


sunday pioneer

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Cong being run by 'gang of urban Naxals': PM Modi



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India to further strengthen FINTECH support to Bhutan: FM



8

Wrapping around a HAT-TRICK with Chuttamalle



Oil se

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The pioneer

They are talking about whatever they want. He (KTR) is dreaming of coming to power using social media. Instead, they are more likely to end up in Chertalapally Jail. I am telling you with a guarantee, that you won't come to power through social media but will end up in jail if you engage in cheap tactics

- Revanth Reddy, CM



DON'T MISS...

Govt sets up livelihood ...

The Telangana government has set up a Consultative Livelihood Support Committee aimed at ensuring a smooth transition for families currently staying in dwelling units on the riverbed of the Musi River in the GHMC area. These families will be shifted to 2BHK houses allotted under the state's housing initiative. The order, issued by the Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA&UD) department under GO RT No: 477, dated October 5 outlines the formation of the ...

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Warangal Police get body-worn ...

Adopting the modern technology, the city police have been using body-worn cameras to capture images of those who create nuisance on public roads and obstruct the police in the discharge of their duties. In the tricities of Warangal-Hanamkonda-Kazipet, the traffic police have been wearing these body cameras on their shirts while discharging their duty. The camera has also the facility to capture the live video footage. With the help of these cameras, the police have ...

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'We have lost our patience'

We have lost our patience, the Supreme Court has said while expressing concern over delay by the states and Union Territories in providing ration card to the migrant workers. A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Ahsanuddin Amanullah granted a final opportunity to the Centre, states and Union Territories (UTs) to take necessary steps in this regard by November 19. 'We have lost our patience, we are making it very clear that there will be no more indulgence. 'We are giving you one last window to comply with our order or your secretary will remain present,' the ...

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DoT, telcos deploying system...

The telecom department, in collaboration with telecom service providers, is rolling out an advanced system in phases to identify and block incoming international spoofed calls before they can reach Indian telecom subscribers, an official statement said on Friday. The Department of Telecom (DoT) has observed that citizens are receiving many fraudulent calls, often disguised as originating from Indian mobile numbers, while the calls are manipulated by cyber-criminals operating from abroad. 'DoT, in collaboration with TSPs, has introduced an advanced system designed to identify and block incoming international...

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'Shun your Zamindari lifestyle'

◆ Donate farmhouses for Indiramma Houses

◆ CM Revanth asks KCR, KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy criticised opposition leaders KCR and KTR's luxurious lifestyles and their habit of ignoring the underprivileged.

The CM was speaking while attending the 95th birth anniversary of G. Venkataswamy, affectionately known as 'Kaka,' in Hyderabad on Saturday.

Revanth asked KCR and KTR to donate the lands of their farmhouses to help the poor.

"If KCR and KTR are truly committed to the poor, they should donate the land of their farmhouses rather than living like zamindars while

Continued on Page 5



'Demolish our houses but spare those of the poor'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS Working president KT Rama Rao requested Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to demolish his homes and that of his party activists if that is what it would take to stop him from demolishing the houses of the poor. He says the CM has to stop bulldozing homes and destroying people's lives.

"If demolishing my home will bring you peace, please do that, but after that end the mindless demolitions," KTR said. Continued on Page 5



No compromise on 'prasadam' quality

AP CM says 'Operation cleansing' on in TTD

PNS ■ TIRUMALA



Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, on Saturday, announced that the State Government has kicked off 'operation cleansing' in the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), emphasising that there's no compromise on the quality of 'Prasadam' offered to Lord Venkateswara's

TG farmers grilling Cong on loan waiver: PM Modi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a scathing attack on the Congress for failing farmers by making false promises of farm loan waivers. He was addressing a rally in the Washim district of Maharashtra on Saturday. Modi said that the Congress has a history of using loan waivers as an electoral tool, only to abandon these promises once in power.

"Just before every election, giving a false promise of crop loan waiver is the Congress's favourite weapon. In Telangana, they came to power promising a farm loan waiver. But after forming the government, a lot of time has passed, and now farmers are asking why their loans have not been waived," Modi stated, accusing the Congress of betraying farmers.

He said that funds meant for farmers and irrigation schemes were misused by the Congress for corrupt purposes.

"The governments run by the Congress used the money meant for farmers and irrigation schemes for corruption," Modi said, pointing out that similar promises were made in Karnataka, where irrigation schemes launched by the BJP were halted after the



"The governments run by the Congress used the money meant for farmers and irrigation schemes for corruption"

Congress came to power.

Modi also praised the Maharashtra Government, stating that it was offering "double benefits" to farmers, with both the state and Central governments providing financial support. Modi said that Maharashtra has the potential to lead the country to prosper-

ity if the right policies are pursued.

Telangana Minister Seethakka, in response, launched a counterattack, stating that Modi had 'no moral right' to criticize the Congress on farmers' issues.

"It is laughable that a Prime Minister, who did not waive a single rupee of farmers' loans in 10 years, is now criticizing the Telangana government," she said.

Seethakka accused Modi of causing immense suffering to farmers during his rule, notably referring to the controversial farm laws that led to widespread protests and the deaths of 700 farmers.

"The person who introduced black laws and tormented farmers has no right to question our government," she added. She went on to criticize Modi for failing to fulfil his election promises, specifically citing the 2019 BJP manifesto, where he promised pensions to farmers above 60 years, a promise yet to be fulfilled. "Despite five years passing, the promise of pensions for farmers remains unfulfilled," she said.

Seethakka also pointed to the rising costs for farmers due to Modi's policies, including increased petrol and diesel prices and reduced government support for crop insurance.

India successfully flight-tests VSHORADS missile

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India conducted three successful flight tests of a very short-range air defence missile system at Rajasthan's Pokhran firing ranges.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday congratulated the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Army for the flight tests of the fourth-generation VSHORADS (Very Short-Range Air Defence System) missiles. "The @DRDO India has successfully conducted three flight tests of the 4th Generation, technically advanced miniaturized weapon system VSHORADS, from Pokhran," Singh's office said on 'X'.

Singh said this new missile, equipped with modern technologies, will give further technological boost to the armed forces against aerial threats, it said.

VSHORADS is a man-portable air defence system designed and developed indigenously by Research Centre Imarat (RCI) in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories and Indian industry partners.

Junior Assistants promoted as Grade 3 EOs after 30 years

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a long-awaited move, 33 junior assistants who had been awaiting promotions for over three decades were finally promoted to Grade 3 Executive Officers (EOs) by the Telangana government. The promotions, granted through GO: 134, were handed over by the Minister for Forests, Environment and Endowments, Surekha, at a formal ceremony held at the Secretariat.

The event saw emotional scenes, with the newly promoted EOs shedding tears of joy, expressing that this felt like an early Dasara gift.

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TG examining paddy exports to The Philippines

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a significant development, the Telangana government is holding talks to export three lakh tonnes of paddy to The Philippines. The talks started on Saturday at the Civil Supplies Bhavan, with the Minister for Irrigation, Command Area Development (I & CAD), and Food and Civil



Supplies (F & CS) Departments, Uttam Kumar Reddy leading the discussions. After consulting the Commissioner of Civil Supplies and experts, he held a video conference with The Philippines' Minister of Food and Agriculture.

The meeting focused on resuming rice trade between Telangana and The Philippines after a hiatus due to quality concerns. It was noted that The Philippines had stopped importing rice from India due to quality issues. However, Telangana's rice has seen significant improvements, making it viable for government-to-government export discussions. If the deal is finalized, it will restore Telangana's trade route for rice exports to The Philippines. Both ministers committed to full cooperation, hoping for the deal to materialize soon.

Exit polls give Congress majority in Haryana; edge to NC-Cong in J-K

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Several exit polls on Saturday predicted a clear majority for the Congress in Haryana and gave an edge to its alliance with the National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir, with the regional partner emerging as the single largest party.

'Dainik Bhaskar' predicted the Congress getting 44-54 seats and the BJP 15-29 seats in the 90-member Haryana Assembly. The C-Voter-India Today polls gave Congress 50-58 seats and the BJP 20-28 seats in Haryana, while the Republic Bharat-Matrive polls put the Congress tally

even higher at 55-62 seats as against the BJP's 18-24. The Red Mike-Datansh exit poll gave the Congress 50-55 seats in Haryana and the BJP at 20-25, while Dhruv Research pegged the Congress at 50-64 and the BJP at 22-32.

Peoples' Pulse exit poll gave the Congress 49-60 seats and the BJP 20-32 seats in Haryana. Most exit polls pegged the INLD's tally higher than that of the JJP, while others were seen

getting up to 10 seats. The BJP has been in power in Haryana since 2014 with Manohar Lal Khattar as chief minister for over nine years. The BJP's second term in office in 2019 was in alliance with the JJP, with Dushyant Singh Chautala as deputy chief minister.

Khattar and Chautala quit in March ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, making way for Nayab Singh Saini, a prominent OBC face of the BJP, as chief minister. Chautala's JJP also snapped ties with the BJP. The Congress is hoping to make a comeback in Haryana with former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda leading the poll campaign.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the C-Voter-India Today survey put the National

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Konda Surekha is not alone: Ponnamm

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Making it clear that the woman Minister from Backward Class is not alone and that the support of all Congress leaders is there for her, BC Welfare and Transport Minister Ponnamm Prabhakar said, "Why are there so many attacks on her?"

Ponnamm commented that it is not proper for film industry people to respond even after Surekha withdrew her comments. The issue is over as Surekha withdrew her comments, he said.



He said that the government is in thoughts to maintain restraint in regard to the ongoing episode of film industry people. The film

industry people would have responded in the same manner in regard to the posts posted insulting Minister Konda Surekha, he said wondering if this much of attack is necessary even after Konda Surekha withdrew her comments? Don't think the Minister from backward classes is alone, Minister Ponnamm warned.

"The victims themselves asked Konda Surekha to withdraw her comments. The Minister withdrew her comments responding immediately

Continued on Page 5

Govt issues HYDRAA gazette notification after Guv's nod

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma gave assent to an ordinance, giving statutory backing to the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA), to strengthen the hands of the GHMC. The gazette was issued on October 3.

The Gazette said that unforeseen contingencies and disasters need specialised agencies whose services can be roped in by the GHMC

to tackle natural disasters. The Ordinance can be called the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2024.

The government inserted Section 374-B in the GHMC Act. "Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, it shall be competent for the Government to empower any officer or agency or authority to exercise any of the powers of the Corporation and the Commissioner

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OBTUSE ANGLE



Last-minute invites leave scrambling scribes breathless

These days, thanks to new media and digital publishing, people get to absorb in real time news that mirror important events. This has somewhat marginalized the role of scribes whose presence in advance of the unfolding of important events was a requirement in good old days and for which invitations used to be sent out well in advance. In Telangana, officials are crossing their limits when it comes to inviting journalists covering key political events in the state, including those involving Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. Apart from not sticking to schedules, reporters are not being extended the elemental courtesy of being properly invited for various events. Perhaps by design; and since they say 'Seeing is believing', YouTube URLs or live links are being shared, just moments before the event kicks off. Recently, reporters were shocked to receive an official invite just 15 minutes before the CM's arrival! On another occasion, they were given only an hour's notice. Such eleventh-hour or last-minute invites leave scrambling reporters breathless, though they are supposed to cover the event and make a good job of reporting it for their readers or viewers as the case may be. The media fraternity does its job, whether invited properly or not; yet, in TG, the officials concerned are taking newshounds for granted. Vexed journalists chorus: "When the invites come so late, how are we supposed to do our jobs properly?". The least that the state government can do is to give the media its due. Timely invitation is their privilege, not officials' meherbani. Print medium jurnos in particular feel the pinch most. What is worrying the media in TG is that the problem is not limited to government events. Opposition leaders too have gotten in on the act. One leader decided to hold an impromptu chat with journalists, giving them only an hour to rush to the venue. By the way, given traffic issues, this one hour is the bare minimum scribes require to make it in time to any event worth covering.

REPORTERS' DIARY

The festivities are no longer the same without her animating presence. Things have come to such a pass that people are wondering if the Kalvakuntla family is celebrating Bathukamma at least at home. After all, Bathukamma and Kavitha had become almost synonymous in BRS circles.

Minister stuns global gathering with bizarre brevity

Not all speakers go by the Bard of Avon's famous words 'Brevity is the soul of wit'. But, at the recent G-SPARC 2024 -- an international event at which World Health Organization officials, among other experts, were waiting for gyan from Telangana's rulers -- Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha, deputizing for Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, shocked the crowd by delivering a 'speech' that lasted less than a minute! Yes, they heard it (and you read it) right. The assembled doctors, national leaders, and health experts heard Narasimha say, looking over his prepared text: "I came with a long speech on paper, but will keep it short". This remarkable one-liner left the crowd wondering what exactly was wrong.

Kavitha's absence leaves a void in Bathukamma fête

Celebrating a festival at home is quite different from taking part in public festivities replete with official paraphernalia. The Bathukamma festivities this season clearly lack the gusto with which people used to participate in recent years,

When the media 'provoked' ...

Endowment Minister Konda Surekha may have spoken her mind, sparking controversy after controversy, perhaps relying on kondanta balamu from TPCC leaders, if not AICC bigwigs. However, Congress leaders in the state have dropped the highly sensitive issues sur-

rounding Konda Surekha like a hot potato. Apparently wary of wading into a controversy themselves, Congress leaders have studiously avoided references to issues concerning Surekha that had shaken up the film industry and political circles. Even in informal settings they are on maun vrat when it comes to Surekha. Still, some Congress leaders chose to make bakras out of newshounds. On Saturday, one of the Ministers faulted media persons for dragging Konda Surekha into a web of controversies, saying certain scribes 'provocative questions' landed her in trouble. According to him, Konda Surekha was already disturbed due to BRS activities in social media and those media persons rubbed salt to her wounds, triggering her emotional outbursts. Luckily for the actors in question, the film industry stood solidly united, prompting Surekha to withdraw her comments to forestall a

defamation suit. Jagan media-friendly after poll debacle Shun scribes when they are after you, invite them when they avoid you. Some netas cannot help resorting to this after political setbacks. In Andhra Pradesh, opposition YSRCP chief and ex-CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has suddenly become media-friendly, perhaps humbled by the decimation of his party in the 2024 Assembly polls. During his tenure as CM from 2019 to 2024, the former chief minister barely organized pressers or gave interviews to media persons. These days he has been regularly conducting press meets, inviting media personnel wholeheartedly. In just the last three and half months, Jagan has held more press conferences than what he had organized throughout his rule. This week he spoke to the media twice. Media persons feel twice blessed.

Govt clears yarn depot for power loom sector in Rajanna Sircilla dist

The Telangana Government has issued orders approving the establishment of a yarn depot in Vemulawada in Rajanna Sircilla District aimed at helping the power loom sector. The Telangana State Handloom Weavers Cooperative Society Limited (TGHSCO) has been designated as the nodal and implementing agency of this project.

Oh God! Politics?

When the Supreme Court observed the other day "Keep Gods out of politics", few would have imagined a political response to it. Yet, in Andhra Pradesh, both the NDA coalition government and the opposition YSRCP welcomed the apex court's verdict on the TTD laddu row case, interpreting it as "a judgment in our favour".

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

Telangana to promote eco-tourism: Surekha

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The state will be developed as a front-runner in eco-tourism, Forests, Environment and Endowments Minister Konda Surekha said.

Addressing a meeting of the Eco-Tourism Consultative Committee held at her office in the secretariat, she directed officials to work on a comprehensive action plan to ensure eco-tourism projects are environmentally friendly and do not harm nature.

The meeting approved the final draft of the eco-tourism policy, which will be sent to



Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for final clearance.

Surekha emphasised the need for well-planned, eco-friendly projects that foster a balance between nature and

human activity, stating that many villages would be transformed into eco-villages, preserving their cultural heritage and promoting local traditions.

She also asked officials to create a website that highlights Telangana's eco-tourism spots, promoting it as a brand. She also proposed that tourists visiting eco-tourism spots plant trees as part of a larger green initiative and suggested converting these areas into study tour centres.

Eco-tourism circuits were discussed in detail, with officials providing a comprehensive presentation on their

unique features.

Several other key decisions were made during the meeting. The Telangana Forest Development Corporation (TFDC) will serve as the nodal agency for the implementation of the policy. An Eco-Tourism Project Screening Committee will be established to approve projects, and funds will be raised from various sources, including the Centre and CSR contributions.

The involvement of private agencies in the management of eco-tourism centres will also be explored, as directed by the Minister.

IF HARISH STAGES DHARNA AT RAHUL'S RESIDENCE: JAGGA REDDY

I will stage dharna at KCR's house

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Senior Congress leader T. Jagga Reddy said that he will stage a dharna in front of former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's residence or farmhouse if BRS leader T. Harish Rao stages a dharna in front of Rahul Gandhi's residence in New Delhi. He also asked Harish to explain with what face he will go to New Delhi.

"I will stage a dharna wherever KCR stays. I will stage a dharna in front of KCR's house to protest against his cheating. I will stage my dharna on the day Harish starts his dharna in front of Rahul Gandhi's residence. Everybody knows



where Rahul is staying but there is no clarity about where KCR is staying," Jagga Reddy said. Speaking to the media at the Gandhi Bhavan on Saturday, Jagga Reddy asked Harish to reveal who his scriptwriter was.

"Did Harish suddenly remember after nine and a half years that KCR has a farmer's

heart? Where was that heart when the police attacked the farmers of Mallama Sagar? Did KCR keep his heart in the fridge when the police handcuffed Khammam farmers? Harish and KCR did not come to Sangareddy when I said that I would block KCR if he came to Sangareddy," Jagga Reddy said.

Farmers must cooperate in cleaning Musi River: Kiran



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress's Bhongir MP, Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, said that discussions would continue on cleaning the Musi River and requested the public to extend their cooperation to the government. He said the government will protect farmers.

Addressing a meeting with farmers on Musi cleaning on Saturday at the Nagole Shubham Convention Centre, Kiran said that BRS leaders, who sleep in luxurious farmhouses after making the state debt-riddled, have no right to criticise the 'people's government'. The government will clean the Musi and ensure

that the burden does not fall on the people, he said.

Kiran said the government has taken Musi River cleaning as a prestige issue. Noting that Musi became a garbage dump due to the negligence of past governments, he appealed to farmers to extend their support to ensure the future of Hyderabad.

He said that BRS and BJP leaders are speaking as they like regarding Musi cleaning. While the CM is going ahead with the idea of cleaning the Musi and freeing the people of the catchment area from pollution, the opposition is trying to block the project, he said.

Opposition leaders are trying to stop the project by misleading the people, Kiran said.

He said farmers must attend Sunday's meeting and show their support for the government's project for cleaning the Musi.

Government Whip Beerla Ilaiah, Nagarkurnool MP Mallu Ravi, farmers of the Musi catchment area in Nalgonda and Ranga Reddy districts, Zahirabad MP Suresh Shetkar, former MP Madhu Yashki Goud, MLAs Malreddy Ranga Reddy, Mandula Samel, Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy and B. Lakshma Reddy attended the meeting.

TGERC focuses on consumer, infra safety at SAC meeting

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Electricity Regulatory Commission (TGERC) convened its 8th State Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting on Saturday to discuss the Multi-Year Tariff (MYT) framework and key regulatory filings by various electricity bodies.

The meeting, chaired by the Commission's Chairman, was held in the conference hall of TGERC, with representatives from sectors like commerce, industry, agriculture and consumer groups. The focus of the meeting was on the tariff deter-



mination filings made by TGGENCO, TGTRANSCO, SLDC, TGDISCO and CESS Sircilla for the period from FY 2024-25 to FY 2028-29.

The Chairman underscored the crucial role of the energy sector in fostering the state's economic and social progress. He stressed the importance of collaboration with stakeholders to create a sound regulatory frame-

work, while emphasizing TGERC's commitment to delivering affordable, reliable electricity and promoting innovation, particularly in renewable energy.

During the discussions, the Commission expressed concerns over the delays in the submission of regulatory filings by various bodies, including DISCOMs, TGTRANSCO and TGGENCO.

70TH NATIONAL FILM AWARDS Invitation to Jani Master withdrawn, award suspended

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The invitation extended to Shaik Jani Basha, popularly known as Jani Master, to attend the 70th National Film Awards for his choreography work in the 2022 film 'Thiruchitrabalam' has been officially withdrawn.

This decision follows serious allegations of criminal activity under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act that surfaced against him. According to the National Film Awards Cell, the initial invitation, extended in August 2024 and reaffirmed in September 2024, came before the allegations came to light.

As the matter is now sub-judice, the competent authorities have decided to suspend

Jani Master's National Film Award for Best Choreography for the year 2022 until further notice. The 70th National Film Awards function is scheduled to take place at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi on October 8, 2024. However, with the award being suspended, the invitation for Jani Master to attend has been revoked.

The notice was formally communicated by the National Film Awards Cell, with copies being shared with Jani Master's counsel, the Special Public Prosecutor for Telangana and relevant law enforcement officials.

BRS social media warriors on edge as arrests begin

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Even though Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said on Saturday that the BRS is aiming to come to power through social media, and had warned they could end up in jail instead, BRS social media activists have begun to face arrests.

Rajashanker, known for running the 'Captain Fasak' handle on X, was reportedly detained. This has stirred concerns within BRS's online networks.

BRS social media convener, Manne Krishank, reacting to the arrest, stated, "Since it's a Saturday followed by the Dasara vacation, the Congress government is attempting to target our social media activists. But let me assure you, the BRS Legal Cell is just a message to 8143726666 or a phone call away."

Another convener, Dinesh Chowdary, weighed in, saying, "Chitti Naidu (CM) wants to frighten our social media workers with illegal arrests. If social media is the only way to stop us, we are ready. We stand with Captain and while we will face the arrests legally, our fighting spirit will strengthen. But what does this mean for our public struggles in the days ahead?"

As the arrests continue, BRS social media circles anticipate more detentions. Krishank, Dileep Konatham, Nalla Balu and MR4BRS are among those already taken into custody and got relief from the court.

Going to Islamabad for multilateral event, not to discuss Indo-Pak ties: Jaishankar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after India announced that External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will travel to Islamabad to attend a key meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) mid-October, he said he was going to Pakistan for a "multilateral event" and not to discuss Indo-Pak relations.

He said this in response to a query during an interaction after he delivered the Sardar Patel Lecture on Governance organised by IC Centre for Governance here.

"Yes, I am scheduled to go to Pakistan in the middle of this month, and that is for a meeting of the SCO Heads of Government. Normally, prime ministers go to high-level meetings of heads of state, and one of the ministers goes for the heads of government meet-



ing, so it's in line with the tradition," he said.

"It so happens that the meeting is taking place in Pakistan, because like us they are a relatively recent member," Jaishankar said.

Pakistan is hosting the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting on October 15 and 16.

It will be for the first time in nearly nine years that India's

external affairs minister will travel to Pakistan even as the ties between the two neighbours remained frosty over the Kashmir issue and cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan.

During the interaction, Jaishankar was asked if he was preparing for his visit to Pakistan for the SCO meeting, and what was his anticipation from it.

SRDS board meeting held after 10 years

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Society for Rural Development Services (SRDS) was held under the leadership of the Minister for Panchayat Raj, Rural Development and Women & Child Welfare, Seethakka, at the Secretariat. The meeting was attended by Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Secretary Lokesh Kumar, Commissioner Anita Ramachandran, Special Commissioner Shaif Ullah and other senior officials.

During the meeting, Seethakka expressed surprise that the board meeting had not been conducted in the last 10 years. She questioned how employees' issues could be understood if meetings were not held for such a long time.

The SRDS currently employs around 3,700 personnel through contracts and outsourcing, including technical assistants, computer oper-

ators, office subordinates, and engineering consultants.

Seethakka directed that proposals should be prepared to ensure the job security of these employees.

"We are an employee-friendly government. Only when employees are happy can they work efficiently. That is when the government's goals and intentions can reach the people. The Panchayat Raj and Rural Development department is the lifeline between the people and the government. Our department focuses on both the development of rural areas and improving the living standards of the people," she emphasised.

She said that the government would make efforts to resolve employee issues as much as possible. Efforts would be made to extend retirement benefits like that of government employees for SRDS workers, Seethakka said.

Quambiant Developers Global Grace Cancer Run-2024

The World's largest Cancer awareness run Avinash Mohanty, Police Commissioner Cyberabad and Jennifer Larson, Consular General US Consulate, Hyderabad to attend

Dr. Bart S. Fisher, IPS, Chairman, Give Life Foundation

Venue
Gachibowli Stadium, Gachibowli, Hyderabad Sunday, 06th October, 2024

Dubai Proptry Show

Property experts coming to your city

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

nSure Healthy Spine

Inaugural ceremony by P Gopichand, national coach, Badminton Association of India.

Venue
4th floor, Above Asian Spine Hospital, Road No. 92, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad October 6. At 12.30 pm.

Aura by Jalsa

Grand opening.
Venue
8-2-601, P, 31, Ground Floor, Road No. 10, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad. October 6, 12.30 pm

SERP - SARAS Fair-2024

Venue
People's Plaza, Hyderabad Till October 7

Toxic

By Abhishek Upmanyu
Venue
Shilpakala Vedika November 2

Prateek Kuhad

Silhouettes tour.
Venue
Hyderabad international convention centre November 8

Eateries directed to instal CCTV in kitchen for food safety

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) ordered the eateries to install CCTV cameras focused on their kitchen area to improve the standards.

The GHMC on Saturday released a press release, saying that many eating establishments under FSSAI license category are not adhering to the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) guidelines with respect to the maintenance of kitchen hygiene and sanitation, Training of Food Handlers, Storage guidelines and documentation which are being penalised for non-adherence to the conditions while the Food Business Operators (FBO) are claiming ignorance of the guidelines.

Further frequent complaints of contamination of food with insects, worms, hair etc are being received from the consumers. The GHMC said that in order to ensure that the eating establishments improve their standards and to provide safe food to the consumers, establishments are instructed to follow the guidelines in the advisory and are also instructed to install CCTV Cameras focused on the Kitchen area.

City Pioneer

sunday pioneer

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03

Govt sets up livelihood support committee for families living along Musi riverbed

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has set up a Consultative Livelihood Support Committee aimed at ensuring a smooth transition for families currently staying in dwelling units on the riverbed of the Musi River in the GHMC area.

These families will be shifted to 2BHK houses allotted under the state's housing initiative. The order, issued by the Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA&UD) department under GO RT No: 477, dated October 5 outlines the formation of the committee with specific roles and responsibilities.

The newly constituted committee will be chaired by the CEO of the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), Hyderabad, with the GHMC Commissioner serving as Vice-Chairperson.

Other key members are representatives from T-MASS, the Welfare Departments of Minorities, SC, BC and Women &

Child Development (W&CD), and heads of relevant educational institutions and residential societies.

This initiative aims to address the livelihood concerns of families who will be displaced from their current houses along the Musi River. A primary objective is to create sustainable livelihood opportunities for these families by coordinating with Women Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to facilitate interest-free loans, linkages with local businesses and other financial inclusion efforts.

Additionally, the committee will ensure educational continuity for children affected by the relocation, with a focus on mapping students to nearby schools and residential welfare schools.

The other responsibilities of the committee are working with civil society organizations to craft a detailed action plan for these families, implementing a strategy for SHGs to improve livelihood prospects and overseeing the establishment of Help Desks to



support affected residents. The committee has been tasked with submitting its detailed action plan to the government within 30

days, with focus on a holistic transition for these families.

Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari issued the directives to the

Managing Director of MRDCL, Hyderabad, to take steps for implementing the committee's initiatives.

Telangana Finance Commission hosts IDEATHON 2024 Grand Finale

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Finance Commission (TFC) held the Grand Finale of its prestigious IDEATHON 2024 on Saturday at Haritha Plaza, Begumpet, Hyderabad.

This citizen engagement initiative, aimed at involving public participation in generating innovative revenue ideas for local bodies, saw an overwhelming response with 1,100 applications received across multiple sectors. IDEATHON 2024 marks the first-ever citizen engagement program of its kind undertaken by the Telangana Finance Commission, a constitutional body responsible for reviewing the finances of local bodies and suggesting revenue-sharing metrics. Over the last nine months, TFC has emphasised the importance of grassroots democracy and participatory

governance, in line with the 73rd and 74th amendments of 1992. The competition, which was launched on August 16, 2024, sought innovative ideas from citizens that could help generate revenue for rural and urban local bodies in Telangana. After four competitive rounds, which concluded on October 1, 2024, 47 participants presented 29 innovative ideas at the Grand Finale. Key sectors covered by the ideas presented included waste management, solar energy, employment generation, digital advertising for urban local bodies, compressed biogas stations, and laser fencing for agricultural lands.

The participants also introduced concepts like smart economic zones, waste-to-wealth initiatives, and green bonds for municipal greenery, all of which align with TFC's mission to strengthen local governance.

NITI Aayog taking initiatives to empower women

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Appreciating that 40 per cent of women students are in the first batch of entrepreneurs scaling ventures, which is empowering women, said Union Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Jayant Chaudhary, while inaugurating the I-Venture Immersive (IVI) programme at the ISB Hyderabad Campus on Friday.

This six-month I-Venture Immersive (IVI) programme at ISB Hyderabad offers entrepreneurs support and funding to develop their ideas, with a program fee of Rs 5.9 lakhs, including a six-month stay on campus.

Addressing the new class of students, Jayant Chaudhary remarked that no Minister can truly be in charge of entrepreneurship.



Union Minister of State for Skill Development Jayant Chaudhary inaugurating the I-Venture Immersive programme at ISB Hyderabad on Friday.

He noted that STEM fields are growing in India, with 13-15% of women as entrepreneurs. He announced a new scheme to scale startups in progress, stating that a multidisciplinary approach with parallel thinking and coordination is needed.

He also highlighted that while Make in India is progressing, migration stories will play a significant role for him and will be focusing on seg-

ments of that industry. He mentioned that three ministries are working on a scheme to upskill traditional village entrepreneurs, targeting 30 lakh people.

Discussing women entrepreneurs, Jayant said NITI Aayog is planning more initiatives, though no structural map is in place yet. However, the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) is actively working on skilling programmes.



Women participating in Bathukamma celebrations at Ravindra Bharathi in Hyderabad on Saturday

Women of all ages join Bathukamma celebrations

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bathukamma celebrations were held with grandeur on Saturday at Ravindra Bharathi. Every evening at 6 pm, for the past three days, the Bathukamma festivities at Ravindra Bharathi have become a major attraction in the city. Women of all ages have been joyously gathering to decorate and celebrate Bathukamma with vibrant colors and cheerful dancing. The entire premises of Ravindra Bharathi have been lit up with colorful lights, creating a festive atmosphere. The Department of Language and Culture has provided adequate facilities, allowing women from different parts of Hyderabad to come together and participate in the celebrations with great joy.

Today's celebrations saw participation not only from women of all communities but also a group of Bengali women who visited Ravindra Bharathi as part of their Navratri celebrations. Interestingly, they integrated their traditional "Dhunuchi" dance with the Bathukamma festivities, showcasing a beautiful blend of traditions.

This event stood as a testimony to the unity in diversity seen in India and highlighted the rich cultural tapestry of Hyderabad.

The participation of Bengali women in this iconic festival of Telangana added a unique touch, as they danced to the tunes of folk songs while blending their traditional dance with the Bathukamma celebration. Alongside, tribal artists like Madhuri Girijan and Banjara artists also mesmerized the audience with their performances, capturing everyone's attention.

In a unique addition to the celebrations, a voice actor dressed as Yamadharmaraju (the god of death) approached a 5-foot tall Bathukamma installation at Ravindra Bharathi and delivered a thought-provoking message.

Through a monologue, he urged the youth not to resort to drastic measures like suicide, emphasizing the value of life and encouraging them to seek joy in their daily existence, as symbolised by the Bathukamma festival. His powerful performance left the audience deep in thought.

Each day of the Bathukamma festival at Ravindra Bharathi has introduced a new attraction, drawing the attention of citizens. Today's celebration especially highlighted the solidarity and cultural exchange between people from different regions. Dr. Mamidi Harikrishna, Director of the Department of Culture, remarked, "Just like each flower in Bathukamma contributes to its beauty, Hyderabad as a city has grown into a cosmopolitan hub, reflecting the harmony among various communities, making it a global city."

IN STEP WITH TRADITION



Secretariat employees celebrating Bathukamma on the Secretariate premises in Hyderabad on Saturday



Minister Ponnambhakhar participating in Bathukamma celebrations at Gandhi Bhavan under the leadership of TG Mahila Congress president Sunitha Rao on Saturday

New biweekly train to Goa to be inaugurated today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

G Kishan Reddy, Minister of Coal and Mines, will flag off the Secunderabad - Vasco - Da - Gama inaugural Express from Secunderabad station on Sunday. Ponnambhakhar, Minister of Transport, will also participate in the programme.

The train also provides facilities for the people traveling towards Karnataka and Goa. The schedule of the train has a convenient train schedule to Goa and other intermediate stations which caters to both reserved and unreserved segment passengers. It provides cost effective transportation when compared with other modes of the transport and offers scope for rail users to plan their itinerary more conveniently.

The train connects Secunderabad, Mahbubnagar, Gadwal, Kurnool City, Dhone with the Vasco - Da - Gama and is being operated for two days in a week in both the directions. The new train will cover a distance of about 854 Kms in a travel time of about 20 hours in upward direction and 21 hrs in return direction. The train has been inducted with the latest state of the art LHB coaches, which will provide a comfortable riding experience and modern amenities to the passengers.



Petition filed against Nagarjuna in police station

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Janam Kosam Manasakshi Foundation NGOs president Kasireddy Bhaskara Reddy filed a petition against actor Nagarjuna Akkineni at Madhapur Police Station.

Kasireddy Bhaskara Reddy alleged that actor Nagarjuna resorted to illegal land encroachment.

He accused Nagarjuna of illegally constructing the N Convention Centre, which was demolished in August on land valued at hundreds of crores rupees.

Reddy also said that the

actor had been generating significant illegal revenues on the encroached land for several years and called for strict legal action against the film actor.

When The Pioneer contacted the Madhapur Police Station sub inspector, he said the petition asserted that Nagarjuna had improperly profited from the N Centre, Reddy demanding that funds be recovered and returned to the government.

"We have not registered any case in this matter and we will inquire into the issue after taking legal opinion," said Madhapur sub Inspector.

YASHODA THAKORE TAKES DANCE TO NEW HEIGHTS

Embellishing the sacred and profound dimensions of love as portrayed in Kshetravya padams, dance guru Yashoda Thakore has always won the hearts of dance connoisseurs of Telugu states as well as lovers of music and dance the world over.

Yashoda is an acclaimed and accomplished Kuchipudi and Devadasi Nrityam artiste. She began training under proponents of Kuchipudi, earlier from Padma Sri Sobha Naidu and later Padma Vibhushan Vempati Chinnsayam, before she sought to expand her horizons. An artiste with unquenchable thirst for learning and passion to explore the deeper potentialities of her dance, she went to the Kalavantulu (as

this community of hereditary women dancers of the temple and court is called in the Godavari Delta) families, to reach out to them and learn their art.

Building on her passion for art complemented by assiduous practice, Yashoda, in association with renowned

Kaivalya -Joy in Yoga and Dance.

Consummately enriching the practice of the art of dance with research findings, Yashoda has emerged as an artiste widely regarded for innovative classicism. She has enthralled world audiences with her flawless artistry, touring and conducting lectures.

Culture & Heritage

art critic Dr Pappu Venugopala Rao, translated the 13th Century Sanskrit treatise on dance, N'ttaratn'vali, into English, which was published to critical acclaim. She has also authored the book



While Khajuraho, Konark, Mudra, Kalamandalam, Nishagandha Festivals, The Sri Krishna Gana Sabha and Madras Music Academy have played host to Yashoda in India, she has been showered with praise for her perfor-

mances in The Nehru Centre, London, The Indian High Commission, Dubai, the Sanskrit Theatre Symposium, Dhaka, the International Kuchipudi Dance Convention, California, and the Volos International Festival, Greece, amongst others, abroad. She also presented papers and performed at the Centre for South Asian Studies, Paris.

For her continual allegiance to her art, Yashoda was conferred the Ugadi Puraskar by the Government of combined Andhra Pradesh. She has her own institute Rinda Saranya Kuchipudi Dance Academy in Hyderabad where students are trained in Kuchipudi, music and yoga.

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MLC polls: Govt teachers urged to register as voters by Nov 6

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

District Deputy Returning Officer and Additional Collector Madhusudhan Naik has called upon the eligible government teachers to register their names as MLC voters in Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda teachers' constituency of the legislative council before November 6. He reviewed the MLC voter registration progress with the Education Department officials, principals of government educational institutions at his chambers here on Saturday. He appealed to them to give a wide publicity to the voter registration programme. As per the Election Commission orders, he said that first and second publication notices will be issued in the press on October 16 and 25 with regard to the registration of voters of the Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda teachers' constituency. The eligible voters should submit their applications before November 6 through submission of form-19.

Warangal Police get body-worn cameras

The police officers expressed the view that the cams will ensure transparency in policing

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Adopting the modern technology, the city police have been using body-worn cameras to capture images of those who create nuisance on public roads and obstruct the police in the discharge of their duties. In the trities of Warangal-Hanamkonda-Kazipet, the traffic police have been wearing these body cameras on their shirts while discharging their duty. The camera has also the facility to capture the live video footage. With the help of these cameras, the police have been submitting necessary evidence in courts and ensuring the accused in various get punished. In the region of the three cities, measuring over 407.71 square kilometers, at least 11 lakh people reside there. Moreover the city is expanding rapidly in all directions for the past five or six years. There are three traffic police stations in the city. There are hundreds of colleges located in the city. The roads become crowded during the morning peak traffic hour time. Besides these, protests, sit-ins are staged at one place or the other daily. During the drive against the



Warangal Police wearing body-worn cameras in Warangal on Saturday

alcoholics, the tipsy drivers often tend to argue with the police and likely to behave rudely with the cops on duty. Many cases filed against such persons but they were acquitted for want of evidence and with the accused turning tables on the police. The police department has supplied body-worn cameras to the traffic police who undertake drive against drun-drive. The use of such cameras during the protests would help the police identify

those who vitiate the law and order. First these cameras have been given to the officers of the ranks of Sub Inspectors and Circle Inspectors for producing electronic evidence in courts. There are already 250 CCTV cameras in the city. Besides the CCTV cameras, the body worn cameras would be of much more help to the cops. These cameras have 32 GB capacity and will have 4 cm wide screen.

These cameras have been linked to the police command control facility. Warangal traffic Assistant Commissioner of Police Satyanarayana said that the cameras to ensure transparency in the policing. These cameras record voice, photos and videos. These cameras will inject a sense of fear among the mischievous elements and would show case how the police behave with the public.



Vegetable prices skyrocket in Rangareddy district

Coast of home-cooked food soared to Rs 31.30 from Rs 28.10

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Vegetable prices have sharply increased across in Rangareddy district, including Shadnagar, Shamshabad, Rajendranagar, Chevella, and other regions, leaving consumers struggling to manage their household budgets. Last week, tomatoes were priced between Rs 50 and 60 per kg, but they have now surged to Rs 100. Similarly, onions have jumped from Rs 60 to Rs 80 per kg. Other vegetables have also seen significant hike, cabbage is now Rs 120 per kg, cauliflower at Rs 100, and brinjal at Rs 60. Beans are priced at Rs 120, radish at Rs 200, okra and gourd both at Rs 60, carrots and beetroot at Rs 60,

green peppers at Rs 60, coriander at Rs 200, and other leafy vegetables at Rs 100 per kg. Traders in these areas attribute the price hikes to untimely rains and predict that prices may rise further as the Dasara festival approaches. With the cost of oil also on the rise, families are now buying vegetables in smaller quantities to cope with these increases. A recent CRISIL report revealed that the cost of home-cooked meals has also surged due to the rise in vegetable and cooking material prices. In September last year, the cost of preparing a vegetarian meal was Rs 28.10, but this year, it has increased by 11 per cent, reaching Rs 31.30.

Police to strengthen check-post to curb marijuana smuggling

PNS ■ SURYAPET

Satyanarayana, Inspector General of Police of Multi Zone-2, conducted inspections at the Suryapet Town Police Station and interstate border check-posts. He emphasised need to take strict actions against illegal transportation and highlighted continuous surveillance at border check-posts. He asked the police to focus on eliminating marijuana smuggling, gambling activities, and illegal sand mining, labelling these as social evils. During his visit, the IG was welcomed by Suryapet District Superintendent of Police Sharath

Chandra Pawar and Additional SP Nageswara Rao, who presented him with a bouquet. Addressing a media conference at the district police office, the IG stated that he conducted a surprise inspection at the police station to review its operations, record management, and case investigations, providing guidance to the staff. He mentioned that border check-posts along Andhra Pradesh and Telangana would be strengthened to combat smuggling effectively. The SPs of Suryapet and Nalgonda districts are actively monitoring the



Inspector General of Police Satyanarayana addressing a press conference in Suryapet on Saturday

situation. Clear instructions have been issued by the Chief Minister of Telangana to prevent illegal rice trade, ganja trafficking, gambling, and unauthorized sand mining.

Administration focus on increasing area under oil palm crop

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI

Efforts are underway to increase the area under oil palm crop in Peddapalli district compared to the area under cotton and paddy cultivation in the district. The Agriculture and Horticulture Departments have focussed on expanding the oil palm cultivation in the district. They have set a target to encourage cultivation of the crop in hundreds of acres in each and every village. The officials of these two departments have been explaining the benefits of cultivation of these crops to the farmers. A workshop was held at Kukkalaguduru village of Palakurti mandal to sensitise the farmers on cultivation of oil palm on Saturday.

Peddapalli district Agriculture officer Doma Adireddy and district horticulture officer Chatla Jaganmohan Reddy have appealed to the farmers to take up cultivation of oil palm for their economic development. Many farmers in telangana have inclined to cultivate the crop, they said exhorting the farmers of the district to pay more attention to cultivation of oil palm. The oil palm crop can be inter-cropped with crops like cotton, chilli, bengal gram, castor oil, sunflower, maize, gingelly, pulses, vegetable crops and creepers. The government gives 90 per cent subsidy on the oil palm plants, 80% on drip-irrigation equipment and pays Rs 4500 annually for raising inter-crops.

'Procure every grain harvested': Minister

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

On Saturday, a review meeting was held under the leadership of District Collector Kranti Vallaraju at the mini conference hall of the Sangareddy Collectorate to discuss the establishment of procurement centres for Vanakalam (Kharif) 2024-25 season. Health Minister Damodar Raj Narasimha, who was present at the meeting, directed the officials, to ensure that procurement centres are opened. During the meeting, the Minister emphasised the Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's directives to ensure that every grain produced by farmers is purchased without fail. He instructed the authorities to set up separate procurement centres for fine paddy and ordinary paddy. The government



Health Minister Damodar Raj Narasimha speaking at a review meeting in Sangareddy on Saturday

has set the prices for this season at Rs 2,320 per quintal for super fine variety and Rs 2,300 for common variety. Additionally, a bonus of Rs 500 for fine paddy has been announced. He stated that the number of procurement centres in the district should be increased and all necessary arrangements made to avoid

inconveniences for farmers. He directed officials to ensure that tarpaulins are available at the procurement centres and to take precautions to prevent paddy from getting wet due to untimely rains. He also suggested that gunny bags and transport vehicles be made available on time. Raj Narasimha emphasised that officials must

take full responsibility for the purchased paddy until it reaches the mills. He recommended setting up surveillance at the procurement centers and establishing check posts to prevent the transportation of fine variety paddy from other states. District Collector Kranti Vallaraju instructed the officials to take appropriate measures to ensure that payments for the purchased paddy are credited to farmers' bank accounts within 48 hours. He suggested that the Revenue, Civil Supplies, Agriculture, Police, Cooperation, IKP, and Transport Departments should work in coordination for the procurement of paddy in the district. He urged immediate resolution of any issues that arise at the procurement centers.

Three members of a family commit suicide

PNS ■ NIZAMABAD

In a tragic incident, three members of a family died by suicide at Waddepally village under Yedapalle mandal in the district. The bodies were found in the early hours of Saturday. The deceased were identified as Suresh (53), his wife Hemalatha (45) and their son Harish (22). According to police, a relative of the family had found the bodies lying unconscious and alerted the police. The neighbours expressed the suspicion that the family members could have committed suicide because of financial problems. Entrapped by debts incurred by their son, Harish for playing online games, Suresh and Hemalatha committed suicide by hanging. Later, Harish too died by suicide, it is alleged. The police shifted the bodies to Bodhan Government Hospital for post-mortem.

Yadagirigutta temple nets Rs 27,79,959

PNS ■ YADADRI-BHUVANGIRI

The Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple in Yadagirigutta has recorded an income of Rs 27,79,959 this week. A total of 1,450 devotees offered their hair. The income breakdown includes Rs 72,500 from Kalyana Katta, 1,86,800 from main bookings and Rs 4,000 from kankaryams (services). Suprabhata Seva garnered Rs 5,300, while break darshan contributed Rs 1,64,700. Other contributions included Rs 81,600 from vratas (vows), Rs 17,300 from vahana pujas (vehicle worship), and Rs 1,77,300 from VIP darshan. The publicity department accounted for Rs 17,950, and the old gutta received Rs 21,200. Vehicle entry to the hill generated Rs 4,00,000, with Rs 80,954 from Yada Rishi Nidayam. Swarna push-parchana (golden flower offer-



ings) brought in Rs 43,632, while the Shiva Temple collected Rs 9,296. Permanent pujas accounted for Rs 32,500, and the pushkarini (sacred water tank) raised Rs 1,200. Prasada sales reached Rs 11,03,940, with lockers earning Rs 180. Annadaanam (food donations) saw Rs 2,98,321, leases brought in Rs 56,286, and gograsam contributed Rs 5,000. In honor of Lord Narasimha's birth star (Swati Nakshatra), a grand Shatha

Ghata Abhishekam (ceremonial bathing with 100 pots of water) was performed. The Giri Pradakshina Mahotsav allowed devotees to spiritual-circumambulate the sacred hill, enhancing their connection to the divine. The substantial contributions to the temple's hundi (donation box) during these celebrations highlight the unwavering faith and commitment of the community. Temple officials expressed their heartfelt gratitude for the overwhelming support and anticipate further festive activities to strengthen community bonds. As Yadadri Temple continues to serve as a cultural and spiritual hub, the local community remains dedicated to preserving and celebrating their rich traditions, ensuring that future generations can enjoy the profound spiritual heritage.

Minister Tummala pitches for clean city

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao has said that the people of the city will be healthy only when the city is clean. The Minister was speaking after laying the foundation stone for the Rs 10-lakh storm-water drain and cement concrete roads in Raparti Nagar located in 58th Division of the city with TUFIDC funds. New colonies are being developed and construction activity has been taken up in 58th division of the city. Therefore, measures would be initiated to develop roads and drains in the division, he said. The government sanctioned Rs 1 crore for development of amenities in Dorai colony, he said asking the authorities to use the funds for public purpose. The Minister asked the engineers, contractors and municipal commissioners to start the works first in the areas where the people have been



Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao laying foundation stone for Storm-water drain in Khammam on Saturday

facing difficulties. He asked them to ensure the quality of the works executed. The roads and drainages should be developed rather qualitatively and the levelling should be fine. He asked them to make good use of the funds being released by the state government and take steps to ensure that the people and their surroundings are kept tidy. Stagnation of drainage water in vacant sites would mushroom the growth of mosquitoes and

will become the haunting ground for the pigs causing diseases. Further, he asked them to speak with owners of the vacant sites to level their sites to ensure that there is no water stagnation. There is a need to erect fence around the vacant sites. He asked the officials to implement special action plan to remove the garbage from the vacant sites to make the sites cleaned by the site owners.

Telangana engineer shot dead in Uganda

PNS ■ JANGAON

An engineer, who hailed from o Jangaon district, died tragically after he was shot by a security guard, at a company on Friday morning.

He was working in a construction company. The reasons for the security guard firing on the engineer could not be known immediately.

The deceased was identified as Yetikala Tirumalesh (42). He was employed in Royal Tech Construction Company..

He is survived by wife, son and daughter. While his wife and son live with him Uganda, his daughter is pursuing education in Nizamabad staying with her grandparents.

Tirumalesh's office is located in Kampala, the capital of Uganda. However, he went to the Sembabule work site of the project for inspection in the adjacent Sarota district.

When he arrived at the site visit, the security guard at the site opened firing from his gun on Tirumalesh. He collapsed and died on the spot.

When the people present there tried to apprehend the security guard, the assailant also committed suicide by shooting himself



Tirumalesh

with the gun. Following the incident, a pall of gloom descended on Girmiggeda in Jangaon district. Tirumalesh's mother and other family members wept inconsolably for their dear one. Tirumalesh's father died during the Covid pandemic situation.

According to Tirumalesh's brother Chinna, the company officials sent the body of Tirumalesh for an autopsy at a hospital in the region where the tragedy had taken place. The police are investigating the reasons for the security guard opening fire on the engineer.

Damodar pays tributes to Venkatswamy

PNS ■ MEDAK

Tributes were paid to former minister and Congress leader Gaddam Venkat Swamy on his birth anniversary. On Saturday, at Sangareddy Collectorate conference hall, Minister for Health and Family Welfare Damodar Raja Narasimha and District Collector Kranti Valluru paid floral tributes to his portrait, recalling his services.

Speaking at the event, the Minister praised Venkat Swamy as a leader who earned a special place in the state's politics and was dedicated to social welfare. He highlighted Venkat Swamy's lifelong dedication to the welfare of the poor and his tireless fight for Dalit rights. He noted that Venkat Swamy's efforts to achieve social and economic equality had served as a guiding light for many lives.

He further stated that Venkat Swamy implemented many welfare schemes to ensure justice for the underprivileged and gave hope to the Dalit and marginalised communities across the country. His reforms in education and employment sectors continue to benefit countless students and unemployed youth today. He also remarked that Venkat Swamy's efforts to address people's hardships as a minister remain unforgettable, and his tireless work for the upliftment of the poor and social



Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha paying floral tributes to the portrait of former minister and Congress leader G Venkatswamy in Medak on Saturday

equality will always be remembered. The minister urged the youth to take inspiration from Venkat Swamy's life and strive for justice and equality in society. He added that Venkat Swamy's efforts to provide equal opportunities in education, employment, and economic sectors would continue to inspire future generations, and his vision remains relevant and necessary for society today. Minister Narasimha emphasized that the work done by Venkat Swamy to secure equal rights for all remains a significant contribution.

IN BRIEF



India to host Malabar naval exercise

India will host the four-nation Malabar naval exercise beginning Tuesday amid evolving security situation in the region. The navies of India, the US, Australia and Japan will carry out a series of complex naval drills during the 'sea phase' of the mega wargame. 'Exercise Malabar 2024 is scheduled to take place from October 8 to 18, beginning with the Harbour Phase in Visakhapatnam, followed by the sea phase,' the Indian Navy announced on Saturday. The Malabar exercise, which began in 1992 as a bilateral naval drill between the US and the Indian Navy, has evolved into a key multilateral event aimed at enhancing interoperability, fostering mutual understanding and addressing shared maritime challenges in the Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific region. The exercise will feature the participation of various Indian naval platforms, including guided missile destroyers, multi-purpose frigates, submarines, fighter aircraft and helicopters.



Man slits relative's throat over affair with wife

A 45-year-old man was killed here by his brother-in-law over suspicion he was having an affair with his wife, police said on Saturday. The victim, Lalji, a Gonda native, had been living with his brother-in-law Kania - his wife's sister's husband - for the last four to five days in adjacent Balrampur district, Circle Officer (Sadar) Shipra Verma said. On Friday evening, Kania took Lalji out, had liquor with him, and slit his throat with a knife, she said. The ensuing commotion drew the attention of the passersby, who rushed him to the district hospital in Balrampur, where he was declared dead. CO Verma said a case was filed against Kania on the complaint of Lalji's son. She said Kania suspected his wife was having an affair with Lalji and meeting him every time she would visit her maternal home. Lalji's body was sent for post mortem, Iiyathok Kotwali Dehat Police Station SHO Durgesh Singh said.



Over 60 per cent polling in Haryana polls

Over 60 per cent polling was recorded in the Haryana Assembly elections on Saturday in which the ruling BJP is eyeing a third term and the Congress seeking a comeback after a decade. Officials said polling, which closed at 6 pm, went on smoothly barring a clash in Nuh between supporters of two candidates which left three persons injured. According to the data available at 5 pm, 61 per cent polling has been registered and it will further increase once all information comes in. The BJP, Congress, the INLD-BSP and the JJP-Azad Samaj Party alliances and the Aam Aadmi Party are the key parties contesting the polls. A total of 1,031 candidates are in the fray, including 101 women and 464 Independent nominees.

Cong being run by 'gang of urban Naxals': PM Modi

PNS ■ WASHIM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday alleged that the Congress is being run by a 'gang of urban Naxals', and asked people to unite to defeat the "dangerous agenda" of that party. He also accused the Congress of looting the poor and not improving their condition for its selfish politics.

"They (Congress) think that if we all unite, then their agenda to divide the country will fail," Modi said, addressing a rally in Washim district of Maharashtra after launching various projects.

"Congress only knows how to loot the poor and keep them poor for its selfish politics. It only knows how to divide people. We have to be alert and remain united. Congress is run by a gang of urban Naxals," he alleged. Everyone can see how closely Congress stands with those people who do not harbour good intentions for India, Modi said. "Drugs worth thousands of crores of rupees were seized in Delhi recently. A Congress leader is suspected to



"Congress only knows how to loot the poor and keep them poor for its selfish politics. It only knows how to divide people. We have to be alert and remain united. Congress is run by a gang of urban Naxals," he alleged.

be the kingpin. Congress wants to contest elections from the money it gets by pushing the youth towards drugs," he said.

The Indian Youth Congress had said on October 3 that Tushar Goel, the suspected kingpin, was expelled from the organisation on October 17, 2022, for anti-party activities, soon after BJP spokesperson and MP Sudhanshu Trivedi charged the opposition

party with having links with the drug dealers. Modi alleged that Congress' thinking has been foreign from the very beginning. "Like the British rule, this Congress family also does not consider Dalits, backward and tribals as their equals. They feel that India should be ruled by only one family. That is why they have always maintained a derogatory attitude towards the Banjara communi-

ty," he said.

"Saints from the Banjara community inspired culture and spiritualism. Britishers harassed the community, but when they left, successive Congress governments continued the trend and prevented the community from coming into the mainstream," the PM alleged. The PM also accused the Congress of leaving no stone unturned to make the lives of farmers miserable.

"The governments run by the Congress used the money meant for farmers and irrigation schemes for corruption," he alleged. Modi asked people to beware of the Congress propaganda of false assurance of farm loan waiver. "People in Telangana are still waiting for the loan waiver. In Karnataka, the Congress government stopped the irrigation schemes started by the BJP regime," he said.

Stating that Maharashtra has the capacity to lead the country to economic progress, Modi said the state government was giving double benefit to farmers in terms of financial assistance, in addition to what the central government was providing.

'We have lost our patience'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

We have lost our patience, the Supreme Court has said while expressing concern over delay by the states and Union Territories in providing ration card to the migrant workers.

A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Ahsanuddin Amanullah granted a final opportunity to the Centre, states and Union Territories (UTs) to take necessary steps in this regard by November 19. "We have lost our patience, we are making it very clear that there will be no more indulgence. "We are giving you one last window to comply with our order or your secretary will remain present," the bench said. Additional Solicitor General

SC on delay in providing ration cards to migrant workers



Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, informed that only one ration card is issued per priority household under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana. The top court was hearing a

suo motu case registered in 2020 after taking cognizance of problems and miseries of the migrant labourers during COVID. The apex court had earlier asked the Centre to file an affidavit giving details about compliance of its 2021 judgement and subsequent directions on providing ration cards and other welfare measures to the migrant workers.

The top court, in June 29, 2021 judgement and subsequent orders, had passed a slew of directions to the authorities asking them to undertake welfare measures, including giving ration cards to all migrant workers, who were distressed during the COVID-19 pandemic, registered

with the 'e-Shram' portal. The 'e-Shram' is a comprehensive National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW) launched by the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment with a primary aim to facilitate delivery of welfare benefits and social security measures to unorganised sector workers across the country. The top court, in the 2021 judgement, had termed as "unpardonable" the Centre's "apathy and lackadaisical attitude" towards creating National Database for Unorganised Workers (NDUW) and ordered its commencement by July 31, 2021 so that all migrant workers are registered and welfare measures extended to them during COVID distress.

Govt land to be given to poor on..

Continued from page 1

in Tirumalagiri Sagar is part of our process to ensure that the new law addresses all land issues effectively," the Minister said. As part of the pilot project, the government has been conducting surveys in Tirumalagiri Sagar, where many landowners face discrepancies. Some possess land without official title deeds (pattas or ownership documents), while others have title deeds for land they do not occupy. The surveys aim to provide a permanent resolution to these issues.

Ponguleti said that approximately 13,000 acres in Tirumalagiri Sagar have been

identified as having bogus title deeds, and the government is committed to distributing about 3,500 to 4,000 acres of this land to the eligible poor. The Chief Minister will preside over the distribution of these lands at the December 9 event, he said. "The government's primary objective is to ensure that government land benefits the poor. We will distribute title deeds to the eligible poor during the public meeting on December 9, where the Chief Minister will personally hand over these land rights," the Minister added.

Alongside land distribution, Ponguleti also reiterated the government's commitment to providing Indiramma houses to

the poor. He said that the first phase of the Indiramma housing scheme would begin by the end of October, with 3,500 houses being distributed in all constituencies and 5,000 houses allocated for Nagarjunasagar. He directed collectors to ensure that previously distributed Indiramma houses, which are still under mortgage, are freed and granted full ownership to beneficiaries.

Former Minister Kunduru Jana Reddy, who was present at the event, praised the government's initiative. He said that selecting Tirumalagiri Sagar for a pilot project to correct flaws in the old revenue law and Dharani portal is a welcome move.

Govt issues HYDRAA..

Continued from page 1

under State Government and preserve them from any kind of illegal encroachments, in the manner prescribed by the Government as it deems fit from time to time, for effective disaster response and protection of public

assets," the section says. The Gazette added that it has been considered essential to make necessary amendments to the GHMC Act, 1955, to provide legal competence to the Commissioner of the GHMC to engage the services of any specialised agency for effective disaster response and asset protection.

Continued from page 1

on quality, from the raw materials to the final preparation," he assured. He proudly pointed out that no one can replicate the quality of Lord Venkateswara's Prasadam, which holds a patent. "Our Laddu, Mysorepak, and Vada are one of a kind," he added with a smile.

On the environmental front, Naidu highlighted that greenery on the Hills has already reached 72%, with efforts to push it up

No compromise..

prays to Lord Venkateswara upon waking and during difficult times. He urged those serving on the Hills and all devotees to maintain utmost sanctity.

Naidu recalled that the Anna Danam scheme, initiated during NT Rama Rao's era for a few thousand devotees, now feeds around three lakh devotees daily. He also instructed TTD officials to improve the management of queue lines, noting that devotees are satisfied with both the Prasadam quality and TTD services.

Konda Surekha is not alone..

Continued from page 1

to the victims' demands. I don't know why film industry people are continuing their discussions even after the Minister withdrew her comments and apologised," the Minister Ponnamp said.

During a chat-chat with journalists on Saturday, Ponnamp said the Congress government is fulfilling the assurances of overcoming financial problems. He said that the BJP and the BRS 'are one' and they are criticising the government, conspiring joint-

Junior Assistants..

Continued from page 1

Speaking at the occasion, Surekha expressed her happiness at being able to facilitate these long-pending promotions. "Today, with a single signature, these employees have received what they rightfully deserved for years. The Congress government under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is committed not only to public welfare but also to the welfare of its employees. This promotion is a clear reflection of that," she said. Surekha pointed out that under the current admin, the state had already provided several promotions to Grade 1 and Grade 2 EOs, a process that the BRS government had ignored.

Shun your Zamindari..

Continued from page 1

the poor languish in slums." "KCR has a farmhouse in Gajwel with 1,000 acres. If you give 500 acres out of it, we will build Indiramma houses for the poor. KCR do some Bhoodhan. KTR has 50 acres in Janwada. Give 25 acres out of it to build Indiramma houses. The BRS bank account has Rs 1500 crore. Give Rs 500 crore. Let's distribute it to the people. All this money was stolen from the people," Revanth said. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that it is not possible for them (BRS Working President KT Rama Rao) to come to power through social media. Instead, they are sure to go to Cheralapally jail, he added.

Addressing the Venakata Swamy birth anniversary celebrations at the Ravindra Bharathi on Saturday, Revanth said that KTR is dreaming that he will come to power through social media. He said that KTR will not come to power through social media but it is sure that KTR will eat Cheralapally Jail food if he engages in cheap tricks. The CM addressed ongoing issues along the Musi River. He assured the displaced residents that the government is committed to protecting their interests and promised Rs 10,000 crore for their rehabilitation. "We will protect every single displaced person and ensure alternatives are provided to them," he said, urging people not to be swayed by the opposition's lies. He criticised the opposition for only raising concerns to protect their farmhouses from demolition. In a direct appeal, Revanth asked Eatala Rajender, KTR and Harish Rao to offer suggestions for the welfare of the poor in the Musi catchment area, reiterating that the government harboured no animosity towards anyone but was focused on doing good for the people.

Demolish our houses but..

Continued from page 1

He also asked Revanth to demolish his brother Tirupathi Reddy's house in Durgam Cheruvu and Revanth's house in Reddy Kunta in Kodangal. He accused the government of prioritising demolitions in low-income neighbourhoods to push forward projects that benefit only the rich and the powerful. KTR specifically referred to the Musi Project, alleging that it was a ruse to steal public funds rather than

a genuine development project. "They are calling it 'beautification,' but it's nothing more than looting. Poor people are being targeted, and the government is hiding behind big-ticket projects to fill their pockets," KTR said. He claimed that the Chief Minister and his administration were focused on "looti-fication" rather than beautification, making it clear that the current projects served to line the pockets of a few elites while neglecting the welfare of commoners.

Exit polls give Congress majority..

Continued from page 1

Conference-Congress alliance at 40-48 seats and the BJP at 27-32 seats in the 90-member assembly of the Union Territory. Elections were held in Jammu and Kashmir after a gap of 10 years and the bifurcation of the state into two union territories

-- Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh -- in 2019. Dainik Bhaskar pegged the National Conference (NC)-Congress alliance at 35-40 and the BJP at 20-25 in Jammu and Kashmir, while Axis My India polls gave NC-Congress between 35 and 45 seats, the BJP in the range of 24-34 and others 4-10 seats.

Make Kannada state's 'business language': CM

PNS ■ RAICHUR

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday gave a clarion call to the people of Karnataka to make Kannada their 'business language'. Speaking at an event to celebrate 50 years of naming the erstwhile Mysore state as Karnataka, the CM appealed to people to make Karnataka a Kannada state.



"All the people living here are Kannadigas. No matter what your home language is, the 'business language' should be Kannada. Kannada should be the main and first language in the state," he said.

added. Dwelling on the Gokak agitation, which was related to granting Kannada the first language status in the state, the chief minister said the 'Kannada Kavala Samiti' was formed to create an atmosphere for Kannada to prosper in Karnataka. Later, the com-

mittee became the Kannada Development Authority, he explained. Siddaramaiah asked people to respect all languages, learn as many languages as possible but never be generous to give up Kannada, the language of this land.

A TASTE OF THE NEW

EXCITING RESTAURANTS SHAPING NCR'S FOOD SCENE



The food scene in the NCR is heating up, with a host of new eateries making their mark, each worth a visit. This month, I sampled a few, and here are my impressions.

LITCHI BISTRO

Nestled in the culinary hub of Malviya Nagar, *Litchi Bistro* offers a creative world cuisine menu alongside freshly brewed coffee from their in-house roastery. The spacious open patio outshines the indoor seating, creating a vibrant atmosphere. Two dishes I highly recommend are the *Spicy Tuna Taco*, served on a crisp Nori sheet with a kick from sriracha mayo and *the Korean Bacon*, a miso-marinated pork belly. The latter is so exceptional that I would return just for this dish.

AVARTANA AT ITC MAURYA

This is easily the most intriguing restaurant I've explored this year. *Avartana* offers set-course menus ranging from 7 to 13 courses, priced from Rs. 2,950 upwards per person. The cuisine is a contemporary interpretation of South Indian ingredients, far from the traditional dishes we usually associate with the region. I'll be doing a detailed review soon, as it's hard to choose favourites when each dish is stellar. It's no surprise that *Avartana* ranks 44th among Asia's 50 best.

689, GURGAON

Six Eighty Nine at Two Horizon brings Quorum Club's finesse into the public domain. This Asian restaurant draws inspiration from Japanese cuisine, with a clever twist of Japanese ingredients across its offerings. A standout dish is the *Flame-Kissed Avocado* from the *Robotayaki* section. The buttery avocado, glazed with soy-mirin, perfectly balances saltiness and sharpness, with a



zing from shichimi lime. Ideal for those who enjoy Asian flavours and refined cocktails without the distraction of loud music.

TEPPANYAKI AT EEST, WESTIN GURGAON

Gurgaon finally has a live *Teppanyaki* counter. What was once

Eest's *Omakase* section has been revamped to accommodate a *Teppanyaki* grill. The sauces are fresh, the ingredients top-notch and Chef Jatin engages with diners to craft dishes tailored to their preferences. The food here is as delicious as it is healthy, ensuring my return visit soon.

ROOM XO, AIPL JOY CENTRAL, GURGAON

The new party hub, *Room XO*, features one of the largest bars in the city, offering high-energy music, creative cocktails, massive screens and a performance bar. The food, curated by celebrity chef *Sabyasachi Gorai*, complements the lively atmosphere. With the same founders as *Studio XO*, this spot is set to be the next big thing in Gurgaon's nightlife.

THANKS AND BEYOND, NEHRU PLACE, DELHI

Veteran nightlife impresario *Priyank Sukhija's* latest venture at *Epicuria Mall* offers three distinct zones. 'Thanks' is a casual dining space, 'And' is the outdoor area, and

'Beyond' is a high-energy bar. For a great time, I recommend the *Tequila-based Picante*, the *Sheesha*, and the *Tuna on Toast*.

PIRATES OF GRILL GRANDE, CYBERHUB, GURGAON

Buffets just went gourmet, thanks to the famous *Banga Brothers*, who have redefined the concept with their Grande edition of *Pirates of Grill*. The quality, variety, and pricing are a revelation - priced at around Rs. 1,000 per head; the spread rivals the best à la carte restaurants. Standout items include the *Benne Dosa* with *Podi Masala*, possibly the best in the NCR and *Dim Sum* that would hold its own in any reputable dim sum restaurant. Don't miss the *Grilled Pineapple*, an old favourite or the *Indianised Meatballs* with shredded egg caulis and cheese, a delightful fusion.

Now that you're in the loop on the hottest dining and nightlife spots in the NCR, where are you heading tonight or later this week? Let me know at pawan.soni@indianfoodfreak.com.

Explore NCR's newest hotspots, serving up bold flavours and vibrant atmospheres for those looking to experience the best in dining and nightlife



PAWAN SONI
Food critic and founder of the Big F Awards



FROM KOLKATA TO DELHI: THE TASTE OF TWO CITIES

While Durga Puja is celebrated across the country, it is at a different level in Kolkata. The rhythm of the dhak, the vibrant atmosphere and the exquisite food transport you to another world, writes DIVYA BHATIA



A visit to Kolkata revealed the grandeur of the festivities, showcasing stunning pandals and creating cherished moments. As a foodie, I was captivated by the culinary extravaganza, especially the traditional *Bhuribhoj* and *Bengali Thali*. The unforgettable flavours of *Basanti Polao*, *Aloo Bhaja*, *Begun Bhaja*, *Potol Bhaja*, *Luchi* and *Chholar Dal*, paired with *Mishti Doi* and *Rasgulla*, left a lasting impression. The magic of these dishes lies in the love behind their preparation. Bengalis savour their meals in small courses, enhancing the authentic flavours of their cuisine. While I've felt a festive spirit in Delhi, it cannot match Kolkata's enchanting transformation during *Durga Puja*. However, Delhi offers its own take on Bengali cuisine, and this year, I explored delightful recipes from young chefs, ensuring that whether you're in Kolkata or elsewhere, you can enjoy traditional *Puja* dishes.

CHEF GAUTAM KUMAR'S RECIPE FOR GOBINDOBHOG GURER PAYESH

Chef *Gautam Kumar*, Executive Chef at *Foodlink F&B Holdings* (India), brings over 20 years of experience in regional Indian cuisine. He emphasises fresh, locally sourced ingredients and has held prestigious positions at top hotels like *Shangri-La* and *Grand Hyatt* Delhi. His innovative approach has garnered numerous accolades, and one of his favourite dishes is *Gobindobhog Gurer Payesh*.

GOBINDOBHOG GURER PAYESH

Kheer, or 'payesh' in Bengali, is a sweet rice and milk dish beloved in Bengali culture. Offered to the goddess *Durga* as 'bhog', it is shared among devotees after the puja. Made with date palm jaggery, 'nolen gud kheer' is a healthier alternative to sugar, especially popular during *Durga Puja*. Sharing *Payesh* symbolizes unity and harmony among family members. *Durga Puja*. Sharing *Payesh* symbolises unity and fosters harmony among family members.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 litre full-fat milk
- 50 grams Gobindo bhog rice
- 150 grams nolen gur (date palm jaggery)
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon green cardamom powder
- 20 grams cashew nuts
- 10 grams raisins (soaked and drained)
- 10 grams ghee

METHOD

- **Soak the Rice:** Soak the rice in water for 30 minutes, ensuring not to over-wash it to retain as much starch as possible. After soaking, drain the rice and spread it out to dry.
- **Coat the Rice:** Coat the soaked rice with ¼ teaspoon of ghee and set aside.
- **Prepare the Raisins:** Soak the raisins in water until swollen.
- **Fry Cashews:** Heat ghee in a pan and fry the cashews until golden. Set aside.
- **Boil the Milk:** Boil the milk in a heavy-bottomed pan, simmer for 15 minutes, and add cardamom powder.
- **Cook the Rice:** Add the ghee-coated rice to the milk and cook on low heat until fully cooked. The rice should be soft and mushy when mashed between your fingers, as it will firm up while cooling. Stir gently to prevent burning and release starch, which thickens the payesh.
- **Thicken the Payesh:** Ensure the rice is fully cooked; the payesh should be slightly thicker than desired, as the gur will thin it out.
- **Add Gur:** Turn off the heat and mix in the gur, salt, soaked raisins, and fried cashews, keeping the heat off to prevent curdling. Gently fold everything together, cover the pan, and let the residual heat melt the gur completely. Serve the payesh hot or cold in a bowl, garnished with fried cashews and soaked raisins.

RECIPE FOR NARDEL NI CHINGRI

Chef *Gagandeep Singh Bedi*, Director of Culinary at *Roseate Hotels & Resorts*, specialises in reviving regional Indian cuisines and creating signature dishes at *Kheer*. He focuses on organic produce and minimising food waste.

NARDEL NI CHINGRI RECIPE

One of his standout creations is *Nardel ni Chingri*, a delightful prawn dish cooked in coconut milk. This recipe exemplifies Chef *Gagandeep's* commitment to authentic flavours and sustainable practices. Here's how to make it:

INGREDIENTS

- 500g prawns, cleaned and deveined
- 200ml fresh coconut milk
- 75g fresh grated coconut
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp ginger paste
- 1 tsp garlic paste
- 2-3 green chilies, slit
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- ½ tsp red chili powder
- 40ml mustard oil
- Salt to taste
- Fresh coriander for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

- Marinate the prawns with turmeric and salt for 15 minutes.
- Roast the grated coconut on medium flame until golden brown.
- Heat mustard oil in a pan until smoking, then reduce heat.
- Sauté onions until golden brown, then add ginger and garlic paste.
- Add green chilies, turmeric and red chili powder, stirring well.
- Add marinated prawns and cook until pink (5-7 minutes).
- Pour in coconut milk and simmer for 5-10 minutes.
- Add roasted grated coconut and cook for an additional 2-3 minutes.
- Adjust seasoning and garnish with fresh coriander and Serve hot with steamed rice for a delicious meal!



Navratri: The essence of Satvik food

BY TEAM VIVA

The festival of *Navratri* is here and the air is filled with a spirit of devotion and celebration. During these nine auspicious days, millions across India follow a special dietary regimen, abstaining from regular food and opting for *Satvik* meals. While these dishes are rooted in tradition, chefs at hotels like *Le Meridien, New Delhi* have taken the opportunity to elevate this sacred cuisine with contemporary flavours, ensuring that even the most discerning food lovers can enjoy fasting meals with a gourmet touch. *Navratri* food is characterised by simplicity, with ingredients that align with spiritual purity. Common dishes consumed during this period have been improvised by Chef *Setuu Gupta*. Here are the dishes:

- **'Kuttu ki Puri'** (*Buckwheat Flour Puri*) - A deep-fried, gluten-free flatbread made from buckwheat flour, which is one of the staples during *Navratri*.
- **'Sabudana tikki'** - A light and flavorful dish made with soaked tapioca pearls, peanuts, and mild spices like cumin, offering a fulfilling yet easy-to-digest meal.
- **'Paneer Tikka'** - Cottage cheese cubes marinated in yoghurt and mild spices, then grilled to perfection. *Paneer* dishes are popular as they provide a protein-rich option for those fasting.
- **'Samak Rice Pulao'** - This is made from barnyard millet, often called 'vrat rice,' and is cooked with mild spices and



vegetables to offer a flavorful alternative to regular rice.

- **'Anjeer ka Halwa'** - A dessert made from figs, slow-cooked in milk and flavoured with cardamom, is a popular sweet indulgence for the fasting period.
- **'Makhana Curry'** - A creamy salty pudding made from foxnuts (*makhana*) and curd flavoured with spices and nuts for a rich taste.
- **'Kachche Kale Sabudana Tikki'** is a crispy snack made from raw banana, *sabudana* (*tapioca* pearls), green chilies, and spices. Shallow-fried and enjoyed during fasting periods like *Navratri*, it offers a flavourful and energising treat.
- **'Arbi Singara Kadhi'** - is a flavourful curry made with *colocasia* (*arbi*) and water chestnuts (*singhara*), simmered in a spiced yoghurt-based gravy. It's thickened with *singhara* flour and seasoned with mustard seeds, curry leaves and chilies for a tangy, savoury dish. *Navratri* food has always been about maintaining purity and simplicity, but at *Le Meridien, New Delhi*, Chef *Setuu Gupta* and his team have shown that fasting meals can be both humble and sophisticated. By elevating traditional dishes with innovative techniques, they ensure that guests not only honour their spiritual commitment but also indulge in a culinary journey that excites the senses. This fusion of faith and flavour is a testament to the evolving nature of India's food culture, where tradition and modernity walk hand in hand.

Photo: Pankaj Kumar



CELEBRATING NAVRATRI

A SPECTACULAR DANCE-DRAMA EXPERIENCE

With the festive spirit of Navratri, *Shriram Bharatiya Kala Kendra* presents a captivating dance-drama that brings the timeless tale of the Ramayana to life, highlighting the struggle between good and evil and the victory of righteousness, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

October marks the arrival of a magical time in India, where the festive spirit fills the air and people from all walks of life come together to celebrate the rich cultural heritage passed down for generations. Among the many stories and traditions that take centre stage during this season, none are as cherished or as timeless as the story of the Ramayana. Retold through art, music, dance and drama, the Ramayana during Navratri is more than just a mythological tale; it's a reminder of the eternal struggle between good and evil, love and loss, and the ultimate victory of righteousness. One of the most iconic ways to experience this story is through the grand production of "Shri Ram" by the *Shriram Bharatiya Kala Kendra*. For 68 years, this dance-drama has been a hallmark of Delhi's festive calendar, drawing audiences into the epic saga of the Ramayana. The production spans 24 days during the Navratri festival; it's not just a performance but an experience, a journey through time and a deep dive into India's cultural and spiritual heritage.

A GRAND STAGE AND CAPTIVATING ATMOSPHERE

From the moment visitors arrive at the venue, they are welcomed by an impressive stage representing ancient Ayodhya. The meticulous attention to detail in the stage design is evident, featuring intricate patterns and vibrant colours that transport the audience to the heart of the Ramayana. The lighting shifts throughout the performance, enhancing the emotional depth of each scene. As the performance commences, the atmosphere buzzes with excitement and anticipation. Artists in elaborate costumes fill the stage, celebrating the arrival of their lord Ram. The traditional music accompanying their movements resonates with the audience, enveloping everyone in the festive spirit. The dance-drama format allows for a seamless blend of storytelling and art; classical Indian dance forms like Kathak, Bharatnatyam and Odissi take centre stage, where each gesture and expression conveys deep emotion. The opening scene beautifully showcases themes of community, love, and unity, drawing everyone into the celebration.

A DIVINE BEGINNING

The story begins with the birth of Lord Ram and his brothers, as the people of Ayodhya rejoice in the arrival of their beloved prince. The joy on stage is visible, reflecting the warmth and happiness of the occasion. The scenes that follow take the audience on a journey through Ram's life, from his education in scriptures and warfare to his marriage with Sita, highlighting the trials he faces along the way. What makes this story captivating is not just Ram's destiny as a divine figure but his humanity. From a young age, Ram exemplifies virtues of humility, patience and wisdom, shaping his actions throughout his life. This sense of divine purpose, combined with Ram's ability to empathise with ordinary people, makes his character relatable and inspiring to devotees during Navratri. As "Shri Ram" beautifully portrays, Ram's early years symbolise the joys of life and the weight of responsibility he must bear as the future ruler.

“ 'SHRI RAM' IS MORE THAN JUST A RETELLING OF THE RAMAYANA; IT IS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL, A COMMON CONNECTION BETWEEN GENERATIONS, AND A TRIBUTE TO INDIAN TALENT IN DANCE, POETRY AND DESIGN”



Photo: Pankaj Kumar



The early relationships that shape him, including his bond with his brothers Lakshman, Bharata and Shatrughna, each play an essential role in the unfolding drama.

THE JOURNEY OF LORD RAM AND HIS BROTHERS

As the story progresses, spectators witness the formative years of Ram alongside his brothers, training under Vishwamitra. This segment showcases the dedication and brotherly camaraderie that define their relationships, expressed through intricate choreography that highlights their commitment to duty. The physical movements and emotional expressions of the dancers capture the essence of loyalty, honour, and sacrifice, core values that resonate throughout the Ramayana. The portrayal of Ram's marriage to Sita is another highlight of the performance. The ceremony is beautifully staged and thoughtfully executed, illustrating the depth of love and devotion between the two characters. Sita is depicted with grace and strength, captivating the audience as she expresses her hopes and dreams.

The artistry of this scene reflects the timeless nature of love, with each gesture drawing the audience deeper into their narrative. This portrayal captures the essence of their divine union while reminding the audience that true love involves enduring hardship and remaining steadfast in faith.

THE RISE OF CONFLICT

The story takes a dramatic turn with the introduction of Ravana. The portrayal of Ravana brings an air of tension and complexity, masterfully performed by a talented artist whose commanding presence leaves a lasting impression. The audience feels the weight of impending conflict as the stage transforms into a realm where good clashes with evil. One of the most gripping moments comes when Ravana sends a golden deer to tempt Sita, leading to the separation of Ram and Sita. The tension during this scene is visible, as Sita's innocence and longing are powerfully conveyed. This pivotal moment marks the beginning of trials that will test Ram's love and resolve. The fierce confrontation between Lakshman and Surpanakha highlights themes of loyalty and honour. The choreography in this segment is intense, illustrating the raw emotions involved in defending family honour. Lakshman's decisive action

in cutting off Surpanakha's nose showcases the protective instincts that run deep within the characters of the Ramayana.

THE BATTLE OF GOOD AND EVIL

As the narrative escalates, the stage transforms into a dramatic battlefield. The choreography during these scenes is breathtaking, with performers moving in perfect synchrony to depict the chaos of war. Ram's battle against Ravana becomes the climactic moment of the performance, showcasing the bravery and determination of the forces of good. The audience is enthralled as Ram ultimately conquers Ravana, a victory resonating with the core message of the Ramayana: righteousness prevails in the face of evil. The final scenes, where Ram returns to Ayodhya to be crowned king, are a celebration of joy and mastery. The atmosphere fills with colour and light, reflecting the happiness of the citizens of Ayodhya as they welcome their lord home. This ending serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of justice, duty, and the values that bind communities together.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF "SHRI RAM"

Under the artistic direction of Padmashri *Shobha Deepak Singh*, the show has evolved over the years while retaining its essence. *Singh*, Chairperson of SBKK, beautifully articulated this sentiment when she stated, "Shri Ram" is more than just a retelling of the Ramayana; it is an educational tool, a common connection between generations, and a tribute to Indian talent in dance, poetry, and design." Her words resonate throughout the venue, emphasising the importance of preserving and celebrating Indian culture. The entire production is a tribute to the dedication of the artists and the meticulous planning that went into its execution. Every detail, from the stunning costumes to the intricate choreography, was carefully curated to create a seamless experience for the audience. This performance not only entertains but also educates, providing insights into the values of loyalty, courage, and righteousness at the heart of the Ramayana.



A CELEBRATION OF CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

The performance of "Shri Ram" is not just an artistic display; it is a celebration of culture and community. The universal messages of love, sacrifice, and the struggle against adversity resonate deeply, reminding everyone of the cherished values in our lives. The lighting is masterfully used to reflect shifts in tone, from the warmth and joy of Ram and Sita's union to the ominous darkness of Ravana's plans. As the scenes transition, the stage transforms fluidly, drawing the audience deeper into the narrative. The costumes are a visual feast - rich, vibrant and steeped in historical authenticity. Each character, from Ram and Sita in their royal attire to Hanuman and his monkey warriors, is dressed to reflect their roles and the cultural and mythological significance of their actions. The grandness of the set and costumes adds a layer of magic to the story, allowing the audience to fully immerse themselves in the spectacle. Embracing the Spirit of Navratri The festival of Navratri is a time for reflection, devotion and celebration, beautifully captured in the performance of "Shri Ram." This production highlights the strength of unity and the importance of standing up for what is right while encouraging a shared understanding of our cultural values. As the Navratri celebrations continue, performances like "Shri Ram" inspire us to reflect on the deeper meanings of the Ramayana and the victory of good over evil. With performances scheduled until 26 October 2024, families have the chance to experience this iconic production together, witnessing the brilliance of Indian art and culture come to life on stage. So, as we gather with friends and family to celebrate Navratri, let us carry forward the lessons of the Ramayana in our hearts. May this festive season fill our lives with joy, love, and an unwavering commitment to righteousness. Wishing all readers a blessed Navratri filled with love and light!



IN BRIEF



Govt grants one-year extension to RBI Deputy Guv

The government has extended the term of RBI Deputy Governor M Rajeshwar Rao for a period of one year, according to sources. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the re-appointment of Rao for a period of one year with effect from October 9, 2024 or until further orders, sources said quoting a government order dated October 4. The ACC is headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Rao was appointed as RBI Deputy Governor in October 2020 for a period of three years. Rao was elevated as RBI executive director in November 2016. An economics graduate and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Cochin, Rao joined the central bank in 1984. As a career central banker, he has exposure to various aspects of the RBI's functioning. He has previously held the charge of the Risk Monitoring Department.

Road logistics industry revenues likely to grow up to 9 pc: Icra

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The domestic road logistics industry is expected to register a growth of up to 9 per cent in revenues in the ongoing 2024-25 financial year, according to Icra.

The organised road logistics sector had witnessed a growth 4.6 per cent in the 2023-24 fiscal year, the ratings agency said in a report.

As per Icra, the industry logged a revenue of Rs 23,273 crore in FY24.

"Icra expects the revenues of the Indian road logistics industry to grow by a moderate 6-9 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) in FY25," it said. The agency further said it also maintains a stable outlook for the sector, fuelled by various government measures and policies in favour of the sector on expectations of good demand outlook from segments like e-commerce, FMCG, retail,



chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and industrial goods.

Srikumar Krishnamurthy, Senior Vice President & Co-Group Head Corporate Ratings, Icra Ltd, said, "In FY24, the growth was subdued

on account of a relatively muted demand amid high inflation, an uneven monsoon, a relatively lacklustre festive season and the rising interest rate regime."

"We expect the industry

"Icra expects the revenues of the Indian road logistics industry to grow by a moderate 6-9 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) in FY25," it said.

operating profit margins to remain in the range of 11-12 per cent in FY25, with the organised players expected to maintain the pricing premium amid an overall inflationary cost scenario," he said.

India to further strengthen fintech support to Bhutan: FM



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said India will further strengthen its fintech support to Bhutan as UPI and RuPay cards gain traction in the neighbouring nation.

During the bilateral meeting with her Bhutanese counterpart Lyonpo Lekey Dorji here, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman conveyed greetings to the King of Bhutan, the members of the Royal Family

and to the people of Bhutan.

The Union Finance Minister acknowledged the support of Bhutan as a testament to the enduring partnership and shared commitment to growth and prosperity, the Finance Ministry said in a post on X.

"FM Smt. @nsitharaman noted the wide acceptance of BHIM #UPI and #Rupay cards in Bhutan and reaffirmed India's commitment to further strengthen FinTech Connectivity between India and Bhutan," she said.

'India will be among leading exporters of defence equipment'

PNS ■ CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR

India will be among the leading exporters of defence equipment in ten years, and the imports will come down to five to ten per cent, DRDO chairman Samir V Kamat said here on Saturday.

Kamat said the country's defence imports have been decreasing, and out of the capital acquisition budget last year, nearly 90 per cent was used on indigenous systems.

Kamat was speaking at Chhatrapati Shahu College of Engineering, where he inaugurated the Defence Innovation Challenge for Excellence (DICE) organised by the Marathwada Accelerator for Growth and Incubation

Council (MAGIC).

"It is true that ten years ago, we were leading importers of defence systems. But if we look at last year's figures, out of our capital acquisition budget, nearly 90 per cent was used on indigenous systems.

I am confident that in ten years the imports will be negligible. A country can't make everything. So five to 10 per cent (import) will remain," he said.

India will be among the leading exporters of defence equipment in ten years, he added.

Talking to reporters after the event, Kamat said India has set a target to achieve exports worth Rs 50,000 crore by 2028 and Rs 1 lakh crore by 2035.



IPO-bound Swiggy launches 'XL' fleet

IPO-bound food tech platform Swiggy on Saturday formally launched its bulk order 'XL' fleet to serve large orders in one go. The launch comes hours after Swiggy announced it has started a 10-minute meals and beverages delivery service 'Bolt', currently operational in select cities. The large order fleet, on a pilot run for the past few weeks, was formally launched on Saturday in Gurugram, on the day of Haryana Assembly elections. "To commemorate its official launch, the Swiggy XL EV fleet delivered 3,500 meals to electoral officials at more than 580 polling booths in Gurugram and Badshahpur constituencies. This service was provided free of cost to the District Administration," Swiggy stated. Sidharth Bhakoo, National Business Head of Swiggy Food Marketplace said, the food delivery services are helping in the overall growth of the F&B sector in India by driving new consumption occasions, promoting supply proliferation and enabling expansion of consumer base.



Centre to finance 65% of Chennai Metro Phase 2

The central government will finance 65 per cent of the estimated cost of Chennai Metro Phase-2 project, which will add up to over Rs 41,000 crore, the finance ministry said on Saturday. The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved a proposal to construct three corridors under the Chennai Metro Rail project phase-2 involving a total estimated cost of Rs 63,246 crore. The Centre's share adds up to over Rs 41,000 crore. In a statement, the finance ministry said the central government will finance almost 65 per cent of the estimated cost of Chennai Metro Phase 2. This will include the entire required loan of Rs 33,593 crore, besides the equity and subordinate debt of Rs 7,425 crore. The balance 35 per cent of the estimated cost will be financed by the state government. "The loans taken from multilateral and bilateral development agencies will be treated as the loans to the central government and will be provided directly to Chennai Metro Rail Ltd (CMRL) from the Central Government's budget," the statement added.

MEIL commissions 5 solar plants in Maha

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Infrastructure company MEIL on Saturday said it has commissioned five solar plants in Maharashtra having a combined capacity of 19 megawatt (MW).

The plants were inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually, Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Ltd (MEIL) said in a statement.

"MEIL has commissioned five solar power plants with a total capacity of 19 MW under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhayaan (PM KUSUM) scheme across Maharashtra. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Solar Plants and Dedicated to the Nation," it said. The five solar plants are at Shambhaji Nagar (3 MW), Nanded (5 MW), Kolhapur (3 MW), Akola (3 MW), and Buldhana (5 MW) in Maharashtra.

Ops at Surda copper mine resume; Kendadih, Rakha may reopen soon

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Saturday said operations at Surda copper mine in Jharkhand have resumed while Kendadih and Rakha copper mines in the state are likely to reopen this year.

Hindustan Copper Ltd (HCL) -- the public sector undertaking under the administrative control of the mines ministry -- owns the mine.

The resumption of Surda Mine operation is a significant step towards making the nation self-reliant in copper, Minister of State for Coal and Mine Satish Chandra Dubey said.

Surda Mine operation will generate employment, revive the local economy and generate about Rs 100 crore revenue per annum, the government said.



HCL has plans to ramp up mining capacity of the copper mine from the current level of 0.4 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) to 0.9 MTPA in the next seven years.

Jharkhand Cabinet has approved lease extension for the Kendadih and Rakha mines recently.

"Reopening of Kendadih and Rakha mines is on the cards this year which will lead to 2,000 direct employment and 10,000 indirect

employment among the local populace and triple the production of Indian Copper Complex," mines ministry said in a statement.

HCL CMD Ghanshyam Sharma said the resumption of Surda mine operations will provide direct employment to about 1,100 people and indirect employment to about 5,000.

A capital investment of Rs 50 crore will be made by HCL for mining operation during 2024-25.

'Generative AI holds significance in shaping future'

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its significance in shaping technology for the future took the centre stage at the CTOtalk event mentored by the city-based software-as-a-service firm Kissflow on Saturday.

CTOtalk is aimed at building a team of senior engineering professionals who share their knowledge and experience with like-minded peers in the industry.

Leaders representing various IT companies delved deep into the applications on AI ranging from automation and machine learning on occasion.

"We found that India does not have a community around CTO level technology content and we wanted to enable that and also bring chief executive officer and vice president level technology talent to Chennai," said Kissflow Founder-CEO Suresh Sambandam at the CTOtalk annual summit, here.

"What started as small talk is now running as a big programme not just in



Chennai, but also in Bengaluru, Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad throughout the year. The summit is our flagship event where all the folks across India come to Chennai, network, learn and build great technology," he said.

The conference laid emphasis on the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence with industry leaders, technology innovators trying to explore the way AI is reshaping industries.

More than 1,000 officials belonging to several information technology majors, including AWS, Google,

Freshworks, Clevertap, Swiggy, participated.

"Generative AI has significantly transformed the way we operate at Swiggy, making our engineering processes far more efficient and compelling. Repetitive tasks are now automated with GenAI, allowing us to handle vast amounts of unstructured data and analyze millions of logs in seconds," said Swiggy, Director of Engineering, Rishabh Tripathi.

"From a business perspective, our AI-driven text to SQL system delivers invaluable insights, empowering teams with faster, more accurate data," he added.

Parl panel to hear SEBI chief on Oct 24 amid Adani-Hindenburg row

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament has decided to review the functioning of top regulatory authorities in the country and has called heads of SEBI and TRAI for deposition on October 24.

Top officials of the Ministry of Finance, (Department of Economic Affairs) and Ministry of Communications have also been asked to appear before the key parliamentary panel, with sources saying representatives of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) chairperson Badhabi Puri Buch and Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) chairperson Anil Kumar Lahoti are likely to appear before the panel.

Sources said the unstated convention in parliamentary practice is that chiefs of institutions have to attend parliamentary panel briefings whenever summoned.

The meeting of the key parliamentary panel comes amid a major row over allegations made by US research body Hindenburg against SEBI chairperson Madhabi Puri Much and her husband Dhaval Buch over her alleged links with the Adani Group.

"Briefing by Audit followed

by Oral evidence of the representatives of Ministry of Finance (Department of Economic Affairs) and Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on the subject, 'Performance Review of Regulatory Bodies established by Act of Parliament', the official agenda for the October 24 meeting of the PAC said.

"Oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Communications, Department of Telecommunications and Telecom Regulatory Authority of India on the subject, 'Performance Review of Regulatory Bodies established by Act of Parliament,' it also said.

The Congress had earlier in August staged a nation-wide protest over allegations by Hindenburg against SEBI chief Madhabi Puri Buch and her husband Dhaval Buch, who have denied any wrongdoing.

The Congress also sought her resignation as SEBI chief. Hindenburg in one of its reports had alleged that the Buchs owned stakes in offshore entities linked to Adani Group's alleged financial irregularities. Hindenburg also said that 18 months after its "damning" report on Adani "SEBI has exhibited lack of interest in charges against Adani".

DoT, telcos deploying system to stop overseas spoof calls

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The telecom department, in collaboration with telecom service providers, is rolling out an advanced system in phases to identify and block incoming international spoofed calls before they can reach Indian telecom subscribers, an official statement said on Friday.

The Department of Telecom (DoT) has observed that citizens are receiving many fraudulent calls, often disguised as originating from Indian mobile numbers, while the calls are manipulated by cyber-crim-

inals operating from abroad.

"DoT, in collaboration with TSPs, has introduced an advanced system designed to identify and block incoming international spoofed calls before they can reach Indian telecom subscribers. This system is being deployed in two phases: first, at the TSP level, to prevent calls spoofed with phone numbers of their own subscribers; and second, at a central level, to stop calls spoofed with the numbers of subscribers from other TSPs," the statement said.

The DoT said that cyber criminals exploit the Calling



Line Identity (CLI) to mask the actual origin of the calls, which has led to a spate of

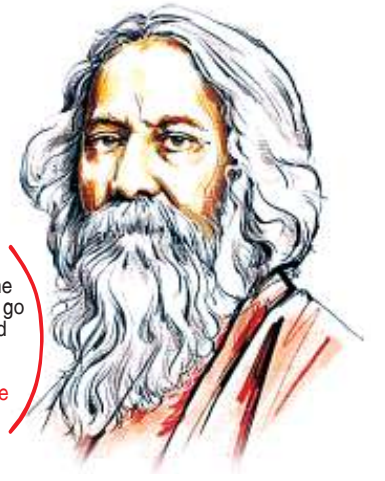
incidents, involving threats of mobile number disconnection, fake digital arrests,

and even impersonation of government officials or law enforcement agencies.

Recent cases have included false accusations involving drugs, narcotics, and sex rackets, further intensifying public concern, the statement said.

"As of now, all four TSPs have successfully implemented the system. About one-third of total spoofed calls at 4.5 million spoofed calls are being stopped from entering the Indian telecom network. The next phase, involving a centralised system that will eliminate the remaining spoofed calls across all TSPs, is expected to be commissioned shortly," it added.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT PANCHAYAT RAJ ENGINEER
 The District Panchayat Raj invites quotation for supply of last rates vehicles TATA 2.1L SS 6 DI diesel engine with necessary specification. The quotation may sent to either through mail or through post from 07/10/2024 to 09/10/2024 to the following address.
 • In case of any enquiry please contact Executive Engineer PR Mahabubnagar
 • Cell No. 9848533399 • Mail ID: dpre@gamil.com
 Address: Old District Panchayat Raj Engineer, PU Division, Mahabubnagar, 1st floor, Zila Parishad Mahabubnagar Pincode: 505001.
 Sd/- District Panchayat Raj Engineer
 P.U. Division, Mahabubnagar



STEP INTO THE FESTIVE SPIRIT

Kullu Dussehra is a vibrant festival in Himachal Pradesh that brings the Kullu valley to life with colourful processions, traditional music, and cultural performances. Celebrated in honour of Lord Raghunath Ji, this annual event attracts visitors from all over, creating a sense of community and joy, writes **SAKSHI PRIYA**



Kullu Dussehra, celebrated in the picturesque valley of Kullu in Himachal Pradesh, is a vibrant week-long festival that goes beyond just religious observance. It brings together centuries-old traditions, the unity of hundreds of local deities and the incredible artistic expression of the region. *Kullu Dussehra* has a distinctive flavour, embracing the valley's culture, history and devotion. This year, the International *Kullu Dussehra* Festival is set to take place from 13th to 19th October 2024, offering visitors a chance to immerse themselves in the vibrant festivities while also appreciating the breathtaking scenic beauty and natural wonders of this enchanting region. The origins of *Kullu Dussehra* date back to the 17th century when *Raja Jagat Singh*, a ruler of Kullu, brought the idol of Lord Raghunath Ji to the valley. From then on, Lord Raghunath Ji became the central deity of the festival and *Kullu Dussehra* has been celebrated in His honour ever since. What sets this festival apart is its spirit of inclusion, with over 300 local deities from surrounding villages joining the celebrations. These deities, carried on beautifully decorated palanquins, are accompanied by their devotees, musicians and dancers, creating a lively and spiritual atmosphere as they converge at Dhalpur Maidan in Kullu. The festival begins on 13th October with the grand Rath Yatra, a procession where Lord Raghunath Ji is placed in a chariot and pulled through the streets by devotees. This procession marks the beginning of a week filled with devotion, music and dance. The streets come alive with the sounds of traditional instruments, the colourful sight of waving flags and the energy of people who have come from far and wide to participate in this sacred event. The Rath Yatra is not just a religious act; it's a celebration of the unity and shared faith that binds the people of Kullu together. *Kullu Dussehra* is not only a spiritual gathering but also a cultural festival that showcases the rich artistic heritage of the region. Every evening, the open-air auditorium at Lal Chand Prarthi Kalakendra becomes a stage for performances by local, national and international artists. From traditional Himachali folk dances like the Nati to contemporary performances, the festival offers a diverse range of cultural experiences. This year, approximately 15 international cultural troupes will participate, bringing their unique traditions and performances to Kullu. These performances reflect the universal language of art, reminding everyone of the shared human connection through culture. On 14th October, the Cultural Parade takes place, showcasing a vibrant display of traditional attire, music and dance from across India and the world. This parade highlights the rich diversity of cultures, where each troupe brings its own distinct flavour to the celebrations.

"Kullu Dussehra beautifully showcases our cultural richness and serves as a reminder of the bonds that unite us as a community." - Sushil Kumar Singla, Principal Resident Commissioner of Himachal Pradesh Sadan, New Delhi



Sunder Singh Thakur CPS and Sushil Kumar Singla, Principal Resident Commissioner Government of Himachal Pradesh, New Delhi

The sight of dancers in traditional costumes, performing to the rhythmic beats of their native instruments, creates a colourful experience that celebrates unity in diversity. The Cultural Parade embodies *Kullu Dussehra's* inclusive spirit, welcoming different cultures to come together in celebration. A highlight of *Kullu Dussehra* is the performance of Lalhri, a traditional dance native to the Kullu Valley. Passed down through generations, Lalhri is not just a dance but a form of storytelling, where each graceful movement and musical note carries the history of the region. Watching the dancers perform in their traditional attire is like stepping back in time, where the cultural legacy of Kullu comes alive through the art of movement and music. This performance encapsulates the very essence of the festival, where tradition and heritage are celebrated and preserved. The spiritual climax of *Kullu Dussehra* takes place on 19th October with the symbolic Lanka Dahan, marking the return of nearly 300 deities, or devidevatas, to their homes. This significant day begins as the Raja approaches Lord Raghunath Ji, causing all music and dance to pause. After the Raja circumambulates the chariot, the procession moves towards Lanka by the river Beas. Here, bushes and grass are set ablaze, symbolising the burning of Lanka. The flames create a captivating spectacle, while the Lanka Dahan ceremony reinforces values of justice, morality, and goodness, highlighting the festival's importance in uniting the community.

The penultimate day features the



Muhalla ceremony, an event filled with joy, music and festivity. Villagers from across Kullu gather at Dhalpur Maidan, setting aside their daily lives to participate in this lively celebration. The deities, surrounded by flags and accompanied by traditional music, pay their respects to Lord Raghunath Ji. The Muhalla is a vibrant reflection of the community spirit that defines *Kullu Dussehra*, where unity and togetherness are celebrated in a colourful display of devotion. Historically, *Kullu Dussehra* has also been a major commercial event. It once served as a trading hub where villagers would sell their crops, handicrafts and other goods. Traders from regions like Lahaul and Ladakh would bring products such as pashmina shawls, carpets and local herbs, creating a bustling marketplace. Today, this tradition continues with the Artisan Showcase, where award-winning artisans display their crafts, from textiles to woodwork. Visitors can purchase these handmade items, taking home a piece of Kullu's rich artistic heritage and supporting the local economy. For those who enjoy food, *Kullu Dussehra* is a culinary journey that showcases the flavours of Himachal Pradesh. The food courts at the festival serve traditional dishes such as siddu (a type of steamed bread) and madra (a rich chickpea curry), offering a taste of the region's culinary traditions. Alongside these local delicacies,

international cuisine is also available, ensuring that visitors can enjoy a wide variety of food during the festival. The culinary experience is an integral part of *Kullu Dussehra*, reflecting the valley's agricultural richness and its connection to the land. This year's *Kullu Dussehra* will also feature the Ambassador's Meet on 18th October, presided over by *Shri Sukhvinder Singh*, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh. The event will bring together resident ambassadors from various countries, promoting cultural exchange and enriching trade ties. The Ambassador's Meet reflects *Kullu Dussehra's* growing global recognition, where tradition meets modernity on an international stage. This blend of cultural celebration and diplomatic engagement adds a new dimension to the festival, highlighting its significance beyond the local community. Beyond its vibrant cultural performances and religious rituals, *Kullu Dussehra* offers a diverse range of entertainment options for visitors of all ages. Families can enjoy amusement rides like toy trains and swings, while sports enthusiasts can engage in competitions such as

volleyball,

kabaddi and tug-of-war. The open-air performances continue late into the night, ensuring that the festivities are alive with music, dance and laughter. As the festival progresses, visitors will also have the opportunity to explore the natural beauty of the Kullu Valley, which offers breathtaking views of snow-capped peaks, lush green valleys, and flowing rivers. Many visitors choose to explore nearby attractions such as the Great Himalayan National Park, Biji Mahadev Temple, and the historic Hadimba Devi Temple in Manali, combining the spiritual experience of *Kullu Dussehra* with the serene beauty of Himachal Pradesh's natural landscape. As *Kullu* prepares to host this grand celebration, it's essential to reflect on the significance of festivals like *Kullu Dussehra* in preserving and promoting cultural heritage. The festival not only showcases the artistic traditions of Himachal Pradesh but also serves as a reminder of the unity and community spirit that festivals inspire. It brings together people from different walks of life, whether they are locals, tourists or international dignitaries, all coming together to celebrate the rich cultural legacy of the region. *Kullu Dussehra* is a festival that everyone should experience at least once in their lifetime. It's not just a celebration; it's a living tradition that continues to evolve while staying deeply rooted in the values of the community. The festival's grandeur, coupled with the warm hospitality of the people of Kullu, makes it a truly unique experience. As the date approaches, excitement is building, and the town of Kullu is gearing up to welcome visitors from all over the world. It's a time of joy, devotion and celebration, an event that leaves a lasting impression on all who attend. *The International Kullu Dussehra Festival 2024* is set to be a spectacular event that will showcase the best of Himachal's culture, art and traditions. *Kullu Dussehra 2024* promises to be a celebration unlike any other. From the grand Rath Yatra to the vibrant cultural performances, from the symbolic Lanka Dahan to the bustling artisan markets, the festival offers a diverse range of experiences for all who attend. Whether visitors are drawn by the spiritual devotion, the artistic performances or the natural beauty of the valley, *Kullu Dussehra* is a festival that speaks to the heart, offering a unique glimpse into the soul of Himachal Pradesh. As the festival approaches, everyone is encouraged to mark their calendars and experience this remarkable celebration from 13th to 19th October 2024. It's a perfect opportunity to enjoy the magic of Kullu Valley, where tradition, culture and community come together in a festival of life, love and joy!

THE ORIGINS OF KULLU DUSSEHRA DATE BACK TO THE 17TH CENTURY WHEN RAJA JAGAT SINGH, A RULER OF KULLU, BROUGHT THE IDOL OF LORD RAGHUNATH JI TO THE VALLEY. FROM THEN ON, LORD RAGHUNATH JI BECAME THE CENTRAL DEITY OF THE FESTIVAL AND KULLU DUSSEHRA HAS BEEN CELEBRATED IN HIS HONOUR EVER SINCE

GRAPE-TASTIC CELEBRATION

‘FORK’LORE



AARTI SREENATH
aarti.sreenath9@gmail.com

Novotel Hyderabad Airport transformed into a whimsical wonderland, throwing open its doors for the annual cake-mixing and grape-stomping extravaganza. Imagine this: a sun-soaked terrace, a delightful medley of hotel guests and local community members sporting chef hats and aprons and a brunch spread so glorious that it would make a monk rethink their diet!

As the culinary team showcased a menu bursting with flavours, vegetarian delights like were served alongside royal treats for the non-vegetarians, featuring *Peri Peri prawns*, *Mustard Bombay duck fish* and the star of the show: *mutton chapli*. Honestly, if those dishes don't make your taste buds do a happy dance, I don't know what will.

The pièce de résistance of the day was the cake mixing ceremony, a vibrant affair where guests channelled their inner bakers. Armed with bowls of colourful dry fruits, spices and spirits, they joyfully combined the ingredients, creating a blend for the hotel's signature Christmas cake. It was like watching a reality cooking show, complete with enthusiastic arm movements that could rival any Olympic sport! Synchronised mixing, anyone?

But wait, the fun didn't stop there! Following the cake-mixing came the wildly popular grape-stomping activity. Participants rolled up their pants (and some even went full-on gladiator by rolling up their sleeves) to stomp grapes as if they were auditioning for a new fitness craze. Amidst the bright sun and uproarious laughter, you could almost hear the grapes begging for mercy as they transformed into grape juice. Talk about a workout that's both fun and delicious.

The growth of this event has been nothing short of phenomenal. "We've seen a massive increase in participation," the GM beamed. "The proof is in the pudding, or in this case, the cake! Just look at the crowd today; it's clear our events have hit the sweet spot."

But what happens to those squashed grapes after all the squashing? "They'll be discarded," he admitted with a chuckle, "but it's really about the fun we create today!" As the sun began to set on this jubilant gathering, it was clear that cake mixing and grape stomping was not merely an event; it was a delightful whirlwind of laughter, camaraderie and just a sprinkle of chaos. With a promise of even more festive cheer next year, you can bet your favourite apron that I'll be back, grape stomping with the best of them and aiming for that elusive grape-squishing glory!

So, when you hear "cake mixing and grape stomping," remember, it's not just an event—it's a wildly entertaining celebration of flavor, tradition, and good-natured fun.



Travel sparks connections, finds study

Tinder has launched the perfect travel partner for daring solo young adults.

According to a recent survey, travel is the top interest for young adults aged 18-25 worldwide, with 50% of Gen Z in India finding it attractive to share this interest. This is reflected in Indian Tinder profiles, with a 17x increase in users mentioning 'solo travel' like "love exploring new places, solo traveller, cat mom" and "Living the mountain life as a solo adventurer, searching for home from beach to mountains."

As an increasing number of young individuals, particularly those from Generation Z and millennials, opt to pursue their own independent journeys, the manual offers advice on travelling in a prudent and secure manner, as well as on establishing international relations both prior to and following their arrival. It is evident that forming new connections is increasingly important for young singles in Asia Pacific, with 78% showing interest in making friends before traveling. In 2024, Bangkok, Tokyo, London, Seoul and Delhi were the top 5 cities for young singles to visit on the Passport app.

With more and more young people, especially Gen Z and millennials, choosing to embark on their own journeys, the guide provides tips for traveling safely and responsibly, as well as for building global connections before and after reaching their destination. It is clear that establishing new relationships is becoming more crucial for young individuals in Asia Pacific, as 78% express a desire to make friends prior to their trips.

Ultimate hack for solo travellers

Encountering unfamiliar individuals in a different city may seem daunting, but this travel document makes it easy and enjoyable. Users have the option to turn on Passport Mode effortlessly by accessing their settings, choosing a city as their destination, or placing a pin on the map to update their location. Following that, they have the option to explore profiles, show interest, make connections and engage in conversations with either locals or other travelers prior to their arrival. With safety being a top priority for young singles in the area, 30% prioritise their safety before meeting someone from a dating app for a first date. The resource also emphasises the different safety features and tips available for a secure online or offline connection.

Here are some tips on how users can make the most out of their solo travel adventures:

1. Line up local connections before you arrive: Use the feature to match with locals before your trip. This can turn potential tourist traps into authentic, off-the-beaten-path experiences guided by someone who knows the area inside out.

2. Be clear about your intentions: Update your bio with your travel dates, hobbies and intentions. This lets matches know what you're looking for—be it local tips or something more—and helps you find the right connections. Be upfront in your conversations, as this helps to avoid misunderstandings, especially when crossing cultural boundaries.

3. Prioritise safety: When meeting someone abroad, always remember to prioritise safety. Use features like Photo Verification and Share My Date and meet up in public spaces.

4. Be open to possibilities: A vacation romance can be thrilling, but it's also important to manage your own expectations. Keep an open mind—sometimes a brief connection is just what you need and even if it doesn't last, it could reignite your excitement for dating once you're back home!

Neha Sudan, travel content creator, "For solo travellers, here are a few tips: opt for a fanny pack instead of a sling bag to keep your belongings secure, avoid areas known for trouble, memorise an emergency phone number and be cautious about sharing personal details with new friends if you have any doubts."

Anali Gupta, another travel content creator, shares "Solo travel taught me that it's the unexpected, funny moments that lead to the most meaningful connections—and sometimes, all it takes is a little stumble to find a friend for life."

Naikita Bali, also a travel content creator, says "For all my Gen Z solo explorers: don't over-plan, leave room for surprises! Safety is a priority, of course, but also don't forget to enjoy the spontaneous adventures. Keep your playlists ready, trust your gut and most importantly, go make some epic memories—you'll thank yourself later!"

WHAT'S NEW



ELEVATE YOUR NAVRATRI LOOK

Navratri is all about vibrant celebrations and unforgettable garba nights and your makeup should shine just as brightly. Elevate your festive look with Anastasia Beverly Hills' Soft Glam eye shadow palette. This must-have palette features a full-pigment, easy-to-blend formula that delivers high color payoff and buildable intensity. With 14 stunning shades ranging from soft neutrals to bright shimmers, it includes 9 ultra-matte and 5 metallic finishes to suit every mood. Stand out and dazzle with each dance move this festive season!

Price - INR 4800

THIS NAVRATRI, SHINE BRIGHT

Navratri is all about dressing up in vibrant, eye-catching colours and hitting the dance floor with your best 'Garba' moves on display! What better than stunning, exquisite jewellery to brighten up your festive wardrobe and help you make a style statement. Demi-fine jewellery Flourish by Gunjan Jain has curated a range of beautifully crafted earrings, rings, bracelets, and necklaces just for Navratri. These pieces flaunt lab-grown precious or semi-precious gemstones like emeralds and solitaires set in 18k Gold or Silver, making them the ideal accessories to complement all your Navratri looks.



NAVRATRI SPECIAL

It's that time of year again—a time to dust off your dance shoes, embrace the festive spirit and of course, figure out what on earth to give your loved ones—as the colourful tornado of Navratri sweeps in! Let's get inventive. Similar to the dance-off you'll unavoidably get yourself in at your cousin's place, Navratri gift-giving is about spreading happiness, laughing and a bit of anarchy. Cheers to joyous dancing and gifting.



NAVRATRI SKINCARE RITUALS

The Honest Tree Sweet Bliss Milk body cleanser is a luxurious blend designed to transform your daily shower into a soothing spa experience. Infused with the richness of milk proteins, this body cleanser gently cleanses your skin while maintaining its natural moisture balance.

Price: Rs 499/-



ACHIEVE RADIANT GLOW

O,WOW oxygenating firming mask is an oxygen-infused mask that firms and rejuvenates, leaving skin fresh and luminous. This product by BIE make for thoughtful and luxurious festive gifts, perfect for skincare lovers looking to elevate their festive beauty routine.



DEBUTANTE PUMPS

Debutante chic chunkies by Anaar were born to be in the spotlight. They're crafted in satin and embellished with a beautiful ornate bow. Make a dramatic entry with it by your side and wrap up the festivities with compliments galore.

Rs. 8,990/-



GLOSS COLLECTION

Sobé Decor is thrilled to present their exceptional collections that bring elegance and charm to the festive season! Crafted in Norway, their color crystal pieces—including candle stands, bookends and vases—are designed to elevate any space. Each item showcases unique craftsmanship, making them a standout choice for celebrations.



RANGRITI UNVEILS NAVRATRI COLLECTION

This Navratri, Rangriti is proud to present its stunning new collection, inspired by the vibrant colours and energetic spirit of the festive season. Offering a variety of options for your celebrations, it has curated a stylish blend of traditional and urbane choices for you all. Align your outfits as per the festive day colours to raise the bar of ethnic styling!



GET ALIA BHATT'S SIGNATURE NUDE LOOK THIS FESTIVE SEASON

Achieving the perfect festive look doesn't always require bold colours—sometimes, a soft, nude lip is all it takes to bring effortless elegance to any occasion. As Alia Bhatt, the face of L'Oréal Paris, shares, her two favourite shades from the Infalible Matte Resistance liquid lipstick collection—Worth It and Worth It Medium—they are the key to her signature no-makeup makeup look. Whether you're dancing at a Diwali party or celebrating Navratri with your loved ones, you won't have to worry about smudging or fading.

Priced at just Rs. 749

HOROSCOPE



ARIES

Find time for your loved ones despite the pressure. Tenacity will ensure success, but balance is needed. Reconnect with family, manage confusion, and trust relationships to improve soon.



TAURUS

Your patience, humour and commitment attract others. Enjoy strong relationships, respect and career success. Emotional tendencies may cause delays. Challenges will soon improve.



GEMINI

Stay confident despite challenges, as your perseverance and generosity will soon bring success. Balance emotions, provide support, and rely on your instincts for personal life growth.



CANCER

Life feels chaotic, but reflection will reveal it's not so bad. Stay calm, loosen up and focus on health and work. Relationships may challenge you, but your energy and health will prevail.



LEO

Avoid overconfidence to prevent mistakes. Communicate openly with loved ones. Success at work and home is likely, but postpone changes and consult the family on vital decisions.



VIRGO

Proceed with long-planned goals. Stay calm despite agitation and focus on recharging. Embrace challenges, remain humble, and avoid emotions that tarnish your health and relationships.



LIBRA

Avoid delays and emotional outbursts. Stay calm and positive. Despite setbacks, your energy and perseverance will lead to success. Focus on self, enjoy good health and relationships.



SCORPIO

Enjoy the rewards of your hard work but stay focused. Balance personal growth, relationships, and obligations. Guard against stress, seek revitalization with family and embrace changes.



SAGITTARIUS

Embrace unexpected feelings and remain confident. Your drive ensures success. Personal ethics may challenge relationships. Trust your instincts. Invest your energy in meaningful pursuits.



CAPRICORN

Your joyful nature attracts others. Stay calm during challenges, especially with family. Avoid emotional blowups, focus on self-control and balance your generosity to prevent issues.



AQUARIUS

You will find a stimulating partner and experience joy through introspection. Avoid appearing unreliable. Focus on decisions regarding your future while managing criticism and worries.



PISCES

This week emphasizes harmony and joy. Communicate openly with siblings and prioritize time with your children. Your charm attracts affection. Emotional awareness is key to good health.

CHAT-O-CINO

Bharti's journey from 'ek episode to anek episodes'

TEJAL SINHA
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A Punjabi Kudi, who grew up in the beautiful holy city of Amritsar, little did she know, she'd become one of the top comedians we have here in India, entering Forbes India's celebrity 100 list someday!

William James, an American philosopher, once very well said, 'We don't laugh because we're happy—we're happy because we laugh.' Well, thanks to our exclusive Chat-O-Cino guest, every time she's on-screen, you can just not stop but laugh your heart out.

She's a favourite of all the celebs. Because when she's there, it's never a dull moment. She makes you feel like home.

Though Bharti Singh had her own struggles to reach where she's been today, she had already become a favourite of all when she created a mark in *The Great Indian Laughter Challenge*, becoming the second runner-up. "Trust me, even I never knew I'd be the second runner-up back then," begins the "Laughter Queen" with great exhilaration. Looking back at those days, she recalls how she had initially thought of just coming in one episode on the television and people of Amritsar would all watch her! "I then realised, Why just one episode? I have a lot more to bring. With every episode, I put in more hard work, which made people appreciate me and motivated me to do more of it. *Ek episode se anek episodes bann gaye.*"

Every time the *Comedy Circus* fame would see people tee-hee because of her, it would bring her a moment of joy. "This has been something that I'd wanted to do; I'm doing it and will always look forward to doing it," affirms the comedian.

From being a contestant in comedy shows like *Comedy Circus Maha-Sangram*, *Kahani Comedy Circus Ki*, *Funhit Mein Jaari*, or *The Kapil Sharma Show* to hosting shows like *India's Got Talent 5*, *India's Best Dancer*, *Khatra Khatra Khatra*, *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Lil Champs*, or *Dance Deewane* to also doing shows like *Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi 9*, or *Nach Baliye*, she proves to be an inspiration and someone who inspires to do our best no matter what.

But she humbly tells us, "I'm not an inspiration. I don't think I inspire anyone. It's me who gets inspired by people, be it a kid, an adult, or someone old; I always get inspired by good things. But again, when people come up to me and say that Bharti, we are inspired by you, I really feel so good about it. I'd say it's just the beginning. *Abhi toh bahut saare diggaj longhe baithe hai jinse*

In the world of comedy, Bharti Singh has been one of the gems who, beyond a doubt, is a favourite of all. But how does it go when you have a heart-to-heart chat with her? Well, *The Pioneer* brings to you an exclusive chinwag with one of the popular comedians of the country!

I'VE BEEN KAPIL BHAI AND SUDESH LEHRI'S STUDENT. SO IF I GET A CHANCE OR GET A SCRIPT, YOU WILL DEFINITELY SEE ME WITH KAPIL SHARMA IN THE GREAT INDIAN KAPIL SHOW

inspire hona hai aur seekhna hai.

As goes the description 'Unlimited Entertainment' of her latest show *Laughters Chef*, the show is a rib-tickling, one-of-a-kind cooking show! A show that was expected to have an extension somehow dismayed the audience. Unfortunately, the cooking-comedy show may come to an emotional close with nothing else but tears rolling down our eyes too. "I've done a lot of cooking shows and game shows, but had never done any cooking-laughing show," discusses the *Jatt & Juliet 2* fame about hosting the show. "I really enjoyed it. It's so amazing seeing how everyone is loving the show so much. The first season turned out to be such a hit and talking of food. You can get a glimpse of my passion for cooking and comedy in my vlogs. When these two interests merge, it creates unforgettable moments that bring me immense joy. I've had some great memories from the show. In the last episode, all of us shed tears as we went through the memories of the show, watching those clippings. We were all so emotional. There were fights, dance, fun and love—everything. We really wish to work with the same team yet again."

Just imagine you are in those mid-week zones, tired of your work, but getting onto your dinner tables with *Laughter Chefs* on your television shows was the best combo, wasn't it? With a lot of talks around its comeback, we ask her about it and the *Hunarbaaz: Desh Ki Shaan* host tells us, "People have been talking about it a lot and we've got to hear about it that the show would make a comeback post-*Bigg Boss 18*. Well, I feel, *zaroor aana chahiye*. Everyone deserves good therapy after all. People these days have forgotten to laugh. With *Laughter Chefs*, they'd laugh and the show should continue."

Well, fingers crossed, so let's manifest, guys! Going ahead, how can one not think of Babil Mausi or Laali from *The Kapil Sharma Show*? Her Bhanga-ratic entries and laughter were a cherry on the cake after all. Just as you all, we too do wish to see her back on the ongoing season of *The Great Indian Kapil Show*. But can we really see it coming? "*Bilkul*" expresses the chuckling beauty with great regards and she further adds, "If you think about it, then maybe I would definitely. Working with Kapil Bhai and sharing the stage with him is also a big thing. It is also a great thing to share the stage with Sudesh Lehri. I've been their student so if I get a chance and I get a script, you will definitely see me with Kapil Sharma."

Well, this was about her projects and then, there's also her podcast and vlogging that we can't stop but keep ourselves hooked on! How can one not die of laughter seeing Golla's masti, Bharti being Bharti? "Future projects are still ongoing," she tells us as we were about to head towards the end of our chat. "We've been posting some great videos on Harsh's new channel. Harsh and I think about our future projects and wish each of them is as good as possible. Every good project too has the same amount of hard work that's put in the rest! At the moment, we are busy with our channels. We want to make our own 'rajya santalat' in which we bring out what people love, talk to, meet, enjoy and play games with them. We are also thinking of such projects. Let's see *aap log ka pyaar raha aashirwaad raha toh*; there will be a lot more coming up, with all the chuckles and fun," shares India's favourite laughter queen, as our chat comes to an end.

TRENDING

KONDA SUREKHA

PERSON



Telangana Minister K Surekha linked former Minister and BRS leader KTR to the divorce of Samantha and Naga Chaitanya, accusing KTR of tapping the phones of actors and blackmailing them.

'MOOH KAALA KARO ISKA'

VIDEO



Jaipur entrepreneurs deface Tripti Dimri's poster and call for her 'boycott' for not attending the event.

After the massive success of the *KGF* franchise and *Kantara*, all eyes are on Dhruva Sarja starrer *Martin*. The trailer for the film has set the internet ablaze and it is undoubtedly the next big hit of Indian cinema.

MARTIN

MOVIE



RAA MACHA MACHA

SONG



Ram Charan recreates his father's (Chiranjeevi) famous veena step from *Dayi Dayi Damma* (Indra) in *Raa Macha Macha*.

COUNTERFEIT CURRENCY NOTES FEATURING ANUPAM KHER'S FACE

PICTURE



Counterfeit currency notes, worth approximately Rs 1.6 crore, featuring actor's face had been discovered in Gujarat.

Unwind in the wild with rise of wildlife-centric getaways

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A new trend that lures people away from metropolitan amenities and into the heart of untamed wilderness is growing amid the restless beat of city life. Properties that focus on wildlife are becoming more and more well-liked because they provide visitors the chance to fully experience the untainted splendour of the natural world. These, which range from opulent tents on African plains to secluded cottages deep in Indian jungles, offer a genuine getaway where the sound of faraway wildlife rustling and birds chirping in the morning silence takes the place of blaring alarm clocks and traffic. More and more people today are searching for locations where the excitement of unspoiled, raw landscapes and the comforts of contemporary life coexist together in order to experience a closer connection to nature. In this leisurely read, let us tell you how nature itself becomes the experience, bringing adventure, peace and the kind of amazement that only the wild can inspire!

"The best way to follow this new trend is to adopt sustainable habits that reduce our environmental impact and improve the surrounding natural ecosystems! The first step in preventing development from upsetting the native flora and fauna is to carefully manage land use. Give top priority to the usage of environmentally friendly building materials and install energy-saving equipment. Naturally, why not work with regional conservation organisations to save wildlife habitats and guarantee that activities interact sustainably with the surrounding ecosystems? Isn't this a smart move? Encouraging environmentally sensitive visitor experiences, such as wildlife safaris guided by knowledgeable naturalists, that aim to increase understanding and reverence for the surrounding ecosystem—perhaps is an additional concept to consider," communicates the Managing Director of Ananta Hotels & Resorts. Because he is bringing one of the most noteworthy aspects of the forward-thinking initiatives: the creation of a serene and peaceful oasis at Ajabgarh, carefully crafted to harmonise perfectly with the stunning natural surroundings of the Sariska Tiger Reserve. This innovative project not only showcases a deep understanding of the importance of environmental balance but also offers a unique opportunity to experience the beauty and tranquility of this breathtaking reserve. By blending seamlessly into the existing landscape, the oasis enhances the natural charm of the area, making it a fascinating destination to explore and learn about the delicate ecosystem.

To minimise the negative effects of wildlife tourism, a meticulously responsible strategy is crucial in designing eco-friendly properties. This entails constructing facilities with minimal disturbance to surrounding natural habitats. Prior to development, comprehensive environmental impact assessments must be conducted to guarantee seamless integration with the local ecosystem. Wildlife excursions should be led by expert naturalists who instruct visitors on responsible tourism practices, fostering respect for the environment and wildlife. Furthermore, collaborating with local conservation initiatives and promoting sustainable methods—such as waste reduction, water conservation and renewable energy utilisation—ensures that these contribute positively to the delicate environments rather than causing harm. "India's breathtaking wildlife and diverse landscapes have long been a profound source of inspiration for us. Driven by this passion, we sought to share these natural wonders with others through unforgettable, up-close experiences. By combining my passion with environmental stewardship, wildlife tourism emerged as the perfect synergy. The wildlife-focused revolution aims to inspire a deeper appreciation and reverence for nature while offering immersive and unique adventures. Furthermore, we recognised wildlife tourism as a catalyst for positive change in local communities!" recognises our interviewee, who is focusing on this "wild" innovation to carry on his father's legacy.



The preservation of the natural balance is crucial and particular caution must be used when developing land close to delicate habitats like the Sariska Tiger Reserve. To ensure compatibility with the native flora and animals, these teams employ a conscientious and sustainable approach! "During one of the safaris, patrons had the unique opportunity to see a mother tiger and her children in a waterhole. This is an exclusive story I often tell! They were forever changed by this enchanted moment because they were able to appreciate the beauty of wildlife and understand how crucial it is to preserve these magnificent animals and their natural habitat. The new buzz surrounding this type of tourism is due to the profoundly transformational experience that these unusual encounters, when paired with environmentally conscientious actions, give." The crew is also working to safeguard the local Indian species known as the Great Indian Bustard, which is in grave risk of extinction! They support conservation programs targeted at saving this famous species, assist in raising awareness and contribute to habitat preservation efforts by collaborating with local wildlife authorities and conservation organisations.

These kinds of immersive experiences are becoming more and more popular. Additionally, there are guided wildlife photography tours that offer opportunities to take amazing pictures! Then, by allowing visitors to take part in conservation and research initiatives, citizen science programs promote a closer bond with the natural world. Overall, this tourism offers genuine cultural experiences and empowers indigenous people, so why not?





Wrapping around a hat-trick with **Chuttamalle**

In a heart-to-heart conversation with **Shikha Duggal** of *The Pioneer*, Shilpa Rao, the voice behind the latest Telugu chartbuster *Chuttamalle*, takes us through the trajectory of her life with charm, nostalgia and a hint of mischief. From climbing trees during her growing years to seek solace to making waves in the Telugu music world against odds with her never-say-die attitude, she has taken life on her terms. You may take a girl out of the south, but you can't take the south out of the girl: Shilpa has demonstrated this with *Chuttamalle*. Shilpa embodies her southern heritage in every note, evoking the same grace of her grandmother's Kanjivaram sarees and the coziness of homemade *Ugadi pachadi*. Shilpa's accomplishments transcend borders—her voice can be heard in some of the biggest hits in Bollywood too—and she has made waves even at the global level with her body of work. Her participation in the 'The Global Goal: Unite for Our Future' concert brought her recognition on a global scale, earning her a nomination for her first Grammy! Shilpa has consistently demonstrated why hers is one of the most versatile voices in Indian music, whether it is through her captivating vocals in hit songs that have won awards or her stunning live performances. While *Devara's Chuttamalle* is breaking records all over, Shilpa takes time out of her busy schedule to share the high points of her career in the world of music.

RAPID FIRE

- Your pinch-me moment of life:** My younger brother Anurag came home from the hospital the day he was born
- Latest thing you discovered about yourself:** That every day, no matter how pleasant or awful, will pass.
- Singer who inspires you:** Mehdi Hassan Sahab
- Proudest moment of your career:** I feel so, so proud when someone says to me, "Oh, you're Anurag's sister."
- Favourite city/country to stay in:** India has always been one location that feels like home and it never will change.



RELATIONSHIP BUILT ON SHARED JOY

I feel profoundly grateful for the serene and enjoyable life my partner and I share. I am married to Ritesh Krishnan. He is a photographer by profession. In 2021, I married him at home and the wedding was registered. We had met three years back on (music composer) Pritam's USA tour. Ritesh seemed to be an affectionate person and we started hanging out together. On the first day that I met him, I felt that he was a chilled-out guy, which was very attractive for me. We started travelling together in 2018 and did many shows across India. Our relationship is built on a foundation of mutual passions, including a love for exploration and culinary delights. Travelling together allows us to experience new cultures, meet fascinating people and create lasting memories. Our weekends are like a mini vacation; they are busier than the workdays. Getting up comfortably, having a meal, making coffee, cooking and then hanging out with friends is always a good idea.

HER 17-YEAR-OLD MUSICAL JOURNEY

Over the past 17 years, my life has been serenaded by the rhythms of the music industry. Surprisingly, my own musical aspirations were not always clear, even with my father's influential presence. Through relentless practice and perseverance, I have cultivated a fulfilling career. Music has become my North Star, illuminating life's journey. Each day brings new lessons from talented musicians and I am humbled by the love and support that has accompanied me every step of the way.

ROOTS OF HAPPINESS

My childhood was idyllic and carefree, thanks to the loving presence of my grandmother and parents. I was born on April 11, 1984, in Jamshedpur. My father, S. V. Rao, is a businessman and my mother is a homemaker. Music was my first passion, introduced to me by my parents, followed by academics. I completed my schooling at Loyola School, Jamshedpur and later graduated with a degree in psychology from St. Xavier's College! While growing up, I was a bit laidback in my attitude, often enjoying exploring nature, climbing trees and even daydreaming. I had no grand ambitions or life plans back then. Those peaceful days remain cherished memories. After school, I would not rush home; instead, I would escape to the nearby park, seeking refuge in the branches of my favourite trees. My parents would often wonder where I was, searching high and low, only to eventually discover me perched in my leafy hideaway, completely carefree.



SAGE ADVICE

The early days in the music industry were a trial by fire. My own journey was no exception! Transformation from being a distinctive voice to an established artist required perseverance on my part. A pivotal moment came when Shankar Mahadevan sir counselled me to cultivate a solo identity at just 23. I have since discovered that success in Bollywood requires unwavering dedication. The key to endurance lies in preserving individuality and authenticity, while embracing lifelong learning and self-improvement—essential principles for thriving in music and art.



DAD'S LEGACY AT TATAS

My father, S. V. Rao, hails from Vijayawada, which is located in the Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh. So, my cultural roots have a blend of Telugu and Bengali aspects, reflecting my father's Andhra Pradesh origins and my mother's Bengali background. But our moorings run deep in Jamshedpur, where three generations of my family—my grandfather, uncle and dad—built their careers at Tatas. I have fond memories of growing up in a vibrant, cosmopolitan city like that. Jamshedpur's diverse community, comprising people from various backgrounds working for Tatas, also exposed me to a rich cultural tapestry.



PARENTS WHO PRIORITISED PASSION OVER PRESSURE

While growing up, I was fortunate to have parents who embodied a unique blend of intellectual curiosity, creativity and progressive thinking. My father, a true polymath, holds a Master's degree in music and a Master's in technical engineering, showcasing his remarkable range of interests and expertise. His professional accomplishments, including designing the Starbucks for the Tatas, are a testament to his innovative spirit. He retired as the post of AGM. My parents have excellent taste for music. They would listen to a lot of female musicians when I was growing up and that helped me cultivate my own interest in music. My brother Anurag, my parents and I used to spend a lot of time together. They were really laidback. My dad would always say, "No, we should go to the concert; this is more important". It could be listening to music or attending late-night classical music events. We studied and attended school, but he did not put any pressure on us. We therefore, I believe, grew up in a fairly balanced environment.



SHUTTING DOWN NAYSAYERS

All through my childhood people told me I could not sing and I initially believed them. But I loved music back then; therefore, I was learning to sing. I never imagined back then that I would become a musician. In that regard, I was not very goal-oriented. I do not give much thought to what people say these days also. All I believe in is hard work. Everyone is free to express themselves, but we need to weed out irrelevant remarks. I would listen to and find value in anything said to me by someone like Rashid Khan Sahab, but not by everyone. Being raised in a musical family provided me with a rich tapestry of genres and styles from the very beginning. This immersive experience kindled a deep passion for music and laid the groundwork for development of my vocal skills. Furthermore, the cultural nuances and experiences woven into my Telugu style upbringing have profoundly impacted my musical identity, informing the melodies I choose and the artistic style I have cultivated.

TOSE NAINA KI KAHANI

During my final days in college I had a serendipitous meeting with Mithoon, a renowned music composer. Actually, our encounter was for a different project, but destiny had other plans. Mithoon shared a rough draft of *Tose Naina* with me and as I lent my voice to the scratch track, something magical unfolded.

POWER OF TEAMWORK ON MUSICAL TOUR

When embarking on a musical tour, my priority is comfort. I firmly believe that feeling at ease in my attire is essential to delivering a captivating performance. If I am not completely comfortable wearing something, I simply do not wear it. Equally vital is the camaraderie with my team, with whom I have shared a decade of unforgettable adventures. Together, we have navigated the highs and lows of touring, forging unbreakable bonds. Their unwavering support, trust and friendship make each day on the road a joy whenever on a musical tour.

LESSONS FROM RAHMAN, ILAAYARAJA

In those days, Shankar sir's (Shankar Mahadevan) invaluable guidance had a lasting impact on my approach to life and career. One essential lesson he imparted is the importance of laying a solid foundation, emphasising the power of slow and steady progress. He wisely advised me to begin with jingles, mastering the art of recording, before transitioning to film projects. The remarkable careers of AR Rahman Sahab and Ilayaraja sir serve as powerful testaments to the boundless potential of artistic expression. These legendary composers have shattered conventional molds, defying expectations and proving that creativity knows no bounds. They have demonstrated that artists can thrive without conforming to predetermined norms, instead of embracing their unique identities and perspectives to produce extraordinary work.

MAESTROS WHO SAW HER POTENTIAL

I vividly recall the transformative impact Ustadji (Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan) had on my musical journey. Unlike others who tended to focus on flaws, he astutely recognised my potential and chose to nurture it. With constant encouragement, he guided me toward self-improvement, and this approach profoundly altered my perspective on music, riyaz and personal growth. When I was thirteen, I got the chance to meet Hariharan since I was in a school singing group. His encouragement also led me to study Hindustani music with Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan and this established a solid basis for my professional future. I quickly began taking part in live performances with Hariharan and later won accolades during a nationwide talent search, all of which helped me get started in the music industry. Legends like Prabha Atré, Ustad Amir Khan, Mehdi Hassan Saab, Pandit Nikhil Banerjee, Ustad Sultan Khan, Begum Akhtar and Farida Khanum fostered my love for music during my formative years. Their iconic voices and masterful artistry instilled in me a profound love for singing and shaped my musical perspective, leaving an enduring legacy that still inspires my craft.

TELUGU TRADITIONS & LOVE

Telugu was the language of our household and it remains so to this day. While growing up, I was exposed to rich cultural traditions, surrounded by the warmth of my mother and grandmother, who adorned themselves in elegant Kanjivaram sarees. They lovingly explained the significance of each festival, sharing stories behind the flowers, foods and rituals. As an example, we would have corn if it was Ganpati. Pear fruit is consumed during Saraswati puja. We used to celebrate Ugadi, a Telugu holiday that marks the beginning of the year. On this occasion, we would eat *Ugadi pachadi*. Naturally, after that, we would take a vacation down south, meet up with our relatives and relax at the Vizag beach. That has always been a constant in our lives.

MISS MAGIC OF BAGHAAR-E-BAINGAN TO BIRYANI

I make it a point to have a substantial amount of food, no doubt about it, whenever in Hyderabad. Most of our family members have lived in Andhra Pradesh, including my grandparents and my sisters. The nicest meals I have ever had were those that I relished at my grandmother's place; they are not there anymore, but the memories are there. My father was born and brought up in Vijayawada, though he moved to Jamshedpur for work. My uncles, aunts and cousins continue to live in Andhra Pradesh, primarily in Vijayawada and surrounding areas. We undoubtedly miss a lot of delicious food from Andhra, like *Baghaar-e-baingan*, *haleem* and *biryani*. I love every dish. I often visit my ancestral home in Vijayawada and connect with my roots during festivals and on special occasions!

JINGLE EFFECT

Then, working on jingles proved to be a pivotal stepping stone in my musical journey. By singing those concise, catchy tunes, I gained invaluable hands-on experience in tracking and recording. The process taught me the intricacies of vocal delivery, mic technique and studio etiquette.

NURTURING HER VOICE

Preserving my vocal well-being is paramount. Adequate sleep is the cornerstone of my voice's health, allowing my voice to recharge. Daily riyaz, or vocal exercises, are essential, but it is not just physical discipline—it is also a mental harmony. I cultivate a deep connection between my voice, thoughts and emotions, ensuring alignment that fuels my artistic expression and nurtures my singing excellence.

CHANGING LIVES, ONE DONATION AT A TIME

Despite achieving success, I still encounter rejection and it is essential to acknowledge that this reality persists throughout one's career. Rejection is an inherent part of the journey and I want to share this vital message with aspiring musicians and singers. Next, I firmly believe that every individual's journey is influenced by the kindness and support of others. Reflecting on our personal experiences, it is evident that we have all benefited from the guidance, encouragement, or assistance of others at some point. This realisation instills a profound sense of gratitude and responsibility. That is why we have cultivated interest in philanthropy! And anything that persists every day and becomes more challenging no matter what is going on; I am always willing to take that up. Another lesson is that everything you are going through could not be that big of a concern because looking back on the past usually does not feel that large. We suffer more in our minds, therefore, it is best to just accept things as they are and go with the flow. I attempt to do that through philanthropy.



KAVALAALAA, CHALONA AND NOW CHUTTAMALLE

The most captivating aspect of studying classical music or any music lies in its boundless depth and complexity. This timeless art form presents an endless journey of discovery, where the pursuit of mastery becomes a lifelong passion. The realisation that there is always more to explore, more to absorb and more to perfect is both humbling and exhilarating for me. I was curious as to why Anirudh chose me for *Kaavaalaa* since it was unlike anything I had ever sung before. Trusting the director's and composer's vision, however, is essential. Because Anirudh Ravichander and I were both present, we were able to make decisions quickly and feed off each other's energy, finishing the *Chalona* recording in just twenty minutes. Having the viewpoints of the composer, lyricist, and occasionally the director, in the same room truly does make a difference. It is hard to figure out all those options when you are alone. *Chuttamalle* has such a sweet and fresh vibe, with bouncy words that capture the slow dance feel of Telugu music so smoothly.