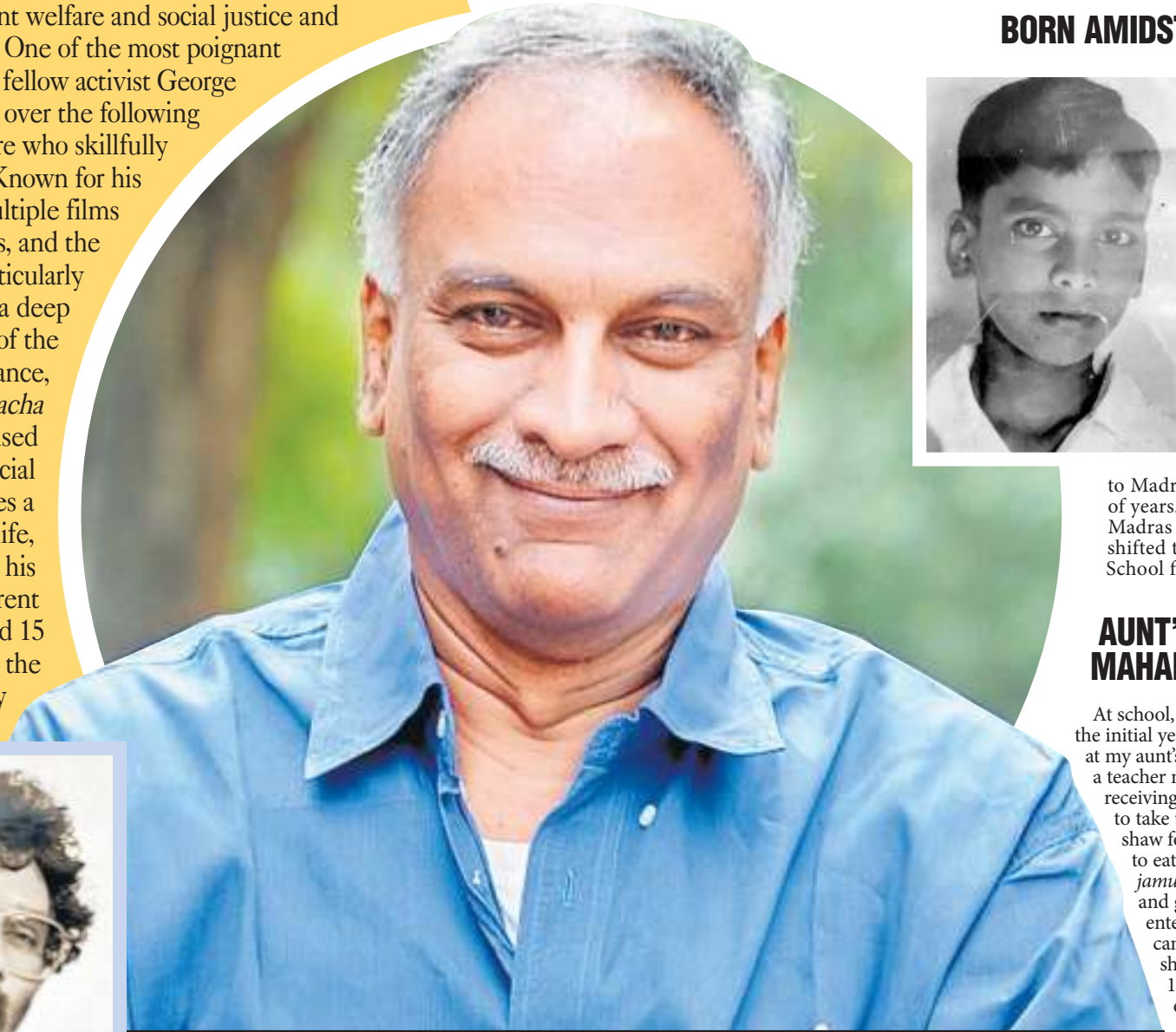
BORN AMIDST TURMOIL



I was born in 1948 in the aftermath of the (1934 British) ban on the Communist Party of India (and repression of its affiliated organisations). Since my father was a Communist leader, the police and government authorities put pressure on my mother to know his whereabouts! There was no maternity hospital nearby at that time and my mother told me that she had to run from one place to another when she was carrying me. After I was born, we lived at Vidyavanam, near Vijayawada and then went to Madras (now Chennai) for a couple of years. I studied till second class in Madras (now called Chennai) and then shifted to Hyderabad and joined Wesley School for studies.

AUNT'S LOVE AND TAJ MAHAL HOTEL TREATS

At school, I was a bright student. During the initial years in Hyderabad, I used to stay at my aunt's house. She was then working as a teacher near the Paradise circle. Upon receiving her salary every month, she used to take us to the Taj Mahal Hotel by rickshaw for treats. On those days we used to eat dosa, idli and sweet such as gulab jamun. She used to iron our clothes and guided us in many ways. When I entered the sixth grade, my mother came to Hyderabad and then we shifted to Yellareddyguda. From 1955 to 2022, we lived there; it is only now that I have shifted to Movie Towers.



Thammareddy Bharadwaj's life reflects a saga of activism and resilience that had a profound impact on the political and cultural landscapes of his community during his formative years. Born in 1948, amid the tumultuous period following the then British ban on the Communist Party, his childhood was turbulent with his mother shielding him from the political turmoil surrounding his father's activism. A gifted student with an early fascination for cinema, Bharadwaj's connection to the industry deepened as he witnessed his father's work in production at the Sarathi Studios. While doing engineering from Osmania University, his leadership traits drew him to student politics, as part of which he championed causes with lasting benefits for the student community. In a conversation with *The Pioneer's* SURESH KAVIRAYANI, he shares vignettes of his efforts for student welfare and social justice and how he got involved in the initial Telangana movement. One of the most poignant events in his life was the murder of his close friend and fellow activist George Reddy in 1972. His contributions to academia and cinema over the following years has cemented Bharadwaj's legacy as an influential figure who skillfully blended art and activism with dedication for the big screen. Known for his meaningful storytelling in Tollywood, he has produced multiple films covering diverse themes such as human values, societal issues, and the complexity of human relationships. His productions, particularly *Alajadi* (1990) and *Pacha Thoranam* (1994), reflect a deep engagement with social issues and explore the struggles of the common man in a rapidly evolving world. *Alajadi*, for instance, sheds light on caste dynamics and social injustice, while *Pacha Thoranam* dives into the challenges of marginalised communities, advocating the need for empathy and social reforms. His film *Pellaina Kothalo* (2006), which takes a lighter, comedic look at the intricacies of married life, adds diversity to his portfolio, showing his versatility in producing films across different genres. He is known to have produced 15 films and directed 20 films in the industry.

GROWING UP IN SECUNDERABAD'S CINEMA HUB

I have always liked watching movies since my childhood. I don't know how many times I watched *Lavakusa*. Tivoli, Dreamland, Plaza, Minerva, Manohar, Alankar, Ajanta, Rajeshwari and Kalpana theaters were among the popular theatres in Secunderabad at that time. I still remember *Rojulu Marayi* ran for 100 days in Rajeshwari theatre and they arranged a big function there. My father was the production manager for that film. He was the general manager for Sarathi Studios that was built at Ameerpet later. We are talking about 1955!

FIGHTING FOR UNIVERSITY'S AUTONOMY

When I was studying at Osmania University, the then government removed Vice-Chancellor DS Reddy. They appointed a person from Andhra and then we protested the government's decision and sought autonomy for universities. We asked the government not to get involved in university affairs and saw to it that DS Reddy was reinstated as Vice Chancellor. Before that, we had gone on a nearly 15- to 20-day strike. We had closed the two approach roads to Osmania University. We barricaded the entire university, staying up at nights and sleeping on the Arts College steps. The government bowed down and re-instated DS Reddy as Vice-Chancellor and later we called off our strike.

'JAILED' IN 1969 DURING TELANGANA MOVEMENT

In 1969, during the peak of the initial Telangana movement, many students participated and I, along with some others, fought for integration and we all attacked the Secretariat and demanded the then Chief Minister's resignation. The police arrested us and put us in a jail of sorts. At that time, the jails were completely full; so they put us in a government school near SR Nagar! We (both Telangana agitators and those fight for integration) used to sing songs and play games in the 'jail'. Nearly 500 people were there in that school and our batch comprised 20 students. My mother used to get breakfast and lunch for all of us.



USHERING SEMESTER SYSTEM IN OSMANIA UNIVERSITY

While I was in college, I joined the Hyderabad Students Union and became its vice president. I was also active in the Students Federation of India. They used to call me *naib-sadr* (vice president) in Urdu! Because of my laziness and overconfidence, I failed in my first year. They gave me paper carrying 100 marks, but I only wrote for 50 marks. So, I completed my exam in just half an hour and went to the movies. At that time, engineering was five years' term. Louis Thomas was the Secretary of the university then. I told him that it was very difficult to write all the examinations at once; so, I gave the idea that exams should be held as per the semester system elsewhere, two times in one year. He liked the idea, but when it took time to implement, we announced an immediate strike; so, they adopted the semester and also the carry-on system. The semester system is still continuing and I can proudly say that I actually started the idea at Osmania University!



DARK CONNECTION BEHIND GEORGE REDDY'S MURDER

George Reddy, student leader and social activist, was a friend of mine and he was a gold medalist. George Reddy was a science student; his brother Cyril Reddy was my classmate. When George Reddy was debarred for three months, he stayed in my house only! There is a Dhoolpet connection to George Reddy's murder. There was Lakhman Singh, who was a very close friend of George and his brother Cyril. He introduced Lakhman to me and at that time they put Lakhman Singh in my hostel room. I don't know what happened among Lakhman, George and Cyril, but Lakhman became enemies with the brothers. Thereafter, the rivalry started and they stabbed George once, but he survived at that time! Lakhman Singh happened to be from Dhoolpet; so, unofficially he kept nearly 30 people from Dhoolpet in the hostel (I too was in the hostel at that time). I started my campaign and went to all the classrooms and these 30 people also followed me. I don't know why, but that day I kept silent and did my campaign, though these 30 people indirectly commented on me. This happened on the last day of the campaign. That day I still remember, after the campaign ended, the next day I met George at college and he took a big class. 'Why did you campaign alone last night; you should have called me,' George told me. After some chitchat, I was hungry and told the same to George, but he wanted me to drop him off at the library. So, I dropped him off and I went to Taj for lunch and then went for the *Somaripothu* movie, which was released on that day. Cyril Reddy, Mahipal, Kooru Rajanna and their batch went somewhere. The movie was not good, so I came out in the interval and came towards OU. At Andhra Mahila Sabha, students were running in a hurry. I asked them what happened. "George ni vesesaru, ninnu kuda vesestaru, vellaku (They have murdered George and they will target you also; don't go to the university). But I went to the university, though by then they had shifted his body to Gandhi Hospital. I went to the hospital, saw the body and I roughed up a police official there and told him, 'George ni mere champaru'. This was the first murder in OU. Lakhman Singh and nine others were arrested, but later, I think the case was not proved and they were freed. George used the knuckle duster at that time and he easily managed 10 people. He was just five feet six inches, but he was a fighter! Had Cyril or Mahipal been with him during the attack, George might have survived. The University remained closed for four months and there were no elections for a few years.



UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES SHOOTING KOTHALARAYUDU WITH CHIRANJEEVI

In 1975, my father made a film *Chimnanati Kalalu* with Krishnam Raju in my name and the shooting happened one month in Mysore. Many other Telugu films, like Dasari Narayana Rao's *Tirupathi*, Kranthi Kumar's *Sarada* and *Yashoda Krishna* in which Sridevi plays young Krishna, were also shot there. Apart from Telugu films, stars from other industries like MGR, Ambarish and Vishnuvardhan also shot their films at the same location. The reason for many films shooting in Mysore was that they announced some subsidies! So everyone stayed in the guest houses and spoke to one another. I got close to producer Kranthi Kumar at that time. In 1979, I watched a Malayalam film and wanted to remake it in Telugu. He asked me to produce myself with Chiranjeevi as the lead actor. Kranthi Kumar made two films *Pranam Khareedu* and *Punadirallu* with Chiranjeevi at that time. So, it was easy for me to get Chiranjeevi. My first film as producer was *Kothalarayudu*; it became a huge success and it also gave Chiranjeevi the first commercial hit as a solo lead actor! My next film was *Mogudu Kavali* which was another blockbuster for Chiranjeevi. I shot all those films in Hyderabad.



CRASHED HER ENGAGEMENT, STOLE HER HEART

I got married to Vani when I was 21. Vani used to live next to our house at Yellareddyguda and her brother was doing medicine. He was my close friend. Her father was a retired executive engineer and she had graduated from Reddy College, Narayanaguda. Her engagement was going on and I did the arrangements! Her friends came and told me, 'Vani is crying'. Then I went to her father and told him that I wanted to marry her. A nice gentleman, he told me that I should have told him before the engagement was fixed. He then cancelled the engagement and we got married in 1972 at Shapurvadi function hall, opposite the Secretariat. Now, there is a hospital in that place. Many of the film personalities, politicians, ministers and governors attended the marriage. I took leave and worked for films, but after some time, I left my job in 1985 and concentrated on films thereafter.



Employees Federation. People should join as members in these federations and they can only work as employees for any film. At that time, Shyamprasad Reddy, Suresh Babu, Akkineni Venkat and I went to Madras and stayed there for almost a month and coordinated with people there! Dasari Narayana Rao coordinated and he actually arranged meetings with the then Chief Minister. I, along with a few others, worked and got recognition for the Andhra Pradesh Film Employees Federation from the All India Film Employees Federation from the All India Film Employees Confederation. Earlier, they gave recognition to Madras (now Chennai), Karnataka, West Bengal, and Bombay. Today I can proudly say that our Telugu employees are getting more than other industry employees. I, along with a few others, set the wages and timings for all the employees and today we have corrected the system because we did a lot of work at that time. At that time, 18 unions were there and now there are 24 unions. I not only got recognition but also became the president of the All India Film Employees Confederation. This was definitely a landmark for the Telugu film industry. Today, the Telugu film employees like choreographers and action directors are working in Chennai, Mumbai, Kannada and everywhere. Our people have now won National Awards too, for which I felt very proud of myself.

UNITED TFI

Actor Prabhakar Reddy made me the president of the Directors Association and secretary of the Film Federation of Employees. After the film industry shifted to Hyderabad, in 1993 there was big agitation from the South Indian Film Employees Federation (SIFE). In Hyderabad, we started the Andhra Pradesh Film Employees Federation and we took on board dance directors, assistants, action choreographers and many others. But the SIFE's objection was that our federation was not recognised by the All India Film Employees Federation from the All India Film Employees Confederation. Earlier, they gave recognition to Madras (now Chennai), Karnataka, West Bengal, and Bombay. Today I can proudly say that our Telugu employees are getting more than other industry employees. I, along with a few others, set the wages and timings for all the employees and today we have corrected the system because we did a lot of work at that time. At that time, 18 unions were there and now there are 24 unions. I not only got recognition but also became the president of the All India Film Employees Confederation. This was definitely a landmark for the Telugu film industry. Today, the Telugu film employees like choreographers and action directors are working in Chennai, Mumbai, Kannada and everywhere. Our people have now won National Awards too, for which I felt very proud of myself.



RAPID FIRE

YOUR PINCH ME MOMENT OF LIFE: When Hyderabad film industry shifted here

THE LATEST THING YOU'VE DISCOVERED ABOUT YOURSELF: I don't fit into present situation

A SINGER WHO INSPIRES YOU: Mohammed Rafi and Ghantasala

PRODEST MOMENT OF YOUR CAREER: Getting semester system in college

FAVOURITE CITY/COUNTRY TO STAY IN: Hyderabad

