

sunday pioneer

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No timeline on Ukraine war says Putin; appreciates Modi's concern



5

India's road infra will SURPASS America's: Gadkari



8

Greening FASHION



Oil se

QUOTE OF THE DAY
The pioneer

We have kept a bulldozer for KTR and Harish Rao who want to lie down in front of it. I will come to Janwada, let's expose it, if it is illegal and not built by encroaching Bulkapur Nala. Harish, who used to stand in front of my house and beg even for buying footwear, has a farmhouse in Azeeznagar. HYDRAA is to regulate traffic in Hyderabad, clear silt from drains and remove the encroachments on water bodies. HYDRAA has not gone to the Musi area so far



- Revanth Reddy, Chief Minister

DON'T MISS...

Police lathicharge protesters

The city police on Saturday resorted to lathicharge to disperse activists of VHP, Bajrang Dal and other Hindu organisations who were protesting against the desecration of a temple idol here. Salman Salim Thakur alias Salman, an engineering graduate from Maharashtra on October 14, allegedly entered the sanctum-sanctorum of Muthyalamma temple in Secunderabad in the small hours and desecrated the main idol of the temple, triggering protests by locals, Hindu organisations and ...

-PAGE: 3

Will Kakatiya Fort get back its ...

The historic Kakatiya Fort, constructed using lime mortar by the erstwhile Kakatiya rulers 800 years ago, has been decaying with each passing day due to the continued neglect of successive administrations in both united Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Once an impregnable stronghold, the fort now shows little sign of its former glory. The stone structure has been slowly deteriorating, with the ramparts that once housed cannons and served as lookout points for soldiers now collapsing. Additionally, the fort lacks proper drainage for ...

-PAGE: 4

Govt eyes record Rabi output...

The Centre on Saturday said it was confident of achieving record foodgrain production in the 2024-25 rabi season despite fertiliser shipment delays, citing favourable soil moisture conditions and adequate water levels in reservoirs. Speaking at a national conference here, Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said there was sufficient availability of key fertilisers such as urea and diammonium phosphate (DAP) despite delay in shipments due to geopolitical tensions. "The shipments are delayed..."

-PAGE: 8

'I teach Ayra that money is ...

With a career spanning over two decades, Sanjeeda Sheikh has proven herself to be a force to be reckoned with in the Indian film industry. From the intricately complex Waheeda in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Heeramandi to her role alongside Hrithik Roshan and Deepika Padukone in Fighter, she has consistently pushed the boundaries of her craft. But beyond the glitz and glamour of Bollywood, lies a woman of unwavering resilience, unapologetic honesty and unrelenting passion. As we look back at her journey, she's beyond a doubt a sweetheart of the Television industry. But with films, remember Neeli in Baghban? From playing the character that had a small screen space, the success of ...

-PAGE: 11

OBTUSE ANGLE



ROW OVER GROUP 1 EXAM ISSUE

Testing time for Telangana



Police stop Bandi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD
Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar was on Saturday stopped by the police for staging a dharna here to express solidarity with aspirants of TSPSC Group 1 services, who are seeking postponement of the Mains exam.
Sanjay Kumar, Union Minister of State for Home, took out a 'Chalo Secretariat' rally after meeting the aspirants at Ashok Nagar here, the hub of coaching institutions for civil services and others in the city. Amid sloganeering by aspirants against the Congress government, Sanjay Kumar squatted on the ground in support of the former.
The aspirants shared their grievances with the Union Minister.
Accompanied by a large number of youth, he took out 'Chalo Secretariat' rally to meet Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and apprise him of their concerns. Kumar was, however, stopped by police following which he briefly addressed

Continued on Page 5

'Stop protests, write exams'

Don't fall prey to political agendas: CM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy called on Group-1 job hopefuls to focus on preparation for the mains, reassuring them that the recruitment process is being conducted fairly and according to the government guidelines. Speaking at the closing ceremony of the Police Duty Meet 2024, Revanth addressed misinformation surrounding Group-1 recruitment, urging aspirants not to fall prey to political agendas.
The CM urged Group-1 hopefuls not to protest but wrote the exam on Monday. He said



95% of aspirants downloaded the hall ticket and called upon the remaining 5 to do so. The courts have also supported the government's examination process.
He emphasized that the government is committed to filling long-pending vacancies, including those for Group-1 officers, as per GO 29 to ensure justice for all.
Revanth highlighted that despite the BRS government issuing notifications, they failed to make appointments, leading to unrest among aspirants.

Continued on Page 5



Candidates protest march to Sectt

A large number of Group-1 candidates staged a protest march to the Secretariat on Saturday, demanding the postponement of their upcoming exams.
The candidates have been continuously protesting urging

Continued on Page 5



KTR blasts govt

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) said that he was disappointed with the Congress Government's handling of the protests by Group-1 candidates.
Addressing the media on Saturday, KTR criticized the government for ignoring the concerns of the candidates, who have been protesting in the harsh sun and rain for the last four days. He stated that the government's indifference towards them is "regrettable and deplorable."
KTR lashed out at the state's approach accusing it of trampling asunder the 95% local reservation policy introduced by Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Rao.
He said that he was disappointed that despite the serious situation, the government did not even call the candidates for a meeting or offer any explanation.

Continued on Page 5

'HYDRAA fear gripping BRS brass'

All-party team must check whether farmhouses of KTR & Harish are legal, says CM Revanth

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

Declaring that BRS Working President KT Rama Rao, BRS MLA T. Harish Rao and BJP MP Eatala Rajender are afraid of the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency (HYDRAA), Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that he will invite an all-party team to check whether the farmhouses of KTR and Harish Rao are legal or not.
"Let's bring out the truth using the fact-finding committee. Is it not right that KTR has a farmhouse in Janwada and Harish Rao a farmhouse in Azeez Nagar? We will decide what to do with them after visiting these farmhouses," the CM said while addressing the Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Yatra Commemoration Award function held at Charminar on Saturday.
"The KCR family is a family of thieves. The KCR family earned lakhs of crores by misusing power. BRS leaders who did not even have footwear are now going around on flights," he said.
He said that some financial terrorists are trying to destroy Telangana's economy. However, the Congress



government will see their end, the CM warned and added that the Congress government will not touch the assets of people who have legal permissions.
The CM said that BRS leaders are opposing HYDRAA as they fear that their farmhouses will be demolished. The CM said that HYDRAA would behave like an elephant against those who have built buildings illegally after occupying water bodies and government lands.
Those who have constructed homes with government permission need not fear, he said and added that some people are spreading lies on social

Continued on Page 5

GROUP-I EXAMS
Govt plans statement today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Ministers, high officials and the TPCC President met at Transport Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar's house on Saturday and decided to make a comprehensive statement on the demands of Group-1 candidates on Sunday.
Ministers Damodara Raja Narasimha, D. Sridhar Babu, Ponnamp Prabhakar, Kinda Surekha, TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud and officials discussed Group-1 examinations, GO No: 29 and Group-1 candidates' demands and the possibility of implementation of their demands.
The Ministers discussed the steps to be taken to see that not a single candidate with experience loses and to ensure that every student gets justice.

'Rythu Bharosa from next cropping season'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageshwara Rao said the Rythu Bharosa scheme will be implemented in the coming season very soon after the Cabinet Sub-Committee submits its report.
He said the state government has been implementing its schemes as per its word and made it clear that the Congress government will work to see that farmers stand on their own.
Speaking to the media at the BRS Bhavan on Saturday, Tummala said on Saturday that the Congress government has been continuing the schemes left by the BRS government like previous Rabi season Rythu Bandhu, subsidy for the seeds of Pachirota, subsidy to palm oil, subsidy to drip companies. He said the Congress government released Rs 8,000 crore for these schemes and it shows the sincer-

ity of the Congress government towards farmers. Tummala said the government will pay back the Rythu Bharosa amount of Rs 7,500 per acre from the coming crop season after the submission of the Cabinet Sub-Committee's report. He said the loan waiver scheme would harm farmers who have loans of more than Rs 2 lakh. However, it will be completed before December month.

BRS calls for statewide protests

BRS Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) has sharply criticised the Congress government for betraying farmers by delaying the release of aid under

5

New political alternative is on cards in Telangana

BY B KRISHNA PRASAD

Is Telangana set to witness the emergence of a new political force? Is there a vacuum in the political arena of Telangana with the Congress party losing ground fast and with the Bharat Rashtira Samithi far from being in a position to stage a comeback? These are among the plausible questions that are making rounds in political circles now.
An aide of Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan is working assiduously to identify the Jana Sena's individual prospects in Telangana. Simultaneously, the party is discussing with local leaders of Telugu Desam Party and Bharatiya Janata Party possible alliances with them to determine which of the alliances could click for it in Telangana. Jana Sena believes strongly that the prospects of the party's expansion in Telangana are bright, provided it latches on to a strong alliance partner.
Telugu Desam Party supremo N Chandrababu Naidu is also planning to rejuvenate the party unit

in the state, with some leaders having clout like Teegala Krishna Reddy and Malla Reddy indicating their willingness for ghar wapsi during their recent interaction with the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, whose party can now influence the NDA government the Centre.
For BJP, however, it is formidable battle ahead in Telangana. The party is bracing up to come to power by beating both the Congress and the BRS. For, the party is of the considered opinion that the Congress is losing its ground very fast, while the BRS has not made headway in regaining public confidence over the last 10 months.
Although the efforts of BRS working president K T Ramarao have started yielding some results, people in general are not very happy with KCR's lackluster attitude towards major issues including HYDRAA ops, delayed Rythu Bharosa and incomplete farmers' loan waiver. "People are yet to forgive KCR for his dictatorial functioning; till it continues, the prospects of BRS would not brighten," commented a senior



BRS leader.
What is crystal clear for every political party in the state is how fast the Congress has been losing its ground among various sections of people. Lack of administrative experience is clearly visible, going by recent developments. The farmers' loan waiver, despite the disbursement of three installments with fanfare, is yet to be completed in right earnest. The Rythu Bharosa, which has already yielded strong ground to BRS in the farming community, has been postponed indefinitely. Both these aspects have changed farmers' attitude towards the Congress.

Repeated changes in dates and schedules of government job exams have widened the gap between the unemployed and the state government. With the advent of HYDRAA ops, the real estate sector, which had pushed the Hyderabad to next level during the BRS regime, has reported nearly a 40 per cent drop. With no sales, and with investors under pressure to return the money they had taken in advance for executing projects, those who had planned their ventures near and around lakes have almost been pushed to bankruptcy.
But the moot question is: Is there a real political vacuum in Telangana or is it the dream of those who are idle in various political parties?
Statistically speaking, TDP still has sizeable vote banks in Khammam, Nalgonda, Ranga Reddy and Hyderabad districts, apart from marginal presence in Nizamabad and Warangal. The Jana Sena has no strength at all in Telangana as per records. The BJP is vying for the top slot and wants to grab power in the upcoming Assembly elections. If the three

parties come together, there will be a fair chance for them to attain power in Telangana. All three parties are known to be cadre-based and, relatively speaking, less corrupt. So, many disillusioned political leaders will be happy to switch to these three parties and contest. So, there will be no dearth of bankable candidates for such an alliance. But the only challenge that both Jana Sena and TDP will face at the time of elections is the exclusionary tag of being 'Andhra parties'. The BRS (as distinct from TRS) may have to give this a new spin to once again stoke regional feelings in the state. But the people of this state have already given 10 years to BRS and the party, while looking at its prospects beyond borders, chose to shed Telangana from its name. Whether the party will once again capitalize on regional feelings and whether people would accept their claims would be clear only ahead of the next Assembly elections.
All told, if the new alliance takes shape, the contest will be three-cornered, giving a fair chance to the Congress party too.

Tycoon's breakfast plans foiled, yet Rs 100 cr lands at Young India Skills University

When power play moves out of the boardroom, can social media be far behind to profit from it? It seems like power moves are playing out in broad daylight or rather over breakfast! A meeting scheduled between a Congress Chief Minister and an influential business mogul, though approved by the party's big bosses in Delhi, had to be cancelled as the opposition leader got the wind of the tycoon's visit. All hell broke loose on Twitter, courtesy KTR. That is not all. There is a twist in the tale. The abrupt cancellation of the high-profile meeting was not the end of it. Sources are now whispering that Sunil Kanugolu and Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy's cozy meeting with Gautam Adani at ITC Kohenur the other day might have stirred up the hornet's nest. But here's the kicker: weeks later, a cool Rs100 crore quietly found its way to the Young India Skills University. Was it coincidence? No way! Some say this was all part of well-thought-out moves on the political chessboard. Of course, there are others who shrug it off as just another day in the commingling world of business and politics. Whatever it is, with donations flying around and plans crumbling under Twitter storms, there are larger questions: Who is pulling the strings? What is next on the power play agenda?

Secretariat, many of the reporters were frustrated because even the available mics were not passed to those who had questions. Those in the back rows struggled to get across their questions. This procedural lapse caught many scribes off guard. Women reporters, in particular, found themselves sidelined. After an uproar to be heard, just when they had almost given up; the Media Communications Director stepped in to restore a semblance of order. At last, two women reporters got a chance to shoot their questions. Noticeably, the situation with regard to mics seems to have upended. At Telangana Bhavan, where reporters previously had to fight for their voice to be heard, mics are now being provided without any hang-ups.

manner". Sensing the difference that Bandi Sanjay Kumar made in voicing the party's view, when scribes asked whether he would be willing to take up responsibilities as president of Telangana BJP unit, Bandi Sanjay Kumar replied: "There is no question of taking the responsibility of Telangana BJP president because the party itself appointed me as the Union Minister. The party will not give another responsibility now. The party is continuing Union Minister JP Nadda as the party's national president and G Kishan Reddy as the Telangana BJP president because the membership drive is going on. Later, the party will appoint new presidents at the national level as well as in the state".

Misinformation confuses scribes as well as politicians

Doesn't a Union Minister have the right to reach out to a section of aggrieved people? Due to avoidable misinformation, a section of the scribes and some

Ex-MLA in hot water again

Former legislator and Tadipatri Municipal Chairperson JC Prabhakar Reddy has landed in hot water again with his provocative remarks targeting liquor shop licence holders in his home turf. In a video that has gone viral, he is seen suggesting that they should contribute 15% of their profits for the town's development, apart from giving him 20 paise per bottle of liquor sold as his personal share. The video, captured during a meeting he had with his supporters in Peddavaguru, has sparked widespread outrage and heated debate. He also spoke against 'non-locals' obtaining liquor shop licences in Tadipatri as 'unacceptable'. His remarks have attracted sharp criticism from various quarters, including scribes, with many questioning his ethics as well as his nerve to spike political tensions in Tadipatri.

REPORTERS' DIARY

politicos got this strange doubt on Saturday, a day after Bhongir MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy slammed Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar, saying that the latter did hungama on the roads without coming for discussions on GO No.29 with Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. Although Bandi Sanjay Kumar clarified that he had not received any phone call or intimation in this regard, some over-enthusiastic news channels ran scrolling suggesting that the Union Minister had politely turned down the invitation from the Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for a discussion on GO No.29. This left a section of the print media scribes confused on Saturday as to what is right and who is wrong. Adding to the confusion, Bandi Sanjay suggested that the Chief Minister ought to invite representatives of Group-I aspirants for a discussion on the GO No.29, adding: "What is the use even if the CM invites me as I am not a Group-I candidate?" Later, some scribes surmised that it could be the handiwork of some opposition party to confound both scribes and politicians.

At last, scribes saw them do their job

After a long, nay very long time, reporters on Bharatiya Janata Party beat, got a chance to see the party's firebrand leader, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar stage dharna on the road on Saturday for the sake of protesting Group-I aspirants. The reporters on duty found a sense of fulfillment so much so that they expressed their happiness, saying "an opposition party ought to act in this

Ex-minister raises eyebrows at Vijaya Dairy

Former minister Bhuma Akhila Priya has raised eyebrows by playing to the gallery at the office of the Chairmen of Vijaya Dairy. In a viral video, she is seen seated in the Chairman's chair and throwing tantrums. The Chairman, who is Akhila Priya's relative, then called her after learning about the situation. She asked point blank, 'Are you threatening me?' and dared him to approach the authorities should he find her actions inappropriate. During their heated conversation, Akhila Priya questioned why a picture of YS Jagan Mohan Reddy (who is no longer the CM) still adorned the office wall. She wanted it to be replaced with a photo of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu. Political circles are curious to know how this 'Lady Don' will be handled in the days to come by the dairy authorities and the state government in that order.

(With inputs from Naveena Ghanate, K Venkateshwarlu and Pradeep Kumar)

Uttam warns people against BJP's 'divisive' politics

Hails Gandhi family for preserving nation's unity

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy warned people against the BJP's 'divisive' politics and accused the party of 'creating' tensions between Hindus and Muslims.

Speaking at the 34th anniversary of the Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Yatra at the Charminar on Saturday, he credited the Gandhi family for its sacrifices in upholding the unity and integrity of the nation.

While the BJP always tried to 'divide' the country on communal lines, the Gandhi family countered it by 'promoting' peace, unity and brotherhood.



He said that it was Rajiv Gandhi who launched the Sadbhavana Yatra 34 years back to counter the BJP's 'communal' agenda. Similarly, he said Rahul Gandhi launched the Bharat Jodo Yatra to 'unify' the country. Hailing the contributions of the Nehru-Gandhi family, he said that Indira Gandhi and

Rajiv Gandhi became martyrs for the sake of the nation's unity and Sonia Gandhi gave up her chance to become the Prime Minister.

He said that Sonia Gandhi's political will was behind the formation of Telangana as it was a big political sacrifice as there was a strong chance of the

Congress losing power in AP. Former minister Dr J. Geetha Reddy who was conferred the Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award was hailed by Uttam Kumar Reddy. He welcomed Dr Geetha Reddy's decision to give up her medical career in Saudi Arabia to join politics as per the call of Rajiv Gandhi.

He also acknowledged the appointment of Mahesh Kumar Goud as the TPCC President and assured support to both Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Mahesh Kumar Goud in strengthening the Congress in Telangana.

Uttam also paid floral tributes to the late Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi.

BCAS holds meeting with airlines amid bomb threats to flights

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) officials on Saturday held a meeting with representatives of airlines on a day when more than 30 flights received bomb threats, according to sources.

Some airlines were represented by their CEOs and others by their senior officials at the meeting.

"Indian skies are absolutely safe. The current protocol (to deal with the situation) is robust and is being strictly followed. We reassure passengers that they should fly without any fear," BCAS Director General Zulfikar Hasan said.

One of the sources said the regulator's officials had "very good" discussions with airline representatives.

Security aspects and other issues were discussed at the meeting, the source said.

Another source said there were discussions on the standard operating procedures in dealing with bomb threats.

So far this week, more than 70 flights operated by Indian airlines have received bomb threats, and most of them turned out to be hoaxes.

AMID GROUP-1 PROTESTS

Chikkadpally SHO transferred

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad City Police Commissioner has ordered the transfer of Chikkadpally Station House Officer (SHO) Seetayya amid ongoing protests by Group-1 candidates. Over the past three days, the candidates have been agitating for their demands, and the administrative decision appears to be linked to the unrest in the area.

Sources said that Group-1 aspirants complained to MoS Bandi Sanjay Kumar about Seethayya and the lathi-charge who informed higher up to take action.

According to an official order dated October 18, 2024,

the Police Establishment Board of Hyderabad City Police met on October 16, 2024, to review the transfer and posting of many inspectors of police.

The decision to transfer Seetayya was made as part of administrative reshuffling. The order outlines that Seetayya has been transferred from Chikkadpally Police Station to the Special Branch of Hyderabad City Police.

The reasons for the transfer, while not explicitly mentioned in the order, are in connection with the disturbances caused by Group-1 candidates' protests.

In addition to Seetayya, other officers have also been affected by this reshuffling.

Raju Naik, who was temporarily attached to the Additional Commissioner of Police L&O, has been posted as the new SHO of Chikkadpally Police Station.

Meanwhile, Srisailam Naik, who was awaiting posting after being attached to Multi Zone-II, has been appointed as the detective inspector (DI) for Domalguda. Similarly, Chanda Saidulu has been posted as the DI for Khairatabad. The reshuffling also affected officers D. Venkatesh and Ch. Srinivas Reddy, both of whom had been earlier posted to DI positions but had not reported. They have been returned to the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Multi Zone-II.

Sanjay must respect courts, says Bhongir MP Kiran

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bhongir MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy said that Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar should respect courts.

It is shocking to see Sanjay creating hungama on the roads instead of coming for a discussion on GO No: 29, he said.

Meanwhile, BRS Working President KT Rama Rao made his men who are not students to enact a drama by filing a case in the Supreme Court. "Where was KTR when Pravalika committed suicide,"

Kiran asked.

Speaking to the media at the Gandhi Bhavan on Saturday, Kiran said that opposition parties had demanded the postponement of DSC. However, the government took the issue seriously and conducted DSC successfully and handed over appointment orders to 11,600 candidates.

Appealing to Group-I candidates that there is no need for them to have apprehensions on GO No: 29, he said that the Congress government has the credit of giving 34 per cent reservations to BCs in United

AP and in Telangana.

He said that it is not proper for Sanjay to oppose the Group-I examination which is going to be helpful for the candidates. He said the court took a decision on GO No: 29 and everyone should respect it.

He appealed to the students not to spoil their future by listening to political leaders and to write Group-I examinations. The opposition is throwing mud due to envy as the Congress government is at last filling vacant posts in government service.

4,000 Indiramma houses by Oct-end: Ponguleti

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Revenue, Housing, Information & PR Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy said that by the end of October, around 3,500 to 4,000 houses will be sanctioned in every constituency in the first phase of the Indiramma Housing Scheme.

The government plans to construct 20 lakh houses in the next four years to provide housing for all eligible poor individuals. Ponguleti said that caste, religion, region or political affiliations would not affect the distribution of Indiramma houses, reaffirming the government's

commitment to development. The Minister added that despite financial challenges and opposition parties trying to block welfare schemes, development projects in the state will not be halted. "The Centre's contributions to the housing project will be secured. We have already approached the Union Housing Ministry's Joint Secretary, who visited Hyderabad recently, and requested a large number of houses for the state," he said.

Speaking on the inefficiency of the BRS government, Ponguleti said, "The BRS government failed to even consider the needs of the poor, while our government is trying to wipe away the tears of the underprivileged."

On Saturday, Hyderabad district in-charge Minister Ponnampalabharathi, along with Ponguleti distributed double-bedroom house documents to 144 people from the Goshamahal constituency at the Collector's office.

Speaking at the event, Ponguleti criticized the main opposition, BRS, for attempting to block the government's efforts. He added, "The BRS's outcry will not harm our government. It is the opposition which will suffer as they take to the streets within a year of our government coming to power. What they couldn't do in 10 years, we are doing within a short span, and they are unable to digest it." The minister commented on the government's schemes for Musi riverfront residents and said that providing houses, jobs, and livelihoods to those living in the area is part of their commitment to improving lives.

Doctors remove surgical scissor from abdomen of woman

PNS ■ GANGTOK

Doctors at STNM Hospital here removed a surgical scissor which was in the abdomen of a woman for 12 years, an official said on Saturday.

The scissor was left in the abdomen of the woman when she underwent an appendix operation at STNM Hospital 12 years ago, the official said.

Dr Suresh Madan Rai, Spokesperson of STNM Hospital said that a committee has been set up with officials of the Health department and doctors from STNM to investigate the case of scissor left in the abdomen of the woman during the appendix operation.

Even after the appendix operation, the woman had pain. Her family brought her to the STNM Hospital. In the X-ray, a surgical scissor was found in her abdomen.

The doctors on Thursday operated to remove the scissor from the abdomen of the woman, he said.



'Keep yourselves abreast with latest developments'

PM Modi urges Civil servants

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked civil servants on Saturday to keep themselves abreast with latest technological developments so as to meet the rising standards and stressed the need for following a citizen-centric approach. Addressing an event here,

the prime minister also suggested seeking help from startups, research agencies and youngsters for getting new ideas. With artificial intelligence, information processing is also becoming equally easy, making the citizenry informed and empowering them to keep a tab on all the activities of the government, he said.

"So the civil servants need to keep themselves abreast with latest technological developments so as to meet the rising standards, wherein Mission Karmayogi can prove to be of help," Modi said after launching the "Karmayogi Saptah" -- National Learning Week -- at the Dr Ambedkar International Centre here.

Will become K'taka CM again, says Kumaraswamy

PNS ■ MANDYA (KARNATAKA)

Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy on Saturday asserted that he would become the Chief Minister of Karnataka once again before 2028.

He also predicted the fall of the Congress government due to dissatisfaction within the party.

"It is certain that this government won't last until 2028. I am confident that the people will give me another opportunity, and I will become Chief Minister again," the Minister

for Steel and Heavy Industries told reporters here.

Kumaraswamy headed the coalition government twice as Chief Minister -- from February 2006 to October 2007 and from May 2018 to July 2019.

"The opportunity to become CM will come before 2028. I am not a fortune-teller, but I am saying this," he added.

He reposed faith in the people who would help realise his dream. "If the people wish, why shouldn't I become the Chief Minister? Even now, I am appealing to the people to give

me a five-year term as Chief Minister," the JD(S) second-in-command said. He rued that his previous stint as Chief Minister of Karnataka for 14 months was under 'someone else's influence'.

"Even though the government was run under another party's influence, the people have not forgotten the pro-people programmes we implemented." The Minister said if given an opportunity, he will do excellent work and no family should have to beg for survival.

Kumaraswamy alleged that money is being looted in the

state and the government assets are being seized. If this is stopped, the government can implement programmes where people earn at least Rs 10,000 instead of receiving just Rs 2,000 from the government.

He also predicted the fall of the Congress government in the state. According to him, the squabbling would lead to its collapse.

"The Congress government here won't last longer. The people of the state and the MLAs of that party will be the ones to topple it," the Minister said.

CITY EVENTS

Standup Comedy

Vivek Muralidharan brings in his signature show "Death by Laughter", where he brings his newest material to stage.

Venue

Multiple venues.
October 19 to
November 24

Toxic

By Abhishek Upmanyu

Venue

Shilpakala Vedika
November 2

Bottle Art workshop

Join us for a lively and creative event where we turn ordinary bottles into extraordinary works of art! Participants are encouraged to bring their old bottles—whether they're from beer, water, or any other source—and engage in a hands-on bottle paint workshop

Venue

Trailing Ivy Cafe
till November 17

Need for judicial, political & police reforms stressed

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

There is an urgent need for judicial, political and police reforms, said the founding members and chief guests at the 15th Foundation Day Celebration of Forum For Good Governance in Hyderabad. Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma took part in the event as the Chief Guest. He congratulated the members of the Forum For Good Governance for their efforts. M Padmanabha Reddy, president of the Forum For Good Governance, while speaking said, "The long awaited electoral reforms are still evading us. Today we have fifty percent of our MLAs and MPs criminal records. This is not good for our Indian Democracy. There is a need to amend the representation of the Peoples Act and also the parties which are recklessly promising freebies must be contained, any political party which is promising freebies must explain where they are getting money from for such schemes." There is an urgent need for judicial, political and police reforms. In regard to the economy it should be inclusive and job creating, he added.

C. Anjaneya Reddy, retired IPS said, "The police are subordinate and in district courts the cases are pending for years. Who will look into it is my question."

City Pioneer

sunday pioneer

HYDERABAD | SUNDAY | OCTOBER 20, 2024

03

Wild animal spotted near Miyapur Metro

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A sense of panic prevailed when locals near the Miyapur Metro station spotted a wild animal in the construction area on Friday evening.

On Saturday the Forest officials sent the scat collected to the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) for confirmation. The laborers of the construction area recorded a video of it walking as they

assumed it to be a leopard. The Police and Forest Officials were alerted and teams reached the spots to investigate.

In the initial investigation they found that it is a jungle cat. A forest officer speaking with The Pioneer said, "It looks to be a jungle cat. We sent scat collected to CCMB for confirmation and installed camera traps to observe its movements".

Bomb threat: Hyderabad-Chandigarh flight checked

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A Hyderabad-Chandigarh IndiGo flight was being checked at the Chandigarh airport here following a bomb threat on Saturday, said official sources. The plane was being checked thoroughly by the airport authorities at the isolation bay, they said. "The plane is being checked in isolation,"

they said. Meanwhile, Indigo said that upon landing, the aircraft was isolated and all passengers were safely disembarked.

A series of bomb threats have been received by various airlines on domestic and international routes. Most threats were received through social media and most of them turned out to be hoaxes.



Actress and cancer warrior Sonali Bendre addressing the breast cancer awareness programme at GVK Health Hub in Hyderabad on Saturday

VK Health hub hosts breast cancer awareness programme

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

On the occasion of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, GVK Health Hub held a panel discussion featuring philanthropist Pinky Reddy, actress and cancer warrior Sonali Bendre, and Dr. Sneha Sagar, a medical oncologist at GVK Health Hub on Saturday. This event aimed to raise awareness about breast cancer by sharing personal stories and professional insights on the importance of early detection and timely screening.

Actress Sonali Bendre shared her journey as a cancer survivor, discussing the physical and emotional challenges of the disease. She emphasised the mental impact of cancer,

stating, "Cancer can destroy your spirit if you allow it. I focused on love, positivity, and small victories. My family, friends, and daily routines helped me build a mental fortress." Dr Sneha Sagar highlighted the importance of early detection, stating, "While genetics play a role, most breast cancer cases are not hereditary. Regular screenings are crucial for all women, especially those with a family history. Women should start mammograms at age 40, as early detection can save lives."

Pinky Reddy urged prioritizing women's health, saying, "Women shape families and communities. By investing in their health, we empower them to nurture those around them."



Police caning protesters at Muthyalamma temple in Secunderabad

IDOL DESECRATION

Police lathicharge protesters

Alleged desecration of the Muthyalamma temple sparks tension in Hyderabad city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The city police on Saturday resorted to lathicharge to disperse activists of VHP, Bajrang Dal and other Hindu organisations who were protesting against the desecration of a temple idol here.

Salman Salim Thakur alias Salman, an engineering graduate from Maharashtra on October 14, allegedly entered the sanctum-sanctum of Muthyalamma temple in Secunderabad in the small hours and desecrated the main idol of the temple, triggering protests by locals, Hindu organisations and the BJP.

The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) on Saturday called for a statewide protest against the Telangana government's "attitude" towards temples, according to its spokesperson Ravinuthala Shashidhar. The activists held protests and gathered in front of the temple holding saffron flags. They raised slogans like "Jai Shriram" and "we want justice". The desecration of the Muthyalamma temple in Secunderabad sparked confrontation between protesting devotees

and police on Saturday afternoon. The situation escalated after a local bandh was called to protest the vandalising of the temple's idol earlier this week. Hundreds of devotees, including women and members of religious organisations, gathered at the temple premises, chanting slogans and demanding justice. Despite heavy police deployment to maintain order, tensions flared as protests began hurling stones and footwear at security personnel.

Earlier in the day, a peaceful rally was organised by locals and members of the BJYM, beginning at Mahankali Temple and heading towards the Muthyalamma Temple. However, as the rally progressed, clashes erupted, prompting the police to use force. Protestors also attempted to storm Metropolis Hotel, but were swiftly dispersed by police. The videos of lathicharge show protestors bleeding and injured in the mishap. In the wake of the unrest, there was information of internet services being shut down in Secunderabad.

Meanwhile, J Susheel Kumar an advocate practicing at Secunderabad Court, submitted a plea requesting

an immediate halt to the lathi charge. He emphasized that the rally had initially been peaceful and expressed concern that continued police action could lead to further law and order problems in the area. Kumar urged authorities to instruct police personnel to cease the use of force to prevent further injuries and escalation of tensions.

North Zone DCP Rashmi Perumal told the media stated that the situation turned violent when around 3,000 people participated in a rally. Twelve policemen were injured. According to the DCP, the rally split into two groups—one near a hotel and another near the temple. Tensions rose when a section of the crowd near the Muthyalamma Temple attempted to move towards a nearby mosque. Despite police efforts to calm the tension, the protestors refused to relent.

Residents of the area largely supported maintaining peace, but a few young individuals began attacking the police with stones, footwear, and chairs. As a result, 12 police personnel sustained injuries. To bring the situation under control, the police had to resort to a lathi charge.

Police Commemoration Day events from Oct 21

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana State Police will join the nation in observing Police Commemoration Day from October 21 to 31. This solemn day honours the brave police personnel who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty while serving the nation and its people. This year, as many as 214 police personnel from across India laid down their lives in service, including one martyr from Telangana.

In Telangana, the Commemoration Period will be observed from October 21 to October 31 culminating in



Director General of Police Photo addressing the media in Hyderabad on Saturday

In Telangana, the Commemoration Period will be observed from October 21 to October 31 culminating in National Unity Day on Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's birth anniversary. A range of programmes will be conducted to honor these martyrs.

National Unity Day on Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's birth anniversary. A range of programmes will be conducted to honor these martyrs.

Booklet Honoring Martyrs: Telangana Suraksha will publish a booklet chronicling the acts of bravery by police officers who lost their lives in the

past year. This booklet will serve as a lasting tribute to their courage and commitment.

Hoardings, banners, and

posters with commemorative artwork and slogans will be placed at prominent locations across Telangana. Public transport vehicles will also carry messages honoring the fallen heroes.

Telangana Police will organise Open Houses in both physical and virtual formats. Schools, colleges, youth clubs, and citizen groups will be invited to police stations to interact with officers. These events will showcase key police initiatives such as Friendly-Policing, Facial Recognition Systems, CCTVs, SHE Teams and Bharosa Centres.

Golf City in southern region to create 10,000 Jobs



IT Minister DSridhar Babu meeting with representatives of The Professional Golfers Association of America at the Secretariat in Hyderabad on Saturday.

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Golf City in the Southern Region will create 10,000 jobs, according to Information and Technology Minister D Sridhar Babu. He had a meeting with the Professional Golfers Association of America (PGA) and local partner Stone Craft, who plans to build an extensive Golf City in the southern part of the city. A delegation from the PGA, based in Frisco, Texas, met with the Minister at the Secretariat on Saturday.

The Minister stated that PGA and Stone Craft are ready to establish golf courses, residential complexes, hotels, and entertainment facilities if the

The Minister stated that PGA and Stone Craft are ready to establish golf courses, residential complexes, hotels, and entertainment facilities if the Telangana government supports them. He mentioned that PGA is working with Shapoorji Pallonji in Mumbai to develop a Golf City, and Stone Craft plans to invest heavily in the Telangana project

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a Golf City, and Stone Craft plans to invest heavily in the Telangana project.

Sridhar Babu added that once completed, the Golf City will create 10,000 jobs over the next decade. He noted that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's vision for the "Fourth City" includes a net-zero city free from pollution. The companies aim to triple green spaces to provide a pleasant living environment.

He also said that the PGA consortium will develop an 18-hole golf course across nearly 200 acres, the first of its kind in South India, enhancing the region's natural Deccan rocks and local water resources.



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Task Force Team of Telangana's Commissioner of Food Safety inspected Shawarma vending units in Secunderabad and found that Synthetic food colours were being used in Shawarmas along with multiple violations. The State Level Task Force team inspected Mujtaba Grills,

Food Safety officials find synthetic colours in shawarma vending unit

East Maredpally, Secunderabad; Shasha Shandar Shawarma, Paradise Metro Station, Rolls on Wheels, Paradise Metro Station, Sync Shawarma, Secunderabad East Metro Station; and the

Asian Chow, Secunderabad. The team found synthetic food colors being used at Mujtaba and discarded them on the spot. One FBO (Shasha Shawarma) was operating with-

out an FSSAI license. The FSSAI license was not displayed in a prominent place at two outlets (Mujtaba and Rolls on Wheels). Medical records of food handlers and pest control records were missing. Some vending units were unclean. Lapses were found in storage practices, including lack of labeling and improper separation of veg/non-veg items.

MERCY'S SILENT POEMS OF THE MIND

Mercy Margaret highlights a world of injustices and sufferings through her poems. Also a short story writer and a social worker from Hyderabad, she came into limelight as a poet after receiving the Kendra Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar for her first anthology of poems in Telugu 'Matala Madugu'. Her other notable works are Kalam valipottunna vaipu, Aasamardudhu and Tripura Shapadham.

Born, brought up in Hyderabad, Mercy studied M.Com, M.B.A. She won the first prize in the State-level poetry competition conducted by the Andhra Pradesh AIDS Control Society. She also won the monthly award for poetry from Sahiti

Prasthanam and received Penna Sahitya Puraskar for her works.

Through her poetry, she stresses on the sufferings of her fellow beings to create awareness and a sense of justice among those who read her works. "I started off with reading the revolution-

grew. Mercy's poems are on social injustices, inequalities, oppression, caste-based discrimination and women. She says her poetry touches a chord with all her readers on social media.

Mercy says she was mentored by

poets like Kavi Yaqoob and Afsar. "Kavi Yaqoob, who is also a professor and a writer, encouraged me to write and invited me for poetry recitations," she reminisces.

She credits another well-known Telugu poet K Shiva Reddy for inspiring her to pen down her second collection of poems.

Reddy was Mercy's visiting professor when she was pursuing post-graduation and taught her the nuances of writing poetry. "Shiva Reddy sir is my guru," she says. She wants to join hands with people who, like her, want to change the dynamics of society and fight for justice.

Culture & Heritage

ary poets who wrote about socio-economic injustices in society," she says.

In 2009, Mercy began uploading her poems on her blog called 'Manasu Palike Mouna Geetham (Silent songs of the mind)' and started sharing her poems on the social media.

Over time, her poems began attracting an audience and her followers



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Cybercriminals trap VIPs via video calls by nudes

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR



Recently, cybercrimes have been on the rise. From gifts and giveaways to lottery schemes and drug parcels, cybercriminals are targeting gullible people in various ways. An alarming trend involves video calls projecting nude videos has emerged. Scammers call from unknown numbers and appear naked on the screen. As soon as the call is answered, they demand money, threatening to share the video on social media if they refuse. This issue is affecting not just ordinary people but also a very important person.

Recently, a scandal erupted when a young woman made such a video call to a VIP in Telangana. Disturbed by the incident, he immediately sought help from the cyber-crime police. Details of the incident reveal that on

October 14, after midnight, the VIP in the united Karimnagar district received a video call from an unknown number. When he answered, he was shocked to see a young woman appearing naked on the screen. Without wasting a moment, he cut the call and expressed serious concern about the incident. He wondered whether someone was trying to blackmail him by orchestrating such a video call or if it was indeed the work of unknown cybercriminals looking for money. The police are investigating.



Will Kakatiya Fort get back its sheen?

Successive governments fail to pay attention to it

PNS ■ WARANGAL

The historic Kakatiya Fort, constructed using lime mortar by the erstwhile Kakatiya rulers 800 years ago, has been decaying with each passing day due to the continued neglect of successive administrations in both united Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Once an impregnable stronghold, the fort now shows little sign of its former glory. The stone structure has been slowly deteriorating, with the ramparts that once housed cannons and served as lookout points for soldiers now collapsing. Additionally, the fort lacks proper drainage for floodwaters, resulting in persistent slush within its walls.

The Kakatiya rulers established their capital at Khilla Warangal, located just one kilometer from Warangal railway station. The fort's construction began in 1199 under the reign of Ganapati Deva and was completed by Queen Rudrama Devi. The Kakatiya dynasty built seven circular forts spanning over 19 kilometers.

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During the Kakatiya era, soldiers patrolled markets and other areas on horseback, elephant-back, and in chariots. The 18-foot wide ditch in front of the fort, once filled with crocodiles and poisonous snakes to deter enemies, has nearly vanished. Where the ditches used to be, one now finds only small puddles and occasional snake pits.

Of the original seven walled forts, five walls have disappeared. Today, only remnants of the mud and stone fort remain. The sixth wall, known as Dharani Kota, encircled the

Kakatiyan capital city for a length of eight kilometers, originally measuring 150 feet wide and 40 feet tall. Over the past 10 to 20 years, the wall has steadily deteriorated, with some sections reduced to mere pathways and others standing at only 12 meters in height.

In close proximity to the Kakatiya capital, a granite stone-walled fort, reaching a height of 15 meters and located 4 kilometers away, was built for soldiers to monitor enemy movements. Unfortunately, the stone structures continue to collapse due to a lack of annual maintenance. Ramparts from which soldiers once defended the fort have crumbled in multiple places. Areas that once housed royal horses and elephants, and where weekly markets were held, now resemble marshlands. The exquisite sculptures of Khilla Warangal Fort are being defaced by vandals.

Despite having ruled Telangana for 10 years, the Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) did not take any measures to preserve the historic heritage of the Kakatiyan rulers.



High Court Justice B Vijayasen Reddy inaugurating a civil court in Medak district on Saturday.

'Take legal services to people's doorstep'

PNS ■ MEDAK

High Court Justice B Vijayasen Reddy on Saturday called for ensuring legal services at people's doorstep. He also emphasised the need for swift justice for the poor.

During the inauguration of the new Civil Courts Complex in Alampur mandal in the district, District Collector Rahul Raj, Superintendent of Police Uday Kumar Reddy and other dignitaries, including District Judge Lakshmi Sharada and Judge Rita Lal Chand welcome him.

The new court complex was formally inaugurated. Advocates of the Bar Association took part.

During the event, Justice Vijayasen Reddy lit a lamp and addressed the gathering, stating that the establishment of the judiciary aims to provide swift justice

for the underprivileged. He emphasised that people should embrace peaceful life instead of harbouring animosities.

He stressed the need for quick resolution of cases, Justice Vijayasen Reddy emphasized that change is vital for societal progress and urged lawyers to act confidently according to legal provisions for the resolution of civil cases. He stated that disputes would arise in a democratic setup, leading to case registrations where lawyers and courts would be available for resolution. He indicated that the Legal Services Authority in the district is moving forward successfully.

Subsequently, the Medak, Narsapur, Jogipet Sangareddy, and Narayanakhet Bar Associations honoured Justice Vijayasen Reddy.



Prof Altaf Hussain assumes charge as MGU VC

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Professor Altaf Hussain on Saturday assumed office as the new Vice-Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi University (MGU), marking the beginning of a new chapter for the institution.

His academic journey began at Kakatiya University where he completed his Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Physics, securing the position of topper and earning a Gold Medal. He then went on to complete his PhD at the same university, gaining recognition for his research contributions. Professor Hussain served as Vice-Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi University from 2016 to 2019 during which he spearheaded several developmental initiatives. Under his leadership, the university achieved significant milestones, including securing a NAAC "B" grade. He focused on improving infrastructure, academic quality, and expanding research capabilities, all while promoting a student-centred approach. His contributions extended beyond administrative work; his focus on the university's research output, quality of teaching, and overall academic performance was remarkable, making MGU stand out in the region.

ED notice to ex-collector over land allotments



PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has issued a notice to Amoy Kumar, the former Ranga Reddy District Collector, in connection with alleged irregularities in land allotments. The inquiry is scheduled to be held on October 22 and 23.

The investigation focuses on land allotments in areas including Madhapur, Serilingampally, and Mokila, where irregularities have reportedly been identified. Amoy Kumar is expected to appear before the ED to provide explanations regarding these allegations.

Govt okays Rs 1 cr for facelift to shrines

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar emphasised the importance of devotion and service, stating that liberation is achieved through the path of devotion, and power comes through service. On Saturday, he performed a special pooja at the Chaudamma Gutta Sri Anjaneyaswamy Temple, located in the outskirts of Shadnagar town. The government has sanctioned Rs 50 lakh for the development of this temple, with an additional Rs 10 lakh donated by a local benefactor, Venkatesh, for the same cause.

During the ceremony, MLA Shankar also per-



MLA Shankar performing pooja to a cow in Shadnagar on Saturday

formed a pooja to Gomata within the temple premises and was honored by the temple priests with garlands and shawls. He assured that he is committed to the devel-

opment of temples and announced that the government has sanctioned Rs 50 lakh for the Bhawani Mata Temple in Elikatta village as well. Additionally, he personally pledged Rs 5 lakh each for the Anjaneyaswamy and Bhavani Mata temples.

In a gesture of remembrance, MLA Shankar handed over a Rs 10 lakh check to Pulimamidi Srisailem Goud, in memory of Akula Raghavender, son of businessman Akula Venkatesham and Aruna. The MLA urged everyone to follow the spiritual path, have faith in God, and work sincerely to achieve success. He also expressed his full support for future temple development initiatives and encouraged temple management to serve with dedication, without expecting financial gains from devotees.

The event was attended by several prominent local figures, including former ZPTC Venkatarami Reddy, Elikatta Srisailem, former Municipal Chairman Aggunuru Viswam, and other local leaders such as Srikanth Reddy, Konkalla Chennaiah, and Balaraju Goud. Many temple devotees, including Yamsani Srinivas, Raikal Srinu, and Praveen Yadav, also participated in the program. MLA Shankar extended his wishes for Anjaneyaswami's blessings to all who contributed to and supported the temple's development.

BRS stages protest for release of water to save crops

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI



Former minister Eshwar taking part in protest at Jagagama village in Peddapalli district on Saturday

Former minister Koppula Eshwar stated that the lack of irrigation water has led to crops wilting as the harvesting season approaches. He urged the Congress government to stop making false promises and immediately release water from the Sripada Yellampalli project to save the crops.

On Saturday, a protest was held at the Godavari river near Janagama village in the district. The protest was led by former MLA from Ramagundam and the district president of the BRS Korukanti Chander.

Speaking at the protest, Eshwar condemned the Congress government's attitude towards farmers, calling it a significant threat to the nation. He assured the farmers that the BRS party would always stand by them. Eshwar explained that releasing water from the Yellampalli project would fill

the Sundilla, Annaram, and Kannepalli barrages, thus revitalizing the crops in the surrounding villages.

Chander, the former MLA, demanded immediate solutions to the problems faced by farmers in Janagama village. He expressed concern that the Godavari river, which used to be a perennial source of water, has now turned into a barren stretch, causing severe difficulties for local farmers. Hundreds of leaders, activists, and farmers from the TRS party participated in the protest.

Tribal youth dies after torching self at police station

PNS ■ JANGAON

A young tribal man, who set himself on fire in front of Palakurthi police on Friday, died while undergoing treatment at MGM Hospital in Warangal in the early hours of Saturday.

Protest erupted at Palakurthi Police Station. The protesters, including women, blocked the ambulance carrying the body of the tribal man, identified as Lakawat Srinivas. They demanded severe punishment of police officers who allegedly ill-treated the tribal youth and drove him to commit suicide.

According to police, Srinivas and his wife were summoned to the Palakurthi Police Station for counselling after a dispute arose between the couple. The police said that they had summoned the tribal youth based on the complaint filed by his wife. As



Women protesters blocking an ambulance carrying the body of tribal youth who died after a self-immolation bid in Palakurthi on Saturday.

the counselling was in progress inside the police station, Srinivas ran out and took a can containing petrol from his motorbike, doused himself and set himself on fire. The police tried in vain to put out the flames.

The youth was rushed to the MGM Hospital for treatment where he succumbed to burns on

Saturday morning. Srinivas reportedly shot a selfie video accusing Palakurthi Cricile Inspector Mahender Reddy and Sub-inspector Sai Prasanna Kumar, besides others of harassing him. He demanded that those who harassed him be severely punished. A group of tribals tried to lay siege to the police sta-

Protest erupted in Palakurthi in Jangaon district demanding suspension of Circle Inspector and Sub-inspector

tion. They set fire to mounds of garbage in front of the police station. Protesters, mainly women, blocked the ambulance which carried the body to the village.

The youth belonged to Mekala Thanda. Tribal protesters demanded justice for Srinivas and immediate suspension of Mahender Reddy and Sai Prasanna Kumar. A large group of tribal people surrounded the Palakurthi police station.

Free darshan in temple extended to Yadagirigutta mandal residents

PNS ■ YADAGIRIGUTTA

In a significant move, the authorities at Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple have extended the free darshan facility to residents of Yadagirigutta mandal. This decision was made following numerous requests from locals who sought similar benefits to those already available to residents of Yadagirigutta town.

Temple Executive Officer E Bhaskar Rao, confirmed that from this week onwards, residents in the mandal can avail themselves of free darshan at the Garbhagriha upon present-

ing a valid Aadhaar card to confirm their residency.

Currently, Yadagirigutta town residents have access to free darshan every Tuesday from 8:15 am to 9 am, provided they are dressed in traditional attire and present their Aadhaar card for verification. This free darshan option is also available on Saturdays from 7 am to 9 am, adhering to the same verification process.

The extension of this facility to mandal residents follows strong local demand, ensuring that all devotees from Yadagirigutta Mandal can now benefit from the free darshan service.



Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind representatives submitting a representation to Khammam Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt in Khammam on Saturday

'Book Yati Narsinganand for remarks against Prophet'

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

A delegation of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind here on Saturday submitted a memorandum to police commissioner Sunit Dutt seeking action against what it called religious fanatic YatiNarsinganand for having hurt the sentiments of the Muslims with his unsavoury remarks against Islam.

The delegation of district JamiatUlema, led by district president Maulana Saeed Ahmed Qasmi, and district Congress leader Abdul Rasheed and district head Ulema, submitted the memorandum to the city police commissioner. It urged the city police chief to

take stringent action against the YatiNarsinganand and file case against him under the harsh sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Samhita. They alleged that some vested interests have been disturbing the peaceful atmosphere and maintained that Islam is a peace loving faith. But, Narsinganand passed unsavoury remarks against the Prophet Mohammad, they maintained. Later, the delegation said that the Commissioner of Police responded positively to its request. The CP called for harmonious living of the people of all faiths. Sunil Dutt called upon people not to hurt religious sentiments of people of other faiths.

ACROSS THE STATES



Union Min Joshi's brother held for duping woman

The police on Saturday arrested Union Minister Pralhad Joshi's brother based on a cheating complaint lodged by a former JD(S) MLA's wife. Gopal Joshi and a woman named Vijayalakshmi Joshi were booked by Basaveshwara nagar police on Thursday night. Gopal's son Ajay Joshi has also been named in the FIR. The complaint was lodged by Sunita Chavan, wife of former Nagthan MLA Devavand Phool Singh Chavan, who lost the 2023 Assembly election. She alleged that Gopal Joshi duped her of Rs two crore on the pretext of securing her family a BJP ticket to contest the May Lok Sabha elections. The complainant also alleged that Vijayalakshmi was introduced to her as Pralhad Joshi's sister. He said he has only three brothers, one of whom died in a road accident in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar in 1984. The minister had already clarified that he disowned his brother (Gopal Joshi) more than three decades ago, and said he had filed an affidavit in the court and also published a public notice saying that anyone claiming to be his brother, relatives or friends and indulging in any financial business will not be a binding on him.



Naxal couple lays down arms in Gadchiroli

Gadchiroli, Oct 19 (PTI) A Naxalite couple with a cumulative bounty of Rs 8 lakh on their heads surrendered on Saturday in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district, a police official said. The official identified them as Asin Rajaram Kumar (37) alias Anil and his wife Anju Sulya Jale (28) alias Soniya. "Kumar was area committee member of the Maoists' press team in Odisha. He is a resident of Narwana in Haryana and was staying under assumed identity in an area near Shimla in Himachal Pradesh. Jale, a resident of Gadchiroli, was also part of the same press team in the eastern state and was staying in HP," the official said. "They surrendered in front of officials of Gadchiroli police and CRPF. Kumar has worked for the Jagrut Chatra Morcha and was recruited in the Maad area press team in 2006. He was living in HP under a fake name since 2018 along with Jale.

BRS calls for statewide..

Continued from page 1

the Rythu Bharosa scheme during the rainy season.

KTR's comments came after Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao announced that the aid would be given only after a cabinet sub-committee submits its report. Lashing out at Tummala, KTR said that this announcement denies farmers help during the agricultural season and described it as a clear betrayal of Telangana's farmers. KTR called for state-wide protests in all mandal centres on Sunday and urged BRS activists to protest against the Congress government's anti-farmer stance.

He asked BRS workers to spread awareness among the public about the government's ploy to scrap the Rythu Bandhu scheme and accused it of hiding behind the formation of a sub-committee and issuing new guidelines as excuses for inaction. KTR warned that the BRS would

not tolerate any injustice towards farmers and emphasised the need to immediately credit Rythu Bharosa payments to farmers' accounts.

Recalling former Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu's warnings, KTR reminded people that KCR had predicted that Congress would scrap Rythu Bandhu if it came to power. "Revanth Reddy's government has now proven this true by denying aid to farmers during the rainy season," KTR said.

He criticized the Congress government for failing to uphold its pre-election promises, which included offering Rs 15,000 per acre to farmers, providing financial assistance to tenant farmers and agricultural labourers and paying a bonus of Rs 500 for paddy. KTR expressed outrage over the Congress government's inability to fund the Rythu Bharosa scheme while allocating Rs 1.5 lakh crore for beautifying the Musi River area.

BC panel holds crucial..

Continued from page 1

elections. The primary focus of the meeting was on using caste survey data as a basis for determining reservations for BC communities in the upcoming elections. Intellectuals emphasized the need to align reservations with the actual population of BCs, ensuring that decisions are legally robust. They suggested that the government must conduct an extensive awareness campaign to educate the public about the importance of accurate information during the survey.

This includes informing citizens about the data collection process, the role of enumerators and the questionnaire, highlighting the significance of participation to ensure fair representation in reservations. The intellectuals underscored the necessity of being

cautious at every stage of the study to withstand legal scrutiny, citing that proper safeguards need to be put in place.

G. Niranjan, Chairman of the Telangana BC Commission, assured the attendees that the Commission will move forward by incorporating their suggestions. He said, "We are committed to ensuring that the recommendations of the intellectuals are carefully considered while determining reservation structure."

Several prominent figures attended the meeting like government advisor K. Keshav Rao, former MP V. Hanumantha Rao, Justice Chandra Kumar, retired IAS officer Chiranjeevi, Dr P. Vinay Kumar, Professor K. Murali Manohar, Professor I. Thirumali, Professor Simhadri and TPCC Intellectual Cell President M. Shyam Mohan.

No timeline on Ukraine war, says Putin; appreciates Modi's concern

PNS ■ MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday said it is difficult to specify a timeline for ending the prolonged war in Ukraine but asserted that his country will win, as he appreciated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's concern over the situation.

Days ahead of the 16th BRICS Summit to be hosted by him, Putin also endorsed Modi's description of the grouping, saying the Indian leader had "aptly" noted that it is "not an anti-western one but a non-western one".

He also made it clear the grouping, which has since been expanded from five initial members to include five more countries, should not be seen as a "bloc style organisation".

Modi is due to visit Kazan to attend the summit on October 22-23. At an interaction with senior Editors from BRICS countries at his official residence Novo-Ogaryovo, about 50 km from Moscow, the Russian leader also indicated he could discuss giving Indian movies another boost when he meets Modi.

Asked by PTI whether he saw a role for India in negotiating peace between Russia and Ukraine, he referred to the concern expressed by Modi, whom he described as a "friend". He said Russia was "grateful" for this. Modi had told Putin on phone on August 27 that he backed an early, peaceful resolution to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, days after he held talks with Ukraine President Volodymyr



Modi had told Putin on phone on August 27 that he backed an early, peaceful resolution to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, days after he held talks with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv. He had also visited Moscow in July. In his remarks on September 5, Putin had identified India, China and Brazil as the countries with which Russia was in touch to resolve the Ukraine conflict.

Zelenskyy in Kyiv. He had also visited Moscow in July. In his remarks on September 5, Putin had identified India, China and Brazil as the countries with which Russia was in touch to resolve the Ukraine conflict. Putin on Friday said setting a timeline on ending the war will be "counterproductive." The Russia-Ukraine conflict erupted in February 2022.

He blamed the US and NATO for pushing Russia into the war, and said his country will prevail. He added that the Ukraine army, on its own cannot handle precision weapon delivery systems. "It is all done

by NATO professionals. But you know what the difference is? NATO is waging a war against us...." He said the Russian army has become one of the most combat effective and high-tech armies in the world, and NATO will get tired of "waging this war against us".

"We will have the upper hand. We'll prevail," he said through an interpreter at the media interaction. The Russian leader expressed his willingness to negotiate peace and accused Ukraine of backing out from earlier efforts.

Besides India and Russia, the

BRICS also has China, South Africa and Brazil. The grouping represents 24 per cent of the global GDP and 41 per cent of the world's population and positions itself as an economic counterweight to the West.

The latest five entrants to the grouping are Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Putin said the doors of BRICS were not closed to new members, and as the grouping develops even the non-member countries will benefit economically. The Russian leader said what sets this group apart from others is that BRICS was never meant to be against anyone. "The Indian prime minister put it aptly. Of late, he has said that BRICS is not an anti-Western one but a non-Western one" he said.

On other issues, Putin accused the US of trying to stem development in China. "It's like telling the sun not to rise," he said.

He also accused the US of resorting to provocative actions in different regions and "literally dragging NATO like puppies into Asia like an angry big person". The US is galvanising its allies like Australia to provide additional points of tension, he added.

To a question on BRICS having a common currency, Putin said it is moving "slowly and cautiously" on this front.

Answering another question by PTI, he said Indian movies were very popular in Russia and indicated giving another boost to the sector when he meets Modi next week.

Rahul accuses BJP of controlling EC, CBI, ED

PNS ■ RANCHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday claimed that the Constitution is "under attack" by the BJP as he accused the saffron party of controlling institutions such as the Election Commission, bureaucracy and central agencies.

He also said no force can stop the caste census and removal of the 50 per cent cap on the reservation. "The Constitution is under constant attack from all sides, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, and it needs to be protected," Gandhi alleged while addressing 'Samvidhan Samman Sammelan' in Ranchi ahead of the Jharkhand Assembly polls.

In a no-hold-bar attack, he accused the BJP of "controlling the Election Commission, Central Bureau of Investigation



(CBI), Enforcement Directorate (ED), income tax department, bureaucracy and judiciary".

"The BJP also controls funds and institutions but we possess honesty. The Congress fought the Lok Sabha elections without money," he claimed. Gandhi said the caste census is a "medium for getting social X-ray but PM Modi is opposed to this". "However, no force can stop caste census, institutional survey and removal of 50 per cent cap on reservation despite no media, judiciary support," he said.

'Modi govt 'anti-farmer'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday accused the Narendra Modi government of being "anti-farmer" and alleged that neither is adequate procurement being done nor are farmers getting fair price for their produce. AICC general secretary Jairam Ramesh, in a post of X, alleged that the policies of the "non-biological prime minister" have been anti-farmer since he assumed power in 2014.

"Neither is adequate procurement taking place nor are farmers getting fair prices, nor is there any legal guarantee of MSP (minimum support



price)," Ramesh said, alleging that the "deception, fraud and cheating" done by this government with the farmers stand exposed. Congress' media coordinator Abhay Dubey alleged that the way the Modi government has "mistreated" farmers in the last 10 years, this has made it clear that "Narendra Modi is anti-farmer".

'Breast cancer rising among young women in India'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Breast cancer, a disease long associated with older age groups, has surged enormously in women aged below 50 in the last three decades, according to experts. Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer affecting women worldwide, as well as in India.

The recent data from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) showed that breast cancer accounted for 28.2 per cent of cancers in women. Celebrities like Sonali Bendre, Tahira Kashyap, and Mahima Chaudhry who battled breast cancer under 50 and overcame the deadly disease with treatments.

Dr Ashish Gupta, Chief of Medical Oncology at Unique Hospital Cancer Centre, who is spearheading the Cancer

Dr Ashish Gupta, Chief of Medical Oncology at Unique Hospital Cancer Centre, who is spearheading the Cancer Mukta Bharat Campaign in India, said "Cancer is no longer the disease of older adults. It is increasingly seen among women in the younger age group, majorly under 50." The early onset of breast cancer is majorly due to genes,



Mukta Bharat Campaign in India, said "Cancer is no longer the disease of older adults. It is increasingly seen among women in the younger age group, majorly under 50." The early onset of breast cancer is majorly due to genes,

lifestyle factors such as poor nutrition, consumption of highly ultra-processed foods and a completely sedentary lifestyle coupled with environmental pollutants, he said.

According to a recent study by Cancer Mukta Bharat

Foundation, cancer is affecting about 20 per cent of young people below the age of 40 in India and breast cancer cases account for 15 per cent of younger adults. The risk factors for early onset include genetic predisposition to

BRCA1 and BRCA2 gene mutations, obesity, excess sugar and processed food consumption, consistently high blood glucose and becoming insulin resistant, Dr Gupta said. The early detection and timely treatment of breast cancer significantly impact the lifespan of affected individuals. Making screening procedures better and more accessible is crucial, he said.

Gupta, an American board-certified Medical Oncologist said, "Early detection programmes, including breast cancer awareness and cost-effective screening, is a must to fight the rising cases of breast cancer in India".

He also assured that people should not panic once diagnosed with the disease as there are many advanced treatments available currently that

improve survival rates. Dr Vineet Nakra, Senior Radiation Oncologist at Max Hospital-New Delhi and Director of Lenus Oncology Institute, said, "Breast cancer is on the rise in younger women due to a gradual change in lifestyle choices including late childbearing, reduced breastfeeding and poor diet choices among urban population."

"With an increased focus on breast preservation and its importance cosmetically in the younger population, radiation therapy plays an essential role after a cancer diagnosis," he said. "Treatment for breast cancer includes surgery, chemotherapy, hormone therapy, targeted drug therapy, and immunotherapy. The treatment may vary depending on the stage and type of breast cancer," Dr Nakra stated.

KTR blasts..

Continued from page 1

"These candidates are the future officials of our state. Yet they are being dragged and beaten like animals which is distressing," KTR said.

He asked why Rahul Gandhi and Revanth Reddy, who had campaigned in Ashok Nagar before the elections, promising two lakh jobs within a year, are now ignoring the pleas of the Group-1 candidates. "The youth of Telangana are deeply frustrated at this betrayal by the Congress government," KTR said, adding that it reflects poorly on how the government plans to treat other sections in the state.

He called on the CM to respond immediately and start a dialogue with the protestors.

He also pointed out that a Supreme Court hearing on the matter is scheduled for Monday, and that BRS leaders had already filed a petition along with the students.

He criticized the government for acting "stubbornly and foolishly" by refusing to hold talks with the candidates and offer sensible reasons for their decisions. "If they have legitimate reasons for their stand, they should explain them to the candidates. If not, they should postpone the exams as requested," KTR demanded.

He cited a similar case in Madhya Pradesh where, after a court decision, exams were rescheduled, and said that Telangana could follow the same path. KTR also condemned the arrest of BRS

leaders RS Praveen, Srinivas Goud, Dasoju Sravan and MLA Mutha Gopal, who had joined the protests in solidarity with the hopefuls.

"Why is Revanth resorting to authoritarian tactics instead of engaging in discussions? Why are you trying to silence leaders by arresting them?" KTR asked and accused Revanth of protecting his ally, Bandi Sanjay Kumar of the BJP, with the CRPF while ignoring the voices of Telangana's youth.

In a direct jibe, KTR questioned Sanjay's qualifications, suggesting that Sanjay's involvement in discussions with the hopefuls was a farce. "Has Sanjay even studied for these exams? His expertise seems limited to leading question papers, not solving real issues," KTR quipped, insisting that the government should hold talks with the candidates instead of playing political games.

Stop protests, write..

Continued from page 1

"Do not believe in rumours or the opposition trying to create confusion. We have already completed the recruitment process, and courts have backed the government's procedure. Candidates should not miss the opportunity to take the mains exams," he said.

He said, "If recruitment is done as per GO 55, BC, SC, and ST candidates would be at a disadvantage. GO: 29 was introduced by the government to ensure justice for all. Please withdraw from protests and abandon misconceptions."

The Chief Minister also addressed the broader role of the

police in ensuring the state's security, applauding their dedication. He announced the establishment of the "Young India Police School" on 50 acres for the children of police personnel, which will begin operations next academic year.

The school, starting with grades five to eight, will eventually expand, aiming to become a prestigious institution. Revanth Reddy also urged the police to remain vigilant in combating drug trafficking and cybercrime, reiterating that no leniency would be shown to offenders.

He pointed out that the safety and security services provided by the police are essential for the

state's development and for attracting investments, particularly in Hyderabad, which continues to grow as an international city.

In his speech, Revanth remembered the sacrifices of police officers in the Telangana movement, specifically honouring Officer Kishitayya's legacy. He also promised that the government would resolve any challenges faced by the police department and emphasized the importance of maintaining the police force's integrity, as even small mistakes could reflect poorly on the government. MLAs Raja Singh, Ganesh, MLCs Balamuri Venkat, Rahamat Beg, and Hyderabad Collector Anudeep Durishetty were among the dignitaries present at the event.

Candidates protest..

Continued from page 1

the government to address several unresolved issues before the examination continues. In a letter addressed to Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari the candidates highlighted their concerns, starting with the request for an immediate postponement of the exam. They argued that the legal uncertainties and lack of clarity on key issues have caused significant damage and insisted that proceeding with the exam amidst these challenges would only worsen the emotional turmoil faced by hopefuls. A few months' delay, they stressed, is a reasonable request to ensure justice.

The second demand focuses on the need for clarity regarding study materials. Candidates have called on the government and the TSPSC to provide official guidelines on which materials, particularly Telugu Academy books, would be valid for the exam.

HYDRAA fear gripping..

Continued from page 1

media to damage the state's progress and the real estate business.

"They fear that their farmhouses will be razed. That's why they are opposing HYDRAA. Why do you fear if you have not illegally occupied water bodies and have not violated GOs," he said.

Pointing out that the government has not carried out any demolitions for the Musi Project, the CM said that BRS leaders are enacting dramas in the name of the Musi Project to save their farmhouses.

"Their concern is only to protect their assets. If they are concerned about the public, Harish and KTR should fight for the public after demolish-

ing their farmhouses. They are trying to protect their farmhouses by using the public as shields," he said.

The CM said there is no need for real estate firms to fear and assured that the government will stand by them.

He said the government is giving houses to Musi victims and helping women to launch businesses. The government is keeping Musi victims in its heart but BRS leaders are hitting their own hearts in despair, he said.

The CM said that once Harish Rao used to stand in front of his house to raise money for purchasing footwear. Harish must explain how he acquired funds to construct farmhouses, he added.

Police stop..

Continued from page 1

the aspirants standing atop a vehicle. Sanjay Kumar was bundled into a police vehicle and taken away. But, he later staged a dharna at the Ambedkar statue near the Secretariat. Noting that the High Court has already given its nod to conduct the exam, state DGP Jitender said the candidates can air their grievance democratically but should not cause inconvenience to public.

"With regard to Public Service Commission Examination, the High Court

has already allowed the exams. If anybody has grievance they can democratically do it... should not create problems and inconvenience to the general public... This is my appeal to all," he told reporters.

The aspirants, who held protests for the last several days, voiced their concerns over the schedule of the exam and the impact of certain Government Orders (GOs) on the recruitment process and reservation.

The police on Friday ceded the Group 1 aspirants, who held protests here seeking postponement of the Mains exam, scheduled to be held from October 21 to 27.

DURING HOLI, MY MOM PREPARES LOVELY PURAN POLIS, AND EVERYONE IN MY FAMILY MAKES AN EXCEPTION IN THEIR DIET PLAN TO INCLUDE THIS DELICIOUS FOOD ITEM!
— SONALI BENDRE

Rose Café A BLEND OF NOSTALGIA AND NEW CULINARY DELIGHTS

For anyone seeking a haven of timeless elegance and warmth, the newly opened *Rose Café* at Malviya Nagar's Eldeco Centre is a must-visit, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**



Nestled within the vibrant neighbourhood of Malviya Nagar, *Rose Café* has opened its doors at the Eldeco Centre, offering a delightful retreat from the hustle and bustle of the city. With its charming vintage-inspired interiors, welcoming atmosphere, and a menu that celebrates home-style cooking with a Mediterranean twist, this beloved *New Delhi* eatery continues to create a space where time slows down, and cherished memories are made. Founded in 2012 by the mother-daughter duo *Sarita* and *Tarini Ahuja*, *Rose Café* first began its journey in the serene bylanes of *Saidulajab*. Now, with its new location in *Malviya Nagar*, the café retains its timeless charm while introducing a fresh and airy space where patrons can

unwind. The high ceilings, chandeliers, floor-to-ceiling windows, and distressed furniture create an ambience that is both captivating and comforting. Hand-painted murals, petal-patterned floors, and custom-made furniture add unique touches that evoke a sense of nostalgia and renewal, making every visit feel like a step back in time, without losing the comfort of contemporary style. At the core of *Rose Café's* philosophy is *Sarita* and *Tarini's* passion for home-style cooking and crafting joyful dining experiences. Their aim is not just to offer meals, but to create moments where guests can relax, connect, and feel at ease. Whether it's a casual lunch, a romantic dinner, or an



all-day breakfast indulgence, the café's commitment to heartfelt hospitality ensures that every visit feels special. Even pets are welcomed with open arms, with the café's pet-friendly policy making it a perfect spot for furry companions to join in the fun. Owner *Sarita Ahuja* says, "Whether you're joining us for a quick bite, high tea, or a comforting dinner, we aim to make every visit special. We invite you to savour our home-style food, experience our hospitality, and become a part of our café's ongoing story." The café's décor also reflects the *Ahuja* family's personal history. Treasured knick-knacks passed down through generations are displayed thoughtfully throughout the space, blending seamlessly with more modern design elements to evoke the warmth of a familiar, lived-in home. This DIY ethos extends to the handcrafted details, from custom-designed chandeliers to hand-painted blackboards and rose accents, all contributing to the charm of the atmosphere. *Rose Café's* menu is a delightful blend of classic comfort foods and new culinary offerings. Alongside long-loved dishes such as *spaghetti* and *meatballs*, *skinny pizzas*, and *bangers* and *mash*, the new location introduces exciting additions with a Mediterranean twist. Diners can indulge in savoury *churros*, made with parmesan and truffle for an irresistible blend of flavours, or savour the richness of *sun-dried tomato* and *pesto cream ravioli* served with burnt butter, adding a luxurious touch to an already beloved pasta dish. For those craving a taste of Lebanese cuisine, there are options like *hummus*



platters paired with warm *pita*, *falafel wraps* bursting with fresh vegetables, and roasted vegetable salads dressed in light, fragrant olive oil and herbs. These Mediterranean-inspired dishes complement the café's classic favourites, inviting diners to explore a range of flavours that are both comforting and adventurous. Mediterranean and Lebanese cuisines are known for their fresh, vibrant flavours and healthy ingredients. Rooted in the use of olive oil, fresh herbs, grains, and legumes, these cuisines emphasise simplicity and the natural taste of ingredients. Lebanese dishes often include staples like *hummus*, *falafel*, *tabbouleh*, and *baba ghanoush*, with generous use of garlic, lemon, and



aromatic spices. Mediterranean food, more broadly, features an array of *grilled vegetables*, *seafood*, *flatbreads*, and *flavourful dips*. Together, they offer a rich culinary tradition that balances light, wholesome fare with bold, satisfying tastes. *Rose Café* brings these to the heart of Delhi with its own improvisations. The food is, of course, served with a smile by warm staff, complementing the warmth of the place. Though new in *Malviya Nagar*, it is creating a lot of interest among people who relish exotic food. The café's all-day breakfast menu ensures that early risers and brunch enthusiasts can indulge in delights like *berry compote-topped French toast* or *creamy scrambled eggs* served with artisanal breads. Sweet treats like the signature *lemon cake*, *homemade gelatos*, and *chocolate chip cookies* remain menu staples, offering a familiar taste of comfort to loyal patrons. At *Rose Café*, the dining experience extends beyond just a meal—it's a chance to savour the beauty of the surroundings and lose track of time in a space that feels like an extension of one's own home. The café caters to every kind of visit, be it a relaxed high tea, a cosy lunch, or a romantic dinner date. The airy, light-filled environment invites guests to linger, enjoy the view through the floor-to-ceiling windows, and soak in the café's elegant yet homely ambience. The combination of vintage charm, Mediterranean flavours, and thoughtful hospitality sets it apart as a place where the simple joys of life are celebrated over delicious meals and comforting surroundings. Whether you're revisiting an old favourite or experiencing the café for the first time, *Rose Café* offers a dining experience that leaves you feeling refreshed, connected, and truly at home.



INDIA'S LARGEST FOOD FESTIVAL

The Grub Fest, India's largest food festival, made a grand return to Delhi at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. With an exciting blend of culinary delights and live entertainment, this year's event offered food enthusiasts a memorable experience, celebrating the vibrant food culture of India, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

Delhi was alive with excitement as it welcomed *The Grub Fest*, India's largest food festival, back to the iconic Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. This year's festival promised a vibrant celebration of culinary diversity, live entertainment and community spirit, creating an unforgettable experience for food enthusiasts and families alike. Since its inception in 2015, *The Grub Fest* has evolved into a significant cultural phenomenon, expanding its reach across major cities, including Gurugram, Pune, Mumbai and Chandigarh. This year's edition proved to be the most ambitious yet, featuring over 100 stalls showcasing a diverse range of flavours from local street food to gourmet delights. Renowned restaurants such as *Indie Q&A*, *Perilicious*, and *Leos Pizzeria* participated, presenting an array of dishes that delighted the taste buds of festival-goers. As attendees entered the festival grounds, they were



enveloped in a magical atmosphere enhanced by stunning decor, cascading flowers, twinkling fairy lights and art installations inviting exploration and engagement. The vibrant layout of the stalls was complemented by intoxicating aromas wafting through the air, promising culinary adventures at every turn. Music played a vital role in the festival, with an impressive lineup of live performances that entertained the crowd. The rhythmic beats and melodic tunes encouraged festival-goers to dance and sing along, fully immersing themselves in the experience. Families found ample opportunity to relax and bond



in the dedicated Picnic Park, a serene space equipped with cozy seating and interactive games for children. Meanwhile, the Beer Garden catered to adults, providing a charming setting where craft beer enthusiasts could sip refreshing brews while enjoying the lively entertainment. The festival

also featured themed booths and a Ferris wheel, ensuring there was no shortage of photo-worthy moments. Aman Kumar, the visionary behind *The Grub Fest*, expressed his passion for curating exceptional experiences that celebrate the rich culinary heritage of Delhi. His commitment to showcasing the city's diverse food culture was evident in the meticulous planning and execution of the event. The festival was not just a gathering; it was a celebration of the community, where people from all walks of life came together to savour, connect and enjoy. In a noteworthy parallel to *The Grub Fest*, *AVA Experience* had taken place earlier at The Khyber Himalayan Resort & Spa in Gulmarg, Kashmir. Speaking about the vision for the event, Samir Sehgal, Co-Founder of *AVA Experience*, shared, "Our vision for *AVA Experience* is to redefine India's music festival landscape with house music in Kashmir, creating community-

led experiences." The event aimed to offer a unique fusion of music and scenic beauty, setting a new benchmark for music festivals in India. Both *The Grub Fest* and *AVA Experience* demonstrated a shift towards innovative and engaging events that went beyond traditional formats. They reflected a desire for meaningful experiences that resonated deeply with audiences, highlighting the power of food, music and community to create lasting memories. As *The Grub Fest* unfolded in Delhi, attendees were treated to a weekend filled with an extraordinary array of flavours, live performances and vibrant interactions. This celebration showcased the best of India's culinary scene and created a sense of unity and joy, reminding everyone of the simple pleasures of good food and shared moments. The event solidified its place as a hallmark of the city's cultural calendar, setting the stage for future festivities that promise to delight and inspire.

CHEERS TO CULINARY CHAMPS!



BY TEAM AGENDA

The Indian Culinary Forum (ICF) held its 21st Annual Chef Awards at Hotel Ashok, coinciding with International Chefs Day. This prestigious event gathered esteemed chefs and industry leaders to recognise the exceptional contributions of culinary artists who have significantly impacted Indian cuisine on a global scale. Among the distinguished guests was *Nakul Anand*, former Executive Director of ITC Hotels, who presented awards to the night's winners. The presence of influential figures like *Chef Davinder Kumar*, President of the ICF and *Chef Vivek Saggarr*, General Secretary, underscored the importance of the event in nurturing culinary talent. *Chef Kumar* expressed pride in showcasing the creativity and dedication of chefs, highlighting the event's role in inspiring future culinary professionals. This year's awards honoured 17 talented chefs across various categories, including the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award, which went to *Chef Sanjiv Mediratta*. Other winners included *Chef (Dr.) Gautam Chaudhry*, who received the Golden Hat Chef Award and *Chef Diwas Wadhwa*, who was awarded the Silver Hat Chef title. Such recognition



not only celebrates individual achievements but also enhances the reputation of Indian cuisine, motivating chefs to pursue excellence in their craft.

The event was marked by a spirit of camaraderie and competition, with 150 chefs participating in rigorous culinary challenges leading up to the awards. The ICF continues to play a vital role in promoting the culinary arts in India, offering a platform for chefs to connect, learn and innovate. As the evening concluded, it was clear that the 21st Annual Chef Awards not only celebrated culinary excellence but also reinforced the community's commitment to elevating Indian cuisine on the world stage.

Photos: Pankaj Kumar



SAFEGUARDING 'UNPROTECTED' CULTURAL HERITAGE AND INTACH

India's unprotected cultural heritage is vast and diverse, requiring active public participation for its preservation. Community engagement ensures the relevance and sustainability of these cultural assets

BY SUKHDEV SINGH

India, being a vast country with diverse populations, topography, and climate, and consequently, a rich cultural heritage, requires the active participation of its people to safeguard this heritage in various ways. Firstly, as genuine stakeholders, people should take ownership of it. Secondly, with public involvement, cultural heritage gains relevance in people's lives and becomes integrated into their everyday use and socio-economic activities. Thirdly, community participation ensures cost-effective and sustainable conservation. Lastly, it encourages local and authentic craftsmanship in its preservation, enriching the process with diverse knowledge resources based on geographical, cultural, linguistic, and religious variations.

Considering the immense diversity and long, disparate historical timeline that has shaped India's cultural imprints, its natural and human heritage cannot be confined to what is protected by the Central and State governments under the AMASR Act of 1958 (amended in 2010). The act provides for the protection and preservation of structures and sites of monumental value that are over 100 years old. These structures are primarily owned by the government and are preserved as abandoned monuments. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) oversees the care and conservation of monuments, sites, and remains of national importance, while State Departments of Archaeology and Museums manage monuments of state (regional) significance. Other structures are regulated under the Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972 (Rules 1973).

However, the scope of these acts is limited and costly. As a result, much of India's vast cultural heritage, which is under threat from pressures other than natural decay, remains unprotected. Since the UNESCO 1972 World Heritage Convention, the understanding of cultural heritage has evolved significantly. It now includes a broader, people-centred approach, recognising that cultural heritage is not only about grand monuments but also encompasses everyday structures, such as common houses, shops, and other ordinary buildings, as well as the living traditions and environments that shape communities.

These cultural legacies, which form 'cultural landscapes' in the streets, markets, and avenues of old townships, are as valuable as monumental heritage but remain unprotected by any legal provisions and are under constant threat from insensitive urbanisation, modernisation, and development policies. Several initiatives have been introduced to safeguard this unprotected cultural heritage. These include the listing of sites, buildings, objects, and intangible systems for record, research, and conservation purposes; heritage walks to raise awareness and connect people to their own and others' cultural heritage; and heritage regulations by state governments and local bodies to create some legal provisions for safeguarding unprotected heritage. Listings serve as inventories for the identification, advocacy, and preservation of unprotected cultural heritage. These inventories



“ THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA (ASI) OVERSEES THE CARE AND CONSERVATION OF MONUMENTS, SITES, AND REMAINS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE, WHILE STATE DEPARTMENTS OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND MUSEUMS MANAGE MONUMENTS OF STATE (REGIONAL) SIGNIFICANCE. OTHER STRUCTURES ARE REGULATED UNDER THE ANTIQUITIES AND ART TREASURE ACT, 1972 (RULES 1973) ”

can together form a National Register of Historic Properties for research and conservation action. Listed buildings may be graded and classified as Grade A, B, or C in descending order of importance, guiding decisions about conservation. Additionally, in modern cities, old townships displaying their existing architecture can be designated as 'Cultural Landscapes' or 'Heritage Zones,' requiring sensitive planning within routine or comprehensive development initiatives. These landscapes can also be listed in the Master Plans of cities. To regulate development in such zones, state and local governments can pass heritage regulations that control interventions involving the modification of unprotected historical or old buildings and sites. To engage people with their cultural heritage,

heritage walks can offer a meaningful path forward. These walks could be made more popular by improving civic amenities and enhancing the visual appeal of heritage areas by reducing the clutter of advertising boards, electric and internet cables, and satellite dish wiring. Heritage walks and conservation projects would also boost the local economy by generating employment in crafts, local shops, and the service sector. This concept of 'living heritage' holds a symbiotic relationship with its architectural and natural surroundings. While protected monuments and archaeological sites must be conserved with minimal intervention as pure and true testaments to the past, other significant architectural structures and sites can be preserved with more flexible interventions, reclaiming

their meaning, relevance, and role as markers of the past within the present. In this way, the 'past' and 'present' are not seen as separate entities but as part of a continuous, evolving timeline. This approach supports 'living heritage' models in the form of heritage lanes, heritage trails, or zones of individual heritage structures. Separating cultural heritage from nature is impractical and artificial, as human culture depends on nature—not only using its elements, such as sand, soil, metals, and plants, but also incorporating natural systems, designs, and processes, like altering materials, colouring them, and varying patterns. This understanding of cultural heritage recognises its continuity and relevance through systemic arrangements. Established in 1984, the Indian

National Trust for Art & Cultural Heritage (INTACH) has developed into a think tank and practical resource for the protection of unprotected cultural heritage. INTACH is tasked with engaging the people of India in this effort by enrolling citizens as members while also engaging skilled human resources. INTACH has been cataloguing buildings over 50 years old that have architectural, historical, archaeological, or aesthetic value, organising heritage walks, and advocating for heritage regulations. It works in partnership with other organisations and individuals, complementing rather than competing with them.

Professor (Retd) SUKHDEV SINGH
Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar
Vice-Chairman, Indian National Trust for Art & Cultural Heritage, New Delhi

IN BRIEF



UCO Bank posts 50 pc jump in net profit

State-owned UCO Bank on Saturday posted a 50 per cent jump in net profit to Rs 603 crore in the September quarter, helped by improvement in interest income. The lender had recorded a net profit of Rs 402 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Total income increased to Rs 7,071 crore during the quarter under review from Rs 5,866 crore in the same period last year, UCO Bank said in a regulatory filing. The bank earned an interest income of Rs 6,078 crore during the quarter compared to Rs 5,219 crore in the same period a year ago. Net interest income improved to Rs 2,301 crore, from Rs 1,917 crore in the year-ago period, registering a 20 per cent growth. At the same time, Net interest margin rose to 3.10 per cent from 2.84 per cent at the end of the second quarter of the previous financial year. Commenting on quarterly numbers, UCO Bank Managing Director and CEO Ashwani Kumar said the bank expects to continue the momentum.



Vedanta to invest over Rs 1 lakh cr in Rajasthan

Vedanta on Saturday said it will pump in over Rs 1 lakh crore in Rajasthan across different business verticals, including, zinc and oil and gas. While Hindustan Zinc, a Vedanta group firm, will invest Rs 30,000 crore to double zinc capacity from 1.2 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) to 2 MTPA, silver from 800 tonne to 2,000 tonne, and set up a one MTPA fertiliser plant, Cairn Oil & Gas, a subsidiary of Vedanta Ltd, will invest Rs 35,000 crore to augment capacity to 3 lakh barrels per day, the company said. Vedanta Group entity Serentica Renewables will invest Rs 50,000 crore to develop 10,000 MW renewable power capacity to support the investments, help energy transition and ensure highest environmental standards and green manufacturing, the company said in a statement. Vedanta also announced setting up of an industrial park around the Udaipur area on a non-profit basis, for small and medium scale industries from Rs 5 crore onwards.



Abhyuday Jindal assumes charge as ICC president

Abhyuday Jindal, the Managing Director of Jindal Stainless, has been appointed as president of industry body Indian Chamber of Commerce. Jindal succeeds Ameya Prabhu, the Managing Director of NAFA Capital, whose tenure as ICC President ended October 18, the chamber said in a statement on Saturday. "I aim to promote sustainable business practices, foster inclusive growth, and advocate for policies that empower Indian industries globally. Together, we will build a stronger, more resilient economy supporting India's ambition to become a USD 35 trillion economy by 2047," Jindal said, while addressing the gathering that included industry leaders and government representatives. Union Minister Piyush Goyal was also present at the event. Jindal is a graduate in economics and business management from Boston University.

GST on elders health insurance premiums may be exempted

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Term life insurance policies, and senior citizens' health insurance premium are likely to be exempted from GST as most members of a state ministerial panel favoured cutting taxes to benefit the common man, an official said on Saturday.

The GoM to decide on GST on health and life insurance premiums in its meeting on Saturday decided to exempt GST on premiums paid by individuals, other than senior citizens, for health insurance with coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh. However, 18 per cent GST will continue to be levied for health insurance cover of over Rs 5 lakh.

Separately, the GoM on GST rate rationalisation, too, met on Saturday and suggested that the GST Council rejig tax rates on a host of goods, including packaged drinking water, bicycles, exercise notebooks, luxury wrist watches, and shoes.

A final decision on GST on health and life insurance premiums, as well as rate rationalisation, is likely to be taken by the GST Council, chaired by Union Finance Minister and comprising state counterparts, in its meeting scheduled to take place next month.

The rate rejig exercise will help the states and Centre to realise revenue gain of Rs 22,000 crore, which will help cover the

Luxury watches, shoes to draw 28 pc



A final decision on GST on health and life insurance premiums, as well as rate rationalisation, is likely to be taken by the GST Council, chaired by Union Finance Minister and comprising state counterparts, in its meeting scheduled to take place next month

revenue loss from reduction in GST rates for insurance premiums," the official added.

The GoM on rate rationalisation proposed reducing GST on packaged drinking water of 20 litre and above to 5 per cent from 18 per cent. If the GoM's recommendation is accepted by the GST council, GST on bicycles costing less than Rs 10,000 will be reduced to 5 per cent from 12 per cent.

Also, GST on exercise notebooks will be reduced to 5 per cent from 12 per cent. The GoM also proposed hiking GST on shoes above Rs 15,000/pair from 18 per cent to 28 per cent. It also proposed hiking GST on wrist watches above Rs 25,000 from 18 per cent to 28 per cent.

Talking to reporters after the GoM meetings, Bihar Deputy

Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary, who is the convener of the health and life insurance GoM, said "every GoM member wants to give relief to people. Special focus will be on senior citizens. We will submit a report to the Council. A final decision will be taken by the Council".

Chaudhary, who is also a convener of the GoM on rate rationalisation, said the panel will meet again before submitting its report to the Council. This was the first meeting of the 13-member GoM health and life insurance premiums, which was set up to last month to suggest tax rates.

The panel, which includes ministers from Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat,

Meghalaya, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana, has been mandated to submit its report to the GST Council by October-end.

In 2023-24, the Centre and states collected Rs 8,262.94 crore through GST on health insurance premium, while Rs 1,484.36 crore was collected on account of GST on health reinsurance premium.

The six-member Group of Ministers (GoM) on GST rate rationalisation includes Uttar Pradesh Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna, Rajasthan Health Services Minister Gajendra Singh, Karnataka Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda, West Bengal Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya, and Kerala Finance Minister K N Balagopal.



India's road infra will surpass America's: Gadkari

PNS ■ BHOPAL

Union minister Nitin Gadkari on Saturday asserted that India's road infrastructure will be better than that of America in the coming time, underscoring that efficient highways, waterways and railways can lower logistics costs and boost the economy.

He also took potshots at consultants making detailed project reports (DPR) for roads, saying they prepare this document by sitting at home.

The Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways was addressing the inaugural session of a two-day seminar in Bhopal on 'Latest emerging trends and technologies in road and bridge construction'.

Gadkari recalled that when he was a minister in Maharashtra, he had a quote by former US President John F Kennedy in his office: "American roads are not good because America is rich, but

America is rich because American roads are good."

The senior BJP leader said his friend Ratan Tata, who died earlier this month, had asked him several times about the quote during his visits to the minister's office.

"In the coming time, Indian road infrastructure will be even better than that of America. We will do it," Gadkari said. He told the participants of the seminar that they could bring about this change.

Sharing his experience of a helicopter survey of the Bangalore-Chennai highway, Gadkari said he noticed three to four "big towers" coming in the way of the highway's alignment and was told that it would cost Rs 300-400 crore to remove them.

Gadkari said he told an official that the towers could have been avoided during the highway's construction, thus saving the cost of their removal.



Afcons Infra plans to raise up to Rs 5,430 cr through IPO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shapoorji Pallonji group firm Afcons Infrastructure Ltd will hit the capital market on October 25 to raise up to Rs 5,430 crore from its initial public offering (IPO).

The public issue comprises fresh shares as well as offer for sale (OFS) by the promoter. The issue will close on October 29.

According to a red herring prospectus (RHP) filed with Sebi, Afcons Infrastructure Ltd plans to raise up to Rs 5,430 crore through the IPO.

Of this, the fresh issue of equity shares is up to Rs 1,250 crore and the offer for sale (OFS) up to Rs 4,180 crore.

The proceeds from the OFS will be received by the selling shareholder and Afcons will not receive any proceeds from it.

Goswami Infratech Pvt Ltd, a promoter group company, is selling shares through OFS.

Of the total proceeds from the fresh issue of shares, Afcons Infrastructure has proposed to use Rs 80 crore for capital expenditure towards purchase of construction equipment.

It will use Rs 320 crore towards funding long-term working capital requirements.

Around Rs 600 crore will be used for prepayment or scheduled repayment of a portion of

certain outstanding borrowings. The remaining funds will be for general corporate purposes.

Afcons Infrastructure is the flagship infrastructure, engineering and construction company of the Shapoorji Pallonji group -- a diversified Indian conglomerate -- and has a legacy of over six decades.

"We have a strong track record of executing numerous complex, challenging and unique engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) projects both within India and internationally," the RHP said.

During the period comprising the last 11 financial years and the three-month period ended June 30, 2024, Afcons has completed 79 projects across 17 countries with a total historic executed contract value of Rs 56,305 crore.

As of June 30, 2024, Afcons had 65 active projects (ongoing projects) across 12 countries, aggregating to an order book of Rs 31,747 crore.

Afcons projects cover five major infrastructure business verticals.

These include marine and industrial, covering ports, and harbour jetties, dry docks, wet basins, breakwaters, outfall and intake structures, liquefied natural gas tanks and material handling systems.

India seeks critical minerals partnership agreement with US

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday said India has proposed a critical minerals partnership agreement (CMPA) with the US, that will help domestic firms in the sector such as electric vehicles to get certain benefits in the American market.

The issue was raised by India during a recent visit of the minister to the US earlier this month.

During the visit, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance cooperation in critical mineral supply chain.

Critical minerals, such as cobalt, copper, lithium, nickel and rare earths, play a crucial role in the production of clean energy technologies, from wind turbines to electric cars. Such minerals are in demand for the production of batteries for electric cars.



"I have suggested that our critical minerals MoU should be converted to a critical minerals partnership agreement and become a beginning point to go towards a free trade agreement. But as we are all aware, the US Congress is not very enthusiastic about FTA with any country," Goyal told reporters here.

Last year, the US and Japan signed a critical minerals agreement. A critical minerals partnership agreement between India and the US will help Indian firms in the sector to enjoy duty concessions and other benefits to sell products

from the sector in the American market.

These benefits are provided by the US under its Inflation Reduction Act, which is aimed at boosting manufacturing capabilities. The benefits are extended to American firms or a firm in the country having FTA with the US.

The CMPA is like an FTA in the critical minerals sector.

An official said the conversion of the MoU into a partnership agreement will give it the status of a trade deal, thereby enabling India to benefit from the electric vehicle tax credit that the US gives under its Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

Goyal also said during his visit, the US industry showed keen interest to increase investments in India in different sectors. Without disclosing name, he said a firm is looking at investments in the range of USD 10 billion in areas such as data centres and quantum computing for AI.

Biotech startup to boost air purifier biz growth

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IIT Ropar-backed biotech startup uBreathe looks to raise Rs 24 crore in a fresh round of funding, the company said on Saturday. The funds will be raised to support the growth and expansion its air purifier products portfolio, uBreathe, which has locally developed six purifier products so far, according to a statement.

uBreathe recently completed a pre-seed funding round of close to Rs 1.5 crore, welcoming IIT Ropar, US-based VC Galaxy Fund, and notable investors like Namita Thapar, and Gajendra (Cars24 co-founder) among others as angel investors.

The startup claims to have sold more than 5,000 units across 15 cities so far and has also unveiled its latest product, uBreathe Life, recently. The plant-based air purifier has been developed in collaboration with Ugaoo, a leader in plant care.

DGCA chief Vikram appointed coal secretary

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Aviation regulator DGCA chief Vikram Dev Dutt has been appointed as coal secretary, Ministry of Coal, according to a Personnel Ministry order.

Senior bureaucrat V Umashankar has been appointed as secretary, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Umashankar, a 1993 batch IAS officer, is presently working in his cadre state Haryana.

Tanmay Kumar has been named as secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

appointment of Dutt, Director General of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) as secretary, Ministry of Coal, according to a Personnel Ministry order.

Senior bureaucrat V Umashankar has been appointed as secretary, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Umashankar, a 1993 batch IAS officer, is presently working in his cadre state Haryana.

Tanmay Kumar has been named as secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

HDFC Bank net up 6%; aims to grow faster

PNS ■ MUMBAI

HDFC Bank on Saturday reported a 6 per cent increase in September quarter net profit to Rs 17,825.91 crore on a consolidated basis.

On a standalone basis, the largest private sector lender's post-tax

net grew to Rs 16,820.97 crore during the reporting period, against Rs 15,976.11 crore in the year-ago period. Its core net interest income grew 10 per cent to Rs 30,010 crore on the back of a 7 per cent increase in gross advances and the margins being stable at 3.46 per cent.

Govt eyes record rabi output

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Saturday said it was confident of achieving record foodgrain production in the 2024-25 rabi season despite fertiliser shipment delays, citing favourable soil moisture conditions and adequate water levels in reservoirs.

Speaking at a national conference here, Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said there was sufficient availability of key fertilisers such as urea and diammonium phosphate (DAP) despite delay in shipments due to geopolitical tensions.

"The shipments are delayed... However, there is no shortage of fertilisers. We have made arrangements and there is

Says fertiliser supply adequate



enough supply for the rabi season," Chouhan said.

The ministry has set a foodgrain production target of 164.55 lakh tonne for the 2024-25 rabi season, including 115 lakh tonne of wheat and 18.15

lakh tonne of pulses.

Sowing of rabi (winter) crops has started and will pick up pace post-Diwali.

Fertiliser Secretary Rajat Kumar Mishra said India is re-routing DAP shipments from Morocco via South Africa after Red Sea routes were disrupted, adding 21 days to delivery times to western ports.

India imports about 60 per cent of its 5.5 million tonnes of DAP demand for the rabi season from Russia, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and China, Mishra said.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)

Director General Himanshu Pathak expressed optimism about the upcoming season.

"Looking at the water level in reservoirs, IMD forecast and soil moisture, a record production is expected in the rabi season of this year," he said.

Pathak advocated for the adoption of climate-resilient and bio-fortified seeds, highlighting that about 70 per cent of wheat cultivation last year utilised such varieties, which significantly contributed to a bumper crop.

Agriculture Secretary Devesh Chaturvedi emphasised the need to increase area under gram cultivation, noting that production remained lower in the past two years, necessitating imports.

Odisha to usher in new era of industrial development: Majhi

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Saturday said his government is fully committed to ushering in a new era of industrial development and asked industrialists to invest in the state.

Odisha is poised to become a modern hub of industrial and economic activity, Majhi said while addressing industry leaders at a session of "Investment Opportunity in Odisha" in Mumbai.

"I am proud to declare that Odisha, India's best-kept secret, is now ready to be explored," Majhi said, according to an official release issued by the Odisha CMO.

The state plans similar con-

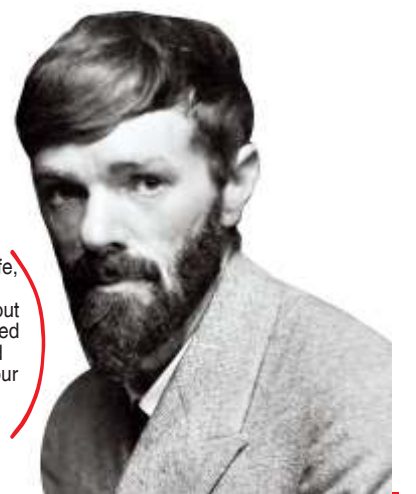
ferences and road shows in Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Europe and Singapore to attract Rs 5 lakh crore investments for Odisha in the next five years.

He highlighted Odisha's high GDP growth and the advantages of its geographical location, natural resources, coastline, infrastructure and ports.

"The state plans to hold its 'Utkarsh Odisha - Make in Odisha Conclave 2025', scheduled for January 28-29, 2025, in Bhubaneswar.

Majhi said Odisha enjoys the active cooperation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his 'Purvodaya Yojana' for the resurgence of Eastern India.

"Love is the flower of life,
and blossoms
unexpectedly and without
law, and must be plucked
where it is found, and
enjoyed for the brief hour
of its duration"
—DH Lawrence



A SYMPHONY OF BLOSSOMS IN THE HIMALAYAS

PHOTO: SATISH JAKHMOLA

A journey to the Valley of Flowers is nothing short of a magical experience. It overwhelms and rejuvenates like no other place on the planet, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

During the last rainy season, I packed my bags to venture into a rather unexplored destination, a hidden gem – the *Valley of Flowers*. Nestled in the heart of the western Himalayas, it is a vibrant tapestry of natural beauty and a haven for nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers. This UNESCO World Heritage Site, located in Uttarakhand, India, is renowned for its breathtaking landscapes, diverse flora, and serene ambience. My trip to this enchanting valley was nothing short of magical, filled with memorable anecdotes that made the journey truly unique.

However, it is not for the faint-hearted or those accustomed to leisurely travel. From the very start, you must brace yourself for adventure at every turn. From the food to the transport to accommodation, everything has a distinct local flavour. You quickly get to know the place and its people as you go. If you are visiting during the rainy season, which is the best time, be prepared for landslides, traffic jams, packed hotels, and sudden downpours that begin and stop at will. A raincoat comes in handy; an umbrella, however, flies away.

The journey to the *Valley of Flowers* began in Rishikesh, a bustling town known for its spiritual significance and adventure activities. After a night of rest, we set off early in the morning, winding our way through the scenic roads that led us to the small village of Govindghat. The drive itself was a prelude to the beauty that awaited us, with the Alaknanda River accompanying us on one side and towering mountains on the other. From Govindghat, we embarked on a 13-kilometre trek to Ghangaria, the base camp for the *Valley of Flowers*. The trail was a blend of steep ascents, gentle slopes, and narrow pathways, each offering a unique view of the surrounding landscapes. Along the way, we encountered cheerful pilgrims heading to Hemkund Sahib, a sacred Sikh shrine situated nearby. One particular moment that stood out during the trek was a sudden downpour. As we took shelter under a large rock, a local guide shared tales of how the valley transforms with each season, painting vivid pictures of snow-covered landscapes in winter and vibrant blossoms in summer. His stories, combined with the rhythmic sound of raindrops, added a mystical charm to our journey. Reaching Ghangaria, we spent the night at the Gurudwara, preparing ourselves for the main highlight of the trip. It is a



NESTLED IN THE HEART OF THE WESTERN HIMALAYAS, IT IS A VIBRANT TAPESTRY OF NATURAL BEAUTY AND A HAVEN FOR NATURE ENTHUSIASTS AND ADVENTURE SEEKERS. THIS UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE, LOCATED IN UTTARAKHAND, INDIA, IS RENOWNED FOR ITS BREATHTAKING LANDSCAPES, DIVERSE FLORA, AND SERENE AMBIENCE



beautiful and humbling place where most travellers to the *Valley of Flowers* or Hemkund Sahib take rest. The hotels in town are modest and almost fully booked during the season. The next morning, we began the 4-kilometre trek to the *Valley of Flowers*. Some paperwork needs to be completed, and certain precautions must be taken, as everyone is required to return on the same day. There are no resting places, not even a tea shack, in the valley. As we entered the valley, the sight that greeted us was nothing short of spectacular. A vast expanse of colourful flowers stretched out before us, with hues of red, blue, yellow, and pink creating a natural mosaic. Walking through the valley, we encountered a variety of flowers, each with its own unique charm. From the delicate Brahma Kamal to the vibrant Blue Poppy, the valley was a botanist's dream. One of the most memorable moments was when we stumbled upon a group of rare Himalayan Monal pheasants, their iridescent feathers glistening in the sunlight. While the flowers were undoubtedly the stars of the valley, the fauna added an element of surprise and delight. We spotted a herd of Bharal, or blue sheep, grazing on a distant slope. Their graceful movements, against the backdrop of snow-capped peaks, created a postcard-worthy scene. Taking a break by a bubbling brook, we enjoyed a simple picnic of sandwiches and fruit. The sheer tranquility of the place, with only the sound of the water and occasional bird calls, made it a perfect spot for reflection. In that moment of quietude, I truly appreciated the untouched beauty of the *Valley of Flowers*. As we made our way back to Ghangaria and eventually to Govindghat, I couldn't help but feel a deep sense of gratitude for the experience. The *Valley of Flowers* is not just a destination; it's a journey that immerses you in nature's splendour and leaves you with



memories that last a lifetime. The camaraderie with fellow trekkers, the tales of local guides, and the sheer beauty of the landscape all contribute to making it a one-of-a-kind adventure. The *Valley of Flowers* serves as a reminder of the incredible diversity and beauty that our planet holds. It calls us to explore, appreciate, and preserve these natural wonders for future

generations. If you ever find yourself yearning for an escape into nature's embrace, the *Valley of Flowers* awaits, ready to enchant and inspire. As I left from the Valley of Flowers, I realised it wasn't just the destination that left a lasting impression, but the journey itself, each step revealing nature's unspoiled beauty. It's a place that calls adventurers to return, with new tales waiting to be discovered on every visit.

'FORK'LORE

'NO'HO OTHER PLACE LIKE THIS!

AARTI SREENATH
aarti.sreenath9@gmail.com

Tucked away in Hyderabad's Jubilee Hills, Noho is a slice of progressive Asian elegance where food isn't just served; it is performed. Walking in, the first thing that hits you is the mysterious ambience, a tad moody, with its dark entrance offset by swings (yes, swings!) and partitioned greenery.

As you step through the intriguing entrance, you're immediately enveloped in an atmosphere that dances between elegance and playful intimacy. The entrance is dimly lit, creating an air of mystery, while the swings that dangle whimsically invite you to relax and indulge. Lush greenery frames the space, offering a refreshing touch of nature that softens the modern décor. Inside, the design is a feast for the eyes. Rich hues of deep red and shades of wine dominate the walls, complemented by copper-gold panels that glimmer softly in the ambient light. Floor-to-ceiling abacus-styled grills create a sense of enclosure while simultaneously inviting curiosity, echoing the intricate craftsmanship of Asian architecture.

As you navigate through the restaurant, large, striking installations, such as a metallic tree and dramatic light fixtures, serve as stunning backdrops for your dining experience, perfect for capturing those Instagram-worthy moments. Each dining area feels uniquely curated, with private seating arrangements that enhance intimacy, making it ideal for romantic dinners or lively gatherings. The overall vibe effortlessly transitions from a relaxed lunchtime ambience to a sophisticated evening setting, with the terrace bar providing a breezy escape to enjoy Hyderabad's enchanting nights.

As you settle into your seat, the luxurious yet comfortable atmosphere invites you to immerse yourself fully in the culinary journey that awaits, where every detail, from the decor to the cuisine, is designed to elevate your dining experience to new heights.

As the menu unfolds, it felt like a love letter to the Silk Road—each dish a postcard from a different stop on the map. From Vietnam to Burma, Japan to Korea, the offerings are as eclectic as they are exquisite. A symphony of



flavourful bites where creativity meets tradition and every plate dares you to explore.

The Tan Tan Ramen stole my heart—a bowl of silky sesame broth cradling minced chicken, bok choy and shimeji mushrooms, finished with a soy egg that practically winked at me from across the table. I'm not saying it's the ramen to end all ramen, but it comes pretty darn close.

Their Pho? A delicate dance of star anise and tofu in a clear broth that's as light as a summer breeze and as comforting as a winter's night. And if you're up for something slightly left of center, the Yamasaki Roll, a bizarre yet delightful combination of takuan, brie, avocado salsa, and panko, will have you questioning why this isn't the sushi standard everywhere.

Then, there's the Japanese Cheesecake, an ethereal cloud draped in matcha dust, the final curtain call of a meal that's more theatre than mere dining. Between the artisanal appetizers and the live robata grill sizzling away in the corner, Noho strikes the perfect balance of daring innovation without forsaking tradition. Pair it all with cocktails that pay tribute to the Silk Route (yes, you can drink your way across ancient trade paths), and you're in for a gastronomic journey that leaves you both satisfied and, somehow, wanting more.

In a city that's always evolving, Noho stands tall as a fine example of where Hyderabad's dining scene is headed—bold, brilliant and bursting with flavour.



FOOD TO TRY

Tan Tan Ramen



DECOR

dim lit, cozy yet regal dining



PRICE

3000 for two people (approx.)



VERDICT

★★★★

Karwa chauth favourites

MAKHANA KHEER

This creamy and comforting kheer made with is a delightful twist on the traditional dessert, featuring crunchy fox nuts.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup Makhana (Fox Nuts)
- 4 cups full cream milk
- ¼ - ½ cup sugar (adjust according to taste)
- 1 tablespoon Ghee
- ½ teaspoon Cardamom powder
- 8-10 strands Saffron strands (optional)
- 2 tablespoons Chopped nuts (almonds, cashews, pistachios)
- 1 tablespoon Raisins (optional)
- 1 teaspoon Rose water (optional)



METHOD:

- Step 1.** First, roast the makhanas. Heat ghee in a pan over medium heat. Add the makhanas and roast, stirring continuously for 6-8 minutes until they become crisp. Let them cool, then roughly crush half of the makhanas and keep the other half whole for texture.
- Step 2.** Next, boil the milk in a heavy-bottomed pan. Bring it to a boil over medium heat. Reduce the heat and let it simmer, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes, until the milk thickens.
- Step 3.** Add the roasted makhanas (both crushed and whole) to the simmering milk. Cook on low heat for 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the makhanas soften and absorb the milk.
- Step 4.** Once the makhanas are soft, add sugar and stir until dissolved. Add cardamom powder and saffron (if using) for flavour.
- Step 5.** Stir in the chopped nuts and raisins, and cook for 5-7 minutes. Remove the kheer from the heat when it reaches your desired consistency. Stir in rose water.
- Step 6.** Finally, garnish with extra nuts and saffron strands. Serve warm or chilled. This way, you can enjoy the richness of Makhana Kheer!

(Attributes: Sonia Shah – Health Coach and Nutrition Advisor, Adani Wilmar, Fortune Foods.)

This recipe for Meethi Mathri, a sweet and crispy Indian treat, is a perfect combination of savoury and sweet flavours. These delightful cookies are traditionally enjoyed during festivals and special occasions.

INGREDIENTS:

For the Mathri:

- 2 cups Atta
- 4 tablespoons Ghee (for the dough) + extra for frying
- 1 teaspoon Fennel seeds (saunf)
- ½ teaspoon cardamom powder
- 2 tablespoons Suji
- A pinch of Salt
- Water, as needed to knead the dough

For the sugar syrup (Chashni):

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup water
- ¼ teaspoon cardamom powder
- A few saffron strands (optional)

MEETHI MATHRI

METHOD:

- Step 1.** Begin by preparing the dough. In a large mixing bowl, combine the Atta, Suji, fennel seeds, cardamom powder, and a pinch of salt. Add the ghee to the mixture and rub it into the flour until the mixture becomes crumbly. This will ensure flakiness in the mathris. Gradually add water and knead the mixture into a firm dough. Cover with a damp cloth and let it rest for 15-20 minutes.
- Step 2.** After resting the dough, divide it into small portions (about the size of a lemon). Roll each portion into a ball and flatten slightly into discs. Roll out each ball into small circles (about 2-3 inches in diameter). Prick them with a fork to prevent puffing while frying.
- Step 3.** Heat ghee in a deep pan on medium heat. Once hot, fry the mathris in batches, cooking them on medium heat until they are golden brown and crispy. Take 7-10 minutes on each batch. Remove the fried mathris and place them on a paper towel to drain excess oil.
- Step 4.** While the mathris are frying, prepare the sugar syrup. In a separate pan, combine Fortune Sugar and water. Stir to dissolve the sugar and bring it to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 7-8 minutes until the syrup reaches a one-string consistency. Add cardamom powder and saffron strands for flavour.
- Step 5.** Dip the fried mathris into the warm sugar syrup, coating them well. Place the syrup-coated mathris on a tray or plate to cool. As they cool, the sugar will crystallise and form a sweet glaze.
- Step 6.** Allow the meethi mathris to cool completely before serving. Store them in an airtight container, and they will stay fresh for up to a week.



PHIRNI

This traditional Indian rice pudding, a luscious dessert made of rice, milk and sugar, has been made with basmati rice and sugar.

INGREDIENTS:

- ¼ cup Basmati rice
- 1 litre full-fat milk
- ½ cup sugar (adjust according to taste)
- A pinch of saffron
- ¼ teaspoon cardamom powder
- 2 tablespoons chopped almonds and pistachios
- Rose petals (optional)

METHOD:

- Step 1.** Begin by preparing the rice. Wash and soak the basmati rice for about 30 minutes. Drain the water and grind the rice into a coarse paste using a little milk. The paste should retain some texture to give the phirni its signature graininess.
- Step 2.** In a heavy-bottomed pan, bring the full-fat milk to a boil. Once it boils, reduce the heat and let it simmer, stirring occasionally to prevent the milk from sticking to the bottom. Add the coarsely ground Traditional Basmati Rice paste to the simmering milk gradually, stirring continuously to prevent lumps. Keep stirring for about 8-10 minutes until the rice cooks and the mixture starts to thicken.
- Step 3.** Add the Sugar to the thickened milk-rice mixture. Stir well until the sugar dissolves. Let the phirni cook for another 5-7 minutes until it thickens to a smooth, pudding-like consistency.
- Step 4.** Add the saffron soaked in warm milk and cardamom powder to the phirni. Stir well to mix the flavours and cook for another 2-3 minutes. Remove the phirni from the flame and allow it to cool a little. Pour it into small earthen bowls and let it cool at room temperature. Refrigerate them for 2 hours to allow them to set.
- Step 5.** Garnish the phirni with chopped almonds, pistachios, and a few saffron strands. Add rose petals for a festive look.

TIPS:

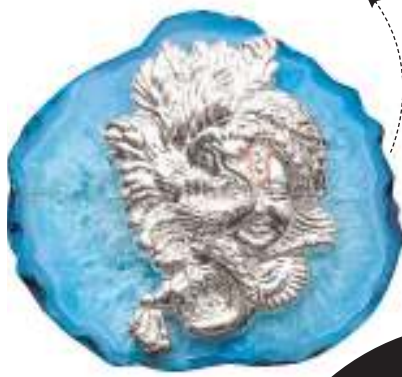
Serve chilled, as the cooling process enhances the creamy texture and the flavours of basmati rice. Traditionally served in clay bowls, it adds an authentic feel and earthy aroma to the dessert.

WHAT'S NEW

Karwa chauth, a sacred festival of love and devotion, is a special moment to celebrate the unbreakable bond between you and your partner. As the moon shines brightly in the night sky, your love shines brighter. Make this day even more memorable with thoughtful gifts that speak directly to your heart. Have a look at our curated collection of Karwa chauth gifts to find the perfect expression of your eternal love!

GIFT COMBOS

As the festive season approaches, KOLLAGE unveils its exquisite collection of unique gifting ideas, perfect for Karwa Chauth. When selecting gifts for our loved ones, it's important to choose something that resonates with tradition and sentiment. A serene representation of Lord Krishna discreetly watching from behind plants and trees, set against a semi-precious stone backdrop.



CELEBRATE WITH ISHATVAM

For Karwa Chauth, a thoughtful gift from Ishatvam can make the occasion even more special. Transform your home and celebrations with its exquisite festive collection. Whether you're looking to light up your space or find the perfect gift, each piece is designed to make every moment of the festival shine brighter.



RECREATE YOUR CARMA LOOK

This Karwa Chauth embraces tradition with a modern twist. Celebrate the beauty of love and commitment with outfits that reflect your unique style and heritage. Carma has a wide range of heavenly bridal couture pieces, festive wear, chic statement ensembles for special occasions and voguish everyday wear.



MAKE IT UNFORGETTABLE

Celebrate the love and devotion of Karwa Chauth with a luxurious gift from Anastasia Beverly Hills. Show her how much she means to you with a timeless beauty set, crafted to highlight her grace and radiance. Let her feel adored and appreciated on this day of devotion as you gift her a moment of indulgence and luxury, reflecting the beauty of your relationship.



CELEBRATE ETERNAL LOVE

Embracing the festive spirit with Rangriti's specially curated Karwa Chauth collection. In a printed pink set with printed dupatta, add vibrancy and charm to your celebrations. Whether you're dressing for the evening puja or a family celebration, it ensures you look stunning while honouring traditions.



SECRET TO RADIANT, DEWY GLOW

Perfect for this Karwa Chauth, this lightweight, buildable formula by Marmello, blends effortlessly into the skin, delivering a natural sun-kissed flush with a glossy finish. Infused with skin-loving ingredients like ceramides, hyaluronic acid, niacinamide, and aloe vera, it hydrates while you glow.

Price: INR 2199/- Quantity: 18 ML



SPOTLIGHT ON BEAUTY!

With Karwa Chauth around the corner, Beauty by BiE's curated skincare is perfect for festive gifting. This product is designed to help your readers achieve a radiant glow, just in time for the celebrations.



ELEVATE GLAMOUR WITH PLATFORM HEELS

As Karwa Chauth draws near, Anaar has the perfect touch of sparkle and glamour for your gifting guide: it's exquisite platform heels. Each pair is a statement piece, blending elegance, artistry and celebration into timeless designs that will light up any festive look.



HOROSCOPE



ARIES

Nervousness will hinder experimentation; rely on trusted support. Your family may oppose home changes. However, projects succeed, boosting confidence, stamina, and optimism.



TAURUS

Frustration may arise, but stay resilient. Resolve conflicts with siblings. Embrace creativity and manage ego. Health remains strong, trips succeed and separation fosters independence.



GEMINI

Manage your pride to avoid sibling clashes. Stay calm at work despite the tension. Your endurance will drive you to success. Prioritize rest, avoid risky travel, and enjoy new friendships.



CANCER

Avoid criticism and excessive openness to prevent delays. Siblings will offer support, while relationships need initiative. Embrace new projects, enjoy travel, and adapt to job changes.



LEO

Embrace unexpected bonds and focus on self-improvement. Avoid irresponsibility to protect your career. Gently manage relationships under pressure. Express love before it's too late.



VRIGO

Stay calm amid workplace tension. Address eccentricities with counselling. Embrace change with innovation. Ensure work-life balance. New environments will enrich your life experience.



LIBRA

Avoid abandoning relationships to prevent mental trauma. Delays in ventures are temporary; stay optimistic. Manage insecurity with guidance. Enjoy support from colleagues.



SCORPIO

Maintain humour and calmness to navigate challenges. Avoid agitation and prioritize self-care. Joyful experiences await you. Manage health wisely, and enjoy recognition in social settings.



SAGITTARIUS

Avoid delays and think carefully before expressing attraction. Enjoy family moments, embrace luxuries, and balance work with rest. New friendships will bring refreshing experiences.



CAPRICORN

Resolve sibling conflicts and embrace unexpected love. Use curiosity for breakthroughs, but prioritize rest. Your optimism attracts projects and friendships. Enjoy upcoming travel.



AQUARIUS

Delay new projects for better outcomes. Embrace freedom and ambition while managing stubbornness. Accept advice from others, enjoy a holiday, and find success on business trips.



PISCES

Stay calm amid workplace tensions and family challenges. Your determination will lead you to success, but avoid monotony. Seek rejuvenation. Discipline will bring you positive outcomes.

'I TEACH AYRA THAT MONEY IS HARD-EARNED AND THAT SHE CAN'T BUY EVERYTHING THAT SHE WANTS'

TEJAL SINHA
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With a career spanning over two decades, Sanjeeda Sheikh has proven herself to be a force to be reckoned with in the Indian film industry. From the intricately complex Waheeda in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's *Heeramandi* to her role alongside Hrithik Roshan and Deepika Padukone in *Fighter*, she has consistently pushed the boundaries of her craft. But beyond the glitz and glamour of Bollywood, lies a woman of unwavering resilience, unapologetic honesty and unrelenting passion.

As we look back at her journey, she's beyond a doubt a sweetheart of the Television industry. But with films, remember Neeli in *Baghi*? From playing the character that had a small screen space, the success of *Heeramandi* has not only elevated Sanjeeda Sheikh's profile but also demonstrated her ability to take on complex, dynamic roles.

"I am very thankful to Sanjay Leela Bhansali for having faith in me to play the complex role of Waheeda," begins the *Kayamath* fame, filled with gratitude. Bhansali has been one of those dexterous filmmakers, who possesses an amazing talent for identifying actors' capabilities, often identifying their strengths before even the actor's realise it about themselves. "His belief in my skills has played a crucial role in my development as an actor. Collaborating with him has been a game-changer. Thanks to his guidance, I've developed confidence in my intuition and been able to infuse my performances with authenticity. His direction has enabled me to access feelings and subtleties I wasn't aware I could express. Thanks to his mentorship, I have gained more confidence and skills during this journey."

Acting, for her, is all about being in the present and conjuring up magic in the moment. "Sanjay Sir's meticulous guidance played a significant role in the dynamic and evolving process of bringing Waheeda to life. He paid exceptional attention to detail; he meticulously crafted every aspect of Waheeda to ensure she seemed genuine, from her gestures to her words. Sanjay Sir and I collaborated closely to develop Waheeda's character on the set. His accurate guidance enabled us to delve into and improve all subtle aspects of her character," shares the *Ek Hasina Thi* star. In fact, to completely embrace her character Waheeda, she treated the character like her most trusted friend, delving into her world, comprehending her thoughts, emotions and motivations profoundly. This close bond further enabled her to depict Waheeda with honesty and complexity, causing the character to deeply connect with the viewers.

With her character Waheeda being perceived as a complex character, she shares, "I think every person has a combination of positive and negative qualities, which is what defines our humanity. The depth of Waheeda's character strikes a chord with me as she embodies genuine emotions and challenges. She is not one-dimensional; she goes through a variety of emotions, including happiness, affection, sadness, and anger. Her varied characteristics make her easy to relate to and believable. The

Sanjeeda Sheikh's name is synonymous with exceptional talent and her remarkable transformation from television sweetheart to film sensation is a testament to her unwavering dedication. As she navigates the complexities of her characters and personal life, she speaks to us about her latest ventures, embracing motherhood and more



way people have responded to Waheeda has been captivating as they perceive various aspects of themselves reflected in her experiences. Some people may understand her vulnerable moments, while others may see similarities between her actions and their own strengths and weaknesses."

From having been admiring Manisha Koirala's work to working alongside her, the *Ponniyin Selvan* fame enthuses, "I have always thought she is naturally beautiful, with a face untouched by artificial enhancements. I have seen all her films. *Dil Se* and *Bombay* are my all-time favourites. She is professional and hard-working. We often see her playing soft, bubbly characters—the girl next door. For her to take on challenging roles, especially at this stage in her career, is impressive. Watching her perform teaches you a lot. Her success is a testament to her dedication and humility. The key

to success is, of course, to keep working hard while staying humble."

But guess what? While she was actually shooting for *Heeramandi*, she was called for a meeting about her next big venture, *Fighter*. "I found the character to be performance-oriented. Even though the part was brief, it was powerful and left a lasting impression. Working with the biggest celebrities like Hrithik Roshan and Deepika Padukone was thrilling, as they are some of the most popular stars in the nation. They possess a lovely, modest characteristic. Deepika's presence on set exudes positive energy through her smile and aura, making you overlook her celebrity status. This overall vibe enhances everyone's performance."

Indeed, there was a scene with Hrithik Roshan at a funeral pyre site. The performance was well-received, exuding an organic and pure atmosphere. "We did not practice for it as our

director Siddharth Anand cautioned against due to its emotional depth. He instructed us to follow our instincts when he urged us to take action. And that is precisely what we accomplished. The scene ended up looking stunningly beautiful. Being present and avoiding overanalysing is essential in acting. You must experience the scene instead of simply performing it," shares Sheikh adding that her family has always been her source of support in difficult moments. Their constant backing has shown her how to be strong and the necessity of remaining rooted.

Talking of the motherhood phase, becoming a mother has completely changed her and develop her patience, resilience and the skill to juggle her professional and personal life.

"Ayra, my daughter, is the main source of my motivation and inspiration. People mention that being a single mom is challenging. It's not difficult. As a mother, your responsibilities are your responsibilities, correct? No one else can do for your child whatever you can do.

Frequently, I say to people, "Why are you getting so worked up about being a solo parent?" Being self-sufficient is the only thing that counts. My daughter is the key to my success. She desires for me to perform well and it brings a lovely sensation. Upon spotting the *Heeramandi* or *Fighter* poster, she enthusiastically declares to her friends, "That's my mother." The amount of pride she feels towards me is a significant accomplishment. The smile she gives me when I come home after receiving an award is invaluable. The award gains significant value from it."

Coming from a middle-class family, she tells us how her parents worked hard and that's what she emphasises to Ayra. "I've raised her normally. I don't buy her everything she wants; I teach her that money is hard-earned and we must plan and work for what we want. It's crucial for children to understand the value of money. I play games with Ayra to help her learn how to manage and spend money wisely. Additionally, I stress the importance of emotional bonding and expressing feelings."

Heading towards the end of the chat, she says that trusting your intuition, being authentic and viewing each stage of life as a chance to learn is essential. "At the age of 20, I made choices that were best for me. At 40, I am now more grown up and conscious of myself. The most important thing is your level of self-awareness. Throughout the years, I have gained a greater understanding of myself. After facing numerous obstacles, I have come to realise my inner resilience. Success is achieved through persistence and maintaining humility."

TRENDING

LIAM PAYNE



PERSON

Liam Payne, *One Direction* star, died after falling from the balcony of his hotel room in Buenos Aires and suffering multiple traumas and hemorrhages.

NICK JONAS RUNS OFF STAGE AFTER BEING TARGETED BY LASER POINTER



VIDEO

In a surprising moment that left fans both amused and puzzled, Nick Jonas was spotted making a hasty exit from the stage during a live performance.

DO PATTI

MOVIE

Do Patti is captivating audiences with its intriguing plot that delves into the complexities of friendship and deception.



BHOO BHULAIYAA 3

SONG



The title track for *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3* features Pitbull and combines his signature high-energy beats with catchy hooks, promising to be a lively addition to the film's soundtrack.

STATUE OF LADY JUSTICE

PICTURE



In a groundbreaking revelation at the Supreme Court of India, a newly unveiled statue of Lady Justice signifies a progressive shift in the nation's judicial mindset. The statue's traditional blindfold has been removed.

CHAT-O-CINO

HEALTH

HIGH COST OF BURNOUT AT WORKPLACE

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In today's fast-paced and high-pressure work environments, the well-being of employees has become a critical concern for organisations. The increasing toll of workplace stress and health issues can lead to tragic outcomes, including fatalities. Employers are urged to take immediate action by implementing proactive wellness measures, stress management strategies and fostering harmonious work cultures. By prioritising employee well-being, organisations can combat the rising tide of workplace-related health crises by investing in initiatives such as health screenings, stress mitigation efforts and promoting a balanced work-life culture. Enhancing the health and wellness of employees at the workplace is paramount. Jitin Bhasin, CEO and Founder of SaveIN, emphasises, "In today's fast-paced work environment, the well-being of employees is paramount. Employers have realised that it is imperative to implement effective strategies to prevent health crises, support mental wellness and promote a culture of sustainable delivery across the workforce. This means that such programs need to go much beyond providing a vanilla health insurance cover to their employees, which becomes applicable only for hospitalisation events and a lot of focus needs to be on preventive care, work-life balance and overall well-being."

To create effective employee wellness and productivity programs, organisations should focus on several key areas:

Establishing clear employee wellness program

Employers must invest time in designing and implementing health and wellness initiatives, identifying responsible teams, and providing adequate budgetary support. The HR team should collaborate with leadership to ensure accountability and sustainability in delivering these programs.

Key elements of successful employee health and wellness program

A comprehensive wellness program should address various aspects of an employee's daily life, including physical fitness, mental health, social interactions and the well-being of their dependents.

Mental health and stress management

Many employees face unprecedented stress due to workplace KPIs, peer pressure, personal situations, long commutes and sedentary lifestyles. Managers should set realistic targets, show compassion towards stressed employees, and promote periodic discussions, team breaks and individual career planning sessions to alleviate work-related stress.

Safety protocols and emergency response systems

To mitigate sudden health crises like accidents or heart attacks, employers should develop



robust safety protocols and emergency response plans. This includes installing first aid kits and Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), training staff to use these resources, and maintaining a list of emergency contacts.

Creating a Culture of Health and Fitness

Employee wellness initiatives require commitment from leadership to ensure they are prioritized and sustained. Workplaces can promote healthy practices such as walking meetings, team activities, and providing healthy snacks and gym memberships.

Promoting mental health among employees is vital. Anuradha Pogalur, L&D Head at Wissen Infotech, shares, "Over the past decade and a half, I've witnessed a significant shift in how mental health is perceived and discussed in the workplace. Initially, it was a topic that was often swept under the rug, but today, it's becoming a vital component of employee well-being." Despite this progress, breaking down the stigma surrounding mental health remains a challenge. Organisations must foster environments that prioritise mental well-being continuously, not just during stressful periods.

"Integrating mental health support into Learning and Development (L&D) programs goes far beyond simply adding a few sessions on stress management or resilience. It's about weaving well-being into the fabric of the entire learning experience. To promote a healthy balance between work and personal life, companies must establish clear strategies to support their employees. One effective approach we've adopted is introducing 'No Meeting Day,' allowing team members uninterrupted time to focus on their tasks," Pogalur adds.

The physical and mental toll of stress is alarming. Swetha Desiraju, psychologist and director of Rising Sun Child Therapy Center, highlights, "Employees working in high-pressure environments undergo stressful situations daily. The stress may lead to burnout, substance abuse, or even heart attacks from the physical toll of stress." This reality is underscored by the Japanese term 'Karoshi,' which means death due to overwork. Desiraju further explains the multitude of health

risks associated with a stressful work environment, stating, "Mentally, it can lead to anxiety, depression and even burnout. Physically, it can lead to headaches, high blood pressure and sleep disturbances. Over time, this can result in severe health conditions like heart problems and stroke."

Burnout often presents warning signs, such as irritability, loss of motivation and frequent absences. "Employees must take proactive steps to manage their mental health. Simple yet extremely helpful strategies like setting clear boundaries, taking regular breaks, practicing mindfulness, daily exercise, and prioritising adequate sleep can be the five stepping stones to a mentally healthier tomorrow! It is also important to normalize seeking professional help like counselling and therapy services when needed. There is bravery in seeking help," Desiraju emphasises.

Additionally, infusing gratitude into daily routines can significantly combat workplace stress. Aashmeen Munjaal, ontologist and mental health expert, explains, "Burnout is the body and mind's way of saying, 'I need a pause to heal.' Signs like emotional fatigue, disengagement, and a drop in motivation are warning flags." Munjaal advocates for the power of gratitude in the workplace, stating, "A simple practice like acknowledging daily wins or moments of kindness can shift the emotional tone, infusing the workplace with renewed energy."

However, misconceptions about workplace wellness programs persist. Satya Karri, HRBP Manager for an MNC, notes, "The most common misconception employees have about workplace wellness programs are that they are only for physical health, they are mandatory or intrusive, not tailored depending on individual needs, not relevant to one's lifestyle, or too time-consuming." Addressing these misconceptions requires a supportive and inclusive approach that highlights the diverse offerings of wellness programs, which should encompass mental, emotional and financial health.

In conclusion, workplace wellness is not just a trend; it is a vital promise that organizations must embrace to safeguard the health and productivity of their workforce. Through effective programs, supportive environments, and a focus on mental well-being, employers can make a significant difference in the lives of their employees.

A much-crowned beauty queen who evolved into a fashion designer and has now ventured into sustainable creations using natural fibers. That encapsulates the career graph of Shilpa Reddy, who was born in Secunderabad on July 21, 1980. An ace designer, businesswoman and environmental crusader, she skillfully blends style and functions. She is truly a Renaissance lady! Having won laurels as a beauty queen first, she has invested her international creations with a distinctive appeal that combines the essence of her Indian background with her credentials as a fashion icon and a crusader for environmental sustainability. This is evident from her eco-focused and instructive YouTube series. As a fashion designer, she has left her imprint at international fashion shows, showcasing natural fibers and handloom fabrics. In a conversation with **Shikha Duggal** of *The Pioneer*, Shilpa, also a doting mother, touches on her new-found passion for early childhood education, having co-founded Ekam Early Learning Centre, a play-based learning school in Hyderabad. Raised in a close-knit family in Secunderabad, Shilpa has a strong foundation in her south Indian heritage. The influence of her west moorings can be seen in her fashion designs, for which she frequently uses traditional handloom fabrics, elaborate patterns and rich embroidery. Her zest for life is best reflected by her consuming passion for south Indian food, music and art



RAPID FIRE

Describe yourself in three words: Disciplined, forgiving and loving

Favourite holiday destination to go to: Africa

A city you wish to visit: I want to go into the jungles now; cosmopolitan life is so boring these days. I want to enjoy those waterfalls!

Favourite colour: Red & Green

Favourite dish: Depends on my mood, have a soft spot for onion omelette & my mother's sambhar

FASHION

THE MAKING OF BEAUTY QUEEN

My appearance attracted a lot of attention as I grew older. Due to my fair skin, I was perceived differently by others than my sister. I wanted to grow as a person in all aspects, not only be recognised for how I looked. That was my entire plan when I entered the pageants. I was able to showcase my personality in addition to my beauty through these pageants. I can also recall a period of time when I began to feel guilty about my appearance, yet these pageants offered me hope. There's a Q&A session, which encouraged me to learn how to talk well and portray myself as a fully groomed woman, so I proved myself beyond appearance! I didn't want to be known solely as a gorgeous woman. I used to tell myself 'Shilpa, you should walk elegantly.' I always wanted to be prim and proper. It seems very childish to discuss today, but I really wanted to win the title of Beauty queen in school (giggles). My winning streak started in school, when I won back-to-back pageants for beauty. When I was in Andhra Pradesh, I did not mind receiving positive attention at all. Next came the major beauty pageant in Miss Andhra Pradesh, where I had to represent my state. My father had mixed feelings about his daughter entering a beauty pageant. However, it was he who aspired to defy generational expectations for the better—call me 'the family's black sheep' (laughs). I was hoping for more from them.



LIBERATING ADVENTURES

Oh, Masai Mara (National Reserve, Kenya) gave me a feeling of visiting a different world. I've always loved the outdoors—hiking, trekking, skiing—but Masai Mara felt like entering a world untouched by human hands, free from technology and innovation. There was a moment when we were surrounded by 15-17 wild elephants, with a pride of lions resting just nearby. In those moments, I felt an indescribable connection to nature, like nothing I had ever known. Every journey brings introspection, but here, I experienced a deeper freedom. We'd go on long safaris under the sun, never feeling tired. I've travelled far and wide, but I've never felt such profound peace and healing as I did there. Masai Mara awakened something in me and I know I'll return, again and again.

IDENTITY BEYOND GLADRAGS

Upon my return from Canada, I found myself yearning to create my own identity. After I had won Gladrags, everyone knew overnight who I was! With my fashion degree at my disposal, I got to work on designing. That's how 'Shilpa Reddy', my label, was created. My efforts were recognised. I don't think it's OK to benefit from greed. I have never fed my conscience by providing sub-par goods. This is my work ethic! I began reading a lot about environmental issues and how fashion has been harming the earth over time. As for contribution to pollution, this was the third-biggest industry in the nation. Throughout it all, I was really reflecting and leaning toward remediation.

FROM WEST FASHION TO SOUTHERN HERITAGE

My style has always been fashionable, though with a firm foundation in heritage. There is usually a lot of embroidery! I used to get most of the materials for my international shows from Indian handlooms. Since I studied in Canada, I knew that some of their methods—such as how West examines the buttons, collars, cuffs and silhouettes—are still not applied here. I was renowned for adorning a saree blouse with a collar. What I am seeing these days is that there are too many designers, which has caused things to change too quickly. I prefer to wear clothes that I can wear again because there are too many trends coming and departing.

SEWING HER LAST SEAMS PROFESSIONALLY

Sewing my last professional seams was not an easy decision, but my conscience wouldn't let me continue. There was an inner conflict between my creativity and my sense of responsibility. I couldn't ignore the environmental harm caused by the materials I was using—georgette, polyester, chiffon—all derived from toxic chemicals. It was a bittersweet farewell to my career as a fashion designer. While I still have a small space where I create for my family, I no longer design professionally. But once you're a designer, it's always part of you—it's how I express myself and that will never change.



HEALTHY HABITS

Discipline and integrity define who I am. I always eat at home or carry my own food—I've never used Swiggy or Zomato! My day begins with spiritual practices for mindfulness and physical training for strength, mobility and endurance. I'm mindful of what I watch, preferring meaningful content like biographies or National Geographic over violent shows. Watching my thoughts and choosing who I spend time with matter greatly. To me, success isn't about fame but about ethical practices, a healthy body, a clear conscience and a joyful heart. My three "fur babies" are my greatest blessings. Singing is also a passion—I've recorded two songs: one for my guru and one for the Save Soil campaign.



GREENING



SIBLING REVELRY

We are three siblings. My elder sister and I are eleven months apart; so, I regard her as more of a twin sister. My brother was born six years later. As siblings, we are very close and may be a little aggressive at times. The brother is the group's entertainer. We have been a close-knit family. We were raised with excellent moral standards, with our parents being very strict. When I was younger, I used to be an extreme extrovert. I used to always have my name enrolled first for any school-related events. You could call me a decent student, though I wanted to accomplish much more in life than being just studious. I was also really good in sports. However, one thing I discovered as I grew older is that art is my genuine calling. I learned singing for over four years.



HER BAJAJ CHETAK DAYS

The entire colony used to witness me and my sister ride dad's Bajaj Chetak since the others were accustomed to riding those Kinetic Hondas. I was like, "I'm going to ride dad's Chetak with a gear!" Mom used to send us to grocery stores those days and we used to make the rounds in the colony. The AOC gates, the army area where we were living. In the area, the roads were then breathtaking because of the abundance of trees. We used to go to verdant spots, stroll there and snap pictures. I used to be really mischievous those days. I played certain pranks and got caught at times.



WHEN REDDY GIRL'S SECRET WIN IGNITED HYD

I had entered the pageant without telling my father and I was able to win the crown. It was a huge thing back then; for I had just then turned 17 and appeared on the front page of the leading English daily in the twin cities. After 'our Reddy girl' made the headlines, I discovered my flair for fashion because a Reddy girl had never won in a beauty pageant before. Following my bachelor's degree in commerce, I studied fashion design. Towards the end of that course, I fancied studying fashion overseas. But my loved ones thought it was a rather unusual idea to study fashion overseas. I was supposed to pursue an MBA or study engineering! To send me abroad, especially because I was single at the time, required a lot of persuasion on my part. After a while, I understood that my parents were merely putting me to the test to see how serious I was about it. Finally, I decided to study fashion in Canada.

DREAM MARRIAGE

Upon my return to India, my sister had tied the knot, my mom presented me with a lovely prospect, Preetham, who made an effort to get to know me completely. Preetham supported my views, my desired way of life and the type of family I wished to be a part of. I was thrilled that he realised how much I dislike limitations. For me, this marriage fulfilled all of my dreams. His family's female members are progressive thinkers. They were operating their own enterprises and doing other things and that is just how I intended to spend my life. Back then, my sister-in-law was an actress! I also know of my mother-in-law, who moved to Los Angeles to pursue fashion design during that time. It does not imply that I was avaricious since my manifestations were coming true. No, not at all! All I wanted to do was freely explore my abilities. My partner is not from the insecure crowd. He has always loved watching me grow and take flight. Until today, he has not had control over me! Rather, he freed me. My in-laws are quite straightforward people. They have a great deal of faith in me and wanted me to succeed more than them. People say, 'Oh, Shilpa Reddy,' but without my husband—a total recluse who despises attention from the public—I never would have made it here today. Not even social media exists for him! He is a true achiever.

ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH

I launched a sustainability-themed YouTube show where 24 celebrities, including Dia Mirza, Shriya Saran and Sadhguru, spoke candidly about the importance of sustainability. I knew that their voices would have a greater reach than mine alone, helping to create a larger impact. One thing that matters deeply to me is being selective about who I partner with. Whether it's my school or any other project, I don't hand out franchises easily. I care about understanding the motivations behind an investment. It's not just about business—it's about shared values, genuine intentions and creating something ethical and meaningful.



IN-LAWS' ENCOURAGEMENT

When I revealed that I wanted to compete in Mrs. India; my in-laws said, "Come on, let's do this!" They promptly scheduled a flight for me to go to Bombay without any delay. My sister-in-law arranged for me to be photographed by the greatest photographers and assigned me to the best designer. I began training my skin, body, mind and vocational skills. I prevailed! I kept up my modelling for a few years, but I was not very fond of the industry; it wasn't very appealing to me. I liked doing catalog shoots more than ramp work because I thought the backstage talks were so trivial. Simply put, I don't talk about people! After two years, I got married and this back-and-forth thing from Bombay to Hyderabad was getting a bit too much for me, so things started to get hard for me. At that time, I had no desire to continue modelling. My personal life in Hyderabad was being disrupted by it.



13 YEARS OF SPIRITUAL SADHANA

Spiritual sadhana reconnected me with my consciousness, making me more mindful, empathetic and responsible. After seven years of marriage, I embraced motherhood fully, putting aside much of my previous life to cherish time with my son. Motherhood changed me, prompting the question, "What else can I do besides design clothes?" Opposing parenting styles that rely on fear, I co-founded an early education school with two wonderful, like-minded women. One being Samantha Ruth Prabhu, a film actress-cum-dear friend and another, Mukta Khurana, one of my sons' teachers, now turned into our co-founder. Our goal is to create a safe, joyful space where children can learn through play. For me, being a mother is the most important role of all.

AMALA GARU — GUIDING LIGHT IN HER LIFE

In real life, I don't have idols, though I've had mentors who've left a lasting impact. No one person can be an idol for me, but I'll always remember how Amala welcomed me, sharing her stories with such grace, never once saying, "listen to me." She is involved in many causes beyond the Blue Cross Society and her life's work inspired me deeply. In my early twenties, she was a powerful influence—her dedication to yoga and mindfulness opened my eyes to new ways of thinking and it undoubtedly shaped who I am today.