



*LATE CITY VOL. 6 ISSUE 365 *Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

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దీపావళి కానుకగా మహిళల సేవలో దీపం-2



సూపర్

సంవత్సరానికి
3 సిలిండర్లు
ఉచితం



అక్టోబర్ 29వ తేదీ నుంచి గ్యాస్ బుకింగ్ ప్రారంభం

బుకింగ్ కస్టర్స్ అయ్యాక పట్టణాల్లో 24 గంటలు, గ్రామాల్లో 48 గంటల్లో సిలిండర్ డెలివరీ అవుతుంది

గ్యాస్ సిలిండర్ ధరను లబ్ధిదారులు డెలివరీ సమయంలో చెల్లిస్తే.. ఆ సొమ్మును 48 గంటల్లో తిరిగి వారి బ్యాంక్ అకౌంట్లో జమ చేస్తారు

ప్రభుత్వానికి ఏటా సుమారు రూ. 2,684 కోట్ల ఖర్చు. ఐదేళ్ళలో రూ. 13,423 కోట్లు.

లబ్ధిదారులు మార్చి 31, 2025లోపు ఎప్పడైనా బుకింగ్ చేసుకుని మొదటి ఉచిత సిలిండర్ పొందవచ్చు. 5 నెలల సమయం ఉన్నందున లబ్ధిదారులు ఎటువంటి ఆందోళన చెందవలసిన అవసరం లేదు.

ఎలాంటి ఫిర్యాదులు, సందేహాలు ఉన్నా

టోల్ ఫ్రీ నెంబర్
1967కు

ఫోన్ చేయండి. లేదా ప్రజా సమస్యల పరిష్కార వేదిక (ప్రజావేదిక) లేదా గ్రామ/వార్డు సచివాలయాలలో సంప్రదించండి.

Is Law & Order in a shambles or in the wrong 'hand'?

Unbeknownst to all of us, has the Law and Order situation in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad deteriorated to such an extent that it is on the verge of total collapse? Is there widespread unrest of unimaginable scale brewing under the surface among the residents of the twin cities against the state government that has the potential to erupt violently, destroying the lives and properties of its citizens on an unimaginable scale? Is it the police assessment that the threat to the lives and properties of Telangana citizens is so grave that even extraordinary measures sacrificing their fundamental rights over an extended period are a small price to pay for ensuring peace?

Nothing that the average resident of the twin cities is aware of points to such an alarming situation prevailing

in the twin cities. Yet, the action of CV Anand, Commissioner of Police of Hyderabad, ominously points to such a precarious Law and Order situation prevailing in the twin cities. Otherwise, why would a senior IPS officer like CV Anand, who has a reputation for being a sincere, no-nonsense officer, invoke section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), popularly known as section 144 under the prior Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), to prohibit every gathering of five or more persons anywhere in the twin cities? That, too, for an extended period spanning more than a month - 32 days, to be precise?

The gravity of the danger posed by the suspected threat to the twin cities' Law and Order becomes apparent once we understand the breadth of the draconian restrictions

The Order issued by the Commissioner of Police restricting gatherings of five or more persons in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad for over a month points to only one thing: our police organisation is in such a shambles that the only way it feels confident of maintaining Law and Order in the twin cities is by curtailing the fundamental rights of every citizen for an extended period.

imposed by the Police Commissioner's Order. The Order dated 27th October directly restricts more than 1.2 crore citizens' fundamental rights of liberty, association, and movement while indirectly impinging on their right to livelihood. That is why the powers under section 163 of BNSS (section 144 of now replaced Cr PC) are never exercised casually. They are exercised only under extraordinary and urgent circumstances when standard police methods are deemed inadequate in ensuring peace.

These powers are also exercised surgically, restricted to specific areas, and for very short periods spanning a few hours to a few days. The aim is to ensure that the suspension of fundamental rights is limited to the fewest people and for the shortest time possible.

Our past experiences make it easy to assume that this oppressive order resulted from our political rulers' dictatorial tendencies. The earlier Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS)



KISHORE POREDDY

leaders, who ruled until last year, tried to eliminate all political opposition and stifle dissent by closing down even Dharna Chowk. The Congress party ruling the state currently has a track record of suspending all the fundamental rights of all Indians by imposing an Emergency. However, one has

to remember that Commissioner CV Anand has issued the order in question by exercising his magisterial powers and not police powers, making it less prone to being dictated by political masters. Also, given his image as an upright officer, it would be unfair to the current Commissioner to assume he has suspended the fundamental rights of so many citizens for no reason but to please his political masters.

Again, given our past experiences, it is easy to assume that the order, issued just a couple of days before Deepavali, was aimed at restricting the Hindus' fundamental right to religion. The order explicitly exempts police and military persons on duty, funeral processions, flying squads of the education department and those with prior permission; it did not list participation in religious

festivities like Deepavali as exempt. To his credit, the Commissioner quickly clarified in a tweet on the social media platform "X" (previously Twitter) that his order was not aimed at curtailing Deepavali celebrations.

"When you have eliminated all which is impossible, then whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth," says Arthur Conan Doyle through Sherlock Holmes. If the order was not motivated by political or religious reasons, the only explanation must obviously be the one mentioned by the Commissioner in his tweet. He cites intelligence reports that certain groups are planning agitations and surprise raids on government offices, and the order to curtail the fundamental rights of more than a crore residents of Telangana was given "to give legal backing

to police action in arresting such elements or detaining them".

The Commissioner's reasoning is shocking, to say the least. It can imply only two things. One, he is unaware of the numerous laws already in the books the police could use against agitators, even preventively, reflecting poorly on his competence. Or, two, that the police organisation in the twin cities is in such a shambles that the Commissioner believes only draconian measures curtailing the fundamental rights of every resident of Hyderabad and Secunderabad for a long, long period is the only way to ensure peace. In either case, the state's citizens deserve an explanation from the Chief Minister, who holds the Law and Order portfolio.

(The author is BJP TS spokesperson.)

AP turning into start-up hub, says Nara Lokesh

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Highlighting Andhra Pradesh's rapid transformation into a hub for start-ups and manufacturing, Minister for IT and Electronics, Nara Lokesh, encouraged the Indian diaspora and members of the US-India Business Council to consider this as an opportune time to invest in the state.

Lokesh emphasised that the state government's investor-friendly policies, along with Andhra Pradesh's extensive coastline, well-connected highways, and efficient sea and air transport networks, make this the ideal moment to invest. He noted that Andhra Pradesh is advancing swiftly under Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's leadership, adding that the



state is on the cusp of becoming a start-up and manufacturing powerhouse.

"We are creating a supportive ecosystem for industrial growth and have reactivated the Economic Development Board to ensure there are no delays in granting permissions for setting up industries," Lokesh shared with the Indian diaspora and US-India

Business Council delegates during his visit to San Francisco as part of his efforts to attract investments to Andhra Pradesh.

He elaborated on the government's focus on decentralised development, noting that Anantapur is being positioned for automobile industries, Kurnool for renewable energy, Visakhapatnam for IT, pharma,

and medical equipment manufacturing, Prakasam district as a centre for biofuel production, and both Godavari districts for the aqua industry.

Discussing Amaravati, Lokesh mentioned that construction will soon resume in the capital city, integrating the latest technologies. He also announced plans for establishing an Artificial Intelligence (AI) university to produce professionals meeting international standards, encouraging investors to tap into the state's conducive business environment.

Rangaswamy, founder of the India Diaspora, along with executive members of the US-India Business Council, including Kavitha Mariyappan, Siva Sivaram, Ramakanth Alapati, and others, attended the meeting.

Six workers hospitalised due to suffocation

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

An incident of suffocation occurred at Saphagiri Camphor Pvt Ltd in Lolur village in Singanamala mandal of Anantapur district, where a vessel was undergoing maintenance.

According to E. Kesavulu, Deputy Chief Inspector of Factories, the welding work began on Friday at around 9:00 am after the vessel was cleaned. However, at approximately 10:05 am, welders Sorai Topnov from Jharkhand and P. Lakshmi Narayana experienced suffocation while working inside the vessel.

To assist them, four other workers — Harinath, Nagendra Prasad, Obulesu, and Krishna — entered the vessel one by one and also encountered suffocation. Upon realising the situation, the executive staff promptly evacuated all six workers and transported them to KIMS Saveera Hospital in Anantapur, where they were admitted to the emergency ward.

Naidu to set tone for statewide road repair drive today

PNS ■ VIZIANAGARAM

The district is gearing up to welcome Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday at 11 a.m. for the launch of a massive statewide road repair initiative. This ambitious project, estimated to cost Rs 826 crore, aims to transform Andhra Pradesh's roads and make them pothole-free. The Chief Minister's visit will begin in Puritipenta, Gajapatnagar mandal, where he will inaugurate local road repairs. A helipad has been set up in Gangachollapenta village for his arrival, followed by a review meeting with officials from various departments and a press conference.

A key highlight of the visit will be the commencement of road repair work on the 6-km stretch from Gajapatnagar to Mentada, costing Rs 37 lakh. This project, part of the larger state plan, is expected to significantly improve road safety and reduce travel time. "The Chief Minister's vision of pothole-free roads is a major step towards better infra-



structure and smoother commutes," said a district official involved in the project. The district is slated to witness 73 road improvement projects spanning 80 kilometers, with an estimated cost of Rs. 10.5 crore.

District SP Vakul Jindal, who inspected the helipad, assured that all security and logistical arrangements are in place. "We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for the Chief Minister's visit and the smooth commencement of these crucial works," he stated. A convoy trial run has been conducted, and the District

Collector personally reviewed all arrangements, suggesting further improvements. Key officials, including DRDA PD A. Kalyana Chakraborty, CPO P. Balaji, R&B SE B. Kantimati, and several district officers, special deputy collectors, and RDOs, are expected to participate.

District authorities are optimistic about the positive impact of these road repair projects. "The public will directly benefit from improved road conditions, which will enhance connectivity and drive development in the region," added a spokesperson from the district administration.

CM launches Deepam 2.0...

Continued from Page 3

This marked his first visit to the district since assuming office as Chief Minister. He received a grand welcome from Union Minister K Rammoan Naidu, Agriculture Minister K Atchennadu, Civil Supplies Minister Nadendla Manohar, District In-charge Minister Kondapalli Srinivasa Rao, and local MLAs Dr Bendalam Ashok, along with District Collector Swapnal Dinakar Pundkar, SP KV Maheshwar Reddy, Joint Collector Farman Ahmad Khan, RTO M Krishnamurthy, MLAs Kuna Ravi Kumar, Gauthi Sirisha, N Eswar Rao, and several leaders from coalition parties.

Before meeting beneficiaries, the Chief Minister interacted with leaders and officials at a tent set up near the helipad, sharing insights on the state's development initiatives.

Meet to discuss protection of Wakf properties tomorrow

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Central government is trying to confiscate lakhs of acres of land and property belonging to Muslims under the Wakf Amendment Bill 2024, stated Rafiq, Secretary of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH), Andhra Pradesh. Speaking to the media on Friday, Rafiq announced that a 'Wakf Parirakshana Maha Sabha' will be organised on November 3 (Sunday) at 5:00 PM at the Kummariapalem Eidgah Grounds in Vijayawada. Rafiq expressed concerns that the Wakf Amendment Bill is part of an official conspiracy to seize Waqf properties from



Muslims, depriving them of their rights and transferring ownership to influential individuals. He emphasized the need to protect the properties endowed by ancestors for the development and welfare of the Muslim community, as well as to safeguard the Waqf Board. He affirmed their commitment to legally oppose the amendment of the bill, stating that they would make all necessary sacrifices to prevent its passage.

During the Maha Sabha, Rafiq highlighted the importance of raising awareness among the people about the nature of Waqf properties, their extent, and the government's intentions to forcibly take them. He called upon all Muslim brothers and sisters to set aside differences and unite under the slogan 'Ham Ek Hai, Aur Ham Nek Hai' to participate in large numbers and ensure the success of the meeting in Vijayawada.

'Polavaram height reduction a conspiracy'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP Guntur district president and former minister Ambati Rambabu strongly condemned Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and TDP coalition government for not opposing the central government in its decision to reduce the Polavaram Project height from 45.72 meters to 41.15 meters stating this reduction would limit its benefits and reduce it to a mere barrage.

Speaking to the media in Guntur, the former minister highlighted that YSRCP had planned the Polavaram Project in two stages to reach the approved height of 45.57 meters, ensuring a water capacity of 194.6 TMC, as approved by the Public Investment Board (PIB). He warned that reducing the height would limit storage to 115.44 TMC, significantly diminishing its capacity for irrigation, drinking water, and power generation.



He said that this reduction in height is part of a larger conspiracy by the coalition government to sideline the project, just as Andhra Pradesh was previously denied Special Category Status, a move that also impacted the state's development. He said Chandrababu Naidu is trying to shift blame onto YSRCP to cover up this compromise, further reducing the project's scope for political advantage.

Ambati also challenged Irrigation Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu, urging him to secure official confirmation from either Prime Minister Narendra Modi or the Union Minister of Water Resources about maintaining the project's original height. He argued that

a statement from central authorities supporting the full height of the project would bring clarity and transparency to the people of Andhra Pradesh, ensuring that the state's needs are met.

Ambati stressed that Polavaram is a lifeline for Andhra Pradesh and should be completed to its full potential, as originally envisioned. Reducing its scope not only undermines the welfare of the state but also the vision of late Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, who initiated the project for the benefit of Andhra's farmers and citizens. YSRCP, he affirmed, will continue to oppose any attempts to compromise the project's scale and impact.

TODAY
ALMANAC
Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha
Tithi: Pratipada: Nov 01 06:16 PM to Nov 02 08:22 PM
Dwitiya: Nov 02 08:22 PM to Nov 03 10:05 PM
Nakshatram: Vishaka: Nov 02 03:31 AM to Nov 03 05:58 AM
Anuradha: Nov 03 05:58 AM to Nov 04 08:04 AM
Rahukalam: 9:09 AM to 10:34 AM
Yamagandam: 1:24 PM to 2:50 PM
Varjyam: 10:19 AM to 12:03 PM
Gulika: 6:18 AM to 7:43 AM
Amritakalam: 08:16 PM to 10:02 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:36 AM to 12:22 PM

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER
Forecast: Mostly Sunny
Temp: 34°C
Humidity: 68%
Sunrise: 6:05 AM
Sunset: 5:36 PM
Updated: November 1, 2024 5:00 PM

Lokesh invites...

Continued from Page 3

making Andhra Pradesh an ideal destination for investments," Lokesh said, urging Google to provide services like AI tools and enterprise solutions to enhance digital governance and improve public services. He also sought Google's support in areas like real-time management, disaster response, and urban planning, and proposed integrating Andhra Pradesh's smart cities with Google Maps as part of its Geospatial services. Additionally, Lokesh requested Google to conduct AI-based training sessions for youth in digital education and skill development.

In response, Google's executives expressed interest in the proposals, stating that they would consult internally and make a decision soon.

They highlighted Google's global expertise in cloud computing and digital services, signalling potential for a productive partnership with Andhra Pradesh.

'Naidu is a...'

Continued from Page 3

Lokesh was speaking at the unveiling of a statue of TDP founder and former Chief Minister, the Late NT Rama Rao, in Atlanta, USA, organised by the NTR Trust.

Highlighting CBN's reputation, Lokesh said he urged Fortune 500 companies to invest in Andhra Pradesh, adding that the whole country is eagerly watching the state, curious about the new reforms being brought in by the government.

Reflecting on the legacy of the Late NTR, Lokesh said Telugu people across the world are respected today because of him. He mentioned how NTR brought the TDP to power within nine months of its launch and symbolised values like discipline and commitment, with "self-respect" immediately associated with his name. Lokesh credited NTR with introducing welfare schemes to the country and pledged to uphold his legacy in the TDP.

He also alleged that the previous government wrongfully jailed Chandrababu

Naidu and recalled how the entire Telugu community, including NRIs, stood united in protest. "Your support has reinforced our determination to fight injustice," he remarked.

Calling NRIs "Most Reliable Indians" (MRIs), Lokesh acknowledged that while they live in the US, their hearts are with India, especially Andhra Pradesh, and they continue to hope for its progress. He highlighted that many NRIs spent up to Rs 2 lakh each to travel back to Andhra Pradesh to vote, with some even staying for a year to serve the community.

He noted the strong mandate he received from Mangalagiri voters, winning with a 91,000 majority, and said that the state is determined to remove the 'psycho' government. "This victory belongs to all Telugus worldwide," Lokesh affirmed.

Announcing new welfare measures, Lokesh said that free gas cylinders would be distributed on the occasion of Deepavali, emphasising that the TDP-led NDA government is committed to its promises. He also announced that pensions for various beneficiary groups have been increased, and that 16,500 teacher positions are being filled through the DSC recruitment process.

QUOTE OF THE DAY
 The pioneer
 Telangana will get a new Chief Minister and that will happen between June 2025 and December 2025. The Congress high command has been doing a vigorous exercise regarding this and at the same time, many Chief Minister hopefuls are also in the race. Ministers N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and Komatireddy Venkat Reddy are gunning for the CM's post. There are chances of anyone among the three becoming the CM.
 - Alleti Maheshwar Reddy, BJP leader

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It's a Dulquer Salmaan show all THE WAY! P12

DON'T MISS...
Naidu to set tone for statewide road...

The district is gearing up to welcome Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday at 11 a.m. for the launch of a massive statewide road repair initiative. This ambitious project, estimated to cost Rs 826 crore, aims to transform Andhra Pradesh's roads and make them pothole-free. The Chief Minister's visit will begin in Puritipenta, Gajapatnagar mandal, where he will inaugurate local road repairs. A helipad has been set up in Gangachollapenta village for his arrival, followed by a review meeting with...

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1 dead, 5 hurt in cracker blast...

In a tragic incident, one person was killed and five others were injured when firecrackers being carried on a scooter exploded near Ganganamma Temple in Turpu Veedhi here on Thursday. Police reported that two youths were transporting a bag of firecrackers home when the scooter's front wheel struck a pothole, causing a strong jolt. Due to the impact, the firecrackers, locally known as 'Ullipaya bombulu', exploded, killing Durgesh Sudhakar, the pillion rider, instantly...

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'Karnataka govt approves Tourism...

The Karnataka government has approved the Tourism Policy 2024-29, allocating Rs 1,349 crore to develop essential infrastructure and attract international tourists, state Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar announced on Friday. Speaking at the 'Karnataka Rajyotsava' celebrations here, the Women and Child Welfare Minister, who is also Udupi district in-charge, emphasised the government's commitment to transforming Karnataka into a global tourism hub through enhanced services and facilities...

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India hand New Zealand control...

India's batters lost the plot in a matter of 20 minutes, leaving the side at a jittery 86/4 after Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar gave the hosts the early bragging rights by dismissing New Zealand for 235 on an eventful day one of the third and final Test here on Friday. Jadeja (5/65) and Sundar (4/81) did their job to perfection but India's batting continued to be a weak link as the side lost three wickets in the space of eight balls, starting with Yashasvi Jaiswal's (30) inexplicable reverse slog sweep. With his 14th...

-SPORTS

CM launches Deepam 2.0

Beneficiaries of the scheme to get 3 LPG cylinders per year free of cost

PNS ■ SRIKAKULAM/CHAPURAM

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu launched the highly anticipated free LPG cylinder scheme under Deepam 2.0 on Friday at Idupuram village in Ichapuram mandal, Srikakulam district. The scheme, part of the state government's Super Six initiatives, provides three free LPG cylinders per year to eligible beneficiaries.

To mark the launch, the CM personally handed over the first free gas cylinder to beneficiary Ambati Shantamma. During his visit, he prepared tea in Shantamma's home, creating a warm and memorable experience as he interacted with her family. Shantamma and her family watched in delight as the Chief Minister lit the gas stove, boiled milk, and prepared tea, which he then enjoyed with them.

As part of his visit, the CM asked Shantamma about her experience with the current government and its schemes. He also visited other beneficiaries, including Balijepalli Janaki, a single woman, to whom he personally handed over the NTR Bharosa Pension of Rs 4,000. Janaki expressed her gratitude, highlighting the positive impact of the single women's pension scheme, which benefits thousands across the state. The Chief Minister assured her of ongoing support,



CM Naidu personally handed the first cylinder to beneficiary Ambati Shantamma and prepared tea at her house.



- During CM's visit, he engaged with beneficiaries, asking about their experiences with the government's initiatives.
- The CM also distributed NTR Bharosa Pension of Rs 4,000 to single woman beneficiary Balijepalli Janaki.
- Extensive arrangements were made for the CM's visit, with a warm welcome from ministers, local MLAs, and district officials.
- The visit included discussions with leaders and officials on the state's development initiatives.

emphasizing his commitment to being there for citizens as a family member.

To ensure smooth implementation of the Deepam 2.0 scheme, extensive arrangements were made

by officials for the Chief Minister's arrival, which was scheduled for 12:45 pm. **Continued on Page 2**

Ours is a 'good govt, not a soft one': Dy CM Pawan



PNS ■ ELURU

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Panchayat Raj K. Pawan Kalyan has stated that the NDA government in the State is a 'good government, not a soft one'.

Pawan Kalyan participated in the launch of the free gas cylinder scheme under Deepam 2.0 at IS Jagannadhapuram in Dwaraka Tirumala Mandal on Friday. After formally launching the scheme, he flagged off the vehicle carrying the free gas cylinders.

During his speech, he strongly criticised the allegations made by YSRCP leaders, stating, "We will not remain silent if misinformation is spread against the NDA-led Andhra Pradesh government. Even after their defeat in the last elections, the YSRCP leaders have failed to learn and understand the people's anger

towards them."

He condemned the absurd comments made by YSRCP leaders on social media and warned of strict action against those involved. "A close watch has been placed on social media postings. If there are any abusive or humiliating comments directed at women, we will take strong action against those responsible," he warned.

Pawan Kalyan emphasised his commitment to ensuring the safety of women and girls, asserting that those who demean them would face severe penalties. "In my opinion, the current punishments are insufficient for those who make derogatory remarks against women. Such individuals will be dealt with appropriately," he stated.

He assured that the government would prioritise welfare, revealing that 1,08,39,286 beneficiaries would receive three gas cylinders free of cost per year under the Deepam 2.0 scheme, which will cost the government ₹2,684 crore annually. He noted that the total expenditure over five years for the scheme would be ₹13,425 crore.

Pawan Kalyan also pledged to develop the Sri Lakshminarasimha Kshetram and resolve the 50-acre land dispute associated with the temple, suggesting that if the land were allocated to the temple, cottages and hotels could be constructed for devotees. **Continued on Page 2**



Jyothi Surekha appointed Protocol DD

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

International archer Vennam Jyothi Surekha, Deputy Collector, submitted her joining report as Deputy Director to the Director of Protocol, T. Mohan Rao, at the Office of the Director of Protocol in Vijayawada on Friday, following government orders.

Jyothi Surekha, who was on the waiting list for posting, has been assigned the role of Deputy Director at the Office of the Director of Protocol to fill an existing vacancy, with an OD facility granted for an initial period of one year.

Chief Secretary Neerabh Kumar Prasad issued the orders, recorded as GO RT NO 1863, on Wednesday. The date of her joining will be communicated to the government.

APCC demands 'Y' security for Sharmila

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Amid a raging battle over the apportionment of assets between Y S Sharmila and her elder brother YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, an Andhra Pradesh Congress leader requested police to extend and enhance security to Sharmila, citing 'potential threats' to her safety.

SN Raja, general secretary, incharge (administration and organisation), Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) wrote a letter to DGP Ch Dwaraka Tirumala Rao, requesting the extension of 'Y' Category



security and 4+4 security arrangement for Sharmila. **Continued on Page 2**

3 hacked to death over illicit affair

PNS ■ KAKINADA

In a shocking incident, three people, including two siblings, were hacked to death, and another person sustained injuries after being attacked by a group in Selapaka village, Kajuluru mandal, about 25 km from here.

According to the police, a long-standing feud between two families escalated into a violent confrontation. The accused, Potlakayala Nageswara Rao, along with four others, allegedly chased down and killed Battula Ramesh, Battula Chinna, and Battula Raja. Another individual was stabbed and is currently receiving treatment at the Government General Hospital (GGH). **Continued on Page 2**

Bhanu Prakash on TTD Board

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

BJP leader G Bhanu Prakash Reddy has been appointed as a member of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Board. Bhanu Prakash Reddy's inclusion is expected to bring new perspectives to the board's administration.

The appointment was confirmed by GO MS No 243, issued by the Secretary to Government



(Endowments) (FAC) S Satyanarayana on Friday. Additionally, four Ex Officio members were added to the board, including the Secretary to Government Revenue (Endowments) Department, the Commissioner of Endowments Department AP, the Chairman of TUDA, Tirupati, and the Executive Officer of TTD, Tirupati.

NOT JUST FOR SUMMER
Collins Dictionary declares 'brat' 2024 word of the year

PNS ■ LONDON

Collins Dictionary has declared "brat" – the album title that became a summer-living ideal – its 2024 word of the year. The word, used by singer Charli XCX as the title of her sixth studio album, has been defined as "characterised by a confident, independent, and hedonistic attitude."

Collins lexicographers said on Friday that in the phrase "brat summer," it became "one of the most talked about words of 2024." "More than a hugely successful album, 'brat' is a cultural phenomenon that has resonated with people globally, and brat summer established itself as an aesthetic and a way of life," the dictionary said. Collins experts monitor their 20-billion-word database to create the annual list of new

and notable words that reflect the ever-evolving English language.

Other new and notable words for 2024 include "era," in the sense of "a period of one's life or career that is of a distinctive character." It's inspired by Taylor Swift's world-conquering Eras tour. Other notable neologisms among the dictionary's word-of-the-year finalists include the growing movement against mass tourism, "anti-tourism"; "delulu," meaning utterly mistaken or unrealistic in one's ideas or expectations; and "rawdogging," taking a long-haul flight with no devices or distractions.

"With many of this year's notable words being popularised by generations Z and Alpha, we can confidently say this is the most 'brat' Word of the Year list ever," said Collins managing director Alex Beecroft.

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a sharp attack on the Congress party on X, targeting its governance in Telangana and other Congress-ruled states.

Modi's remarks focused on Congress's 'fake promises' and accused the party of deceiving voters with promises it cannot fulfil.

"Check any state where the Congress has governments like Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Telangana. The developmental trajectory and fiscal health are turning



Modi expanded his criticism by asserting that Congress's governance style has affected the fiscal health and development trajectory of the states it controls

MODI LASHES OUT AT CONGRESS' FAKE PROMISES

'Telangana going from bad to worse'

from bad to worse. Their so-called guarantees lie unfulfilled, which is a terrible act of deceit on the people of these states. The victims of that are the poor, the young, the farmers and women, who are not only denied the benefits of these promises but also see existing schemes for them watered down," he said.

In Telangana, Modi highlighted the Congress's promise to waive farmers' loans and said that they are yet to deliver on this promise.

"Farmers in Telangana are still waiting for loan waivers which the Congress promised during the election campaign," he said and said that the delay reflects poorly on the party's governance capabilities. Modi alleged that such unkept promises are not only hurting farmers but are a "terrible act of deceit" on all citizens relying on the promised support from the Congress govern-

ment. Modi expanded his criticism by asserting that Congress's governance style has affected the fiscal health and development trajectory of the states it controls.

He pointed out issues in other Congress-ruled states like Karnataka, where he said that internal party conflicts are taking precedence over development.

He also cited Himachal Pradesh's struggles with delayed salaries for government employees as an example of Congress's inability to manage finances effectively.

In Karnataka, Modi said the Congress is more focused on internal politics and "loot" than on fulfilling development promises even going so far as to rollback existing schemes. The Prime Minister's remarks are

likely to add momentum to the narrative against Congress as Maharashtra heads into election. Modi's comments on loan waivers could resonate with the state's large farming community, many of whom have expressed frustration over delayed benefits.

Modi warned voters across the country to be vigilant against the "Congress-sponsored culture of fake promises," referring to what he called a legacy of "non-governance, poor economics, and unparalleled loot."

He said that Congress's approach has left many segments of the population like the poor, the youth, the farmers and women without the benefits they were promised, leaving a trail of disillusionment.

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1.55 crore people benefit from Deepam: Speaker

PNS ■ ANAKAPALLI

Speaker of the AP Legislative Assembly Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu announced that 1.55 crore people across the State have benefited from the Deepam scheme, which provides free gas cylinders to underprivileged families. Speaking at the inauguration of the Deepam-2 scheme at the Narsipatnam RDO Office, he highlighted the impact of the scheme over the next five years, during which each beneficiary will receive gas cylinders worth Rs. 11,630.

"Through Deepam-2, we are fulfilling an election promise to bring essential support to families in need," said Ayyannaputra. "This scheme was launched during Diwali, a fitting time to introduce this form of relief for households." He also commended the efforts of former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, who introduced gas distribution to women in 1999 and laid the foundation for the Deepam initiative. "It was Chandrababu Naidu's vision that started the distribution of gas cylinders for women's welfare," he recalled.

Under the new phase, the Deepam-2 scheme will provide three free gas cylinders each year to eligible beneficiaries over the next five years. To qualify, individuals need a



"Through Deepam-2, we are fulfilling an election promise to bring essential support to families in need," said Ayyannaputra. "This scheme was launched during Diwali, a fitting time to introduce this form of relief for households." He also commended the efforts of former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, who introduced gas distribution to women in 1999 and laid the foundation for the Deepam initiative. "It was Chandrababu Naidu's vision that started the distribution of gas cylinders for women's welfare," he recalled

white ration card, a bank-linked account, and an active gas connection. Ayyanna Patrudu also emphasised the efficiency of pension distrib-

ution, stating that "98 per cent of pensions have been distributed without volunteer assistance," adding that Rs. 41 crore in development funds

have already been allocated to Narsipatnam within just four months of the government's formation.

Local TDP leaders urged active collaboration with mandal-level officials to ensure the scheme's smooth rollout and offered assistance for any issues beneficiaries may face. RDO VV Ramana, Tahsildar Rama Rao, ZPTC Ramanamma, Jana Sena constituency in-charge Suryachandra, and TDP leaders Nani Babu and Srirangaswamy joined other officials in attending the event.

All set for Homa Mahotsavams Kapila Theertham

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

All arrangements are in place to observe the month-long Karthika Homa Mahotsavams at Sri Kapileswara Swamy Temple from November 2-December 1.

From November 2 to 4, first the Homa of Ganapati Swami will be performed followed by the Homa of Subramanya Swamy from November 5 to 7. Later, the Homa of Dakshinamurthy on November 8 and the Navagraha Homa will be held on November 9.

Kamakshi Ammavari Homam (Chandi Homam) from November 10 to 18, Kapileswara Swamy Homam (Rudra Homam) from November 19 to 29, Kalabhairava Homam on November 30, and Chandikeswara Homam on December 1 will be observed, followed by Trisulasanam and Panchamurtula Tiruveedhi Utsavam.

Grihastha (two persons) can participate on one-day Homa with a ticket of Rs 500 and beget an Uttariyam, a blouse piece. Wearing traditional attire to participate in Homam is mandatory.

As part of the Mahotsavams, the sacred Kalyanotsavam of Subramanya Swamy along with Sri Valli and Devasena will be held on November 7, while Kalyanotsavam of Siva Parvati will be held on November 29.

YSRCP slams TDP govt for ignoring AP Formation Day

'Govt disrespects not only Sriramulu's sacrifice, but also Arya Vaishya community'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP has criticised the TDP and its allies for failing to observe the State's Formation Day on November 1, labelling it as a blatant disrespect toward Potti Sriramulu, who sacrificed his life for a separate Andhra State.

Vellampalli Srinivas and former MLA Malladi Vishnu Naidu and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan publicly apologise to the Arya Vaishya community. He demanded that the government reinstate November 1 as the official State Formation Day and recognise it with respect befitting its historical significance.

Speaking to the media at the party central office here on Friday, Vellampalli condemned the TDP government for ignoring Andhra

Pradesh's Formation Day, stating that it disrespects not only Sriramulu's sacrifice but also the Arya Vaishya community, as Sriramulu was a member. He also criticised the recent TTD Board appointments, where the Arya Vaishya community was overlooked.

Malladi Vishnu demanded that CM Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan publicly apologise to the Arya Vaishya community. He demanded that the government reinstate November 1 as the official State Formation Day and recognise it with respect befitting its historical significance.

Vellampalli reminded the public of the various TDP government's actions, where

instead of celebrating Formation Day, it chose to observe June 2 (the date Telangana was formed) incurring unnecessary expenses. He stressed that failing to mark Formation Day dishonours the sacrifices of Andhra Pradesh's founding heroes.

Furthermore, Vellampalli expressed concern over the revival of the Chintamani drama, which he claims portrays the Arya Vaishyas in an unflattering light.

While YSRCP had previously abolished the play due to community appeals, recent attempts to reinstate it were criticised by Vellampalli, warning that the Arya Vaishya community would not tolerate such actions.

Woman, her daughter fatally run over by train

PNS ■ NELLORE

In a tragic accident, a young woman and her mother were fatally knocked down by a train at Kavali railway station. According to the railway police, the deceased Shirisha

(30) and her mother Vajramma (60) went to Kavali railway station.

Vajramma was going to Vijayawada and she had to board a passenger train. When the mother and daughter duo were crossing the track in the

Kavali railway station, the Coimbatore express train ran over them.

The mother and daughter were crushed to death and the bodies so badly crushed under the wheels they were beyond recognition.

PM SHRI Schools to come up soon

Focus on improving key infrastructure facilities



Under the PM SHRI initiative, five schools in the Visakhapatnam district have been selected to receive a composite grant aimed at both maintenance and development. Engineering teams have been tasked with accelerating the construction of playgrounds and chemistry labs, with a particular focus on ensuring safety and functionality. "We are focused on accelerating this project by coordinating across departments and exploring CSR funding if required," Prasad explained

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The establishment of Prime Minister Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) in Visakhapatnam is gaining momentum, as District Collector MN Harendhira Prasad has directed officials to prioritise essential infrastructure upgrades in the region's selected schools. At a recent district-level meeting, Prasad stressed the importance of 21 essential facilities—including safe drinking water, internet connectivity, and well-equipped labs. "Our priority is to ensure these schools are equipped with all required infrastructure to support holistic education," he said.

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These PM SHRI schools in Visakhapatnam are designed to be exemplary institutions reflecting the objectives of

the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. With new playgrounds, essential furniture, advanced laboratories, reliable internet connectivity, and clean drinking water facilities, these schools will offer a modern educational environment that encourages experiential learning, skill development, and well-rounded growth.

However, progress has encountered financial setbacks, as Andhra Pradesh has experienced a delay of 136 days in receiving the initial PM SHRI funds for the 2023-24 period, with the second installment still pending after 142 days. "Timely transfer of funds is crucial," Prasad remarked, stressing the need for streamlined processes to avoid future delays. He added that addressing these financial issues is essential for ensuring that the schools' infrastructure projects proceed on schedule.

The PM SHRI initiative is part of a larger national effort to transform over 14,500 schools into model institutions that embody the vision of NEP 2020. As models of high-quality education, these schools aim to inspire neighbouring institutions, focusing on outcome-based learning and fostering an educational environment that meets both academic and developmental needs.

Minister launches Deepam-2 scheme

Allows eligible recipients to receive three gas cylinders every four months

PNS ■ PARVATHIPURAM

Minister for Women & Child Welfare and Tribal Welfare Gummati Sandhya Rani announced the launch of the Deepam-2 scheme in Saluru on Friday. Under the initiative, three free gas cylinders will be provided to 1,97,727 eligible beneficiaries in Parvathipuram Manyam district, aligning with election manifesto commitments to support underprivileged families. "In line with our commitment to uplift deserving families, we're providing three free gas cylinders under the Deepam-2 scheme," said Sandhya Rani. "A total of Rs.164 crore will be disbursed directly to eligible beneficiaries, ensuring financial relief and access to essential fuel."

Eligible families can register using their Aadhaar card, ration card, Aadhaar-linked bank account, and gas connection details. The Minister noted that individuals who don't have the necessary information can obtain it through relevant agencies. "Beneficiaries simply



need to book gas with their agency, and the excess amount paid will be credited back to their bank account within 24 hours in urban areas and 48 hours in rural regions," she explained. "We have provided a generous booking period from October 29 to March 31, 2025, for families to make their first booking and access

their free cylinders."

The Deepam-2 scheme allows eligible recipients to receive three gas cylinders every four months, distributed during specific windows throughout the year: April to July, August to November, and December to March. Minister Sandhya Rani urged the beneficiaries to use the State's

public grievance redressal platform for any issues encountered. "The government is committed to addressing concerns swiftly, ensuring smooth access to this financial support for our citizens," she said.

Highlighting the scope of the scheme, she shared, "We have identified 1,97,727 eligible connections out of 2,72,757 across 16 gas agencies in Parvathipuram Manyam district." At Rs.827.50 per cylinder, beneficiaries will receive a central subsidy of Rs.10.80, with Ujjwala consumers receiving an additional Rs.300. "Under the Deepam-2 scheme, Rs.10.80 from the central government and Rs.816.70 from the state will be credited within 48 hours after the cylinder is released," she added.

The event was attended by Parvathipuram Sub Collector Ashutosh Srivastava, along with officials, public representatives, and local residents, who expressed appreciation for the scheme's potential impact on economically vulnerable families in the region.

2,384 litres of Illicit liquor seized; 139 arrested

PNS ■ KADAPA

Superintendent of Police V Harshavardhan Raju announced that 2,384.71 litres of illicit liquor have been seized throughout October, resulting in the arrest of 139 individuals across 133 cases.

In a statement on Friday, the SP noted that police teams carried out raids at various locations in the district, leading to the confiscation of 2,384.71 litres of illicit liquor, 4.5 litres of country-made liquor, and the apprehension of 139 people.

The SP also reported the arrest of 275 gamblers in 44 cases, with cash amounting to ₹7,61,450 seized from them. Additionally, 50 Matka gambling organisers were arrested, and ₹3.19 lakh was confiscated. The police seized 59 vehicles involved in the illegal transportation of sand and arrested 75 individuals during October.

Furthermore, 3.45 kg of ganja was seized, leading to the arrest of eight people. The SP warned of stringent action against Matka organisers, cricket betting operators, and those engaged in other illegal activities.

Police recruitment: Last chance to apply for physical test

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh State Level Police Recruitment Board (SLPRB) Chairman AK Ravi Krishna (in charge), in a release on Friday, has announced the dates for the Physical Measurement Test (PMT) and Physical Efficiency Test (PET) for the recruitment of Stipendiary Cadet Trainee (SCT) Police Constable (Civil) (Men & Women) and SCT Police Constable (APSP) (Men) posts. These tests are part of the ongoing recruitment process initially notified under a notification issued on November 28, 2022.

The Preliminary Written Test (PWT), conducted on January 22, 2023, across 35 locations and 997 centres in the State, saw a participation of 4,59,182 candidates, out of which 95,208 candidates qualified.

Due to various logistical issues and pending court cases, the PMT/PET was delayed. Now, the SLPRB aims to conduct these tests in the last week of December.

Of the qualified candidates, 91,507 have successfully submitted the Stage-II Online Application Form. However, the SLPRB is extending a final opportunity for those who qualified in the PWT but did not submit their Stage-II application. These candidates must complete their application between 3 PM on November 11, and 5 PM on November 21 on the official SLPRB website, slprb.ap.gov.in.

SLPRB has advised candidates to stay updated by frequently visiting the official website. Any clarifications can be sought through the helpline numbers: 9441450639 and 9100203323 during office hours.

COLLECTOR'S BRUSHSTROKE

Transforming Parvathipuram with tribal art

A unique initiative to preserve heritage and beautify public spaces

PNS ■ PARVATHIPURAM

District Collector A Shyam Prasad is embarking on a visionary project, Swachh Sundara Parvathipuram that promises to transform the district's landscape. This initiative is more than just a beautification drive; it's a cultural renaissance aimed at preserving and promoting the rich heritage of the Savara tribal community.

"The area boasts a deep-rooted culture and heritage," said Shyam Prasad. "Savara art is a mirror reflecting the tribal lifestyle, with every stroke narrating their stories. We've already established an art gallery in the collectorate, and now, we aim to amplify the visibility of this art through Sundara Parvathipuram."

Inspired by the intricate tribal paintings he encountered in local villages, the Collector himself has delved into learning the art form. Under the guidance of local artists Gowtham and Raju, he has been honing his skills, even sketching during his free time at the camp office. This personal involvement reflects his deep commitment to the project.



The project, commencing in Parvathipuram, is a two-pronged approach. First, it involves a rigorous sanitation drive to clean up neglected areas and garbage dumps. Second, it focuses on the aesthetic transformation of these spaces through the integration of Savara art. By adorning walls and structures with vibrant tribal motifs, the project aims to create visually stunning and culturally significant public spaces.

"We envision these spaces as vibrant hubs for community events, gatherings, and celebrations," said Shyam Prasad. "By blending culture and public service, we hope to not only beautify the district but also inspire a sense of pride and belonging among the local community."

The Swachh Sundara Parvathipuram initiative is more than just a project; it's a testament to the power of art and culture to transform communities. By preserving and promoting the rich heritage of the Savara tribe, the Collector is setting a remarkable example for other districts to follow.

1 dead, 5 hurt in cracker blast

PNS ■ ELURU

In a tragic incident, one person was killed and five others were injured when firecrackers being carried on a scooter exploded near Ganganamma Temple in Turpu Veedhi here on Thursday.

Police reported that two youths were transporting a bag of firecrackers home when the scooter's front wheel struck a pothole, causing a strong jolt. Due to the impact, the firecrackers, locally known as 'Ullipaya bombulu,' exploded, killing Durgesh Sudhakar, the pillion rider, instantly.

The explosion was so severe that Durgesh was killed on the spot, while the rider of the scooter sustained critical injuries and was rushed to the Government General Hospital (GGH). Four bystanders on the road—T Sai, S Seshi, SK Khadir, Suresh, and Satish—were also



injured and are receiving treatment at GGH.

Local officials, including DSP Shrawan Kumar, Circle Inspector Satyanarayana, and SI Madina Basha, visited the scene and registered a case.

On Friday, Minister for



Housing and I&PR K Parthasarathi, along with MLA Badeti Radhakrishna, ZP Chairperson Ganta Padmasri, and Mayor Sheik Noorjahan, visited the injured at GGH and expressed condolences to Durgesh's family. The Minister

provided Rs 15,000 to the bereaved family for funeral expenses and assured them of early disbursement of ex gratia and an outsourced job for a family member of the deceased.

Speaking to the media, Minister Parthasarathi con-

veyed his sorrow over the incident and announced Rs 2 lakh in compensation from the Municipal Corporation and Rs 1 lakh on behalf of the TDP for Durgesh's family. Additionally, each injured person will receive Rs 20,000.

Minister Kollu Ravindra launches free gas cylinder scheme

PNS ■ MACHILIPATNAM

Minister for Mines and Excise Kollu Ravindra formally launched the free gas cylinder scheme at Enagudurupet here on Friday accompanied by Krishna district Collector DK Balaji and APSRTC Chairman K Narayana Rao.

Minister Kollu Ravindra launched the flagship scheme of three free gas cylinders per annum by handing over a cylinder and lighting a gas stove in the house of one of the beneficiaries, Mohammad Sultana.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that as per the assurance given by N Chandrababu Naidu, the government had launched the free gas cylinder scheme on account of Diwali festival. There are about 1.08 crore gas connections in the State and all the eligible would be given three free gas cylinders for annum. The government had to bear over Rs 3000 crore for the implementation of the free gas cylinders scheme per annum, he noted.

He highlighted that the government had already started disbursing enhanced pension to over 65 lakh beneficiaries for which the government is spending Rs 33,000 crore per annum. The government reopened the Anna canteens across the State to provide nutritious food to the poor at an affordable price.

"The TIDCO houses will



be handed to the beneficiaries soon. The poor will be given two cents of site instead of just one cent to build houses. The mega DSC will be announced soon and 16,700 posts will be filled. A job fair will be organized in Machilipatnam soon for the benefit of the educated unemployed," the Minister revealed.

Employment opportunities would be provided to unemployed youth under the MSME programme at a programme to be held on November 9 in ZP convention hall. District Collector DK

Balaji recalled that women used to cook food using firewood. Keeping this in view the then State government launched the Deepam scheme in 1999 which helped the poor a lot.

He called upon the people to properly utilize the free gas cylinder scheme. APSRTC chairman Konakalla Narayana Rao also spoke. RDO K Swathi, DSO V Parvati and Municipal Commissioner CH VVS Bapiraju were among those who attended the programme.

Pothole-free roads by Jan 15: Minister Janardhan Reddy

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Minister for Roads and Buildings (R&B) and Infrastructure Development, BC Janardhan Reddy, has pledged to make the state 'pothole-free' by the Sankranti festival. In a statement on Friday, the Minister announced that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu would launch the 'Pothole-Free State Mission' at Gajapathinagar in Vizianagaram district on November 2, where he will also participate.

The government aims to repair all roads in the state and achieve pothole-free status by January 15. The formal programme will be launched on November 2 by the Chief Minister, Janardhan Reddy confirmed.

The Minister highlighted that the government has already allocated Rs 290 crore for road repairs, with an additional Rs 220 crore to be released from the State Disaster Management Fund. Furthermore, Rs 350 crore will be allocated for the maintenance of state highways, he noted.

"Repair work will commence in all constituencies across the districts. The government is treating road



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repairs as a matter of prestige, and any indifference to road maintenance will not be tolerated," he stated. After completing the necessary repairs, officials will issue a certificate confirming that the roads are

free of potholes, with continuous monitoring of the repair works.

Taking a job at the YSRCP regime, Minister Janardhan Reddy remarked that people were afraid to use the roads during Janu Reddy's five-year tenure due to their deplorable condition.

He emphasised that for any state to achieve sustainable economic development and attract industries and investments, a solid infrastructure is crucial. The government is thus implementing a comprehensive plan for road construction across the state.

To incorporate advanced technology and innovative methods in road repairs and maintenance, the government has signed MoUs with SRM University and IIT Tirupati. The R&B Minister mentioned his recent visits to Gujarat and Assam to study their road maintenance strategies, including the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model and Road Assessment and Management System for state highways.

"There are 129 National Highway projects currently under construction, spanning 3,300 KM, with a total investment of Rs 76,000 crore," he explained.

Jagan slams Centre over Polavaram dam height

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) has strongly condemned the Central government's decision to reduce the height of the Polavaram Project from 45.72 meters to 41.15 m. They criticise Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu for failing to oppose this move, which they argue endangers Andhra

Pradesh's water security and development prospects despite his influential role within the NDA. Taking to 'X', former CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy stated that this height reduction would slash water storage capacity from 194.6 TMC to 115 TMC, affecting water supply for agriculture in the Godavari delta, power generation, and urban needs in Visakhapatnam.

Commissioner bids farewell to retired police officers

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Police Commissioner SV Rajasekhara Babu has felicitated six police officers who retired after attaining superannuation at the NTR District City Police Commissionerate. DCs Gautami Shali, Krishna Murthy Naidu and several police officers were present on the occasion. They congratulated the retired officers for their long and valuable services to the people.

On the occasion, the Commissioner wished all the retired police personnel to spend the rest of their life happily in good health and said their services will be memorable. "It is commendable that you have performed your duties with discipline and



responsibility for a long time and have attained the position of retirement. You have performed your duties in accordance with the laws for so many years. On behalf of the department, I thank you for devoting all your time and

energy to public service in the Police Department," said the Commissioner.

The police personnel were felicitated with police honours and bid a heartfelt farewell. The retired personnel are: D Anand Kumar, Sub-Inspector, CSB; R

Ramanadham, Reserve Sub-Inspector, CAR; K Peddirajulu, Assistant Sub-Inspector, Machavaram, K Emmanuel, Assistant Sub-Inspector, Gunadala, DV Srinivasa Rao, Head Constable, CCS, and S Prasad, Home Guard, Home

Guard Office. ARA CP D Prasad Rao, AO Sunitha, NTR District Police Association president M Somaiah, association members, families of the retiring police officers, CPO staff and others were present.

Constable injured as gun goes off accidentally



PNS ■ ANANTAPUR

An Armed Reserve police constable was injured when the service rifle went off accidentally when he was cleaning the weapon here on Friday.

Police said that the AR police constable, Subba Raju, was doing duty at the treasury

office.

When he was cleaning his service rifle, it went off accidentally and the bullet pierced through his right hand.

He was admitted to the GGH where he was undergoing treatment.

SP Jagadish ordered for an inquiry on the incident.

SRM-AP wins SZ badminton men's trophy

PNS/Vijayawada

The South Zone Inter University Badminton (Men) Tournament, organised by SRM Institute of Science & Technology (SRMIST) under the auspices of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), took place from October 26 to 29. SRM University-AP emerged as the winner, securing a spot in the upcoming All India Inter University tournament. A total of 120 universities from Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, and Telangana participated in the competition.

The SRM University-AP team, comprising Tummala Venkata Sai Harshit, Kothapalli Satyanarayana V V Sri Mohith, Inturi Varshith Sri Sai, Aanupouju Charan Ganesh, Numair Shaik, Tirupathi Rushendra, and Sai Manish Gollapalli, showcased outstanding performances across six matches held over three consecutive days. SRMIST



secured the second place, with MG University, Kerala, and Andhra University, AP, finishing third and fourth, respectively. These four teams will represent the South Zone at the All India Inter University Competition, scheduled to be held soon in Rajasthan.

Led by Tirupathi Rushendra, SRM University-AP lifted the trophy for the first time in the South Zone Inter University Badminton (Men) Competition. Pro Chancellor Dr P. Satyanarayanan, Vice Chancellor Dr Manoj K Arora, and Sports Director Dr Dhiraj

Parasher extended their congratulations to the team and wished them success in the All India tournament.

The team expressed their gratitude to SRM University-AP management for their continuous support and to their coach, Firoz.

New CM for TG between June 2025 & Dec 2025: Maheshwar

KOLISHETTY VENKATESHWARLU
venkat.k.warlu@gmail.com
■ HYDERABAD



It is not just the public who have been eagerly waiting for Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy's 'political bombs' aimed at BRS leaders but also Congress leaders like TPCC President B. Mahesh Kumar Goud.

However, before Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy's 'political bombs' are hurled at BRS leaders, the BJP threw a teaser bomb at none other than Chief Minister Revanth Reddy saying that the Congress is going to remove Revanth from the Chief Minister's post.

BJLP leader Alleti Maheshwar Reddy said that Telangana would get a new Chief Minister between June 2025 and December 2025. The Congress high command has been engaged in a vigorous exercise regarding this and at the same time the Chief Minister hopefuls had joined the race for the same.

Maheshwar said that Ministers N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and Komatireddy Venkat Reddy are in the race for the Chief Minister's post. There are chances of any one of these three becoming the CM, Maheshwar said.

During a chat with journalists on Friday, Maheshwar said that Rahul Gandhi has stopped giving appointments to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. In fact, Rahul has refused to give appointments to Revanth seven times already. Priyanka Gandhi also did not give appointment to Revanth

while in Kerala, he pointed out. "Revanth Reddy's holiday is over. The countdown has started for him. The Congress has launched a hunt for a new Chief Minister. The Congress high command felt that Revanth has been using the project Musi for his personal needs. Original Congress Ministers filed a complaint with the high command regarding this. The original Congress leaders have no interest in the Musi Project," Maheshwar said.

"Senior Ministers are not accepting the decisions of Revanth and complained that Revanth has been engaging in huge fund collection. The Ministers are now divided into two camps. The anti-Revanth faction is in New Delhi. The Minister who oppose Revanth have succeeded in convincing the high command," Maheshwar added.

He said that anti-Revanth Ministers submitted a report with evidence to the high command. They sent reports and are continuing to send reports to settle Revanth's HYDRAA, Musi and land settlements with the high command. These Ministers and some MLAs think that the Chief Minister is collecting huge funds and the high command also thinks the same, he added.

400-year-old temple remains in utter neglect at Tirupati

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

Ruins of a fort and Siva temple are left uncared for at Sanambatla, a village on the left bank of River Krishna in Chandragiri mandal, Tirupati district, said Dr E Sivanagi Reddy, archaeologist and CEO, Pleach India Foundation.

Based on the information given by Prof Peta Srinivasulu Reddy, former HOD, Telugu Department, SV University, Sivanagi Reddy conducted an archaeological exploration along River Swarnamukhi and found ruins of a stone fortification and a Siva temple scattered on both the sides of the river and said that these structures belong to

16th to 18th centuries.

Dr Sivanagi Reddy said that the fort wall with a width of six feet, filled with brick masonry in between its two layers of stone and the finely carved architectural members of the temple respectively, crumbled due to the floods of Swarnamukhi river.

Sivanagi Reddy, who noticed meticulously carved pillars and ceiling slabs bearing features of typical Vijayanagara style, appealed to the Villagers to safeguard the remains for posterity.

Mudumala Suresh Reddy, Sarpanch, research scholars namely P Srinath Reddy, Srikanth Yadav and Prakash participated in the exploration, said Sivanagi Reddy.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

Message from Kutch

PM Modi's Diwali with the troops shows the profound respect and support between a nation and its defenders

In a powerful address from Kutch, Gujarat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated his Government's unwavering commitment to the country's sovereignty, vowing that India will not cede "even an inch" of its land. This steadfast message, delivered while celebrating Diwali with India's security forces, emphasised the government's pledge to fortify the nation's defences to meet the challenges of the 21st century. "When the world looks at you, it sees India's strength," Modi said to the soldiers. "When our adversaries look at you, they see the end of their malicious plans." Addressing personnel of the Border Security Force (BSF), Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force at Lakki Nala in Gujarat's Kutch region, the Prime Minister highlighted his administration's dedication to transforming the country's military into one of the most advanced in the world. Modernisation efforts, he said, are anchored on the principle of self-reliance, a cornerstone of his government's vision for India's defense sector. PM Modi also spoke on the lesser-discussed role of border tourism, an initiative he believes holds strategic importance in national security. With Kutch being a crucial geographical area, he mentioned that promoting tourism in border areas helps increase awareness, instills a sense of patriotism, and brings citizens closer to the nation's defense reality.



This Diwali marks yet another year of Modi's cherished tradition of celebrating the festival with India's armed forces. Since 2014, the Prime Minister has made it a point to spend Diwali with soldiers across various fronts, symbolising both gratitude and solidarity with the defenders of the nation. Each year, his Diwali visits have become moments of deep emotional connection with the troops, underscoring the mutual respect and morale shared between the leader and his soldiers. As the Prime Minister continues to foster self-reliance in defence, his words serve not only as a reassurance to the nation but as a warning to adversaries. Indeed, the soldiers stationed in India's remote borders stand as sentinels of peace, and their Diwali with the Prime Minister serves as a reminder of the unity and resilience that drive India forward. In times of celebration, when families gather to share in the joy of festivals, there exists a silent, steadfast group of heroes who forgo these moments with loved ones to protect the heart and soul of our nation. Our soldiers, standing guard at the borders, embody resilience, courage, and patriotism that transcends any personal sacrifice. They endure the harshest of conditions, from the scorching sun to the bitter cold, and face unforeseen challenges to ensure that our celebrations remain undisturbed, safe, and joyous. This sacrifice takes on a deeper meaning during festival seasons, such as Diwali. While we light our homes with lamps, these brave souls light the way of duty, standing as sentinels against any threats to our country. They spend their festivals under the open sky, far from the warmth of family and loved ones, driven solely by their sense of duty and deep love for the country.

PICTALK



Illuminated Bapu Bazar on the eve of the Diwali festival, in Jaipur

A pathway to deeper connections

Effective communication demands more than mere words; it requires rhythm, empathy and the ability to adapt to the nuances of each moment



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

Communication is central to existence. All living creatures communicate with each other, and there are people who believe that even plants and foliage, amongst other leafy life existences, communicate with each other. In certain cases, language is coded, and in other cases, the impact is seen not because of a translation of a coded language but because of the results it produces.

The long and short of the matter is that communication is a way of transmission of feelings, ideas, possible actions, and more. Volumes of literature have been surfaced in different languages about communication, which can take place through eyes and without making a sound. However, a language code is necessary if somebody other than two live existences, in communication, are involved. Therein comes the language, the sound, and the script. The language of sounds has developed as phonetics, and the language of the written word with or without oral transmission is known as linguistics. The sophistication of these specializations has used the machine and technology to lend both credence and depth to the field of specialization.

The present understanding of digitalization needs to be more enriched while incorporating these ideas. However, the moot point remains that communication is central to existence. The more adept persons have incorporated music and rhythm into such communication, not to overlook the power of touch, which ranges from fingers to other parts of the body.

Accordingly, the study of communication needs to be enriched by the realization of the wide spectrum of its ambit. Many aspects of process are still to be explored in a deep scholastic mode. This alone will enable credible theories to emerge. This process will be a major contribution to the concerns of relationships.



Relationships and emotions are difficult to comprehend and manage because of various levels at which the exchange occurs. The mind is supposed to be affected by various kinds of waves, which have been identified as alpha waves, beta waves, and so on and so forth. This is not only the touch but also the rhythm and words which impact a response.

If someone is annoyed, the level and pitch of the voice is often raised. A common response to somebody's annoyance is a follow-up question, some what to the effect of 'Why are you annoyed?' The truth is, one knows why the other person is annoyed. One is only waiting for a verbalization of the cause of annoyance. This act by itself may or may not help. In fact, unless sincerely intended, asking this question is questionable and indeed could have the effect of aggravating the situation.

For good communication, rhythmic synchronization of each other's moods is necessary. Usually, the opportunity for rhythmic understanding is disturbed by the different moods of the two or more persons involved in communication. In such circum-



stances, a change of topic, a change of tone, or even some humour may help in 'aiding' ease all-round. The challenge is that in the heat of the moment, one loses track of the options for keeping the communication on track or simply persisting with one's perspective. The message is simple: at all stages, one needs to keep one's calm, look at the options, and select wisely. This would help one to not only adjust better in communication but also help carry the other person along. To do this, it is essential to realize that a major purpose of any communication is to be able to share one's own chosen facts in an appropriate tone and content, for the other person to hear. Similarly, to intertwine the communication, it is important to hear what the person is stating. A person who can read the other persons unstated wish to 'posture' can communicate better. It is this complexity coupled with intangible simplicity that makes communication so much of an art and a skill beyond words. Deft negotiators know how to be flexible and accommodating to the other person's point of view. There is also scope for

emphasizing an assertion, but that is few and far between and has to be timed properly with chosen words, appropriate posture, accompanying softness, and suitable intonation in the voice or more. At the end of the day, unless there are special circumstances, in most of communication to win, both must win. It is a rarity to have 'peace' if one wins and the other person loses. People generally do not like to accept defeat, which means that the apparent loser will bounce back in the communication and raise it again sooner or later. All in all, it is important to realize that communication, like all arts, must be gradually perfected. It also requires technological sensitivity. It requires choice of appropriate methods/medium such as the telephone, video, and more to relate with each other. In many cases, the choice of medium itself can convey a message. The art of communication is challenging and fascinating. There are many who are better than others in the practice of this art. (The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute; views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

AMUSING AND EMBARRASSING!

Madam—A recent news report mentions that the French Ambassador's phone was stolen by "experts" in the trade, only to be promptly recovered, likely due to the high-profile nature of the owner. An average citizen, however, would not have been as fortunate in similar circumstances.

The incident was undoubtedly amusing for readers, likely alarming for the Ambassador, and ultimately embarrassing for India as a nation. This is one experience the Ambassador may never forget. As the saying goes, "When in Italy, keep three purses, two pairs of shoes, and one heart open to adventure." Perhaps this applies equally well to India, particularly to areas like Chandni Chowk. Finally, a note of reassurance: some CCTV cameras do indeed function at strategic locations—at least, sometimes.

Avinash Godbole | Dewas

ISRAEL BANS UNRWA

Madam—Israel's recent policy to ban UNRWA, the UN agency assisting Palestinian refugees, is a deeply concerning move that only intensifies an already devastating humanitarian crisis. This decision raises critical questions: by cutting off an agency that has supported Palestinian refugees for decades, what alternative does Israel propose to address the immense health and nutrition needs of millions? Additionally, can Israel's detachment from global efforts be deemed legitimate if it comes at the expense of the welfare of vulnerable populations? This policy appears to prioritize political gains over humanitarian duty and risks further destabilizing the region. If sustainable peace is the ultimate goal, policies must aim to reduce suffering, not exacerbate it, ensuring all vulnerable populations are given the support they urgently need. The war must end before it spills over across the region.

Anshu Bharti | Begusarai

Traumatic traffic



The editorial "Traffic Mayhem" addresses the pressing traffic issues plaguing Delhi—an issue common to most major metro cities. Despite only 7% of Indians owning cars, a large portion of this car-owning population is concentrated in metropolitan areas. In high-traffic zones, parking becomes another major hurdle that demands effective solutions. The experience of being stuck in traffic during peak hours, often resulting in delays and frustration, detracts from

the convenience and enjoyment of car travel. Unfortunately, governments typically respond only once traffic congestion reaches critical levels. Even then, plans are often focused on immediate needs rather than long-term solutions. By the time projects like flyovers are completed, the surge in vehicle numbers has already reduced their effectiveness.

Given the significant resources spent on infrastructure, planning should be forward-looking, ideally considering projections for the next fifty to a hundred years. For main traffic arteries, three-tiered flyovers with side wings to manage separate lanes for heavy vehicles, cars, and smaller vehicles could greatly improve traffic flow. While long-term planning may demand greater initial investment, it offers lasting relief from congestion while creating employment opportunities during project development.

A G Rajmohan | Ananthpur

LONG WAIT FOR JUSTICE

Madam—It has been 40 years since the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, yet justice remains elusive. Thousands of Sikhs were brutally killed in cities across the country, yet not a single individual has been sentenced to death for orchestrating, planning, or participating in these atrocities. Despite numerous inquiries, commissions, extensive charge sheets, and the establishment of fast-track courts, justice has been endlessly delayed, leaving the accused in limbo as undertrials. One wonders what kind of "fast" justice these courts offer, given that even after four decades, they have yet to reach a conclusion. India, as a nation, failed to learn from the horrors of 1984, leading to repeats of such violence in places like Gujarat and Manipur. The impunity with which the orchestrators of these riots operate is evident, as convictions remain rare. The system has allowed mass murderers to escape accountability, and justice has turned a blind eye. Had the perpetrators been adequately punished, it might have

served as a deterrent to others. For the victims of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots who still await justice, hope fades with each passing day.

The saying "justice delayed is justice denied" rings painfully true when thousands of deaths remain unacknowledged in the eyes of the law. Justice may have lifted her blindfold, but she remains blind to the tears of the widows and mothers who witnessed their loved ones burned alive four decades ago. As a country that has greatly benefited from the Sikh community's contributions, we should feel a deep sense of shame for the suffering they endured. While an apology was offered by the Prime Minister, an apology is no substitute for justice.

The time has come to correct this injustice and enact laws that deliver timely justice—before both the victims and the accused are lost to time.

Gurnoor Grewal | Chandigarh

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

A good lifestyle is essential for overall wellbeing

Lifestyle changes can significantly reduce risk of brain stroke. One can recognise it by its early symptoms and take preventive measures

Understanding the Neurological Damage of a Stroke: What Happens in Your Brain Dr Praveen Gupta, Principal Director & Chief of Neurology, Fortis Hospital Being the central organ of the human nervous system, the brain controls both motor and sensory functions throughout the body. During a stroke, the blood supply to a part of the brain is obstructed depriving the brain of much-needed oxygen and nutrients. This lack of oxygen damages the brain cells resulting in inflammation and swelling in the brain. As the blood supply remains obstructed, more cells die, weakening the blood-brain barrier. This breakdown of the barrier causes water to enter the brain, worsening the swelling. The swelling usually lasts for seven days, following which the brain's natural mechanisms begin to take effect, causing the swelling to subside as the body starts to repair the damaged tissue. How Strokes Can Be Prevented,



A healthy lifestyle is key to the prevention of stroke. To begin with, consume a diet rich in fresh fruits and vegetables, have walnuts and almonds, engage in regular physical activity, aim for 30 minutes of walking every day, take care of central abdominal obesity, control your salt intake (less than 6 grams per day) along with eating food low in saturated fats like oil, butter, ghee. In addition, develop a proper sleep schedule to get at least six to eight hours of peaceful sleep every night, and avoid smoking and excess alcohol intake. Also,

you need to be watchful of excess pollution and keep your blood sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure under control. In addition to a healthy lifestyle, you need to keep other parameters in check. If you suffer from heart disease, it's essential to take appropriate medical care to prevent the clots from moving to the brain. This can control the possibility of strokes in at least 50 per cent of people. Warning signs everyone should know. The warning signs of stroke can be classified as BEFAST, where B stands for

balance. Being unable to walk properly or losing your balance can be one of the first signs of stroke. E is for eyes - if you suffer from a stroke; you may have difficulty seeing properly or have double vision. F is for face, your face droops to one side, A is for arms - you may have trouble lifting one of your arms and S is for speech - there is slurring of speech or inability to speak. T is for time. Time is of the essence when you suffer from a stroke. A person suffering from a stroke loses 1.9 million brain cells for every minute. A person's risk of being disabled or dying increases with the length of time they have a stroke. If you can recognize the symptoms of a stroke within the first four and a half hours, you can receive clot-busting drugs, which can break the clot, restore the blood supply to the brain, and prevent the occurrence of a cascade of events.

(The writer is a Principal Director & Chief of Neurology, Fortis Hospital; views expressed are personal)



PRAVEEN GUPTA



FIRST COLUMN

BUILDING A MENTAL RETREAT

We often chase external escapes, yet the true sanctuary lies within

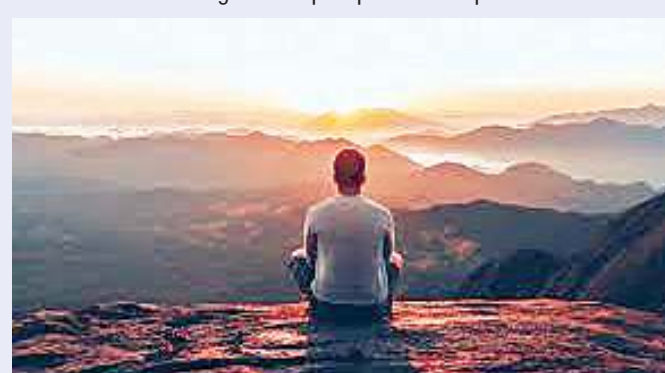


RAVI VALLURI

We should develop a holiday home in the mind to relax. Instead, we build concrete jungles of thoughts where we fear to tread. Summer was simmering, temperatures were rising in Delhi, and the beer-guzzling husband and wife duo, and their college-going children fed on junk food, were looking forward to their first overseas trip "together". "Eureka," he screamed, "Leave sanctioned." "Trip to Chiang Mai will now be a reality," screamed the children and wife. "Bonding at last," the wife mused effusively. The manic and frenetic-paced lifestyle had invaded a bonding that ought to have been a natural part of their living.

This is a familiar tale of several upper-middle-class families and the ones who mimic them as they crave to keep up with the Joneses. The prana levels of such individuals are low. In several cases, opulence without proper responsibility has corrupted their minds and they carry the burden of the twin maladies of inflated egos and judgmental attitudes. But this was not the case with the family. Would they have relished the get-away to Chiang Mai?

The human mind is both a friendly retainer and a dangerous liege. A beleaguered mind causes immense suffering to the individual, those around him and also society at large. An alert mind learns positive lessons from life to take recourse to remedial measures and discovers ingenious ways to address and arrest negativity. Just as an architect designs buildings, we humans can construct an oasis of peace in our minds where we can luxuriate on a genuine holiday. This is mandatory for individuals who are at the worn-off edge or the precipice of disequilibrium. The land-



scape of the mind should be attractive and harmonious, which one would like to frequent. Aeon's ago, there was an old farmer. One day his horse ran away. Upon hearing the news, his neighbours came to commiserate. "Maybe," the farmer replied laconically. The next morning the horse returned, bringing along with it three other wild horses.

Taken aback at the turn of events, the neighbours congratulated the farmer. "Maybe," was the reply. His son tried to ride one of the untamed horses and was thrown off the saddle and broke his leg. The neighbours expressed their grief. "Maybe," answered the farmer. Shortly, some military officials came to the village to draft young men into the army. The wounded son was not recruited. Soon congratulatory messages poured in from the neighbours as the son escaped the hazardous employment. "Maybe," said the farmer.

The stoic farmer remained unfazed in all situations. The supercilious family from Delhi was so full of themselves hurtling towards an imminent disaster that it would undeniably benefit by learning a few secrets from the old farmer. Instead of planning an annual holiday, the family ought to create a sacred space within their hearts and minds where positivism mushrooms and develop a delicate balance of detachment like the old farmer. They could visualise and connect to a soothing terrain in their minds, which would restore equilibrium to their disoriented lifestyles. This topography could unfold the pyramid and radically alter a desultory lifestyle to a more harmonious one. Imagine the mind conceptualises a retreat within its containments, where supposedly a thousand monks practice meditation, observe their breath and remain in silence say for three months. Pranayama and the practice of yoga – be it for the propertied or poor, healthy, or unhealthy – help in mental reconfiguration, rejuvenation, and revitalisation, which soothes frayed nerves and makes individuals happy. This should rekindle happiness, energy and joy in their minds.

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

Turn of the tide in Myanmar?

As the opposition secures control over key territories, including vital trade corridors, the junta's authority appears increasingly tenuous



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR



Myanmar's ruling junta is facing defeat and ouster, which will happen sooner than most people think.

The latest, and one of the most serious, reverses suffered by the Sit-Tat (Myanmar's Army's name), has been the fall, on October 8, 2024, of the township of Pinlebu to the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), an important part of the coalition of forces fighting the junta, and its allies. Located on the border of the Sagaing Region and Kachin State, its capture opens up to the opposition forces the routes leading to the Kawlin township and the surrounding areas.

Apart from its geo-strategic importance, the township's capture is significant for what it revealed of the Sit-Tat's state. It suffered a resounding defeat. A report by Saw Lin, published in the news website, The Irrawaddy, on October 14, 2024, cites the opposition National Unity Government as claiming that the junta's troops, numbering 800, were defeated despite 670 airstrikes and the dropping of over 5,000 bombs, that around 70 junta soldiers were killed, 275 were missing, 225 were wounded, 48 surrendered and 102 captured during the fighting. Around 400 firearms and other military equipment were seized.

The report further cites Thoe Gyi, the leader of Kawlin District People's Defense Team, as saying that Pinlebu, surrounded by forests and mountains, was easy to defend, and difficult to attack. There had been four attacks since the first one in 2022, each of which had almost succeeded but the regime held on with air support and airlifted troops. The fifth one, which began on August 15, 2024, was successful. The enemy, Thoe Gyi said, was weak. Those who were forcibly recruited or drafted under the conscription law dared not fight and surrendered when the fighting broke out. Others surrendered after they ran out of food and could no longer fight. The Sit-Tat suffers from other weaknesses as well. There is discord within. Several three-stars generals have been removed. Many younger officers are unhappy as they recognise that almost the entire country is against them.



THE ODDS ARE NOW RAPIDLY INCREASING AGAINST THE JUNTA. THE LATTER DOUBTLESS HAS TANKS AND OTHER ARMoured VEHICLES, ARTILLERY AND AIR FORCE. TANKS AND ARMoured VEHICLES ARE VERY DIFFICULT TO DEPLOY IN THE AREAS DOMINATED BY THE ETHNIC FORCES

Prior to Pinlebu, anti-junta forces had captured four towns in northern Mandalay. According to a report by Andrew Nachemson published in Al Jazeera dated September 23, 2024, their capture had placed them within striking distance of the city of Mandalay, Myanmar's second largest urban centre, with a population of nearly two million.

In fact, the Sit-Tat has suffered a series of reverses since the opposition Three Brotherhood Alliance (henceforth the Alliance) launched its offensive, codenamed Operation 1027, on October 27, 2023. Comprising the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), active in the Kokang Special Region of northern Shan State, the Taang National Liberation Army (TNLA), also active in the Shan State and the Arakan Army (AA), based in the Rakhine State in the country's western part, it has been acting in close cooperation with the opposition National Unity Government's military arm, the People's Defence Force (PDF) and other ethnic armies like the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and Karen National Army. The AA had brought almost the entire Rakhine State under its control by April, 2024. In a major development, the MNDAA claimed on July 31, 2024, that it had captured Sit-Tat's military base in Lashio, a city in Shan State close to the border with China, and its airport. This was a major loss for the junta. As Vivek Shankar has pointed out in a piece in The New York Times datelined August 5, 2024, the "city of Lashio and its airport lie on a crucial trade corridor to Yunnan Province in China, which is spending hundreds of millions of dollars on a high-speed rail link and other infrastructure projects on both sides of

the border." The opposition forces now control large swathes of territory along Myanmar's borders and mountainous region; the military retains control over the major cities and lowlands in the central Irrawaddy Valley. It is losing even the cities and towns. As Vivek Shankar has stated in the article cited above, the forces resisting the junta now hold "roughly 75 cities and towns across Myanmar and two airports, one in Thandwe in Rakhine State in the west, and the other in Lashio." The odds are now rapidly increasing against the Junta. The latter doubtless has tanks and other armoured vehicles, artillery and air force. Tanks and armoured vehicles are very difficult to deploy in the areas dominated by the ethnic forces. With densely forested mountainous terrains, deep gorges and steep climbs, these are ideal for staging ambushes. Moreover, airstrikes and artillery do not win wars, even when backed by heavily armed and trained infantry. Otherwise, the United States would have romped to a victory in Vietnam.

Can the junta see the writing on the wall? During its 8 p.m. news broadcast on September 26, 2024, the junta seemed to offer, for the first time, a major concession to the opposition armed resistance groups. It said in a statement, "The state lost a large number of human resources, infrastructures, lives and property of the people due to the fact some individuals and organizations chose to resort to armed terrorism and armed struggle line without solving political problems through political ways." Given the statement's accusatory undertones and unbelievable inherent irony, it is hardly surprising that several commanders of the rebel forces, ethnic armies, and the opposition NUG government,

promptly rejected the offer. A report (datelined September 27, 2024) by Sui-Lee Wee in The New York Times, quoted Ye Myo Hein, a visiting senior expert for the Myanmar programme of the United States Institute for peace, as saying, "The reason they made this announcement is to appease China." It could well be so.

As Wee points out in her report, while expressing support for the junta, Beijing has also been engaged in talks with northern Myanmar's ethnic armed groups. According to the report, China's foreign minister, Wang Yi, had travelled to Myanmar in August, 2024, to urge the country's army chief, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, to pursue political reconciliation and hold elections. Earlier, in a meeting with Myanmar's president, Thein Sein, in China in June, Wang Yi had also called on the military to hold talks with Aung San Suu Kyi, who is currently serving a 27-year prison term on totally false charges.

There is no indication that the junta has any intention of holding talks with Suu Kyi. In fact, in an interview to Myein Myein carried in The Irrawaddy on October 24, 2024, her son, Kim Arris, said she had been kept completely incommunicado in prison in Naypyitaw with even her family and lawyers barred from meeting her. The conditions in the prison being terrible and with Suu Kyi having serious health issues, he expressed the fear that she might die in prison, which may well happen. In that case, the burden of guilt not only be on the junta but the Western democracies which seem no longer bothered about developments in Myanmar.

(The author is Consulting Editor, The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal)

Reforming India's education system for job market alignment

With comprehensive planning, a revitalised education system could become the catalyst for national prosperity and social stability

In today's industrialised economy, formal education has become the backbone of personal and national development. Originally introduced around 1830 by Lord Macaulay, formal education gained momentum post-independence, facilitating India's shift from an agrarian to an industrialized economy. However, as the job market has evolved, a concerning mismatch has emerged between the skills provided by the education system and the needs of the workforce. This disparity has led to high unemployment rates, particularly among educated youth, while certain sectors experience a shortage of skilled labor. Thus, India's education policy requires significant reform to better align with employment needs and sup-



R P GUPTA

port the country's development goals. Human capital is undoubtedly the most valuable resource for a nation's growth and development. However, to leverage this asset, it must be channeled appropriately into the economy. Failure to do so could lead to an increase in poverty rates and potential social unrest. For meaningful employment and economic improvement, the workforce

must be equipped with skills relevant to market demands. By bridging the gap between education and employment, India can reduce unemployment, enhance income levels, and improve overall economic efficiency. According to a survey by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), in the third quarter of fiscal year 2022-23, only 12% of job-holders were graduates. The majority, 40%, had completed only high school (10th grade), 28% had not completed high school, and the remaining 20% had education levels below the 5th grade. Surprisingly, the unemployment rate among graduates was 17.2%, compared to 10.2% for high school graduates and 1.6% for those with lower education levels. This

data reveals that India's education policy is misaligned with its employment demands, underscoring the urgent need for change. The first step in this reform should involve conducting a comprehensive survey to assess current and future labor demands across various sectors. Such a survey would help young people make informed decisions about their education and career paths. Using this data, policymakers could create a dynamic, responsive education system that evolves with changing market needs. Firstly, completing basic education, up to matriculation, should be universally encouraged. Financial assistance programs could be provided for those in need. Physical activities, like yoga



and sports, should be made compulsory to promote physical health. Ancient teachings on humanity, ethics, and nationalism could also be incorporated to build a responsible, compassionate society. After completing matriculation, students should have access to short, specialized courses (2-4 years) in fields such as engineering, nursing, and hospitality management.

This model could be expanded to cover a broader range of fields based on market demand. These courses should blend formal education with vocational training, with course duration varying according to job requirements. For students pursuing higher education, curricula should be adapted to reflect the skills demanded by the job market, and mandatory internships should be introduced to provide hands-on experience. Developing soft skills, like communication and problem-solving, is also essential. With India's growing population, opening new educational institutions, supported by both public and private sectors, is necessary to meet increasing demand. Research and innovation are

crucial for a nation's future. India must support a select group of students pursuing research to meet the country's long-term needs. However, given the limited market for research roles domestically, many scholars are compelled to seek opportunities abroad. Governments, both central and state, should invest in research institutions, providing more funding to retain skilled researchers and encouraging innovation within India. Self-employment accounts for nearly 50% of India's workforce, with a large portion comprising farmers and small business owners. However, these individuals often earn less than those in salaried positions and may have entered self-employment due to a lack of alternative oppor-

tunities. Beyond the industrial sector, there is a significant demand for skilled and semi-skilled workers, including drivers, electricians, masons, cooks, and security guards, among others. Many self-employed individuals, like craftsmen and repair technicians, have learned their trades informally, often without pay. Vocational training combined with formal education could significantly enhance their earning potential. For example, an educated driver with certification in vehicle maintenance and traffic regulations would have better job prospects and could command higher wages. *(The writer is an author and writes on education; views are personal)*

IN BRIEF



India's power consumption rises to 140.4 bn units

India's power consumption rose marginally by about one per cent to 140.47 billion units (BU) in October compared to a year ago, mainly due to heavier base effect. In the year-ago period, the power consumption grew by over 22 per cent to 139.44 BU from 113.94 BU in October 2022. The highest supply in a day (peak power demand met) dipped to 219.22 GW in October 2024 from 221.53 GW in the year-ago month. The peak power demand touched an all-time high of about 250 GW in May this year. The previous all-time high peak power demand of 243.27 GW was recorded in September 2023. Earlier this year, the power ministry projected a peak power demand of 235 GW during the day and 225 GW during evening hours for May while 240 GW during daytime and 235 GW in the evening hours for June. The ministry also estimated that peak power demand may hit 260 GW this summer.



'JSW-POSCO to set up steel plant in Odisha's Keonjhar'

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Friday said that India's fastest growing conglomerate JSW Group and South Korean steel major POSCO will jointly set up a greenfield steel facility in his home district of Keonjhar. Majhi revealed this amid nationwide speculation over the exact location of the JSW-POSCO joint venture. "During our roadshows for the ensuing Make-in Odisha conclave in Delhi and Mumbai, I had discussed with both JSW and POSCO regarding the establishment of a steel plant in Odisha's mineral-rich Keonjhar district," Majhi, who is on a two-day visit to Keonjhar for celebrating Diwali, told reporters. "Meanwhile, they have signed an MoU. They will do it jointly. They have also mentioned doing it in Keonjhar district. It is under process and Odisha will get another steel plant," the chief minister said. The two steel makers on October 29 signed an MoU at JSW Group's corporate headquarters in Mumbai, in the presence of JSW Group Chairman Sajjan Jindal and POSCO Chairman Chang In-hwa.



Bengaluru gets food security boost with subsidised grains

With the aim of easing the price rise challenge, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and National Co-operative Consumers' Federation of India Ltd (NCCF) have started distribution of essential food grains in Bengaluru at an affordable price. In a press statement issued by NCCF on Friday, it was mentioned that these products are made available in Phase 2 of Bharath products. Under the initiative, high quality essential grains are made available at an affordable rate for Bengaluru residents. Bharath rice is being sold at Rs 34, while the Bharath wheat flour Rs 30, Bharath Chana Dal Rs 70 and Bharath Moong Dal is being sold at just Rs 107. The market rate for the same products are rice Rs 55-60, atta Rs 45-50, dal Rs 90-100 and moong dal Rs 120-130.

'Karnataka govt approves Tourism Policy 2024-29'

PNS ■ UDUPI (KARNATAKA)

The Karnataka government has approved the Tourism Policy 2024-29, allocating Rs 1,349 crore to develop essential infrastructure and attract international tourists, state Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar announced on Friday.

Speaking at the 'Karnataka Rajyothsava' celebrations here, the Women and Child Welfare Minister, who is also Udupi district in-charge, emphasised the government's commitment to transforming Karnataka into a global tourism hub

through enhanced services and facilities.

Highlighting Karnataka's investment appeal, Hebbalkar stated that Bengaluru continues to lead the nation in investment inflow, a feat credited to the government's strategic efforts.

She noted that youth skill development programmes have equipped local talent to contribute effectively to various industries, further driving economic growth and investor confidence.

Reaffirming the government's dedication to promot-



ing the Kannada language, Hebbalkar urged the public to engage more deeply with Kannada literature and culture. "We are committed to estab-

lishing Kannada as the primary administrative language and have initiated several measures to support this goal. Programmes celebrating liter-

ature, folk arts, and environmental and cultural heritage are central to our mission," she added. Hebbalkar also highlighted the government's broader vision for socio-economic empowerment. "Our five guarantee schemes are designed to give people greater autonomy in social and economic realms," she asserted.

Addressing educational initiatives, she announced Rs 14.2 crore grant under the 'Oduh Karnataka' (Read Karnataka) programme, aimed at improving literacy among government school students in

Classes 4 and 5. Study materials and teacher training have been implemented to ensure the scheme's success.

Turning to irrigation developments in the Udupi district, Hebbalkar revealed plans to construct vented dams worth Rs 1.88 crore under the Paschima Vahini project this financial year. "These dams will irrigate 33 hectares of farmland. Additionally, embankments will be built along 151 km of riverbanks at a cost of Rs 6.15 crore to prevent farmland flooding," she explained.

KERALA CM TO FM

'Release grant for Vizhinjam seaport without strings'

PNS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has urged Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to release the Centre's share of Rs 817.80 crore in the Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for the Vizhinjam seaport here without imposing the condition that the state has to repay it later.

Vijayan, in a letter to the FM, said the condition imposed by the Empowered Committee constituted by the Department of Economic Affairs, that the VGF amount should be repaid by Kerala in Net Present Value (NPV) terms by way of premium (revenue) sharing, would result in a huge loss of Rs 10,000 to 12,000 crore to the state exchequer.

"The state is investing resources to the tune of Rs 5,595 crore out of the total project outlay of Rs 8,867



crore. I am sure, the Hon'ble Minister would appreciate that given the financial situation of a small state, like Kerala with limited financial resources, this scale of investment involves tremendous sacrifice on the part of the state.

"In addition, as the repayment of Rs 817.80 crore is to be made on NPV basis, this would involve a further loss of Rs 10,000 to 12,000 crore

to the state exchequer in actual terms, computed on projected interest rates and revenue realisation from the port over the period of repayment," the CM said.

He further said that the VGF was a financial support mechanism that was introduced to encourage Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in infrastructure projects that are economically justified but not financially viable

without additional financial support.

The VGF is invariably provided as a grant, not a loan and its defining elements are that "the payment to the concessionaire is non-repayable, it is a one-time grant and that it is over the construction period of the project," the CM said.

Thus, the condition that the VGF has to be repaid, "defies the rationale" behind it, he added.

"...the government of India and government of Kerala, as the two project proponents, have jointly decided to give this grant to the concessionaire."

"But to further stipulate the condition that one of the project proponents, viz.- the government of India, will advance this money as a deferred 'loan' to the other project proponent viz.- the state government, defies the rationale behind the VGF itself," he said in the letter.

India's coal production rises 7.4 pc in October, dispatches increase to 82.89 MT

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Coal production rose by 7.4 per cent to 84.45 MT in October compared to 78.57 MT in the corresponding month of the previous fiscal, the Coal Ministry said in a release.

Coal production from captive and other entities rose to 16.59 MT in October over 11.70 MT in the corresponding month of the previous fiscal.

Coal dispatches witnessed a boost in October reaching 82.89 MT compared to 79.25 MT recorded in October last fiscal.

"Coal dispatch from captive and other entities also grew to 16.18 MT in October 2024, compared to 11.83 MT in October 2023, representing

growth of 36.83 per cent," the coal ministry said.

In the April-October period of 2024-25, India's coal production rose by 6.1 per cent to 537.45 million tonnes (MT) compared to 506.56 MT in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal, the coal ministry said.

Cumulative coal dispatch during the April-October period rose to 571.39 MT compared to 541.51 MT during the corresponding period in 2023-24.

The Centre, the ministry said, remains committed to ensuring a reliable coal supply to meet the country's energy demands, with continued focus on boosting production, streamlining logistics, and supporting the nation's energy goals.

Facebook India Online Services profit grows 43 pc to Rs 505 crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Social media major Meta's advertisement unit, Facebook India Online Services, has posted a 43 per cent growth in profit to Rs 504.9 crore in the financial year ended on March 31, 2024, according to documents shared by Tozler.

The company had posted a profit of Rs 352.91 crore in FY2023.

Facebook India Online Services Private Limited is engaged in the business of selling advertising inventory to customers in India and providing IT-enabled support services and design support services to Meta Platforms Inc.

The company reported a 9.33 per cent increase in turnover to Rs 3,034.82 crore in FY24 against Rs 2,775.78 crore in FY23.

Petrol sales rebound, diesel demand continues to drop

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's petrol consumption soared 7.3 per cent in October on the back of increased demand from the start of festive season but diesel sales were down 3.3 per cent, preliminary data of state-owned firms showed on Friday.

Petrol sales of three state-owned firms, which control 90 per cent of the fuel market, rose to 3.1 million tonnes during October when compared to 2.87 million tonnes of consumption in the same month last year.

Diesel demand dropped 3.3 per cent to 6.7 million tonnes.

While petrol sales were up mostly due to an increase in use of personal vehicles as the festive season kicked in, diesel demand dropped due to lower demand from the agriculture sector owing to the extended rainy season.

Petrol and diesel sales have



been tepid during the last few months as monsoon rains reduced vehicular movement and demand for the agriculture sector.

Month-on-month petrol sales were up 7.8 per cent when compared to 2.86 million tonnes of consumption in September. Diesel demand was however almost 20 per cent more than 5.59 million tonnes of consumption in September. Diesel is India's most con-

sumed fuel, accounting for almost 40 per cent of all petroleum product consumption. The transport sector accounts for 70 per cent of all diesel sales in the country. It is also the predominant fuel used in agriculture sectors, including in harvesters and tractors.

Consumption of petrol during October was 10.5 per cent more than in October 2022, and 32.8 per cent more than in Covid-marred October 2020.

Diesel demand was up 1.7 per cent over October 2022, and 12.6 per cent compared to October 2020.

Jet fuel (ATF) sales rose 2.5 per cent year-on-year to 6,47,700 tonnes during October 2024. But this was 2.6 per cent lower month-on-month when compared with 6,31,100 tonnes of fuel sold in September.

Like petrol and diesel, ATF demand too is now firmly above pre-Covid levels.

OUTSTANDING BILLS OF USD 846 MILLION

Adani reduces power supply to Bangladesh

PNS ■ DHAKA

India's Adani Power Jharkhand Limited (APJL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Adani Power, has stopped half of its power supply to Bangladesh because of outstanding bills of USD 846 million, according to a local media report on Friday.

Data from Power Grid Bangladesh PLC showed the Adani plant reduced supply on Thursday night, The Daily Star newspaper said.

Bangladesh reported a shortfall of more than 1,600 megawatts (MW) on the intervening night of Thursday and Friday as the 1,496 MW plant is now producing 700 MW from a single unit, the newspaper reported.

Earlier, the Adani company wrote to the power secretary asking the Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) to clear its outstanding dues by October 30. The letter, dated October 27, said that if the bills are not paid, the company shall be constrained to take remedial action under the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) by suspending the power supply on October 31.

The company said that the

PDB has neither provided a letter of credit (LC) for an amount of USD 170.03 million from Bangladesh Krishi Bank nor cleared the outstanding amount of USD 846 million.

The newspaper quoted a PDB official as saying that they had earlier cleared a portion of previous dues, but since July, Adani has been charging more than the previous months. He said the PDB has been paying around USD 18 million weekly, while the charge is more than USD 22 million. "This is why the due payments increased again," he said, adding that they had submitted last week's payment to Krishi Bank as well, but due to a dollar shortage, the bank failed to open a letter of credit against the payment.

About the additional payment, he said, when the PDB raised a question on the coal pricing in February last year, they signed a supplementary deal that obliged Adani to quote coal prices less than the rates charged by the other coal-fired power plants.

After the tenure of the one-year supplementary deal, Adani has again started charging as per the PPA, the report said.



what's brewing?

Deepika's 'Lady Singham' avatar sparks solo film demand!



Amid much roar, Deepika Padukone has made a remarkable impact as Shakti Shetty, the fierce 'Lady Singham', in Rohit Shetty's latest action-packed film, *Singham Again*. The introduction of Padukone's character has left audiences enthralled, with many praising her commanding screen presence and intense performance. Known for her versatility, Deepika has flawlessly stepped into the high-stakes world of Shetty's cop universe, bringing a fresh energy and a powerful female force to the franchise—Shakti Shetty.

Her unique entry scene has become a talking point, with fans expressing admiration for her bold portrayal and her synergy with the other characters, especially Ajay Devgn's iconic Bajirao Singham.

Following the overwhelmingly positive response, fans are calling for a stand-alone movie featuring 'Lady Singham' Shakti Shetty as the central character. They have taken to social media, tagging Rohit Shetty with requests to expand the 'Lady Singham' narrative. It is incredible to see how after *Chennai Express*, where Rohit Shetty and Deepika Padukone brought along Meenamamma, which stays one of the most memorable characters, Shakti Shetty has yet to stand out as another successful product of the collaboration from the duo. With the love from netizens, critics are also all praises for Deepika Padukone. While some have said that Deepika Padukone's magnetic screen aura makes a special place in your heart, others call her fiery and one that leaves a tremendous mark as 'Lady Singham'.

'Don't oversexualise me'

Nora Fatehi was still making a name for herself in the Indian entertainment field when she showcased her dancing skills in the song *Dilbar* for the 2018 film *Satyameva Jayate*. Despite the music video's massive success with over a billion views on YouTube, Nora did not receive any payment for her involvement. During a recent chat with Rajeev Masand at the *Indian Film Festival of Melbourne*, Nora shared that she was on the verge of leaving India when she got the opportunity to do *Dilbar* (*Satyameva Jayate*) and *Kamariya* (*Stree*). She reminded herself that the priority at the moment was not to receive payment but to demonstrate her worth, despite her urgent financial situation.

Nora mentioned that she filmed for *Kamariya* initially and started working on *Dilbar* only a couple of weeks later. She explained she wanted to perform the songs her way but ended up not receiving any payment.

"When I met the makers of these two songs, which I never got paid for, by the way, I did them for free. And I did them for free because I said that it's not the time for me to make money; right now is the time for me to prove myself, to make a name, and to work with credible people," she said.

Nora described watching *Satyameva Jayate*, starring John Abraham and *Stree*, produced by Dinesh Vijan, as "credible" chances.

"All these things made more sense than to actually make money at that time, even though, trust me, I needed it. I needed money, but I was like, 'It's okay, let's prioritise this first'."

Nora said that she wanted to push the envelope with both songs. "When I sat with those filmmakers, the first thing I said was, 'Look, we can make this into an item song and we can just look hot and sexy at the end of the story, or we could change the game and make this more into a dance-oriented visual, a dance-oriented experience where people don't have to be uncomfortable to watch it with their families and kids. They can watch it and be like, 'Oh, what dance style is this?'. 'Look at the hook step, that's crazy, I want to try it'" she said

and added that most "girls" who appeared in such songs "kind of want to show a bit of skin and then boom, the song is still going to be a hit." She continued, "You don't really need to push yourself with the choreography, but I had that requirement that it has to be heavy on choreography." Nora said that she even trained the dancers on *Dilbar* for a week so they could match her steps.

In fact, going further, she also revealed that the blouse she was given for *Dilbar* was too tiny, due to which she had to put her foot down and ask for a different one. "When they brought me the blouse, it was too tiny and I had to put my foot down. I said, 'Guys, I cannot wear this. Don't oversexualise me. I get it; it's a sexy song; we are all inherently sexy; but we don't have to be vulgar about it'. In the morning, when we were about to shoot the song, they had to make a new blouse," she said, and added, "They had to reconstruct the new blouse that made me comfortable. To some people, it still looks over sexy, but for me, it was whatever I was comfortable with compared to what they were going to give me."



Kartik Aaryan gushes over Vidya, Madhuri

Kartik Aaryan expressed his heartfelt gratitude for the opportunity to work alongside two of Bollywood's most celebrated actresses, Vidya Balan and Madhuri Dixit, in the highly anticipated film *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*. Aaryan shared his excitement about collaborating with these iconic figures, describing the experience as "unreal and so special."

"The more I will say, the less it is—it still feels so unreal and so special to work with two of the icons of Hindi cinema and I am just too grateful to be a part of this film," he stated, highlighting the unique dynamic on set. Aaryan particularly praised Balan's vibrant personality, noting, "Vidya ma'am is fun-loving; she always jokes around and her laughter is infectious. It used to be a laugh riot when we both were on the sets."

His admiration extended to Madhuri Dixit, whom he called a legend. "Even Madhuri ma'am is so chilled out. She has such a calming and great aura around her that I used to look forward to working on scenes with her. It was like a dream come true moment for me to work with Madhuri Dixit—the legend. Gratitude," he added.

With Kartik Aaryan reprising his role as Rooh Baba from the superhit *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2*, a project initiated by Bhushan Kumar, he will be seen alongside Triptii Dimri, the OG Manjulika (Vidya Balan) and her partner in crime, Madhuri Dixit. Directed by Anees Bazmee and initiated by Bhushan Kumar, this highly anticipated release is set to carry forward the legacy of Bollywood's beloved horror-comedy franchise.



Blockbuster Alert! Baby John preview generates unprecedented excitement

Fans are buzzing with enthusiasm about the preview for *Baby John*, which debuted in theaters alongside *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*. The preview has generated enthusiastic reviews, with audiences lauding Varun Dhawan's tough, broad appeal in the movie.

One fan expressed enthusiasm, saying, "Superstar #VarunDhawan is back with a bang, bringing pure swag and power to the screen! His new avatar as #BabyJohn is set to break records and hearts alike (sic)."

Another person wrote, "Certified Blockbuster! (sic)."

The movie marks Keerthy Suresh's debut in Hindi cinema and also includes Wamiqa Gabbi. The cast features Jackie Shroff and Rajpal Yadav in the action-comedy film. *Baby John* is a Thaman S production.



STANDALONE



Actress Tabu flew to New York for the much-anticipated premiere of HBO's *Dune: Prophecy*, based on Frank Herbert's novel *Dune: The Sisterhood*. Tabu did not disappoint, gracing the red carpet in a breathtaking black ensemble designed by the renowned Abu Jani Sandeep Khosla. Crafted from pure Khadi silk, it boasts a crushed texture achieved through a signature artisanal technique, perfected over thirty-eight years ago.

FUN

ARCHIE

IT'S AMAZING HOW PILTON CAN DO CALCULUS IN HIS HEAD! YEAH, I SUPPOSE! C²+X+1

I GUESS I'LL SETTLE FOR BEING THE SCHOOL'S MOST ADMIRABLE ATHLETE AND GREATEST SEX SYMBOL!

IT'S AMAZING HOW REGGIE DOES ALL THAT IN HIS HEAD, TOO!

CALVIN AND HOBBS

MAYBE YOU SHOULD TELL YOUR MOM ABOUT THE BINOCULARS, AND SHE CAN HELP SOMEHOW.

TELL MOM?? ARE YOU CRAZY?? NO WAY!

WHY NOT? YOU'VE GOT TO TELL SOMEONE. MAYBE SHE CAN THINK OF SOMETHING.

AT TIMES LIKE THESE, ALL MOM CAN THINK OF IS HOW LONG SHE WAS IN LABOR WITH ME.

GARFIELD

I'M EATING HEALTHIER THESE DAYS

SORRY, I CAN'T SAY THAT WITH A STRAIGHT FACE!

NANCY

I WANT YOU TO LEARN A LOT IN ROBOTICS CLUB...

BUT I ALSO HOPE YOU'LL MAKE FRIENDS

SHE WANTS US TO MAKE... FRIENDS...

GINGER MEGGS

I'M THINKING ABOUT A CAREER IN BIG BUSINESS. MAYBE BANKING.

WHAT'RE YOU THINKING?

I'M THINKING WE SHOULD STAY FRIENDS!

SPEL THE ROSES BUT WATCH OUT FOR BEES.

REALITY CHECK

ANDY WARHOL'S QUOTE, 'EVERYONE WILL BE FAMOUS FOR FIFTEEN MINUTES', HAS BEEN UPDATED TO 'EVERYONE WILL BE IN THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION FOR 15 MINUTES'

SPEED BUMP

KIDS! WHAT DID I TELL YOU ABOUT LEAVING YOUR CLOTHES ON THE FLOOR!

CROSSWORD

1	2		3	4	5
			6		
7			8		
		9			
10					
11				12	
		13			
14					
15				17	
16					
18				19	

SUDOKU

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

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

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

Rules

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

ACROSS

- An eight-legged creature
- Small mark
- Opposite of succeed
- Well-mannered
- Spectacles
- Largest
- A stringed instrument
- Floppy
- Uncommon
- An imaginary fire-breathing monster

DOWN

- Not in danger
- A frozen drip
- Twosome

SOLUTION

U	N	C	E	R	T	A	N	
W	I	N	S	R	E	A	H	
I	N	I	B	E	G	A		
S	L	A	S	S	S	I	N	C
T	I	C	K	E	T			
E	H	A	D	D	E			
O	R	I	E	N	D	E		
N	C	A	I					
C	A	T	H	E	R	A	L	

With 23 years of global hospitality expertise, John Biswas discusses his love affair with Hyderabad's food scene, people and culture, revealing what makes this city truly special in an exclusive chat with The Pioneer

AARTI SREENATH
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In a city where biryani reigns supreme and the food scene is as diverse as its inhabitants, John Biswas has carved out a niche that beautifully intertwines his culinary expertise with the vibrant culture of Hyderabad. As the Culinary Experience Curator at Radisson Blu Plaza Hyderabad, John's journey beautifully illustrates the vibrant blend of flavours and friendships that make this city so unique.

With nearly 23 years in the hospitality industry, his career has taken him across the globe, from the Middle East to Africa, Bermuda to Dhaka. After a successful stint at JW Marriott Aerocity in Delhi, he arrived in Hyderabad in 2018, initially planning to stay just a couple of years. Yet, the warmth of the people and the burgeoning food and beverage scene captured his heart, and he's been here ever since.

"Hyderabad is such a vibrant city! The people are fantastic and the F&B scene is thriving," he shares, reflecting on his unexpected long-term love affair with the city. "I thought I'd explore new places, but the creativity and passion for food here inspired me to stay."

For him, food is more than just a career; it's a powerful connector. He notes, "I've never encountered a city where biryani is not just a dish but a sentiment. Biryani in Hyderabad is a lifelong topic of discussion! It's not just a meal; it's part of the city's identity."

When asked about his favorite culinary spot, John enthusiastically points to Bawarchi on RTC Road. "It's the original Bawarchi and I know the owners personally. The experience there is fantastic!" he exclaims, highlighting the importance of

CURRY-ING CONNECTIONS IN HYDERABAD

local connections in his culinary journey.

His adaptation to the local culture was surprisingly smooth. "I was curious about how I would be received, but I quickly realised it was quite simple: food connects everyone. The warmth of the people made it easy to feel at home," he explains. He sees Hyderabad as a melting pot of cultures, noting that the city embraces its diversity, welcoming people from across India and beyond.

Contrasting Hyderabad with his hometown of Calcutta, he remarks, "Hyderabad is fast-paced, especially with the tech crowd. There's a certain vibrancy here that I love. The food scene is also incredibly diverse, with influences from Middle Eastern to Iranian cuisines."

Among his fondest memories is an unexpected connection formed over food. During a food blogging session, John met local resident Parash Pashori and they bonded over their shared love for cricket. "I started playing cricket on his team, and it's become an important part of my life here," John shares, smiling at the serendipitous way food brought him into the sports community.

Yet, life in Hyderabad isn't without its challenges. "The traffic can be quite overwhelming," he admits, acknowledging a common frustration among residents.

When hosting friends and family, John introduces them to the city through its culinary delights. "Food is always first! I

"The food scene is incredibly diverse in Hyd, with influences from Middle Eastern to Iranian cuisines."

take them to experience Irani chai at Nimra Cafe and biryani at places like Pista House or Karachi. We usually end up at Golconda Fort too; there's just so much to see!" he says, emphasising the importance of food in his explorations.

Beyond food, he is also a devoted pet parent. "Hyderabad is becoming increasingly pet-friendly, which is one reason I'm not moving out anytime soon! I love Indian dogs and have adopted a street dog who's been with us for six years now," he shares, revealing the deep connection he feels to both his furry friend and the city.

If John had to sum up Hyderabad in three words, they would be "food, technology and fun." He reflects, "My journey in Hyderabad has been filled with delightful surprises; food brought me here, but it's the people and their stories that keep me grounded. The connection is what makes this city truly special."

In a city known for its rich culinary heritage and the warmth of its people, John Biswas embodies the spirit of Hyderabad. His journey illustrates how food transcends mere sustenance, forging bonds and creating memories that resonate far beyond the plate. As he continues to curate culinary experiences in this dynamic city, he reminds us that every meal is an opportunity for connection, discovery and love, a true celebration of the heart and soul of Hyderabad.



FROM BAT TO MIC: Babbal Rai balls over his passion and profession

TEJAL SINHA
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Punjabi entertainment's versatile sensation, Babbal Rai, has taken the industry by storm with his captivating music and impressive acting skills. From his early days as a budding cricketer to becoming a household name, Babbal's journey is a testament to his dedication and passion.

Born in Samrala, Punjab, Babbal grew up with a passion for cricket and music. His childhood dream was to become a cricketer, but fate had other plans. "Yes, I used to sing as a kid, but never thought of it as a profession growing up. My dream was to be a cricketer. But now, after becoming a celebrity, I am able to play in the cricket leagues, which is a good feeling because somehow that dream has also come true," reveals the *Tere Layi* singer in an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*.

Babbal's journey to stardom began when his YouTube videos went viral. His debut song, *Australian Challa*, released in 2008, became a massive hit. "Social media had the biggest role in my journey. It all started when my videos went viral on YouTube."

Babbal's music is known for its unique blend of traditional and contemporary styles. He has released numerous chart-topping tracks, including *Tere Naam*, *Küche* and *Ja Dhol Bajega*. His acting career has also garnered immense appreciation, with notable roles in films like *Mr. & Mrs. 420* and *Ghuggi Yaar Gupp Na Pyar*. *The Jattan Da Munda* fame says, "It feels really good when people appreciate my acting and my music."

For Babbal, the key to success lies in quality over quantity. "I always prefer quality over quantity, so the songs that I did, the movies I did, I have always been very selective about it, so that really helped," shares the *Tere Naam* singer.

Social media has played a pivotal role in Babbal's journey. "Only the medium keeps changing; once there was Orkut, then Facebook, then Snapchat and now Instagram. Social media plays a huge role in the life of an artist, and it feels really good whenever my song gets viral," he acknowledges.

Babbal credits his team, EYP, for their unwavering support. "We have the same aim. We started together, so whatever we are doing today, EYP has had a huge role in it, and it will always be this way."

The Punjabi industry's global recognition fills Babbal with pride. The *Sohmi* singer enthuses, "Firstly, I feel very blessed that God has given me this talent of singing and acting. And it's amazing that the Punjabi industry is receiving so much love worldwide. A lot of our music is also a part of Bollywood movies, which has led to new opportunities for the Punjabi industry."

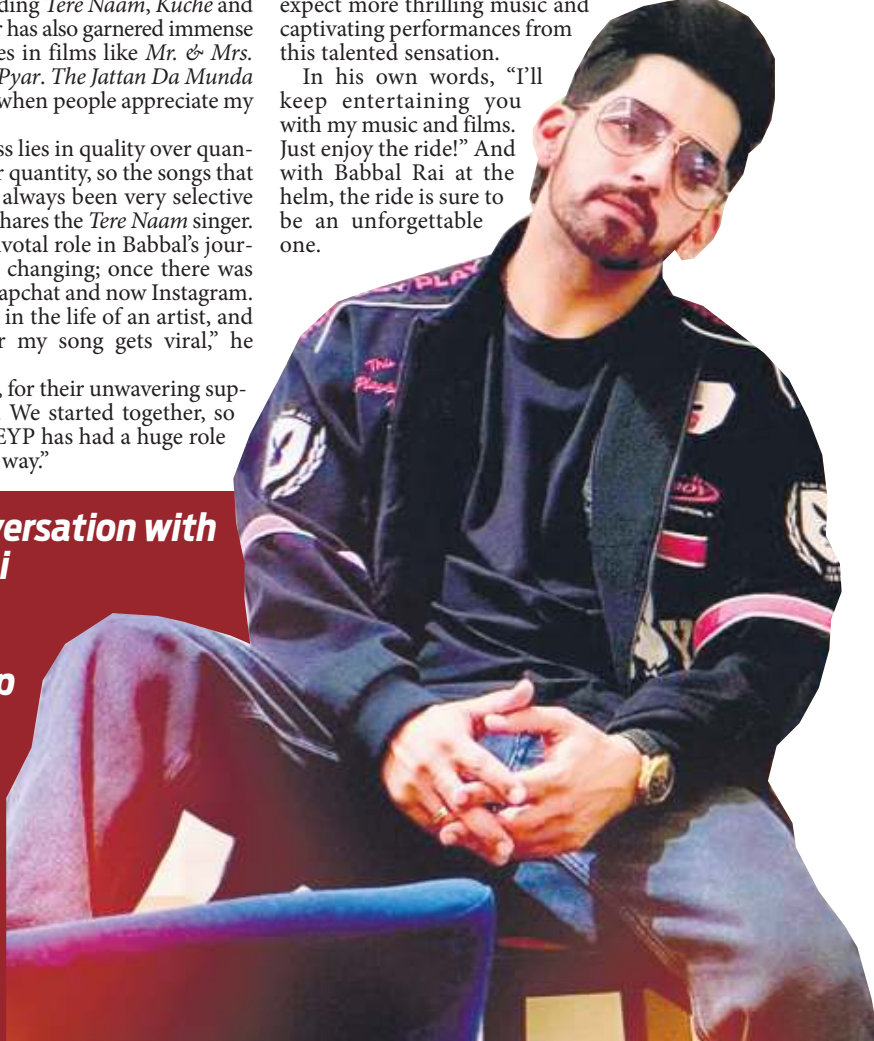
Babbal believes in giving back to society. "I always say I am not the best, but I am blessed. I have always tried to give my best and entertain the audience with my work," he humbly admits.

Babbal has several exciting projects lined up. "There are a few films in the lineup; one is *Intha Da Ghar* and another is *Chacha Jaan*, which will start filming soon. I am also working on my EP, which I hope to release soon."

As Babbal Rai continues to soar to new heights, his journey serves as a shining testament to the power of passion, dedication, and perseverance. From his humble beginnings as a budding cricketer to becoming a household name in the Punjabi entertainment industry, Babbal's story is an inspiration to millions.

With his multifaceted talent, humility, and commitment to his craft, Babbal Rai has cemented his position as one of the most sought-after artists in the industry. As he gears up for his upcoming projects, fans can expect more thrilling music and captivating performances from this talented sensation.

In his own words, "I'll keep entertaining you with my music and films. Just enjoy the ride!" And with Babbal Rai at the helm, the ride is sure to be an unforgettable one.



In an exclusive conversation with The Pioneer, Punjabi entertainment's versatile sensation, Babbal Rai, opens up about his captivating journey from a budding cricketer to a household name, his passion, perseverance and more

JEE RE-ATTEMPT? Change your strategy for better results!



DEVELOP STRONG STUDY PLAN

If you decide to reattempt JEE, a comprehensive and well-structured study plan is essential. Instead of repeating the same study patterns, focus on creating a more efficient schedule that prioritises building a strong foundation in math, physics, and chemistry. These subjects form the core of the JEE syllabus, so ensuring clarity in fundamental concepts is important.

Organise your preparation to allow enough time for regular practice. Solving previous years' question papers and taking mock tests will improve your speed and accuracy. Consistent practice is the backbone of effective preparation, allowing you to spot mistakes early and refine your approach over time.

SEEK GUIDANCE AND EXPERT SUPPORT

Enrolling in a reputable coaching institute or seeking help from experienced instructors can make a significant difference. Expert guidance provides more than just study materials and offers strategic insights into the exam pattern, common pitfalls, and areas where you can maximise your score. Interacting with professionals can give you a fresh perspective on your preparation methods.

Coaches often offer personalised feedback, which can help you adjust your study techniques and improve weaker areas. Engaging in a supportive community of learners also keeps you motivated and on track.

A retry at JEE is not just about trying again; it's about doing things differently and smarter. By reflecting on your previous performance, assessing your readiness, following a disciplined study plan, and seeking expert guidance, you can significantly improve your chances of success in JEE 2025. Remember, perseverance, adaptability and self-awareness are your best allies in this journey.

(The author, Rohit Gupta, is the COO of College Vidya.)

The Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) is one of the most popular exams for engineering aspirants in India. Conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA), the JEE serves as a gateway to prestigious institutions like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the National Institutes of Technology (NITs). Every year, lakhs of students appear for this highly competitive exam, hoping to secure a seat among the 2.5 lakh available in top engineering colleges.

However, the exam's difficulty and fierce competition mean that not everyone achieves their desired rank on their first or second attempt. If you're considering a re-attempt for JEE 2025, scheduled for January and April 2025 (exact dates to be announced in November 2024), it's crucial to adopt a refined strategy to improve your chances. Here are some expert tips and strategies to guide you through your preparation for JEE 2025.

EVALUATE YOUR CURRENT READINESS

Deciding to re-attempt JEE is not just about academic commitment; it also requires physical and mental readiness. The intense preparation phase demands sustained effort, and any signs of burnout or stress from your previous attempt should be carefully considered. If you are feeling drained or uncertain about your ability to manage the pressures of another year of studying, seeking emotional support may help. Talk to trusted friends, family members, or even a counsellor to ensure you are in the right mindset.

REFLECT ON YOUR PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS

Before considering re-attempting the JEE, it is crucial to assess your earlier performance. Identifying the specific reasons behind any shortcomings, whether related to conceptual

understanding, anxiety during the exam, or ineffective time management, can provide clarity on how to improve.

Many students struggle with balancing their knowledge across subjects, which makes it important to reflect on whether your weaknesses were spread across all areas or concentrated in certain topics. Understanding these patterns will help you build a more targeted study plan for your next attempt.

EVALUATE YOUR CURRENT READINESS

Deciding to re-attempt JEE is not just about academic commitment; it also requires physical and mental readiness. The intense preparation phase demands sustained effort, and any signs of burnout or stress from your previous attempt should be carefully considered. If you are feeling drained or uncertain about your ability to manage the pressures of another year of studying, seeking emotional support may help. Talk to trusted friends, family members, or even a counsellor to ensure you are in the right mindset.

Mental health is a critical aspect that often gets overlooked in competitive exam preparation, yet it directly impacts your ability to focus and perform.

India hand New Zealand control after batting flop show on Day 1

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's batters lost the plot in a matter of 20 minutes, leaving the side at a jittery 86/4 after Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar gave the hosts the early bragging rights by dismissing New Zealand for 235 on an eventful day one of the third and final Test here on Friday. Jadeja (5/65) and Sundar (4/81) did their job to perfection but India's batting continued to be a weak link as the side lost three wickets in the space of eight balls, starting with Yashasvi Jaiswal's (30) inexplicable reverse slog sweep. With his 14th five-for in Tests, Jadeja also moved ahead of former pace bowling teammates Zaheer Khan and Ishant Sharma to climb to the fifth spot in the list of highest wicket-takers for India in the format. With 314 wickets so far, Jadeja is now behind Harbhajan Singh (417 wickets) in the all-time list. India, who lost by eight wickets in Bengaluru and by 113 runs in Pune, are in a desperate position to remain alive in the race to the World Test Championship final but the contest seems to be slipping away. If Virat Kohli (4) missed an innocuous full toss to be cleaned up in first innings at Pune was an aberration, the batting maestro ran himself out in ending stages of the first day's play which left India



staring at a mountain to climb. India's rapid fall displayed their fast eroding confidence with the bat as Rohit Sharma (18) too was among those who fell without making a significant dent. In between the loss of the team's batting pillars, Jaiswal and Shubman Gill (31 not out) forged a 53-run stand for the second wicket before the closing stage collapse. Rohit, playing only his second Test on his home turf of the Wankhede Stadium, dazzled

with a few attractive strokes to get off the blocks quickly but failed to make the most of a reprieve. William O'Rourke spilled a tough chance at fine leg off Henry when Rohit pulled one towards his left with the fielder also covering fair distance to get to the ball in the fifth over. In the seventh, Rohit played awkwardly at a back of a length ball, looking to work it on the leg side, the Indian skipper was perhaps surprised with the

bounce as he closed the face of the bat but the ball flew to his counterpart Tom Latham in the second slip. Rohit's fall had Gill joining Jaiswal and the two did try to rebuild before the latter's dismissal. Earlier, spinners ruled the roost as Jadeja (5/65) and Washington (4/81) shared nine wickets between them to keep New Zealand to 235 after the visitors opted to bat. Washington sparkled with a crucial two-wicket burst

claiming key wickets of New Zealand captain Tom Latham (28) and the in-form Rachin Ravindra (5). Even though Will Young (71) and Daryl Mitchell (82) played outstanding knocks, on a spin-friendly track, humidity and heat tested the Kiwis' resolve while they pushed full tilt to counter India's spin threat. Young and Mitchell put New Zealand on track for a big first innings score but Jadeja played a decisive role in pegging them

back and handing the advantage to India with his mastery over the pitch and the conditions, picking five wickets along the way. R Ashwin, deployed first among the Indian spinners, remained wicket-less despite his variations but his bowling partners exploited the pitch perfectly, particularly left-arm Jadeja who bowled comparatively quicker and attacked the wickets. New Zealand, who crumbled from 159 for three to 235 all out predominantly against Jadeja, did deserve credit for braving the conditions which had their highest scorer in the innings, Mitchell, really struggling in the middle. The burly batting all-rounder consumed liquids frequently and kept dropping to his haunches and even lay flat on his back as he made a fighting 82 off 129 balls, laced with three fours and as many sixes. Mitchell felt the heat more than anyone else also because he dealt a lot in singles and doubles until he brought up his maiden fifty of the tour. Each of his three sixes came towards the end. Like Mitchell, Young too looked set for a century but Jadeja's brilliance ended his knock. Getting one to turn away against Young's front-foot defence, Jadeja had the ball kissing the shoulder of the bat and Rohit did the rest at first slip, bringing an end to a fine knock in which Young scored 71 off 138 balls with four fours and two sixes.



Kolkata Anish three years old becomes youngest rated chess prodigy

PTI ■ KOLKATA

While most children of his age are absorbed in cartoons like Peppa Pig or Chhota Bheem, or simply playing with toys, young Anish Sarkar found his fascination in the quiet strategy of chess pieces, sparking a journey few could fathom. At just three years, eight months, and 19 days, the kid from Kaikhali in north Kolkata on Friday became the youngest rated chess player in history. Born on January 26, 2021, Anish made his debut in competitive chess with the West Bengal state Under-9 Open in October, securing an impressive 5.5 out of 8 points and finishing 24th overall defeating two rated players -- Arav Chatterjee and Ahilaan Baisya. He was also fortunate to get an opportunity to play against India No. 1 and World No. 4 Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi in a simultaneous exhibition match during the Bengal Rapid Rating Open. Just a week later, Anish tested his skills again in the West Bengal state Under-13 Open, where he faced older, experienced players. Though the event was challenging, it became a vital step in his journey, meeting the requirement of facing five rated players, ultimately earning him an initial FIDE rating of 1555, which was updated on Thursday. In doing so, he surpassed the previous record set by Tejas Tiwari, who had become the youngest FIDE-rated player at five years, India's second GM and his coach Dibyendu Barua said. "He reminds me of Mitrabha Guha (who became GM at 20 years). Anish definitely has potential but he has a long, long way to go," Barua, the director of Dhanuka Dhunseri Dibyendu Barua Chess Academy, told PTI. Anish's emergence comes as India witnesses an exciting era in chess, with young talents like Erigaisi, R Praggnanandhaa, and D Gukesh shines internationally. These prodigies have shattered records, inspired fans worldwide, and recently, India celebrated a historic double-gold victory at the Chess Olympiad in both the open and women's categories. Their success has not only put India on the global chess map but has sparked a nationwide interest in nurturing young talents like Anish. In most videos of Anish at chess tournaments, he is seen sitting on a stack of chairs just

to reach the chessboard, making it an endearing sight. In one video, Anish plays against three GMs, including Barua and Surya Sekhar Ganguly, while balancing on the chairs as his coach Barua, playfully pinches his cheek. "We've put him in a special group, where he trains for seven to eight hours," said Barua. "Sometimes, he even comes to my home to play, and once he sits down at the board, he simply won't get up. His focus is truly astounding." Born into a lower-middle-class family with parents who had "zero knowledge of chess," Anish's journey began just a year ago when he was a toddler. "We introduced him to different YouTube channels, including cartoons like Peppa Pig, but he was drawn to chess videos," his mother said. "By January, his interest had grown, and he would watch those videos endlessly. I bought him a chessboard and pieces, thinking it was safe for him to handle even if I couldn't supervise him closely. "Since he was already good with numbers and counting, chess quickly became his favourite. That's when we decided to place him under the guidance of Dibyendu Sir," she recalls. His mother, however, prefers to stay anonymous for now. "We come from a lower-middle-class family and would rather avoid the limelight at this stage," she said. "This is his moment, and he deserves to be the one in focus. We'll be happy to share our names when he becomes a GM!" "Till date, I don't know a single chess move," his mother admits with a laugh. "Maybe his father knows a bit more, but he hasn't managed to beat him even once." She goes on, "We're happy to support him quietly from behind and let him make his mark, wherever his interests lead him. There's no pressure on him; we just want him to enjoy himself. My time is fully devoted to him," she adds. Although she holds a master's degree, she chose to be housewife to support her son. "Who is his idol? "He absolutely loves watching GothamChess on YouTube, but his real hero is none other than Magnus Carlsen," his mother signs off with a smile. Barua, meanwhile, mentioned that they are trying to put him in the field of the upcoming Tata Steel Kolkata Chess where Carlsen has confirmed his participation.

Four senior players led IPL retention discussions: MI coach Jayawardene



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene has disclosed that the team's senior quartet - Rohit Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah, Hardik Pandya, and Suryakumar Yadav - was actively involved in discussions about captaincy and retentions for the IPL's 2025 season. The five-times champions have retained the quartet of Bumrah, Suryakumar, Pandya and Rohit along with youngster Tilak Verma. "We had extensive discussions. These four senior guys led those discussions. Obviously, what happened last season, as well as how we collectively move forward that was crucial for us to align in that right direction," Jayawardene told Jio Cinema on Thursday. "So coaching staff, owners,

management and these four guys the direction came from them, what needs to be done, how it needs to go about." MI have paid the top retention price of Rs 18 crore to pace spearhead Bumrah while Suryakumar and Pandya have been retained for an equal retention price of Rs 16.35 crore each. Jayawardene said Rohit (Rs 16.30 crore), who has retired from the format after leading India to the T20 World Cup in June, agreed to be the fourth retention. Verma (Rs 8 crore) was the former champions' final retention pick. "And obviously Ro (hit) led the retention part, and everyone agreed that Booms (Bumrah), you know, being the best sport in the world, and it's been very consistent, and we need to recognise that at the top. "And then he wanted the other

young Indians to be recognised, and it was his call. So all in all, it was brilliant to see that you know them leading that conversation and agreeing to everything. So it was quite easy for us." Pandya was named captain last season, replacing Rohit amid a lot to backlash from the fans. However, Jayawardene, who recently returned as the team's head coach, said the all-rounder will continue to lead the side. "The leadership, as well Hardik being appointed captain, we had that conversation with them. So that was led by them." MI endured a disastrous season, finishing at the bottom of the 10-team league. Asked what the discussions are going into the new season Jayawardene said, "It's about learnings for us, understanding what went right, what went wrong. We need to learn from that and that was part of the discussions that we had." "We need to control things on the field and then off the field stuff will be handled quite easily. I think with it, it was tough for us to perform on the field, and everyone acknowledged that, you know, we underperformed as a group." MI will head into the auction with a purse of Rs 45 crore.

Man United target Rúben Amorim promises decision after his Sporting Lisbon

AP ■ LISBON

Manchester United target Rúben Amorim has promised to clarify his future coaching plans after his Sporting Lisbon team plays a Portuguese league game on Friday evening. Amorim spoke on Thursday at a news conference ahead of league-leading Sporting facing Estrela da Amadora. Sporting has started its title defense with nine straight wins. "After the game tomorrow, we will have the decision made," Amorim said. "It will be very clear, so it's one more day." The 39-year-old coach's growing reputation and two Portuguese league titles in four seasons attracted Man United, which hired Erik ten Hag on Monday with the team 14th in the English Premier League. Sporting's statement to the Lisbon Stock Exchange said United was interested in paying the release clause in Amorim's contract worth 10 million euros (\$10.8 million). "It is a negotiation between two clubs," Amorim said on Thursday. "It's never easy. Even with the clauses it's never easy, they have to talk." Reports in English and Portuguese media suggest



Amorim will move to Manchester during the next break for national team games. That would make his first Man United game on Nov. 24 at Ipswich. One of Amorim's likely final games with Sporting is hosting Manchester City on Tuesday in the Champions League. Amorim had been linked to joining Man City, where Pep Guardiola has not publicly committed to renewing a contract that expires after the season. Man City's next director of football, Hugo Viana, will join from Sporting after this season. Man United was led by interim coach Ruud van

Nistelrooy on Wednesday and beat Leicester 5-2 in the English League Cup. Van Nistelrooy, a former Man United star striker who returned in the offseason to assist his Dutch compatriot Ten Hag, seems set to coach the team for three more home games: Chelsea visits in the Premier League on Sunday, then PAOK in the Europa League, and Leicester again in the Premier League on Nov. 10. Van Nistelrooy said on Thursday that it had been well-communicated that his new role would be interim only. "I was happy with that," he said at a news conference ahead of Sunday's game. "I felt that I was called upon to help the club forward in the situation and obviously it was difficult that Erik had to leave." Van Nistelrooy, who is under contract as an assistant through next season, said "you have to switch and (adopt) the mindset to win because in the end 75,000 (are) people waiting and celebrating and millions watching at home. "I think that's what we try to do," he continued, "and same for Sunday at least, and then after that we'll see.

Humbert knocks out Alcaraz to join Zverev and Tsitsipas in Paris Masters quarterfinals

AP ■ PARIS

Frenchman Ugo Humbert harnessed the energy of the home crowd and produced one of his best career performances in beating Carlos Alcaraz 6-1, 3-6, 7-5 to reach the quarterfinals of the Paris Masters. A flurry of forehand and backhand winners had Alcaraz 5-0 down in a first set so one-sided that Alcaraz - a four-time Grand Slam winner - ironically waved his racket and grinned to the crowd after holding in the sixth game. "There were some incredible points, I think I have just experienced one of my greatest moments on a tennis court," Humbert said. "I don't want it to end here." The second-seeded Alcaraz controlled the second set but, after missing chances during the third set, served to stay in the match. The crowd jeered a replayed point but Alcaraz was unperturbed and held comfortably for 5-5. Sensing a big upset, Humbert got the Bercy Arena crowd going in

the next game. The 26-year-old left-hander looked like he was about to do a lap of honor after a brilliant forehand pass down the line at full stretch and earned ovations following a superb angled volley and a booming winner that flew past his Spanish opponent. "I have to congratulate Ugo. His performance has been really high," Alcaraz said. "The way he hits the ball is unbelievable." Alcaraz said Humbert deserved his racket and grinned to the crowd after holding in the sixth game. "It's a negotiation between two clubs," Amorim said on Thursday. "It's never easy. Even with the clauses it's never easy, they have to talk." Reports in English and Portuguese media suggest



Serving again to stay in the match at 15-40, Alcaraz saved one match point but returned long on the next as the 15th-seeded Humbert set up a last-eight contest with Australian Jordan Thompson. Eighth-seeded Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov beat Arthur Rinderknech 6-2, 4-6, 7-6 (5) to have an outside chance of reaching the season-ending ATP Finals. Dimitrov, who served 17 aces, needs to reach Sunday's final and next faces 2018 champion Karen Khachanov. Earlier, Alexander Zverev silenced the raucous home crowd, beating French prospect Arthur Fils 6-4, 3-6, 6-3. The third-seeded German compiled 16 aces compared to nine for the 20-year-old Fils in their first indoor meeting. "I am happy I hung in there today," Zverev said. "He is a great player and has improved a lot this year. I am looking forward to the next few battles we are going to have." Zverev, the French Open runner-up, saved three break points in serving for the match at 5-3. "The atmosphere here is a lot

louder than at Roland Garros," the 27-year-old Zverev said. "The crowd is on top of you." He next plays 10th-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas in his 16th career meeting, with Tsitsipas 10-5 up. The big-serving Greek earlier rallied to beat Francisco Cerundolo 6-7 (1), 6-4, 6-2 to stay in contention to qualify for next month's Finals in Turin, the year-end tournament gathering the season's top eight players. Although Tsitsipas hit nine aces and saved all three break points, he converted only three of his 11 break-point chances. In other third-round matches, ninth-seeded Alex De Minaur kept up his chances of reaching the Finals with a 5-7, 6-2, 6-3 victory against Britain's Jack Draper, the U.S. Open semifinalist, and 2022 champion Holger Rune edged out lucky loser Arthur Cazaux 3-6, 6-3, 6-4. Khachanov won 7-6 (5), 6-4 against Alexei Popyrin and Thompson advanced to the first Masters quarterfinal of his career by beating veteran Adrian Mannarino 7-5, 7-6 (5).



It's a Dulquer Salmaan show all the way! REVIEW

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Malayalam star Dulquer Salmaan's latest Telugu film, *Lucky Bhaskar*, released this Diwali, marking his third direct Telugu outing after *Mahanati* and *Sita Ramam*. Directed by Venky Atluri, with Meenakshi Chaudhary as the female lead, the film's promotional content hinted at a storyline centered on a banking scam set in the past. With music by GV Prakash Kumar, here's a breakdown of the storyline and its journey on screen.

STORY

Set in 1990s Mumbai, *Lucky Bhaskar* follows Bhaskar Kumar (played by Dulquer Salmaan), a middle-class bank employee and the sole breadwinner for his family, including his wife Sumathi (played by Meenakshi Chaudhary), his siblings and his father (played by Sarvadaman Banerjee). Bhaskar's dedication and hard work make him the bank's top employee, but financial burdens and family debts weigh heavily on him. An enticing but risky offer from a trader named Antony (played by Ramki)

presents Bhaskar with a chance to clear his debts, though he's hesitant to take the risk. However, with mounting pressure from creditors and Sumathi's desire to start a pickle business, Bhaskar decides to take the plunge with Antony. What follows is a high-stakes journey, will Bhaskar's risk pay off and will Sumathi's dreams come true? The answers unfold in *Lucky Bhaskar*.

ANALYSIS

Director Venky Atluri, known for his nuanced storytelling, once again explores period drama with *Lucky Bhaskar*, weaving in elements of financial fraud. Inspired by the infamous Harshad Mehta scam of the '90s that rocked India's financial sector, Venky Atluri adapts the tale to center around a middle-class worker's plunge into the world of banking scams. Instead of using real names, he introduces the character Harshad Mehra to echo the scam's essence, drawing a parallel to *Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story*.

While banking scandals aren't new themes in Indian cinema, Atluri makes it accessible to Telugu audiences by narrating the story in an engaging way that balances complexity with clarity. The film opens with a CBI

officer arresting Bhaskar for involvement in a bank scam, leading Bhaskar to recount his journey. Atluri skillfully depicts Bhaskar's challenges at work and his aspirations, providing a relatable portrayal of his struggles. As Bhaskar joins hands with Antony, the plot gains momentum. Notable scenes, like Bhaskar pleading with the bank manager and his clever maneuvering through challenging situations, are highlights.

In the second half, Bhaskar exploits banking loopholes for financial gain, but as he climbs higher, his family dynamics change. His relentless pursuit of wealth strains his relationship with Sumathi, leading to well-crafted scenes of conflict. There are a few scenes between the couple that come out very well. However, the latter part of the film leans on cinematic liberties that may confuse some viewers with intricate details about banking and finance, especially for those in rural areas which may not be understood by the front bench audience in rural areas.

PERFORMANCE

Dulquer Salmaan shines as Bhaskar, delivering a compelling performance from start to finish. He is one of the finest actors, he did a splendid job as Bhaskar

and the way he showed the emotions is simply superb. His portrayal is both engaging and emotionally resonant, carrying the film with a powerful screen presence and adept delivery of Telugu dialogue. Meenakshi Chaudhary delivers her best performance to date, portraying Sumathi with both strength and grace. The child actor Ritwik impresses, while seasoned actors like Sai Kumar, Ramki and Sarvadaman Banerjee provide solid support. Kasireddy, in a memorable role as Bhaskar's friend, adds charm. GV Prakash Kumar's background score amplifies the film's tone, while Nimish Ravi's cinematography beautifully captures the 90s ambience. Atluri's writing adds depth, with dialogues that resonate with meaning.

CONCLUSION

Lucky Bhaskar is a well-crafted film with good dialogues, marked by Dulquer Salmaan's stellar performance and GV Prakash Kumar's impactful music with an amazing background score. Despite some narrative liberties and a few slow moments in the second half, the film is an engaging watch for fans of dramas with an edge. It is a good one time watch.

Cast: Dulquer Salmaan, Meenakshi Chaudhary, Sai Kumar, Ramki, Sarvadaman Banerjee, Kasireddy, Hyper Aadi, Sachin Khedekar, Manasa, Tinu Anand and others
Cinematography: Nimish Ravi
Music: GV Prakash Kumar
Producers: Naga Vamsi, Sai Soujanya
Director and Writer: Venky Atluri
Rating: 3.5

KA gives new experience, credits to director duo

PNS | HYDERABAD

This year, the festival of Diwali was a feast for cinema lovers, as nearly few Telugu and Tamil dubbed into Telugu films were released. One of them is the Kiran Abbavaram starrer *KA*. After delivering two flops, Kiran Abbavaram has come up with this film *KA* and had previously said that the film story is unique and new in cinema. Well, ahead of the release of his film, he also stated that if anyone felt that the subject wasn't new or somehow disliked the film, he would quit the industry. *KA* marks director duo Sujith and Sandeep's directorial debut and also stars Nayan Sarika and Tanvi Ram as the female leads.

PLOT

Abhinav Vasudev (played by Kiran Abbavaram) is an orphan and works as an assistant postman in a mysterious village called Krishnagiri. His worst habit is that he reads and occasionally responds to all the letters. During his childhood, he developed this habit, which he continued even more after becoming a postman. In the village, he falls for Satyabhama (played by Nayan Sarika) instantly, the postmaster's (played by Achyuth Kumar) daughter. In a strange manner, several of the girls from the village are vanishing one by one and Vasudev aimed to take action regarding this situation. Therefore, he discovers a hint in one of the letters regarding the whereabouts of the girls who have disappeared. He initiated his own inquiry into the disappearance of the girls and encountered several obstacles. A man wearing a mask abducts Vasudev and school teacher Radha (played by Tanvi Ram), placing them in separate rooms. Who is the man wearing a mask and what is the reason for him locking up these two individuals in different rooms? What is the story behind the disappearance of the girls and who is responsible for it? The essence of the story revolves around the outcome of the masked man and the fate of Vasudev's love story.

ANALYSIS

Just as Kiran Abbavaram challenges, this concept is a complete new subject, which brings a different experience to the audience. The story starts with a masked man interrogating protagonist Vasudev in a room. Then the story starts with Vasudev narrating his story, which the director narrated more in an interesting way, especially the conversation between the masked man and the protagonist, which is gripping and definitely new to the audience. At the same time, in another room, a woman called Radha is also captured.

Sujith and Sandeep's story narration is different, as they take it in a non-linear way. Whenever the masked man is asking Vasudev, he goes back to his past and then the story is revealed. Though there are some normal and regular scenes in between, the interval bang is a big surprise and definitely no one expects.

On the other hand, Radha's flashback story that happened in the same village is also interesting. We can't tell the story more as it has a lot of twists and turns. After the interval suspense, the climax is very interesting and definitely never comes before on the big screen. There is a lot of spiritual, mythological and the philosophy of Karma all interlinked in the story. The way they reveal the meaning of *KA* is also interesting and once the climax part is done, you can recall the story that happened from the beginning.

The village itself gives some curiosity because it was designed so well. Vasudev's investigation on the disappearance of girls, the court scenes, and the action scenes are all designed so well and create some kind of interest for the audience. The romantic scenes between Vasudev and Satyabhama are normal, but the action scene in the end is definitely one of the highlights. The climax is a big surprise. The other highlight of the film definitely goes to Sam CS, the music director, who gave the background score. It not only elevates the protagonist in some scenes but also creates some sort of interest to watch every scene. The cinematography is simply superb, showing the village and action scenes and it travels with the story. The art director should get a pat for designing the 1977 period look of the village and the ambience. The entire credit goes to the director duo for showing a complete new world to the audience.

Cast: Kiran Abbavaram, Nayan Sarika, Tanvi Ram, Achyuth Kumar, Saranya Pradeep, Ramachandran, Annapurna, Kota Jayaram, Aruna Balaraj, Annapurna and others
Cinematography: Daniel Viswas, Satish Reddy
Music: Sam CS
Producers: Chinta Gopalakrishna
Directors: Sujith and Sandeep
Rating: 3.5



PERFORMANCE

When it comes to the performance, you can see Kiran Abbavaram's hard work on the screen. This film is going to be his best in his career and a memorable one for him. The way he carried his character, the emotions and the way he handled the action scenes were simply superb. There is a meaning for his open challenge before the release; as he says, this film is a new subject, never before on the big screen. Tanvi Ram's performance as Radha is another highlight. She did a very good job and a good one to showcase her talent. Nayan Sarika is cute and beautiful, though her role is limited. Achyuth Kumar, Kota Jayaram, Saranya Pradeep, Annapurna and all others supported well in their roles. Ajith appeared in a cameo. Tamil actor Redin Kingsley gets irritated in his role.

VERDICT

Finally, though there are a few flaws here and there, *KA* is definitely worth watching. Full credit to the director duo Sujith and Sandeep, narrating a new subject in a gripping way with twists and turns and Kiran Abbavaram fully supported them with his performance. The interval and climax are the strong points for this film.

Director duo Sujith and Sandeep celebrate KA success



The director duo of the latest released Kiran Abbavaram-starrer *KA*, Sujith and Sandeep have lately been the talk of the town. The film was released on the Diwali festival and is going strong at the box office, making it a Diwali blockbuster.

"We are both siblings and hail from Nellore. Since childhood, we were used to write small stories," said the duo. Of the two brothers, Sandeep is more interested in graphics, while Sujith is into writing. "We know a common friend of director SR Kalyanamandam. We approached him with the story. He then called Kiran Abbavaram and introduced us to him. We narrated the story to Kiran and he liked it immediately."

"I got this idea, which is something never seen before. I was confident that this story is going to be interesting for the audience," said Sujith, who is younger than Sandeep.

The story deals with a lot of philosophical and also some kind of mythological touch too. "I read a lot of books on Ramana Maharshi and I follow him a lot," said Sujith, who has completed his MBA. "Before we met Kiran Abbavaram, we had a doubt:

"Will he accept this story, because it's a different genre and new? But when we narrated the story, he was excited and asked us to do the film," they said. Both are in good understanding and they know which one is doing what. "When we get clarity on everything and also a constructive discussion between us before the shot," they said. Sometimes they will go with the flow also.

Why is the protagonist a postman? "When we write a period drama and a person who is reading other letters, then the postman comes into our mind, who can easily read the letters," said why they choose the postman. "I would like to share my philosophy; we do some things every day, but what we don't know is that every work we do is interlinked with some other person; that's what we showed in the film," said Sujith.

Both wanted to continue as a director duo in the future and also wanted to give stories that were original. "I don't want to get inspired by other language films. I have written some unique stories and I wanted to create a new world with every film. Now, we are enjoying the success of this *KA* film," said Sujith. They are also getting calls from industry people for their next project.

Pushpa Raj & Srivalli's sizzling chemistry continues

The anticipation for *Pushpa 2: The Rule* continues to build as Mythri Official released the highly anticipated official poster featuring the dynamic duo, Allu Arjun and Rashmika Mandanna. The poster showcases the pair in striking poses, showing off the intense and electrifying chemistry that fans have come to adore since the first installment of the franchise.

In the poster, Allu Arjun, reprising his role as Pushpa Raj, exudes charisma and intensity, while Rashmika Mandanna, as Srivalli, captures hearts with her alluring presence. The official

handle of Mythri Pictures shared the poster with a caption that reads, "Pushpa Raj & Srivalli wish you and your family a very Happy Diwali#Pushpa2:TheRule will bring celebrations and fireworks on the big screens. Grand release worldwide on 5th December 2024."

As we bid adieu to the year 2024, *Pushpa 2: The Rule* will be an apt entertainer to end the year. Starring Allu Arjun, Rashmika Mandanna, and Fahadh Faasil, the film is directed by Sukumar and produced by Mythri Movie Makers and Sukumar Writings, with music on T-Series.



Ram Charan's Game Changer teaser set for Nov 9 release

Following the global success of *RRR*, Ram Charan returns to the screen as the solo lead in the upcoming film *Game Changer*, directed by Shankar and produced by Dil Raju. Unlike *RRR*, which was a multi-starrer, *Game Changer* focuses entirely on Charan's character. The film is set to release on January 10, 2025, just in time for Sankranti, with the team gearing up for a robust promotional campaign. The makers recently revealed that the film's teaser will drop on November 9, sparking excitement among fans eager for a first look at Charan's appearance and the grand visual spectacle promised by the film.

Adding to the anticipation, music director Thaman hinted at a stunning train fight



sequence that is expected to raise the bar in action filmmaking. Two songs from the movie have already been released, giving audiences a taste of the film's musical grandeur. Known for his ability to create immersive, larger-than-life experiences, director Shankar is set to present Charan in a career-defining role with *Game Changer*, positioning it as the biggest film in Charan's career.

Alongside Ram Charan, Kiara Advani stars as the female lead, with Anjali, Samuthirakani, SJ Suryah, Srikanth, Sunil and Naveen Chandra taking on powerful supporting roles. Dialogues are penned by Sai Madhav Burra, adding depth to the film's narrative.

Rishabh Shetty transforms into Hanuman in Jai Hanuman

Prashanth Varma is set to continue the success of his film *Hanuman* with an exciting sequel titled *Jai Hanuman*. Anticipation has been building over who would portray the role of Lord Hanuman in this sequel, and on Diwali, the makers finally put the curiosity to rest by unveiling the first look of the character. National Award-winner Rishabh Shetty has been cast in the lead role, taking on the powerful and revered character of Hanuman.

Known for his unique approach to blending modern storytelling with mythology, Prashanth Varma has built a strong following. Meanwhile, actor Rishabh Shetty is riding high on the widespread success of *Kantara*, which resonated across multiple languages. With this star-studded pairing, *Jai Hanuman* is generating high expectations and is set to capture the attention of audiences nationwide. Alongside the casting announcement, the filmmakers released a captivating first-look poster that embodies the essence of Hanuman. The poster features Rishabh Shetty as

Hanuman, seated with an idol of Sri Ram held reverently in his hand. The narrative explores Kaliyug, where Hanuman lives in Agnathavasam, an exile prompted by his sacred promise to Ram. In *Jai Hanuman*, Hanuman's silence represents not surrender but purposeful strength, a hidden power that awaits its moment to awaken. The film pays homage to unwavering devotion and the power of a vow that withstands all challenges. Produced by Naveen Yerneni and Y Ravi Shankar, *Jai Hanuman* is being created on a grand scale on a very high budget, promising a cinematic spectacle.

Meanwhile, adding to the excitement, behind-the-scenes (BTS) footage from the film has been released, perfectly capturing the intensity of the project as it brings Rishabh Shetty and director Prashanth Varma together in one frame.

The makers took to their social media to share BTS footage from the *Jai Hanuman* photo shoot, featuring National Award winner Rishabh Shetty and director Prashanth



Varma, and added the caption:

"When Focused Vision meets Metaculous Perfection Team #JaiHanuman is beyond grateful for the outpouring of love and all the Epic Responses for the #JaiHanumanFirstLook. A BTS click of National Award Winning Actor @shetty_rishabh and Visionary Director @PrashanthVarma from the photoshoot session."

While replying back on this, the Rishabh Shetty also shared the BTS picture on his social media and wrote, "Dear brother @prashanth-varmaofficial, your vision and creativity is incredible! Loving these BTS moments, Your direction brings magic to life on screen."

Lucifer returns with bang this March

The cinematic powerhouse that began with *Lucifer* is set to make an explosive comeback as its much-awaited sequel, *Empuraan*, gears up for a grand release on March 27, 2025. The sequel dives even deeper into the intense and enigmatic world established by *Lucifer*, weaving together power struggles, betrayal and the allure of the unknown with a fresh narrative and heightened stakes.

Directed by Prithviraj Sukumaran, who also returns in a key role, *Empuraan* stars the legendary Mohanlal, reprising his iconic role as Stephen Nedumpally, alongside a stellar cast that includes Manju Warrior, Tovino Thomas and Indrajith Sukumaran. The production boasts some of the industry's best, with Murali Gopy's gripping screenplay and

Antony Perumbavoor and Subaskaran taking the reins as producers, alongside the creative forces at Aashirvad Cinemas and Lyca Productions.

The film promises thrilling visuals, dynamic action sequences choreographed by Silva Stunts, and a powerful score by Deepak Dev, heightening every moment of the experience. Cinematographer Sujith Vaasudev captures each frame with meticulous artistry, ensuring that *Empuraan* will not only continue but elevate the *Lucifer* legacy.

As fans eagerly await Stephen's return, the excitement and speculation around *Empuraan* only grows, with audiences ready to explore deeper dimensions of his character and witness confrontations that promise to redefine Indian cinema.

