

QUOTE OF THE DAY
 I read that those who went to jail will become CM. But KTR's sister Kavitha went to jail first. He doesn't have a chance there. In KCR's family, that chance has gone to his sister who went to jail. He is unable to handle the competition in the family. He should stop such cheap thoughts. He worked as a minister for 10 years, went to the US. He should have some wisdom and use it

- Revanth Reddy, Chief Minister

India supports immediate ceasefire in **West Asia**
 P1

YUNG SAMMY
 GOES GLOBAL! JOINS DRAKE & MORE
 P9

Devi Sri Prasad expresses discontent with **Pushpa 2**
MAKERS
 P11

DON'T MISS...
Police fail to crack Warangal thefts
 A surge in thefts across the Warangal Police Commissionerate has left the authorities scrambling for answers. Police suspect that organised inter-state criminal gangs from Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan are behind many of these heists, which are primarily targeting locked houses, apartments, and commercial establishments. One of the most alarming incidents was the theft ...

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FIR against SP MP Barq, SP MLA's son
 Police have lodged seven FIRs in connection with the violence over a court-ordered survey of a Mughal-era mosque here, naming Samajwadi Party MP Zia-ur-Rehman Barq and local SP MLA Iqbal Mehmood's son Sohail Iqbal as accused, officials said on Monday. The district administration has already imposed prohibitory orders and barred the entry of outsiders into Sambhal till November 30. Internet services are ...

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Gold tumbles Rs 1K to Rs 79,400 per garm
 Gold prices tumbled Rs 1,000 to slip below the Rs 80,000 level in the national capital on Monday amid weak global trends, according to local marketmen. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity tanked Rs 1,000 to Rs 79,400 per 10 grams against the previous close of Rs 80,400 on Friday. Silver declined Rs 1,600 to Rs 91,700 per kg. The metal finished at Rs 93,300 per kg on Friday. The price of gold with 99.5 per cent purity plunged ...

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Kohli proves why team India needs him
 In a reverential tone, India skipper Jasprit Bumrah on Monday paid a massive compliment to Virat Kohli, saying the team needs his support more than the batting mainstay needs theirs. Kohli's 30th Test century, an unbeaten 100, played a big part in India's epochal 295-run win over Australia at Perth after getting rolled over for a paltry 150 in the first innings. "Obviously, I have already said that Virat Kohli does not need us. We need him. He is an experienced player. This is ...

-SPORTS

Ruckus over Adani issue
 ● Oppn tries to corner govt, seeks JPC probe
 ● Both Houses adjourned within minutes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
 Gautam Adani and others in a US court on charges **Continued on Page 2**
 The winter session of Parliament got off to a rocky start on Monday with both houses being adjourned within minutes of the commencement of proceedings as the opposition tried to corner the government on the issue of corruption allegations against the Adani Group and demanded a JPC probe.
 Addressing media before the two Houses met, Prime Minister Narendra Modi attacked the opposition on the issue of disruptions, saying those rejected by people "80-90 times" were trying to control Parliament by resorting to hooliganism for their political gains.
 Several opposition MPs had given adjournment notices in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha seeking suspension of the day's listed business to discuss the issue of the indictment of Adani group head

TG rejects Adani's Rs100 cr donation for Skills University

PNS ■ HYDERABAD
 Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said on Monday that his government had declined Rs 100 crore offered by the Adani Foundation towards the 'Young India Skills University' being established in Hyderabad.
 The decision comes in the wake of sensational bribery and fraud charges against Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani and his associates by US prosecutors, in connection with a mega solar power purchase agreement between Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) and various states, including neighbouring Andhra Pradesh.
 On Thursday, when the US court indictment came to light, opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi's working president KT Rama Rao alleged a nexus between Revanth and Adani, "even as the Congress high command and leader Rahul Gandhi accused the tycoon of being utterly corrupt, an offender."

Adani Group here to stay
 NAVREENA GHANATE naveena.ghanate@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD
 Although the Telangana government has declined the Rs. 100 crore donation offered by the Adani Group towards the Young India Skills University (YISU), Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has clarified that the group remains involved in the state's skilling and industrial projects.
 Asked by The Pioneer if Adani Logistics would continue with

skilling at YISU, the Chief Minister emphasized that Adani's role in YISU's logistics skilling segment would continue as planned. This decision to decline pertained only to the Rs 100 crore offered as donation.
 At YISU, each corporate entity focuses on skilling youth in specific sectors, and Adani is handling the logistics domain. This was explicitly mentioned by Minister Sridhar Babu when the Bill was introduced in the Assembly. **Continued on Page 2**
 A New York court has charged Adani and seven others, including his nephew Sagar, of promising Rs 2,029 crore in bribes to Indian government officials to obtain contracts.
 Revanth said, "Rahul Gandhi has clearly said that the state government or central government must call for tenders. With a proper systematic process in a democratic way, the ten- ders will be allotted, be it Adani, Ambani or Tata".
 The Chief Minister said that many companies had given funds towards establishing the Young India Skills University. In the same way, the Adani Group also offered us Rs 100 crore. I would like to reiterate the decision by the state government that it will not accept the Rs 100 crore from the Adani Group," he said. **Continued on Page 2**

KALESHWARAM PROJECT
Probe panel seizes records
 PNS ■ HYDERABAD
 The Justice PC Ghose Commission has deepened its inquiry into the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project, for which records related to works at various barrages, including Medigadda, have been seized.
 The Commission, which resumed its investigation into the project, questioned engineers, including Assistant Executive Engineers (AEE) and Divisional Engineers (DE), on construction details and work execution. Justice PC Ghose expressed his dissatisfaction with the responses to the questions posed.
 Registers documenting work done on the field level were seized, and signatures from engineers were taken to verify their authenticity.
 The Commission found discrepancies, including missing quality control registers, particularly related to sagging pillars at Medigadda and other barrages.
 Justice Ghose is understood to have specifically inquired whether work placement records were updated daily or **Continued on Page 2**

HARISH TO REVANTH
What about Rs 12 400-cr Adani deals made in Davos?
 PNS ■ HYDERABAD
 Former finance minister Harish Rao, in a calculated attack on Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, demanded clarity on the Rs. 12,400 crore agreements made with Adani during the recent Davos summit. In a press statement, Harish Rao questioned the Congress's contradictory stance, pointing out how Rahul Gandhi had been demanding a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe into Adani's alleged corrupt practices while Revanth Reddy was forging deals with the same tycoon.
 "Revanth Reddy, who recently announced the decision to return Rs. 100 crore donated by Adani to Young India Skill University, must **Continued on Page 2**

Vande Bharat Express gets delayed by 11 hours
 PNS ■ BHOPAL
 High drama was witnessed at Rani Kamalapati railway station in Bhopal after the Vande Bharat Express for Hazrat Nizamuddin in Delhi was delayed on Monday by nearly 11 hours due to a technical snag, officials and eyewitnesses said.
 Before the premium train, which otherwise departs from Rani Kamalapati station at 5.40 am, left for its destination in the evening, angry passengers staged a protest on **2**

Director Ram Gopal Varma ready to appear 'digitally' for probe
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 The Supreme Court of India has cancelled certain land allotments made to housing societies within the limits of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC). The verdict was delivered by a bench led by Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna on Monday.
 The ruling impacts various allotments of government land to public representatives, government offi-

SC cancels land allotment to housing societies in GHMC limits
 MPs, MLAs, civil servants, judges, defence personnel, journalists etc impacted
 PNS ■ HYDERABAD
 The court therefore constituted a three-member SIT (rural)) and IPS Sujata Kumari Veenapani (DSP (traffic) of Howrah).
 "The SIT shall take over the investigation... forthwith, all the records of the investigation shall be entrusted to SIT today during the course of the day and the SIT will start investigation without any delay. The SIT shall be at liberty to associate some other police officers, if so required," the bench ordered.
 The top court urged the Calcutta High Court chief justice to constitute a special bench before which the SIT would submit its weekly reports and seek further investigation.
 Senior advocate Narender Hooda, representing the petitioners, sought protection for **Continued on Page 2**

Maharashtra: Suspense over 'Kaun Banega CM' continues
 PNS ■ MUMBAI
 Suspense over who will be Maharashtra's next chief minister continued on Monday, two days after the ruling BJP-led Mahayuti won a landslide victory in the assembly elections, shattering the Congress-led Maha Vikas Aghadi's dream to wrest power.
 The formation of a new government in Maharashtra, which appeared likely immediately after the BJP-led coalition's thumping victory, has been delayed due to Shiv Sena's insistence that Eknath Shinde continue as the chief minister, sources said.
 After the November 20 election results were out on Saturday, there was talk that Devendra Fadnavis, instrumental in getting his party the highest-ever seats in the assembly, would be sworn in, as early as Monday, but that has not happened, due to the Mahayuti leaders not reaching a consensus on who will be the next CM, the sources said.
 There was speculation that Fadnavis, Shinde, and Ajit Pawar, who reached Delhi Monday to attend the **Continued on Page 2**

Artisan workers submitted a memorandum to the Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Monday
Bandi wants state govt to make artisan jobs permanent
 PNS ■ HYDERABAD
 Finding fault with the state government for "using artisan workers like slaves", Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar has demanded the State government to immediately make artisan jobs permanent. Otherwise, the Bharatiya Janata Party would wage a movement along with artisan communities.
 Bandi Sanjay Kumar asked the state government to convert the engagement of artisan workers in electricity **Continued on Page 2**

Routinely ordering CBI probe demoralises state police: SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
 Routinely ordering the CBI to take over probes not only leads to an "unimaginable burden" on the premier investigative agency, but also has a "very serious and far-reaching demoralising impact" on the officers of the state police, the Supreme Court on Monday highlighted.
 A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan made the remark while ordering an SIT investigation into the alleged torture of a woman in police custody following her arrest during the protests against the rape and murder of a doctor at R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.
 The bench, which modified the November 6 Calcutta High Court verdict upholding the single judge order directing a CBI probe, said, "It is not necessary for us to comment on those reasons except to say that entrustment of the investigation of matters to the CBI not only leads to an unimaginable burden on the premier investigative agency of the country, but also has a very serious and far-reaching demoralising impact on the officers of the state police."
 The bench did not find it prudent to proceed on the premise that senior IPS officers allocated to the West Bengal cadre were incompetent or inefficient to hold a fair and independent investigation and unearth the truth.
 The court therefore constituted a three-member SIT (rural)) and IPS Sujata Kumari Veenapani (DSP (traffic) of Howrah).
 "The SIT shall take over the investigation... forthwith, all the records of the investigation shall be entrusted to SIT today during the course of the day and the SIT will start investigation without any delay. The SIT shall be at liberty to associate some other police officers, if so required," the bench ordered.
 The top court urged the Calcutta High Court chief justice to constitute a special bench before which the SIT would submit its weekly reports and seek further investigation.
 Senior advocate Narender Hooda, representing the petitioners, sought protection for his clients and submitted the state had invoked provisions under the stringent POCSO Act against a young girl.
 The bench further directed the victims to approach the SIT to ensure no harm was caused to their lives and liberties, and the probe team was asked to take necessary steps without any delay.

The bench did not find it prudent to proceed on the premise that senior IPS officers allocated to the West Bengal cadre were incompetent or inefficient to hold a fair and independent investigation and unearth the truth



FIRST COLUMN CORPORATE CAREWASHING

Many organisations falsely present themselves as socially responsible



SAKSHI SETHI

Nowadays we often see that companies are engaged towards launching mental health awareness campaigns while maintaining toxic work environments or failing to provide meaningful employee support; at times companies celebrate diversity during cultural moments without addressing systemic inequities, such as unequal pay or a lack of diverse leadership. But the question arises are the employees getting benefited or are still victims?

In an age where ethical responsibility and social consciousness are increasingly demanded of corporations, governments and individuals, a troubling phenomenon termed carewashing has emerged. The term refers to the practice of falsely presenting an organisation, business or individual as socially or ethically responsible, particularly in areas of caregiving or support, to improve their reputation or deflect criticism. Much like its environmental counterpart greenwashing, carewashing also exploits emotional appeals to mask the absence of genuine commitment to caregiving causes.

Several factors such as modern consumers increasingly seeking brands that align with their values, create pressure for organisations to appear socially conscious or social platforms that provide both positive as well as failures, thereby encouraging companies to capitalise on social causes for visibility and if that not enough then such organisations outshine its competitors by attracting customers and talent with minimal invest-



ment in genuine reform contribute to the rising of carewashing. While these pressures reflect positive shifts in societal values, they also incentivise performative actions over authentic efforts. It is believed that when carewashing is exposed, it damages trust between organisations and their stakeholders as it is often when the dissonance between claims and actions becomes apparent. Employees who witness discrepancies between an organisation's statements and its actions often feel disillusioned.

This alienation leads to reduced morale, engagement and retention, especially among those drawn to the organisation by its purported values. Quiet often we hear once the trust is lost, rebuilding it is a slow and costly process. Exposure to carewashing through whistleblowers, investigative journalism, or public criticism can lead to significant reputational harm. By co-opting social causes for profit, carewashing trivialises important issues, potentially reducing the urgency of addressing them authentically. To counteract carewashing, organisations must prioritise authenticity and accountability. This involves providing measurable, verifiable data on social and environmental efforts rather than vague claims; including employees in shaping policies and initiatives to ensure alignment with internal realities; conducting regular audits and feedback loops that will help organisations stay true to their commitments and correct shortcomings and public statements should be backed by tangible actions, such as policy changes or resource allocation.

There is no denying that carewashing is a symptom of the growing demand for ethical behaviour in business and society, but it represents a shortcut that sacrifices trust and authenticity for superficial gains. While it may offer short-term visibility, its long-term consequences are overwhelmingly negative, eroding credibility and alienating stakeholders. Organisations must recognise that true social responsibility requires meaningful actions, transparency and a commitment to sustained progress. Only by moving beyond carewashing can businesses and institutions genuinely contribute to a better world while earning the loyalty and respect of their communities.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

Food subsidy: Go for direct transfer to curb leakages



UTTAM GUPTA

Despite extensive measures implemented by the government, including digitisation, pilferage persists, revealing systemic flaws in how food subsidies are administered

According to a Study titled 'Rationalising Public Distribution System in India' done by the Indian Council For Research On International Economic Relations (ICRIER), there was grain leakage under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) of 20 million tons (17 million ton of rice and 3 million ton of wheat) which is 28 per cent of the 71 million ton of grain off-take by states (that included 52 million ton of rice and 19 million ton wheat) during August 2022 - July 2023. The Study estimates the annual fiscal cost of this leakage to be around Rs 70,000 crore. Under the PMGKAY, the Union Government asks the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and other state agencies to procure food from the farmers at MSP (minimum support price) and organise its distribution to around 820 million people for free. The entire cost i.e. MSP paid to farmers plus handling and distribution cost (HDC) is reimbursed to the FCI/other state agencies as a subsidy. The money comes from the Union Budget's allocation for 'food subsidy'. While, the PMGKAY has been in force since January 1, 2023, before that, the Centre was giving food to 820 million persons (7 kg of cereals per person per month to 120 million poorest of the poor persons covered under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana or AAY families and five kilograms of cereals per person per month to the remaining 700 million) at a heavily subsidised price of Rs 2/3/1 per kg for wheat/rice/coarse cereals under the National Food Security Act (NFSA). In addition, since April 2020, it has given 5 kg of food per person per month for "free" to all 820 million beneficiaries under PMGKAY to mitigate the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

From January 1, 2023, it merged the free part of PMGKAY with the regular food security schemes under NFSA. Now, food is available to all 820 million beneficiaries for free under the new incarnation of NFSA, the PMGKAY. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced in November 2023, this arrangement will continue for five years until the end of CY 2028. During the financial year (FY) 2022-23, the Centre's expenditure on food subsidy was Rs 272,000 crore. Apart from expenses under PMGKAY for the whole of that FY, this amount also included the subsidy on food grain given under NFSA at the subsidised price of Rs 2/3/1 per kg for wheat/rice/coarse cereals from April to December 2022. Within this total expenditure, how much money was lost due to pilferage? How does the Study reach Rs 70,000 crore? The authors look at the 'economic cost' (EC) of rice and wheat. This is the MSP paid to farmers plus HDC. During 2022-23, this was Rs 36.7 per kg or Rs 36,700 per ton for rice and Rs 25.9 per kg or Rs 25,900 per ton for wheat. Multiply the pilfered quantity of rice 17 million tons by its EC, we get the cost of its pilferage Rs 62,390 crore. Likewise, multiply 3 million tons of pilfered wheat by its EC, and the cost comes to Rs 7770 crore. Thus, the total cost was around Rs 70,000 crore. This



is around 26 per cent of the food subsidy expenditure of Rs 272,000 crore for 2022-23. Taken as a percentage of the subsidy given under PMGKAY alone (the budget doesn't provide this figure; a back-of-the-envelope calculation using annual off-take of 55 million tons, EC for rice and wheat given above and their use in 75:25 ratio, yields Rs 187,000 crore), this is much higher at 37 per cent.

How has the Study arrived at the quantum of leakage?

The Study picked up monthly off-take (albeit "reported") data from the FCI from August 2022 to July 2023 and saw this in juxtaposition with "actual household consumption levels" taken from the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) 2022-23. While the former was taken as an approximation for the quantity of food grain sent for distribution amongst the PMGKAY beneficiaries, the latter was taken as a proxy of the quantity received.

Based on the above comparison, it was concluded that as against 52.4 million tons of rice that were sent, 35.7 million tons were received suggesting a shortfall of 16.7 million tons. Likewise, against 19 million tons of wheat that was sent, 16 million tons were received pointing toward a shortfall of 3 million tons. Thus, a total of 19.7 million tons or close to 20 million tons was pilfered from the public distribution system (PDS). But, there is a flaw in such a comparison.

At the Off-take level, it can't be surmised that the quantities that

left the FCI warehouses and were picked up by states were 'entirely' meant for PDS stocks to be used for distribution (actual consumption) by the PMGKAY beneficiaries.

Off-take figures also include food stocks in transit, buffer stock, operational reserves and cereals set aside for social welfare schemes and commercial sales by the government. Each of these serves a specific purpose. For instance, 'buffer stock' refers to a strategic stock for smoothening out price fluctuations —buying a commodity when the price is low and releasing it in the market when the price is high. Likewise, 'operational reserves' are kept as a backstop which can be used quickly in the case of an unplanned event/emergency. Similarly, stock in transit can't be considered as part of food grain meant for PDS consumption within a given time frame.

The quantities meant for all such purposes need to be excluded from the grains that left FCI warehouses and only the net figure available for PDS consumption should be compared with actual household consumption levels as read from the Consumption surveys. It seems, the Study hasn't done it.

This is also corroborated by the fact that the annual distribution of free food for PMGKAY beneficiaries is normally 55 million tons; against this, the Study uses 71 million tons.

At the beneficiary's end also, the actual household consumption level includes cereal consumed from multiple sources, such as

private purchases or state-specific schemes and not just the quantities available under PMGKAY etc. Therefore, it won't be on all fours to directly correlate with PDS off-take.

To conclude, there are leakages from the PDS though not on a scale indicated by the Study. Its root cause has to do with how food subsidy is administered. Under the extant system, the subsidy is built into the price which under this Scheme is Zero. Herein lies the rub.

The availability of a mammoth of around 55 million tons (the quantity distributed under the PMGKAY) in the supply chain with zero price tag is an open invitation to dubious operators to siphon off and sell in the open market raking in a moolah. Howsoever, foolproof one may make the system (Modi - government has done an exemplary job getting PoS (point of sale machines) installed at 530,000 fair price shops across the country; digitisation of supply chain from procurement to distribution; authentication of beneficiaries with their Aadhaar numbers and so on), as long as subsidy is routed through the State agencies, unscrupulous characters will always find ways to circumvent even the best of technology interventions aimed at curbing pilferage. Pilferage can be eliminated only when the government gives subsidies directly to the beneficiaries and allows the food markets to function competitively and efficiently.

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



'BUFFER STOCK' REFERS TO A STRATEGIC STOCK FOR SMOOTHENING OUT PRICE FLUCTUATIONS—BUYING A COMMODITY WHEN THE PRICE IS LOW AND RELEASING IT IN THE MARKET WHEN THE PRICE IS HIGH

Addressing rural housing challenges in India: A case study of PMAY-G

PMAY-G has transformed rural housing in India, delivering not just shelter but also dignity and opportunity to millions

Housing is a fundamental challenge for rural India, where a significant portion of households live in kutcha structures made of non-durable materials such as mud and bamboo. These homes are highly vulnerable to harsh weather conditions, exposing residents to risks and uncertainties. Recognising this, the Indian government launched the 'Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G)' as part of its commitment to achieving "Housing for All."

This ambitious welfare program aims to provide financial and construction assistance to build durable 'pucca' houses equipped with essential amenities. The scheme targets both houseless households and those residing in 'kutcha'



JEEVANT RAMPAL

or dilapidated structures. As of October 2024, PMAY-G has facilitated the construction of 2.67 crore houses, marking a significant milestone in its progress. However, this raises critical questions: Will this initiative truly ensure housing for all? How effectively does it address rural India's housing challenges?

Leveraging Technology for Quality and Oversight

A cornerstone of PMAY-G's success lies in its use of technology to enhance construction quality and ensure transparency in disbursement. One notable component is the 'Rural Mason Training (RMT) Program', developed in collaboration with the National Skill Development Corporation. The programme has trained 2.81 lakh masons, equipping them with the skills to deliver high-quality construction while fostering local expertise. This initiative not only improves housing quality but also accelerates construction. For instance, over 40 lakh houses were built in 2021-22, with the number surpassing 50 lakh in 2022-23, breaking all previous records. Further, the program prioritises disaster-resilient designs, supported

by tools like the 'Pahal Compendium'. This resource offers diverse, region-specific house designs incorporating disaster-resilient features. Complementing the compendium is an app that provides 3D visualisations of recommended house designs, ensuring practicality and accessibility.

Transformative Impact on Beneficiaries

PMAY-G's impact extends beyond physical housing. Recent research highlights its role in improving living conditions, access to infrastructure, and overall wellbeing. Beneficiaries have reported enhanced social status, self-esteem, and a sense of belonging—factors that potentially reduce distress migration. A key feature of the programme



is its focus on marginalised groups, promoting transparency and ensuring female co-ownership, thereby empowering women.

The initiative has also significantly contributed to rural employment. Each house constructed under PMAY-G generates approximately 314 person-days of work, distributed among skilled (81 days), semi-skilled (71 days), and unskilled (164 days) labour. This

employment impact is further amplified by integration with the 'Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGN-REGS)'. The quality of training under the RMT programme is evident, with certified masons even securing overseas employment opportunities. Such achievements underscore PMAY-G's dual focus on immediate housing needs and long-term skill development.

Comprehensive Programme Integration

One of PMAY-G's standout features is its integration with other government schemes to improve beneficiaries' overall quality of life. This includes: - Toilets through 'Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)' - LPG connections via 'Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala

Yojana (PMUY)' **Ensuring Transparency and Fairness**

Transparency in beneficiary selection is another critical strength of PMAY-G. Beneficiaries are identified using the 'Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC 2011' and 'Awaas+ 2018' lists, verified through Gram Sabhas and an appellate process. The program also uses the 'Awaas+2024 Mobile App', which enables households to self-survey and update their housing status. Recently, facial recognition systems were introduced to further improve oversight, ensuring fairness and reducing fraudulent claims.

Global Scale and Ambitions: PMAY-G Despite its notable success, PMAY-G faces sever-

al challenges that need attention. A significant issue is the lack of awareness among many eligible beneficiaries, particularly in remote areas, about the programme's eligibility criteria, highlighting the need for better information dissemination. Additionally, the program would benefit from stronger feedback mechanisms to address potential blind spots and improve implementation efficiency. Another concern is the uneven progress across states, with some exceeding their targets while others fall behind. Achieving balanced implementation will require greater political consensus and more equitable resource allocation.

(The writer is faculty, IIM Ahmedabad; views are personal)

YUNG SAMMY GOES GLOBAL! JOINS DRAKE & MORE

Trailblazing hip-hop sensation Yung Sammy, sits down with *The Pioneer* for an exclusive chat, as he speaks about his remarkable journey from the streets of Noida to the global stage, leaving an indelible mark on the music world

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With his innovative flair and unstoppable energy, Yung Sammy is rapidly becoming one of the most talked-about young artists in hip-hop. Through his inventive approach and boundless enthusiasm, this emerging artist is redefining the sonic landscape of his generation. His most recent freestyle, *Noida 2 NYC*, has achieved a historic milestone in Indian hip-hop by being featured on New York's *On The Radar* platform, further solidifying his global presence.

Following his highly regarded appearance on *Fire in the Booth* with Charlie Sloth, the musical artist tells us in an exclusive interview, "Hip-hop has always been unique in its storytelling and has undoubtedly been very cultural in expressing other cultures. I believe I have been able to have the USP and I am also receptive to other cultures, including India and my own culture, where I was born at Nigeria. Therefore, if you listen to any of my music, you'll notice that I employ a variety of voice modulations, lingos and slang, which is more open because I have been receptive to both cultures."

He believes that music has a significant role in culture and storytelling. When you see Afro music, you may say, "I'm trying something new like Punjabi lyrics on Afro music, an Afro dialect and Afro music and Afro accent. He has a lot to convey about his experiences living in both countries, so he thinks music has played a significant role. As a result, the music has a greater taste and more listeners." Sammy believes that it has consistently played a positive role.

The trailblazing Nigerian hip-hop artist further states, "You know, artists have always been pushed by *Fire in the Booth*. The opportunity to showcase musicians from around the globe and my ability to represent Nigeria and India. I made the track for the intro and when I was in London, Shabz informed me that we were going to *Fire in the Booth* tomorrow. To be honest, I had no idea that I would be a part of the *Fire in the Booth*. When I was in the venue and I saw Charlie Sloth, I was really anxious. However, when I was rapping, there was a point in the video where I was kind of annoyed because I began to remember where I started and where I was. That emotion took me by surprise and I thought, 'I need to kill this shit.' I wanted to be flawless when I was in and the location had to be flawless, so that's what I was actually thinking while I was pitting the bars, which was undoubtedly a one-take. I took care to ensure I didn't overlook anything."

Yung Sammy is totally obsessed with Indian music - and it shows in his amazing collaborations with artists like 'Seedhe Maut!' He's also into Honey Singh, Krsna, Raftaar and all the other talented musicians who are making waves in the Indian hip-hop scene. With the scene exploding right now, Yung Sammy is right at the forefront! "As I mentioned earlier, it's a huge honour to represent both India and my home country, Nigeria. As an artist, gaining legitimacy and respect is crucial and people's admiration is a wonderful bonus. In my opinion, it's a significant achievement and it serves as a reminder that anyone can succeed, regardless of their race, nationality, or culture. Moreover, it shows that one can repre-

sent their country from anywhere in the world." Well, true that Yung!

Freestyling is a gift in itself. Not all artists possess the ability to freestyle. For Yung Sammy, freestyling is also a skill he honed in the studio, where he and his team would play instrumental tracks and improvise rap verses. They would experiment with different rhythms and flows to test their abilities and improve their freestyling skills. As a result, Yung Sammy has a deep appreciation for artists who can freestyle well. Joining the league of artists like Drake, Central Cee, Da Baby and Ice Spice, Yung Sammy has become the second India-based hip-hop artist, after Hanumankind, to feature on a prominent global show. He states, "This freestyle is more than just music - it's a bridge between Noida and New York, showing the world what Indian hip-hop is capable of. From the streets of Noida to New York's iconic platforms, this journey represents every young Indian artist's dream."

Building on this momentum, his unique journey from Noida's streets to New York's hip-hop scene serves as an inspiration for aspiring Indian artists. His ability to blend authentic Hindi lyrics with international rap styles has not only caught the attention of global platforms but has also created a new blueprint for Indian hip-hop artists aiming to make their mark on the world stage.



Navdeep Khanuja's *Million Dollar* deals and beyond

In an exclusive interview with *The Pioneer*, Navdeep Khanuja, star of *Million Dollar Listing India*, opens up about his journey in luxury real estate, sharing insights into his business mantra and future plans. The new show offers an inside look at the high-stakes world of selling multimillion-dollar properties to India's elite, and his expertise makes him a key figure in this thrilling venture.

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In the high-stakes world of real estate, success isn't just about sharp deals and gleaming properties, it's about resilience, adaptability and teamwork. For Navdeep Khanuja, his journey to building a thriving enterprise epitomises these values, with family support and a strategic vision playing pivotal roles.

Reflecting on his early days, he recalls a defining moment: "Within a couple of months, I closed a significant transaction. That early success gave me the confidence to go all in." Starting as a one-man army, he managed every aspect of the business himself. However, as demand surged, he quickly realised the importance of a solid support system.

"It was just me at the beginning," he shares. "Then the business expanded so rapidly that I had to hire an executive assistant. Even then, it wasn't enough. I remember telling my wife, Geet, who was managing our five-month-old baby at the time, 'Hire two full-time maids because I need you in the office. The business is growing, and I can't handle it alone.'"

Geet's entry into the business marked a turning point. "She took charge of operations and follow-ups while I focused on the fieldwork," he explains. Her efficiency enabled the business to scale smoothly and today, their team has grown to 15 members. "The credit goes to my wife for managing operations so seamlessly," he says.

By 2023, he had achieved considerable milestones but yearned for more. Inspired by Netflix's *Selling Sunset*, he began dreaming of showcasing Indian real estate in a similar glamorous light. "I thought, 'This doesn't exist in India yet.' I envisioned something centered on my life, my work, and the stunning properties I deal with," he says.

He discussed the concept with industry friends, but one filmmaker advised him to wait for a network's interest. In January 2024, destiny intervened when he received a message from Endemol. "They were planning a show like this and wanted to meet me," he recalls. "It felt surreal, like the power of manifestation coming to life."

During his initial meeting, he learned that the global real estate franchise *Million Dollar Listing* was launching in India. "The moment I heard that, I knew it had to involve me," he says confidently.

Unlike the dramatic rivalries often seen in reality TV, he found the experience on *Million Dollar Listing India* refreshingly collaborative. "All six of us have unique spaces in the market, catering to different clientele," he explains. "We didn't have prior rivalries, so instead of competing, we ended up learning from each other."

He highlights how the show provided opportunities to collaborate on projects, gaining insights into his peers' approaches. "It became a learning curve for all of us. Each one of us is doing fabulous work in our respective spaces and the show allowed us to showcase our strengths while learning from others."

Being on *Million Dollar Listing India* wasn't just a professional milestone, it was a game-changer for his personal brand. "These days, personal branding plays a massive role," he explains. "When a client invests, they're not just buying a property, they're trusting you, your reputation and your expertise." The show gave him a platform to highlight his authenticity and professionalism. "It's about building credibility as a realtor and connecting with people on a personal level. The exposure helps potential clients trust us with their investments," he adds.

Filming the show posed its own challenges. For a month and a half, he had to delegate responsibilities to his team while focusing on filming. "Honestly, I didn't work much during that period," he admits. "I was setting up strategies and over-seeing things from afar." Despite his absence, his team delivered impressive results. "I'm so thankful to them for stepping up. They not only kept things running smoothly but achieved big numbers. It's a testament to the systems we've put in place."

He also credits the show for reshaping his marketing strategy. "It's no longer just about selling properties, it's about selling a lifestyle, a vision, and trust," he says. With increased visibility, his focus shifted to relatability and authenticity, ensuring that his personal and professional values resonate with his audience.

One memorable deal showcased on the show involved a young client returning from the US. "He contacted me from his UK number, saying he wanted a 500-square-yard property for his mother," he recounts. "He told me, 'I've come to you and I'm not going anywhere else.'"

The transaction unfolded swiftly. "His mother, a senior advocate, visited one of the properties and decided to close the deal on the spot. It was a quick, successful transaction and you'll see it all on the show," he shares proudly.

For those entering the competitive world of real estate, he emphasises authenticity and a client-first approach. "First and foremost, find your niche," he advises. "Identify your space in the market and approach it your way. You don't need a mentor or a godfather. I didn't have either, I carved my own path by staying true to myself."

He underscores the importance of honesty and transparency. "You're handling clients' hard-earned money, it's a responsibility that should never be taken lightly. Establish your credibility through fairness and integrity. Clients value trust, and that's what sets you apart in this industry."

Ultimately, he believes success lies in carving your own journey. "Don't imitate someone else's path. Define your style, build relationships, and focus on trust. Real estate is as much about connections as it is about properties. If you stick to these principles, success will follow."

Participating in *Million Dollar Listing India* marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for him. "Being on Sony LIV is not just about visibility, it's about opening new doors and exploring fresh prospects," he says. For him, growth is a constant pursuit and his journey exemplifies how resilience, vision and authenticity can lead to unparalleled success.



INDIA'S WAR ON DIABETES

The 52nd Annual Conference of the Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India (RSSDI), in collaboration with the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), was officially commenced on World Diabetes Day. The event attended by several dignitaries brought together over 5,000 healthcare professionals, national and international experts and prominent speakers to discuss and address the growing diabetes epidemic in India. According to the latest report from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), more than 10 crore people are currently affected.

Science and Technology Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, who was one of the attendees at the conference, stated that to tackle the epidemic of diabetes that confronts us today, we need a collaborative effort that has to be extended beyond the practitioners of medicine and the researchers of medicine. He further opined, "This collaboration must include inputs from cultural and social activists. As rightly pointed out, it's about breaking barriers and bridging gaps—between individuals and patients, individuals and doctors, individuals and families, individuals and soci-

ety, as well as between the private and public sectors. I have been a strong advocate of increasing private-sector involvement in these efforts. It is only through such partnerships that we can achieve truly optimal results."

The conference also announced a joint declaration by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and RSSDI. This declaration underscores the global and regional commitment to diabetes awareness, prevention and treatment. Another key aspect of the conference is the Doctors' Pledge, or Doctor's Oath, with over 10,000 healthcare professionals from across India taking a solemn oath to increase diabetes awareness, advocate for early screenings, and promote healthier lifestyle choices.

Dr. Banshi Saboo, Chief Diabetologist & Chairman of Dia Care—Diabetes Care & Hormone Clinic, emphasised, "The urgency of addressing diabetes as a national priority cannot be overstated. By focusing on prevention, early diagnosis and patient education, we empower individuals to manage their health more proactively, ultimately reducing the burden of this epidemic on families and communities."

The conference agenda features in-depth sessions on various critical aspects of diabetes care and treatment. Key highlights included discussions on diabetes in pregnancy and women's health, addressing topics such as gestational diabetes and unique concerns like diabetes and PCOS, and highlighting both maternal and fetal health. Sessions on Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes management will also provide insights into insulin therapy, glucose monitoring guidelines and the latest combination therapies.

The program also highlighted nationwide activities led by doctors, including the A-Z Diabetes Awareness Activity campaign. Emerging therapies and technological advances are another focal point, with workshops on Artificial Intelligence in diabetes care, Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) and alternative therapies that explore new technological tools and their applications in patient care. Organ-specific complications related to diabetes, including heart, liver, kidney and nervous system issues, will also be explored in detail to help attendees understand the broader impacts of the disease.

Lifestyle, obesity and diet were the critical themes, with master classes and nutritional talks addressing the role of obesity in diabetes and strategies for managing it through diet, exercise and the latest treatments. A specialised focus was placed on the mental health aspects of diabetes, underscoring the importance of psychological support in diabetes management.

Prevention, global strategies and perspectives, including a lecture by the IDF President, provided insights into international standards and community-focused preventive measures. Additionally, practical workshops on CPR, manuscript writing, insulin use and case-based learning will equip healthcare providers with the skills needed to enhance their clinical practice.



what's brewing?



Hyderabad witnessed a spellbinding showcase of Mishru's Resonance 2024/25 collection, curated by Swapna Anumolu at The Mishru store in Banjara Hills. Enhanced by sculptural furniture, design and storytelling, reflecting its dedication to Indian craftsmanship and contemporary innovation.

PARTY



Malabar Gold & Diamonds launched its Brides of India Festival! As a part of this festival sale, they have a 25% off on value addition and diamonds. The offer is valid till December 8, 2024.



Over 600 industry leaders and professionals came together at QE Conclave 2024 in Hyderabad, hosted by Qualizeal, to explore the future of Quality Engineering. The event also marked the launch of their AI-powered quality engineering tool, QMentisAI.

PHOTOS BY - SV CHARY



The Vignana Jyothi Institute of Management (VJIM) hosted the 30th Convocation with solemn grandeur at Bachupally campus of the Institute, today. The event was attended by President and Executive Board Member of LTIMindtree, Sudhir Chaturvedi, as Chief Guest.



Yardley London, relaunched its signature Perfumed Beauty Talc range. With a sleek, contemporary design, the collection is crafted to appeal to today's modern, driven women while preserving its time-honoured legacy of elegance and quality.



Apollo Institute of Medical Sciences & Research (AIMSR) Hyderabad, hosted the White Coat Ceremony, for the MBBS Class of 2024 students, at the RNR Auditorium, Jubilee Hills. Chief Guest Dr. Rooma Sinha, Honorary Professor, Gynecology, Apollo Hospitals; presented the White Coats to students on the occasion. Aparna Reddy, COO, AIMSR; Dr. K. Manohar, Dean, Apollo Institute of Medical Sciences & Research; along with the faculty from the Institute and parents of students, were present to catch a glimpse of the momentous occasion.



Tansen has introduced 'Sardi Ke Rang, Tansen Ke Sang,' an exclusive showcase of winter seasonal cuisine. Chef Gagan Deep Singh has curated a special menu to bring forth the warmth and flavours of the season.



Oldschool Brindavanam, a unique experience center focused on fostering holistic well-being, hosted a captivating conversation yesterday featuring Dr. Sathya Sindhuja, a renowned Siddha Yoga doctor. The event delved into the ancient wisdom of Siddha Yoga, a powerful self-healing system for the human body.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



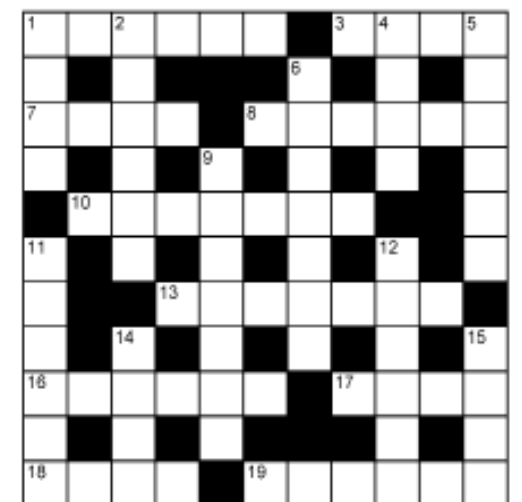
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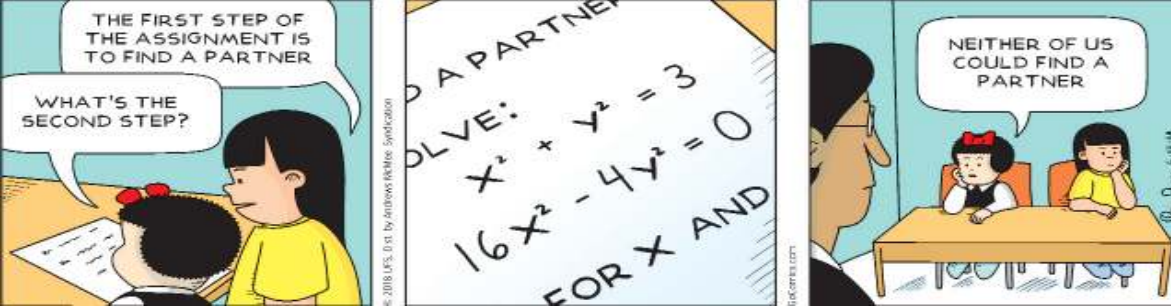
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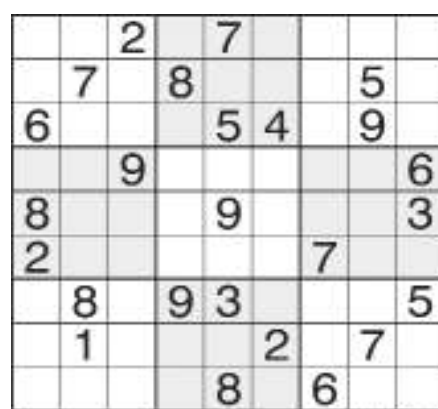
CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

ACROSS

- A hole in a hill for a train
- Unlock
- Very uncommon
- An animal with a shell
- An erupting mountain
- A long sort of table where you are served in a shop
- A restaurant worker
- Meat and vegetables cooked slowly in liquid
- Scraps of material
- A planet

DOWN

- Ripped and ragged
- Opposite of wide
- Tame animals kept at home
- Required
- On fire
- A month
- Reply
- Defeated
- Make music with the voice
- These birds hunt at night



GINGER MEGGS



TUNE TURNS SOUR

Devi Sri Prasad expresses discontent with *Pushpa 2* makers



THE MAKERS OF PUSHPA 2 HAVE ROPED IN THREE MUSIC DIRECTORS FOR THE BACKGROUND MUSIC, AS THEY FEEL THAT DSP (DEVI SRI PRASAD) IS NOT DELIVERING ON TIME. IN RESPONSE, HE OPENLY CRITICISED THE PRODUCERS REGARDING THE ISSUE AT THE PUSHPA 2 SONG RELEASE EVENT IN CHENNAI

SURESH KAVIRAYANI
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It is known that the makers of *Pushpa 2* have roped in three additional music directors - SS Thaman, B Ajaneesh Loknath and Sam CS - to work on the film's background score, alongside the primary music director, Devi Sri Prasad. This decision was reportedly made due to concerns that the film's delay was partly caused by the background music. However, this move openly suggests that the makers are dissatisfied with Devi Sri Prasad's work. On Sunday, the makers released a special song from the film at an event in Chennai. The song, titled *Kissak*, features Allu Arjun and Sreeleela. The film's lead pair, Allu Arjun and Rashmika Mandanna, along with Sreeleela, attended the event. Music director Devi Sri Prasad, who resides in Chennai, was also present.

During his speech, Devi Sri Prasad primarily spoke in Telugu, possibly to convey his thoughts directly to the producers of *Pushpa 2*. At one point, he stated, "Whatever we want, we have to ask and take it. The payment from the producers or for the credit on the screen!" His satirical talk is indirectly points towards the producers. He went on to say that if he receives support from fans, nothing will occur.

The music director discusses the movie and expressed

his happiness after watching the first half of it. "But when I completed the second half too, it was definitely on another level. Allu Arjun is mind blowing and his performance is next level," said Devi Sri Prasad about the film. This confirms that he has provided the music for the entire film.

However, it is still not known whether the makers will go on further with Devi Sri Prasad's background music, or the other three music directors.

Going ahead, he went on to express his disagreement on the producers. "Ravi (producer) has so much love for me at the same time he brought more complaints than love," said DSP. "You didn't give the song in time, background score was not given and even you didn't come for this programme not on time, just like how he has several complaints to me," said DSP. He added that he came to this event nearly 25 minutes before, but they didn't allow him. And the music director added that the producer, after seeing him, said 'wrong timing.' "What do I do sir, if they didn't allow me



“RAVI (PRODUCER) HAS SO MUCH LOVE FOR ME AT THE SAME TIME HE BROUGHT MORE COMPLAINTS THAN LOVE. YOU DIDN'T GIVE THE SONG IN TIME, BACKGROUND SCORE WAS NOT GIVEN”

inside," said DSP to producer Ravi. "Whatever you want to ask, do it right now, if we do the same separately there's no kick in it," said the music director. This tells us that the differences between producers and the music director continues. The same producers made a film with Ajith titled *Good Bad Ugly* which they roped in Devi Sri Prasad as music director initially. Now, they replaced him with GV Prakash Kumar. *Pushpa 2* is releasing on December 5 and the special song is not going well when compared to the *Oo Antava Mava* from part one. The trailer also does not appeal to the Telugu audience.



Tamil music director-duo Vivek-Mervin enters Tollywood

The Telugu film industry provides a platform for numerous artists, technicians, and other professionals. Many female actors and antagonists from different languages can be seen. Several technicians from various regions of India are currently employed in Tollywood and Mythri Movie Makers has recently brought in a new music director duo to the industry. Tamil music director Vivek-Mervin is

ready to make their first appearance in Telugu with a Ram Potheneni movie directed by Mahesh Babu, known for *Miss Shetty Mr Polishetty*. Ram Potheneni takes an active approach in promoting fresh and thrilling talent. The musical works for this film will be handled by the talented music composer-duo Vivek-Mervin. The producers announced on Monday that the music for *RaPo22*

will be composed by the Vivek-Mervin duo.

Vivek Siva and Mervin Solomon, who are better known by their stage name of Vivek-Mervin.

They collaborated on multiple highly praised Tamil movies, with the standout being *Vada Curry*. They also created music for Dhanush's film *Pataas*. *RAPO22* is set to star Ram and Bhagyashree Borse in the main roles.

Tollywood's weekend washouts disappoint

Recently, Vishwak Sen's movies like *Mechanic Rocky*, *Zebra* and *Devaki Nandana Vasudeva* were released. Despite Vishwak Sen's strong belief in the success of his film and his aggressive promotion, the audience did not respond positively and rejected it. The actor had high expectations for this film, but it didn't make as much money as anticipated at the box office. The figures are significantly lower compared to Vishwak's prior movies, resulting in a huge disappointment and a major setback for the actor. This film marked Ravi Teja Mullapudi's first venture as a director, with Shraddha Srinath and Meenakshi Chaughary portraying the female leads.

Another movie called *Zebra* was also released, featuring Satya Dev, Daali Dhananjaya, Satya Raj and Priya Bhavani Shankar. Satya Dev, who has been seeking a great opportunity for the past few years, is optimistic that this movie will be the perfect one. However, to his disappointment, the audience immediately rejected the film. The director of the film is Easvar Karthic, and the plot revolves around a banking scam and money laundering. However, it appears that the director was unable to effectively communicate the story. Despite being shown on a holiday like Sunday, the film does not attract many viewers to the box office, resulting in disappointing numbers for Satya Dev once again.

The second film of Mahesh Babu's nephew Ashok Galla, *Devaki Nandana Vasudeva*, was also released but got cancelled in numerous areas on the very first day. Arjun Jandiyala serves as the director of the film, with Devdatta Nage making his debut as the villain in *Aadipurush*. Miss India Manasa Varanasi also had her first appearance as the female protagonist; however, the movie was rightfully not successful in theaters. The filmmaker invested heavily in this movie, but he is finding it challenging to profit from it.

Vishnu Manchu locks release date of *Kannappa*

Vishnu Manchu's highly anticipated project, *Kannappa*, is ready for its big premiere. Accompanied by Mohan Babu, actor Sarathkumar, Arpit Ranka and director Mukesh Kumar Singh, Vishnu went to the Shri Mahakaleswar Temple in Ujjain to officially reveal the film's release date.

Kannappa is set to be globally released on April 25, 2025, strategically scheduled for the summer, which is an ideal time for movie premieres. The movie will be available in languages other than Telugu, including Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, and Hindi. Vishnu Manchu has enlisted numerous top actors from various languages, such as Mohan Lal, Akshay Kumar,

Sarath Kumar and Prabhas, to portray important characters in the movie. Filming is done and post-production is nearly finished as well. The majority of the movie was filmed in New Zealand.

So far, the movie has released initial posters showcasing the main actors and a teaser, both of which have greatly increased excitement for the film. The film narrates the untold tale of Kannappa, the greatest follower of Lord Shiva, known for his immense courage and unwavering devotion. The movie is being made on a global level, with Hollywood experts participating in its creation. The movie will highlight the stunning scenery of New Zealand, offering viewers a magnificent visual treat.



FALSE ALARM! *KANTARA: CHAPTER 1* TEAM CLARIFIES ACCIDENT RUMOURS

Reports indicate that a bus transporting certain individuals from the *Kantara: Chapter 1* team was involved in an accident, leading to the suspension of the film shooting. Kannada actor Rishabh Shetty is currently starring in this movie and the filming is progressing rapidly. This is the movie that came before *Kantara*, which was a big success. However, it was stated that the shooting came to a stop as the bus transporting 20 junior artistes from Jakkal Kollur was involved in an accident, resulting in nearly six severe injuries.

However, the production company strongly refuted these claims and stated that filming is still in progress. It was reported that there was a collision, however, they managed to get away unharmed. In a



statement, the production stated that the shooting commenced at 6 am in the morning.

"The news making the rounds is completely false. The *Kantara: Chapter 1* team began shooting at 6 am today, and everything is proceeding as normal. A minor accident occurred 20 kilometers away from the shooting location, involving a local bus carrying some members of the *Kantara* team. However, no injuries were reported," said the production house in a statement.

Kantara was widely popular not just in Kannada but also in other languages. Rishabh Shetty is both the director and main actor, with Saptami Gowda playing the female lead. B Ajaneesh Loknath is in charge of composing the music.

I automatically want to put myself in tough

PTI ■ PERTH

Jasprit Bumrah said on Monday that he relishes absorbing the pressure in tight situations as captain and bowler which can make the job of his less experienced colleagues much easier. The ace pacer was India's standout bowler with an eight-wicket haul in the Perth Test, shaping India's humongous 295-run drubbing of Australia. "Whenever the tough scenarios come, I look at myself to see how I can contribute, even when I'm not the captain. So, whenever tough scenarios are there, I look at answers — if I'm going to bowl at this moment, what can I do? I automatically want to put myself in tough scenarios," said Bumrah in the post-match press conference here. His fighting spirit found resonance in young bowlers like Harshit Rana and Nitish Kumar Reddy as all contributed at crucial junctures at the Optus Stadium. "I was trying to put myself in

that tough scenario to make the job a little bit easier for the new guys coming in. Because, you know, it's not very easy in the first tour to take a lot of responsibility. "So, I was trying to do that and very happy to be on the positive side," he added. Despite the historic win, Bumrah will have to vacate the top seat when Rohit Sharma returns for the Adelaide Test to lead India. So, how will he tackle a rather personal tough spot? Bumrah offered a cheeky reply. "I'm not going to tell him that I'm going to leave (captaincy)," he said. Going more matter of fact, the 30-year-old said: "I said that in the previous press conference as well, he's the captain and he's done a phenomenal job. I was filling in for him. "I had discussions when he was in India, you know, discussing how we are shaping up. But, yeah, But, yeah, I'm going to help him in whatever capacity I can," he noted. However, Bumrah was quite chuffed to see his side



responding to a marshy situation after getting bundled out for 150 in the first innings. The Indian bowlers struck

back to skittle the Aussies for 104 in their first essay. "I am very proud of the team. We were put under pressure in the first innings when we

were bowled out for 150. But then, you know, the team showed character and didn't lose belief. So, that is something that will be really

special for us. "Obviously, in this game, there are a lot of positives for us. You know, we scored a lot of runs in the second innings.

New guys coming in, also chipping in with a lot of runs. Of course, Virat scoring a 100 as well is a great sign for us," he added. So, what was the plan of the Indian bowling unit to be successful on the Perth pitch? "There was some health on the wicket. So, I want to make the batters play as much as I can because the new ball is crucial over here. So, with the wicket having dents in it, the ball would seam around." Bumrah said the key for his bowlers was not to get desperate to bag wickets even in helpful conditions. "Sometimes when you are bowled out for a lower score, you can be a little too desperate and try too much to get wickets. When you try too much here, it doesn't really help and the run scoring goes high. So, we had to be nice and disciplined." The 30-year-old pacer was delighted to see his colleagues adjusting to the Perth length very quickly to make an impact. "Usually in Perth, there could be a scenario when we come

from India, you tend to bowl a little short because you can get excited by the bounce and you can't find the length. It looks good when you bowl a back of length delivery and the batsman gets beaten, but the batsman is still there. "So, you have to find the right length. We were focusing on our strength. We as a bowling unit got a lot of dismissals through LBW and caught behind. So, yeah, we realised that, you have to stick to your strengths and find the right length and we were able to do that," he explained. However, Bumrah reminded the team that they needed to start afresh in the second Test since it would be the Pink Ball Test, starting from December 6 at Adelaide. "Adelaide might be totally different. It's a pink ball. So, yes, you can take the confidence from here. But, again, you have to start from zero. You have to build on this confidence. "You have to take learnings from this game as well. So we're going to take it in our stride and, you know, put our best foot forward," he noted.

Kohli proves why team India needs him

PTI ■ PERTH

In a reverential tone, India skipper Jasprit Bumrah on Monday paid a massive compliment to Virat Kohli, saying the team needs his support more than the batting mainstay needs theirs. Kohli's 30th Test century, an unbeaten 100, played a big part in India's epochal 295-run win over Australia at Perth after getting rolled over for a paltry 150 in the first innings. "Obviously, I have already said that Virat Kohli does not need us. We need him. He is an experienced player. This is his fourth or fifth tour. So, he knows his cricket more than anyone else," said Bumrah in the post-match press meet. "He was in good shape. He was mentally switched on. Sometimes, as long as the career is, sometimes you bat in tough scenarios. He has always been batting in tough scenarios. So, it is always difficult to do in every match. But he was batting in a very good form and in a very good space. "And obviously, he got a good delivery in the first inning. But he was still in a great space. And in the



second inning, he capitalized. He needed a lot of experience at that time. So, he played with him and also made the other player play with him." The stand-in skipper added, "So, we are very happy for that. And obviously, at the start of the series, when he comes in confidence, you can't ask for more than this." Bumrah was also delighted to register his first Test win as skipper, but remained firmly rooted to the ground saying that the India need to start afresh in the second Test against Australia at Adelaide on December 6. "Special win, first win as captain. We were put under pressure and we showed the character. "We can take confidence from this game but we need to start fresh in the second Test. We need to carry forward the learnings as well to Adelaide," Bumrah added. The speedster also said there were no jitters in the dressing room despite getting bundled out for a low score in the first innings. "When we got out for 150, no one was feeling down in the dressing room. That was the biggest positive, that attitude, you know," he said.



Getting Ishan Kishan a huge deal for us, nothing

PTI ■ JEDDAH

Sunrisers Hyderabad head Coach Daniel Vettori was most excited about securing Ishan Kishan on day one of the IPL mega auction here but admitted that losing T Natarajan to Delhi Capitals was a setback. Kishan, who made his name at the Mumbai Indians, was sold to SRH for Rs 11.25 crore on Sunday. The left-arm batter has had a tumultuous year, having lost his place in the Indian team as well as a BCCI central contract for defying the board's diktat to play domestic cricket. However, he is back playing Ranji Trophy. SRH bought as many as eight players on day one including pacers Mohammed Shami (Rs 10 crore) and Harshal Patel (Rs 8 crore). However, they were not able to buy back T Natarajan and Vettori said nobody could offset the loss of the left-arm pacer. SRH had retained five players ahead of the auction including skipper Pat Cummins, Travis Head, Abhishek Sharma, Heinrich

Klaasen and Nitish Reddy. "Nothing sets off Nattu's loss (smiles). Every team goes through it, whether you try and find the players early and...Pounce on opportunities or you try and wait for the back end," said Vettori in a media interaction. Natarajan was bought by Delhi Capitals for Rs 10.75 crore. "We decided today to try and sense an opportunity when they came along and Mohammad Shami was one and then Harshal Patel, they were two guys that we potentially didn't think would go for those prices (bargain buys). "And then Ishan Kishan was a huge deal for us. We really wanted to secure him and we thought he, once again, we thought he'd go for more. So extremely happy that we got those three players as well as the rest," said Vettori, who took time off from his coaching duties for Australia in the ongoing first Test against India. Vettori said skipper Cummins is in agreement with all the picks.

"Yes, yes there were (inputs from Cummins). A sad captain tonight (referring to Australia being behind in Perth), he had a hard day. I spoke to him earlier today (Sunday) and he understood the logic of the players that we'd gone for and then he had some ideas for obviously the rest of the squad building," said the former New Zealand spinner. Leg-spinner Rahul Chahar was a steal at Rs 3.2 crore. Vettori said they factored both recent performance and pedigree before going for the players. "We identified players that we thought had performed in the IPL previously. So we put a premium on that experience. And we've seen that pay off time and time again. "So to get those players who maybe didn't have the season they wanted, in terms of Rahul Chahar last year (for Punjab Kings), we still see the skill set. We still see a bowler who's played for India, and hopefully in our conditions, he can be a real asset for us," Vettori added.

Harshit Rana, Nitish Reddy prove detractors wrong

PTI ■ PERTH

Skipper Jasprit Bumrah was highly impressed by the fearless attitude and maturity of Harshit Rana and Nitish Kumar Reddy, saying he never got the feeling that the two youngsters were playing in Australia for the first time. Their selection was viewed with raised eyebrows in the run-up to the first Test in Perth, but they silenced the doubters, chipping in their own way in India's massive 295-run win over the Aussies. "When they made their debut, the biggest positive sign was that they were not nervous at all. It didn't feel like they were playing for the first time in Australia or it was their first match," Bumrah said in the post-match press conference here on Monday. Rana took the prized wicket of Travis Head in the first



innings with a gem of a delivery and was even not hesitant to exchange a few words with veteran Mitchell Starc, despite them being team-mates at the Kolkata Knight Riders during the IPL 2024. Nitish made nerveless 41 and 38 across two innings here, knocks that belied his lack of sufficient exposure in First-

Class cricket. "If you are scared, then your fear will not go away. So, that is a very positive sign for me that they are not afraid and have a lot of desire to learn. "They have started very well and hopefully, they will do well in the future as well," added Bumrah. The pace talisman said the two young players were more

than happy to handle the responsibility once they were informed of their debut. "They themselves were looking for responsibility. When you talk to them... they are more than ready. They were looking for responsibility. So, that is a very positive sign for our team. "All the youngsters who are coming (in), they are very hungry. They have a lot of faith in their ability. So, if that happens, then you can learn skills," he said. Similarly, Yashasvi Jaiswal was also playing his first Test Down Under but the left-hander left an indelible impression with a remarkable 161. Bumrah said it was the best Test innings in Jaiswal's fledgling career because the 22-year-old showed a lot of self-restraint. "If I had to choose a man of

the match, I would choose Jaiswal. I think this was his best Test knock so far because, you know, he has an attacking nature. But in that second innings, he left certain balls, he took his time and batted deep. That gives us a lot of confidence. "He showed that he has patience as well and he's ready to adapt and change. That is a brilliant sign for Indian cricket that a batsman is able to adapt so early in his career," said Bumrah. The 30-year-old also did not forget the role KL Rahul played as an opener. The right-hander made an obdurate 26 off 74 balls in the first innings before getting out to a dubious caught-behind decision, and a more fluent 77 off 176 balls in the second while sharing 201 runs with Jaiswal for the first wicket.

We are a really tight unit: Cummins scotches speculation on dressing room divide

PTI ■ PERTH

Australia captain Pat Cummins on Monday defended his struggling batting unit after former players including Adam Gilchrist raised the question of a potential batters and bowlers divide in the dressing room. Following one of their heaviest defeats at home, Cummins was asked if there were any divisions in the team with batters letting the team down in Perth. The chatter around possible tensions in the unit started when Josh Hazlewood was asked about Australia's approach going into day four, having been reduced to 12 for three on day three chasing an improbable 534. Australia were bundled out for 104 in their second innings after India put up 150 on day one. "You probably have to ask one

of the batters that question. I'm sort of relaxing and trying to get a bit of physio and a bit of treatment, and I'm probably looking mostly towards the next Test and what plans we can do against these batters," Hazlewood said on Sunday. A day later, Cummins cleared the air. "I don't know what Joshy (Hazlewood) said, but no, not at all (division). There's plenty of times where the batters have dragged us bowlers out of tight situations, and we've done the same. So it's a really tight unit. It's probably one of the tightest teams I've ever played with," Cummins was quick to scotch the speculations following the loss. "We really enjoy playing cricket together. We've been through a lot over the last few years, the core group. So no problems there. Everyone gets along really well. So all good."

On Fox Cricket, Gilchrist and Michael Vaughan were the experts who sensed a possible divide between batters and bowlers. "That to me tells me there is potentially a divided change room. I don't know if there is. I might be reading too much into that," Gilchrist said referring to Hazlewood's comments. Vaughan added: "I must admit, I'm staggered by that. Josh Hazlewood is a great bowler, terrific team member. Publicly, I've never heard an Australian come out and kind of divide the camp into batters and bowlers." On the same Fox Cricket panel was Hazlewood's longtime teammate David Warner who came to the fast bowler's defence. "Those comments (from Hazlewood) probably weren't warranted, [but] I don't think there is a divide.



"In the England team, Broady [Stuart Broad] or Jimmy [Anderson] might have come off after a long day and you can start pointing fingers, but

I don't think there is a divide," said Warner. Marnus has got a very good pink ball record Cummins was asked about the lean run

of Marnus Labuschagne in the post match media interaction. The batters in general have been under the scanner for a while now and that includes

the great Steve Smith. "Marnus, along with quite a few guys in the team didn't have the week that we would have wanted. It's no secret how hard the batters, particularly Marn, works in the nets, and he's always trying to find those small marginal gains. "So, this week, there'll be a lot of conversation with the coaches around, you know, maybe his approach and what he could be doing differently. We know he's a class player. "So, yeah, this week will be about those conversations. As I say, get to Adelaide a little bit earlier, maybe do an extra day or two prep leading to that second Test. But he's done it before over here. He's got a very good pink ball record. "So I always think it's, you know, looking back at past successes when you're at your best is always a pretty good way to get yourself back on track," said the skipper.

Cummins had no qualms in admitting that his team was thoroughly outplayed in the series opener but he promised to bounce back in Adelaide where India struggled on the previous tour with pink ball under lights. "You kind of sit in the change room after a loss like that and it hurts. You know when a team declares on you, it's never an amazing feeling. So we've all been in these situations before. It's the nature of being professional sport. "You're going to lose some games. The biggest challenge and the biggest, the most important thing is how do you bounce back? What's your next move? So that's what we've got to do this week," Cummins said. He also added that there won't be too many changes to the playing eleven despite the unexpected outcome in Perth.