

BRS's social media activists are uncultured and they are ignorant of the difference between elder sister, younger sister and mother. As a younger brother, I offered a handloom garland to Minister Surekha after getting her permission. When Prime Minister Modi came also, I offered such a garland. As a brother, I am deeply sorry for the insult suffered by my sister. The details of trolls have been collected and a complaint has been filed with the police

-Ragunandan Rao, BJP MLA TG P2

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Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah rules out resignation

GOYAL MEETS WARBURG PINCUS, BLACKSTONE; SEEKS INVESTMENTS

Swag is one of the top films in my career:

SREE VISHNU

FLOOD RELIEF FROM CENTRE

Only Rs. 416.80cr for TG

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) released Rs 416.80 crore to flood-affected states. This allocation includes Rs 1492 crore for Maharashtra, Rs 1036 crore for Andhra Pradesh, Rs 716 crore for Assam, Rs 655.60 crore for Bihar and Rs 600 crore for Gujarat.

These states suffered widespread damage due to the monsoons, and the financial assistance aims to alleviate the hardships faced by the people.



HC issues notice to HYDRAA, DSP, MRO

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Justice K. Lakshman of the Telangana High Court on Tuesday issued notices to officials of the Revenue Department and the police regarding a demolition carried out at Ameenpur on September 22.

K. Durga Vallabha Rao filed the case in court. The respondents are Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA) Commissioner AV Ranganath, Sangareddy Collector Valluri Kranthil, Ameenpur Tehsiladar Radha, Patancheru DSP

Ravinder Reddy, HYDRAA DSP Srinivas, HYDRAA SI Mohan, District Fire Officer Papa Rao and Town planning official Ram Reddy. Continued on Page 5



DON'T MISS...

Sridhar Babu for roadmap to...

Advising the creation of a roadmap to increase the number of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) from 6.4 million to 7.5 million, IT Minister D Sridhar Babu directed officials to begin the land acquisition process for establishing mini-industrial parks in all Assembly segments for women in SHGs.

-PAGE: 3

Onion prices bring tears to ...

There is a four-fold increase in onion prices, which sell at Rs 60 a kg, hitting hard the middle classes. In fact, a kg of onions was sold in the range of Rs 15-20 in July. The increased onion prices have a dampening effect on hotel industry too.

-PAGE: 4

India's power consumption at...

India's power consumption remained almost flat at 141.36 billion units (BU) year-on-year in September, mainly due to the above-normal rainfall across the country, which reduced the use of cooling appliances like air conditioners and desert coolers.

-PAGE: 8

Ashwin Ties Muralitharan Man...

Indian off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has etched his name in the records book once again, equalling the most number of Player of the Series in Test cricket's history, with his stellar performances in Bangladesh series.

-SPORTS

TG to become green hydrogen hub : Bhatti

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana is set to emerge as a leader in Green Hydrogen production with a collaborative venture between Japan's Yamanashi Green Hydrogen Company and the state. Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu who handles Energy also, had announced plans to establish large-scale green hydrogen plants and battery energy storage systems (BESS) across Telangana during his visit to Japan.

Chief Engineer Kunugi explained that the entire process is powered by solar energy, making the hydrogen produced entirely eco-friendly. Impressed by Yamanashi's solutions, Bhatti called for immediate preparations to set up similar Green Hydrogen plants in Telangana. He emphasized the state's abundant water resources and ideal conditions for solar energy production, making it

Continued on Page 5

A Dasara gift Telangana farmers

Centre hikes price of palm oil to Rs 17,043 a tonne: Tummala

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Dasara festival came early to the families of palm oil farmers as the Centre has hiked the price of palm oil to Rs 17,043 a tonne, Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageshwara Rao said. Tummala had recently asked Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan to support domestic palm oil farmers by re-imposing the import duty on crude palm oil so that it would encourage farmers to take up oil palm cultivation in the state.

Accordingly, the Centre recently issued an order increasing the import duty on crude palm oil from 5.5% to 27.5%. Due to this, the price of crude palm oil increased from Rs 14,392 to Rs 17,043. The new prices will be effective from October. Now farmers will get an additional Rs 12 crore.

The Minister said that the lifting of duty on the import of crude palm oil earlier not only disappointed farmers but also had a negative

impact on farmers who wanted to cultivate oil palm. Keeping this in mind, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who recently visited TG was asked to take appropriate action on the matter. On September 13, as per the initiative of the minister, the Centre issued an order increasing the import duty on crude palm oil from 5.5% to 27.5%. At present, 44,444 acres of palm

oil plantations in the state produce 2.80 lakh tonnes of oil palm per annum. This increase in prices will benefit 9,366 oil palm farmers.

Continued on Page 5

'BJP has no right to protest for farmers'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageshwara Rao said that it is a shame on the part of BJP leaders to stage Rythu Haamila Deeksha. He said that it is a wonder that the BJP is speaking about farmers and added that the BJP has no right to stage a dharna for farmers.

Speaking to the media at the secretariat on Tuesday, Tummala

said the BJP is the party behind the deaths of dozens of farmers who protested against black laws.

He said the Congress government waived farm loans amounting to Rs 17,000 crore in just six months after coming to power. However, the BJP, which did not waive farm loans across the nation, is criticising the Congress government saying that it did not implement the loan

Continued on Page 5



Telangana gets TIOL award

2

Ponguleti expresses displeasure over slow LRS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Revenue, Housing, and Information & Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy expressed dissatisfaction over the slow progress in regularisation of unauthorised layouts (LRS) and instructed collectors to expedite pending applications. He emphasised that many applicants have been waiting for over four years, and the current pace of resolving cases is insufficient.

During a video conference with district collectors on Tuesday, the Telangana government is set to provide a digital health profile card to every family in the State, irrespective of economic status, according to the Minister.

The Minister emphasised that the

digital family card will include a unique number for each household and will ensure seamless benefits to citizens without any errors in data collection. The Minister, along with Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari, discussed various matters including digital health cards, the Urban Development Authority (UDA), regularisation of unauthorised layouts (LRS), double bedroom houses and paddy procurement.

He directed the officials to ensure meticulous collection of family data in the 238 pilot areas selected from 119 constituencies, with door-to-door surveys scheduled between October 3 and 7. Special officers from the RDO and Zonal Commissioner levels will oversee the implementation of the project.

Musi riverfront ups political heat

Minister makes light of BRS claims

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Industries and IT Minister D. Sridhar Babu has dismissed the claims made by BRS leaders alleging that the Congress government is planning to spend Rs 1.5 lakh crore on the Musi Riverfront Development Project.

He clarified that the opposition is making exaggerated claims and creating fear among the public.

"Whether it is Rs 50 crore, Rs 100 crore, Rs 150 crore, Rs 1000 crore, Rs 50,000 crore or Rs 1 lakh crore, they are



making estimates of Rs 1.5 lakh crore and engaging in spreading lies. "We don't know whether it will be Rs 1, 2 or Rs 10 crore. Like they spent Rs 1 lakh crore on Kaleshwaram, they are under the impression that we will spend Rs 1.5 lakh crore," he said.

Continued on Page 5

CM creating chaos: KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS Working President KT Rama Rao has sharply criticised Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and accused him of creating chaos in Hyderabad during Dussehra and the Bathukamma festival.

KTR was

interacting with the victims of the Musi River floods in Tulasi Nagar in Amberpet. He said the poor are living with the constant fear of their homes getting demolished. He said that Revanth Reddy is wreaking vengeance on Hyderabad's residents as they did not vote for the Congress.

Continued on Page 5

Won't remain silent if Cong loots public funds: Maheshwar

BJP asks Govt to release White Paper on loan waiver

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bharatiya Janata Legislative Party (BJLP) leader Alleti Maheshwar Reddy said that the BJP would not stand by idly if the Congress government looted public funds. He said that the BJP will continue to question every act of corruption with evidence.

Addressing the 24-hour BJP Rythu Haamila Sadhana Deeksha, Maheshwar said that the BJP is a pro-farmer party and added that anarchy has gripped the state. "The Chief Minister is behaving like Gajini. The CM cheated all sections of people during his 9-



month rule. The CM is working here to pay tax in Delhi. It is not clear whether the CM is for Telangana or for paying tax in Delhi," he said. Maheshwar said the Congress government is collecting money in the name of HYDRAA

and sending it to New Delhi. Musi cleansing is intended only to fill pockets. The entire history of the Congress is corruption. The Congress collected crores in the last nine months in the name of R-tax, B-tax, RRR tax etc.

RS 10.60 CRORE CYBER FRAUD CASE

TG cops name Bombay cop as accused

CHITHALURI REVANTH revanth.chithaluri@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Cyber Security Bureau (TGCSB) registered a criminal case and named one Navajoth Simmi, the Bombay Police, SI Ravi Kumar and others as the accused.

The police registered a case under Section 66D of the IT Act and BNS Sections 318(4), 319(2), 307, 351(2), 127(2), 338, 336(3), 340(2) and 61(2) against the accused.

The accused claimed to be the Bombay Police and defrauded Rs 10.61 crore from an old couple in Hyderabad. The First Information Report (FIR) named Bombay Police as accused number 2.

The complainant said that on July

8, 2024, he received a call from the 'Bombay SBI Customer Care.' They informed me that someone from Bandra West Mumbai - 400050 had opened a bank account on May 9, 2024, by using my Aadhaar number

The complainant said that Navajoth Simmi, claiming to be an IPS officer, was handling the case. She kept on following us every two hours as visitors came to our house and sent their photographs and continuously threatened us with imprisonment

and was trying to withdraw an amount of Rs 1,09,609 with a credit card. I was asked to file a complaint with the Bombay Police and they

provided a phone number also. "When I called that number the police said I was involved in providing my personal information to the main suspect Suresh Anurag to open an 'illegal' bank account in the

IPS officer, was handling the case. She kept on following us every two hours as visitors came to our house and sent their photographs and continuously threatened us with imprisonment.

Canara Bank for money laundering," says the FIR.

The complainant said that Navajoth Simmi, claiming to be an

IPS officer, was handling the case. She kept on following us every two hours as visitors came to our house and sent their photographs and continuously threatened us with imprisonment.

The fraudsters asked the victims to send money to them as the bankers were involved in the money laundering case to prevent the detection of national secret regulations.

"I believed their words. I and my wife were completely traumatised by their intimidating words and we were digitally arrested. We followed their instructions and I broke all our fixed deposits existing in my name in the bank and transferred them to different banks as instructed by them," said the complainant in the FIR.

Jagan must revitalize YSRCP; prove he is down, but not out!

Even a supremely confident political leader may become diffident if his party is decimated in the elections. Andhra Pradesh's former chief minister and YSRCP president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, given his party's drubbing in the recent Assembly elections, may not look diffident; yet it is high time he took concrete steps to galvanize the party again.

The issues that bedevil Jagan and his party include sacrilege of Tirumala Srivari laddu and the narrow-minded response to the recent floods that devastated Vijayawada, among others. Jagan's apparent unwillingness to sign the faith declaration for



PIN POINT

visiting Tirumala has assumed added significance, considering that other prominent personalities like former president Abdul Kalam and former Congress president Sonia Gandhi have signed the mandatory declaration in the past when they visited Tirumala temple.

Jagan has cancelled his visit, leaving common people wondering why he backed down. As for the laddu issue, the Supreme Court has just issued orders asking rulers to "keep Gods out of politics". This is also the least that common people expect from netas. YSRCP has sought the inter-

Months after defeat in the Assembly polls, YSRCP, left without even the tag of principal opposition in AP, is yet to be revitalized by Jagan to present itself as an alternative political force that is alive.

vention of the Court (instead of SIT's probe) and has not demanded a CBI enquiry into the issue alleged desecration of Srivari laddu.

Likewise, with regard to floods, YSRCP preferred to highlight the two-kilometre

retaining wall constructed during Jagan's rule to protect people from floods of River Krishna in the Krishna lanka area of Vijayawada city. Considering that the devastation caused by floods of Budameru has been significant,



M D RATNA KUMAR
Senior Journalist

it may not be appropriate for the party to highlight that one point. It may be mentioned here that the VI Nizam of

Hyderabad princely state Mir Mahabub Ali Khan had taken great corrective measures after the devastating floods of river Musi on 28 September, 1908. The reservoirs then constructed on both sides of river Musi in the limits of Hyderabad are still capable of preventing floods.

Months after defeat in the Assembly polls, YSRCP, left without even the tag of principal opposition in AP, is yet to be revitalized by Jagan to present itself as an alternative political force that is alive. The legacy of late Dr. YS Rajasekhara Reddy helped his son Jagan a lot in building an alternative to both then ruling and opposition parties,

Congress and TDP respectively in 2011, after he had decided to part ways with the Congress, with whose blessings his father could become chief minister after a long wait of 23 years. Jagan chose a different path to become the chief minister of residual AP post bifurcation.

Today, the party's cadre is missing Jagan's enthusiasm in rebuilding the organization. The cadre is rather confused over the future of the party, given the desertions of public representatives and senior leaders. They are not able to digest the exit of leaders with the party head making no efforts to retain them.

Given the spree of desertions, YSRCP may lose its sheen in the

national political arena, particularly with the exit of its Rajya Sabha members. YSRCP is losing its strength in the Upper House of Parliament.

No state level meeting has been convened so far to review the party's defeat in the Assembly elections. This also means no opportunity is being given to grassroots-level workers to interact with the party leadership.

In such trying circumstances, YS Jaganmohan Reddy is yet to start the next phase of his political journey by learning lessons from the recent past. It is high time he galvanized the party and positioned himself as an effective leader who is down but not out.

MUSI CLEAN-UP

Govt to appoint panel with BRS leaders: Venkat

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Declaring that the BRS is 'spitting venom' on the people of Nalgonda, R&B Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy said that the people of Nalgonda will have to fight those who oppose the Musi clean-up project just as they fought the Razakars and Seemandhras.

Stating that the Congress government will appoint a Committee for Musi cleaning and will provide a place to BRS leaders in that committee, Venkat said that it is painful that KCR, who had read 70,000 books, did not know about the problems of the Musi.

KTR was educated in the US and he should know about the pollution in the Musi. Harish



Rao is inciting people again, he said.

He said that the responsibility of the Congress government is to provide primary education and medicare to the people. The Kalvakuntla family, who thought that they could rule the state like the Nizam who ruled Telangana for seven generations, found that its dreams were shattered and so they are speaking against the Congress government, he said.

Speaking to the media on Tuesday at the Ministers' Quarters, Venkat asked why BRS leaders KCR, KTR and Harish Rao are angry with the people of Nalgonda.

He said that the BRS leaders were speaking inhumanly and suggested that they should learn about Musi pollution from their former Officer on Special Duty (OSD).

Venkat said that the people of Nalgonda, Ranga Reddy and Hyderabad districts were going through hell while the KCR family enjoyed life.

Lashing out at BRS leaders for branding Congress rule as bulldozer rule, Venkat said that Congress rule is people's rule. He said the government will clean up the Musi River as well as beautify it.



Mallu Ravi asks KCR to respond on Musi clean-up project

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress's Nagarkurnool MP, Mallu Ravi, demanded that Opposition leader K. Chandrasekhar Rao should speak on HYDRAA and the Musi clean-up issue.

"Why did the government give Cabinet rank to KCR? Is it to sleep in his farmhouse? KTR has been saying that corruption took place in the Musi clean-up project even though the DPR has not been prepared, work has not started and money has not been paid. The Congress stands to gain if the BRS continues its campaign of lies," Mallu Ravi said.

He said that KCR appoint-

ed a committee on Musi clean-up then but it could not do its job and people know the reasons for that. However, Revanth is developing Hyderabad by launching HYDRAA and the Musi clean-up project even though the government has no money.

Declaring that the BRS and KTR are spreading lies about the six guarantees, he asked KCR to give his suggestions on the Musi project. He said that KCR demolished the secretariat and built a new one in the name of beautification but that did not prove useful to the people. However, the Musi clean-up project is something useful for the public, he said.

Raghunandan lashes out at BRS social media activists, warns them of criminal cases

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Declaring that the BRS's social media warriors are uncultured and that they do not appreciate the differences between an elder sister, younger sister and mother, the BJP's Medak MP, M. Raghunandan Rao, said that as a younger brother he stands by the government has no money.

Declaring that the BRS and KTR are spreading lies about the six guarantees, he asked KCR to give his suggestions on the Musi project. He said that KCR demolished the secretariat and built a new one in the name of beautification but that did not prove useful to the people. However, the Musi clean-up project is something useful for the public, he said.

mother, elder sister and younger sister. As a younger brother, I offered a handloom garland to Surekha after get-



ting her permission. When Prime Minister Modi came, I offered such a garland. The BRS spread lies regarding this. As a brother, I am deeply sorry

for the pain caused to my sister. Those who posted this will be dragged to court. There is a photo of Harish Rao and KCR on the person's DP. Are BRS leaders having no control over their social media warriors? If those who post offensive material are yours hand them over to the police. Details of the trolls have been collected and a complaint has been filed with the police," Raghunandan said.

He said that he had offered the handloom garland to Surekha to bring handloom weavers' problems to her attention.

TG bags Bronze Award for tax reforms

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana continues to set the standard for governance and innovation, bagging the Bronze Award at the TIOL National Taxation Awards 2024 for its best practices and reforms in indirect taxes and commercial taxes. This recognition marks a proud moment for the state, highlighting its leadership in revolutionizing tax administration with bold, forward-thinking reforms.

Telangana's best practices have transformed tax systems, creating a seamless, transparent, and efficient process that benefits both businesses and the public. The state's innovative use of technology has made tax filings smoother and more accessible, reducing bureaucracy and ensuring quicker processing times. These reforms have not only streamlined compliance but also encouraged voluntary tax par-

ticipation, boosting revenue and making Telangana a business-friendly hub.

At the heart of these reforms lies Telangana's commitment to fairness and transparency, ensuring that every Rupee is accounted for, and every citizen benefits from a robust tax system. From digitized platforms to simplified tax returns, Telangana's approach is a blueprint for other states aiming to modernize their financial governance.

BRS govt changed RRR alignment to save Harish's lands: Mynampally

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Senior Congress leader Mynampally Hanumanth Rao said the BRS government changed the alignment of the Regional Ring Road (RRR) to save the lands of BRS MLA T. Harish Rao.

Mynampally asked the Congress government to change the alignment and ensure that the RRR goes through the lands of Harish. He warned Chief Minister Revanth Reddy that he would stage a dharna in front of the Chief Minister's residence in case the government doesn't change the RRR alignment.

Speaking to the media after visiting Mallanna Sagar land ostees at Gajwel on Tuesday, he asked why the BRS did not pay ex-gratia to Mallanna Sagar victims.

Mynampally said the BRS government vacated some villages to ensure that KCR could go to his farmhouse. BRS leaders killed many youths by inciting them during the Telangana movement. However, the Congress helped the poor and farmers who took loans from banks, he said.

MSME policy changes to accommodate BCs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has positively responded to the BC Welfare Department's request to make changes in its MSME 2024 policy, and include issues connected to BCs.

During a seminar held at the Secretariat Conference Hall, BC Welfare Minister Ponnampallam Prabhakar, along with Government Advisor K. Keshava Rao, intellectuals, retired IAS officers, BC MLAs, corporation chairpersons and industrialists held discussions.

During the meeting, it was decided to form a committee that included the retired Director General of MSMEs, Chukka Kondayya, retired IAS officers and industrialists to provide suggestions



on incorporating BC-related elements into the MSME policy. Advisor Keshava Rao said the MSME policy introduced by the government is one of the best in the country, and if extended to BCs like other communities, it can lead to industrial development.

Ponnampallam pointed out that BCs have not been included in the MSME policy so far, even though the majority of micro, small, and medium enterprises

are based on the traditional occupations of BC communities.

BC Welfare Department Principal Secretary Burra Venkatesham said that every BC family in the state should be treated as a micro-unit, adding that traditional occupations like gold smithing, laundry and barbering would greatly benefit from the inclusion of BC-related provisions in the MSME policy.

Retired IAS officers suggested that modern technology could revolutionize various occupations under MSMEs.

The inclusion of BCs in the national MSME framework, as suggested by retired IAS officer Chiranjeevi, could bring similar benefits as those provided to SCs and STs, extending subsidies to BCs, minorities, and disabled individuals.

Cong brass enquires about HYDRAA with CM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

While enquiring about HYDRAA and the Musi Development Project, AICC President Mallikarjuna Kharge asked Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to tone down demolitions so that the people do not turn against the government and to ensure that the poor do not suffer injustice, it is learnt.

The Chief Minister visited Mallikarjuna Kharge on Tuesday as he fell ill during his Jammu and Kashmir election campaign. Kharge enquired about the High Court's comments regarding the demolitions, implementation of government schemes, cabinet expansion and other issues.

The Chief Minister also met Rajya Sabha Abhishek Manu Singhvi. It is learnt that the CM discussed HYDRAA cases with Singhvi.

The CM also met AICC General Secretary KC Venugopal. It is learnt that the CM discussed cabinet expansion and party matters with Venugopal. The CM returned to Hyderabad on Tuesday night.

'Counter BRS criticism against govt'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Asking Corporation Chairmen not to relax after taking charge, TPCC chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud asked Corporation Chairmen to counter the criticism of the BRS against the Congress government. Mahesh said a meeting with the chairmen of Corporations on Tuesday at the Gandhi Bhavan.

Addressing the meeting, Mahesh said that the Chief Minister and Ministers are working 18 hours a day. The Chief Minister and Ministers are infusing confidence among the people by taking up policy decisions and welfare schemes every day. There is a need for Corporation chairmen to join the CM and Ministers and take welfare schemes to every house.

No comparison between KCR's farmhouse rule and Cong rule: Kiran

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress's Bhongir MP, Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, said that there is no comparison between KCR's farmhouse rule and Congress rule.

Speaking to the media at the Gandhi Bhavan on Tuesday, Kiran said that BRS leaders are trying to incite the people of Hyderabad to block the Musi clean-up project and so they

are spreading lies through the social media shamelessly.

"The Musi Riverfront Development Corporation was set up during KCR's rule but BRS leaders don't have any interest in developing it. Now, Revanth has taken a decision to save Hyderabad and areas near it. 60,000 acres are cultivated under the Musi project. As this water is contaminated the crops grown by farmers are

not getting sold. Everything is polluted," he said.

He said that BRS leaders must understand that this is not just a beautification project but there are lakhs of people dependent on this. He said he is requesting BRS not to engage in politicking with such an important project.

They don't want this government to work and get a good name.

CPCR moots closure of Sri Chaitanya hostel

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (TGSCPCR) has taken a step in response to a recent incident of food poisoning and recommended the closure of the hostel of Sri Chaitanya Junior College, Akshara Girls campus located in Madhapur.

In an official note on Tuesday, the Commission outlined its serious concerns over the safety and well-being of the children residing at the institution.

Chairperson J Srinivasa Rao stated, "The Commission

bench has reviewed the incident and understands that it is a matter of serious concern and amounts to the life of many children residing in the hostel." The incident highlighted various violations, prompting the Commission to act decisively.

The Commission reported that the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation had previously imposed fines on the institution for maintaining unsanitary conditions and lacking essential safety measures, such as fire safety protocols and the absence of a valid trade licence. In line with these developments, the

Commission's investigation revealed non-compliance with guidelines issued by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR).

Consequently, the Commission has recommended to the Collector and District Magistrate of Ranga Reddy district the closure of the hostel to safeguard the children's interests. Rao emphasised the urgency of the decision, stating, "Based on the information, the Commission took it as a suo motu case and unanimously decided to recommend for the closure of the hostel."

NSUI tries to block KTR's convoy Demands apology for trolling Surekha

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

An NSUI team led by Motha Rohit tried to block BRS Working President KTR's convoy in Amberpet demanding that KTR issue an immediate apology to Endowment Minister Konda Surekha and also for attacking Congress activists outside the Telangana Bhavan on Monday. Hyderabad Youth Congress President Motha Rohit strongly condemned the trolling of Minister Konda Surekha on social media by BRS activists.

Former minister KTR, who was going to visit the victims of the Amberpet protest against the Musi River Project, was stopped in Vidyanagar under the leadership of Youth Congress Greater Hyderabad



President Motha Rohit.

A scuffle broke out between BRS workers and the Youth Congress. Motha Rohit said that they had to hold the protest as BRS politicians had insulted a woman minister and they were attacked by BRS goons.

"We are in the government and are exercising restraint but trolling women ministers regularly and demeaning them on social media is not acceptable," Motha Rohit said.

Madhu Yashki Goud to fight on behalf of Musi victims in courts

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC Campaign Committee chairman Madhu Yashki Goud, while talking to the victims of the Musi beautification project, stated that he will fight with the government for the sake of the people. He declared that there were courts and that he would fight for the people as a lawyer.

Madhu Yashki Goud made these comments while address-

ing the people of Musi catchment area in Chaitanyapuri. "I will fight as a lawyer if the government decides to demolish structures. Similarly, I will fight with the government on behalf of the people. The government has not taken any decision on the demolitions." Madhu Yashki tried to reassure the victims of Musi riverbed that the blue mark has nothing to do with it.

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CITY EVENTS

Dandiya Nights

Bringing you mind-blowing Navratri experience with Celebrity Dandiya Nights 2024.

Venue

At Rangbhoomi Spaces and Events, Flipside Adventure Park, Financial District, Gachibowli, Hyderabad
October 2

SOCIAL

Celebrate Navratri at SOCIAL with a special festive menu. At SOCIAL, we're bringing a festive touch with a special Navratri menu that blends traditional flavours with our signature twist.

Venue

Mindspace SOCIAL, Hyderabad
October 3rd to 11th

SERP - SARAS Fair-2024

Venue

People's Plaza, Hyderabad
Till October 7

Dubai Proptry Show

Property experts coming to your city

Venue

ITC Kohener , HYTEC City, Plot No. 5, Survey No. 83/1, Madhapur, Opposite Inorbit Mall
October 5 and 6.

Toxic

By Abhishek Upmanyu

Venue

Shilpakala Vedika
November 2

Prateek Kuhad

Shouettes tour.

Venue

Hyderabad international convention centre
November 8

Students demand release of pending fee reimbursement

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Thousands of students under the leadership of the DMSA and TSF student unions staged a massive protest at the District Collectorate demanding the immediate release of pending fee reimbursement and scholarship arrears.

The students claimed that the government owes them approximately Rs 6,500 crore in fee reimbursement for the last three years and around Rs 8,000 crore for the past six years. They criticised the government for neglecting their demands.

The students also expressed their disappointment over the absence of an education minister for 10 months, stating that this lack of leadership has hindered the resolution of their issues. They questioned the government's priorities, noting that it has allocated hundreds of crores for the HYDRAA project but has failed to provide adequate funding for students.

The non-reimbursement of fees has forced many students to pay additional charges to their institutions, putting their education at risk. The student union leaders warned the government that if their demands are not met, they will intensify their protests across the State. The protest was led by DMSA State president Dudapaka Naresh and TSF State president Kannam Sunil.

DJ sound systems banned in religious rallies

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad City Police banned the use of DJ sound systems, DJ sound mixers, sound amplifiers, firecrackers and other high-sound generating equipment, which are capable of producing or reproducing sound, during religious processions in Hyderabad Commissionerate limits.

In a round-table conference with various religious and political leaders, Hyderabad City Police Commissioner CV

Anand has discussed the plan of ban on DJ sound systems (powered mobile speakers delivering high decibel sound) and firecrackers during all religious processions in the city. The meeting has concluded with various opinions. However, on Tuesday he has issued a notice that there will be a ban on use of DJ in any religious procession.

The notice said, "In Hyderabad and surrounding areas various religious festivals are celebrated, involving big

processions comprising thousands of people throughout the year. There is competition among the procession organisers to hire bigger and louder DJs. The use of such systems is harmful to the human body, besides causing a lot of noise pollution. A prolonged exposure to the high decibel of sound emanated by these systems is extremely damaging for human health."

The Hyderabad City Police has cited that violation of the orders will lead to penal action

under various Sections of the Hyderabad City Police Act, 1348 Fasli, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), Environment Protection Act, 1986, Noise Pollution (Regulation & Control) Rules, 2000 and the Hyderabad City Loudspeakers (Regulation of use and Licencing) Rules, 1963.

In residential areas, the sound decibel limit will be 55 decibels (dB) during the day hours and 45 dB in the night.

City Pioneer



HYDERABAD WEDNESDAY | OCTOBER 2, 2024

03

Gates of Hyd's twin reservoirs lifted

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Water Board lifted the gates of the twin reservoirs of Himayat Sagar and Osman Sagar. A total of 1,776 cubic foot per second (cusecs) of flood water was released into the Musi river from the twin reservoirs.

The Water Board said that due to the rains, 1,750 cusecs of water reached the reservoirs and they reached the full tank level.

Officials have lifted one gate of Himayat Sagar and released 348 cusecs of water. Six gates of Osman Sagar were lifted and released 1,428 cusecs of water.

MINI INDUSTRIAL PARKS IN ALL ASSEMBLY SEGMENTS

Sridhar Babu for roadmap to increase SHGs to 7.5 million

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Advising the creation of a roadmap to increase the number of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) from 6.4 million to 7.5 million, IT Minister D Sridhar Babu directed officials to begin the land acquisition process for establishing mini-industrial parks in all Assembly segments for women in SHGs.

He emphasised that each park should have 2 to 3 acres of land and include two-story buildings to support 30 to 50 self-help groups (SHGs), suggesting new opportunities for growth. Sridhar Babu noted that while empowering women as entrepreneurs is possible, the main challenge is marketing their products. To address this, the Minister recommended hiring a supply chain consultant if needed. He also mentioned that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's vision is to help every woman become a millionaire, stating that achieving this goal for even half of them would be a major success.

The Minister also stressed the importance of capacity-building programmes to enhance the skills of women in SHGs and encourage the wide-spread organisation of 'Saras' product exhibitions across all districts.



IT Minister D Sridhar Babu holding a meeting with officials on Self-Help Groups in Hyderabad on Tuesday

One-stop shop with single window outposts for WEP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Highlighting the large number of women in the State, the government aims to convert the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) into a one-stop shop with single-window outposts at every mandal level. Announcing this, Special Chief Secretary to the IT department, Jayesh Ranjan, moderated the launch of Telangana's WEP Chapter at the Hyatt Gachibowli on Tuesday. NITI Aayog CEO BVR Subrahmanyam launched the TG's WEP platform

and its logo, in the presence of WEP Co-chair Sangeetha Reddy and Principal Economic Advisor Anna Roy.

Addressing the launch, Subrahmanyam emphasised that WEP, initially based in Delhi, is taking a major step by launching in Telangana. He stressed the importance of women's uplift for national development and highlighted that 30,000 women organisations are registered on WEP. He commended Jayesh Ranjan for his vision to take WEP to the grassroots level.

Meanwhile, Sangeetha Reddy noted that 30,000 women mentees are already benefiting from over 450 mentors across the country, a small programme which began during the G20. Jayesh Ranjan announced the establishment of physical and virtual WEP outposts at the mandal level, ensuring regular support for women entrepreneurs. The SHG and Startup women members shared their entrepreneurship journeys and urged for funding, networking and mentoring through WEP.

Chikungunya awareness drive

GHMC authorities will undertake a special drive and conduct anti-larvae operations from October 3 to prevent chikungunya.

381 grievances received at Prajavani

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In all, 381 grievance applications were received in the Prajavani at the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Praja Bhavan on Tuesday.

According to the officials, 72 applications were received for housing, 56 for SC welfare, 51 for revenue issues, 40 for electricity, 28 for Panchayati Raj and Rural Development, 25 for Minority Welfare, 5 for Pravasi Prabhani and 94 for other departments. Deputy Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the State Planning Commission G Chinna Reddy and Special Officer of Public Administration D Divya, participated in the programme and received the applications.

Rachakonda SHE Teams arrest 283 persons in a month

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The SHE Teams of Rachakonda Police have nabbed 283 persons and registered 343 complaints in the 30 days of September.

The Police conducted decoy operations at bus stands, railway stations, Metro stations, Schools, colleges, vegetable markets and other areas in the limits of the Commissionerate.

Police gave counselling to the accused in the presence of their parents at the camp office of the Commissioner of Police (CP) at LB Nagar.

DCP of Women Safety Wing said that 69 cases have been registered against people who had been harassing on

phones, 91 are social media apps, 183 complaints registered for directly harassed women. Out of them, 11 criminal cases and 107 petty cases were registered.

The Police requested women to contact the SHE Teams immediately if they are being harassed. They can contact through



WhatsApp number 8712662111, or Bhongir area 8712662598, Choutuppal 8712662599,

Ibrahimpattam 8712662600, Kushaiguda 8712662601, LB Nagar 8712662602, Malkajgiri 8712662603 and Vanasthalipuram number is 8712662604.

Heavy rainfall in city, Yellow Alert issued

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The city experienced heavy rainfall on Tuesday evening across Jubilee Hills, Ameerpet and Khairatabad. The rain continued intensely toward Kukatpally, Qutbullapur, Alwal, Miyapur, Bowenpally, Balanagar, Chintal, Jeedimetla and Madhapur, according to Telangana Weatherman. This sudden downpour caused waterlogging and traffic jams throughout the city.



Scattered thunderstorms were also experienced in Adilabad, Asifabad, Nirmal,

Sangareddy and Vikarabad districts.

The IMD issued a yellow alert until Thursday for thunderstorms with lightning likely to occur in isolated areas of Mulugu, Bhadradi Kothagudem, Khammam, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Mahabubabad, Rangareddy, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, Mahabubnagar, Nagarkurnool, Wanaparthy, Narayanpet and Jogulamba Gadwal districts.

Vivekanand seeks extension of Metro services to Quthbullapur

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Quthbullapur MLA KP Vivekanand met with Hyderabad Metro Rail MD NVS Reddy at the Hyderabad Metro Rail Bhavan in Begumpet and submitted a request to extend Metro services to Quthbullapur as part of the Hyderabad Metro Rail Phase-2 expansion.

During the meeting, Vivekanand emphasised the rapid development in Quthbullapur, which lies to the north of Hyderabad and the daily commuting needs of the area's residents. He highlighted that thousands of



employees travel daily from Quthbullapur, Suchitra, Kompally, IDPL, Chintal, Shapur Nagar, Jeedimetla, Suraram, and Dundigal to various parts of the city. Vivekanand proposed two key Metro routes for the

extension. The first route would connect GandiMaisamma to Bharat Nagar Metro Station via Suraram, Jeedimetla, Shapur Nagar and Balanagar Chowrasta. The second route would link Medchal to Secunderabad via Kompally, Suchitra and Bowenpally.

In his request, Vivekanand urged that Quthbullapur be given priority in the Metro expansion plans, allowing residents to travel swiftly to distant parts of the city. The Metro extension, he noted, would ease traffic congestion and improve the overall quality of life for commuters.



Bathukamma fete to begin today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has announced the schedule for Bathukamma celebrations from October 2 to October 10. Governor Jishnu Dev Varma, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and former chief minister K Chandrababhan Naidu greeted people on the eve of Bathukamma festival.

Bathukamma, a festival deeply rooted in Telangana's cultural heritage, will feature a series of grand events aimed at showcasing unity and promoting the cultural vibrancy of the region.

The official celebrations will kick off on October 2 with

'Engilipula Bathukamma,' which will take place at the Ravindra Bharati premises, where women will gather and participate in Bathukamma's traditional songs and dances. This year's celebrations will emphasise the participation of women from all sections of society. A notable feature of the inaugural day will be the unveiling of a book titled 'Okkokka Poolu Vesi Chandamam' authored by local women writers.

On October 3, the 'Atukula Bathukamma' will continue at the Ravindra Bharati auditorium.

The following days will feature a variety of activities.

BioAsia 2025 logo unveiled

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

IT and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu unveiled the logo for BioAsia 2025 at a ceremony in the Secretariat on Tuesday. This international summit will be held under the leadership of Telangana government on February 25 to 26, 2025, at the Hitex exhibition centre, with participation from representatives of 50 countries. The summit will focus on life sciences, healthcare and health technology, aiming to explore key innovations in these areas.

Sridhar Babu highlighted Telangana's important role in improving global healthcare through innovation. Topics will include biopharmaceuticals, digital health, medical devices and advanced therapeutics.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA

SC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

INVITING REPRESENTATIONS ON SC SUB-CLASSIFICATION

Government has constituted a committee headed by Sri.Nalamada Uttam Kumar Reddy, Hon'ble Minister for I&CAD, Food & Civil Supplies to study the Judgment of Supreme Court on the Sub-classification within SC reserved categories.

The Committee has decided to take representations from all SC communities, Associations, Individuals on the subject matter. The representations are being received from **30.09.2024** onwards.

All SC communities, Associations, Individuals are requested to submit their representations, to the following officers in the O/o Commissioner, SCDD, 3rd floor, DSS Bhavan, Masab Tank, Hyderabad on all working days from **11.00 am to 5.00 pm.**

- 1. Sri. K.Kishan, Deputy Director**
(Phone No.040-23391362)
- 2. Smt. S.Subbalakshmi Asst, Director**
(Phone No.040-23391362)

The representations can be mailed to **commr.scsclassification@gmail.com**

N.Sridhar IAS,
Principal Secretary to Govt.,
SC Development Department..

R.O.No.SPL-05-DPIC/L/ADVT/1/2024-25, Dt. 01-10-2024



Ratnakumar and Parvati

Cheated couple commits suicide

A tout allegedly conned them of Rs 16 lakh promising them jobs in SSCL

PNS ■ KOTHAGUDEM

A young couple, who attempted suicide on Monday, after being conned by a tout, died while undergoing treatment on Tuesday. The tout, according to the couple's relatives, had collected Rs 16 lakhs from them promising a job in Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL). The couple, identified as Halavath Ratnakumar (32) and Parvati, had been working in a shop selling cloth here for the last few months. One of their friends, posing as having connections with top officers, made the couple that he would get them a job in the SCCL. The tout allegedly collected Rs 16 lakh from them. While Ratnakumar completed graduation, his wife Parvathi was a Bed graduate.

The couple hailed from Sairam Thanda under Julurupad manal in the district. According to family members of Ratnakumar, a tout enticed him to pay Rs 16 lakh to get a job. Ratnakumar paid the money in instalments by mortgaging his wife's gold ornaments. Ratnakumar and his wife got the shock of their lives when they learnt the death of the tout. The friends of the tout had thrown up their hands in despair. Upset over the developments Ratna Kumar and his wife consumed pesticide. Their neighbours rushed them to government hospitals. As their condition deteriorated, they were sent to Khammam government hospital and from there to Hyderabad. They died while undergoing treatment in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

Onion prices bring tears to consumers

Farmers too complain of not getting remunerative price for produce

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

There is a four-fold increase in onion prices, which sell at Rs 60 a kg, hitting hard the middle classes. In fact, a kg of onions was sold in the range of Rs 15-20 in July.

The increased onion prices have a dampening effect on hotel industry too.

The increase in prices of onions is attributed to significant decrease in the area of cultivation under the crop. Delayed rains have forced the farmers to switch over to other crops. Keeping in mind, the last year's experiences in cultivation of the crops, many farmers stayed away from cultivation of the onions.

The area under onion crop fell to 1,200 acres from 3,600 acres in the district. Onions are cultivated in Veepanagandla, Timmajipet, Wanaparthy, Pebbair, Utkur, Narayanapeta, Maktal and so on. In Vanakalam (kharif) season, the following are the areas in onion cultivation is taken up: Mahabubnagar district-52 acres, Jogulamba-Gadwalk district- less than 87 acres, Nagarkurnool district - only in 971 acres (normal area under the crop 2,800 acres), Narayanapeta district-86 acres (as against the normal 340 acres).



The increase in prices of onions is attributed to significant decrease in the area of cultivation under the crop. Delayed rains have forced the farmers to switch over to other crops

The recent rains have damaged whatever onion crop that has been raised in the district.

Because of these reasons, onion prices have been steadily rising for the past three months. Moreover, there were no imports of onion from Kurnool, Nandikotkur, Mantralayam and Anantapur from AP as the crop failed in that State.

Under these conditions, the onion traders were forced to import onions from Karnataka, Nasik and Chhattisgarh pushing

up the prices of onions three fold. A quintal of onions was sold at Rs 2,000 in July. However, its price went up to Rs 5,600 in September.

Mahabubnagar district Horticulture officials said that the area under the crop would increase in Yasangi (rabi) and prices will come down.

A housewife belonging to Goorakonda said that she uses onions extensively in all preparations of food. The increased prices have hit middle class. She appealed to the government to

take steps to regulate the onion prices and make them accessible to the common man.

A farmer belonging to Devarakadra, Bhagavantu, said that the onion prices were not at all remunerative for the farmers. What the farmer gets was only Rs 2,500 a quintal of onions. Sometimes, they get Rs 3,500 a quintal. Only one or two traders buy onions at Rs 5,000 a quintal. He demanded that the government pay minimum support price for onion.



Ill-fated car

Five killed as car overturns in Adilabad

PNS ■ ADILABAD

Five persons of a family were killed, while three others suffered injured when a car in which they were travelling hit a divider, spun out of control and overturned near Mekalagandi village under Gudihathnoor mandal on Monday night. The deceased were identified as Khaza Moiz (60), his son Moinuddin (40), grandchildren Ali (8), and Mohammad Usmanuddin (10). They belonged to the Teachers' Colony in Adilabad. Farid (12) breathed his last while undergoing treatment at RIMS-Adilabad. Ayesha Afrin, Ekra and Sath and Farid suffered injured. They were referred to RIMS-Adilabad. Their condition is stated to be stable.

The occupants of the ill-fated car were returning to Adilabad from Hyderabad. The accident happened near their home.



Collector inspects hostel, stays overnight

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Rangareddy District Collector K Shashanka conducted a surprise inspection at the social welfare hostel in Ibrahimpatnam constituency on Monday night. He also stayed overnight in the hostel to assess the conditions firsthand. He conducted a thorough review of the hostel, examining the quality of food, cleanliness, and the overall facilities provided to students, including the condition of the toilets and kitchen.

During his stay, Collector Shashanka tasted the food served to the students and engaged in conversations with

them about the management of the hostel. He expressed satisfaction with the conditions and advised the students to report any issues to the mandal-level officials for resolution.

The Collector further inquired about any problems the students might face, encouraging them to take full advantage of the government-provided facilities and focus on their studies.

Deputy Director of Social Welfare Rama Rao, Multi-Zone Officer Rajani, Principal Varodini, and Assistant Social Welfare Officer Venkat were present during the inspection.

Bathukamma festival opens with traditional grandeur

PNS ■ YADADRI BHUVANAGIRI/CHOUTUPPAL

Bathukamma festival is a special occasion that symbolises strength and divinity of womanhood. This festival, celebrated every year in Telangana, emphasises worshipping nature and praying for prosperity and good fortune, stated Komatireddy Lakshmi Rajgopal Reddy.

In Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district, the Bathukamma festival was celebrated with traditional grandeur under the auspices of Trinity Educational Institutions in Choutuppal Municipality limits.

Komatireddy Lakshmi Rajgopal Reddy, the wife of Munugode MLA Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy, participated in the event and celebrated the festival grandly with students. "With the blessings of Gauri Devi, I wish the people prosperity."

The event, celebrated alongside children, played a crucial role in fostering unity within the community. She mentioned, "In our culture, flowers are sacred. In



Komatireddy Lakshmi Rajgopal Reddy, wife of Congress MLA Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy, participating in Bathukamma festival in Choutuppal on Tuesday

Telangana, we worship these flowers as deities."

She highlighted that the women of the village came together to celebrate the festival, reinforcing bonds within the community.

The Bathukamma festival serves as a platform for women to come together, share stories, and strengthen relationships. Such events not only preserve cultural

heritage but also empower women, providing them with opportunities to play significant roles in society.

As the festival concluded, interest in Bathukamma continued to thrive within the community. People in Nalgonda, Yadadri, and Suryapet districts expressed their desire to celebrate these traditions even more grandly.

Congress govt will support Mallannasagar displaced

PNS ■ SIDDIPEET

Former Malkajgiri MLA Mainapalli Hanumanth Rao on Tuesday stated that the Congress government will support the people affected by Musi riverfront development. He made these comments while visiting the displaced farmers of Mallannasagar in Gajwel on Wednesday.

He alleged that BRS party leaders are politicising the Musi rejuvenation efforts. He wondered why Harish Rao is suddenly expressed concern over the displaced Mallannasagar farmers when he previously ignored them during the floods. He claimed that the farmers in the submerged villages were paid compensation of Rs 5 lakh an acre though the land value there was Rs 30 lakh an acre.

He urged wealthy individuals like Mukesh Ambani to lend their support. He also appealed to Prime Minister Modi to help the poor, suggesting that the BJP and Congress should come together.



Former MLA and Congress leader Myaneni Hanumantha Rao interacting with Mallannasagar displaced farmers in Siddipet district on Tuesday

Fertilizer production at RFCL surges

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI

Ramagundam Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited is witnessing a continuous increase in production at its factory. The management has announced the production figures for the first six months of the current financial year. The factory was established as part of a partnership between the Central and State governments to address the shortage of fertilizers in the country. Full-scale production began



on March 22, 2021. Currently, the Neem-coated urea produced at the plant is being supplied to Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh. In the past six months (April 2024 to September 2024), the factory produced 617,600.43 metric tons of urea. Of this, 216,036.45 metric tons were supplied to Telangana, 56,481.30 metric tons to Andhra Pradesh, 133,897.77 metric tons to Karnataka, 66,436.92 metric tons to Maharashtra, 43,869.06 metric tons to Chhattisgarh, 46,529.91 metric tons to Tamil Nadu, and 54,349.02 metric tons to Madhya Pradesh, Chief General Manager Rajahamsa stated this on Tuesday.

Call for respect and care for elderly

PNS ■ KUMRAM BHEEM ASIFABAD

District Collector Venkatesh Dhotre has called upon the people to show respect to the elderly people and taking good care of the aged in the family.

Lighting a lamp along with Additional Collector Dasari Venu and members of the Aged Welfare Association at a function held here on Tuesday in connection with the International Day of Older Persons, he said that the aged in the family always want the welfare of the family. Therefore, they should be respected.

"It is our duty to nurse them properly," he said. The government introduced stringent laws for the



Kumram Bheem Asifabad Collector Venkatesh Dhotre at a function held on the occasion of International Day of Older Persons in Asifabad on Tuesday

welfare of the older persons. Therefore, it would take action against the family

members who neglected the care of elders, he said. Awareness programmes

would be conducted with regard to the welfare of the aged persons, he said.

He observed that the aged prefer to live in their native places. He invited the senior citizens to contact him directly in case of any problems. Efforts were under way to set up a home for the aged at Kagaznagar. Later, he felicitated the senior citizens by presenting them with shawls.

District Welfare Officer Bhaskar, District Rural Development Officer Bhanot Dattaram, president of the welfare of the aged Racharla Buchamma, secretary Lakshmi Narayana, the aged persons, Anganwadi teachers, CDPOs, supervisors, Sakhi personnel and others took part in the event.

Collector highlights importance of public relations



Yadadri Bhuvanagiri Collector Hanumanth K. Zendage felicitating District Public Relations Officer P Venkateswara Rao on his retirement in Yadadri on Tuesday

PNS ■ YADADRI BHUVANAGIRI

The District Collector, Hanumanth K Zendage, stated that the role of public relations is crucial in giving publicity to state development and welfare schemes to the public.

On Monday, the Collector attended a function to felicitate P Venkateswara Rao, the District Public Relations Officer, who retired from service. The function was organised by the District Gazetted Officers Association.

During the event, the Collector emphasised that public relations play an invaluable role in communicating the development schemes and welfare programs initiated by the government and highlighting their importance. He noted that the

District Public Relations Officer P Venkateswara Rao had effectively fulfilled the by coordinating with the district machinery and media. He also remarked that employees play a unique role in the implementation of development and welfare programs, keeping the district at the forefront.

The programme was attended by K Gangadhar, Additional Collector, media representatives, Mandadi Upender Reddy, Treasurer of the State Gazetted Officers Association, Shobharani, Chief Executive Officer of the District Council, Nagireddy, District Rural Development Officer, Jagannathan Prasad, President of the District Gazetted Officers Association, Srinivas, General Secretary, and various district officials.

Ponguleti orders Collector to probe CMR irregularities

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Revenue and Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on Tuesday directed District Collector Muzammil Khan to order a comprehensive probe into the irregularities taking place in the custom milled rice (CMR).

He asked the Collector to take stringent action against the rice millers who defaulted on the handing over the custom milled

ed the paddy procured from farmers to the rice millers for the custom milling of the rice.

He sought information from the Collector the year-wise quantities of custom milled rice recoverable from the rice millers.

The Minister instructed the Collector to probe the role of the millers and government officials and take departmental action against those who are responsible for the irregularities.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, PR CIRCLE, PEDDAPALLY
E PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
NIT No. 148 to 171/SE/Tenders/2024-25. Dt: 20.09.2024.
Total No. of works (24) calling the works under 10th Finance, DMFT, SFC, SPC and CSR Grants in pertaining Peddapally and Jayashankar Bhupalpally Districts. Total Est Cost Rs. 652.88 Lakhs.
Tender Schedules can be had from e-procurement market from Dt. 03.10.2024 to 15.10.2024 for each tender with minimum (07) working days to participate from date of upload. Further details can be availed from e-procurement market place www.tenders.telangana.gov.in
Sd/- Superintending Engineer,
PR Circle, Peddapally
P.O.No: 483-PRCL/MDVT/1024-25, Dt: 01-10-2024

OFFICE OF THE KARIMNAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
P.O. No: 0378-224358, Fax: No: 0878-2243024, Email: kvrcmcr@rediffmail.com
GORRIGENDUM NOTICE FOR EOI NOTICE
No. EIMCKE/MD/2024-25. Dt: 20-09-2024
Publication of Short EOI notice - Various Developmental works in Karimnagar Municipal Corporation - Compendium - Instead of the Following
Last date for issuing of schedule: 27.09.2024 @ 3.00 PM
READ AS
Starting date for issuing of schedule: 27.09.2024 @ 3.00 PM
For more details please contact: 8974949143. Sd/- Commissioner
P.O.No: 483-PRCL/MDVT/1024-25, Dt: 01-10-2024 Municipal Corporation Karimnagar

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
EE-Div 16/EE/Divm.16/16/SBZ/GHMC Dt: 01-10-2024
NIT No: 23/Ci-16/Engg-Div-16/SBZ/GHMC/2024
Name of the work: Bathukamma festival works in Amberpet Circle-16, Secunderabad Zone, G+H.C. Total Tender Amount: Rs. 18.50 Lakh S.I. No. 1 to 6 Start Date: 03/10/2024 From 3.00 PM.
Last Date & Time for receipt of Bids: 07/10/2024 at 3:00 PM, Sd/- K.RAMESH BABU, Executive Engineer, Division-16, Circle-16 Amberpet, Sec'nd Zone, GHMC, Cell: 8790374655/
630991902, Address of the Concerned Executive Engineer, Div-16, SBZ, GHMC Aisls, Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation. Further details can be seen at E-Procurement www.tender.telangana.gov.in
Sd/- Executive Engineer
P.O.No: 483-PRCL/MDVT/1024-25, Dt: 01-10-2024 Div-16, SBZ, GHMC

ACROSS THE STATES



Govinda injured after revolver accident, safe

Actor Govinda was injured in the leg on Tuesday after his revolver accidentally went off at his Mumbai residence when he was about to leave for the airport, police said. Dr Ramesh Agarwal, who tended to the 60-year-old actor after the accident, said Govinda is recuperating at a private hospital and will be discharged in a few days. Govinda, a favourite with audiences for his impeccable comic timing and dancing skills, later issued a statement informing his fans he is doing better. "With the blessings of my fans, my parents and god, I am doing better now. I was hit by a bullet, which has now been removed. I thank the doctor here, Dr Agarwal ji. I thank all of you for your prayers," the "Hero No 1" actor and a member of the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena said in the audio message. According to the doctor, the bullet hit him below his left knee and that he had got 8-10 stitches.



Doval calls on French Prez; conveys PM greetings

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval on Tuesday called on French President Emmanuel Macron and conveyed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's greetings. He also met the Armed Forces Minister of France and discussed enhancing bilateral defence relations and advancing space collaboration, as well as the "evolving" global situation. "NSA Ajit Doval calls on French President HE @EmmanuelMacron. Conveyed PM @narendramodi's greetings. Reiterated commitment to implement the India-France Horizon 2047 roadmap," the Indian embassy in France said in a post on X. "President stressed the value of India-France efforts to advance peace and address global challenges; appreciated PM Modi's initiatives," it added. Doval held extensive discussions with French Armed Forces Minister Sebastien Lecornu.



Chirag calls Bihar flood situation 'frightening'

Amid grim flood situation in Bihar with 11.84 lakh people reeling under water, Union Minister Chirag Paswan, who hails from the state, visited the affected areas and said that he would share details of the "frightening" conditions with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who returned from New Delhi a day ago, also undertook an aerial survey of the areas inundated as a result of release of millions of cusecs of water, in a barrage along the border, by Nepal which was battered by record rainfall over the weekend. According to the state disaster management department, packets of food and other relief materials were air-dropped by Indian Air Force helicopters which benefitted more than two lakh people in Sitamarhi and Darbhanga districts. Deputy Chief Minister and BJP leader Samrat Choudhary, who met Union Jalshakti Minister C R Patil in Delhi a day ago, said he has urged the latter to consider construction of "an additional barrage" to check recurring floods that wreak devastation in areas bordering Nepal every year.

DEMOLITION OF PROPERTIES

Will lay down pan-India guidelines, asserts SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said it will lay down pan-India guidelines on demolition of properties and any religious structure in the middle of a road, be it a 'dargah' or a temple, "has to go" because public interest is paramount.

Observing that merely because somebody is an accused or even a convict cannot be a ground for demolition of property, the apex court reserved its verdict on a batch of pleas which have alleged that properties, including of those accused of crime, were being demolished in several states.

A bench of Justices B R Gavi and K V Viswanathan said unauthorised construction made by any person, irrespective of his religion or belief, has to be



removed. The bench said its September 17 order, which had said there will be no demolition of properties till October 1 without its permission, will continue till it decides the matter.

"Whatever we are laying down, we are a secular country. We are laying it down for all the citizens, for all the institutions,

there cannot be a different law for a particular religion.

"We are going to make it clear that merely because somebody is an accused, or even somebody is a convict, can't be a ground for demolition," it said. The apex court made it clear that it will not protect any encroachment on public places, roads, footpaths, government lands, forests, water bodies and the likes. "Whatever directions we issue, it will be applicable pan-India," it said, adding, "We will take care to ensure that our order does not help the encroachers on any of the public places."

The bench also observed that

there cannot be a different law for a particular religion.

"We are going to make it clear that merely because somebody is an accused, or even somebody is a convict, can't be a ground for demolition," it said.

The apex court made it clear that it will not protect any encroachment on public places, roads, footpaths, government lands, forests, water bodies and the likes. "Whatever directions we issue, it will be applicable pan-India," it said, adding, "We will take care to ensure that our order does not help the encroachers on any of the public places."

During the hearing, the bench observed that notices for demolition of properties be sent through registered post to the owners and it should also be displayed on an online portal so that a digital record is there.

Modi working for handful of billionaires: Rahul

PNS ■ SONIPAT

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday accused the Narendra Modi government of attacking the Constitution and also slammed it over various issues including unemployment, the Agniveer scheme and farmers' welfare.

Addressing a public meeting in Sonipat while campaigning for the October 5 Haryana assembly polls, he also alleged that the government was working for a handful of billionaires in the country.

"While en route to this place, a man stopped me. He told me he runs a small business. He said Modi and the Haryana government destroyed him," the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said as he blamed demonetisation and "wrong" GST.

"He (the man) told me they did this to help Adani and Ambani," claimed Gandhi.



"Everyone knows that the central and Haryana governments are being run to help two-three 'arabpatis'. Whatever avenues of employment you had, they have been shut," he alleged.

Attacking the BJP-led government over the issue of the Agniveer scheme, he alleged "the military recruitment programme was a way to 'steal' a

not for any particular community," the bench said.

"On the first day we had pointed out, if there is any religious structure on the middle of a road, may it be a 'dargah' or some temple, it has to go because public safety and public interest is paramount," it said.

He alleged that a company owned by Adani was putting its labels on weapons which were manufactured by foreign companies.

"Modi only wanted to give a defence contract to Adani," he charged. "On one side the pension of jawans was snatched, martyr status and the same money goes into Adani's pocket," he alleged.

He raised the drug menace issue in Haryana and said everyone knows drugs are spreading tentacles. "I want to ask Modi ji when thousands of kilos of heroin was seized from your friend Adani's Mundra port, what action did you take? How many did you send to jails for this," he asked. "When thousands of kilos of drugs were seized, Narendra Modi, Gujarat government did not take any action," he claimed.

Gandhi claimed that the motive behind "stealing" jawans' pension was to hand over the defence budget to Adani.

Earlier, there used to be public sector, government factories, these have been privatised. Wherever, you see, you will only see Adani and Ambani names, he further alleged.

Gandhi claimed that the motive behind "stealing" jawans' pension was to hand over the defence budget to Adani.

Minister makes light of..

Continued from page 1

He emphasized that the actual estimates would only be determined once specific things like sewage treatment plants, storm water networks and other related infrastructure details are finalized. Sridhar also criticized BRS leaders for opposing the project for political gains. He pointed out that the Musi Riverfront Development Project was originally initiated by the BRS government in 2016, and the Musi Riverfront Development Corporation Limited was established the following year.

"We are following the same GO issued by the previous

administration," Sridhar said, referring to GO MS: 7, which demarcated a 50-meter buffer zone along the riverbed.

He said the BRS government had also begun efforts to remove illegal encroachments along the river and had set up committees to identify the maximum flood discharge levels for the river. Sridhar recalled how former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Reddy and the then Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao had wanted to address these issues but eventually sidelined the project. He accused BRS leaders of using mudslinging tactics instead of providing constructive criticism to regain ground after losing power.

BJP has no right ..

Continued from page 1

waiver scheme perfectly. He ridiculed BJP leaders saying that they have to stage the dharna in Delhi instead of at the Indira Park. BJP leaders are not getting sleep as the Congress government is

implementing the assurances it had given to farmers one after the other, he said.

Tummala said the Congress government will clear the loans of all farmers who do not have ration cards by Dasara and later the government will distribute Rythu Bharosa funds.

CM creating..

Continued from page 1

KTR reminded Revanth of his pre-election promises and asked whether any of the six guarantees had been implemented.

KTR blasted the Congress claim that it would spend Rs 1.5 lakh crore to clean 55 km of the Musi River. Expressing disbelief at the figure he asked whether the aim is to loot public funds.

He urged people to unite and resist if bulldozers came to demolish their homes. He lashed out at the hypocrisy of Congress, who under the 'Indiramma Rajyam' banner promised to build houses, but is now demolishing them.

Citing the 'Namami Gange' project he said that Rs 20,000 crore was spent to clean 2,400 km of the Ganga while Revanth wants to spend 1.5 lakh crore on just 55 km of the Musi River.

KTR cited Sudheer Reddy's caution that the Musi Project would harm the poor, which led KCR to halt the project.

HC issues notice to HYDRAA..

Continued from page 1

The complainant said that the Ameerpur Tehsildar issued verbal orders on September 21 at 6 pm and officials conducted demolitions at 7 am on September 22 (Sunday) without following the due process of law and without heading the High Court's Status Quo order. The land is located in survey number 6 at Patelguda Village in the Ameerpur Mandal of Sangareddy district. The court will hear the petition on October 15.

TG to become Green Hydrogen..

Continued from page 1

a prime location for Green Hydrogen. He expressed confidence that Telangana could soon become a hub for Green Hydrogen in India, with plans to supply the eco-friendly fuel to fertilizer factories, the Road Transport Corporation (RTC) and other industries.

During his visit, Bhatti also inspected Yamanashi's Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), which stores excess solar energy generated during the day for later use.

He noted that implementing this technology would benefit Telangana's solar energy initiatives, particularly the 245 MW solar plants currently operated by SCCL. Plans are already underway to expand solar capacity by an additional 1,000 MW. He proposed a joint venture with Yamanashi to introduce both Green Hydrogen plants and BESS technology in Telangana. Yamanashi officials responded positively, expressing interest in discussions to develop this partnership. With these initiatives, Telangana is positioning itself as a key player in India's renewable energy landscape, aiming to lead the nation in Green Hydrogen production and sustainable energy storage.

K'taka CM Siddaramaiah rules out resignation

Questions ED for slapping money-laundering case



PNS ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday questioned the ED slapping a money laundering case against him in the MUDA 'scam' and once again ruled out his resignation over the issue.

Siddaramaiah also alleged that his wife Parvathi B M, who decided to relinquish the ownership and possession of 14 plots that was allotted to her by the MUDA (Mysuru Urban Development Authority), was a victim of 'politics of hate' against him and he was surprised by her move. A team of Lokayukta police probing MUDA site allotment case against Siddaramaiah and others on Tuesday surveyed the land, in lieu of which 14 sites were "illegally" allotted to his wife in Mysuru.

Hours after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) booked Siddaramaiah in a money laundering case, his wife on Monday wrote to MUDA conveying her decision to return the 14 plots stating that no site, home, asset and wealth is bigger for her than her husband's respect, dignity, honour and peace of mind.

"I don't know on what grounds it's a money-laundering case. Probably you (reporters) too feel the same. According to me, it does not attract the money laundering case because compensatory sites were given. So, how is it a money-launder-

ing case?", the Chief Minister said here.

The ED registered an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR), equivalent to an FIR by police, against the Chief Minister over the alleged irregularities in allotment of 14 sites to his wife by the MUDA. The agency had also invoked relevant sections of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) case against him.

Meanwhile, the Lokayukta police team that visited the 3.16 acre land was joined by the special land acquisition officer, surveyors and town planning members from the MUDA, and they surveyed the land and took notes, official sources said.

Social activist Snehamayi Krishna on whose complaint the Lokayukta police has registered an FIR against Siddaramaiah, his wife and two others, was also present, they said, adding, he also appeared before the Lokayukta police in Mysuru, following the notice issued to him by the investigating officers.

Parvathi's letter conveying her a decision to return the plots, was personally submitted to MUDA Commissioner A N Raghunandan's office by her son and MLC Yathindra Siddaramaiah, in Mysuru earlier today. "The letter received will be processed after going through the provisions in the law," a MUDA official said.

Parvathi's letter conveying her a decision to return the plots, was personally submitted to MUDA Commissioner A N Raghunandan's office by her son and MLC Yathindra Siddaramaiah, in Mysuru earlier today. "The letter received will be processed after going through the provisions in the law," a MUDA official said.

on the walls of houses. A source said that officials have handed over double-house certificates to a total of 174 families in Malakpet and Nanampally mandals.

A person from Chadarghar said that the government had given a 2BHK house for his family of 17 members. So they have taken a rented house in Chadarghar.

The government said that after allocating 2BHK houses they will commence demolitions and start development of the project. But some of the victims are saying that they have not been given any 2BHK houses.

IAS officials appointed..

Continued from page 1

Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Mulugu and Mahbubabad districts. In the districts of Medak, Sangareddy, and Siddipet, Harichandana Dasari, the Special Secretary in the R&B Department, will serve as the Special Officer. K. Surendra Mohan, the Secretary of Mines & Geology, has been assigned Khammam and Bhadrachalam districts.

In Hyderabad, Amrapalli Kata, the Commissioner of GHMC, has been appointed as the Special Officer.

The GO emphasized that these officers are expected to immediately visit the assigned districts and coordinate closely with Collectors to ensure the effective implementation of government programmes.

A Dasara gift Telangana..

Continued from page 1

Tummala said the import of palm oil costs the Centre Rs 80,000 crore in foreign exchange per year, and the imposition of import duties will benefit the country's palm oil farmers, especially Telangana palm oil farmers, and the increase in palm oil prices will create an opportunity for new farmers to turn to palm oil.

The Telangana govern-

ment gave permission to 14 companies to expand oil palm cultivation and so far about 2.23 lakh acres have been brought under oil palm cultivation in Telangana.

With prices increasing, many TG farmers are likely to take up oil palm cultivation and the minister asked palm oil companies to be ready for that. Oil palm seedlings must be provided to farmers who want to cultivate them, he said.

MIGRATION HISTORY OF ELEPHANTS

Genetic study finds 'dilution of diversity'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A genetic study has charted the migration history of elephants in India from north to south, revealing multiple bottlenecks encountered along the way that threatened their existence and likely caused a "dilution of genetic diversity".

Genetic diversity is important for a resilience to disease and long-term survival, including an ability to adapt to environmental changes.

The findings can help shape the future of elephant species in India by informing conservation strategies, researchers from the National Centre for Biological Sciences and the Indian Institute of Science in Bengaluru, said.

The Asian elephant has been listed as 'Endangered' species on the IUCN Red List since 1986.



The list was established by the International Union for Conservation of Nature in 1964.

Elephants in India -- known to make up 60 per cent of the global Asian elephant population -- started migrating about 1,00,000 years ago, eventually settling in different parts of the country.

The researchers analysed 34 whole genome sequences, obtained from blood samples

taken from wild elephants across the country's landscapes.

The analysis, published in the journal Current Biology, identified five genetically distinct populations, as opposed to previously reported three or four, "emphasising their antiquity and unique evolutionary histories", according to the authors.

Of the five distinct breeds, two are located in north and central

India, and three in the south, separated by the Palghat and Shencottah Gaps or 'breaks' in the Western Ghats, they said.

The Palghat Gap lies between Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu and Palakkad in Kerala, while the Shencottah Gap connects Tamil Nadu's Madurai with the district Kottayam, Kerala.

Further, the northern breeds were found to be more genetically diverse and have low inbreeding -- where creatures having very similar genetic material breed -- compared to the southern ones, two of which had low diversity and were inbred, they said.

Co-lead author Uma Ramakrishnan, a molecular ecologist and a professor at the National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bengaluru, told PTI that the team observed a "dilu-

tion of diversity".

"Imagine an ink blot on a filter paper, dropped at the top right corner. The further we go from this, towards the bottom left, the less dark the ink is. Similarly, the diversity in southern western ghats is less than that in the northeast and north populations," she said.

Ramakrishnan added that the inbreeding in the southern populations suggested that "there has been either a bottleneck, or mating between relatives recently".

The researchers also found evidence of historical exploitation endured by the land mammals in the form of "bottlenecks". Wild elephants in India are known to be regularly exploited for military and domestic use, since they began to be tamed during Harappan times.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Saving Ladakh

Sonam Wangchuk's foot march highlights the urgent need for ecological protection and local autonomy of Ladakh

Ladakh, a region known for its breathtaking landscapes and unique culture, is now under threat from an ecological disaster. Climate change and unchecked development are eroding its delicate environment, pushing it towards a tipping point. In the face of this growing crisis, climate activist Sonam Wangchuk has emerged as a key figure in the fight to protect Ladakh. Recently, he, along with over 100 supporters, embarked on a foot march from Leh to New Delhi to demand concrete steps for safeguarding Ladakh's fragile ecosystem and securing the region's autonomy under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. However, upon reaching Delhi's Singhu border, Wangchuk and his supporters were detained by the police for violating prohibitory orders. Despite this setback, the march has already sparked widespread attention and support for his demands. Ladakh's environment is one of the most sensitive in India. Nestled in the Himalayan range, the region is already witnessing alarming impacts of climate change. Melting glaciers, shrinking water sources, and unpredictable weather patterns are threatening not only the ecosystem but also the livelihoods of the local population.



The rapid melting of glaciers is particularly concerning as they are the primary source of water for the region. This has caused Ladakh to face a severe water crisis, with rivers and streams drying up at an unprecedented rate. Unchecked tourism and infrastructure development further exacerbate the issue. Waste management remains a significant challenge, and the increasing construction of roads and buildings has disrupted the natural landscape. Wangchuk, who is known for his innovative environmental solutions like the 'Ice Stupa' project, has been vocal about the need for sustainable development in Ladakh. His demands are not only about preserving the environment but also about giving the local people the power to manage their resources and protect their cultural identity. One of his primary demands is to include Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. The Sixth Schedule provides special protections and autonomy to certain tribal areas in India, allowing them to preserve their culture, manage their resources, and have law-making powers over local matters. Ladakh, with its predominantly tribal population and distinct cultural heritage, has been seeking similar protection. The people of Ladakh in general have expressed disappointment with the current governance structure, which is led by a Lieutenant Governor appointed by the central government. Right now the people of Ladakh have a limited say in decision making. Granting Ladakh Sixth Schedule status would empower its people to make decisions that are in line with their unique environmental and cultural needs. It would allow them to enact laws that protect their fragile ecosystem, manage resources more effectively, and ensure sustainable development. The people of Ladakh are making their voices heard. Now, it is up to the government and the rest of the nation to listen and take meaningful action.

Stupa' project, has been vocal about the need for sustainable development in Ladakh. His demands are not only about preserving the environment but also about giving the local people the power to manage their resources and protect their cultural identity. One of his primary demands is to include Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. The Sixth Schedule provides special protections and autonomy to certain tribal areas in India, allowing them to preserve their culture, manage their resources, and have law-making powers over local matters. Ladakh, with its predominantly tribal population and distinct cultural heritage, has been seeking similar protection. The people of Ladakh in general have expressed disappointment with the current governance structure, which is led by a Lieutenant Governor appointed by the central government. Right now the people of Ladakh have a limited say in decision making. Granting Ladakh Sixth Schedule status would empower its people to make decisions that are in line with their unique environmental and cultural needs. It would allow them to enact laws that protect their fragile ecosystem, manage resources more effectively, and ensure sustainable development. The people of Ladakh are making their voices heard. Now, it is up to the government and the rest of the nation to listen and take meaningful action.

PICTALK



A view of Humayun's Tomb, a UNESCO world heritage site, in New Delhi

Walking through the woods in UK

Suspension of winter fuel allowances, Starmer's push to reset relations with Europe, and the forgotten legacy of the Gorkhas are echoing in the woods of the UK



ASHOK K MEHTA

Hadlow Stair is a village in Tonbridge Kent, UK, with the Old Hadlow Road leading to it. Tonbridge is a poorer cousin of the historic Tunbridge Wells but a great place for a walking-talking vacation this September when the sun broke through the clouds permitting invigorating small walks. Hadlow Stair is the perfect escape from rain-soaked London, just 40 minutes away by train to Charing Cross in Trafalgar Square. Ordinary Brits have been stunned by the new Labour, suspending Pound 200 winter fuel allowance to pensioners, ostensibly to fill the Pound 22 bn deficit left by the Tories though inflation is below 3 per cent. In the village, most read newspapers only on the weekend: the talk is about Ukraine, Gaza and Lebanon and Prime Minister Keir Starmer and his wife accepting gifts. Former civil servant Sue Gray who sorted out Boris Johnson for his indiscretions during the pandemic is now the chief advisor to Starmer with a pay package of Pounds 180,000, surpassing the wages the PM gets. Modernising Britain's Continuous Sea Deterrence as well as upgrading its nuclear submarines from Vanguard to Dreadnought class is also underway. Peers in the House of Lords warned that 2.5 per cent on defence spending (at present 2.3 per cent) may not be enough to meet the challenges and fix the military.

Here too, there is a Pound 10 bn hole which is proposed to be filled up by taxes. India's spending is below 2 per cent with immeasurably bigger threats. But who cares! All this and more, John Lawson, my walking companion shares with me. Amongst all the walks the one in the undulating woods nearby is most enjoyable as John takes myriad routes and detours along the soggy earthy soil. You can do a dozen different trails here and not know they are in the same woods. Go south from Hadlow Road past the Scottish St Andrews Church across fields and through apple orchards with apples to eat and apples to cook. But there are no pickers due to Brexit, laments John.



The Chinese have invented an apple-picking machine which is yet to make its commercial debut. Here, in the fields too, John has manufactured several walking trails - the special one is along the Medway river to Tonbridge town which has everything from Marks and Spencers to Waitrose and Sainsburys to Kathmandu Valley and Dalchini restaurants to Humphrey and Bean Pub where we were privy to a brawl. There is also the Tonbridge Castle. My favourite walk though is through the Higham Woods. This I did every morning, meeting making friends with people walking their dogs. Every house here has a cat or a dog or even a horse! Almost every afternoon John and I did serious walking bringing the milometer to roughly 120 plus miles in 12 days. In his spare time, John moves auto parts and trucks in the UK and Europe where too, Brexit means cost and time overruns. At the Labour Party annual conference, Starmer said he wants to reset relations with European Union and make Brexit work with the EU reset. The biggest applause at the conference was reserved for the Home Secretary, who decried the recent racial riots. Migrants continue to sail

THE PLAN TO RAISE A THIRD BATTALION OF GORKHA RIFLES WAS ABANDONED THOUGH THREE GORKHA COMPANIES WERE RAISED FOR THE SPECIAL FORCES. ALDERSHOT IS WHERE RETIRED GORKHAS ALLOWED RESIDENCY IN BRITAIN LIVE, WHILE THE BATTALION IS FURTHER SOUTH

across the Channel and since Rwanda is a closed issue, they will be settled in Britain. I've been travelling to the UK since the 1970s and can say this: Indian or Asian or coloured are no longer looked down upon even though many of the menial jobs are still being done by them. I was horrified to learn that there is a Gorkha Cleaning Company in Kent. The Gorkhas, the Brits once worshipped in battle are all but forgotten except by the likes of Joanna Lumley. This became more evident in London where along a side lane from Whitehall Avenue resides the life-sized stone statue of the eternal Gorkha soldier. The plan to raise a third battalion of Gorkha Rifles was abandoned though three Gorkha companies were raised for the Special Forces. Aldershot is where retired Gorkhas allowed residency in Britain live, while the battalion is further south. The other battalion is in Brunei for which the Sultan pays. Sadly, very few recognise the badges of the Gorkha Regiment any more. Why blame the Brits when we have offered the poor choice of Agniveer to Nepali Gorkhas who stopped joining five years ago? The British Army is 70,000 (with a reserve of 30,000) soldiers and Infantry

less than the size of our Gorkha Brigade. The Navy and Air Force together make another 70,000 warriors but all field state-of-the-art equipment including conventional and strategic forces which are the best in Europe. The military component of the Indian High Commission in Aldwych has been downsized from three officers to just one with a Naval Commodore holding the fort instead of the Army Brigadier. Returning to my trudge on the tarmac along Whitehall Avenue, the old MoD has become Raffles Hotel, RUSI next door renovated and a few meters ahead are bronze statues of leaders who won fame in India: Field Marshals Slim, Auchinleck, and Allanbrooke. Another Indian famous is the Duke of Wellington honoured in Trafalgar Square and Wellington Corner. The Brits nurture the military and that's one reason they are respected. Thoughts that wafted during the walk in the woods. We must learn. (The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff; The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WEST ASIA TURMOIL

Madam — Apropos, 'West Asia on fire' (September 30). Israel which had vowed 'enough is enough' in the aftermath of a brutal terrorist attack by Hamas on October 7 last year, has dealt a body blow to Hezbollah, the most powerful militant and political force in Lebanon, by eliminating its head Hassan Nasrallah, who had been a global figurehead of anti-Israel resistance for decades. He had been a prime target of Israel since the last Lebanon War of 2008. Now, Hezbollah, considered the vital part of the Axis of Resistance, is leaderless and thus rudderless. However, Nasrallah's demise may only keep Hezbollah lying down for a while. It cannot be written off. Wounded but not destroyed, it may not be long before Hezbollah tries to avenge Nasrallah by raining a barrage of missiles on Israel to keep its people from returning to the northern region. Netanyahu stakes his political fortunes on this. Meanwhile, with thousands of its citizens fleeing northern Israel in wake of Hezbollah strikes, Israel's main task remains unaccomplished. Its bombarding Lebanon may go on till Netanyahu gets war-weary and domestic pressures mount or until breakthrough on the hostage issue. It is an opportune time for the international community should it desire to prevail upon Tel Aviv to agree for ceasefire. But peace is unlikely to return to Gaza till Hamas frees hostages and a ceasefire is reached.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Washington

NON BJP STATES WITHDRAW CBI CONSENT

Madam — Karnataka has joined the long list of states that have withdrawn general consent to the CBI to conduct investigations relating to corruption, economic offences and crime or violence in that particular state. The Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946, under which the CBI was setup, has defined general consent and

Women education empowers India



Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar made insightful remarks on the significance of women's education. He said that a developed India is incomplete without women's empowerment, which is a powerful reminder of the crucial role they play in our society. Women constitute a substantial portion of our

population, and their active participation in all spheres of life is essential for holistic development. By investing in women's education, we not only unlock their individual potential but also empower their families and communities. Educated women are more likely to make informed decisions regarding health, nutrition, and child-rearing, leading to healthier and more prosperous families.

Moreover, women's education is a catalyst for economic growth. When women have access to education and employment opportunities, they contribute to the workforce, boost GDP, and reduce poverty. Their participation in decision-making processes ensures that diverse perspectives are considered, leading to more inclusive and equitable policies.

Fiza Fatima | Hyderabad

POTHOLES OF CORRUPTION

Madam — No matter which party is in power, the conditions of the roads all over the nation are pathetic. It requires no rocket science to understand why this is happening. Corruption is the root cause as inferior quality materials are used due to cuts taken by everybody from top to bottom in passing tenders and clearing bills. Therefore, it is hard to be enthused about the promise of pothole free roads by the CM of Delhi Atishi Marlena. Accidents caused by bad roads have come at a great cost including injury and sometimes fatality with no accountability fixed for the loss, what is worse, it is not just potholes but literally craters the vehicles are expected to navigate. Recently, there was a container truck that was completely swallowed by the road. This despite the vehicle owners being made to pay all kinds of taxes for permission to park their vehicles on such roads!

Anthony Henriques | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Remembering Gandhi: A journey of justice and simplicity

Gandhi's transformative journey, which began with racial discrimination in South Africa, helped shape his lifelong pursuit of justice, equality and nonviolence



RAJDEEP PATHAK

On September 11, 2024, Union Minister for Culture, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, inaugurated a restored railway coach at Gandhi Darshan, Rajghat, New Delhi. This coach, donated by the Ministry of Railways and painted in brown with a 'III' marking for third class, represents Mahatma Gandhi's simple lifestyle and his close relationship with the Indian railways. A life-size sculpture of Gandhi stepping off the train further emphasises his connection with the masses. Organised by the Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti, the exhibition offers an immersive experience of Gandhi's rail journeys. Shekhawat, in his address, highlighted how Gandhi turned the freedom struggle into a mass movement, remarking that the coach will inspire future generations to uphold the values of justice, equality, and peace for which Gandhi stood. Gandhi's association with the railways was deeply symbolic and formative in his transformation from an ordinary lawyer to the leader of India's independence movement.



A key moment occurred on June 7, 1893, in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, when Gandhi, then a young barrister, was forcibly removed from a first-class train compartment despite having a valid ticket. This act of racial discrimination left a lasting impact on Gandhi and ignited his lifelong dedication to justice and non-violent resistance. He often referred to this incident as the turning point that set him on the path toward becoming the Mahatma.

Gopal Krishna Gandhi, Gandhi's grandson, poignantly reflected on this moment. He wrote that when Gandhi was thrown off the train, an Indian fell, but when Gandhi rose, both India and South Africa rose with him. The experience transformed Gandhi, turning a personal

humiliation into a public cause. What began as a lawyer's indignation became a revolutionary's commitment to human justice. His later train journeys in South Africa, including those to Johannesburg and Pretoria, deepened his understanding of racial discrimination in the railway system. Gandhi confronted railway officials and managed to negotiate some concessions for Indian passengers, marking the beginning of his use of negotiation and protest as tools for change. Upon returning to India in 1914, Gandhi's relationship with the railways grew stronger. He followed the advice of his mentor, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, by traveling in third-class compartments to stay connected with India's impoverished masses. For

Gandhi, trains were a means to engage with ordinary people and understand their struggles firsthand. The challenging conditions he faced—overcrowded compartments, unsanitary surroundings—only strengthened his resolve to fight for social justice. His decision to travel third class symbolised his commitment to egalitarianism and helped transform the freedom struggle into a mass movement that resonated with the broader population. Gandhi traveled by train from Calcutta to Delhi and stayed at Birla House where he spent the last 144 days of his life. During this time, he tirelessly worked for peace amidst the communal violence of Partition. His assassination in January 1948 ended a life devoted to nonviolence and service to humanity. As we celebrate Gandhi Jayanti today as the International Day of Nonviolence, we are reminded of Gandhi's self-sacrifice, dedication, and compassion. (The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)



FIRST COLUMN SLEEP, SPIRITUALITY AND THE MODERN MIND

Reclaiming quality sleep requires reconnecting with spiritual practices



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

In the famous poem "Childhood", Ravindra Nath Tagore bemoans the loss of innocence as a child grows up. One thing we can all agree that to sleep like a child is a great asset. But as we grow up our minds begin to play havoc with our sleep. Before I go any further let us understand the basics of sleep. Sleep is one of the most important biological functions and inadequate sleep can cause many problems. Sleep is the time when the body rejuvenates itself. Sleep restores physical well-being and removes fatigue related to emotional activities.

Our brains are beehives of activities during sleep, including the time when one is dreaming. How much sleep is required? It depends on each individual according to age, type of activities, level of activities, etc. Lord Krishna has mentioned sleep as one of the four activities, which must be appropriate. (The Bhagavad-Geeta 6.17) We need sleep excellence. What does the modern man do? There are three types. One cuts on sleep and another cannot fall asleep and resorts to drinks and drugs.

The third sleeps too much wasting precious human life. Taking up the busy ones, they have no respect for rules made by God – the Creator of our bodies. They feel that they can do with less sleep and nothing adverse will happen. But they get harmed in many ways.

The first causality is the energy level; it goes down. Physical health is affected in many ways, but it takes a long; one feels that he is fine until hit by some serious health problem. Performance declines; cognitive ability reduces; memory consolidation is affected as does mental health. You cannot copy someone else, because, as stated earlier,



er, it is, person specific – a bodily necessity. The second group suffers no less, if anything substantially more in the long term.

One thinks that he can order the body to sleep whenever one wants. Have you tried to postpone sleep? What happens? Circadian rhythms are 24-hour cycles that are part of the body's internal clock. Its primary function is sleeping and waking.

We cannot take charge; it controls us. So what does the modern man do? He resorts to artificially induced sleep by taking drinks and drugs. We all know what drinks do to our liver. And drugs are similarly harmful to the brain. Both are habit forming. One is stuck once this is continued over some time. Why is one unable to fall asleep, when bodily and mentally tired? Because we have allowed our minds to take charge of our lives.

We have unlimited desires for a sense of enjoyment, power, fame, etc. We are being driven by emotions like lust, greed, anger, hate, etc. By the way, drinks and drugs do not stop bad and scary dreams from coming, which leave a very bad feeling upon waking up.

The third kind harms oneself in more ways than one by making sleep one's shelter. Let us come to our senses. Shelter is available in God. There are simple spiritual practices, which connect one to God. He will help us curb our wrong tendencies, as only God can. But one has to first accept that one is wrong; one has to give up overblown ego.

It is quite strange that a small, ignorant and helpless soul has such a big ego. What is the conclusion? There is only one shelter, as instructed by Lord Krishna. You will get plenty of sleep and of good quality too sans bad dreams.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher; views are personal)

Transforming lives of the Indian farmers



SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN

Through modern infrastructure, expanded credit support, and sustainable farming methods, PM Modi's policies are revolutionising Indian agriculture

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's deep concern and sensitivity towards farmers is visible in the decisions, policies and plans taken for the farming community. Transforming the lives of our food providers (Annadata) is the first and foremost goal of our Prime Minister. This is the reason why agriculture and farmers remained the top priorities in the first 100 days of the third term of the NDA government. Under his leadership, the government is making unprecedented efforts for the empowerment and upliftment of the agriculture sector. We are committed to increasing farmers' income, which is reflected in schemes such as the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF), and PM AASHA. Post-harvest losses in India are a major challenge, which threatens the production capacity of the agricultural sector and it also adversely impacts the hard work put in by lakhs of farmers. According to the latest estimates, about 16-18 per cent of the total food production is affected every year in India due to this.

These losses can be attributed to various stages of agriculture such as harvesting, threshing, storage, transportation and processing. Lack of proper storage, cold chain, inadequate processing units, and lack of efficient logistics contribute to these huge losses, as a result of which the overall food security of our country gets affected.

Keeping all these factors in mind, the Modi government is working with renewed enthusiasm towards strengthening this. Under the able leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government is making efforts to take the research of scientists from lab to land, due to which the cost of production has reduced considerably and profits have increased for farmers. The Prime Minister with a visionary approach launched the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) way back in July 2020 as a transformative initiative under the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative. Its objective is to increase the income of farmers and address post-harvest management issues through farm assets to reduce food wastage. These challenges have to be addressed by promoting new projects and new age technologies. Under AIF, banks provide interest subvention of 3 per cent per annum with an interest cap of 9 per cent and financial institutions will provide loans up to Rs 2 crore with credit guarantee coverage under CGTMSE (Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises) for loans. Through this initiative, the government aims to not only increase production to preserve quality and quantity, but also help farmers access markets more efficiently, and as a result, their income will also increase.

Due to the able leadership of the Prime Minister, the benefits of the scheme, till August 2024, the amount sanctioned under this scheme has crossed Rs 47,500 crore. Of this, more than Rs 30,000 crore has already been disbursed for various projects. Notably, 54 per cent of the projects that were sanctioned are linked to farmers, cooperative societies, agricultural production organisations and self-help groups (SHGs), which is in line with the Prime Minister's vision. It reflects the strong participation of farmers in providing farm-gate level infrastructure. Prime Minister Modi is very committed towards strengthening farm gate infrastructure to solve the major problem post-harvest losses in agricultural produce. He prioritised the development of infra-



structure in storage (dry and cold), transportation, etc., so that farmers could be protected from such crop loss. In terms of dry storage, in comparison to food grain production, India has an infrastructure in terms of 1,740 lakh metric tonnes of storage capacity, and at present, there is a shortage of 44 per cent in the storage capacity for the overall grain production in India, which is very concerning.



THE PRIME MINISTER WITH A VISIONARY APPROACH LAUNCHED THE AGRICULTURE INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (AIF) WAY BACK IN JULY 2020 AS A TRANSFORMATIVE INITIATIVE UNDER THE 'ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT' INITIATIVE

Similarly, for horticulture produce, about 441.9 lakh metric tonnes of cold storage is available in India, while the cold chain capacity is only 15.72 per cent of the production of fruits and vegetables in the country. AIF initiative has helped bridge the storage capacity gap by approximately 500 lakh metric tonnes. Contributing to saving about Rs 5,700 crore post-harvest losses for the nation. Furthermore, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, the development of proper cold storage facilities has reduced the loss of horticulture products by 10 per cent, due to which 3.5 lakh metric tonnes of produce is being secured post harvest and about Rs 1,250 crore is being saved every year. This commitment of the Prime Minister towards the agriculture sector and farmers will not only ensure economic empowerment but also raise their standard of living. Under the guidance of the Prime Minister, the AIF is providing new impetus to the growth and development of agricultural infrastructure. As of August 2024, as many as 74,695 agriculture infrastructure-related initiatives across the country have been approved under AIF. These include 18,508 custom hiring centres, 16,238 primary processing centres, 13,702 warehouses, 3,095 sorting and grading units, 1,901 cold stores and cold chains, and 21,251 other types of infrastructure facilities. These 74,695 projects have attracted a total investment of Rs 78,702 crore in the agriculture sector since 2015, which marks significant progress in the sector. Prime Minister Modi has encouraged entrepreneurship among farmers, as approximately 50,000 new agricultural enterprises have been set up in the country. These efforts have helped create more than 8,00,000 employment opportunities, and this number will only increase in the future, even-

tually leading to the creation of 2.5 million jobs, directly or indirectly. The Prime Minister's welfare policies have brought about positive changes in the working style of farmers. The creation of advanced infrastructure on farms has facilitated farmers to sell directly to a wider consumer base, thereby enhancing price realisation and increasing their overall income. Due to modern packaging and cold storage systems, farmers can time their market sales more strategically, resulting in better value realisation. On average, this infrastructure initiative has enabled farmers to get 11-14 per cent higher prices for their produce. Prime Minister Modi's policies will not only encourage the development of agricultural infrastructure but also reduce credit risk. Through credit guarantee support and interest subvention, lending institutions can give loans with minimal risk, thereby helping their customers. This helps in expanding their base and portfolio diversification. Significantly, this fund is involved in the creation of agricultural infrastructure in collaboration with the refinance facility of NABARD, reducing the effective interest rate for Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) to 1 per cent.

This has brought significant benefits to thousands of farmers associated with such PACS. Under AIF, 9,573 PACS projects have been approved with a loan amount of Rs 2,970 crore to date by NABARD. In an important step under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the central government has approved the progressive expansion of the ambitious Agriculture Infrastructure Fund scheme, making it more inclusive and substantially more influential. The make agriculture a profitable business we have come up with a six-point strategy to increase the income of farmers, such as increasing production, reducing the cost of farming, fair prices for production, providing the appropriate amount of relief during natural disasters, diversification of agriculture and natural farming.

At present, some promising projects for agricultural asset development, such as hydroponic farming, mushroom cultivation, vertical farming, and

aeronic farming, polyhouse and greenhouse, are reserved for only farmer groups and collectives.

Now by expanding the scheme coverage to include integrated processing projects, farmers will get better prices for their produce through the creation of integrated processing plants, which include both primary and secondary processing. In addition to this, component A of PM-KUSUM (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan) Yojana provides the facility for the installation of solar power plants up to 2 MW on barren, fallow, cultivable, pasture or marshy lands, and it can be easily converged with the AIF scheme. This strategic convergence will help individual farmers and empower farmer groups, enhancing their role from being 'Annadata' (food givers) to 'Urjadata' (energy providers). The dedicated credit guarantee cover window, which was exclusively kept for FPOs, i.e. NAB Sanrakshan Trustee Company Private Limited, will remain open for AIF beneficiaries as well, where they will be eligible for guarantee fee reimbursement. These changes will increase processing capabilities, diversify food production, and increase and improve the quality of the yields.

They will increase the shelf life of the produce, boost transport capacity and improve rural supply by linking it to the urban demand. Additionally, these changes will help in generating rural employment opportunities. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund is making a significant contribution towards the development of the agriculture sector and empowerment of Indian farmers, by providing a sustainable solution. Due to the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, even the minutest problems faced by farmers are being resolved, intense communication and combined efforts have brought a new dawn in the context of farmers' welfare, and this will prove to be a key milestone to fulfil the dreams of a developed agriculture sector of a Viksit Bharat.

(The writer is the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Rural Development; views are personal)

Navigating manufacturing landscape: Bridging growth, disparities, and industrial ambitions

India stands as the world's fifth-largest manufacturing powerhouse, generating nearly \$560 billion in goods annually

India is the world's fifth largest manufacturing powerhouse producing nearly 560 Billion Dollars' worth of goods per year but our share in global manufacturing output is below 3 per cent. And the share of manufacturing in India's Gross Value Added (GVA) is stuck at just 17 per cent, not far ahead of the share of agriculture. It is often stated that India seems to be transitioning directly from a primary sector-dominant economy into one dominated by the service sector. The question often asked is whether manufacturing is going to play its part in India's often paradoxical and counter-intuitive growth story. However, one element of India's industrial landscape is quite predictable. The concepts



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

of growth poles first propounded by the French Economist Perroux along with its accompanying concepts of the inevitability of unbalanced regional growth in industrial clusters, with an agglomeration effect that will accentuate regional diversity, seems pretty close to India's development experience. Thus, even where India had set up new industrial townships in

places like Rourkela, Bokaro or even Jamshedpur in an earlier era, these do not appear to have led to broader regional development, with the nearby hinterland areas remaining under-developed for the most part.

The broader issue of regional disparities that have emerged in India has been sought to be addressed institutionally by the various Finance Commission's devolution formula which gives overwhelming weightage to per capita income and, therefore, ensures higher resource flows into backward areas.

The market, on the other hand, has responded to these disparities by the movement of migrant labour to the faster growing parts of the country, with the migrant labour being

the unsung hero of the construction and manufacturing growth in these areas. The concepts of growth poles and growth centres are now being supplemented by the phenomena of port-led industrial growth with major ports, old and new, serving as growth centres in many countries.

The National Industrial Corridor Development Programme (NICDP) takes on the challenges of accelerating India's manufacturing growth, creating multiple industrial growth foci and linking industrialisation to transport nodes, head-on. The NICDP has focused on the development of industrial townships adjacent to 11 key transport corridors. Eight such townships had been approved till the current



year, four of which are shovel-ready with the industrial plots being allotted, and four others are being implemented with trunk infrastructure being set up. As against eight projects implemented or under implementation over the last 17 years, the Government has recently approved twelve such smart industrial cities in 10 States, at one go, with a big bang approach which is characteristic of PM Modi's style which focuses on Speed and Scale.

All these sites have been validated using the geospatial data on the PM Gati Shakti National Platform to minimise disturbances to existing habitations and ecology, with prioritisation to availability of land parcels with the State Governments, covering land of relatively lesser agricultural value, with proximity to major transport modes for multi-modal connectivity.

A new aspect of using PM Gati Shakti to not only ensure the enhancement of transport infrastructure for improved connectivity but also to combine such network planning with an area planning approach by asking States to start filling social infrastructure gaps (schools, Anganwadis, ITIs, accommodation) concurrently with project implementation, has been initiated.

This combination of transport network planning and area planning should lead to these green field industrial cities getting plug and play infrastructure and multi-modal transport links ahead of demand for the private sector and particularly for foreign investors who wish to participate in India's growth story. It may be recalled that India's Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) ranking had improved from 143 in 2014 to 63 in 2020, in the last year that such rankings were published by the World Bank. While contract compliances and improvement are linked to the broader issue of judicial reform, the NICDP programme will substantially address, along with

parallel initiatives by the States, the issues of land availability and its transparent administration, for any investors seeking industrial sites in these cities. The NICDP Programme also de-risks the investor from one key compliance burden that new investors are concerned about, the issue of environmental clearances by ensuring that full environmental clearance for the entire township is already in place and is backed up by a full spectrum of utility services like power, sewage and waste treatment, roads etc., in a smart city with state-of-the-art infrastructure and digitized grievance redressal mechanisms.

(The writer is former Secretary, DPIIT and currently OSD, Ministry of Defence; views are personal)

IN BRIEF



Gold snaps 10-day rally; declines Rs 200

Gold prices declined by Rs 200 to Rs 78,100 per 10 grams, snapping a 10-day winning streak, in the national capital on Tuesday, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal closed at Rs 78,300 per 10 grams on Monday. However, silver remained flat at Rs 92,500 per kilogram on Tuesday. Additionally, gold of 99.5 per cent purity fell by Rs 200 to Rs 77,700 per 10 grams. It had finished at Rs 77,900 per 10 grams in the previous close on Monday. Meanwhile, in futures trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold contracts for December delivery jumped by Rs 347 or 0.46 per cent to Rs 75,958 per 10 grams. Silver also climbed Rs 441 or 0.49 per cent to trade at Rs 91,160 per kg on the bourse. "Gold prices traded positively with gains. Market participants are closely watching this data-packed week, with the prime focus on non-farm payrolls and unemployment data scheduled for Friday."



Working with MCA to roll out PM Internship Scheme: CII

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on Tuesday said it is working closely with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) to facilitate the implementation of the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme that was announced in the Budget. The PM Internship Scheme aims to provide internship opportunities to one crore youth in 500 top CSR spend companies in the next five years. CII is acting as a critical facilitator between the government and the industry, ensuring the scheme's effective rollout, the industry body stated. The PM Internship Scheme will enhance youth employability in India by offering them hands-on exposure to real-world business environments. The scheme will also benefit the industry by creating a pipeline of skilled, work-ready youth who can be employed post-internship both in large as well as micro, small and medium enterprise, CII stated.



Maruti Suzuki sales up 2 pc to 1,84,727 units

Maruti Suzuki India on Tuesday reported a 2 per cent year-on-year increase in total sales at 1,84,727 units in September. The company had sold 1,81,343 units in the same month last year, Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) said in a statement. Total domestic passenger vehicle sales were at 1,44,962 units as compared to 1,50,812 units in the year-ago month, a decline of 4 per cent, it added. Sales of mini segment cars, comprising Alto and S-Presso, grew to 10,363 units against 10,351 units in September 2023. Sales of compact cars, including Baleno, Celerio, Dzire, Ignis, Swift, Tour S and WagonR, however, declined to 60,480 units as compared to 68,551 units in the year-ago month. Utility vehicles, consisting of Brezza, Ertiga, Grand Vitara and XL6, clocked sales of 61,549 units last month, as compared to 59,272 units earlier, a growth of 4 per cent. Sales of van Eco were at 11,908 units last month as against 11,147 units in September 2023, while that of light commercial vehicle Super Carry stood at 3,099 units as against 2,294 units earlier.

Goyal meets Warburg Pincus, Blackstone; seeks investments

PNS ■ NEW YORK

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Tuesday held bilateral meetings with global private equity firm Warburg Pincus and global investment company Blackstone here to discuss investment opportunities in India in sectors like electronics and renewable energy.

At the invitation of United States Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo, Goyal is in the US till October 3, 2024. He will co-chair with Raimondo the India-USA CEO Forum on October 2, and the 6th India-USA Commercial Dialogue on October 3 in Washington D.C.

In a series of posts on social media platform X, Goyal said that he met Timothy F Geithner, Chairman of Warburg Pincus, and discussed the efforts made by India to facilitate business entry, ease of doing business, single-window clearances and industrial infrastructure.

"We explored new ideas and collaboration opportunities in sectors such as renew-



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able energy, data infrastructure and R&D," he said.

He also met Stephen A Schwarzman, Chairman, CEO and Co-Founder of Blackstone, and discussed the company's future investment

plans as India continues its exponential growth trajectory.

"Invited them to explore opportunities in sectors like infrastructure, housing and renewable energy, among oth-

ers," Goyal said, adding he also held deliberations with Henry R Kravis, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Chairman of global investment firm Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. (KKR).

During that meeting, he emphasised upon the potential investment avenues for the firm in India's electronics manufacturing, data infrastructure and logistics sectors.

"Also, highlighted how the country's consistent economic growth over the past decade and large consumer market offer a multitude of opportunities for its strategic investments," he added.

The minister invited American companies with expertise in high-tech manufacturing to 'Make In India' for the world.

The US is the largest trading partner of India. The bilateral trade was \$120 billion in 2023-24. India is also one of the major recipients of foreign direct investment from the US. The country received \$67 billion between April 2000 and June 2024



West Asia conflict hurting India's trade with Israel, Jordan, Lebanon: GTRI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The escalating conflict in West Asia is hurting India's trade with countries like Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon that are involved directly in the war, think tank GTRI said on Tuesday.

To navigate these turbulent times, India must stay vigilant and adaptable to the fast-changing geopolitical and trade landscape in West Asia, the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said.

During January-July 2024, India's trade with countries directly impacted by the conflict has faced significant challenges. "Exports to Israel dropped sharply by 63.5 per cent, Jordan

saw a 38.5 per cent decline due to spillover effects, and Lebanon experienced a 6.8 per cent decrease," GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said. He added that the Israel-Hamas war, which erupted in October 2023, has now extended to Lebanon, Syria, and is indirectly impacting Jordan and Iran. Key regional players like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, and Qatar have thus far remained uninvolved in the conflict. "This neutrality has allowed India's trade with these Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to increase by 17.8 per cent between January and July 2024 compared to the same period the previous year," Srivastava said.

NMDC hikes iron ore rates by Rs 400/tonne

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The country's largest iron ore miner NMDC on Tuesday increased the rates of lump ore and fines by Rs 400 per tonne with immediate effect.

The company has revised the price of lump ore -- containing 65.5 per cent iron -- to Rs 5,750 per tonne from Rs 5,350 a tonne fixed on August 8.

The rate of fines or low-grade ore, with 64 per cent and below iron content, has been hiked to Rs 5,010 per tonne from Rs 4,610 per tonne fixed in August this year.

The prices are effective from October 1 and include royalty and contributions towards the district mineral fund (DMF), and National Mineral Exploration Trust (DMET). It excludes cess, forest permit fees and other taxes, the company said.

Iron ore is one of the key raw materials used in the manufacturing of steel, and any movement in its prices has a direct impact on rates of steel, an alloy widely used in segments like construction, infrastructure, automobile and railways.

According to BigMint, the price hike is in line with the rise of global iron ore prices after China recently announced a stimulus to boost its economy.

"The rates of iron ore in the global market have moved up

by around 15-20 per cent in the last one week after the announcement of a financial package by the government in China," the markets research firm said. Hyderabad-based NMDC is India's largest iron ore mining company catering to the country's up to 20 per cent demand for steel-making raw material.

Kumaraswamy tells automakers to follow PM E-DRIVE norms

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy told automakers to follow the guidelines while availing incentives under the Rs 10,900 crore PM E-DRIVE scheme launched on Tuesday, asserting that there should be "no scope" for controversy like in the FAME-II scheme.

The heavy industries minister's remarks assume significance as the second phase of FAME-II (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles) scheme was marred by allegations of some companies availing fiscal incentives by violating the norms.

The FAME-II regulations permitted incentives for producing electric vehicles using made-in-India components. However, a probe by the heavy industries ministry had revealed that some companies purportedly utilized imported components.

Sensex, Nifty fall on profit-taking in oil & gas, FMCG shares

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty edged lower on Tuesday, extending the losing run to the third day amid profit-taking in oil & gas and select FMCG shares.

The BSE Sensex dipped 33.49 points or 0.04 per cent to settle at 84,266.29. During the day, it hit a high of 84,648.40 and a low of 84,098.94.

The NSE Nifty closed marginally lower by 13.95 points or 0.05 per cent to 25,796.90.

Muted trends in global markets and heavy foreign fund outflows weighed on investor sentiment, analysts said.

Sensex has shed nearly 1,570 points or nearly 2 per cent and Nifty declined 419 points or 1.6 per cent since Friday after China announced stimulus measures to prop-up its economy.

Among 30 Sensex companies, IndusInd Bank fell the most by 2.68 per cent. Asian Paints dropped 1.54 per cent and Hindustan Unilever by 1.27 per cent.



Tata Motors fell nearly 1 per cent on disappointing September sales numbers. Tata Steel, Titan, Reliance Industries and NTPC were also among the major laggards.

Triggered by the recent stimulus policies by the Chinese central bank, funds are shifting to cheaper Chinese stocks from expensive markets like India.

This, along with the possible increase in interest rates by the BoJ due to recent political changes, may impact the domestic market in the near term," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. IT shares bucked the trend and helped indices trim

losses. Tech Mahindra rose the most by 2.93 per cent among Sensex shares. Mahindra & Mahindra rose by 2.22 per cent on strong sales numbers in September.

Kotak Mahindra Bank, Infosys, HCL Technologies and State Bank of India were among the major gainers.

The BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.56 per cent and mid-cap index went up by 0.27 per cent.

Among the indices, telecommunication declined 0.86 per cent, oil & gas (0.71 per cent), utilities (0.35 per cent), realty (0.24 per cent) and power (0.17 per cent).

Flood of IPOs: 13 cos file draft papers with Sebi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A wave of initial public offerings (IPOs) is set to hit Dalal Street with over a dozen companies, including Vikram Solar, Aditya Infotech, and Varindera Constructions, filing preliminary papers with markets regulator Sebi in a single day.

These firms are expected to collectively garner at least Rs 8,000 crore, according to the draft papers filed by them on Monday.

These IPOs are across sectors, deal size and combination of fresh issues and offer for sale (OFS). The filing comes at a time when the primary market is experiencing strong interest from both issuers and investors across various sectors.

Moreover, 62 companies have already mobilised around Rs



64,000 crore collectively via mainboard, marking a 29 per cent increase from Rs 49,436 crore collected by 57 firms through the route in the entire 2023. The strong momentum in IPO markets is driven by several key macroeconomic, sector-specific factors and willingness of funds to look at new ideas, partially led by strong inflows into domestic mutual funds as well as the robust capital formation hap-

pening across corporate India, Munish Aggarwal, Managing Director Head - Equity Capital Markets at Equirus, said.

"Unless there is a major black swan event which disrupts global economy and markets, we expect the markets to continue with the momentum in 2025 with both number of transactions and issuance amount going up further," he added.

Apart from Vikram Solar, Aditya Infotech, and Varindera Constructions, other companies that filed draft papers on Monday are Ajax Engineering, Rahee Infratech, Vikran Engineering, Midwest, Viney Corporation, Sambhvi Steel Tubes, Jaro Institute of Technology Management and Research, All Time Plastics Ltd, Scoda Tubes, and Dev Accelerator.

GST mop-up rises 6.5 pc to Rs 1.73 lakh cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gross GST collection in September grew 6.5 per cent to about Rs 1.73 lakh crore, according to government data released on Tuesday.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue in September last year was Rs 1.63 lakh crore. In August 2024, the mop-up was Rs 1.75 lakh crore. Last month, domestic revenue grew 5.9 per cent to about Rs 1.27 lakh crore. Revenue from import of goods was up 8 per cent to Rs 45,390 crore.

Refunds worth Rs 20,458 crore were issued during the month, an increase of 31 per cent over the year-ago period.

India initiates dumping probe on six products imported from China

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has initiated a probe into alleged dumping of as many as six products, including certain chemicals, and cold rolled electrical steel and black toner powder cartridge, imported from China following separate complaints from domestic players. The commerce ministry's investigation arm Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) is probing the dumping of 1,1,1,2-Tetrafluoroethane or R-134a; Acrylonitrile Butadiene Rubber; certain

Antioxidants; polytetrafluoroethylene; black toner powder cartridge; and cold rolled non-oriented electrical steel from China. According to six separate notifications, the applicants have alleged that material injury is being caused to the domestic industry due to the dumped imports of these products originating in or exported from China into India.

They have requested for imposition of anti-dumping duty on these imports with a view to guard them from cheap imports.

India's power consumption at 141.36 bn units

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's power consumption remained almost flat at 141.36 billion units (BU) year-on-year in September, mainly due to the above-normal rainfall across the country, which reduced the use of cooling appliances like air conditioners and desert coolers.

According to the Indian Meteorological Department, the country experienced a rainfall excess of 10.6 per cent in September.

In September 2023, the power consumption stood at 141.29 BU, according to official data.

The highest supply in a day (peak power demand met) contracted to 230.60W GW



in September 2024 against 239.93 GW in the year-ago month. The peak power demand touched an all-time high of about 250 GW in May this year. The previous all-time high peak power demand of 243.27 GW was

recorded in September 2023.

Earlier this year, the power ministry projected a peak power demand of 235 GW during the day and 225 GW during evening hours for May, and 240 GW during daytime and 235 GW in the

evening hours for June.

The ministry also estimated that peak power demand may hit 260 GW this summer.

Experts said the widespread above-normal rainfall in the country reduced the use of cooling appliances like air conditioners and desert coolers.

This led to a decline in power consumption as well as growth in power demand in the country in September, they said. The demand for power and consumption will continue to be steady in the coming days due to the end of the Monsoon season and more industrial and commercial activities in the country due to festivities, they added.

Govt looking to tweak regulatory norms for MedTech, pharma

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government is considering tweaking regulatory norms for MedTech and pharma sectors and sought industry inputs for the same, Niti Aayog member (Health) VK Paul said on Tuesday.

Speaking at an ASSOCHAM event here, he said that with changing times the regulatory framework also needs to be worked upon. "Under the aegis of principal scientific adviser to the Government of India, regulatory improvements for medical technology and pharma are under active consideration," Paul said.

He sought industry participation in making the system better.

"We are working on it with a very open mind. We are conscious of the fact that even in the classical space, there is room for improvement. But certainly, when it comes to frontline technology, cell and gene therapies for the individualised care and perhaps even integrated systems that we are looking at, the regulatory system needs to be tweaked to be improved," Paul said.

As per the government's stated vision of making India a developed country by 2047, there is a need to enhance exports from India, he added.

The country should not only be the largest market for diagnostics but also the biggest creator of technologies in the sector, the member noted.

Asha Negi's stunning transformation for Honeymoon Photographer

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A breakthrough that brought her the 'Stellar Performer of the Year', Asha Negi has certainly proved to be the well-deserved one. Pavitra Rishta, made our guest for the day a household name. She's now here exploring her prowess, not only refined to a particular medium but also genre!

Currently, gaining much traction for her portrayal of Ambika in the latest Jio Cinema show *Honeymoon Photographer*, the show revolves around her character, who is a photographer in the Maldives for a honeymoon shoot. She faces a terrible situation when the groom is discovered dead and she has no recollection of the previous evening upon waking up. As hidden truths come to light, she navigates a dangerous tangle of deceit to reveal the truth—or face destruction.

"Ambika is like a girl next door," begins the *Ludo* fame in an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*. "The show is a thriller and has a lot of suspense—a murder mystery, basically. She's not proactive. She's this vulnerable girl who is also an artist, a photographer and this is the first time she's doing something like a honeymoon photography." *Honeymoon Photographer* introduces her character as this charming, self-confident girl who enjoys her work. As the story unfolds, "You get to see different versions of Ambika because of the challenges that she's going through. Just imagine a girl next door, a photographer, an artist, a simple girl; she happens to be involved in somebody's murder. How would that be? She's not prepared for anything like this. It just happens with her. How she tackles all of it is how Ambika's character is unfolding in the show."

Guess what? With this project, she discovered something new about herself. "I can also have abs and be this really fit and toned (she giggles)," shares the *Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi* season 6 star, adding, "For other characters that I had played, I'd mostly be wearing salwar suit and don't really have to dress up like this character. As this project came my way, they'd told me that I might have to wear something like this bikini and shorts. I was like, okay, but I don't know if I can reach that level of confidence of wearing such clothes on screen. And secondly, I don't know if my body can actually become so fit and toned that I look good in that. This was something new that I faced, but I am glad that this character came my way. The entire fitness journey that people see on social media of mine happened only because of this show. Otherwise, I was very comfortable doing my basic."

Well again, dance is something that she's always enjoyed and so do we, seeing her dance choreography. Haha! The *Nach Baliye* star affirms, "Everybody is making dance reels and that's why I was also like, why not me?" Getting back again to the show, she shares how she'd gone out of her comfort zone and not being monotonous. "I did push myself a little harder for this particular character."

Delving deeper into *Honeymoon Photographer*, the show also delves into the themes of love, relationships and personal growth. "Personal growth is very important," she further discusses in this chat, adding that it is the most important aspect when it comes to living your life. "I feel evolution; personal growth is actually my priority as a person. Other than that, yes, while the show has a murder mystery, it also has cheating and a lot of emotions related to the characters. Of course, cheating is something that is not tolerated. I think it is the same for all of us. Right? I think other than that, I would say there are many more emo-

Actress Asha Negi is no less than a talented star who certainly enraptures hearts every time on and off-screen. In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, she discusses her character in *Honeymoon Photographer*, the transformation that she brought in, being a director's actor and more



tions discovered in the project through different characters."

Well, Asha is just another of those director's actors, who is pretty good with following what the director has to say and what the director wants the actor to do. A lot of times, the *Collar Bomb* fame reveals, "I go blank and fill my slate with what the director has to instruct. That is how I also like my entire process to be. Of course, I do have my own pointers, my own way. I do put in my own style at the end of it, but I still love it when the director is very clear about the character and how the scene has to be portrayed. Even with *Honeymoon Photographer*, I did the same. The director, writers and team have been on the story, on the characters, way before we joined the project."

The series also features stunning backdrops, where they were not just shooting but having fun too. But again, it was hectic!

"Outdoor shoots are not that easy, not that fun," recalls the *Abhay* season 2 fame. Well, she was also all praises for her co-star Rajeev Siddhartha. "I think he's a phenomenal actor. Most of the time, I used to be in awe of his performance. He knows that and I have told him a couple of times too. I really got to learn a lot from him." Later, once the outdoor schedule was over, which was like the last but, guess what? "I have hogged and how? I ate 3-3 burgers in a go," she humourously tells us and we were like, "Oh my god." But why not? She was on a diet for the character, of course. "I think that it is the most fun part. I was really looking forward to it." Again, love and relationships were not something in her priority while shooting for this show. In fact, "I was very indulged in the murder and the mystery; the whole thriller and angle."

While the diaspora certainly brings a show or a film as a male starrer, reviews have made a mention of the Asha Negi-starrer. Now that the women are given their due credit, we head towards the end of this chat as the former Miss Uttarakhand says, "Trust me, I'd not even thought of it. But let me tell you, honestly, I'm very happy. Something that was actually seen as risky is finally happening. But again, this is not something that I look into. Even if it wouldn't have happened, I'd still be happy."



I GO BLANK AND FILL MY SLATE WITH WHAT THE DIRECTOR HAS TO INSTRUCT. I DO HAVE MY OWN POINTERS. BUT I STILL LOVE IT WHEN THE DIRECTOR IS VERY CLEAR ABOUT THE CHARACTER AND HOW THE SCENE HAS TO BE PORTRAYED.

— Actress
ASHA NEGI

REDISCOVERING A GENIUS Father of Indian Abstractionism's story

SHIKHA DUGGAL
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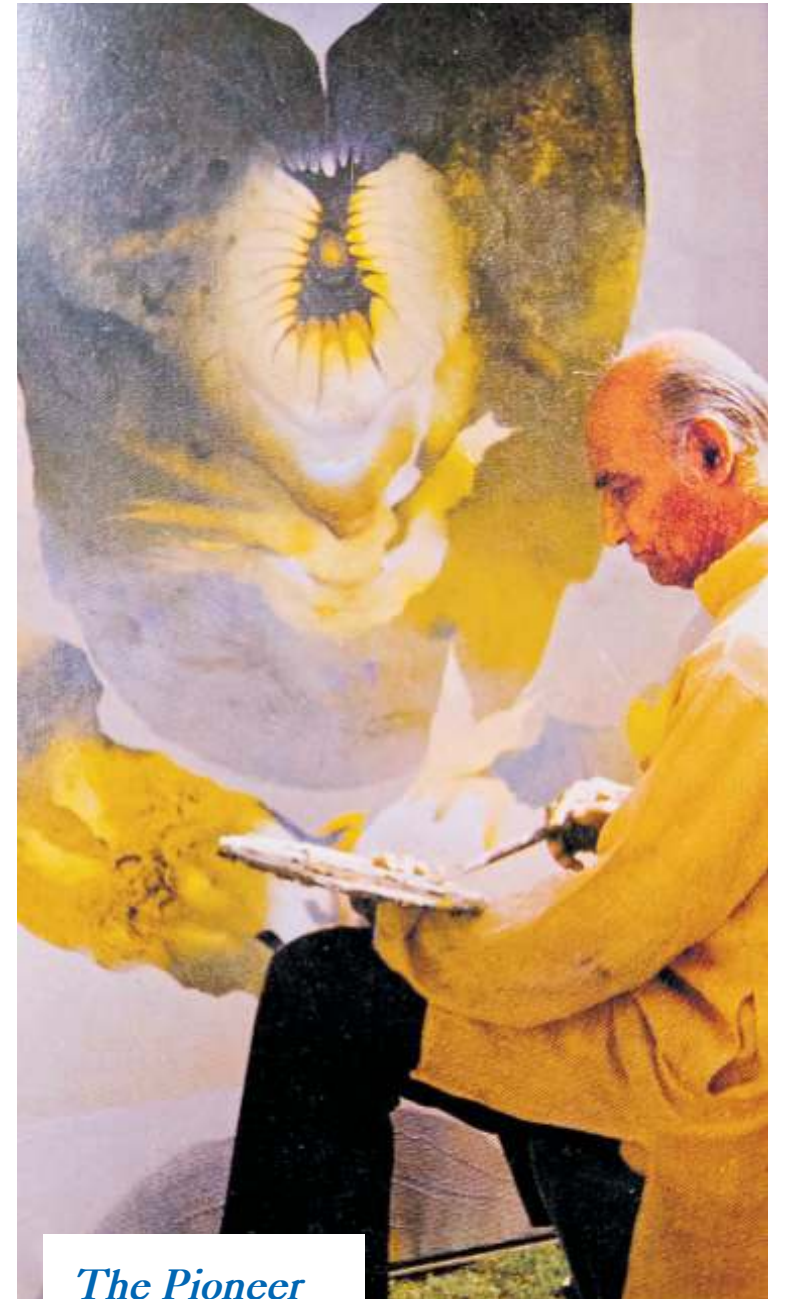
In Indian art, Bimal Das Gupta was a pathfinder whose avant-garde abstract paintings completely changed the field of modern art! His mastery of colour, particularly in water-colours—was his greatest asset as an artist. He had a captivating manner of blending and mixing, whether in a bright array or monochrome. His paintings have been forgotten for a long time, despite his tragic death and the deaths of his children in a car accident in 1995. Sources, however, inform us exclusively that his pieces have only begun to resurface at auction and are receiving positive reviews.

The main collector of artwork by is Vikram Mayor, Director of Gallery Silver Scapes. An intriguing discovery for our readers, reading this piece appears to be the experiences he reveals from people who have collaborated closely with him. "Bimal Da was always a creative genius with a vision that sought to continually rediscover himself. His early paintings from the 1930s include abstract-bordering landscapes and architectural pieces. He started his journey in the 1940s before moving on to tantric pieces. As a devoted Hindu, the Shiv Parivar from the 1940s, during what is known as his "brown period," is among his first known abstractions." His works created after the 1980s can be understood as a potent synthesis of his previous experiences into a fusion of Tantra and landscapes with a Darwinistic vibe. Artists typically begin to wane as they become older. Bimal Da was different and each work coming out was a masterpiece in its own rights.

"Every new piece the artist produced over the course of six decades was a development from the one before it; the journey was clear and will be on display when his works are shown. I wouldn't know how to characterise it other than as a transforming phase that lasted till his death in 1995," accompanies the jubilant art enthusiast. He goes on, "Das Gupta was a master of mediums, in actuality. Like all the artists of his time, he started with oils but gradually learned that he had a serious sensitivity to oil. Consequently, he started experimenting with medium to make up for his inability to utilise oil. He began combining materials like tempera, gouache, ink, and dye pastes. He was also the pioneer in introducing acrylics to India! No artist has been able to replicate or blend mediums in the same way as he did; therefore, his method of combining various mediums to achieve the outcomes he produced remains undisturbed and is evident in the works."

The art curator additionally stated, "Forty years of arduous labour. With each item being added as a drop. Being connected to the artist, we were aware of his brilliance; nothing surprised us, with the exception of some of his older catalogs, which showcase the artist's enchantment and his lineage—you'll have to wait to see them. I would say that the younger generations took cues from him and went on to become masters of their own accord, exactly as he would have desired."

We have also learned that he had planned to perform in Japan, to which he had devoted most of his legacy, but that never materialised. Post his passing, there being a paucity of his works and them being generations ahead of his time, Bimal Da started slowly fading with the new galleries only pushing artists they had access to. "With this exhibition, we hope to shed light on the genius that India possessed and the person our art historians should refer to as the Father of Indian Abstractionism. Due to the commercialisation of art and the lack of anyone to explain the work of this genius, educators who were only using basic formulas were unable to relate to this maestro, whose works are



The Pioneer takes our readers through an intriguing discovery of Bimal Das Gupta, an innovator whose inventive abstract artworks revolutionised modern art!

futuristic even today," we hear from a few more perceptive recollections. India was only familiar with two artists: Das Gupta and Hussain. Gujral was an admirer of art and a friend of the artist; his brother, Satish Gujral, was also an artist. VP Singh came to learn painting from Bimal Da since he had heard so much about him. This show advances art in a way that goes beyond abstraction. The medium and methods employed by Bimal Da still remain the foundation of contemporary Indian art. Aspiring artists would get a great opportunity to witness the works in person and get a firsthand look at the phenomenon known as Bimal Das Gupta. Abstract art is sometimes viewed as little more than a scattering of colours and textures, but with the pieces on show, they intend to change that perception.

"I want to start by changing the word to "underappreciated." Among people who are familiar with his works, Bimal Da has never been underappreciated and is not now. He is regarded as a visionary ahead of his time and a genius. In Indian art, however, the artist's genius is still being determined by his or her monetary success rather than by the quality of their work. We want to alter that with this show. The artist's genius will be exposed to the world and nobody will be able to purchase their creations. After this event, I genuinely hope that artists will be pushed based on their quality rather than using a commercial, elitist, or nepotistic approach. The purpose of this exhibition is to alert the art market's eyes to the fact that a genius like Bimal Das Gupta was previously unknown."

Bimal's unconventional methods serve as the foundation for the education of today's young artists and his creations are proof of this genius's expertise. Many exploited the techniques discovered by Bimal Da but have not even come close to the expertise this genius demonstrated in his works! It has been the hard labour of Gallery Silver Scapes and Dhoomimal to bring to light the amazing works of Bimal Da. There is still a long way to go for this merited artist, but his skill has ignited interest in an audience that has matured from three decades ago.

Travancore House is set to host Bimal Das Gupta: Tutelage - An Ode to a Legend on November 9 and 10, 2024. From the 1930s, when he initially deviated from the figurative styles that were prevalent in India after independence, to the later stages of his career, the exhibition charts his development as one of the nation's most influential and pioneering abstractionists.

COMBATING MONSOON ACNE AND BREAKOUT

Increased humidity and dampness in the monsoon weather affects the skin deeply, making its care all the more essential. The high temperatures combined with humid conditions becomes an ideal breeding place for microbes, causing skin infections as well as breakouts.

Below mentioned is a detailed list of strategies that can be obeyed in order to deal with acne breakouts in this sticky weather:

Gentle cleansing of the face: Monsoon weather becomes highly unfriendly to the skin as excessive sweat and dirt can clog the skin pores, causing acne. So washing the face at least twice a day is quintessential, early in the morning and at bedtime. Choose an oil free non-comedogenic cleanser and wash your face with neither too hot nor too cold, rather lukewarm

water. Post a workout session or after profuse sweating, preferably cleanse the face too. The way of cleansing the face should be very gentle without scrubbing it.

Prefer skin exfoliation: Skin exfoliation is also a key practice behind a healthy skin-care routine. Use mild chemical exfoliants namely alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs) and beta hydroxy acids (BHAs) for breakout prone skin to remove dead cells that may clog the pores. Be cautious to not overdo exfoliation and only practice it once or twice a week as excessive exfoliation can damage the skin's natural oils.

Use a combination of moisturiser and sunscreen: Applying a gentle oil-free hydrating moisturiser after face cleansing is a must. It keeps the skin youthful and glowy. If you skip its application, skin pro-



duces more sebum as a compensatory mechanism and its natural sebum is produced more, causing acne. After moisturizer, a gentle application of sunscreen is also important having a SPF of minimum 30. Even on cloudy days, do not skip it as ultraviolet rays of the sun can even pass through clouds. Apply a generous amount of sunscreen on all the exposed areas and regularly reapply it every 2 hours once outdoors.

Hydration is must: Keep the skin well hydrated by drinking a minimum of 8 glasses of water daily and also eat more fruits and vegetables that are high in water content such as watermelon, cucumber, oranges etc. If your skin is devoid of moisture, it's compensatory mechanism to produce more sebum is activated that clogs the skin pores.

Wholesome diet: The food you eat is a great driving force behind your healthy and glowing skin. Consume raw fruits and vegetables as much as possible as they have bioactive compounds with anti-inflammatory properties and are rich in antioxidants. Keep a knowledge of your trigger foods behind acne and breakouts and refrain from their consumption. Most people have breakout triggers by eating foods high in sugars, milk and its products and junk food.

For keeping skin youthful and glowing even in the damp weather of monsoon, follow an adequate skin care routine. Also be mindful of what you eat and drink as your skin is the reflection of what you put inside.

(The author, Dr. Rupika Singh, MBBS, MD, is a dermatologist and founder of Akiya Aesthetics)

what's brewing?



Miss and Mrs. India Iconic Diva 2024, Season 4 was held at The Park Hotel, Hyderabad, co-powered by Sangita Aiyar Reddy, founder of Femperials. The event inspired attendees, promoting empowerment and wellness for women and children.



Prism Outdoors has announced its Prism Navaratri Utsav, a grand celebration of the Navaratri festival, to be held from October 3 to October 12 at Novotel in Hyderabad. The curtain raiser event of this upcoming utsav was held at the Novotel Lawn area, where the official poster was unveiled by actor and Bigg Boss fame Sunny, along with other dignitaries.



PARTY
Photos by- SV Chary



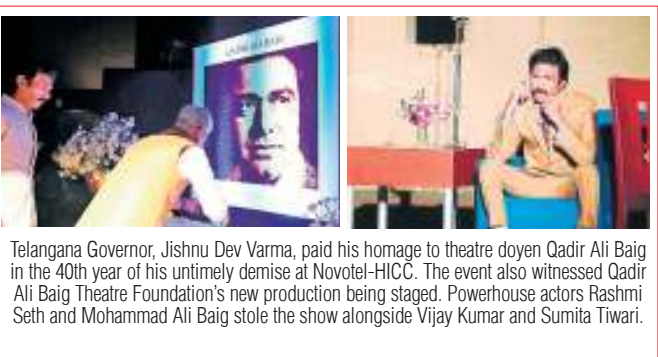
Sandhya Convention Centre, in collaboration with Muppa Projects and Coca-Cola is presenting the "Dola re Dola" Navaratri celebration, beginning from October 3 to October 12 at the Convention Centre in Gachibowli.



Namitha Jain, along with Kavitha Jain and Kanchan Agarwal, among the other socialities, marked their presence at the 3-day Sutra fashion and lifestyle exhibition. The expo being held at Taj Krishna in Banjara Hills, was inaugurated by socialite Sushila Bokadia.



Global Essay Prize. The famous John Locke Institute Global Essay Prize is designed to promote critical thinking, independent thinking, and cogent reasoning in young students. Senior academics from prestigious universities like Princeton and Oxford evaluate the essays.



Telangana Governor, Jishnu Dev Varma, paid his homage to theatre doyen Qadir Ali Baig in the 40th year of his untimely demise at Novotel-HICC. The event also witnessed Qadir Ali Baig Theatre Foundation's new production being staged. Powerhouse actors Rashmi Seth and Mohammad Ali Baig stole the show alongside Vijay Kumar and Sumita Tiwari.

Anavila's show at the Chettinad Heritage and Cultural Festival marked the third edition of the festival's unique cultural oasis that brought the rich traditions of the Chettiar community



FUN

ARCHIE

IS JUGHEAD KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT GOLF? YOU KIDDING? MR. LODGE'S CLUBS HAVE BETTER HEADS!

OK, CADDIE! CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT I'M DOING WRONG? YEAH!

YOU MISSED THE LITTLE HOLE!

CALVIN AND HOBBS

NUTS! THIS WHEEL STRUT SNAPPED. WHY DO THEY MAKE 'EM SO DARN SMALL?

I GUESS THAT WAS AN OPTIONAL PIECE. MY WHEEL WON'T FIT IN THE WHEEL WELL.

HERE, LET ME TRY. SOMETIMES YOU JUST HAVE TO...

SNAP! BARN IT!

THIS PLANE IS IN FOR SOME ROUGH LANDINGS.

GARFIELD

OKAY, SO I'M TURNING 40

I SUPPOSE I SHOULD LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE...

ONLY TEN MORE YEARS UNTIL I GET THE SENIOR CITIZEN'S DISCOUNT AT DONUT BARN!

REALITY CHECK

MODERN CONVERSATION:

ARE YOU PAYING ATTENTION, BRIAN? HELLO! MY EYES ARE UP HERE!

SPEED BUMP

I'M NOT SAYING THEY'RE GOSSIPERS, BUT THEY DO SNIFF A LOT OF SCUTTLEBUGS.

CROSSWORD

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

NANCY

AUNT FRITZI DECIDED TO SIMPLIFY HER LIFE BY GETTING RID OF EVERYTHING SHE DOESN'T LOVE

I THINK IT'S MADE THINGS A LOT EASIER

FOR HER?

NO, FOR THE CARTOONIST

SUDOKU

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

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

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

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

GINGER MEGGS

RIGHTO, MATE! YOU'RE ALL SET. NOW, MAKE SURE YOU DELIVER ALL OF THESE!

DON'T JUST CHUCK 'EM ALL INTO THE NEAREST DUMPSTER.

WELL, I WASN'T GOING TO, BUT NOW YOU'RE GIVING ME IDEAS!

ACROSS

- A large group of musicians
- The steps of a ladder
- Do this when you are thirsty
- Knotted
- Opposite of newest
- Mend
- A holder for cut flowers
- A slow-moving creature
- Jewellery for fingers
- People who hide on ships to avoid paying a fare

DOWN

- Wash the soap out of
- A snake noise
- A seat on a horse
- Lift up
- Goes back to a place
- Baby cats
- Rest your head on this
- Pigtail
- Pester
- The people working on a ship or aircraft

SOLUCION

P	E	A	C	E	F	U	L	
S	A	V	E	N		R		
E	A	G	L	E		L	E	D
P	E	N	S	E		P		
T	I	S	S	E		T	R	E
E	E	F				A		
M	I	N	D			C	A	U
S	T	E				S	O	T
R	E	M	E			T	R	A
N	E	E				T	R	A
M	E	A				S		
M	E	A				S		

Swag is one of the top films in my career: Sree Vishnu

Sree Vishnu, known for choosing diverse subjects and characters, is back with his latest film, *Swag*, in which he portrays four distinct roles. In a candid conversation, he discusses the film, his upcoming projects and his personal interests!

Sree Vishnu always experiments with different types of cinema and portrays unique roles in his films. His latest project, *Swag*, carries the Telugu title *Swaganika Vamshaniki Swagatham* and is directed by Hasith Goli. This marks their second collaboration after working together on *Raja Raja Chola*. "I'm playing four characters in this film, which is a completely new experience for me. I haven't played dual roles," said Sree Vishnu.

Regarding the film's title, he explained, "Nowadays, most youngsters aren't familiar with Telugu slang, so we used *Swag* for them. For those who appreciate the Telugu language, we kept the full title, *Swaganika Vamshaniki Swagatham*. We wanted everyone to be able to connect with the film, including those from other languages who can easily catch *Swag*. That's why we chose this dual title approach."

Sree Vishnu further elaborated, "Today, people only understand when you mention 'family tree,' but many in the current generation might not be familiar with *Vamsa Vruksham*. Our story revolves around gender issues and understanding one's lineage. It begins 1500 years ago and explores who held the upper hand—men or women. We've told this story in an entertaining, cat-and-mouse style." All four of Vishnu's characters belong to the same lineage, hence the similar appearance across generations! He praised Ritu Varma's role, saying, "She has portrayed her character beautifully. After this film, people will respect women even more. Women will definitely love Bhavabhuthi's character."

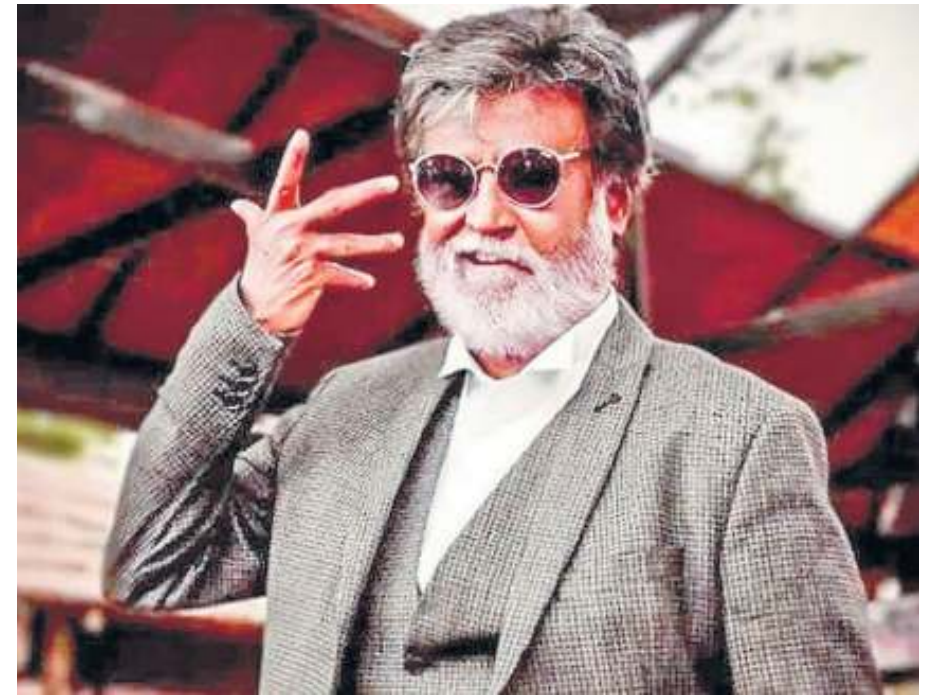
Speaking about the challenges of playing these roles, he said, "Except for my present character, Singa, the

other three were challenging. They speak pure Telugu, with some Sanskrit mixed in, which required a lot of practice. One character involved prosthetic makeup, which took around four hours to apply and two hours to remove. The removal process used pure alcohol, which was quite irritating for hours. This film has been a unique and challenging experience."

Vishnu mentioned that, although it's a complex story, it has been narrated concisely. "After watching the film, you'll be amazed at how such a large story was told in just two and a half hours. This is definitely one of the top films of my career."

He also spoke about the production houses, noting that this is his second project with them. "After *Raja Raja Chola*, we decided to make another film together. Though the production house has faced some setbacks, I'm confident they will bounce back with *Swag*. This film feels like a prequel to *Raja Raja Chola*. Every 20 minutes, there's a new surprise," he added.

Sree Vishnu expressed his love for folk movies, stating, "I'd love to do a film in the folk genre. If anyone comes with a good script, I'm ready." Regarding his upcoming projects, he revealed that he is working on a thriller and another film with the big production house, Geetha Arts.



Rajinikanth's health stable; to be discharged soon

Tamil superstar Rajinikanth was admitted to Apollo Hospitals in Chennai on Monday evening after complaining of stomach pain. He was immediately rushed to the hospital, according to reports. In the latest health update, the veteran actor is reported to be stable and is expected to be discharged from the hospital within two to three days. "Rajinikanth has successfully undergone an elective procedure during which a stent was placed near his lower abdominal area. The procedure was carried out by a team of three speciality

doctors in a cath lab. Currently, he is stable and is being kept under observation. He will be recuperating at the hospital for the next 2-3 days before being discharged," said the reports. Rajinikanth's film *Vettaivan* is slated to release on October 10. In the lead-up to its release, the actor has been actively promoting the film. He recently attended the pre-release event, where he danced alongside music director Anirudh Ravichander. The film is directed by Gnanavel. Rajinikanth has also begun shooting for his upcoming film *Coolie*, directed by Lokesh Kanagaraj. The actor has been actively involved in the production over the past few days.



BOBBY ROPED IN FOR THALAPATHY'S LAST FILM

Bobby Deol offlate has been regular in South cinema, with multiple Telugu and Tamil films. The Bollywood actor is now roped in for another South film. He has now been roped in for Tamil superstar Vijay's film, *Thalapathy 69*, directed by H. Vinoth and with music by Anirudh Ravichander.

The production house announced the cast on Tuesday, expressing their excitement to have Bobby Deol on board. This film marks Vijay's final project before he transitions to full-time politics, having announced his political party in February 2024 and intending to contest in the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections.

Thalapathy 69 has been generating significant buzz, especially after Vijay's recent film, *GOAT*, didn't quite live up to expectations at the box office. Despite this, Vijay decided to act in one more film and *Thalapathy 69* is expected to be a high-octane action entertainer.



Satyam Sundaram's reception leaves Karthi overwhelmed

Actor Karthi is in Hyderabad promoting his recent film *Satyam Sundaram*. The film is directed by Prem Kumar of 96 fame, with Aravind Swamy as the other leading actor. *Satyam Sundaram* has received critical acclaim and the makers organised a success meet. On this occasion, Karthi spoke about similar films made long ago by directors Viswanath, Balachander and Dasari Narayana Rao. "When I first read the script, I had a doubt in my mind—would people watch this kind of film? But then I felt that if we come up with a new concept, the audience will definitely appreciate it. True to my words, today people are talking about this film," said Karthi. "I received calls from many people who got emotional while discussing the film with me. I felt happy about it, but this kind of film should also be commercially successful. If it succeeds commercially, producers will come forward to make more good films," Karthi added. He didn't want to say much more about the film's success. "When I came to this event, the way people received, hugged, wished me—made me emotional. I'm very happy with the response," he said.



Unstoppable with NBK 3 shooting begins in Hyderabad

Nandamuri Balakrishna is currently juggling his upcoming film, directed by K.S. Ravindra (Bobby) and the new season of his popular talk show *Unstoppable* on Aha. According to sources, the show is presently filming an episode featuring Malayalam superstar Dulquer Salmaan, who has gained popularity in Telugu cinema through his direct Telugu films.

However, a source revealed, "Dulquer Salmaan's episode won't be the first to air in the new season, which premieres on October 24 on Aha." According to the latest update, the shooting of the third season of *Unstoppable* has begun in Hyderabad. The first episode is expected to feature the team of *Lucky Baskhar*. SThe makers are planning to shoot additional episodes with notable actors like Chiranjeevi, Venkatesh, Ram Charan and Allu Arjun.

One question on everyone's mind is whether Balakrishna will invite Nagarjuna onto the show, given their reported long-standing rift. Notably, Balakrishna missed having Chiranjeevi on the show in the last two seasons, but the source confirms Chiranjeevi is on the guest list for this season.

Last year, Chiranjeevi's brother Pawan Kalyan's appearance on the show was a massive hit.

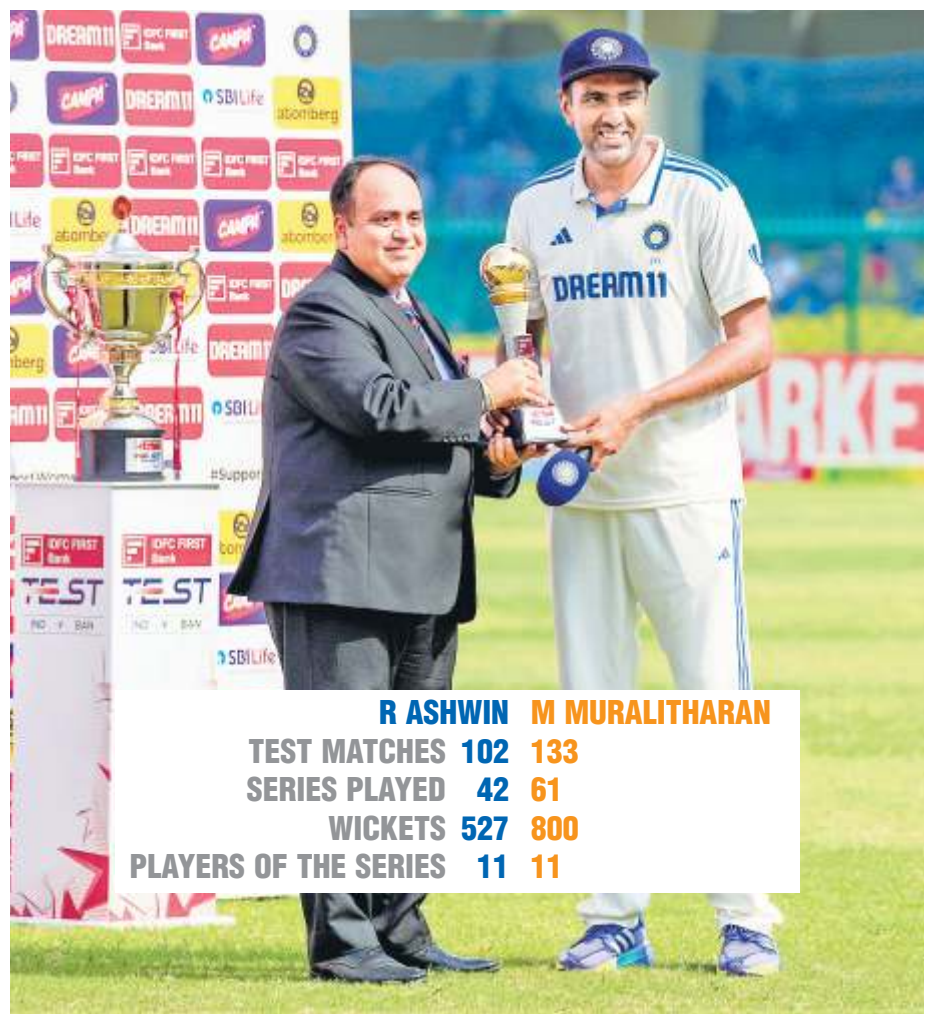
Matka set for November 14 release

Varun Tej's last successful film was *Gaddalakonda Ganesh*, which released in 2019. Since then, a few of his films have hit the big screen, but they were not successful at the box office. Now, Varun Tej teams up with Palasa director Karuna Kumar for the period drama *Matka*, where he takes on a unique avatar. According to the makers, it's a mass action entertainer and the shoot is nearing completion.

Matka is one of the highest-budget films in Varun Tej's career, produced by Dr. Vejender Reddy Teegala and Rajani Thalluri. Currently, they are shooting an important action sequence involving Varun Tej and fighters. With the production almost complete, the makers have officially locked the release date for November 14.

Varun Tej stuns in two distinct looks that beautifully depict his character's evolution over time. Director Karuna Kumar has crafted a powerful script with a period backdrop spanning 24 years, from 1958 to 1982, showcasing Varun Tej in four different avatars. Meenakshi Chaudhry and Nora Fatehi star as the female leads opposite Varun Tej, while GV Prakash Kumar has provided the music for the film.





	R ASHWIN	M MURALITHARAN
TEST MATCHES	102	133
SERIES PLAYED	42	61
WICKETS	527	800
PLAYERS OF THE SERIES	11	11

ASHWIN TIES MURALITHARAN MAN OF THE SERIES MARK

RISHABH MALIK ■ NEW DELHI

Indian off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has etched his name in the records book once again, equalling the most number of Player of the Series in Test cricket's history, with his stellar performances in Bangladesh series. Ashwin now stands with Sri Lankan spinner Muttiah Muralitharan. They both now share the 11 Player of the Series accolades, Ashwin performance in the Bangladesh series conquered many records in history of cricket. Ashwin took 11 wickets and scored 114 runs in both the innings two Test matches. Ashwin's performances throughout his test career gave many cherish moments for India. In first test match in Chennai his crucial knock of 113 runs gave team a fighting total and took 6 wickets in second innings for winning the Test match. Ashwin awarded his 11th number of Player of the series. Back from his Test debut in 2011 he has only played in 42 series so far. On the other

hand Sri Lankan legend Muralitharan featured in a total of 61 series for Sri Lanka during his 18-year-long career and won the Player of the Series award on 11 occasions. In the list of most number of Player of the Series Ashwin alongside with muralitharan tops the list followed by Jacques Kallis (South Africa)-9, Imran Khan (Pakistan)-8, Richard Hadlee (New Zealand)-8, Shane Warne (Australia)-8. For India Sachin Tendulkar and Virender Sehwag are second in the list of India players with most Player of the Series awards in Tests five number of occasions they were rewarded. Virat Kohli has three Player of the Series awards to his name in Tests, whereas Kapil Dev, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh, and Rahul Dravid in their careers with four Player of the Series awards each. Ashwin who considered as an All-rounder batting at number eight scored six centuries allowed him to match New Zealander Daniel Vettori who scored five centuries batting at lower order for their team. The 38

year old spinner currently ranks number two in ICC Test All-rounder rankings. Ashwin's heroic show in the second Test against Bangladesh has tossed him to the top of the wicket-takers list in the ongoing 2023-25 World Test Championship (WTC) cycle. He has taken 53 wickets from 10 matches at an average of 21.18 and a strike rate of 37.30, surpassing Josh Hazlewood, who is second in the list of most wicket takers with 51 wickets. It would be an epic battle to see in the upcoming Border Gavaskar Trophy later this year in Australia which might be his last Border Gavaskar feat in Australia currently he is second most wicket taker after Nathan Lyon in Border Gavaskar Trophy. This achievement further highlights Ashwin's crucial role in India's Test cricket success marks as one of the greatest spinners of his generation. Ashwin's ability to adapt to different conditions and bowl effectively in all phases of the game and made him a nightmare for batsmen worldwide.

We were willing to get all out for 100: Rohit on India's boldplay in Kanpur Test

PTI ■ KANPUR

India were willing to take the risk of being bowled for 100-odd in its bold push for a result in the weather-hit second Test against Bangladesh, said Rohit Sharma after the hosts pulled off a dramatic win here on Tuesday. India managed to win the game comfortably on day five despite two full days were lost due to wet outfield at the Green Park Stadium. Even on day one, only 35 overs possible. After bowling out Bangladesh for 233, India batted in T20 mode to smash 285 in 34.4 overs before declaring their first innings. Having lost two batters overnight, Bangladesh were bowled out in their second innings at stroke of lunch and India ended the game in the second session. "Once we lost two and a half days, when we came on day 4 we wanted to get them out as quickly as possible and see what we can do with the bat. When they got bowled out for 230, it wasn't about the runs we



get but the overs we got at them," said Rohit at the post-match presentation. "To make a game out of it on that pitch was a superb effort. It was a risk we were willing to take because when you're trying to bat like that, you can be bundled out for a low score. But we were ready for it even if we got bowled out for 100-120. It was India's record extending 18th series win in a row at home. Among the new players, Rohit was pleased by Akash

Deep's relentless effort. "He's been good (Akash Deep). Lot of domestic cricket he has played. When you come up through the ranks like that, there are a lot of overs in the legs. He has the quality and the skill. Good body as well - can bowl long spells. You have to make sure you prepare your bench strength," said the skipper. It was the first Test series under new head coach Gautam Gambhir who overtook the

responsibility from Rahul Dravid. "We had a fantastic time (with Dravid) but life moves on. Gautam Gambhir, I've played with him and know what sort of mindset he comes in with," said Rohit. Ashwin was named player of the series for his all-round show. He rated the improbable win as "massive" in the context of World Test Championship. "When we bowled them out

yesterday, it was little after lunch. Rohit was keen that we needed 80 overs to bowl at them. "And the moment he came inside out and gave that talk where we're going to go after it even if we get out under 230. It's not only him saying it, he went out there and hit his first ball for six. He set the tone that way," said the premier spinner. Opposition skipper Najmul Hasan Shanto said that team's batting through the two Test series let them down. "Both the Tests we didn't bat well. In these conditions we need to bat well. If you look at our batters - we played 30-40 balls and got out. It's important in a Test match, when batsmen get in, you should look to score big runs," said Shanto. "The way Ashwin and Jaddu batted at that time (in Chennai after India were six down) - they batted really well. As a bowling unit we need to look at those moments - how we can get those wickets. That partnership cost us that game," added Shanto.

Whenever it comes to the team, I go and give my life out there: Rodrigues

PTI ■ DUBAI

Jemimah Rodrigues feels adaptability and maintaining a team-first mentality will be key for India to achieve their dream of claiming a maiden ICC title at the T20 World Cup beginning here on Thursday. India, who reached the finals of the women's T20 World Cup in 2020, will start their campaign in the ninth edition of the tournament against New Zealand on October 4. "For me, it's all about assessing the conditions and playing the situation. I just want to keep it simple and do whatever it takes to help the team win and whatever the team needs," Rodrigues, who hit a 52 in the first warm-up game against West Indies, told Star Sports. "When I put things in that perspective, it gets the best out of me and motivates me. For me, whenever it comes to the team, I go and give my life out there. That gets me more passionate, energetic, and enthusiastic. I want Team India to win. We, as a unit, want Team India to win. For me, it's all about keeping it in that perspective." The 24-year-old from Mumbai emphasised on the importance of playing to the situation irrespective of the bowler. "For me, it's not about specific bowlers but about playing to the situation. Bowlers can have off days, and as a



batter, I need to assess which bowler to attack and when to hold back. The satisfaction comes from playing smart and doing what's best for the team." In other ICC events, India has reached the finals of ODI World Cups in 2005 and 2017 but never gone the distance. Harmanpreet Kaur and Co, meanwhile, made a good start by winning the first warm-up match against West Indies by 20 runs. "For this team, it's a mix of absolute youngsters and some like me who have had experience. Richa (Ghosh) and Shafali (Verma) have also played World Cups before, so we are young but not inexperienced," Rodrigues said.

"Then we have Harman and Smriti (Mandhana), who have played more World Cups than all of us. That coming together is the strength of this team. This team is special. There's something in this team, a fire to win, and at the same time, an energy and bond that's very special. "We keep talking about sticking to our processes in team meetings and doing whatever it takes to help Team India win. That's the entire goal of this team." Talking about New Zealand legend Sophie Devine, Rodrigues said: "I remember watching her hit five sixes in a row at my first Under-19 camp at Chinnaswamy Stadium. It was

incredible, and since then, I've always admired her game. We've prepared well to bowl against her, and now it's just about executing our plans." India will face Australia in a Group A clash in Sharjah on October 13, and Rodrigues stated that execution will be key against the former champions. "I love playing against Australia because you have to bring your A-game. There's no other option if you want to win. The rivalry has been intense over the years, and it brings out the best in us. "We've prepared well and put in the work. Now it's time to execute our plans." Rodrigues lavished praise on senior colleagues - opener Mandhana and skipper Harmanpreet. "What stands out about Smriti is her maturity. Even though she's young, she understands the game and her role so well. As the vice-captain, her inputs are invaluable, and she's developed a great understanding of players. She doesn't just tell you to do something her way; she puts herself in your shoes and offers advice that works for you." "Harman di is a big-match player. We've seen it time and again - from her 171 in the World Cup to her performances in key matches. As a team, we know how much this World Cup means to her, and we want to win it for India and for her. If I see her lifting the trophy, I know I'll start crying."

Associate nations might abandon 'costly' red-ball cricket: Whatmore

PTI ■ SHARJAH

World Cup-winning coach Dav Whatmore voiced concerns about the sustainability of the ICC's multi-million dollar initiative to support Test cricket suggesting that several countries, especially associate nations, may abandon the "costly" red-ball format entirely. The International Cricket Council is mulling a dedicated fund of at least USD 15 million for Test cricket that would increase the minimum match payment for Test players and cover the cost of sending teams on overseas tours. "Saving Test cricket is one of the challenges. The ICC is very keen to maintain some sort of status in Test match cricket. They have created a pool of money to assist countries that are struggling. A step in the right direction, but I'm not sure how sustainable that is," Whatmore told PTI on the sidelines of the Cricket Predicta Conclave here. "There are a number of countries, particularly the Associates, which may abandon the red ball and focus on the white ball," he added. The dedicated fund would support national boards that struggle to compete with the wages offered in global T20 competitions. "It is a very costly format of the game. A number of countries do it really well, and they're very successful at it, but there's also many who are struggling. India, Australia, and England appear to be the only three countries prioritising Test cricket, with India reaching the finals of the World Test Championship on both occasions. Whatmore attributes this success to the presence of a strong red-ball domestic calendar. "It appears as though those three



countries are very strong in their domestic red ball tournaments, and that reflects internationally," he said. "New Zealand played in the championship not all that long ago. They're also keen to be active in that format, but they're struggling when they travel to the subcontinent. They'll be tested again when they come to India." The 70-year-old, who coached Sri Lanka to the World Cup in 1996, lauded India for its robust domestic calendar while adding that the IPL and the under-19 program contribute significantly to accelerating player development. "Well, it's very robust. It's a very good, strong, healthy domestic calendar that

throws up very good new cricketers that come along, and then you add IPL onto that. It really does accelerate development for a lot of youngsters. "Add to that the Under-19 program, which is always successful. There's always been one or two boys that continue on with a very good form from every second year in the World Cup, and they've been successful in winning the World Cup too on many occasions. So all in all, it's a very good one." While Bangladesh registered a historic Test series victory against Pakistan and host Sri Lanka defeated New Zealand, the two struggled against India and England respectively. Whatmore, who has coached both the

teams in the past, feels they need to be more consistent. "Sri Lanka were reasonably competitive in England, and they come back to their own conditions, which they are very familiar with and having won some very important tosses in Galle, makes it very difficult for touring teams, particularly the Western countries. "So they're doing well, and so is Bangladesh. They did well against Pakistan, but then they had a real tough time in Chennai in the first against India. "So overall, they're very encouraging performances, but you've got to have consistency, and that's what will separate the teams," he added.



Sabalenka extends winning streak, Osaka to play Gauff at China Open

AP ■ BEIJING

Aryna Sabalenka's dominant hard-court season showed no signs of slowing down as she cruised to a 6-2, 6-2 win over Ashlyn Krueger at the China Open on Monday for her 14th consecutive victory. The three-time Grand Slam winner started her streak with a title at Cincinnati in August and continued with a run to the championship at the U.S. Open earlier this month. She also won the Australian Open earlier in the year. The second-ranked Sabalenka converted five of her seven breakpoint opportunities in a lopsided contest against Krueger and will next face Madison Keys, hoping to equal her career-best 15 consecutive victories set in 2020-21. Keys had a 6-3, 6-3 win over Beatrice Haddad Maia of Brazil. Haddad Maia won the Korea Open last week but

struggled to combat the baseline power of Keys. Former No. 1 Naomi Osaka continued her positive start with new coach Patrick Mouratoglou with a 6-3, 6-2 victory over Katie Volynets, advancing to a round of 16 match against sixth-ranked Coco Gauff. It will be the first meeting between the two Grand Slam champions in more than two years, with the head-to-head series tied at 2-2. "It's going to be a really cool test for me," Osaka said. "She's played really well this year. I'm excited to play the match, and I know people are excited to watch the match." Osaka, who returned from maternity leave at the start of this season and is No. 73 in the current rankings, fired five aces and produced three service breaks. The four-time major winner joined Mouratoglou shortly

before the China Open after splitting with Wim Fissette. Her run here so far is the first time since May that Osaka has had three consecutive wins. Also, No. 14-ranked Anna Kalinskaya was leading 3-6, 6-3, 3-1 when Peyton Sterns retired from their match. She will next play Yulia Starodubtseva of Ukraine. Karolina Muchova beat Jaqueline Cristian 6-1, 6-3 and will play the winner of the match between Cristina Bucsa and 24th-seeded Elise Mertens in the fourth round. In the men's draw, Andrey Rublev beat Alejandro Davidovich Fokina 6-4, 7-5 in a match that was carried over from Sunday because of a rain delay. No. 6-ranked Rublev had six aces and 21 winners to extend his career record against Davidovich Fokina to 5-0. The fifth-seeded Russian will play local favorite No.