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TAPPING REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCE FOR EMOTIONAL CONNECTIVITY



'Devaki Nandana Vasudeva and Murari are poles apart,' clarifies Arjun



the pioneer A settlement has taken place between the Congress and the BRS and KTR's arrest will go to 'Kanchi.' The phone tapping case, the Kaleshwaram scam, the Formula E-Car Race scam, the Dharani scam and all other scams have gone to the wind. It is shameful on the part of the Congress Government not to arrest KTR even after knowing that KTR was behind the attack on the Vikarabad Collector. The

QUOTE OF THE DAY

inefficiency — Bandi Sanjay Kumar,

inability to arrest KTR

exposes the Revanth **Reddy Government's**

Union Minister

New Crop Insurance Scheme from Rabi

The Crop Insurance Scheme has changed its approach, now requiring farmers to contribute their share of the insurance premium starting this Rabi season. This marks a shift from the previously implemented free crop insurance model. Despite the State announcement that the free crop insurance scheme would continue for the current season, the Agriculture Department has issued a notification regarding the various crops covered under the crop insurance scheme and payable premium details as...

'Polavaram to be completed in 5 yrs'

Lok Sabha Member Putta Mahesh Kumar has announced that the Polavaram project and the Chintalapudi lift irrigation scheme will be completed within the next five years. The MP made this statement during his participation in the Karthika Samaradhana programme, which was held at a mango orchard near Nuzvid on Sunday. Speaking at the event, MP Mahesh Kumar shared his optimistic view on the progress of the two key projects, stating that both the Polavaram project and the Chintalapudi lift...



Shah reviews security situation in Manipur

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday reviewed the security situation in Manipur and directed top officials to take all possible steps to ensure peace in the Northeastern state, sources said, Shah held the meeting soon after he returned from Maharashtra after cancelling his election rallies there. The home minister reviewed the situation in Manipur with top security officials and directed them to take all possible steps to ensure peace, the sources said. Shah is expected to hold another

-PAGE: 5

India's free trade pacts not paused

detailed meeting

Negotiations for all the proposed free trade agreements, including those with the UK and European Union (EU), are progressing as per the schedule and the country's FTAs are not paused, a top government official has said. The official said that an impression is going around that FTAs are paused, which is not correct. "All our FTAs, whether it is with the EU or UK, all are progressing as per the schedule." the official said. In the coming weeks, a bilateral meeting is weeks, a unatora.....scheduled between the ... -PAGE: 8

ABUSIVE COMMENTS ON NAIDU, LOKESH

Vizag police register case against Kodali

The ex minister was booked based on compliant by a law student



PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

A city-based law student, Satyala Anjana Priya, has filed a complaint against YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) leader and former minister Kodali Nani, prompting the Visakhapatnam police to register a case. The complaint was submitted to the 3rd Town Police Station in Visakhapatnam on Saturday night.

In her statement, Anjana Priya accused Kodali Nani of using abusive language and making personal insults during press conferences and assembly sessions throughout the five-year rule of the YSRCP. She specifically alleged that his comments targeted and defamed Telugu Desam Party (TDP) National President and Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, as well as TDP National General Secretary Nara Lokesh. She also

mentioned instances of body-shaming during official events. Anjana Priya claimed that these comments harmed her dignity and damaged her family's reputation, especially after being shared widely on social media.

Speaking to reporters on Sunday, Anjana Priya said, "As a responsible woman and law student, I am deeply hurt by such vulgar and offensive language being used on public platforms.

Guntur Mayor Kavati booked

GUNTUR: The police have filed a case against Guntur Mayor Kavati Manohar Naidu for allegedly making abusive and offensive remarks against N Chandrababu Naidu and K Pawan Kalyan when they were in the Opposition. TDP leader Kanaparti Srinivasa Rao filed a complaint with the Arandalpet police station against Mayor Manohar Naidu for his objectionable comments about the two leaders. Based on this complaint, the police registered a case against the Mayor. Srinivasa Rao stated that when Chandrababu Naidu was arrested, TDP leaders and workers staged a protest at Arundalpet. During the protest, Mayor Manohar Naidu reportedly went to the location, took a lathi from a police constable, and acted aggressively towards the TDP activists. He also allegedly used offensive language against TDP and JSP leaders.



Jyothi Surekha wins gold at World **Indoor Archery meet**

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Telugu archer Vennam Jyothi Surekha has added another prestigious title to her impressive career by winning the Gold Medal at the GT Open World Indoor Archery Series in Strassen, Luxembourg, on Sunday. In a thrilling final, she defeated Paasmeeri Marita of Belgium with a close score of 147-145.

In the semi-finals, Jyothi Surekha showcased her skill and determination by beating Roner Elisa from Italy to secure her place in the final. In the decisive match, she kept her composure and delivered a strong performance to outlast Marita and claim the gold

CBI arrests Waltair DRM for bribery

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

In a major development, Saurabh Prasad, the Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) of Waltair Division in Visakhapatnam, was arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) late on Saturday night for allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 25 lakh from a contractor in Mumbai. The bribe was reportedly linked to a tender for the mechanical branch of the railways.

Prasad is said to have personally travelled to Mumbai to collect the money, unaware that the CBI had set up a covert operation to apprehend him. His arrest was followed by raids at several locations connected to him, including his residence in Mumbai, his bungalow in Visakhapatnam, and his office. The CBI team seized several incriminating documents and electronic evidence during these searches, which are now being examined.

The news of the arrest quickly spread on social media platforms like 'X' and WhatsApp, sparking widespread discussion. However, railway officials have remained tight-lipped, and the CBI has not yet released an

official statement on the matter. This arrest is the latest in a series of corruption cases involving senior railway officials. In July, the CBI arrested five senior railway officers, including the DRM of Guntakal, Vineet Singh, over similar allega-

This arrest is the latest in a series of corruption cases involving senior railway officials. In July, the CBI arrested five senior railway

officers, including the DRM of Guntakal, Vineet Singh, over similar allegations of financial misconduct. These repeated incidents have raised serious concerns about corruption within the Indian Railways.

repeated incidents have raised serious concerns about corruption within the Indian Railways.

A senior railway official, speaking on condition of anonymity, expressed concern over the impact of such scandals. "The role of DRM is highly respected, and such incidents damage public trust and tarnish the department's image," he

3 boys killed as water tanker hits scooter

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Three boys were killed in a tragic road accident when a water tanker hit the scooter they were riding on, near the SC Colony at Koppolu village, close to Anjaneya Swamy temple, on Sunday.

According to the boys were from the SC Colony and were riding towards their village when the speeding water tanker crashed into their scooter from behind. The impact instantly killed 17-year-old Kannadari Teshmanth.

The other two boys, 7-year-old Vadde Vishal and 12-year-old Vadde Vikash, were seriously injured. They were rushed to the Government General Hospital (GGH), where Vadde Vishal succumbed to his injuries while

undergoing treatment. Vadde Vikash was later shifted to a private hospital, but he also passed away while receiving treatment. The police have registered a case and sent the bodies for postmortem at the GGH. The tragic incident has left the SC colony in deep mourning.

When DLF's K P Singh fulfilled Rajiv's wish of bringing GE to India!: P8

Nara Ramamurthy Naidu laid to rest with full state honours

PNS TIRUPATI/NARAVARIPALLI

The last rites of Nara Ramamurthy Naidu, former MLA of Chandragiri and brother of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, were performed with full state honours on Sunday in his native village of Naravarpalli. Ramamurthy Naidu, passed away on Saturday morning at AIG Hospital in Hyderabad. His body was brought to

Naravarpalli from Hyderabad on a special flight on Sunday at 7 AM, accompanied by family members, Renigunta Airport, the body was taken to the village in an ambulance. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu was accompanied by his wife Brahmini, and other family members. dence of Chandrababu Naidu in member.



including Nara Lokesh. From Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu carrying the bier of his younger brother at Naravaripalle in Tirupati district on Sunday

Bhuvaneshwari, daughter-in-law

The body was kept at the resi-

Naravarpalli for public viewing. The Chief Minister was visibly emotional as he bid farewell to his brother. Many prominent leaders and celebrities from the Telugu states, including Maharashtra Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan, also paid their respects. Along with Chandrababu and his

family members such as Indira, Rohith, and Girish were present during the ceremonies. The funeral procession began around 2:30 PM, with thousands of supporters, family, and well-wishers joining to pay their final respects.

In a deeply emotional moment, Chandrababu and Lokesh carried the bier of their beloved family

Govt misleading House on State finances: Buggana

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Former finance minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy has accused the State government of misleading the Legislative Assembly about the States financial status, calling their statements 'irresponsible rhetoric.' Speaking to the media on Sunday, Reddy criticised the government's tent fioures and al over the State's loan burden.

Reddy pointed out that while the total loan amount during the previous government's tenure was shown as Rs 6.5 lakh crore, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu recently claimed it had risen to over Rs 9.76 lakh crore in the Assembly. Additionally, he noted that Finance Minister Yanamala Ramakrishnudu presented an even higher figure in the Legislative Council.

TIDCO HOUSING PROJECT

BJP sees irregularities during Jagan rule



PNS VIJAYAWADA

BJP legislators Vishnukumar Raju and Adoni MLA Parthasaradhi met Lanka Dinakar, Chairman of the Twenty-Point Programme (TPP) Implementation, to discuss irregularities in the TIDCO housing scheme during YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's tenure. The legislators findings to Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, emphasis-

ing the damage caused to the Prime Minister's flagship hous-ing scheme, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), particularly in the case of TIDCO houses. In a detailed discussion, the

leaders, along with TPP Chairman Lanka Dinakar, reviewed the situation and agreed that the implementation of PMAY in Andhra Pradesh had been severely impacturged Dinakar to present the ed under Jagan Mohan Reddy's

PADDY PROCUREMENT

WhatsApp to simplify process



Minister Nadendla Manohar explained, "The farmers will first need to enter their Aadhaar number and verify their name. After that, they must select the purchasing centre where they want to sell their paddy. They will then be given three options for the date on which they wish to sell the grain."

a special 'WhatsApp' service.

Civil Supplies Minister Nadendla Manohar announced on Sunday that a WhatsApp number, 73373 59375, has been created to provide better services to farmers selling

the process.

Minister Nadendla Manohar explained, "The farmers will first need to enter their Aadhaar number and verify their name. After that, they must select the purchasing centre where they want to sell their

paddy. They will then be given three options for the date on which they wish to sell the grain.

The Minister further explained that the farmer will have to choose a date and a specific time slot for selling their paddy. There is also an option to select the type of paddy they wish to sell.

In the next message, the farmer will be asked to enter the quantity of paddy they want to sell. Once this information is provided, the farmer will receive a confirmation message with the details of the sale registra-

By following the steps on

PM Modi receives Nigeria's 2nd highest national award

PNS ABUJA

Nigeria on Sunday conferred its national award - the Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger - on Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his statesmanship and stellar contribution to fostering bilateral ties, making him the second foreign dignitary to receive the distinction.

In a ceremony at the State House, Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu conferred the national award on Prime Minister Modi.

"Honoured to be conferred with the 'Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger' Award by Nigeria. I accept it with great humility and dedicate it to the 140 crore people of India and the friendship of India and Nigeria," Modi said

after receiving the award. The prime minister thanked the government and the people of Nigeria for the honour.

The award citation notes that under the Prime Minister's visionary leadership, India has been positioned as a global powerhouse, and his transformative governance has fostered unity, peace and shared prosperity for all. This was the 17th such international award conferred

on Modi by a country. Queen Elizabeth is the only foreign dignitary who was awarded GCON in 1969. In his remarks, Modi said the relations between India and Nigeria are based on mutual cooperation, goodwill and respect.

"As two vibrant democracies with

dynamic economies, we have been working together for the well-being of the people of both countries," he said. Modi said that in his meetings with the Nigerian leadership, he discussed on making mutual cooperation strong and broad.

He said new possibilities have

"India and Nigeria will move forward together for the prosperity of the people of both countries and the entire African continent. We will give importance to the interests and priorities of the Global South, working in close coordination."

been identified in the economy, energy, agriculture, security, fintech, small and medium-scale enterprise and cultural sectors. Modi said Nigeria has a very big and positive role in Africa, and close cooperation with Africa has been a high priority for India.

"India and Nigeria will move forward together for the prosperity of the people of both countries and the entire African continent. We will give importance to the interests and priorities of the Global South, working in close coordination," he said.

Modi is in Nigeria on the first leg of his three-nation visit at the invitation of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. This visit is the first by an Indian prime minister to Nigeria in 17 years. On his arrival in Nigeria on Sunday, Prime Minister Modi was warmly welcomed by Minister for Federal Capital Territory Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, who presented him with the 'Key to the City' of Abuja.

PNS ■ GUNTUR

To make the process of selling paddy easier for farmers, the Civil Supplies Department has launched

their paddy produce.

Farmers wishing to sell their paddy can simply send a "Hi" message to the WhatsApp number, and they will receive an automated response powered by Artificial Intelligence, guiding them through

WhatsApp, farmers can easily register and sell their paddy. The Minister added that the government aims to introduce a concept called 'Ease of Doing Farm Service', similar to the 'Ease of Doing Business' initiative, to further streamline agricultural processes.

Adversity or positivity, political moves matter

is beyond anybody's comprehension. Even the best of minds cannot come near their typical mindset as it wanders in the wilderness of oppor-tunities. They catch hold of what may benefit them and avoid anything that can be detrimental to them. The 'Be a Roman in Rome' syndrome prevails in Indian politics. Politicians are very assimilative and adaptable to any adversity or positivity irrespective of their

earlier stance or anything.
South India is the cradle bearer of regional parties nation-wide with Tamil Nadu standing in the forefront. Later, United Andhra Pradesh came second with movie legend NT Rama Rao coming to power just nine months after launching his Telugu Desam Party. The long neglect of regional interests helped the proliferation of regional parties. Some parties

leaders like KCR achieved separate states using popular sentiment. The popular sentiment, regional aspirations, and above all political realities worked well then and the respective leaders came to power and ruled states.

As is said there is a saturation

point for any kind of sentiment and the same may not work well on all occasions and treading the same may not work well for the same leaders. Taking a cue of the emerging political realities, K. Chandrasekhar Rao abruptly changed the name of TRS to Bharat Rashtra Samathi (BRS) to reach out to other states. He even campaigned in other states during the last elections. But things did not go well for him despite discarding the regional sentiment. He lost the last Assembly elections in Telangana. Revanth Reddy, who was reared in the Telugu Desam Party, later joined the BRS, left it to join the

¬the mindset of politicians led by regionally unyielding **As is said there is a saturation point for any** kind of sentiment and the same may not work well on all occasions and treading the same may not work well for the same leaders. Taking a cue of the emerging political realities, K. Chandrasekhar Rao abruptly changed the name of TRS to Bharat Rashtra Samathi (BRS) to reach out to other states.

> Congress, and led it to power in Telangana by defeating the BRS. In a political maneuver that speaks a lot about leaders changing their stands as political realities demand, the Telangana Chief Minister asked Muslims not to vote for regional parties. This makes sense in changing circumstances and shows the pragmatism of politicians.

> Here, particularly in the Indian political context and from the perspective of politicians the adage 'Nothing is permanent except change works well as far as realising intended

goals are concerned. There have been only a few regional parties and regionally strong leaders who stuck to their ideological mindset despite the prospect of losing power to national parties. And the remaining regional parties tend to change their outlook to gain political mileage and ensure their survival in their

respective states.
Although the BRS changed its name to ensure a national perspective it did not gain in the TG Assembly elections and is now virtually facing a situation that no regionally strong party have



RAJESWARA PRASAD brajeswaraprasad1@gmail.com

faced so far. There is no chance for it to join the BJP or the Congress in the situation that exists in Telangana. Its regional rise was due to its opposition to other parties although it helped in the formation of a separate Telangana state. The Congress, then in power proposed it and the then-opposition BJP did

not oppose it. Ironically both the parties did not have any political advantage in the elections held after the formation of a separate Telangana state. The TRS led by K. Chandrasekhar Rao reaped the political dividends and ruled the state for a decade and lost power due to many reasons, including the changed mindset of the people. The Congress is in power now and the BJP is gradually gaining political ground. The unexpected change in the political situation in Telangana has thrown the BRS into a dilemma, and it is unable to sustain itself due to many challenges which include corruption allegations and the Revanth admin ordering a probe into many of them.

Facing changing realities, the BRS supremo is said to have considered changing his party's name to TRS again as the BRS did not hold any sentimental value for the Telangana people.

Now that thinking also, it seems, has taken a back seat as there has been no inkling of it.

The Telugu Desam Party led by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, realised this fact, aligned with the BJP and joined the NDA. That helped it to defeat the Jagan Mohan Reddy-led YSRCP and gain power in the state.

In this kind of unforeseen situation, what would be the political path of both the defeated parties is generating a lot of interest in the Telugu states. Both the BRS and the YSRCP were very confident that they would come to power in the recent Assembly elections. The defeat of the parties in the elections was a great shock for both KCR and Jagan and both are facing corruption allegations and probes from the respective governments.

The Telangana Chief Minister's statement against

acceptance among the people. There is a possibility that Jagan Mohan Reddy may knock on the doors of the Congress. However, the case of the BRS in Telangana is creating interest as it does not have a chance of joining or aligning with the NDA or INDIA as of now.

As said there are no permanent friends or foes in politics and anything could happen as elections are nowhere near and enough time is available for leaders to chart out their course. In the given political scenario, regional parties are gradually losing their strongly held sentimental grounds and are paving the way for the entrenchment of national parties or alliances led by them. What is in store for KCR and Jagan only time can tell as they are still uncertain of their future course.

(The writer is a senior journalist)

Monday Mirchi

The attack on Lagacharla has catapulted Vikarabad Collector Pratik Jain into the limelight, but it seems like the saga is throwing shade in more directions than one. A senior bureaucrat said that Back in the day, a seasoned insti-tution like the Chief Secretary would have swooped in to offer moral support to young officers in distress. But now? Bureaucrats are gossiping behind closed doors, grumbling, what is happening? Pratik hasn't been a saint in this drama either. His remarks about not labeling the incident an "attack" and his decision to personally receive CM's brother Tirupati Reddy have raised a few eyebrows. While the opposition is seizing the opportunity to criticize him, whispers among the bureaucrats suggest that such brazen incidents of attacks are unheard of in the history of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh

IAS ASSOCIATION'S 'THREE-LINER' **ACT: WILL THEY HIBERNATE AGAIN?**

The IAS Association Telangana finally woke up from its deep slumber and managed to churn out a three-line statement on the Lagacharla incident condemning attack on collector. With Association chief Shashank Goyal in Delhi, General Secretary Jayesh Ranjan passed the resolution. Initially, it was just two lines, but as the day dragged on, someone seemed to have remembered the third line. Whatever the case, the association at least broke its silence, albeit briefly. However, the opposition didn't let the moment pass quietly. They were quick to question the association's earlier inaction, especially when bureaucrats were targeted with foul language by politicians. The timing of the statement has only fueled whispers within the corridors of power, with many speculating that the association will soon slip back into its usual hibernation mode. For now, it's a rare appearance from the association, but one can't help but wonder—when will they actually stand up for their own with consistency?

BUREAUCRACY'S SILENCE CONTINUES DESPITE REGIME CHANGE

While the government is celebrating Praja Palana Vijayotsavalu, the winds of change in Telangana's political landscape haven't stirred the bureaucrats much, with most continuing to shy away from interviews, much like the KCR era. Even the generally approachable IPS officers seem unusually wary, offering little more than a curt "situation is not good" when approached for even routine interactions. Traditionally known for being more flexible with media engagements, the IPS community's newfound reticence has raised eyebrows. Bureaucratic circles appear frozen in cautious silence, unwilling to embrace the openness expected under the banner of 'Praja Palana'. It seems that while political leadership may have shifted, the culture of restraint and apprehension within the administration remains deeply entrenched. The restoration of true people's governance will require more than just a change at the top—it demands courage and transparency from those tasked with running the show behind the scenes.

HYDERABAD CP 'ANAND' WITH GARIKAPATI **NARASIMHA RAO'S PRAISE**

In a heartfelt gesture, Hyderabad City Police Commissioner CV Anand shared a video featuring renowned spiritual leader Garikapati Narasimha Rao commending the police force during the Karthika Masam Deepotsavam celebrations. Addressing the gathering, Garikapati lauded the police for their unwavering dedication, emphasizing that they manage large crowds as part of their duty without expecting additional rewards. He

urged devotees to express their gratitude by performing a 'namaskaram' to the officers present. Moved by these words, Commissioner Anand took to social media, stating, "Just listen to this - am happy at least someone recognized publicly the hard work which police does in India to keep the country running. Thanks a lot, Garikapati Narsimha Rao garu." This public acknowledgment highlights the often-overlooked efforts of law enforcement personnel in maintaining order during significant events, reinforcing the importance of community appreciation for their service.

JAGAN MOHAN REDDY SLAMS GOVERNMENT OVER SOCIAL MEDIA CRACKDOWN

YSRCP leader Jagan Mohan Reddy has launched a scathing attack on the state government for its aggressive action against social media activists, accusing it of stifling free expression and suppressing dissent. Highlighting the alarming rise in law and order issues in Andhra Pradesh, Jagan pointed fingers at DGP Tirumala Rao, citing the state's failure to address crimes, including 177 murders, 500 attempted murders, and 110 atrocities against women and minors.

Jagan revealed startling figures, stating that 680 social media activists have been served notices, 147 cases filed, and 49 individuals arrested for allegedly posting content critical of the government. "Social media should be a platform for open expression, but this government is using brute force to silence voices that criticize its failures," Jagan remarked, accusing authorities of targeting those who question the administration.

Insiders suggest that the government has pressured the police force to take an uncompromising stand against dissent on social media, leaving activists with little room to voice their opinions. Reports indicate strict instructions have been issued to penalize anyone who posts content perceived as deroga tory towards the ruling establishment.

Jagan, known for his active use of social media to spotlight government shortcomings, vowed to continue his fight against what he termed a "culture of fear" aimed at silencing opposition. "Despite the crackdown, I will lead the charge in using social media to expose corruption and misgovernance," he declared, urging activists not to bow down to intimidation.

SINGARENI CMD N. BALARAM'S DEPUTATION **EXTENSION AWAITS PM'S APPROVAL**

N. Balaram, serving as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), is approaching the conclusion of his sixth year on deputation in his home state. Typically, such deputations are capped at five years; however, an extension was previously granted, allowing him to serve an additional year.

With this extended tenure nearing its end, the Telangana state government has formally requested the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) for a further extension of Balaram's deputation. This request is currently under consideration. Notably, any extension beyond the standard tenure requires approval from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

The situation has garnered significant attention, as observers are keen to see how the state government navigates this process with the central authorities. The outcome will not only impact SCCL's leadership continuity but also reflect the dynamics between the state and central administrations concerning highlevel bureaucratic appointments.

--Yours truly

Continued from Page 1

The funeral rites were conducted at the same place where their parents, Ammannamma and Khajuranaidu, were laid to rest. The state government provided full ceremonial honours for Ramamurthy Naidu's cremation.

Prominent leaders, public representatives, and film personalities attended the funeral, including Chittoor MP D. Prasad Řao, actors Mohan Babu, Manchu Vishnu, and

Nara Ramamurthy...

Rajendra Prasad, former minister Devineni Umamaheswara Rao, Puthalapattu MLA Kalikiri Muralimohan, and MRPS president Manda Krishna Madiga. Actor Rajendra Prasad, while paying his respects, described Ramamurthy Naidu as a man of high ideals and a kind-hearted leader whose loss would be deeply felt by his family and the

community. Ramamurthy Naidu had been

under treatment at AIG Hospital in Hyderabad since October 14 due to deteriorating health. Despite advanced medical care, he succumbed to cardiac arrest on Saturday afternoon. He is survived by his wife Indira and sons Rohith and Girish. Rohith is a film actor, while Girish works in

the Gulf for business. Chandrababu Naidu, who was in Delhi for official duties, rushed to Hyderabad upon hearing about his brother's critical condition.

Purandeswari seeks arrest of accused in attack on BJP worker

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Andhra Pradesh president and MP Daggubati Purandeswari has demanded the immediate arrest and strict punishment of those responsible for the brutal attack on Krishna Murthy Shetty, a BJP worker from Chandragiri village in Bommanahal mandal of Anantapur district.

In a statement released from the BJP State office in Vijayawada on Sunday, Purandeswari expressed her deep concern over the attack on Shetty and called for the swift apprehension of the attackers. She urged the police to ensure that everyone involved in this violent act is arrested and faces severe legal consequences.

Purandeswari extended her support to Shetty's family, urging them to stay strong, and assured them that the BJP stands firmly behind them for their protection. She also called for better medical care for Shetty, who is currently undergoing treatment in a hospital following the attack.
The BJP leader condemned

the violent assault on Shetty and stressed the need for a thorough investigation to that the BJP remains committed to ensuring the safety of its members and seeking justice in the case.

Vizag police...

Continued from Page 1

These remarks not only insult individuals but also harm democratic values and set a bad example for society." She also expressed concern

over the wider societal impact of such unchecked abusive behaviour. "These toxic comments encourage a culture of online abuse, especially among the youth," she said. "If this continues, young people may start copying this behaviour, which could lead to serious consequences like mental health problems and even suicides, particularly among women."

Anjana Priya also criticized the role of media platforms in spreading such comments. "Kodali Nani has often used platforms like Sakshi News Channel to make baseless accusations and engage in body-shaming. This kind of language not only ruins reputations but also threatens the moral fabric of our society," she added.

She called for immediate action, urging authorities to set a strong example. "The police must take strict action to show that this behaviour will not be tolerated. It is important to protect the dignity of individuals and uphold the values of democracy," she stated.

Visakhapatnam Police Commissioner Dr Shanka Brata Bagchi assured that the matter is being treated with priority, and appropriate legal action will be taken against Kodali Nani.

AMRIT BHARAT STATION SCHEME

Gunadala Railway Station works gain momentum

The redevelopment works at Gunadala Railway Station are progressing rapidly as part of the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS) to upgrade railway stations across the country. With an investment of Rs 14.13 crore, the station is being revamped to ease the pressure on Vijayawada's main railway station by serving as a satellite station.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation for the redevelopment of 46 railway stations, including Gunadala, in February this year. As part of the project, the station's platforms are being extended, and new restroom facilities are being constructed. The redevelopment will provide enhanced infrastructure at Gunadala, which will help manage the growing number of trains and passengers in the



Vijayawada area.

Located on the Vijayawada Visakhapatnam line, Gunadala Railway Station is close to the city, making it a convenient alternative to the main station. Once redevelopment is complete, trains traveling from Visakhapatnam and Bhubaneswar to Hyderabad will stop at Gunadala instead of the main station, easing congestion at Vijayawada and offering greater convenience

Vijayawada Divisional Railway officials have released the blueprint for the station's redevelopment. Currently, Gunadala has only one platform, but under the redevelopment scheme, three platforms are being added. Construction of the platforms and roofs has been completed, and work on the footbridge is ongoing. Additionally, the station will have both AC and non-AC

restrooms for passengers.

An online reservation counter is also being set up at Gunadala to improve passenger services. B Raja Ramesh, a boxing coach who frequently travels between Vijayawada, Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, and Bhubaneswar, expressed his support for the redevelop-

He pointed out that it is currently difficult for passengers to travel to the main station, and having Gunadala station as a satellite station with halts for express and superfast trains would make travel much more convenient.

The redevelopment of Gunadala Railway Station is expected to provide much-needed relief to the busy Vijayawada Main Station, benefiting both passengers and the railway system.

CPI demands White Paper on irrigation projects in AP

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Communist Party of India (CPI) State secretary K Ramakrishna has demanded that the State government release a white paper on irrigation projects and the water allocations related to them. He also called on the government to convene an all-party meeting to discuss the irrigation projects and water distri-

bution. Ramakrishna, along with former MLC and CPI state secretariat member Jalli Wilson, addressed the media at the party's state office, Dasari Bhavan, in Vijayawada on Sunday. During the press



conference, Ramakrishna criticized the central government for what he called its unjust treatment of the state concerning irrigation projects. He pointed out that while Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu talks about river interlinking, the central government is attempting to reduce the height of the Polavaram project, which he said would harm the state.

Ramakrishna further alleged that due to the actions of the central government, the state could lose the benefits of the Polavaram project.

He said that Chief Minister Naidu had not provided clarity on this issue. He also raised concerns about the Krishna River Management Board (KRMB) finalizing water allocations, claiming that the central government was attempting to reduce the water share, which he said goes against the state bifurcation law. Ramakrishna urged Chief Minister Naidu to take appropriate steps to protect the state's interests regarding irrigation projects and water allocations.

Govt misleading...

Continued from Page 1

According to Reddy, these conflicting statements suggest a lack of coordination among the leaders handling state finances, with each offering different figures.

He further criticised the government's narrative that there was a 'scam' behind every welfare scheme, although Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's administration had implemented Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to ensure money reached the beneficiaries directly. Reddy also accused the state government of failing to meet promises made under key welfare schemes. For instance, he claimed the government had only provided a small amount under the Deepam scheme, covering one free LPG cylinder instead of the promised three. Similarly, he mentioned that other initiatives like Adabidda Nidhi, Talliki Andanam, Anna Daatha, pensions, Yuva Galam, and free bus services for women had not been implemented as promised.

BJP sees irregularities...

Continued from Page 1

The scheme, aimed at providing homes to the economically disadvantaged, had faced major setbacks. Under Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, tenders were called in 2015-16 for the construction of 4.55 lakh TIDCO houses, and work began on 3.13 lakh homes. However, during Jagan Mohan Reddy's government (2019-2024), only

57,000 houses were completed. Furthermore, about 1.67 lakh houses that had been started earlier became uninhabitable due to a lack of proper infrastructure and neglect.

Vishnu Kumar Raju, while presenting the facts to Lanka Dinakar, pointed out several critical issues under the current administration. One major concern was the alleged issuance of fake

2019 and 2024. These documents, which featured photographs of the Chief Minister, were reportedly given to beneficiaries under PMAY, even though the houses were never built. In addition, loans were allegedly collected in the names of beneficiaries from banks, with the funds being diverted, leaving the beneficiaries to face notices from banks demanding repayment for homes that do not exist.

CBI arrests Waltair DRM...

Continued from Page 1

The arrest of Prasad has also sparked heated debates among railway staff, many of whom have been voicing a while. It's shocking and

concerns about his alleged involvement in corrupt activities for some time. "This arrest confirms what many of us had suspected for

very disappointing," said a senior railway employee. As the investigation con-

tinues, Saurabh Prasad remains in CBI custody for further questioning. Officials are working to uncover the full extent of the alleged bribery network.

TODAY **ALMANAC** Month & Paksham Krishna Paksha Tithi: Nov 17 09:06 PM Tritiya: to Nov 18 06:56 PM Nov 18 06:56 PM Chaturthi: to Nov 19 05:28 PM

Nakshatram: Mrigashirsha: to Nov 18 03:48 PM Ardra: Nov 18 03:48 PM to Nov 19 02:55 PM Rahukalam 7:50 AM to 9:13 AM 10:37 AM to 12:01 PM Yamaqandam: 11:54 PM to 01:26 AM Varjyam:

Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:39 AM to 12:23 PM VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Mostly Sunny **Temp:** 32°° Humidity: 60% Sunrise: 6:13 AM

Gulika:

Amritakalam:

Sunset: 5:32 PM **Updated:** November 17, 2024 5:00 PM

1:24 PM to 2:48 PM

07:35 AM to 09:05 AM

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TDP leaders pay homage to Rama Murthy Naidu

PNS VIJAYAWADA

TDP leaders in Vijayawada paid heartfelt tributes to Nara Rama Murthy Naidu, former MLA and Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's brother, who passed away recently, on Sunday. The programme took place at the NTR District TDP office and at NTR Bhavan, the office of

Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath, also known as Chinni. The leaders remembered Rama Murthy Naidu's dedicated services to the State and to his constituency, Chandragiri. TDP-Affiliated

Telugu Mahila NTR district president and Croporator Chennupati Usha Rani, SC Cell president Songa Sanjay Varma, Minority Cell president Sk Karimulla and others participated in the condolence meeting held at the NTR Bhavan at Grenada Colony in the city.

They said that Rama Murthy Naidu has strived a lot for the party as well as the cadre development. He was developed as one of the most important leaders in the TDP, they added. They extended their condolence to Rama Murthy Naidu's family members in this regard. They added that he represented the Chandragiri Assembly constituency from 1994 to 1999.

Meanwhile, many TDP leaders attended Rama Murthy Naidu's condolence meeting held at the party district office at Auto Nagar in the city.



New Crop Insurance Scheme from current Rabi

Notification issued on crops covered in the scheme and premium payable amounts

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The Crop Insurance Scheme has changed its approach, now requiring farmers to contribute their share of the insurance premium starting this Rabi season. This marks a shift from the previously implemented free crop insurance model. Despite the State government's earlier announcement that the free crop insurance scheme would continue for the current season, the Agriculture Department has issued a notification regarding the various crops covered under the crop insurance scheme and payable premium details as well as the deadline for it.

The deadline for premium payment concluded on November 15 for commercial crops. Farmers must pay their premiums by December 15 for black gram, groundnut, green gram, and other crops. The premium payment deadline for Rabi paddy is December 31. However, the deadline for the commercial crop insurance premium payment was ended before the government's announcement, i.e. on November 15.

The State government is implementing the Pradhan



Mantri Fasal Bhima Yojana (PMFBY) and the Rabi Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) starting this season. According to Agriculture and Horticulture Minister K. Atchannaidu, the new crop insurance scheme will take effect from the next Kharif season. While the free crop insurance scheme will remain in force for the Rabi season, the department has begun collecting premium amounts from farmers this season.

Under the new crop insurance scheme, the premium collected will be 1.50 per cent from farmers for food grains and oilseeds, while it will be five per cent for commercial crops based on the total sum insured.

The remaining premium will be covered by the State and Central governments. The government also announced that crop insurance will be available for mangoes starting this year.

The last date for commercial

crops, such as cashew nuts, was November 15. The payment deadline for farmers' contributions to crop insurance for black gram, green gram, maize, groundnut, and others is December 15, while it is December 31 for paddy. Meanwhile, the government is going to implement the crop insurance scheme not only for farmers who took crop loans from the banks, but also for those who did not take the

Interestingly, the premium contributions required from farmers differ between the PMFBY and RWBCIS. Farmers cultivating paddy, black gram, groundnut, green gram, and other crops must pay 1.50 per cent of the premium based on the respective crop sum insured to avail themselves of the crop insurance scheme under PMFBY. However, under the RWBCIS, the farmers' premium contribution for these crops is

only 0.20 per cent of the sum insured. There are differences in the payment of premiums for both PMFBY and RWBCIS.

Based on the sum insured, the government is collecting premiums from the farmers to implement the crop insurance scheme. The State government ensured the paddy, maize and other crops- Rs.41,000 to Rs.42,000, maize-Rs.42,000, black gram, and green gram -20,000 per acre. However, the sum insured for the jowar is Rs.19,000 and Bengal gram is Rs.38,000 per acre. However, P Jamalaiah, gen-

eral secretary, Andhra Pradesh Koulu Rythula Sangam (Tenant Farmers) Association, told The Pioneer the government should implement a uniform premiums payment system for all crops in the State. Paddy farmers in the Krishna district are to pay their contribution for the crop insurance is Rs.84 per acre. However, it is Rs.126 in the NTR district, Rs.500 in Eluru, and Rs.630 in Srikakulam and Vizianagarm districts. So, the government should rectify the difference in the premium to be paid by the farmers in various districts, he added.

Call to withdraw 1 pc additional surcharge on State GST

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Malladi Vishnu, YSR Congress Party's Vijayawada Central constituency coordinator and former MLA, has accused the State government of preparing to impose financial burdens on the public under the pretext of flood relief. He expressed strong discontent over Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's request to the Central government for a one-per cent additional surcharge on the State GST, characterising it as an unreasonable burden on the already struggling populace.

cised the coalition government for its failure to secure the necessary funds from the Centre, stating that shifting the financial burden onto citizens is inappropriate. He raised pointed questions about the management of hundreds of crores in donations received for flood relief efforts, questioning where those funds had gone. Instead of seeking assistance for a state already in debt,

During a press conference here on Sunday, Vishnu criti-



the government is essentially telling flood victims that they will be taxed to aid their recovery, a situation he claims is unprecedented in the country

Vishnu noted that

Vishnu remarked that it was peculiar for the government to request tax cooperation.

Vishnu noted that the gov-ernment is essentially telling flood victims that they will be taxed to aid their recovery, a situation he claims is unprecedented in the country. He questioned the estimates provided by Central teams regarding flood damage and called for the State government to release a White Paper detailing the assistance provided to victims, as well as the total donations received and the aid announced by the Centre.

Vishnu lamented that rising prices of essential goods and increased electricity charges have made it increasingly dif-ficult for ordinary citizens to make ends meet. He warned that if the government moved forward with additional taxation, there would be no viable living conditions for people in the State, urging immediate withdrawal of the proposed one percent increase on GST surcharge. He added that if the government did not heed these warnings, the YSRCP would launch a large-scale movement against such measures.

GVMC unveils plan to clear 24 lakh tonnes waste from Kapuluppada

Project aims to clear the dumping yard by October 2, 2025

PNS | Visakhapatnam

GVMC Commissioner P. Sampath Kumar has launched an ambitious plan to rid the Kapuluppada dumping yard of 24 lakh tonnes of accumulated waste, following a directive from Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. The project aims to clear the yard by October 2, 2025, addressing a longstanding environmental issue that has plagued the city

"Kapuluppada dumping yard has become a major source of pollution over the years," said Sampath Kumar. Our goal is to eliminate all legacy waste and transform the area into a green space. This is a critical step for the city's environmental health and future sustainability. The Kapuluppada yard, cov-

ering 100 acres, is the main dumping ground for GVMC's



daily waste, which includes over 1,100 metric tonnes of waste, of which 350 tonnes are wet waste. The site, overrun with plastics, glass, paper, and construction debris, has led to significant environmental issues, including severe air and groundwater pollution due to uncontrolled burning

and rainwater seepage.

To mitigate these challenges, the Jindal Company, under a

Public-Private Partnership model, has established a 'Waste to Energy' plant. This facility processes 750 tonnes of wet waste per day, converting it into bio-CNG for local industries. In addition, materials like plastics, glass, and paper are separated for recycling, while construction debris is repurposed into bricks.

Despite these efforts, the legacy waste remains a signifhurdle. Environmental Solutions Pvt Ltd has been using bio-mining techniques to extract recy clable materials. So far, 9.5 lakh tonnes of waste have been cleared, freeing up 33 acres of land. "We have already made significant progress," said Sampath Kumar. "By clearing 9.5 lakh tonnes, we've reclaimed 33 acres. We're committed to meeting the October 2025 deadline.



Seminar highlights neurological issues among diabetics

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Dr P Nataraj, a renowned neurologist, has said that longterm diabetes patients often experience increased blood sugar levels, adversely affecting the brain and nerves in various ways. One critical issue noted was the narrowing of blood vessels in the brain. which can lead to reduced blood circulation and even strokes.

Speaking at a scientific awareness seminar organised by the SHO Hypertension and Diabetic Club and the Humanity Voluntary Service Society at Guntur on Sunday, Dr Nataraj outlined the neurological challenges faced by diabetes patients. He emphasised the widespread effects of diabetes on the human body, particularly on the brain and nervous system.

Dr Nataraj explained that diabetes does not spare any organ and influences physiological functions, leading to significant changes in their structure and performance. Moreover, Dr Nataraj spoke about two primary types of nerve issues arising from diabetes: peripheral neuropathy and autonomic neuropathy. He described peripheral neuropathy as causing abnormal changes in peripheral nerves, leading to a loss of sensation making it difficult for patients to feel pain from wounds, thus risking severe infections and complications. He advised diabetic patients to exercise caution with their feet and legs, as neglecting any injuries can lead to serious conse-

Speaking at a scientific awareness seminar organised by the SHO Hypertension and Diabetic Club and the **Humanity Voluntary** Service Society at Guntur on Sunday, Dr Nataraj outlined the neurological challenges faced by diabetes patients

In discussing autonomic neuropathy, Dr Nataraj noted that it affects the nerves controlling internal organs, causing abnormalities that can alter temperature regulation, heart rate, blood pressure, and digestive processes. He also mentioned potential changes in vision during the night, underscoring the importance of regular medical check-ups for diabetics to

monitor these issues. Dr T Seva Kumar, president of the Service Health Organisation, encouraged patients not to overlook neurological problems, reiterating that maintaining proper blood sugar levels can help mitigate these health risks. T Dhanunjaya Reddy, the chairman of the Humanity Voluntary Service Society, stated that such awareness seminars and free medical camps aim to educate the public about the rapidly growing prevalence of diabetes.

Garikipati highlights supreme power of Goddess

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Renowned spiritual leader and Padma Shri awardee, Dr Garikipati Narasimha Rao, emphasised that there is no power greater than the divine form of Jagannmata in the universe, and no one more compassionate than the Goddess herself. He was speaking at the concluding session of the "Sri Kanakadurganandalahari" series, held at KBN College. The event was jointly organised by the Sri Durga Malleshwara Swamy Varla Devastanam, Indrakeeladri, and the SKPVV Hindu High Schools Committee.

Dr Garikipati explained that the Goddess, in her form as Jagannmata, is the protector of all living beings in creation. He elaborated on how she has manifested in various forms to safeguard her devotees, especially during times of adversity, and pointed out her significant role in protecting great saints. He also highlighted the



scientific power behind mantras and delved into the mysteries of mantra, tantra, and vantra.

The preacher discussed the incarnations of the Goddess-Vishalakshi, Kamakshi, and Kanakadurga—and their role in protecting the world. He noted that even the most accomplished man cannot attain righteousness without the presence of a wife, emphasising that marriage is not merely a physical union but a deeply spiritual bond. Drawing a parallel with a mother's unconditional love for her child, he explained that the Goddess, in her form of Shakti. also bestows boundless love and

care upon her devotees. Dr Garikipati further touched upon the devotional poetry of great saints such as Adi Shankaracharya, Pothana, and Kalidas, offering insights into their spiritual significance and meanings.

The event was graced by several dignitaries, including Durga Temple Executive Officer KS Ramarao, KBN College Secretary Dr T Srinivas, Hindu High Schools Committee President T Sheshayya, and G Vijay Kumar. They all felicitated Dr Garikipati Narasimha Rao for his enlightening discourse.



Interstate chain snatching gang nabbed, Rs 24L booty recovered

PNS CHITTOOR

The Chittoor police have arrested a six-member interstate gang involved in chain snatching and recovered stolen goods worth Rs 24 lakh.

Superintendent of Police (SP) Manikhantha Chandolu informed the media on Sunday that the police team arrested the gang in Palamaner and recovered 330 grams of gold jewellery, silver ornaments, and four motorcycles.

The gang, which had been operating for the past two years, was involved in a series of chain snatchings, thefts, bur-glaries, and bike lifting across Chittoor district and neighbouring states. Police have stated that the gang members were responsible for numerous criminal activities in the region. The arrested gang members are being questioned, and further investigations are underway.

VMRDA plans to set up EV charging stations

Stations require minimal land, with facilities for accommodating two cars and two two-wheelers

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

To tackle the insufficient charging infrastructure for electric vehicles (EV), the Visakha patnam Metropolitan Region Development Authority (VMRDA) has introduced a new policy by inviting tenders to select Charging Point Operators (CPOs) to set up and manage EV charging stations. This move aligns with the growing trend of EV adoption in Visakhapatnam, particular-ly among car and two-wheel-

VMRDA has identified underutilised spaces in prime areas of the city for establish-

ing these charging stations. These stations require minimal land, with facilities capable of accommodating two cars and two two-wheelers in compact setups.

"Promoting electric vehi-cles is not just about cleaner energy; it's about creating the right infrastructure to support their growth," said Vishwanathan, Commissioner of VMRDA. "We are utilising vacant spaces in the heart of the city to set up these charging stations. The revenue-sharing model allows companies to benefit while contributing to

the EV industry. Six vacant sites have been



earmarked for the first phase of this initiative, with tenders already called. Companies interested in setting up EV stations must submit applications to the VMRDA office by

refundable Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) of Rs 50,000.

We are thrilled with the response from companies. Several experienced players in to the VMRDA office by this sector have shown inter-November 28, along with a est. These partnerships will added. "To begin, the service will be available at two loca-

not only increase the availability of charging stations, but also ensure that they are efficiently managed, Commissioner Vishwanathan

tions in Central Park, Women's Degree College, Gurajada Kalakshetram in Siripuram, Tenneti Park, and the new commercial complex in MVP." The initiative aims to establish a robust charging network to support the rising EV population. Vacant sites will be utilised for the stations, with more spaces to be allocated based on future demand. Companies awarded the tenders will be allowed to operate the charging stations for 10 years, after which the land will revert to VMRDA.

"By addressing the infrastructure gap, we are making EV adoption more practical and accessible for the public. This is a step toward a sustainand cleaner Visakhapatnam," said the VMRDA Commissioner.



Polavaram, Chintalapudi projects



Newly married couple donates blood

PNS NANDYALA

In a unique and heartwarming gesture, a newly married couple donated blood immediately after their wedding in Nandyala on Sunday. The blood donation camp was organised by the Friends for Seva Society at the Ammavarisala Function Hall.

The couple, Siddhartha and Srileka, participated in the camp by donating blood, and setting an inspiring example for others. Phanindra, president of Friends for Seva Society, described the couple's deci-

sion to donate blood so soon after their marriage as a rare and commendable act.

Phanindra mentioned that a total of 30 people, including the newly married couple and their relatives, donated blood at the camp. He encouraged others to take inspiration from the couple and come forward to donate blood, which can

He also shared that the Friends for Seva society has so far motivated over 20,000 people to donate blood, highlighting the growing support for such noble causes.

Woman dies in mishap hours before engagement

PNS ■ ANANTAPUR

In a tragic incident, a young woman was killed in a road accident just a few hours before her engagement function, and her brother was critically injured at Venkata Reddy Palli village in Tadipatri mandal on Saturday night.

CI Shiva Gangadhar Reddy told the media that the deceased woman, Geetha (24), was a software engineer working in Bangalore. Her engagement was scheduled for Sunday morning. Geetha had gone to a neighbouring village to get 'mehndi' done ahead of the ceremony. While returning on a bike with her brother, a speeding tractor collided with their vehicle, killing Geetha instantly. Her brother, Narayana Reddy, was critical-

ly injured in the accident. Narayana Reddy was first



taken to the Government General Hospital (GGH) in Tadipatri and later shifted to the GGH in Anantapur as his condition worsened.

The scene in Venkata Reddy Palli village was heart-wrenching, with the family and relatives in deep shock and grief. The police have registered a case and sent the body for postmortem at the GGH.

Meanwhile, villagers have raised concerns about the reckless driving of tractor operators on narrow roads, alleging that speeding tractors often cause accidents in the area.



the completion of these prestigious projects. He informed the gathering that work on the Polavaram project would resume in December, as the

released the necessary funds. Additionally, MP Mahesh Kumar assured mango farmers of his support and pledged to resolve their issues. He

ter understand their concerns and requirements. The MP also reiterated his commitment to addressing the problems faced by oil palm, aquaculture, and tobacco farmers in the region. The MP expressed hope that

the establishment of mangorelated industries in the Nuzvid constituency would create significant employment opportunities for the local community. He reaffirmed his dedication to the overall development of the Eluru Lok Sabha constituency.

Earlier in the day, the MP paid tribute to the late MLA Nara Ramamurthy Naidu by garlanding his portrait. The event was also attended by retired IPS officer AB Venkateswara Rao and former MLA Ganga Murali,



The European Cemetery in Visakhapatnam, often referred to as the Old Cemetery, is an important historical site located in the port area

EUROPEAN CEMETERY IN VIZAG

A silent testament to a forgotten mutiny

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Nestled within the intricate, winding streets of Vizag's One Town area, the European Cemetery, also known as the Old Cemetery, stands as a silent sentinel of history. Among its 80 graves lie British soldiers who fell during India's first sepoy mutiny in 1780—a little-known yet significant chapter of Vizag's heritage. This cemetery is more than a burial ground for foreign soldiers; it embodies the valour of local sepoys who dared to resist British authority, sparking a rebellion decades before the widely recognized revolt of

Edward Paul, a historian and member of the Indian and member of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), shared insights into this hid-den piece of history with The Pioneer. "While British forces were preoccupied with Hyder Ali in the south near Madras Ali in the south near Madras, reinforcements were urgently sought from the Northern Circars," Paul explained. "Eight companies of sepoy grenadiers stationed in Masulipatnam and Eluru were dispatched by sea to Madras, despite their religious reservations about crossing the ocean."

The frigate Sartine carried these sepoys to Vizag, where additional troops were to board. However, upon receiving orders to embark, the sepoys resisted, leading to an outbreak of rebellion. "This mutiny, which erupted on October 3, 1780, was the first recorded sepoy uprising in British India," Paul emphasized. "Three British officers— Lt. Crisp, Cadet Venner, and Paymaster Rutherford—lost their lives, while Captains Lane and Maxton were injured in the skirmish."

Recognizing this historic event's importance, INTACH is campaigning for an official monument at the European Cemetery to commemorate the mutiny and the sepoys' courage. "This history is crucial to Vizag's legacy and deserves acknowledgement," said Paul. "A monument here could serve as a solemn reminder of the forgotten val-

our of these sepoys."

Local historians and advocates believe that highlighting this pivotal moment could foster community awareness and position Vizag as a significant site in India's struggle against colonial rule. "By honouring these brave sepoys, we pay tribute to their sacrifices and inspire future generations to value our fight for freedom and justice," Paul concluded. As the cemetery awaits recognition, it remains a poignant reminder of Vizag's untold stories, quietly bridging the past and present.

Steps taken to curb crime: SP PNS NANDYALA

mango orchard near Nuzvid on Sunday.

Speaking at the event, MP Mahesh Kumar shared his

optimistic view on the progress

of the two key projects, stating that both the Polavaram pro-ject and the Chintalapudi lift

scheme are expected to be completed in the next five

The MP also highlighted

the commitment of the coali-

tion government to expedite

Ganja plants

destroyed in 15 acres

of forest land

Police and forest officials destroyed ganja plants

spread across 15 acres of for-est land in Jadiguda village,

located within the Manabangi panchayat lim-its of Pedabayalu mandal in

ASR district on Sunday. According to authorities,

ganja smugglers had illegally cultivated the crop on for-

est land in the agency area.

Acting on the instructions

of SP Amit Bardar, a joint

operation was carried out by

police, revenue, and forest

officials discovered the ganja

plants and immediately

destroyed them by uproof-

ing and burning them. The police have issued a warning,

stating that strict legal action

will be taken against those responsible for cultivating

ganja on forest land.

During the operation,

officials in the region.

PNS ■ PADERU

Superintendent of Police Adhiraj Singh Rana has stated that measures have been taken to combat crime in the district, including tackling the brewing and consumption of illicit liquor in public places.

Following the SP's directions, the police conducted counselling sessions for anti-social elements across various police stations as part of efforts to reg-ulate criminal activities. The SP reported that in the past SP days, 37 litres of illicit liquor had been seized, and two individuals were arrested in connection with the illegal trade.



In addition, the police registered 71 cases for consuming liquor in public places, seizing a total of Rs 5,810 from the offenders. The police also imposed fines of Rs 2,33,585 on 423 individuals found dri-

ving without a license or valid documents. In drunk driving cases, 21 vehicles were seized. The SP further revealed that police teams conducted raids to crack down on matka gambling in the region.

TTD EO sworn in as ex officio member of TTD Board

PNS TIRUMALA

TTD Executive Officer (EO) J Syamala Rao took oath as ex-officio member of the TTD Board at Tirumala Srivari Temple on Sunday. Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary administered the oath to him at the Bangaru Vakili in front of the presiding deity at Tirumala Temple. After the EO had darshan of Srivaru, Vedic scholars rendered Vedaseervachanam Ranganayakula Mandapam.

ater the Additional offered Srivari Tirtha Prasadams and a laminated picture of Srivaru. Speaking to the media on the occasion, the EO said that taking oath as an ex-officio member of the Board is a sacred opportunity given by Srivaru. He thanked Chief Minister Chandrababu



Naidu for the opportunity. He said that many good pro-TTD in the past five months. He said steps have been taken to provide facilities to common devotees and improve the quality of Anna Prasadam and Laddu Prasadam. He said that this year's Brahmotsavam was organised with great splendour with the

blessings of Srivaru. He also said that steps have men menace at Tirumala. Later the EO said that more good programmes will be taken up by the TTD Board in the future as well. Deputy EOs Lokanatham, Bhaskar, temple Peishkar

Ramakrishna and others were

Two electrocuted as they come in contact with HT wire

PNS NANDYALA

Two persons were electrocuted after they came in contact with a high-tension electric wire while travelling on a minitruck in Thimmapuram village, Mahanandi mandal, on Sunday

According to the police, the mini-truck was transporting banana bunches, and the victims, Raghavendra and Nagur Basha, were travelling on the vehicle. While travelling, they accidentally touched an 11 KV high-tension wire and were



Engineer (AE) Prabhakar Reddy visited the scene to assess the situation. The police have registered a case and sent the bodies to the Government General Hospital (GGH) in Nandyala for post-



Port City observes World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Visakhapatnam joined the global community on Sunday in observing World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims. A solemn ceremony was held to honour those who have lost their lives or been injured in road accidents. The event brought together city officials, experts, and NGOs to discuss strategies to enhance road safety and provide support to affected families.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Sanka Bratha Bagchi, the City Police Commissioner, emphasized the urgent need for road safety, stating, "Every moment, someone is injured or loses their life due to road accidents. It is imperative for each of us to follow road rules diligently."

He highlighted the significant progress made in helmet compliance since July 1, saying, Helmet usage in Andhra Pradesh has increased from 10% to over 50%. Our goal is to reach 100%, ensuring both riders and pillion passengers wear BIS-certified helmets."

To further strengthen enforcement, Dr. Bagchi announced plans for an AI-driven system to identify traffic violations, including helmet noncompliance, through vehicle number plate recognition and directly issue fines to offenders. The Commissioner also noted a decline in traffic fatalities in Visakhapatnam, stating, 'Accident-related deaths have dropped from 32 to 19 within a few months. This is a step in the right direction, but we must strive for safer roads for all." To provide timely support to

accident victims and their families, Dr. Bagchi announced the establishment of a Road Traffic Victim Assistant Cell with a 24/7 helpline (7995095799). This cell will help track compensation claims, register grievances, and ensure victims receive assistance without bureaucratic delays. "The best tribute to road accident victims is ensuring their families receive timely help. We will work with all relevant departments to make this possible," he pledged.

Dr. Bagchi appealed to the public, "Let us honour road accident victims by making our roads safer. Follow traffic rules, wear helmets, avoid speeding, and ensure every journey ends

Business bond between KCR & Revanth's family: Bandi

PNS HYDERABAD

"There are business ties between former KCR and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's family and I will prove that. Is the KCR family ready to leave politics? If it is proved that I and Revanth Reddy have business ties I will quit politics," Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar said.

He said that KCR and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy have business ties and that is why KCR's family members are not arrested although Congress leaders have levelled several

PNS VIJAYAWADA

al enrichment.

The Amaravati Balotsavam

provided a platform for children

to showcase their talents while

emphasising the need to balance

education with cultural tradi-

tions and creativity. It inspired

children and adults to

allegations against KCR and his family before the Assembly elections. "A settlement has taken place between the Congress and the BRS and KTR's arrest will go to 'Kanchi'. The phone tapping case, the Kaleshwaram scam, the Formula E-Car Race scam, the Dharani scam and all other scams have gone to the wind. It is shameful on the part of the Congress Government not to arrest KTR even after knowing that KTR was behind the attack on the Vikarabad Collector. The inability to arrest KTR exposes the Revanth Reddy Government's

inefficiency," Sanjay said.

Addressing the media at Sangareddy on Sunday, Sanjay said that the RK (Revanth Reddy & KTR) combination is running the state and that the attacks are just a ploy to divert attention from the problems of farmers.

"The BRS is a subversive party. The BRS is playing with the lives by carrying out attacks. The BRS tried to create destruction through the protests organised by the BJP regarding the recruitment of constables and Group-I services. The government should ban the BRS. People should think about facts,"



Union Minister Bandi Sanjay speaking ... e media at Sangareddy on Sunday

The Amaravati

a platform for

Balotsavam provided

children to showcase

emphasising the need to

balance education with

their talents while

cultural traditions

and creativity

Collector launches 'Swachha Sundara Parvathipuram'

PNS PARVATHIPURAM

District Collector A. Shyam Prasad has launched an ambitious initiative, "Swachha Sundara Parvathipuram," aimed at enhancing the town's cleanliness, greenery, and overall aesthetic appeal.

Speaking about the initiative's significance, Collector Shyam Prasad said, "Cleanliness is paramount in shaping a town's identity. This initiative's success hinges on active people's participation and responsibility." He stressed the need for



public awareness and residents' involvement in maintaining a clean environment.

A core component of the initiative is the separation of wet and dry waste, a crucial step

towards effective waste management and resource recovery. By segregating waste, we can recycle and create valuable resources, contributing to a more sustainable environment," the Collector explained. The initiative also encompasses plans to improve the town's infrastructure. The Collector announced efforts to enhance roads, parks, electricity, and traffic systems. "Potholes have been filled, and further measures are being taken to ensure smooth and safe roads," he

The seventh Amaravati Balotsavam Children's Festival concluded at Siddhartha Academy in Mogalrajapuram, Vijayawada, on Sunday. The event was marked by vibrant participation, reflecting a strong commitment to nurturing young minds. Held over three days, it attracted around 12,000 children from 400 schools, highlighting the importance of education, creativity, and cultur-

cherish and nurture the essence of childhood for a happier, more fulfilling life. The festival featured traditional songs, games, and educational programmes that blended fun with learning. Participants were encouraged to value their heritage while also embracing

modern education.

Children's Festival concludes

Prominent figures at the event included Jagannadha Rao, pPresident of the Kakinada Kriya Pillala Festival, SP Rama Raju, president of Amaravati Balotsavam, and notable contributors like Canara Bank GM Vijaya Lakshmi and cultural

enthusiast Swaroop Rani, who all played vital roles in the fes-

tival's success. During the concluding session, Dr Vasireddy Ramesh Babu, the founder of Amaravati Balotsavam, emphasised the importance of preserving childhood and its role in fostering creativity and a fulfilling life. He urged parents and teachers not to burden children, underscoring that education should inspire rather than oppress. He noted that the festival has a transformative impact on children, shaping their outlook on life and enhancing their potential for success. Progressive Democratic Front (PDF) MLC KS Lakshmana Rao commended the organisers for their dedication to children's development.

ACROSS THE STATES



J&K minister meets fencer Chhavi, assures govt support

Sports Satish Sharma on Sunday met young female sabre fencer Chhavi Sharma at her residence here and assured full government support in her endeavours. Chhavi has brought laurels to the country by winning a bronze medal in sabre girls team event in Cadet and Junior Commonwealth Fencing Championship held at Christchurch, New Zealand in July. She has also participated in Asian Cadet and Junior Fencing Championship held at Manama Bahrain, World Cadet and Junior Fencing Championship Riyadh Saudi Arabia and has won many medals in national level fencing championships. The minister applauded her excellent performances in national and international events and assured all possible support from the department, an official spokesman said. He also appreciated the efforts of the Youth Services and Sports department, her parents and coach on her outstanding performances.



Justice Gavai stresses importance of Article 39A

qupreme Court Judge and National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) Executive Chairman Justice B R Gavai on Sunday Delaborated on the critical role of legal services in empowering marginalized communities and ensuring socia justice. He said that Article 39A of the Constitution is of immense significance as it guarantees the right to free legal aid for the voiceless, marginalized and vulnerable sections of the society, ensuring access to justice for those who might otherwise be deprived of it. Justice Gavai shared these views during the regional conference of the State Legal Services Authorities themed "Empowering the Marginalized and a Step Towards Social Justice" organised at the Chandigarh Judicial Academy here, according to an official release. Justice Surva Kant, Judge, Supreme Court; Justice Tarlok Singh Chauhan. Acting Chief Justice, High Court of Himachal Pradesh; and Justice Tashi Rabstan, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh also graced the occasion, the release said.



DU, JNU, Jamia teachers protest removal of professors

he teachers and students from various universities gathered here on Sunday to express solidarity with professors Salil Mishra and Asmita Kabra, protesting their termination from Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD). The protestors called the action an attack on academic freedom and demanded their immediate reinstatement. Mishra and Kabra were dismissed on November 5 by AUD's Board of Management (BoM) over alleged procedural lapses in the regularisation of 38 non-teaching staff in 2018. The decision has sparked widespread criticism, with many pointing out that Dr G.S. Patnaik committee had earlier cleared them of wrongdoing. "Dr G.S. Patnaik committee clearly exonerated all administrators involved in the decision-making and implementation of the regularization policy," said Uma Gupta, convenor of the Democratic Teachers' Front. "Yet the BoM chose to disregard this and set up another committee, which still found no evidence of malafide intent or financial irregularities," she added. Gupta condemned the terminations as vindictive

'India accords priority to partnership with Nigeria'



PNS ABUJA

India accords high priority to its strategic partnership with Nigeria and it will work towards boosting ties in a range of areas, including defence, energy and trade, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said during his talks with Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu on Sunday.

In his televised opening remarks at the meeting, Modi identified terrorism, separatism, piracy and drug trafficking as

major challenges and said the two countries will continue to work together to deal with them. Modi arrived in Abuja early Sunday on the first trip to the country by an Indian prime

minister after a gap of 17 years. "We give high priority to our strategic partnership with Nigeria...I am confident that a new chapter in our ties will begin following our talks," the prime minister said.

Modi also described the around 60,000-strong Indian expatriate community as a key

and thanked Tinubu for ensuring their welfare. The prime minister also announced that India is sending 20 tonnes of relief supplies for Nigerian people hit by last month's floods.

He also referred to the African Union becoming a permanent member of the G20 at the India-hosted summit of the grouping last year and described it as a significant outcome. Before the delegation-level talks, Modi and Tinubu held one-on-one meeting at the Presidential Villa.

The prime minister was also accorded a ceremonial welcome. Both sides are likely to ink a number of agreements following the delegation-level talks. Modi is in Nigeria as part of

three-nation tour. From Abuja, he will travel to Brazil to attend the G20 summit. His last destination will be Guyana.

The India-Nigeria ties were elevated to the status of a "strategic partnership' during then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to the African nation in October 2007.



Nation 05

No progress at COP29 in matters critical to developing countries: India

PNS BAKU (AZERBAIJAN)

At COP29 in Baku, India expressed frustration with developed countries for not seriously discussing how to support climate action in developing nations, saying it is impossible to tackle climate change without financial and technological help.

Delivering a statement in the closing plenary of the subsidiary bodies' meeting on the Mitigation Work Programme (MWP) on Saturday, India said developed countries, which have historically contributed the most to greenhouse gas emissions and have more resources and the abili-

ty to act on climate change,

highest capacity to take climate action had "continuously shifted goals, delayed climate action, and consumed a highly disproportionate share of the global carbon budget"

India said developed countries with the

have repeatedly delayed climate action and continuously

shifted goalposts. "We have seen no progress in matters critical for developing countries (during the last week). Our part of the world is facing some of the worst impacts of climate change with far lower capacity to recover from those impacts or to adapt to the changes to the climatic system for which we are not responsible," said India's deputy lead negotiator Neelesh Sah.

He said the MWP is meant to help, not punish, and must respect each country's right to set its own climate goals based on its unique needs and cir-

Mahayuti playing politics over caste and religion: Mayawati

PNS ■ PUNE

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati on Sunday accused the BJP-led Mahavuti coalition in Maharashtra of playing politics over caste and

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister was in Pune to campaign for BSP candidates ahead of the November 20 Maharashtra assembly elec-

Addressing a rally, she urged people to reject the BJP and Congress and asserted that her party would give justice to every community if voted to

"Caste should not be a factor while giving tickets to candidates in elections," she said,



accusing the ruling dispensation of exploiting caste and religion for political gains. She also claimed that Mahayuti would also play the reservation card for its benefits.

"The ruling party will use 'saam' (persuasion), 'daam' (reward) and 'dand' (punishment) to win the elections in the state. Multiple members from some political parties are deliberately asked to contest the polls to split votes and help the ruling party," she claimed.

Amit Shah reviews security situation in Manipur

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday reviewed the security situation in Manipur and directed top officials to take all possible steps to ensure peace in the Northeastern state, sources said.

Shah held the meeting soon after he returned from Maharashtra after cancelling his election rallies there.

The home minister reviewed the situation in Manipur with top security officials and directed them to take all possible steps to ensure peace, the sources said. Shah is expected to hold another detailed meeting with top officers on Monday and take further steps, they said.

The move came as the situation in Manipur, which has been reeling from ethnic strife since May last year, continued to



be volatile following protests and violence after the recovery of bodies of women and children.

Irate mobs set ablaze the residences of three more BJP legislators, one of whom is a senior minister, and a Congress MLA in various districts of Imphal Valley even as security forces foiled an attempt to storm the ancestral residence of Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh, officials said.

NPP withdraws support to BJP-led govt

PNS SHILLONG/IMPHAL

The National People's Party (NPP) on Sunday withdrew support to the BJP-led government in violence-hit Manipur, claiming that the N Biren Singh dispensation has 'completely failed to resolve the crisis and restore normalcy" in the northeastern state.

The NPP has 7 MLAs in the 60-member Manipur assembly. In the last few days, the situation in Manipur further deteriorated and many more innocent lives have been lost and people in the state are and restore normalcy.

"going through immense suffering", the NPP claimed in a letter to BJP chief J P Nadda. "We strongly feel that the Manipur state government under the leadership of Shri Biren Singh has completely failed to resolve the crisis

'Maha deprived of jobs as key projects shifted to Gujarat'

Congress general secretary Privanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday criticised the ruling BJP for its policies, claiming jobs due to the shifting of some big projects to Gujarat.

Speaking at a rally in Maĥarashtra's Gadchiroli district while campaigning for the November 20 Maharashtra assembly polls, she claimed the ruling alliance leaders were trying to divert the attention from real issues and making attempts to polarise the society.

Targeting the Mahayuti government over its flagship Ladki Bahin scheme, Vadra said women should vote for a better life and not because they are getting Rs 1,500 a month. The



Congress leader also said if the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) comes to power, it will give Rs 7,000 per quintal MSP to farmers for soybean crop.

in Maharashtra. The state has

Vadra claimed there were more than 2.5 lakh vacant posts been deprived of jobs due to the shifting of Foxconn, Airbus projects to Gujarat, she added. People are making efforts,

learning new skills, but they still can't find jobs. This should have been the government's primary focus, but it has failed to fill these posts," she said. She also sought to link suicides by youth in Maharashtra to lack of job opportunities.

"Maximum number of youth suicides in the country are is the result of the BJP's failure to address unemployment," the Congress leader claimed. On the slogan "ek hain to safe hain" (if we are united, we are safe) raised by BJP leaders during the poll campaign, Vadra said the word 'safe' has two meanings - security and coffer.

"But in this country, the only one who is truly safe is Adani. The entire country knows that Adani is the only one who has access to the government coffers, while ordinary citizens struggle," she

Delhi Assembly polls a 'dharamyudh' like Mahabharata, says Kejriwal

PNS NEW DELHI

AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal on com-Assembly elections to a 'dharamyudh' -- a righteous battle akin to the one in the Mahabharata. In an address to district-

level officials at a conference in Chandni Chowk here, Kejriwal asserted that divine forces are on the AAP's side, citing the party's victory in the MCD mayoral elections, despite the BJP's concerted efforts to seize control.

Kejriwal urged the party's booth and district-level workers to take on the challenge of reaching every voter, empha-



sising the need for at least 65,000 local meetings to convey the AAP's message.

He reminded the officials of the AAP's achievements, claiming credit for building 10,000 kilometres of roads in Delhi's colonies a feat he said the BJP could not match in the 20 states where it holds power.

Govt schools to be revamped in Haryana

PNS CHANDIGARH

The Haryana government will completely revamp state-run schools in the next five years, School Education Minister Mahipal Dhanda said on Sunday while stressing that improving education facilities in rural areas and transforming the sector is a key priority.

Visiting villages in his Panipat Rural Assembly constituency, Dhanda appealed to the people of the area to educate their children and equip them with the

skills to contribute nation building. "My entire life is dedicated to the service of the rural people and I am walking this path to serve them. It may take some time to fix the system, but in the end, the results will be very positive," he was quoted as saying in an official statement.

"Improving education facilities in rural areas and transforming the sector is a key pri-The government will completely revamp the staterun schools in the next five years," Dhanda said.

JMM led govt standing like a mountain: Soren

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Sunday claimed that his alliance government was standing like a mountain in the state and the BJP was unable to shake it despite its nefarious design to topple it. He claimed that they put him behind bars to topple his government but could not

"The unity of coalition partners is essential to protect the Constitution of the country



and keep agenda-less BJP out lic meeting at Jamtara in supof power,", Soren said at a pubport of INDI block candidates in the ensuing assembly poll.
Attacking the saffron party,
Soren questioned what BJP did for adivasis, farmers, and poor people of the state. They did "nothing".

"We have delivered for the betterment of people, who are availing benefits of the government's welfare schemes like 'Aapki Sarkar, Aapke Dwar' (your government at your doorstep) where government officials visit the doorstep of people to solve their problems," Soren said.

Delhi second-most polluted city in India; air quality 'severe'

PNS NEW DELHI

Delhi's air quality worsened further on Sunday, with an AQI of 441, making it the secondmost polluted city in the coun-

The city's 24-hour Air Quality Index (AQI), recorded at 4 pm daily, stood at 441, in the "severe" category. On

Saturday, the AQI was 417.
According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), a "severe" AQI poses risks to healthy individuals and severely impacts those with pre-existing health conditions.

Four cities in the country recorded the AQI in the 'severe" category. Bahadurgarh



in Haryana topped the list with an AQI of 445, followed by Delhi (441), Bhiwani in Haryana (415) and Bikaner in Rajasthan (404), according to

the CPCB's data. Of the 40 monitoring stations

in the capital, data from 34 provided by the CPCB showed that 32 stations recorded the air quality in the "severe" category,

with AQI levels of above 400. An AQI between 0 and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100

"satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", 401 and 450 "severe" and above 450 "severe plus".

With the third stage of the

Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) restrictions coming into force in Delhi-NCR from Friday, a stringent ban has been imposed on construction and demolition activities, mining-related operations have been suspended, shifting to online classes for students up to Class 5 is being considered and daily water sprinkling on major roads has been mandated.

The GRAP for Delhi-NCR is divided into four stages of air

quality (AQI ranging from 201 to 300), Stage 2 for "very poor" air quality (AQI from 301 to 400), Stage 3 for "severe" air quality (AQI from 401 to 450) and Stage 4 for "severe plus" air

quality (AQI above 450). According to the Centre's Decision Support System for Air Quality Management, vehicular emissions contributed approximately 15.8 per cent to Delhi's pollution on

Sunday. The system also reported that stubble burning was the main contributor to the capital's air pollution on Saturday, accounting for 25 per cent of the total pollution.

Major initiatives in offing to strength party at grassroots level in J&K: Cong

Some major initiatives are in offing to revamp and strengthen the Congress at the grassroots level in Jammu and Kashmir, the party's fact finding team said on Sunday.

The fact-finding team headed by Jammu and Kashmir Congress vice-president Ravinder Sharma dropped the hint about major initiatives during their visit to Rajouri where they held a day-long meeting with party leaders and workers, a spokesperson said.



Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee president Tariq Hameed Karra set up the factfinding team after the party's performance in the recently held assembly elections by winning only six seats

- five in Kashmir and one in Jammu region.

The team was constituted to ascertain the reasons behind the Congress' defeat in the polls, especially in Jammu region, and to suggest measures for strengthening the party.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Left turn ho!

Anura Kumara Dissanayake's election triumph could prove to be a turning point for Sri Lanka's politics and South Asia

ri Lanka has done it again. After electing Anura Kumara Dissanayake as President his left-leaning party has secured a majority in the parliament, which gives Anura a complete control over Sri Lanka. What is more startling is that his party has decimated the Tamil parties in the northern Sri Lanka, which was the stronghold of Tamil parties. This is indeed a stunning political shift. Anura Kumara Dissanayake, leader of Sri Lanka's National People's Power (NPP), has achieved a resounding victory in the country's parliamentary elections, winning 123 out of 225 seats in Sri Lanka's Parliament. This outcome, which comes barely two months after Dissanayake's election as President on September 21, marks a pivotal moment in the nation's political landscape and could have significant ramifications not only for Sri Lanka but also for the wider South Asian region. Dissanayake's rise to prominence is both unexpected and historic. His party, despite winning only 42 per cent of the presidential vote, has managed to galvanise a



broad cross-section of Sri Lankan society, particularly in regions where other political forces have traditionally held sway. His victory represents a rejection of the traditional political elites that have long governed the island since its independence in 1948, and it signifies the growing appeal of his platform advocating for economic revival and social justice. Notably, the NPP's win in the Jaffna district—a historically Tamilmajority area in the northern part of Sri Lanka—has surprised political pundits. For decades, Tamil ethnic parties have dominated this region, a legacy of the civil war (1983-2009) that left a deep divide between the Tamil minority and the Sinhalese-majority government.

This victory in Jaffna is symbolic of a new approach to ethnic relations in Sri Lanka. Traditionally, the Tamil population has been wary of Sinhalese-majority leaders, given the traumatic history of the civil conflict, where over 100,000 lives were lost according to conservative UN estimates. Dissanayake's success in these areas suggests that many Tamils are willing to embrace a new kind of leadership, one that offers economic promise and a path forward, beyond ethnic divisions. Dissanayake's victory carries significant implications for the future of Sri Lanka. First and foremost, his strong mandate gives him the political capital needed to implement his economic revival agenda, which is urgently needed as Sri Lanka grapples with economic instability and growing debt. Dissanayake has long advocated for Marxist economic policies, including land reforms, wealth redistribution and greater state control over key industries. If successful, his administration could lead to a reshaping of Sri Lanka's economy, potentially benefiting marginalised communities, including Tamils and other ethnic minorities. Dissanayake's popularity, especially among younger voters and ethnic minorities, suggests a growing demand for alternative political solutions. But can he live up to people's expectations, bring about radical changes and maintain ethnic harmony? That is the big question only time can tell!

PICTALK



Labourers thresh paddy at a field on the outskirts of Amritsan

The smog capital of India

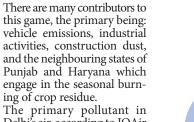


As Delhi battles a toxic mix of seasonal stubble burning and local pollution sources, its residents are exposed to severe and potentially life-threatening health risks

he National Capital Territory of Delhi, which is home to nearly 30 million people, has been grappling with dangerously high pollution levels for over two weeks. On Wednesday, November 13, 2024, the air quality index (AQI) across Delhi remained in the 'very poor' category, marking the 15th consecutive day when residents faced increased health risks from the polluted air. According to official data (the Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi, managed by the Central Government), this situation will likely persist for at least six days. In parallel, the city is also expeencing an unusually warm spell that defies typical seasonal trends, adding complexity to an already challenging situation for residents. This grim forecast highlights the role of unfavourable meteorological conditions that limit the dispersal of pollutants, essentially trapping them close to the ground. The AQI measures levels of harmful pollutants in the air, with a higher value indicating a greater concentration of pollutants. While an AQI between 300 and 400 is considered "very poor," evels above 400 are classified as "severe," meaning the pollution is severe enough to affect even healthy individuals.

The IMD has reported that the typical winter season may not arrive in Delhi as quickly as expected, thereby disrupting long-established weather patterns that typically bring cooler, less

polluted air to the region. The dense fog mixed with thick smog has created a near-total obscurity, as citizens found themselves enveloped in a hazardous blend of pollutants and moisture resulting in keeping daytime temperatures lower than expected for this time of year – because of fog and smog - although overall temperatures remain warmer than the seasonal norm. This combination of high pollution and warm temperatures has itterns has compounded the health concerns for residents, particularly the elderly, children and those with respiratory ailments. Delhi's persistent air pollution crisis is fuelled by a combination of local and regional sources.



Delhi's air, according to IQAir - a global air quality monitoring agency based in Switzerland – is PM2.5, a fine particulate matter that can penetrate deeply into the lungs. Earlier this month, parts of Delhi recorded Air Quality Index (AQI) levels as high as 1,133, placing them in the 'hazardous' category. Prolonged exposure to such elevated PM2.5 levels poses serious health risks, including respiratory infections, asthma attacks and even heightened mortality rates among vulnerable populations. Warmer-than-normal temperatures hinder the ability of pollutants to disperse, as colder temperatures usually facilitate the movement of these particles away from the urban air

The combination of stagnant weather conditions, pollution, created a perfect whirlpool of the smog's persistence over Delhi, making it more difficult for the city to "breathe" as it would in cooler conditions. Health experts believe that exposure to high levels of pollution can lead to short-term



THE DENSE FOG MIXED WITH THICK SMOG HAS CREATED A NEAR-TOTAL OBSCURITY, AS CITIZENS FOUND THEMSELVES ENVELOPED IN A **HAZARDOUS** BLEND OF **POLLUTANTS** AND MOISTURE RESULTING IN KEEPING DAYTIME

TEMPERATURES

LOWER THAN

EXPECTED

effects like coughing, throat irritation and chest tightness. In the long term, the risks increase substantially, with studies linking air pollution exposure to chronic respiratory diseases, lung cancer, heart disease, and even impacts on cognitive functions. Air pollution is a severe health crisis in India, causing between 1.2 million and 1.8 million premature deaths each year.

The 7 million annual deaths from air pollution worldwide exceed those from COVID-19, as well as combined fatalities from war, homicide, car and plane accidents. Clean air is essential for human health, yet scientific studies continue to reveal new health risks linked to air pollution, including respiratory diseases, heart issues, stroke, and lung cancer, as well as emerging links to premature births, diabetes, and brain damage

Poor air quality can also wors-

en outcomes for COVID-19 by increasing vulnerability to respiratory illnesses. Dr David R Boyd, Ínstitute for Resources, Environment Sustainability, University of Associate Professor in law, policy and Sustainability in his paper "The Human Rights to Breathe Clean Air" published in The National Library of Medicine (2019) necessitates the urgency for treating air pollution as a human rights issue and that "Air pollution on

today's scale, clearly violates the rights to life and health, the rights of the child and the right to live in a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment" and that there is an urgent need to voice that the legal support of a human rights issue, since Dr David says that "The human rights perspective changes everything – because governments have clear, legally enforceable obligations to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights. As Delhi battles yet another season of toxic air, the health and wellbeing of millions are at stake. The situation demands urgent and coordinated action from the government, industry, and residents (read citizens). Sustainable improvement requires systemic changes to reduce pollution at its source. While the road to a cleaner, healthier Delhi may be long, there is hope in ongoing technological and policy developments aimed at reducing pollution. As more people become aware of the critical importance of air quality, public support for environmental initiatives will continue to grow, fostering a col-British Columbia, CA, lective movement toward cleaner air and a better quality of life for all Delhiites and others who visit to see the grandeur of the Capital City. When... It's in our hands!

(The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Smriti; views are personal)

employing new tricks to defraud indi-

viduals, like fake UPI transaction

images, net banking fraud through

emails, etc. And from common citizens

to government officials, no one is

There are various things that we must

do if we fall prey to such scammers, like contacting authorised customer

care centers, reporting incidents immediately to the National Cyber

Crime Helpline, documenting every-

thing, keeping strong passwords, and staying informed through social

media, etc. A strong and rigorous

Bal Govind | *Noida*

untouched by these scamsters.

Let us be comfortable with silence to discover inner self



Silence is empowering, it not only gives peace but also strength and clarity. It invites us to reconnect with our inner calm, a solitude we often shun

am writing this column from the quiet environs Lof an Alpine valley in Germany. The winter has set in, turning the skies grey and the air bleary. This small town in Bavaria withdraws into its living rooms as early as 4.30 pm when darkness falls and then there is only silence all around, made palpable by the dwindling traffic and people on the streets. For someone who is used to the non-stop noise of metropolitan Dubai, this silence is new and com-

The downtime it offers is not everyone's cup of tea though, for silence can be disconcerting to many. Its virtues are disregarded and it is taken as a sign of lethargy and dispiritedness, an absence of inspiration and the ultimate sign of an introverted personality. In a world teeming with sounds, silence has become something of an endangered species.

It is the quietude that we collectively fear as if the absence of words leaves us exposed, untethered, and conversations taper off, Silence is perceived as racing minds and to let the

there's often an instinctual drive to fill the void, a compulsion to keep the hum of interaction alive lest silence brings its "awkwardness" into the room. But I often wonder, is silence something to be avoided?

Or is it, in fact, a sanctuary we have lost touch with, one that could lead us back to ourselves? I think of the times I have seen people close friends, even strangers—grapple with the discomfort of a pause, reaching for words as if they were life preservers in a sea of quiet. We are, it seems, constantly seeking refuge in noise, hoping it will drown out whatever solitude and reflection might stir in

emptiness, a fearful space, dust of daily life drift gently rather than a fertile ground to the ground. for connection and self-discovery. We are conditioned to believe that engagement is strength and that silence, moment of quiet with somesomehow, signals inadequa-

To be quiet in conversation is almost seen as a failing; we are regarded as "shy" or "distant." Yet, silence has its richness, a subtle power that invites us into the fullness of presence, something words ten, not only to others but perhaps that's where the unease begins. The quiet need to perform or impress. holds a mirror up to us, revealing what lies within when the outside world fades to a hush.

Silence invites us to reconnect with an inner calm, a solitude we often shun. Instead of fearing what might emerge in the absence a reservoir of strength and of chatter, we might learn to clarity, one that restores find comfort in simply being-without the compulsion to fill every moment with talk. In this way, silence is not a void; it is an invitasomehow incomplete. When us if given the chance. tion to pause, to settle our

Consider, too, the depth that silence brings to relaone, we are not erasing the connection; we are deepening it.

It is in these pauses that we see each other most clearly, unfiltered by words, and held by the simple act of shared presence. Yet, our tendency to fear silence as cannot always offer. In silence, we are called to lispower of these moments power of these moments times when we could also to our inner voice and breathe alongside one another, unburdened by the It is time we learn to embrace silence not as an absence but as a presence a steady, gentle force that grounds us when words have exhausted their role. For in those quiet spaces, we rather than depletes, and brings solace to our weary

(The author is a columnist and children's writing coach based in Dubai; views are

INFANT LIVES LOST

Madam — The shocking fire accident in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) of Maharani Laxmibai Medical College in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh, in which at least 10 newborn babies died due to burns and suffocation and some still struggling for their lives, is really heart-wrenching. Just a few months back, a devastating fire in a newborn care unit of a children's hospital in Delhi had claimed the precious lives of infants. Lack of preparedness, readiness to tackle fire accidents, be it due to short circuit or any other sort and lack of awareness on what to do in case of such incidents make us victims to infernos. The death of these little innocent infants poses a big question: when are we really going to learn our lessons?

Be it hospitals or hotels, movie halls or malls, people may not have the slightest bit of idea about the escape routes, layouts and other possible ways of escape in case of an inferno. Staff of the concerned establishments should be prepared to rescue or at least guide the guests to safety. Intensive care units and baby care units should definitely have safety arrangements so that such fire accidents can be prevented. Buildings should have a common way to exit that anyone, irrespective of age and gender, should be able to identify and escape immediately. Buildings should have proper fire and electricity safety devices and these must be checked occasionally. Staff, especially in sensitive places like hospitals, schools, and hotels, should take part in mock drills and be ever ready in case of emergency. Schools and colleges should include fire disaster management lessons in their physical education curriculum so that we can groom citizens who can face such emergencies boldly, wisely, and bravely and even help the weak and those who are very young.

M Pradyu | Kannur

BULLDOZER RULE ENDS sensitise all the concerned. Bulldozing the tion. structures of those who are branded as

Secure online transactions



¬he rapid growth of digital payments, from banking to shopawareness campaign has to be started ping, has made everything done online nowadays; it has opened doors by the government of India so that for scammers as they continue to these scammers do not have a free run evolve their methods to con people in & individuals are safe. newer ways. Cybercriminals are

criminals and those of communally ostracised is an act that proclaims the rule of a dictator and the death of democracy. The rule of law is thrown in bins and the individual's whims and fancies of the persons at the helm of power prevail only in a totalitarian state.

The salient feature of the verdict is the part that recommends payment of compensation to the victims. The bureaucratic section should stick to the statutory provisions and should not dance to the tunes of those in power, as persons in power may come and go but laws prevail forever. Also, those who permit illegal constructions in the water areas should be penalised by making them compensate the victims when such structures are razed. But the crux of the issue is the corruption and avaricious attitude of the political bigwigs to enjoy a monopoly in enjoying asset accumulation by demolishing dissents and oppositions. The real solution to such issues could emerge only Madam — The spirit of the verdict should from a people's movement against corrup-

DELHI POLLUTION CRISIS

Madam — The Delhi Chief Minister Atishi has directed all educational institutions, particularly the primary schools, to shift to online classes while going by the very high risk of AQI in the state. The Delhi civic authorities started implementing methods like sprinkling water with dust suppressants on roads, as well as mechanised sweeping that would help settle dust. which also came into effect. There is a ban on non-essential constructions in the world's most polluted capital. The air quality has worsened to the level that the image of the Taj Mahal appears to be a kind of ghost at the moment. The manmade calamity by worsening air conditions and the cleaning up of the image by the Delhi government's AAP has become like a war for them, which is symbolic of the party's

election symbol, the 'Broom,' to rebuild

their unclean image nearing the elections

along with other major issues. A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

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FIRST COLUMN

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Servant leadership redefines leadership, emphasising the leader's role as a servant to their team



SAKSHI SETHI

n an increasingly complex and interconnected world, the traditional top-down leadership model is often insufficient for addressing the challenges organisations and communities face. The concept of servant leadership approach which, prioritises service to others over self-interest, has emerged as a vital alternative for fostering trust, collaboration and sustainable success.

Servant leadership is grounded in a set of key principles such as empathy, awareness, commitment to growth, stewardship that distinguish it from traditional, top-down leadership models. Trust in leadership across industries is at an all-time low, exacerbated by scandals, corporate greed and exploitative practices. By putting people first, servant leaders create a foundation of reliability and authenticity that restores faith in leadership.

Nowadays modern employees seek more than just a paycheck. They want meaningful work, supportive environments and leaders who genuinely care about their growth and wellbeing. Servant leadership aligns with these expectations by fostering empowerment, empathy and commitment to growth. This approach helps organisations attract and retain top talent in competitive job markets. Servant Leadership has proven effective in various contexts, from corporate settings to community organisations. Companies like Southwest Airlines and Starbucks have integrated servant leadership into their management philosophies, resulting in loyal employees and strong customer relationships. In education, servant leadership fosters supportive environments where teachers and students thrive. Similarly, nonprofit organisations benefit from servant leaders who prioritise the needs of the communities they serve.



It is often believed that, in times of crisis, such as economic downturns or global pandemics, organisations with servant leaders are more likely to thrive as these leaders provide stability and reassurance to their teams; prioritise people over profits during tough times and even empower employees to adapt and innovate. In an era where businesses are held accountable for their societal and environmental impact, servant leadership helps organisations fulfill their social responsibilities. By focusing on stewardship and community building, servant leaders ensure that their organisations contribute positively to soci-

While servant leadership offers numerous benefits, it is not without its challenges. Its emphasis on service, empathy and community-building can sometimes create complexities, especially in environments that demand rapid decision-making or highly competitive strategies. Undeniably, this approach is a compassionate and effective approach in many scenarios but is not a one-size-fits-all solution. To succeed, it must be carefully balanced with the demands of the organisation and tailored to the specific context in which it is applied. By placing the wellbeing and development of others at the forefront, servant leaders foster trust, collaboration and sustainable success. In an era where ethical leadership is more important than ever, adopting the principles of servant leadership can lead to profound, lasting impact not just within organisations, but in society as a whole. By serving first, leaders ultimately inspire and empower others to achieve their fullest

In essence, servant leadership is about flipping the traditional power dynamic. Instead of a command-and-control approach, servant leaders focus on collaboration, ethical behaviour and the empowerment of others to create more effective and meaningful outcomes. In a world that increasingly demands empathy, collaboration and accountability, servant leadership is more than a philosophy it is a necessity.

(The writer is an educator; views expressed are personal)

Supreme Court strikes down 'bulldozer injustice'



By reinforcing legal safeguards, the Apex Court seeks to restore public trust in the justice system and ensure that no citizen is denied their constitutional rights

historic Supreme Court verdict against "bulldozer justice" promises broad legal, social, and administrative impacts, addressing concerns around the unchecked, high-handed demolition of properties linked to criminal accusations. Such actions have often violated the fundamental tenets of the Indian Constitution. This ruling holds direct implications for BJP-ruled states like Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Assam and the Delhi Municipal Corporation, which have been accused of misusing administrative powers to punish marginalised sections of society without

due legal process. The concept of "bulldozer justice" was notably invented by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Yogi Adityanath, earning him the nickname "Bulldozer Baba" among supporters. The Court's verdict marks a setback to the UP government, though CM may not express regret for actions nullified by the ruling, which had previously jeopardised the constitutional guarantees afforded to all Indian citizens.

Social Implications Protection of Marginalised Communities: The ruling acknowledges that bulldozer justice has disproportionately impacted marginalised groups. By mandating due process, the Court aims to prevent biased or retaliatory actions against vulnerable communities, promoting equal treatment under the law. **Public Trust in the Rule of Law:** By condemning bulldozer justice, the Supreme Court seeks to rebuild public confidence in lawful governance, fostering trust that the state will not bypass legal safeguards to punish alleged offenders.

Awareness and Advocacy: This judgment may empower civil rights groups to challenge arbitrary demolitions, advocating for the rights of those affected by unilateral property destruction. Administrative and Policy Impact.

Arbitrary Reduced Actions: Administrative bodies may now face restrictions against immediate demolition practices that bypass judicial processes, holding them accountable to legal frameworks designed to protect against arbitrary punishment. This could encourage a fairer and more equitable application of laws. Policy Revisions at the State Level: States that have regularly employed demolitions as a form of "bulldozer justice" may need to revisit their policies, ensuring alignment with constitutional rights to property and due process. This could result in tighter guidelines and even statutory changes. Limit on Executive Power: The Court's disapproval of unilateral demolition reinforces the separation of powers, signaling that executive decisions must strictly adhere to legal boundaries.

Legal and Judicial Consequences Strengthened Due Process: The ruling reaffirms that demolitions must respect due process, requiring legal scrutiny rather than administrative discretion. This will likely lead to the implementation of judicial approval for demolition orders, protecting citizens' rights against arbitrary state

actions. **Increased Judicial Oversight:** The ruling could result in heightened court involvement in cases where demolitions serve as punitive responses to alleged crimes, particularly in cases involving minority or marginalised groups.

Pressure for National Guidelines: The Supreme Court suggested nationwide stan-



ADMINISTRATIVE **BODIES** MAY NOW FACE RESTRICTIONS **AGAINST IMMEDIATE** DEMOLITION **PRACTICES** THAT BYPASS JUDICIAL PROCESSES, HOLDING **ACCOUNTABLE** TO LEGAL **FRAMEWORKS DESIGNED** TO PROTECT

AGAINST

ARBITRARY

PUNISHMENT

related to criminal cases, which could formalise rules for state authorities to follow, reducing current ambiguities.

Supreme Court Guidelines on Demolitions Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan made impactful assertions, noting that demolitions based solely on accusations violate fundamental rights. The Court emphasised the presumption of innocence and mandated a 15-day notice period, allowing tenants or owners time to challenge demolition orders or make necessary arrangements. This highlights the right to shelter under Article 21 of the Indian

The Court warned that contempt proceedings could follow violaons of these guidelines and responsible officials may face compensation liabilities for restitution. This ruling stemmed from controversial demolitions in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, alongside a Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind petition challenging demolitions in Delhi's Jahangirpuri in 2022. Data show that state laws on demolitions were often violated in Uttar Pradesh, a state pioneering "bulldozer justice."

The Uttar Pradesh Urban Planning and Development Act, 1973, requires a minimum 15-day notice before unauthorised structures can be removed, with a right to appeal. However, the 2022 demolitions, where structures were razed without due process, led to the Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind's petition to the Supreme Court.

In another significant instance, former Chief Justice Chandrachud, before his retirement on November 9, and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra directed the Uttar Pradesh government to pay Rs 25 lakh as compensation to a man whose home was demolished in 2019 for a road-widening project.

The Court expressed concern over state actions that could potentially use demolitions as selective reprisals, noting that citizens' voices must not be stifled by the threat of losing their homes. In Rajasthan, demolition laws under Section 245 of the Rajasthan Municipalities Act, 2009, require prior written notice detailing the grounds for eviction. Following communal tensions in

Udaipur, authorities issued a quick notice before demolishing a house on alleged forest land encroachment, contravening local law requirements for a reasonable response period. Section 91 of the Rajasthan Forest Act. 1953 restricts eviction orders to be issued only by a Tehsildar.

Madhya Municipalities Act, 1961, stipulates that any unauthorised building alteration or construction may be removed, but only after notice. However, this was ignored when a labourer's home was demolished immediately after his son's arrest, raising rights violation con-

Under the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957, the commissioner can remove illegal structures but must give reasonable opportunity for owners to dispute the action.

The Jahangirpuri incident in 2022 highlighted the need for due process, intensifying scrutiny on such practices. In Haryana, demolitions are governed by Section 261 of the Haryana Municipal Corporation Act, 1994, which mandates a notice period with an opportunity to contest. However, after communal violence in Nuh

over 440 structures, mostly affecting Muslim households. Although similar to Delhi's DMC Act, Haryana's compliance period is notably shorter—only three days, leaving owners little time for appeals.

Strengthening Accountability: The Supreme Court's new guidelines aim to check arbitrary demolitions and uphold legal protec-tions, particularly for vulnerable tenants. These regulations emphasise that adequate notice, transparency, and due process must be integral to any demolition order. While state laws vary, adherence to these guidelines will be essential in ensuring that demolitions respect both legal and constitutional rights, strengthening administra-

A Fundamental Shift in the Justice System: The Supreme Court of India's recent ruling against "bulldozer justice" was a response to cases where properties of individuals accused of crimes, especially those involving communal violence, were demolished without legal due process.

The Court underscored that demolitions must be legally justified and cannot bypass established procedures. It criticised this practice for disproportionately impacting marginalised communities, violating human rights, and eroding public trust. In essence, this ruling reaffirms the constitutional right to due process, expected to curb the trend of using demolitions as extrajudicial punitive measures. The ruling marks a shift toward a justice system grounded in fairness, procedure, and accountability.

(The author is a political analyst and strategic affairs columnist; views are personal)

Tackling the epidemic of diabetes and hypertension: Urgent action needed Lack of awareness and limited early screening make these two lifestyle diseases rampant

iabetes and hypertension are two interconnected yet distinct chronic diseases that collectively strain public health. Both conditions share underlying risk factors, such as unhealthy diets, physical inactivity and high stress levels. They also frequently co-occur, accelerating the onset of severe complications and amplify-

ing each other's impact. significantly increase the risk for cardiovascular diseases, chronic kidney disease, stroke, and eye disorders, forming a "double-edged sword" for health. In particular, hypertension, when combined with diabetes, can increase the likelihood of heart disease and conditions in India is challeng- tension, over a billion people—



PANKAJ BHARDWAJ

Diabetes and hypertension ing due to lack of awareness, inadequate early screening and inaction, particularly in rural and resource-poor areas. More than half a billion people are living with diabetes globally. This is only expected to more than double in the next 30 years, in almost every country, according to a Lancet stroke. Management of these study. When it comes to hyper-

women—are living with this condition, which ranks as one of the leading causes of premature death worldwide. In addition to this, WHO states that more than 50 per cent of people with diabetes and about 46 per cent of adults living with hypertension don't even know about their condition.

It is safe to argue that lack of awareness is the biggest problem here. Both conditions have become the largest, silent, dual epidemics currently challenging India. The Cost of Inaction: Tertiary treatment for complications from advanced diabetes and hypertension such as heart disease, kidney failure, or stroke—is exponentially more costly than primary health interventions. In 2024, reports from different

1 in every 4 men and 1 in 5 Insurance companies showed that the cost of a kidney transplant in public sector hospitals in India generally goes up to 6

This estimate is significantly lower than in private hospitals, which can go up to INR 15 lakhs or more, due to higher administrative and facility fees. Similarly, cardiac surgery can range anywhere between Rs 1 lakh and Rs 15 lakhs. In contrast, medication for diabetes and hypertension cost potentially up to only Rs 10,000 yearly, which is otherwise completely free of cost if obtained from a Government

Thus, investing in primary care interventions is far more cost-effective and sustainable than managing advanced complications. Reducing the wise be allocated to proactive community health services.



Burden: Encouraging people to take ownership of their health and get regular checkups could prevent costly treat-

One person's decision to monitor their blood pressure or blood sugar levels could save thousands in healthcare costs—covering medication, hospital beds and medical staff—funds that could otherwise be allocated to proactive

decrease in the incidence of severe complications, ultimately saving lives and reducing the overall societal cost.

A Path Forward: Our country needs to work on three fronts parallelly: first, increasing awareness campaigns, second, enhancing access to screenings and third, ensuring wide-spread support for affordable primary care.

Educating communities, especially in rural areas, about the importance of early detection can create a more health-conscious society that seeks intervention before these conditions spiral.

At the same time, the government's initiatives, such as the National Programme for Prevention and Control of

Cardiovascular Diseases and betes through accessible Stroke (NPCDCS), need robust on-the-ground implementation to reach every corner of the country. The National Programme for Prevention and Control of

Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases, and Stroke (NPCDCS) was

launched in 2010 by the Government of India, as a game changer. It aims to reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) through early diagnosis, management, and health promotion. The programme

focuses on four major NCDs cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and stroke—due to their high prevalence and impact on public health. It equips our communities to battle hypertension and diascreenings and preventive care. By catching issues early and promoting lifestyle change, we're not just treating diseases—we're transforming health outcomes and reclaiming years of productive life

across India. Conclusion: Addressing diabetes and hypertension isn't just a medical issue; it's a societal one. India's battle against these diseases demands the willingness of individuals to seek preventive care, awareness of the risks, and action by both govt and citizens to implement and utilise early detection programs. Only then can we mitigate these silent but pervasive epidemics and prevent a looming healthcare crisis.

(The author is a public health expert; views are personal)

VIJAYAWADA | MONDAY | NOVEMBER 18, 2024

MONEY MATTERS



'Sagarmanthan' to begin from today

agarmanthan, South Asia's largest maritime thought leadership forum, will begin on Monday, according to an official statement. Organised by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) in association with the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), the maiden edition of 'Sagarmanthan - The Great Oceans Dialogue' aims to foster knowledge on maritime sector and provide a premier global platform for global leaders, policy makers, business moguls, thought leaders and visionaries to share, learn and shape actionable insights towards effective decisions for a future ready, sustainable and efficient marine sector, the statement said. Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal said, "Sagarmanthan is an attempt at celebrating the best available knowledge in maritime sector from global experts with deep understanding, wisdom and insights on upcoming trends." Sonowal further said as India's role as an important and key maritime player has increased manifold, this platform offers a premier platform for everyone to seek knowledge, share wisdom, chalk out pathways and set the course for maritime sector's collective



FM answers to X user seeking tax relief

inance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday responded to an X user seeking tax relief for the middle class, saying the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government attends to people's concerns. "PM @narendramodi's government is a responsive government. Listens and attends to people's voices. Thanks once again for your understanding. Your input is valuable," Sitharaman replied to the user on X. The user had posted: "I humbly request you to consider providing some relief for the middle class. I understand the immense challenges involved, but it's iust a heartfelt request." Sitharaman also said, "I recognise and appreciate your concern.'



Prestige Estates to launch Rs 52 K cr housing projects

ealty firm Prestige Estates Projects Ltd plans to launch housing projects worth Rs 52,000 crore by March next year to encash surge in demand for residential properties. In its latest investors presentation, Prestige Estates has mentioned that the company plans to launch multiple projects in Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Goa, and Delhi-NCR comprising more than 53 million sq ft area with a total sales bookings value of Rs 52,114 crore. According to a transcript of conference call with analysts Prestige Estates CMD Irfan Razack expressed confidence that the company will be able to meet its sales bookings guidance for this fiscal year at Rs 24,000 crore. During the 2023-24 fiscal year, Prestige Estates clocked record sales booking of Rs 21,040 crore. Prestige Estates recorded sales of Rs 4,022.6 crore in the September quarter as against Rs 7,092.6 crore in the year-ago period. During the April-September period, the company's sales bookings fell to Rs 7,052.2 crore as against Rs 11,007.3 crore in the corresponding period last year. Nevertheless, Razack is confident of not only meeting the target but exceeding it considering the strong pipeline of new launches.

India's free trade pacts not paused: Official

Negotiations for all the proposed free trade agreements, including those with the UK and European Union (EU), are progressing as per the schedule and the country's FTAs are not paused, a top government official has said.

The official said that an impression is going around that FTAs are paused, which is not correct.

"All our FTAs, whether it is with the EU or UK, all are progressing as per the schedule," the official said.

In the coming weeks, a bilateral meeting is scheduled between the commerce secretary and the Director-General of the European Union to take stock of the negotiations for the proposed trade agreement with the European Union.

They will also meet as part of the Trade and Technology Council (TTC).

Besides the EU and the UK, India is negotiating these agreements with Australia, Peru, Sri

Anil Ambani's Reliance Group

has launched the Reliance

Group Corporate Centre

(RGCC) as part of its 2030

growth strategy.
"The RGCC will serve as a

strategic hub, providing guid-

ance to the Group's

companies as they

opportunities

and technolog-

ical advance-

ments," the firm said in a

K Raja Gopal.

The core team

of RGCC will

include experienced

leaders of the Group --

Sateesh Seth, Punit Garg, and

Garg currently leads as CEO

of Reliance Infrastructure,

while K Raja Gopal has been

statement.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Anil 's Group sets up centre

to helm 2030 growth strategy

Says all talks progressing as per schedule



In such pacts, two trading partners either significantly cut customs duties or remove the maximum number of goods traded between them. They also ease norms to promote trade in services and attract investments.

India has so far implemented FTAs with a number of nations including Japan, Korea, Singapore, and the UAE.

at the helm of Reliance Power

rience in the power sector. Other leaders from the Group

companies will also be invit-

RGCC aims to harness the in-

'The establishment of

support

house expertise of these

seasoned leaders to

Group's forward-

looking growth

initiatives and

cultivate a new

generation of

leadership for future project," the

The RGCC will play

statement said.

a pivotal role in mentoring

and developing emerging lead-

ers, blending experience with

fresh talent to propel the

Group towards sustained growth.

He has over 27 years expe-

for six years.

ed to the RGCC.

According to the commerce ministry, the next round of negotiations for the proposed free trade agreement between India and South American nation Peru will be held after finalisation of the FTA strategy.

The standard operating procedure (SOP) or strategy document for negotiating free trade agreements (FTAs) is expected to be ready by the end of this year. It is an internal document aiming to standardise the processes of negotiations of these pacts.

The ministry has also informed that the negotiations for a comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA) with Oman were completed in March this year, but further discussions are ongo-

Davos meet to focus on 'collaboration for intelligent age'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

'Collaboration for the intelligent age' would be at the core of discussions when over 100 business and government leaders from India join their global counterparts at the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting in January

Expected to be attended by nearly 50 heads of states and governments from across the world, the annual meeting from January 20-24, 2025 would take place in the backdrop of a change of regime in the US and various geopolitical and macroeconomic issues including the Ukraine war and the continuing West Asia crisis.

Besides Union ministers and civil society leaders, the Indian presence would be comprised of top executives of business conglomerates like Intelligent Age'.

Reliance, Tata, Adani, Birla, Bharti, Mahindra, Godrej, Jindal, Bajaj and Vedanta

groups.

Besides Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani, the nextgeneration leaders from their groups are also expected to be present, while technology leaders including Salil Parekh of Infosys, Rishad Premji of Wipro, as also Sumant Sinha of ReNew, Vijay Shekhar Sharma of Paytm and Adar Poonawalla of Serum Institute are expected in the Swiss Alpine resort town.

Geneva-based WEF, which describes itself as an international organisation for publicprivate cooperation, will convene leaders from government, business and civil society as well as scientific and cultural thinkers for its 55th annual meeting under the theme of 'Collaboration for the

Food inflation to moderate in next 2 quarters: Marico

Money 08

PNS NEW DELHI

FMCG major Marico is looking for double-digit growth in the second half of FY25 and expects the prevailing high expects the prevailing high food inflation to moderate in the next two quarters, which will help revive urban con-sumption, its MD & CEO Saugata Gupta said.

The company, which has already gone for a price hike for its Saffola range, expects a similar action from other FMCG players as prices of raw materials such as coffee, cocoa, and palm oil have gone up.
"In the sector, there will be

some price increases. If you look at some other input costs for other players, there has been a globally significant increase in the prices of coffee, and cocoa, So there is a little bit of inflation situation and now you are seeing a signifi-cant increase in palm oil prices.

"So across the sector, there will be some price increase," Gupta told PTI.

However, he also pointed out that most of the big-scale FMCG manufacturers would try to absorb a portion of the increase in the commodity prices through various cost management initiatives and extend a small part of the bur-den, as volume growth also

matters.
"I think it will be smart to absorb some of these costs and (pass on) only a part to the consumer, given the demand situation, because at the end of the day, volume, growth and market share are far more important in the short and medium and long term," he said, adding, "margins always come back for scale players".

Besides, the other driver of the input costs is crude oil and Gupta does not expect any major volatility in the nearterm there.

Over Marico -- the maker of Saffola and Parachute -- Gupta said he is pretty hopeful of trying to improve that sequential volume growth a bit in the second half of the ongoing fiscal



"In the sector, there will be some price increases. If you look at some other input costs for other players, there has been a globally significant increase in the prices of coffee, and cocoa, So there is a little bit of inflation situation and now you are seeing a significant increase in palm oil prices.

However, he added, "There are challenges in terms of input cost, which could ensure a margin will lag a little bit of revenue growth.'

The biggest concern right now is food inflation.
"We expect that to hopeful-

ly to moderate over the next two quarters and then the urban growth is expected to recover because that has been impacted a little bit by the high food inflation that is prevailing," he said.

Marico, which had reported a 7.6 per cent increase in consolidated revenue to Rs 2,664 crore for the September quarter along with a 20.2 per cent rise in PAT, is witnessing a sequential volume improve-

"Our revenue growth is also in high single-digits and we are fairly confident about revenue moving into double digits in the second half of the year," he said.

ACME Sun Power secures Rs 3,753-cr term loan from REC



PNS NEW DELHI

ACME Sun Power, a whollyowned subsidiary of ACME Solar Holdings, has secured a Rs 3,753-crore term loan from state-owned REC Ltd.

The loan has been secured for the development and construction of a 320-MW firm and dispatchable renewable energy (FDRE) project in collaboration with SJVN.

Wholly-owned subsidiary ACME Sun Power Secures Rs 3,753 crore loan from REC for FDRE projects in Rajasthan and Gujarat, ACME Solar Holdings said in a statement

on Sunday.
An FDRE plant ensures round-the-clock power supply, assisting power distribution companies (discoms) in fulfilling their renewable purchase obligations and energy storage

The project would be located at high resource potential areas at Jaisalmer, Rajasthan for solar capacity and Bhuj and Jam Khambhaliya, Gujarat for wind sites, the company said.

A power purchase agreement has been signed with ity has also been secured. The land acquisition process is in advanced stages, the company

SJVN and the grid connectiv-

Manoj Kumar Upadhyay, Chairman and Founder of ACME Solar Holdings, said, "We are delighted to receive this financial assistance, which reinforces the trust and confidence of our lenders. This funding is a significant step in strengthening our commit-ment to building world-class FDRE renewable energy projects and contributing to India's green energy transi-

FII trading, global trends to dictate trends: Analysts

PNS NEW DELHI

Trading activity of foreign investors and global trends will be the major driving factors for the equity markets in a holidayshortened week ahead, according to analysts.

Leading stock exchanges BSE and NSE have declared a trading holiday on November 20 for elections assembly Maharashtra. Elections to the 288-member

state legislative assembly will be held on November 20, and votes will be counted on November 23.

"The Indian stock market will remain shut on Wednesday, November 20, in observance of Maharashtra assembly elections. The election results, along with key global economic indicators,



including US bond yields, dollar index performance, US unemployment claims, flash manufacturing and services PMI data, and Japan's inflation data, will be pivotal in shaping market direction.

"High US bond yields and a strengthening dollar post-election have impacted emerging markets like India, and FII (Foreign Institutional Investors) activity remains a key factor, influencing Indian equities in the near term," Pravesh Gour, Senior Technical Analyst,

Swastika Investmart Ltd, said. The movement of global oil benchmark Brent crude and rupee-dollar trend would also influence trading in the market, experts said.

"This week is also shortened due to a holiday, and with the earnings season largely concluded, attention will shift back to FII flows. Foreign institutional investors have been on a consistent selling spree for the past month and a half. Additionally, traders will keep a close watch on global market trends," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Last week, the BSE benchmark gauge Sensex fell 1,906.01 points or 2.39 per cent.

Equity markets were closed on Friday for Guru Nanak

Jayanti. The BSE benchmark fell a massive 8,397.94 points or 9.76

per cent from its all-time high, and the Nifty has also lost 2,744.65 points or 10.44 per cent from the record peak.

When DLF's K P Singh fulfilled Rajiv's wish of bringing GE to India!

PNS NEW DELHI

When Rajiv Gandhi was the prime minister, he was determined to bring General Electric into India and his wish was fulfilled by DLF's K P Singh, who helped catalyse the American giant's presence in this country, says a new book.

Singh talks about his journey through India's transforming landscapes and his indelible contributions to the industry in 'Why the Heck Not", published by Penguin Random House

Co-authored with Aparna Jain, Singh also writes about the bold risks and visionary decisions that shaped his career, as well as the challenges he over-

Delving into the GE story, the book says in the mid to late '80s, Gandhi revered GE chairman and CEO Jack Welch as a business icon.



Determined to bring him to India, he dispatched the Indian envoy in Washington, Ambassador P K Kaul, to extend a formal invitation, it

"At the time, India was not globally known for business prospects and was not a priority on the lists of investors and entrepreneurs. Jack refused Kaul, bluntly stating that he would not waste his time visit-

Singh then recalls an evening in 1988 when Gandhi's secretary, Sarla Grewal, met at a formal dinner and urged him to

fulfil the prime minister's wish, regardless of obstacles. Singh knew it was a difficult task but still said he would "meet Welch, gauge his pulse

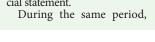
and see if I can convince him for an India visit" Welch had then just married

and Singh proposed that the couple should come and see the 'romantic Taj Mahal". Soon, Jack was scheduled for

a four-day visit. "I don't want to meet any fuddy-duddies. The youth are the ones with promise. I want to meet young eaders and businesspeople, he told Singh. Singh unfurled the red car-

pet for Welch and his wife, Jane Beasley, with flair. "From the moment Welch stepped onto Indian soil, it was a whirlwind of business meetings and backto-back mornings with leaders, bureaucrats and industry titans," the book says.

"Breakfast was with the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's dynamic team, including Sam Pitroda, the chief technology advisor, Jairam Ramesh from the Planning Commission and Montek Singh Ahluwalia, special secretary to Rajiv Gandhi.





The all-India average retail modal wholesale prices at Delhi's price of tomatoes stood at Rs 52.35 per kg on November 14, Azadpur mandi witnessed a sharper decline of nearly 50 per down from Rs 67.50 per kg on cent to Rs 2,969 per quintal from October 14, according to an official statement. Rs 5,883 per quintal, driven by

corrections were reported from key markets like Pimpalgaon (Maharashtra), Madanapalle (Andhra Pradesh), and Kolar (Karnataka), the ministry said. "Though arrivals have sub-

Retail tomato prices drop 22.4 pc on improved supplies: Govt

sided at major tomato centres in Madanapalle and Kolar, prices have eased due to seasonal supplies from Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat filling supply gaps nationwide," it added. Favourable weather condiincreased arrivals. Similar price tions have supported both crop

growth and smooth supply chain movement from fields to consumers, the statement noted. The country's tomato production is projected to increase 4 per

cent to 213.20 lakh tonne in 2023-24. While tomatoes are grown year-round, production varies seasonally across regions. The ministry said adverse weather and logistics disruptions significantly impact prices due to the crop's high susceptibility and perishable nature.

what's brewing?



DILJIT DOSANJH UNLEASHES **FURY POST-HYD SHOW**

unjabi star Diljit Dosanjh sang modified lyrics I'll tell you something. God is with me, I won't let this to his chartbusters Lemonade and 5 Taara at the Hyderabad show of his Dil-Luminati India Tour 2024 tour on Saturday. This was days after he received a notice from the Telangana government directing him to not sing any songs promoting alcohol, drugs or vio-lence at the concert. Clips of the famous singer-actor from the gig are circulating online where he can be seen singing Tainu teri coke ch pasand aa Lemonade instead of Tainu teri daaru ch pasand aa Lemonade from the song Lemonade.

Similarly, the lyrics in 5 Taara became 5 taara hotel *ch* instead of the original 5 taara theke utte.

During the show, Diljit spoke to the spectators alluding to the notice, which also restricted the singer from using children on stage. "If an artist comes from outside the country, they can sing or do whatever they want, there's no tension. But when your artist is coming home to perform, you have a problem, you create trouble. But

go," he said. The 40-year-old called out naysayers questioning how

his concerts were going housefull.

"Many people are unable to digest why such big shows are happening. How are these tickets getting sold in two minutes? Bro, I've been working for a long time now. I did not become famous in a day," he added.

Diljit also addressed the black marketing of his shows' tickets, urging victims to alert authorities in the first hour of the incident by calling on 1930, the toll-free helpline number for reporting online cybercrime.

"Some people buy tickets early so that they can sell it again. This has become a norm. This happens in big international shows even today. This will be fixed in time, the govern-

Jonathan Bailey confirms return to Bridgerton for season 4

onathan Bailey has confirmed his return to Bridgerton for the upcoming fourth season of the hit Netflix series. The actor, who became a fan favourite for his portrayal of Viscount Anthony Bridgerton, made the announcement during an appearance on Late Night with Seth Meyers, where he shared his enthusiasm about reuniting with the Bridgerton

family, as per The Hollywood Reporter. Bailey, who led the second season alongside Simone Ashley, will once again join the ensemble cast for the next chapter of the

Shonda Rhimes-produced period drama.
The actor revealed that he would be "reuniting with the family next week" as production for season four begins.

"It changes every year, you know, every two years," Bailey joked, referencing the show's rotating lead cast, as per The Hollywood Reporter, Each season of Bridgerton focuses on a different member of the Bridgerton family and with each new lead comes a fresh dynamic for the beloved period series.

Bailey, 36, expressed his excitement about the show's evolving format. "What an amazing thing to be a part of," he said, reflecting on his time with Bridgerton.

Looking ahead to season four, Bailey also shared his support for the new cast members, including his onscreen brother Luke Thompson and the recently announced addition, Yerin Ha, who will take centre stage as the lead couple in the upcoming sea-

There's going to be lots of space for new people to come in and Luke and Yerin are gonna be great," Bailey said, adding, "So I'll always pop back and say hello," as per The Hollywood

Reporter. Season four of *Bridgerton* will centre on Benedict Bridgerton, the second son of the Bridgerton family. While Bridgerton fans are eager for new episodes, there is still no official release date for season four. However, according to *Bridgerton* producer Brownell, viewers may have to wait up to two years



AB's nuanced portrayal leaves Shoojit in 'awe'

n a recent heartfelt reflection, director Shoojit Sircar opened Lup about the powerful performance delivered by Abhishek Bachchan in the upcoming film I Want to Talk. Shoojit shared an emotional anecdote, highlighting the profound impact of Abhishek's portrayal of Arjun Singh, a character grappling with a terminal illness.

Speaking about the film, Shoojit revealed a conversation he had with Bachchan during the shoot, where the actor, in character as Arjun Singh, shared a deeply poignant line: "I am now married to cancer, so now I have to take it with me." This raw, yet uplifting, perspective encapsulated the essence of Arjun's journey-one of acceptance, strength, and resilience in the face of an inevitable fate.

"The way he smiled and spoke about the character's challenges, it gave me the force to move forward with the project," Shoojit shared, acknowledging how Bachchan's nuanced portrayal brought an empowering energy to the film.

For Shoojit, this was not just a film about illness, but one about living life fully, even in the face of hardship. "I laughed every day and with every scene because of the way Abhishek brought this character to life," the director said. Abhishek's role, according to Shoojit, is a tribute to human spirit and the way we can find strength, even in the most difficult circumstances.

I Want to Talk is slated to release in theatres on November 22, 2024. The film also stars Johnny Lever and Ahilva Bamroo and is produced by Ronnie Lahiri and Shoojit Sircar under Rising Sun Films.



before the next season arrives on Netflix.

'Prove yourself on big screen not mobile screen'

Rohit Shetty, known for directing some of Bollywood's biggest blockbusters, recently shared his thoughts on the younger generation of actors. In an interview, alongside casting director Mukesh Chhabra, Shetty reflected on stardom and compared the new crop of stars with seasoned actors like Ajay Devgn, Shah Rukh Khan and Akshav Kumar, with whom he has worked Shetty described Ajay Devgn as a

"secure" actor who allows his

co-stars to shine, contrasting this with the insecurities he perceives in many of today's younger stars. "The new stars are insecure people. They are too much into social media, which is not the real world. One thing about social media is that 90% of followers and articles are paid. They need to go out in the world. Buying followers or having paid articles won't help after two years. Ultimately, you will have to prove yourself on the big screen, not the mobile screen." he remarked. Offering advice to young actors, Shetty

emphasised the



importance of conviction and embracing opportunities, regardless of their scale. "My biggest advice to the younger generation is never to think of any work as big or small. You just have to follow your conviction. For instance, when Salman Khan's movies weren't working, he did Jeet with Sunny Deol. He saw it as an opportunity to move forward. This quality in stars is now fading. People are scared of failure... and the moment this fear goes, there will be progress.

Season 2, says, 'Finishing it up strong' Priyanka Chopra, one of the busiest stars in the

Priyanka Chopra teases Citadel

entertainment world, is gearing up for the highly anticipated second season of Citadel. Balancing her professional commitments with personal life, Priyanka shared a glimpse of her packed schedule on Instagram, giving fans a sneak peek into her "working Saturday.

In a video shared from her car, Priyanka said, "It's a working Saturday, you know, finishing it up, strong. She also posted a stunning selfie, donning a black leather jacket, minimal makeup and a sleek ponytail. The actress looked effortlessly stylish while updating

her followers about her day. In Citadel Season 2, Priyanka will reprise her role as Nadia Sinh alongside Richard Madden as Mason Kane. The upcoming season will also introduce new cast members, including Rahul Kohli, Merle Dandridge and Michael Trucco, while Stanley Tucci and Lesley Manville return in key roles. Produced by the Russo brothers, the espionage thriller first premiered on April 28, 2023 and the six-episode follow-up is set to stream on Prime Video soon, with the release date yet to

ARCHIE







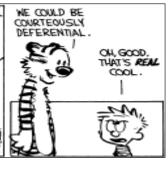


CALVIN AND HOBBES









GARFIELD

NANCY

NEW YEAR,

NEW ME!

THE NEW YEAR STARTED MONTHS AGO

GINGER MEGGS





TIME FOR SOME

SPRING CLEANING

ALMOST SUMMER ALREADY





REALITY CHECK

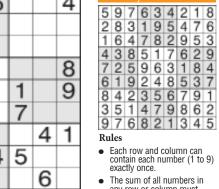


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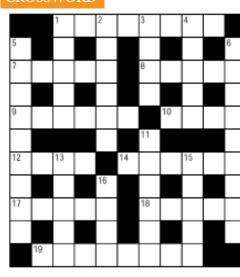
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CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- Large stone buildings built in ancient Egypt as tombs 7 Steel pins knocked into wood
- 8 Call in on
- 9 Get 10 A song sung by one person.
- 12 Have a lie down
- 14 Thin cord for tying parcels
- 17 Fabric 18 Defrosts
- 19 So smooth it is difficult to
- get hold of

DOWN

- Indicate direction with
- your finger 2 Moscow is in this country



3 Shift

5 Wrong

13 Ruin

16 Large boat

6 Most powerful

11 A sculpted figure

15 Rome is the capital

city of this country

4 A type of dance club

HOW'S THE GOING, JUGGIE?





The pioneer land a land

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Monday November 18, 2024

THE SABARMATI REPORT

Fearless attempt marred by flawed misstep

TEJAL SINHA tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

he Sabarmati Report is influenced by a tragic event in history, in which a coach of the Sabarmati Express was set ablaze close to the town of Godhra in Gujarat. The train journeyed from Ayodhya to Ahmedabad, leading to the deaths of several individuals, primarily Hindu pilgrims coming back from a religious event in Ayodhya. The blaze was allegedly initiated by a mob and victims were unable to escape, when the carriage was consumed by fire. The event triggered extensive violence throughout Gujarat, resulting in communal clashes that persisted for many weeks. The incident, which is one of the darkest pages in history, continues to haunt millions of Indians.

The movie centers around Samar Kumar (played by Vikrant Massey), a Hindi journalist entangled in the office politics of the newsroom. The story develops as Samar, with the assistance of a youthful journalist called Amrita Gill (played by Raashii Khanna), works to reveal the reality of Godhra to the public. The film's plot revolves around the search for truth and a major media outlet's attempt to conceal it.

The highlights of *The Sabarmati*

Report include the chilling recreation of the Godhra Train Burning sequence, a pivotal moment in the film. The intense courtroom confrontation between Samar and the politician is another standout scene. The film effectively uncovers the conspiracy behind the riots, exposing shocking truths. Thought-provoking themes of justice, accountability and communal tensions are woven throughout. The film's technical aspects, including haunting cinematography, a haunting background score and skillful editing, add depth. Impactful moments including the climax, where a powerful verdict is delivered, Amrita Gill's emotional testimony and hard-hitting dialogue will make you hooked.

DRAWBACKS

However, The Sabarmati Report does have its own drawbacks. The film's graphic violence and disturbing imagery may be triggering for some viewers, while its emotional intensity could overwhelm certain audiences due to the sensitive subject matter. Pacing issues arise, with some scenes feeling rushed or drag-ging and the emphasis on melodra-ma slightly detracts from the fact-based narrative. The film's messag-ing sometimes feels heavy-handed, with themes feeling forced or didactic and the portrayal of complex political and social issues lacks nuance. Additionally, some historical inaccuracies or creative liberties are taken and the tone unevenly balances drama, thriller and social commentary elements.



DIRECTED BY: Dheeraj Sarna

PRODUCED BY: Balaji Motion Pictures and Vikir Films Production

CAST: Vikrant Massey, Raashii Khanna, Ridhi Dogra, Barkha Singh, Nazneen Patni, Hella Stichlmair, Aryan Ardent, Sundip Ved, Prince Kashyap, Sandeep Kumar, Rohit Ameriya, Al Arjun, Anjali Nadig and Tushar Phulke

WRITTEN BY: Arjun Bhandegaonkar, Avinash Singh Tomar and Vipin Agnihotri

MUSIC BY: Kartik Kush, Akhil Sachdeva, Anu Malik and Arko

RATING: 3/5

PERFORMANCES

Vikrant Massey can effortlessly embody any character. True that! Iust like always, Massey being a skilled actor, effortlessly adapts to

any role he is assigned, whether it be a black or white character. Describing his excellent performance as a Hindi journalist would be an understatement. This expe-

rienced actor really stands out as Samar. Even though his dialogues make a strong impression, as usual, it is his eyes that do the speaking. With flawless

execution, Ridhi Dogra portrays Manika as a strong and no-nonsense individual, unwavering in her convictions. Dogra masterfully blends strength, passion and unwavering self-assurance, making Manika an unforgettable figure. Her character is marked by unapologetic assertiveness, sharp intellect and empathetic yet unflinching commitment to truth and justice. Meanwhile, Raashii Khanna shines in her role as Amrita. She brings a strong sense of depth and sincerity to her character, fully honouring the script. Her character embodies vul-

nerability, courage and determination, con-veying emotional depth through

poignant portrayals of pain, loss and struggle for justice. Amrita's narrative arc showcases inner strength, navigating c o m p l e x emotions from

grief to anger and ultimately, hope. Her story evokes empathy, making her relatable and endearing to audiences.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

Chaudhary captures the stark real-

ities of riot-torn Gujarat, employing muted colors and stark lighting to convey the somber mood. The cinematography's blend of close-ups, wide shots, and aerial views creates a visceral experience. The editing by Manan Sagar is crisp, seamlessly interweaving multiple narrative threads. The background score by the team is haunting and evocative, amplifying tension and emotional depth. The sound design effectively recreates the chaos and intensity of the riots. Production design meticulously recreates the early 2000s setting, adding authenticity. The film's visual effects are subtle yet effective, enhancing key

sequences. Despite these, *The Sabarmati* Report has some technical drawbacks. The pacing occasionally falters, with uneven editing transitions disrupting the narrative flow in a few scenes. Certain visual effects appear inconsistent and lacking in polish.

The Sabarmati Report offers an intriguing perspective on a pivotal event in Indian history, despite some narrative detours. While its intentions occasionally waver, the film regains focus for an impactful climax. Decent performances from the cast elevate the viewing experience. It's a worth watching for those interested in fact-based dramas and social com-Cinematography by Amalendu mentaries, but with tempered



BORN HEALTHY, BORN STRONG:

Maternal health for premature birth prevention

Premature birth, defined as delivery before 37 weeks of pregnancy, is a significant global health challenge, often leading to long-term complications for the baby and emotional and financial stress for families. According to WHO's last data about 287000 women died during and following pregnancy and childbirth in 2020. However, optimising maternal health and ensuring responsible fertility treatment can significantly reduce the risk of premature birth. Raising awareness about these factors is crucial for improving outcomes for both mother and child.

Maternal health: The foundation for full-term pregnancy

The journey toward a healthy pregnancy begins with the mother's overall health. Conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity and infections can significantly increase the risk of preterm labour. Regular preconception health checks help identify and manage these risk factors early. Moreover, adopting a balanced diet, maintaining a healthy weight, staying physically active and avoiding harmful substances like tobacco and alcohol create an optimal environment for a full-term pregnancy.

During pregnancy, prenatal care is essential. Frequent check-ups allow health-care providers to monitor fetal growth, manage any emerging complications and provide timely interventions. Expectant mothers are encouraged to take prescribed prenatal vitamins, especially folic acid and practice stress management, as stress hormones are linked to preterm labour.

Responsible fertility treatment: A critical role

Fertility treatments, such as in-vitro fertilization (IVF), have been a boon for couples struggling with infertility. However, they come with their own set of risks, including multiple pregnancies—a leading cause of prematurity. Responsible practices, like transferring a single blastocyst embryo during IVF and opting for advanced techniques like PGT -A and

transferring single Euploid embryo and other advances like CAPA IVM (In Vitro Maturation), can minimise these risks. CAPA IVM requires minimal hormonal stimulation, reducing the chance of ovarian hyperstimulation and lowering the likelihood of multiple pregnancies, thereby promoting safer outcomes for both mother

Global progress and the need for

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the maternal mortality ratio worldwide has improved significantly, declining from 441 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1985 to 223 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2020. However, at the halfway mark to 2030, the goal of reaching a global maternal mortality ratio (MMR) of 70 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births remains elusive. This progress reflects advancements in maternal health care, yet challenges like premature birth

Empowering women through

Awareness and education are key to preventing prematurity. Couples planning a family should consult healthcare providers early to understand their health status and the safest fertility options. Additionally, healthcare professionals must emphasise the importance of maternal health and responsible fertility practices during con-

Preventing premature births requires a collaborative effort between individuals, families and healthcare systems. By prioritising maternal health and advocating for safer fertility treatments, we can help more babies enjoy the benefits of a healthy, fullterm start in life. Awareness is the first step toward ensuring that every child has the best possible chance to thrive.

(The author, Dr. Sai Manasa Darla, is the clinical head and fertility specialist at Oasis Fertility.)

Karanvir Sharma tapping real-life experience for emotional connectivity

AARTI SREENATH aarti.sreenath9@gmail.com

aranvir Sharma, known for his gripping portrayals of Shaurya Sabarwal in *Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani* and the intense Haider Akhtar in *Rab Se Dua*, has made a mark in the world of Indian television. His performances, marked by their emotional depth and raw intensity, have earned him recognition and a dedicated fan base. But as the actor reflects on his career, it's clear that his aspirations go far beyond just the small screen.

Starting from his early days in television, he speaks humbly about his journey from his initial projects like *Zid* to his most latest popu-

As *The Pioneer* connects exclusively with the talented actor, we were struck not just by his humility, but also by his palpable sense of anticipation. "The most defining moment of my career is yet to come," he says with a confident hint of mystery in his voice. "The milestone I'm waiting for will happen next year. That's what keeps me motivated. It reminds me that there is always room for growth."

It's not often that you meet an actor who speaks with such conviction about their future and vet, Karan's words resonate with an unmistakable energy. Despite having achieved significant milestones in his career including his memorable turn in Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani, a role that won him acclaim for its depth he believes the best is yet to come.

What sets him apart from many of his peers is his unwavering commitment to his craft. He doesn't let the fame or success of a role dictate his next step. The *Zid* fame explains, "I've always been someone who chooses roles based on the strength of the character, not the recognition it brings. Whether it's a hit show or a movie, what matters to me is the story and the character I'm portraying. That's where my

He stresses that a show's success is not just the responsibility of the actors, but a collective achievement. When comparing his approach to film roles and television roles, the Rab Se Hai Dua actor explains that in television, linear storytelling allows for a more continuous flow, while in films and web series, the narrative structure can be non-linear, requiring a different kind of preparation. He points out that both mediums have their unique challenges and demands but emphasises that, regardless of the format, his passion to understand the craft remains consistent.

As he reflects on his transformative performances, his complex portrayal of Shaurya, a man torn between his beliefs and his love for Anokhi, or Haider Akhtar, the conflicted man at the heart of Rab Se Dua, he reveals the depth of his preparation. "For me, it's all about drawing from real-life experiences," he says, leaning in thoughtfully. "I observe people around me, I read, I watch films and sometimes, it's just a fleeting moment that sticks with me. I recall a time when I saw a girl sitting silently in a hospital, her face a canvas of emotions. I didn't know her, but when I approached her, she broke down and shared everything with me. That moment became a source of inspiration for my role as Haider."

He delves into the emotional depth of his performances, particularly in roles like Shaurva Sabarwal in Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani and Haider Akhtar in Rab Se Dua. He shares a deeply personal story about a moment in a hospital where he encountered a girl in a state of emotional distress, which later influenced his portrayal of Haider. This story highlights his approach to acting, using life experiences and the emotions of those around him as a foundation for his performances. He reflects that this empathy and deep connection with his characters are what make his portrayals resonate with audiences.

This ability to tap into real emotions is what

makes his performances so believable. Moving on to his role in Safal Hogi Teri aradhna, Sharma speaks about how the success of the show has affected his approach to acting. He remains grounded and focused on the character rather than external metrics like TRPs or fame. For him, the essence of a successful show lies in the collaborative effort quality writing, skilled direction and the right team coming together to create something meaningful. He speaks about how the technical aspects of the show, such as high-quality cinematography and the involvement of experienced professionals, elevate the final prod-

Despite his growing fame and popularity, he remains grounded, a quality that seems to define him both as an actor and a person. "What excites me most right now is not the success, but the journey ahead," he says, his eyes gleaming with optimism. "As much as I enjoy my work, I'm always looking ahead. I know that the kind of work I'm meant to do will come. Until then, I will continue to learn, grow and evolve."

As for connecting with his audience, as he reflects on his presence on social media, noting that he doesn't actively follow trends or algorithms. Instead, he focuses on authenticity. He believes that his work speaks for itself, rather than using social media to build influence. This honest approach to his career resonates with his philosophy of being an entertainer, not an influencer.

To unwind from the intensity of his professional life, he has now turned to spirituality and meditation, seeing it as a tool for staying grounded and maintaining a sense of peace amid the pressures of fame and a demanding career.

With such a mindset, it's clear that he is not just carving a path in Índian television; he's paving the way for a career that promises to transcend the medium. And while he waits for that defining moment to arrive, there's little doubt that when it does, he will be ready to take on whatever challenges lie ahead.

In a world full of fleeting trends and short-lived fame, his dedication to his craft and his belief in the power of storytelling sets him apart as one to watch in the years to come. His reflections offer valuable insights for aspiring actors and a broader audience looking to understand the complexities behind a successful career in entertainment



India beat Japan 3-0 to top league stage

PTI ■ RAJGIR (BIHAR)

efending champions India stormed into the semifinals of the Women's Asian Champions Trophy with an unbeaten record, defeating Japan 3-0 here on Sunday. Continuing her stellar form, star striker Deepika netted a

quickfire brace from penalty corners in the final quarter to seal the victory, following vice-captain Navneet Kaur's opener in the 37th minute. With this win, India topped the league stage with maximum 15 points from five matches, ahead of Olympic silver medallists

China (12 points). India will take on fourthplaced Japan in the semifinal on Tuesday, while China will play third-placed Malaysia in the other last-four game.

Deepika, the tournament's leading scorer, now boasts 10 goals, including four field goals, five penalty corners, and one penalty stroke, underscoring dominance.

In the day's other matches, Malaysia beat Thailand 2-0, while China defeated South Korea by an identical

The Indians secured their but Deepika's flick from the another penalty corner in



form of back-to-back penalty corners in the eighth minute Yu Kudo. India earned

first scoring chance in the second effort was brilliantly

the 13th minute but yet again wasted the chance. The Indians continued to to dominate and secured their and made three brilliant

fourth penalty corner in the 25th minute but once again Kudo rose to the occasion

A minute after the change of ends, Kudo again came to Japan's rescue to deny Deepika.

India eventually broke the deadlock in the 37th minute through Navneet's brilliant reverse hit to the second post.

Deepika's brilliance The Indians continued their

domination and earned three back-to-back back-to-back penalty corrners in the 47th minute and star dragflicker Deepika finally found the back of the net with a powerful low dragflick to open her account.

A minute later, the Indians secured another set piece and this time too Deepika struck again with a powerful flick into the top right corner, effectively sealing the match.

match.
Credit must also go to the Indian defence, led brilliantly by Udita and Sushila Chanu, as they didn't let the Japanese take a single shot at the Indian goal.Skipper Salima Tete, Neha and Sharmila Devi too were brilliant in the midfield, creating numerous chances for the forwardline chances for the forwardline with their runs and neat



Swiatek leads Poland comeback over Czechs to set up BJK Cup semi against Paolini's Italy

AP ■ MALAGA (SPAIN)

Iga Swiatek won in singles and doubles to lead Poland's 2-1 comeback against the Czech Republic in the Billie Jean King Cup. Poland will meet Italy in the semifinals after Jasmine Paolini likewise won her singles and doubles matches

Paolini likewise won her singles and doubles matches to lead Italy back for a 2-1 win over Japan.

Marie Bouzkova beat Magdalena Frech 6-1, 4-6, 6-4 to give the Czech Republic a 1-0 lead on the indoor hard court in Malaga's Palacio del Deportes.

The second-ranked Swiatek leveled the score after she

leveled the score after she held on for a 7-6 (7), 4-6, 7-5 win over Linda Noskova. The five-time Grand Slam winner then went back on the court after a short break to help Katarzyna Kawa beat Katerina Siniakova, the world's top-ranked doubles player, and Bouzkova 6-2, 6-

"Let's enjoy this one. For sure it was an exhausting day and some really tough matches, but I am really happy we won that last one," Swiatek said.

She added that she hadn't played doubles in three years and praised Kawa's wellplaced passing shots in the doubles lane as key to victory.

Swiatek showed no sign that she was worn down by the back-to-back matches that combined for 3 hours, 50 minutes of playing time. The Polish pair converted all four break chances and hit more winners, 29-18, than the Czechs.

Poland is seeking its first title. The Czech Republic is an 11-time champion, second only to the United States' 18 titles.

ITALY EYES SHOT AT CONSECUTIVE FINALS The fourth-ranked Paolini, a finalist at Wimbledon and the French Open, defeated

Moyuka Uchijima 6-3, 6-4 to level the tie 1-1. She then helped Sara Errani beat Shuko Aoyama and Eri Hozumi 6-3, 6-4 to seal the quarterfinal win. Japan took the early lead when Ena Shibahara

when Ena defeated Elisabetta Cocciaretto 3-6, 6-4, 6-4. Uchijima stole Paolini's first

service game. But that was only a blip in an otherwise dominant showing by the Italian. Paolini broke Uchijima four times and hit 17 forehand winners to secure the straight-set victory. In doubles, the Italians broke the Japanese four times and made just 14 unforced errors to 23 by their rivals.

"Japan is a tough cookie, as you say in English," Italy captain Tathiana Garbin said. "They played with a lot of courage so it was fun to watch this kind of level. My players, they played unbelievable doubles, so we

England by five wickets in 4th T20 'go hard' on emotional Kohli



AP ■ GROS ISLET (ST. LUCIA)

Shai Hope and Evin Lewis made half centuries in a rapid 136-run opening stand been losing some early as the West Indies wickets so the main thing completed a record run was to try and understand chase to beat England by five wickets in the fourth Twenty20 international.

Hope made 54 from 24 balls and Lewis made 68 from 31 balls, with seven sixes and four fours, in a partnership which lasted only 9.1 overs but enabled the West Indies to reach a winning target of 219 on Saturday.
The West Indies' confident

start was shaken when Lewis, Hope and Nicholas Pooran fell to consecutive balls in the 10th over. But captain Roston Chase put the innings back on track with 38 from 23 balls and Sherfane Rutherford competed the chase with successive sixes and an over

to spare. There were 32 sixes in the match, 16 from each team. "We had to assess the

conditions. That's one thing we struggled with in the first three games in the power play," Hope said. "We've what was the best remedy, to understand the conditions and come out of the power play on top."
England already had won

the five-match series after winning the first three matches by eight wickets, seven wickets and three wickets respectively.
Every match in the series

and in the previous three-match one-day series has been won by the team winning the toss.

After being sent in, Phil Salt and Jacob Bethell who both have deep roots in the Caribbean made swift half centuries as England made 218-5 to equal the highest first innings total at the Darren Sammy Stadium. Bethell who was born and raised in Barbados made an

unbeaten 62 from 32 balls

while Salt who was born in Wales but raised in Barbados made 55 from 35 balls at the

top of the order.
Will Jacks (25), Jos Buttler (38) and Sam Curran (24) also contributed to England's innings of 218-5.
The West Indies made a speedy start in pursuit of that total. Hope reached his half century from 23 balls, the West Indies were 69-0 after the power play and their hundred came up in sply 7.3 evers only 7.3 overs.

only 7.3 overs.
Lewis was more watchful than Hope at first but when he began to hit out it was with enormous power. He reached his half century from 26 balls and the longest of his sixes traveled 105 meters.

The century partnership between Hope and Lewis came from only 45 balls and had impregnable until Lewis played an awkward shot to a ball from Rehan Ahmed which he skewed to Dan Mousley.

Hope was run out next ball for the second time in consecutive matches and Pooran was bowled first ball as the West Indies slumped to 136-3.

Powell restored some of the early momentum with his 38 before falling lbw to John Turner in his T20 debut. The West Indies needed 21 from the the last three overs with five wickets in hand, then 15 from two.

After edging towards the target in singles, Rutherford finally found the middle and blasted consecutive sixes from Mousely to clinch the

West Indies chase down 219 to beat | McGrath urges Australia to

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

 $P_{\text{feels Australia have the}}^{\text{ace legend Glenn McGrath}}$ "ammunition" to target an "emotional" Virat Kohli, who will be under pressure if he gets off to a poor start at the five-match Test series for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, starting in Perth from November 22.

India have won the last four Test series against Australia, including two Down Under. However, they head into the much-anticipated five-Test assignment on the back of a 0-3 series whitewash at the hands of New Zealand at

"Without a doubt, especially after coming off a 3-0 loss



against New Zealand, you've got plenty of ammunition to back yourself up," Fox Cricket quoted McGrath as saying on CODE Sports'.

"So put the pressure on them and see if they're up for it," he

Kohli, who has been India's batting mainstay for over a

With the injured Shubman Gill out of contention from the first Test and skipper the first Test and skipper Rohit Sharma's participation also in doubt, Kohli will feel the pressure of leading the batting line up.

However, the 36-year-old has a penchant of eking out his best in Australia. Kohli has an impressive average of 54.08 in

a mere 22.72.

impressive average of 54.08 in the four Australia tours he has been a part of.

decade, has struggled with form in Test cricket recently.

In the six matches he's played this year, he has averaged just

And McGrath warned that targeting Kohli aggressively could also lift him, especially if he manages to keep his

Need to be proactive against Ashwin, and not allow him to settle: Smith "Ashwin and I have had some good

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australian batting talisman Steve Smith wants to adopt a proactive approach against Ravichandran Ashwin in the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy to avoid his struggles against the Indian spinner during the 2020-21

Ashwin had nicked off Smith thrice during that rubber, and later in 2023 the Indian off-spinner dismissed the Aussie twice as he could only make 22 runs against his old foe.

"I don't like getting out to off-spin in Australia. But he's also a very good bowler and he came in with some decent plans. There were a couple of occasions where he got on top of me," Smith told the Sydney Morning Herald. "But then I got on top of him at the SCG when I was a bit more proactive (Smith made 131 and 81 at Sydney). So, that's key for me. Just be proactive against him and not let him settle and bowl the way



he wants to," he added. Ashwin's Test bowling average stands at a modest 42.15 in Australia compared to his home average of 21.57. Smith hoped to land the first blow on

the 38-year-old to gain an early upper hand in the five-match series, beginning at Perth from November 22.

The Tamil Nadu man recently said that he had worked out Smith after some initial struggles against him.

'I think I've kind of figured out what he does or how he bats, I've had an edge over him. I've had the wood over him," Ashwin had told Channel Seven. But Smith did not read too much into it.

battles over the years. When you have five matches, if someone gets on top of another player, they could have 10 innings against them.
"So, you're facing those mental

challenges each game, and if it goes one way early, they will feel under pressure against that player. There's nowhere to hide in five games like there are in a two-game series," said the New South Wales man.

The 35-year-old, who is 315 shy of 10,000 Test runs, will bat at his favoured No. 4 slot against India after opening the innings for four Tests earlier this year. It was not a successful experiment and Smith hoped to hit the ground running early from a position where he made runs at an average in excess of 60.

It always makes your summer better when you start well. It gives you a lot of confidence. It's about not overthinking things. It's playing each ball as it comes and keeping it simple.

pressure one service game after another but somehow

managed to keep holding. Fritz got ahead early in the tiebreaker and finished Zverev off with an audacious

inside-out forehand winner

Fritz finished with 15 aces to

Zverev's 10 in a match that

"I felt like statistically and

shot-wise, my level maybe

was even higher than his

until the important moments. That's where I

on his first match point.

last 2 hours, 20 minutes.

US Open runner-up Fritz back in another big final and faces Sinner again for ATP Finals crown

AP ■ TURIN (ITALY)

 $T_{\ make\ reaching\ big\ finals\ a\ habit.\ He\ feels\ like\ he}^{a\ like\ he}$ belongs among the very best

players in tennis, too. The American followed his runner-up finish at the U.S. Open by beating Alexander Zverev 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (3) on Saturday to play for the trophy at the ATP Finals. "I have believed that I

belong, that I'm one of the best players," Fritz said. "It's not results-based. It's more I can feel how I'm playing. This week is huge."
In Sunday's final, Fritz will

will face top-ranked Jannik Sinner — the player he lost to in the U.S. Open final. Sinner also beat Fritz in straight sets in the group stage this week.

Sinner advanced with a rapid 6-1, 6-2 win over Casper Ruud.

Fritz became the first American finalist since James Blake lost the 2006 final to Roger Federer. The last American to win the elite eight-man event was Pete mark an American sweep of Sampras, who beat Andre the season-ending events Fritz will finish year at career

Agassi in 1999.

"I trust my game and I trust my level and I don't feel nearly as uncomfortable in these situations anymore because I've been playing the top guys at big events a lot lately," Fritz said. "I'm getting more comfortable in the moment. I'm really, really

confident in my game."
Fritz upbeat after loss to SinnerFritz came away encouraged from his 6-4, 6-4 loss to Sinner on Tuesday.

"I felt much more comfortable from the baseline. ... I had chances to break him in both sets," Fritz said. "He had an equal amount of chances, and he took his. He played the big points better than I did. It didn't feel anywhere near as one-sided as the Open."

Sinner noted that Fritz "played a great match."
"The difference was just a

few points. Tomorrow will be very similar. ... But finals are always different than group matches."

Fritz trying to match GauffIf Fritz wins the trophy, it will

after Coco Gauff won the WTA Finals last week. Fritz's run in New York made

him the first American man to reach a Grand Slam singles final in 15 years. He's playing at the ATP Finals for the second time. On debut two years ago, he beat Rafael Nadal in his opener and made it to the semifinals, losing to Novak Djokovic. "It's awesome to come back and already go a step further," Fritz said. "I'm all about always trying to do better than the year before." At the start of the week, Fritz told The Associated Press his "career has always been a very steady progression and just improving a little bit each vear." Fritz has Zverev's numberIt

Fritz's fourth consecutive victory over Zverev, who replaced Carlos Alcaraz at No. 2 in the rankings this week.

"He's an uncomfortable player for me." Zverev said. "It's no secret."

Fritz also beat Zverev at Wimbledon and the U.S.

highFritz already was assured of finishing the year in the top five for the first time and he'll rise to a career-high No. 4 Monday. Zverev has seen Fritz's improvement up close

especially on one key stroke: "His forehand used to break down quite a lot. ... I feel like the ratio is a lot more towards winners now."

It was a matchup of big servers between the 6-foot-5 (1.96-meter) Fritz and the 6-

foot-6 (1.98-meter) Zverev, and when Fritz broke Zverev for 4-2 in the first set, it marked the first time that Zverev lost a service game in four matches in Turin. Eventually, though, the match turned into a physical

duel from the baseline. Fritz rallied from 0-40 and held his serve for 3-2 in the third after a nine-minute game full of long rallies – winning one such exchange that lasted 30 strokes.

kind of blew it," Zverev said. "This one will hurt more than the other few." Doping case hangs over SinnerSinner is playing at home for the first time since it was announced before his U.S. Open title that he tested positive in two separate drug tests this year. A decision to clear Sinner of wrongdoing was appealed by the World Anti-Doping Agency in September and a final ruling in the case is expected next year.

Last year, Sinner lost the final to Djokovic, who Fritz was then under withdrew injured this year.

Vijayawada | Monday November 18, 2024 *'Devaki Nandana Vasudeva* and *Murari* are poles apart,' clarifies Arjun Jandyala

SURESH KAVIRAYANI sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

uperstar Mahesh Babu's nephew Ashok Galla returns to nephew Ashok Galla returns to the big screen with his second film, Devaki Nandana Vasudeva, directed by Arjun Jandyala of Guna 369 fame. Scheduled for release on November 22, the film has already created buzz, especially after the launch of its intriguing trailer, which hints at a mythological

When asked about the apparent trend of mythological themes in Tollywood, Arjun Jandyala clarified, "It's not about following a trend. Prashanth Varma gave this story before his film HanuMan was released. Initially, I was supposed to work on a film for producer Balakrishna, but during that time, Prashanth Varma also narrated this story to Ashok Galla. Ashok liked it and we decided to pro-

ceed with this project first."

Jandyala further explained that Prashanth Varma was impressed by his debut film *Guna 369* and had trusted him to direct this story. "We understand each other well, and that synergy helped bring the story to life beautifully," he shared.

Regarding the film's mythology-inspired backdrop, he elaborated, "The trailer clearly indicates references to Krishna and Kamsa from ancient mythology. For instance, the villain's death being foretold to occur at the hands of his sister's third son is just one element. However, the movie has many surprises in store for the audience."

Reflecting on the four-year gap since his first film, *Guna 369* (2019), he attributed it to external factors. "The pandemic caused delays for everyone. pandemic caused delays for everyone. I've been working on this project for the past year and a half, so it's not really a gap as much as a dedicated focus on making this film."

He also revealed making a few changes to the original story provided by Prashanth Varma. "I had some ideas and discussed them with Prashanth who supported and agreed."

Prashanth, who supported and agreed to the changes. He was pleasantly surprised when he saw the final film."

One of the movie's standout features is a special idol of Lord Krishna integral to the story. "The idol's connection to the narrative is crucial and the sequence featuring it is sure to be a highlight," said Jandyala. While visual effects play a role, he assured that they are natural and do not overpower the storytelling.

After the trailer's release, comparisons were drawn to Mahesh Babu's classic *Murari*. Jandyala addressed this, saying, "Although both films involve supernatural elements, the concepts and stories are entirely different. In *Devaki Nandana Vasudeva*, the protagonist faces life-threatening obstacles and how he overcomes them is the crux of the narrative. The story seamlessly blends action, emotion and commercial elements."

The film was shot in Vizianagaram The film was shot in Vizianagaram near Visakhapatnam, a choice driven by the story's requirements. "There is a specific temple in Vizianagaram that provides the perfect backdrop and a fresh visual experience for the audience," he explained.

Miss India Manasa Varanasi makes her debut in this film as the female lead. Jandyala praised her perfor-mance, saying, "Her role is pivotal and she has portrayed a strong character with perfection. She was the ideal choice for the role." The filmmaker admitted that working on a story provided by a successful director like Prashanth Varma was a challenge. "It was a huge responsibility, but I took it as a challenge and worked hard to ensure the film's success," he concluded confidently.

ashok galla and **MANASA VARANASI** ARE SET TO PLAY THE LEAD ROLES IN DEVAKI NANDANA *Vasudeva*. Ahead OF ITS RELEASE, **DIRECTOR ARJUN** JANDYALA **DISCUSSES THE** FILM, COMPARISIONS WITH **MAHESH BABU'S** *Murari* and the **CHALLENGES HE FACED DURING ITS MAKING.**





Maha Sandram promises intense action drama

generation filmmakers experiment with fresh and unique subjects. Joining this trend is Maha Sandram, an action drama featuring Navneet Raina in the lead role. The film is being produced by Seshu Ravella and Karthikeya V, with the story, screenplay and direction also helmed by Karthikeya V.

The project was formally launched with a puja ceremony attended by Damodara Prasad, Secretary of the Telugu Film Chamber of Commerce, along with prominent directors N. Shankar and Samudra. Speaking at the event, Karthikeya expressed his excitement for the

he Telugu film industry continues to wit-film, saying, "It's an action film with a lot of will introduce new artists and technicians, adding, "The story has some interesting twists and turns and we will start the shoot soon."

Maha Sandram is being made as a bilingual film in Telugu and Hindi, catering to a broader audience. Regarding the title, the director shared, "For this story, the title *Maha Sandram* is apt. I will reveal more details about the film in the coming days."

With production set to begin soon, Maha

Sandram promises an engaging blend of action, emotion and surprises, making it a project to

Hombale Films sets release date for Kantara: Chapter 1

with the festive occasion of Dussehra. As Hombale Films gears up for its next pan-India

The much-awaited cinematic extravaganza, Kantara: Chapter 1 is all set to hit theatres on October 2, 2025, aligning of Kantara. Renowned for delivering grand and authentic storytelling, Hombale Films has spared no effort in



The film's production has brought the historic Kadamba Empire to life in Kundapur, featuring meticulously detailed architecture and immersive settings that promise to transport audiences to a bygone era of valor, culture and mysticism.

Leading this ambitious project, actor-director Rishab Shetty has poured immense effort into his role. To bring authenticity to his character, he trained extensively in Kalaripayattu, one of the world's oldest martial arts rooted in Kerala's rich tradition. His determination to master the form ensures his portrayal embodies resilience and cultural depth.

The Kantara franchise initially captivated audiences by introducing the world to the vibrant folklore of the Konkan region. With its compelling narrative, stunning visuals, and heartfelt performances, the film resonated deeply with viewers across borders, becoming a global phenomenon. Its authentic depiction of local traditions and rich storytelling established a dedicated fanbase and set the stage for this highly anticipated chapter.

With the announcement of its release date, excitement for Kantara: Chapter 1 has reached new heights.

'Teaser is just a glimpse, don't form negative assumptions'

narma and Aishwarya Sharma take the lead in *Drinker* Sai, a film with the tagline "Brand of Bad Boys." Produced by Basavaraju Srinivas and directed by Kiran Tirumalasetti, the story is said to be inspired by real-life events. The film is gearing up for a grand theatrical release soon. In a unique promotional move, the teaser was launched by celebrities portraying everyday roles such as an auto driver, electrician, AC mechanic, motor mechanic,

Speaking about the film, director Kiran Tirumalasetti explained, "The protagonist's name is Sai and he drinks excessively, which is why we named the film Drinker Sai. The teaser contains a few curse words, but these are commonly used in real life. Those who might form a negative impression after watching the teaser will change their perspective once they see the full movie. I'm confident the audience will appreciate it."

Aishwarya Sharma, the female lead, expressed her gratitude to the director for entrusting her with the role. "I'm thrilled to will touch your hearts with its engaging love story," she said Dharma, who plays the protagonist, credited his parents for their encouragement and support. "I've reached this stage because of the motivation provided by my parents," he shared. Addressing concerns about the teaser, he added. "The teaser is just a glimpse of the film, so don't form negative assumptions. Drinker Sai is a heartfelt love story with many elements that will entertain and resonate with everyone.



Dolly Dhananjaya on his intense role in Zebra



olly Dhananjaya, best known for his portrayal of Jali Reddy in *Pushpa*, is now set to play one of the lead characters in the upcoming film *Zebra*, alongside Satya Dev. Directed by Eswar Karthik, the film is scheduled to release on November 22 in Telugu and four other languages.

saying, "Eswar narrated the story in a way that's easy for everyone to understand. When he first shared the script with me, I was immediately intrigued. It was a well-bound script."

The actor also highlighted the film's entertainment quotient. "While the story is intense, it also includes comedy and other

four other languages.

Speaking about his role,
Dhananjaya said, "I played a
powerful and intense gangster
character." He explained that the film features two interconnected worlds: one centered around a bank and the other around gangsters. "Director Eswar crafted the story based on some true incidents. It delves into financial crimes within the banking system, something we've all heard about but rarely understand in detail. This film explores how such crimes occur," he elaborated.

Dhananjaya praised the director's storytelling approach,

also includes comedy and other entertaining elements. The director has skillfully blended everything into a screenplay-driven film," he shared.

on working with co-star Satya Dev, Dhananjaya said, "He's a very good friend of mine, and I had a great time

working with him."

Expressing his gratitude towards the Telugu audience, Dhananjaya said, "The Telugu audience has embraced me ever since *Pushpa*. Jali Reddy remains a memorable role for me. I hope to continue receiving good opportunities in Telugu cinema in the future."

PUSHPA 2 FEVER: #WHYPATNA TAKES OVER SOCIAL MEDIA

Dushpa 2: The Rule, one of the most anticipated films of the ward. ed films of the year, has kept audiences on the edge of their seats since its announcement. With the electrifying teaser and music already setting the stage for the film's massive arrival, the excitement has only intensified with the announcement of a grand trailer launch event on November

What makes this launch even more intriguing is the location, Patna. The makers have chosen the historic Gandhi Maidan as the venue for the trailer's big reveal, expecting around 10,000 fans to attend the event. This choice of Patna has left fans and netizens buzzing, prompting the trending hashtag #WhyPatna across social media as people speculate about the reason behind selecting this particular city for such a monumental event.

Ahead of the trailer release, the makers dropped a striking new poster, along with an ominous caption that reads: "HUMONGOUS DESTRUCTION LOADING". The trailer will be released today at 6:03 PM, and the event at Gandhi Maidan will begin from 5 PM onwards, with fans able to tune in via a live stream on YouTube.

Directed by Sukumar, Pushpa 2: The Rule stars Allu Arjun, Rashmika Mandanna, and Fahadh Faasil, and is produced by Mythri Movie Makers. The film is set to release on December 5, 2024 and spectacle, it's poised to make a massive impact at the box office. with its high-octane storyline and larger-than-life



Chay & Sobhita's wedding card takes internet by storm

Akkineni Naga Chaitanya is all set to marry Sobhita Dhulipala on December 4 at Annapurna Studios, Hyderabad. The couple has started sending out wedding invitations and gifts to family members and close friends and their wedding card has now gone viral on social media.

The wedding card prominently mentions both sets of Naga Chaitanya's grandparents—Akkineni Nageswara Rao and Annapurna and Daggubati Rama Naidu and Rajeshwari. It also acknowledges his parents, listing his mother Lakshmi and her hus-



band Sarath, as well as his emony, or Muhurat, is set for 8:13 PM, followed by dinner. father Nagarjuna and stepmother Amala. The auspi-Interestingly, the bride's full cious time for the wedding cername is written as Lakshmi



Sobhita on the card.

Naga Chaitanya was previously married to actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu in

2017, but the couple parted ways in 2021 after a few years of marriage. Following their divorce, Chaitanya began dat-ing actress Sobhita Dhulipala and now the two are ready to tie the knot.

On the professional front, Naga Chaitanya's upcoming film Thandel is all set for release on February 7, 2025. Meanwhile, Sobhita is busy with multiple projects, including web series and

The wedding cards have become a trending topic online, with fans eagerly discussing the details of the much-awaited ceremony.