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**QUOTE OF THE DAY**  
The pioneer

KTR and Harish Rao are competing with each other to occupy KCR's place. KTR and Harish Rao are not doing anything for the people except conducting press conferences to get photos published in newspapers. The BRS is not a political party. The BRS means KCR, KTR, Kavitha, Harish and Santhosh. KTR, Harish, Kavitha and Santhosh functioned with the objective of looting. The KCR family should release a white paper on their assets before and after 2014

-Kadiam Srihari, Station Ghanpur MLA

**'India does not believe in 'taken-for-granted' relations'**

5

**FINMIN SEEKS EXPENDITURE PROPOSALS**

8

Ananya awaits her big commercial **SUCCESS**

P11

**DON'T MISS...**

**Govt prioritises welfare of ...**

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy laid the foundation stone for the Young India Police School at Manchirevula village in Rangareddy district on Monday. Minister D Sridhar Babu, MP Konda Vishweshwar Reddy, Chief Secretary A Santhi Kumari, Special Chief Secretary Ravi Gupta, Director General of Police Jitender, Hyderabad Commissioner of Police CV Anand, Intelligence DGP B Shivadhar Reddy, CID DGP Shikha Goel, and other dignitaries participated in the programme. Minister Sridhar Babu addressed the gathering ...

-PAGE: 3

**'No opposition party can stop ...**

Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkata Reddy has made it clear that no opposition party can stop Musi river cleaning. River Musi rejuvenation will be carried out under any circumstances, he has asserted. Speaking at a meeting, shortly after laying the foundation stone for the construction of panchayat building in Madugulapalli mandal in the district, he emphasised that the State government is committed to the welfare of all sections of people. He came down ...

-PAGE: 4

**When scammers cloned Mittal's...**

Scammers often use AI voice clones to con commoners to transfer money or disclose financial information but it's rare when they try to impersonate a billionaire. This is exactly what scammers tried to do by cloning telecom czar Sunil Bharti Mittal's voice to scam his executive in Dubai to transfer money. Fortunately, the executive was smart enough to realise Mittal won't ask for such a huge money transfer and the scam was stopped in its tracks. On Monday, speaking at the NDTV World...

-PAGE: 8

**Pressure on Siraj after only 19...**

Indian skipper Rohit Sharma believes in consistency when it comes to team selection but he will have to take a leap of faith to retain speedster Mohammed Siraj in the playing eleven for the second Test against New Zealand considering his poor run in home conditions. The match starts in Pune from October 24 and inclusion of spin bowling all-rounder Washington Sundar as the fifth slow bowler is an indication that coach Gautam Gambhir and Rohit might go for the jugular on a spin-friendly track...

-SPORTS



**Group I exams begin amid tight security**

72.4% attendance

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The Telangana Public Service Commission (TSPSC) successfully conducted the Group-I Mains Examination for the General English (Qualifying Test) on October 21 amid tight security across 46 exam centres located in Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy and Medchal-Malkajgiri districts.

A total of 31,383 candidates were eligible to take part in this examination. Notably, 20 sports candidates were permitted to write the exam as per the orders

**'One Minute Rule' made many candidates cry**

**KOLISHETTY VENKATESHWARLU**  
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■ HYDERABAD

They had worked hard for years staying in Hyderabad and spending a lot of money at coaching centres to qualify for the Group-I Mains examination.

However, the 'One Minute Rule' dashed their lifetime dream of appearing for Group-I Mains. The 'One Minute Rule' brought tears to the eyes of Group-I candidates on Monday, the day the Group-I Mains exams started.

Officials did not allow many candidates inside examination centres at several places although the candidates requested the authorities to let them in saying that they had qualified for the mains.

5

**'Conflicting stands on Musi'**

Harish blasts CM for contradictory statements

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

BRS MLA Harish Rao strongly criticized Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's contradictory remarks regarding the Musi River Musi River Redevelopment Project.

He pointed out that on July 20, Revanth had announced a plan to invest Rs 1.5 lakh crore over five years for Musi River redevelopment. This was reiterated in the 'Telangana Growth Story: The Road to a One Trillion Dollar Economy' document, released by the CM on September 6, which clearly outlined a budget of Rs 1.5 lakh crore (approximately USD 18 billion) for the Musi Riverfront Redevelopment.

However, in a recent press conference, Revanth denied making such claims, prompt-

**SC refuses to stay Group I exam**

Says it will lead to chaos

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to stay the examination being conducted by the Telangana Public Service Commission (TGPSC) to fill up 563 Grade-1 posts in various government departments, saying such an order will lead to "chaos".

"The examination will commence at 2 pm... There will be chaos if we stay the exam at this stage," a bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, had said during the hearing earlier when senior lawyer Kapil Sibal, appearing for a petitioner, pressed for an interim stay.

"Students have already entered the exam centres," the bench underlined.

The bench noted in its order, "Any interim order would lead to the substantial dislocation of the conduct of the examination

**ATTACKS ON TEMPLE ISSUE**

**'Plot to divide people'**

CM alleges some forces trying to create rift

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that some forces were trying to create rifts among people by attacking places of worship and called for foiling their designs by cooperating with the police.

Stating that Telangana society is enlightened, he said that he was confident that it would not encourage provocative acts and would cooperate with the government.

Addressing the Police Flag Day Parade at the Police Martyrs Memorial in Hyderabad on Monday, the CM expressed concern over the recent act of vandalism at the Muthyalamma Temple in Secunderabad and subsequent incidents.

He said the police would act firmly against those engaging in such attacks and trying to vitiate the peaceful atmosphere. He urged people to cooperate with police in dealing with those whose actions are detrimental to society.

"If some people decide to punish the culprits themselves by taking the law into their hands there will be no difference between them and those resorting to the heinous acts," he said.

Declaring that the police are dealing firmly with those engaging in crimes, the CM said no one should have any doubts about this. He emphasised the importance of peace and security for development and said no state can attract investments without proper law and order.

Continued on Page 5

**'Reject power tariff hike move'**

BRS asks ERC, says it will impose Rs 18500cr burden on people

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

BRS Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) has expressed concern over the proposed electricity tariff hike by the Congress government, which could impose a burden of Rs 18,500 crore on the public.

KTR urged the Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC) to reject the proposals put forth by the Congress government through power distribution companies (Discoms).

He along with BRS MLA Jagadish Reddy, other MLAs and senior BRS leaders met the ERC commission on Monday in Hyderabad and handed over a letter on behalf of the BRS.

KTR expressed apprehension about the nine proposals made by Discoms, which he believes would severely impact the public. One key proposal suggests increasing fixed charges for households consuming more than 300 units per month raising it from Rs 10 to Rs 50. KTR termed this

Continued on Page 5

**Congress top brass upset with Deepadas?**

**NAVEENA GHANATE**  
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■ HYDERABAD

Munshi's extended presence and the renting of a house, reportedly costing lakhs, have raised eyebrows among political observers.

What began as private accusations has now become a topic of open debate. Congress leaders themselves have dubbed Munshi the 'Viceroy of Telangana,' a reference to the colonial administrators claiming that she has set up a de facto gov-

**'Have more than 2 kids'**

AP CM Naidu appeals to women

**PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA**

Flagging Andhra Pradesh's falling birthrate, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has called upon women in the state to bear at least two children to stabilise its population, remarks welcomed by the AP Congress unit while ruling TDP's rival, YSRCP questioned the CM's 'vision' on the matter.

South India was witnessing an ageing problem, Naidu said, adding each woman should give birth to more than two children in their lifetime.

Incidentally, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin also touched upon the population issue on Monday in Chennai, linking it with the delimitation exercise.

Andhra's birthrate is under the replacement level of 2.1 live births per woman.

"There is a need to manage our population. Till 2047, we will have the demographic dividend, there will be more youngsters. After 2047, there will be more old people...if less than two children are given birth (per woman), then population will reduce. If you (each woman) give birth to more than two children, then the population will increase," the CM said during a recent public meeting in Amaravati.

Noting that the southern state's birth rate has plummeted to 1.6, he feared the continuation of the current situation could lead to further decline of the birth rate to 1 or lower, where only "old people will be visible in the society".

Continued on Page 5

**Congress, BRS fight over foreign trips**

Cong claims KTR went abroad 24 times, BRS lists out ministers went to foreign trips 24 times in last 10 months

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

A fresh political spat has erupted between the Congress and the BRS over foreign trips.

The controversy began when BRS Working President KTR criticized Congress ministers recent visit to South Korea, suggesting that the trip brought no benefit to Telangana. His remarks sparked a backlash, making the Congress accuse KTR of hypocrisy over his own travel history.

Responding to KTR's criticism, the Telangana government, through CPRO B. Ayodhya Reddy, released a document listing the 24 foreign trips undertaken by KTR during the last decade on X.

The document revealed that since 2014, KTR had travelled to Dubai, the US, Japan and the UK, allegedly at public expense. The timing of the release was seen as an attempt to deflect criticism by pointing out KTR's extensive travels.

However, Dileep Konatham, the former Director of Digital Media for Telangana, took to X to counter the Congress attacks.

The list of Congress leaders' 24 foreign trips includes Revanth Reddy's visits to Switzerland, Britain, Dubai, and the US, along with other senior leaders like Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhathi Vikramarka, who has also travelled to the US, Japan, and Dubai. Leaders like Juppally Krishna Rao, Duddilla Sridhar Babu, and Ponnam Prabhakar are also on the list with multiple foreign tours over the past few months.

Continued on Page 5





## CITY EVENTS

### Special showcase

Latest collection, curated just for you.

#### Venue

Kunal Rawal Flagship Store, Ground Floor, Inhabit Building, 8-2-601/1, Road No. 10, Zahara Nagar, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad. Hosted by Deepika Reddy. October 24, 25. 11 am to 7 pm.

### Fizzy Goblet

Grand opening of third store in Hyderabad to be hosted by Kamini Saraf.

#### Venue

Fizzy Goblet, 1st floor, Sarath City, Capital Mall

October 25. 4 pm to 8 pm.

### Standup Comedy

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

#### Venue

Multiple venues. till November 24

### Toxic

By Abhishek Upmanyu

#### Venue

Shilpakala Vedika November 2

### Prateek Kuhad

Shouettes tour.

#### Venue

Hyderabad international convention centre November 8

## HYDRAA begins to focus on rejuvenation of lakes

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

After multiple demolition drives, permissions and public panic, HYDRAA shifted its focus to rejuvenating lakes.

HYDRAA announced that it began the initial works of rejuvenating the water bodies in and around Hyderabad on Monday.

In a release, it stated that after removing encroachments from lakes in Hyderabad, it has turned its attention to rejuvenating the water bodies. The HYDRAA has started with Errakunta Lake in the Nizampet Municipality. The cleanup is expected to be finished in two to three days and there are plans for rejuvenating Errakunta Lake, with locals welcoming the efforts, said HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath.

# City Pioneer

the pioneer

HYDERABAD TUESDAY | OCTOBER 22, 2024

03



GHMC Commissioner Ilambarthi taking petitions from the public at the Prajavani programme on Monday

### PRAJAVANI

## Call to control illegal constructions in city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Commissioner Ilambarthi has directed the officials of the concerned department to pay special attention on controlling illegal constructions in the city.

He took part in the public address programme held at the GHMC head office on Monday and assured that they will take steps to solve the problem by asking the people who came from all over the city to solve their problems. On this occasion, Commissioner Ilambarthi said that the authorities should take the initiative in solving the problems of the people. It has been clarified that HODs must attend the Prajavani programme.

"Most of the complaints related to the town planning department were received in public and appropriate measures should be taken to control the illegal constructions completely. How many complaints were received? How many notices have been issued as per the rules? What action was taken must be explained," said Commissioner Ilambarthi.

The legal officer was advised to review all court cases. Officers of all departments were advised to look into the complaints received in the Prajavani and take steps to solve them quickly.

## Govt prioritises welfare of policemen

### CM lays foundation stone for Young India Police School

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy laid the foundation stone for the Young India Police School at Manchirevula village in Rangareddy district on Monday.

Minister D Sridhar Babu, MP Konda Vishweshwar Reddy, Chief Secretary A Santhi Kumari, Special Chief Secretary Ravi Gupta, Director General of Police Jitender, Hyderabad Commissioner of Police CV Anand, Intelligence DGP B Shivadhar Reddy, CID DGP Shikha Goel, and other dignitaries participated in the programme.

Minister Sridhar Babu addressed the gathering and stated that since coming to power, this government has prioritised the welfare of policemen, recognising their tireless service, often without a single day off. In this regard, the foundation stone of the Young India Police School has been laid, marking a step towards providing high-quality education to the children of police officers, enabling them to grow to international standards.

In addition to prioritising



police welfare, the government has also established the Young India Skill University, the first of its kind in the State. This institution aims to equip youth with

industry-relevant skills, creating employment opportunities across various sectors, regardless of caste or religion. Plans are underway to set up Young India

Schools in every constituency to further this inclusive vision.

The Young India Police School is envisioned as an exemplary institution, focusing not only on

academics but also on sports and extracurricular activities, fostering the overall mental and physical development of students. The Chief Minister has directed officials to prioritise sports, recognising its role in supporting holistic growth.

Furthermore, in a significant achievement, the government successfully conducted the Group 1 Mains exams for the first time since formation of Telangana.

With the Supreme Court's approval and the peaceful conclusion of the exams, the government is committed to implementing a clear 10-month vision to provide employment opportunities for the unemployed. These initiatives reflect the government's dedication to fostering a prosperous and inclusive future for all.

MP Konda Vishweshwar Reddy congratulated the police on the occasion of laying the foundation stone for the Young India Police School. Director General of Police Jitender welcomed the dignitaries, and the vote of thanks was delivered by Additional DGP (Greyhounds) Stephen Ravindra.

## Property show aims to boost TG real estate amid HYDRAA concerns

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA) impact has reduced the general sector of real estate from 5 to 8 per cent, according to the members of National Real Estate Development Council (Naredco-Telangana).

Announcing the upcoming 14th Property Show of Naredco from October 25 to 27 at Hitex, the members have anticipated that there will be a boost to the real estate sector of Telangana, especially Hyderabad as Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has made a categorical statement that constructions with legal permissions will not be demolished by HYDRAA.

On Monday, the members have detailed that in an invitation to interact with Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka and Uttam Kumar Reddy, the associations have detailed that there is a fear among developers and buyers about HYDRAA and a decision supporting the requests of people who have legal permissions would see a change in the real estate sector.

Vijaya Sai Meka, president of Naredco explained, "We have met the ministers and explained to them



the current scenario of fear in the public. We are planning to encourage developers and buyers that there is no fear as Chief Minister Revanth Reddy made a categorical statement that assets with legal permissions will not be disturbed. It is an ongoing issue for real estate businessmen in Telangana."

However, the downfall of 5 to 8 per cent will be improved once the people visit the property show and understand that it is the right time to invest in Telangana as the government is planning to develop the city and HYDRAA is an advantage to the developers who follow the rules. With the Musi River Front Development project, more invest-

ments will be attracted to the city, said R Venkateshwara Rao, treasurer and K Sreedhar Reddy, secretary general, Naredco.

"This is the first government which announced the budget of Rs 10,000 crore for infrastructure in Hyderabad and developing lakes is a welcome idea.

The association involves a robust permission process for constructions and no developer from our association was involved in illegal constructions.

We only inform them that if the project is in litigation then the developer suffers. So, we restrain ourselves from going with an unethical process," they added.

## Special emergency vehicles for power restoration launched

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a first-of-its-kind initiative, Telangana government has inaugurated special vehicles in Greater Hyderabad to handle emergency power restoration services.

These vehicles, designed like ambulances, aim to ensure immediate response and restoration of electricity during any interruption in power supply across the city. Speaking to the media after the inauguration, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu said that the vehicles will be deployed in all divisions under the Central Breakdown (CBD) department and will operate round-the-clock. "Whenever there is a disruption in power

supply, consumers can call the toll-free number 1912, and emergency response teams will be sent out immediately," he said.

Greater Hyderabad currently has 57 sub-divisions, and one vehicle will be allocated to each division. He emphasised that the growing demand for electricity and the increasing number of consumers require expanded services to address power outages quickly.

Each vehicle will be equipped with an assistant engineer and three linesmen, who will be on standby 24/7 with essential materials. The vehicles are fully fitted with advanced tools, including thermal vision cameras, power ramps, ladders, insulators, con-

ductors, cables and other necessary safety gear.

These vehicles also have the capacity to tow transformers, allowing the staff to transport and replace them in a short time.

The TGAIMS app will assist in identifying the exact location of emergencies, helping the teams reach the affected areas faster.

These vehicles can be called power ambulances, and they will significantly enhance our ability to respond to electrical emergencies, ensuring better services for our consumers. The event was attended by Energy Secretary Sandeep Kumar Sultania, CMDs Musharraf Ali, Varun Reddy and other officials.



## Docs urged to enhance image of govt hospitals

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a high-level review meeting, Minister for Medical and Health Damodar Raja Narasimha instructed doctors to work towards improving the brand image of government hospitals, ensuring they instill greater trust and confidence in the public. The meeting focused on the performance of teaching hospitals affiliated with medical colleges, particularly their outpatient and inpatient services, bed capacity and other key areas.



Minister Raja Narasimha emphasised the need for government hospitals to operate in a manner that enhances public confidence. He directed officials to address any hospital-related issue promptly and assured them that the government is prepared to provide all necessary facilities.

He also warned that hospitals' performance will be regularly reviewed and that action will be taken if patients face any difficulties. The Minister stressed the importance of strict sanitation and security measures. He instructed DME and the secretary to conduct surprise inspections

and take immediate action against responsible personnel if sanitation issues are found. Additionally, he emphasised the need for timely repairs of hospital equipment and discouraged referring patients elsewhere due to non-functioning equipment.

Regarding maternity and child health centres, the Minister mentioned complaints about long waiting time for scans and recommended increasing the number of scanning machines to reduce delays.

## Trend of managers pressuring staff to resign emerges

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■ HYDERABAD

A growing trend has emerged where managers are pressuring employees to resign voluntarily rather than being terminated. Employees are often counselled that if they are fired, their record will state they were laid off, which could negatively impact future job prospects. However, if they choose to resign, they can leave without any formal remarks on their employment history, making it easier to move on to new opportunities.

In such a situation faced by employee T Ravi (name changed) with an E-commerce company explained, "I am just married and I have shifted to the present company with better opportunity, but as the project is completed, I have been involved in conversations where my manager was forcing me to resign." "I was advised that with a limited time period of work no further company will be interested to hire me if I am fired in the upcoming recession, then it will impact on my performance certificate." The employees understand the adversity of the situation



later when they are not finding jobs in the market. They are in search of jobs in the market by being unemployed. The employees are unable to

fight for their rights of being paid for three months when fired by the organisation without notice. Another employee Srikanth

(name changed) explains, "My project is yet to be completed, but I was informed earlier that I need to look out for jobs and also begin discussing the salary brackets of a few employees. The communication has started that we are being approached to leave the organisation before it will commence removing employees."

A few of the employees have advised that youngsters who are joining through placements to be vigilant in reading the guidelines and approach a redressal committee if any manager is stressing them to resign forcibly.









## FIRST COLUMN

## THE FEAR OF LOSS AND THE QUEST FOR INNER PEACE

Accepting life's impermanence may be the key to transcending fear



RAVI VALLURI

Humans are intrinsically fearful of loss. Misplacement can assume several dimensions. Say mislaying of property, wealth, recognition, position, power, pelf, health and most importantly, life. John's (name changed) steely voice suddenly trembled and quivered as he answered the pretentious cell phone. Rachel (name changed), his daughter had met with a grievous car crash and was wheeled into the ICU of an estimable hospital. Death is the action or fact of dying or being killed, the end of life of a person or an organism.

Several years ago, a Japanese warrior was captured by his adversaries and was confined to a dungeon. That fateful night he tossed and turned restlessly and was unable to sleep, fearing the following day when he would be interrogated, tortured and eventually executed. He was staring death in its face. Then suddenly he remembered the priceless words of his Zen Master. "Tomorrow is not real. It is an illusion. The only reality is now." Heeding these esoteric words, the warrior overcame the exacting condition he was encountering and soon his mind became tranquil and he fell asleep. Suffering and fear arise in our minds when humans confront ailment or impending death. No one wishes to pass from being to non-being.

The credo of the human mind is the desire to remain eternally immortal. Millions of cells in the human body perish and are regenerated. But we are not mindful or wakeful of this reality. Do humans compose dirges or elegies like Catullus or Propertius for the dead cells? Or do we carouse and indulge in delirium on the birth of new cells and recite 'Happy Birthday'



songs? "No one wants to die. Even the people who want to go to heaven do not want to die to get there! And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it." Be it Rachel or the Japanese warrior no one has ever attained perpetuity or everlastingness; however bare-knuckled a person may be, he remains a glass jaw to the reality.

Yet youngsters today cannonaded by gizmos and technology become weary and bored of life at the young ages of twenty, thirty and hotfoot to snuff out their lives. Life is indeed holy and hallowed, too valuable and will remain a mystery that should not be recklessly given up. Yet there is no covenant or magic potion which guarantees deathlessness. Identifying and unravelling this mystery has confronted the minds of spiritualists, religious congregations and those of scientists and technocrats alike. A Zen Master was unwell and desired to cast away his body. His pupils implored him that he ought to live longer and disseminate the profound knowledge. It so happened that one disciple remarked, "Whether it is life or death, let it be." The Master was ecstatic with the response and passed away. "Let it be" is much more than a mere aphorism, it is a state of mind.

Our shastras impress that the human mind is influenced by place, time, food, past impressions and associations and the actions of individuals. The footprints bear both efficacious and antipathetic impacts on the human mind. Humans are enslaved by the above-mentioned factors and habits and, as a result, involuntarily superintendents our perceptions, attitudes and behaviour.

And over a period if we are not aware of these negative emotions they compound into anxiety, anger, aggression, covetousness, low self-esteem, and fear. Knowledge about the impermanence of life and variegated dimensions can be gained only through regular practice of pranayama, Sudarshan Kriya, meditation, or mindful observation of breath. This is the secret and the only truth.

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

## Unlocking the full potential of GatiShakti



UTTAM GUPTA

The PM GatiShakti initiative is revolutionising India's infrastructure by integrating digital planning tools to expedite project completion and improve multimodal connectivity

According to the Secretary of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Amardeep Singh Bhatia, as many as 208 big-ticket infrastructure projects including roads (101), railways (73), urban development (12) and oil and gas (4) worth Rs 1539,000 crore have been recommended for approval under the PM GatiShakti initiative so far. These projects have been recommended by an inter-ministerial group known as the Network Planning Group (NPG) constituted under the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (NMP). Launched in October 2021, the PM Gati Shakti NMP is a transformative Rs 100 lakh crore initiative aimed at revolutionising the infrastructure in India over the next five years.

Its vision is to create a world-class integrated infrastructure that improves the ease of living, boosts economic growth and makes Indian businesses more competitive. It does so by expediting project completion, reducing timelines, enhancing multimodal connectivity, boosting efficiency across sectors, benefiting logistics (a jargon for handling, storage and transportation) creating jobs and fostering innovation. How does it work? The PM GatiShakti NMP has been developed as a Digital Master Planning tool. It works on a dynamic Geographic Information System (GIS) platform wherein data on specific action plans of all the 16 Ministries/Departments dealing with infrastructure sectors as well as of the States have been incorporated within a comprehensive database.

The NMP portal has over 1,600 layers of geospatial data, showing all physical and social infrastructure of an area viz land, ports, forests, and highways and so on. The NMP revolves around seven primary sectors that are fundamental to economic growth and ensuring seamless connectivity. These sectors are roads, railways, ports, airports, mass transport, waterways and logistics infrastructure.

These are further supported and complemented by sectors like energy (all fuels such as petrol, diesel, ATF, natural gas and power etc) transmission, IT communication, bulk water and sewerage, and social infrastructure. The inter-ministerial NPG has representations from the connectivity infrastructure ministries/departments, involving their heads of network planning division to ensure unified planning and integration of the proposals.

The NPG meets every fortnight and appraises infra projects to ensure multi-modality (a term used to connote several different modes of transportation to get cargo from the factory/port/warehouse to a client's front door), synchronisation of efforts, and comprehensive development in and around the project location. All logistics and connectivity infrastructure projects worth over Rs 500 crore are routed through the NPG. The NPG's approval is required even before making a DPR (Detailed Project Report) at the planning stage. Thereafter, the project follows the normal procedure of approval by the Public Investment Board (PIB) or Department of



AS MANY AS 156 GAPS IN INFRASTRUCTURE TO PORTS AND FOR MOVEMENT OF BULK COMMODITIES LIKE COAL, CEMENT, FERTILIZERS AND FOOD GRAINS, HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED FOR INTERVENTION UNDER THE PM GATI SHAKTI INITIATIVE

Expenditure under the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and the Cabinet.

Put simply, NMP provides on a centralised portal, a 360-degree view of all the existing projects/initiatives, those under implementation as well as projects under planning stage across all ministries and departments and offers visibility into all critical data relevant to efficient planning and execution. It helps in the identification of critical gaps in infrastructure, helping to select the most efficient routes for transportation, reducing costs, and minimising delays.

As many as 156 gaps in infrastructure to ports and for movement of bulk commodities like coal, cement, fertilisers and food grains, have been identified for intervention under the PM GatiShakti initiative.

The plan also helps in prioritising projects more effectively by leveraging cross-sector interactions, ensuring that the ministries work in harmony to align the projects and allocate resources optimally - based on national priorities - avoiding duplication and redundancies.

The upfront approval by the NPG even before the ministry prepares the DPR can help it in making the RIGHT choices, prevent delays and avoid colossal wastage of resources that were germane to the earlier dispensations when the ministries and departments were working in silos - in an uncoordinated manner - unaware of the happenings and work in progress in other departments and bereft of the crucial data on KEY parameters. The PM GatiShakti is a robust system working on real time basis in a dynamic framework to guide project planning and execution (monitoring through satellite imagery ensures that the ministries can track progress and make necessary

adjustments to keep projects on schedule).

The phenomenal increase in the capacity in all crucial areas such as ports, airports, railways, highways, roads and so on is a testament to the success of efforts made under PM GatiShakti.

But, we have a long way to go. The target of Rs 100 lakh crore investment for building the infrastructure over five years was set by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her maiden Budget for 2019-20 (out of this, 39 per cent or Rs 3900,000 crore was to come from the Centre and an equal amount from States and the balance Rs 2200,000 crore from the private sector).

Against this, the investment covered under PM GatiShakti is Rs 1539,000 crore which is just about 15 percent. Even when we take this as a proportion of the investment commitment by the Centre (presumably all projects under PM GatiShakti are centrally sponsored), this works out to 40 per cent. As for the States, they are far behind in meeting their overall investment target of Rs 3900,000 crore.

And, very few of them such as Uttar Pradesh, and Gujarat have boarded the PM GatiShakti platform.

The platform by ensuring visibility, identification of bottlenecks and better coordination can help expedite approvals but it can't be a substitute. The approvals have to be given by the concerned authorities at the central and State levels. Here, projects face long delays especially when it comes to getting environmental and land clearances.

Local protests exacerbate the delays. 'Working in silos' syndrome doesn't go away just because Modi has given a platform to the bureaucrats in various Ministries to sit together and thrash out issues.

Sticking to their stance, especial-

ly when it comes to staking their claim to resources (such conflicts are seen more in major projects like roads and railways) often leads to delays. Further, a lack of coordination with the states, as seen in the Sagarmala and Bharatmala projects, has led to slower progress.

Outdated or incomplete data is a major bottleneck. For instance, while land records are digitised in 13 states, the rest lag. This hampers the implementation of projects in states where land records are not digitised as well as roads/highways projects, power transmission lines, and oil and gas pipelines passing through these states.

Even as the PM GatiShakti platform allows for real-time tracking, the authorities don't always make project updates regular, which delays completion. This is particularly true of rural road projects in many districts leading to slow progress.

The investment by the private sector is nowhere near the target of Rs 2200,000 crore set by Sitharaman. In the roads/highways sector, even as the government has asked private players to come under public-private partnerships (PPPs) mode, the latter's response isn't encouraging leaving it to the former to take on the load.

The bottlenecks lead to continuing project delays and cost overruns which cause high tariff/service charges across all sectors highways, railways, ports, airports, power transmission, fuel transportation etc. These come in the way of making Indian businesses more competitive and ease of living for the common man. All Stakeholders particularly the States should work to surmount the bottlenecks to enable PM GatiShakti to deliver its full potential.

*(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)*

## How India's workforce can benefit from the world's growing demand

Tapping into this opportunity requires a systematic approach to connect Indian talent with international employers

India's labour force is one of its greatest assets, with millions of skilled workers spread across various industries, including healthcare, construction, information technology and engineering. However, despite this abundance of talent, many of these workers struggle to find suitable employment within the country. The global labour market, on the other hand, is increasingly facing shortages in these same sectors. Bridging this gap has been a significant challenge.

Global Skill Shortage and Demand for Indian Talent over the past decade, countries across Europe, the Middle East, and parts of Asia have been facing critical shortages in skilled



ADITI BANERJEE

labour. Factors like ageing populations, changing work preferences, and evolving technological needs have driven these regions to seek out talent from countries like India. Healthcare, construction, IT, and logistics are some of the industries experiencing the most pressing shortages. We need to recognise this demand early on and respond by connecting skilled Indian

professionals with global employers. This will help in aligning the skill sets of Indian workers with international standards and job requirements, offering thousands secure employment overseas.

A Systematic Approach to Global Mobilisation. The workforce mobilization model should ensure that the process is smooth and transparent for both the workers and the employers. The organisation focuses on several key stages: **Talent and Skill Gaps:** We should conduct thorough assessments of candidates, ensuring they meet international job requirements. By collaborating with top training institutes, they also provide upskilling opportunities to candidates who need it.

**Job Matching:** With established relationships with employers in countries such as Germany, Canada, and the UAE, organisations can ensure that candidates are placed in roles that match their qualifications and aspirations.

**Navigating Complexities:** Overseas job placement is fraught with regulatory hurdles, but offering complete support with visas, documentation, and legal compliance, ensures candidates can focus on building their careers without administrative delays.

**Supporting Worker Welfare:** The organisation provides post-placement assistance, offering support with relocation and helping candidates adjust to new cultural environments. This ensures long-term success



for workers abroad. Shaping the Industry's Future Beyond individual placements, the organisation's work is in shaping the broader landscape of international labour migration. There has to be a system for fair recruitment practices and the protection of workers' rights. This is critical in an industry that is often plagued by stories of worker exploitation and unethical recruitment agencies.

A transparent process ensures that workers are fully informed of the terms of their contracts before they travel abroad. This approach not only safeguards the interests of Indian workers but also builds trust with global employers.

The global demand for skilled labour is at an all-time high, and India has the talent to meet this need. Many organisations have pitched in to fill this gap. 'Magic Billion' creates dignified, well-paying employment opportunities for Indian workers overseas. Since starting in 2018, it has facilitated over 4,000 Indian workers being placed in global roles. It is just not helping individuals find jobs; we're building sustainable careers that elevate both the worker and their families.

**Women Empowerment:** A particularly noteworthy aspect of such an organisation's work is its focus on women and young professionals. The global job market offers unique opportunities for these groups, particularly in industries like healthcare and hospitality. Targeted programs need to aim at empowering women to enter these fields and secure high-paying jobs abroad. This is especially significant in a country like India, where barriers to women's employment are still prevalent in many sectors. The organisation's efforts to provide training and certification for nursing professionals, for example, have opened up opportunities for hundreds of women to work in countries where there is a growing demand for healthcare work-

ers. This not only benefits the individual but also creates ripple effects for their families and communities.

**Economic Benefits:** India's skilled labour force is not only contributing to the economies of the countries where they work but also bringing significant benefits to India itself. Remittances sent home by overseas workers are a major source of foreign exchange and play a crucial role in the economic development. By placing workers in global jobs, we can help alleviate some of the domestic unemployment pressures. This is especially important for sectors like construction where there is a surplus of skilled labour in India.

*(The writer is CEO & Co-Founder of Magic Billion; views are personal)*





## BREAKING BARRIERS IN CLASSICAL DANCE

Embodying the soul of Mohiniyattam, **Gopika Varma's** pursuit of this classical dance is marked by an insatiable curiosity, passion and dedication to unravelling the hidden layers of stories, emotions and cultural significance. In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, renowned Mohiniyattam exponent delves into the intricacies of her artistic journey, where dance becomes a profound exploration of the soul



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**G**opika Varma's pursuit of Mohiniyattam is a journey steeped in curiosity and passion, where dance becomes a living, breathing dialogue with history and mythology. Her search isn't confined to perfecting a graceful step or mastering a delicate expression; it's about uncovering the hidden layers of stories, emotions and cultural significance that lie beneath each performance. She constantly seeks more—more knowledge, more understanding and more connection. Whether she's collaborating with scholars, experimenting with new interpretations, or blending ancient tales with contemporary relevance, her artistic path is one of endless discovery, where every performance is not just an expression of dance but a profound exploration of the soul of Mohiniyattam.

In the world of classical Indian dance, she resonates with grace, storytelling and an undying dedication to her art form, Mohiniyattam. Reflecting on her journey, she describes it as a continuous learning process, one that blends tradition with modernity, demanding both passion and discipline. "It's very important for me that we announce and explain what I've choreographed at the beginning of every performance," she shares, emphasising the need for clarity in storytelling. For her, performing, feels like returning to her artistic roots. "Dancing is beautiful—there's a unique energy here. The staging, the audience, the backstage, everything is wonderful. And Shovana ji's festival, in particular, brings out the best audience," she says, praising the festival's impact on the city's cultural scene.

Her Mohiniyattam performances have always placed a strong emphasis on *abhinaya* (expressive storytelling), which she considers the soul of this classical dance form. "In Mohiniyattam, while footwork is important, the focus is on *abhinaya*—and that too, mature *abhinaya*. Only through refined expressions can we tell stories that resonate," she explains. Her recent performance at the *Spandan* festival showcased the stories of three strong women from the *Mahabharata*, characters that she believes continue to live among us today. "Drapadi is a powerful figure. Her life wasn't designed by her own desires; she lived for others, for *dharma*. In many ways, women today still live lives that aren't designed by them, much like Draupadi."

Reflecting on the evolution of the dance world, Gopika acknowledges how the digital age has transformed not just the way we teach and perform but also how classical dance forms like Mohiniyattam reach a broader audience. "The digital age has been a beautiful moment for us, especially when it comes to sharing classical dance styles. Online performances, teachings, and discussions have bridged the gap between distances. It's important, though, to use these resources wisely, ensuring the art's essence is preserved." Her journey with Mohiniyattam hasn't been easy, especially when she first arrived in Chennai. "When I came to Chennai, Mohiniyattam was practically nonexistent. It was a rare form to see, but now I have over 200 dancers performing in the city." The pride she feels for reviving the art form in Chennai is palpable, especially when she recalls receiving the state award from J Jayalalithaa, the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. "Receiving that honour from someone who understood and had learned both Mohiniyattam and Bharatanatyam was a great moment for me, particularly as a non-Tamil artist."

As she shares her experiences, it's clear that her art is deeply personal. "When you dance, especially when you embody a character, it always reflects your own mindset. I can't perform something that doesn't resonate with me. It won't feel personal, and the performance won't connect with the audience. To be successful, there has to be a reflection of yourself in your art."

For her, learning from maestros has been key to her growth. "When you train with maestros, you don't just learn the dance; you learn everything—the backstage, the management, the intricacies of every moment. It's like working with a great lawyer. There's a big difference between learning from a good teacher and a maestro. That experience is invaluable."

Despite her success, she continues to learn and evolve, which in turn inspires her students. "It's important that we keep upgrading ourselves to inspire the next generation. Mohiniyattam is a relatively young art form, revived only about 250 years ago. So it's vital to give it as much exposure as possible by presenting strong characters at major festivals."

Even during the pandemic, she found ways to keep the art alive. "We had online performances, classes and discussions. The distance between us reduced, but we had to make sure we used the resources well." For her, storytelling remains at the heart of Mohiniyattam. "We have to read, understand, and constantly be in touch with scholars to make sure the stories we tell reach the audience. Not every story does, but it's our responsibility to ensure they do." Through her performances, teachings and endless dedication to the dance, Gopika Varma continues to breathe life into the ancient stories of Mohiniyattam, ensuring they resonate with today's audiences.



## Sports drinks after short training? More harm than help!

**S**ports drinks are often marketed as a quick way to replenish electrolytes and energy lost during exercise. However, they aren't always the best option after short training or competition sessions.

Here are a few reasons why:

### EXCESS SUGAR

Sports drinks typically contain high amounts of sugar. After short sessions, the body does not need the excess sugar, which can lead to unnecessary calorie intake and may contribute to weight gain over time.

### ADDED CALORIES

For brief workouts (less than an hour), water is usually sufficient for rehydration. Consuming sports drinks adds unnecessary calories without significant benefit, especially when the exercise wasn't intense enough to burn many calories.

### ELECTROLYTE LEVELS

Short training sessions generally do not deplete electrolytes significantly. The sodium, potassium, and other electrolytes in sports drinks are designed for longer, intense sessions where sweat loss is substantial. For most people, typical diet intake is sufficient to replenish these electrolytes after a brief workout.

### DENTAL HEALTH

The sugar and acidity in sports drinks can contribute to dental problems, including tooth decay and enamel erosion. Regular consumption, particularly when it's not needed, may increase this risk.

### HYDRATION NEEDS

For moderate activities lasting less than 60 minutes, plain water is typically adequate for rehydration. Drinking water is the healthiest way to maintain fluid balance without the added sugars and artificial ingredients found in many sports drinks.

### ARTIFICIAL INGREDIENTS

Many sports drinks contain artificial flavors, colors, and preservatives, which provide no nutritional benefit and may not be ideal for those seeking a clean, healthy recovery option. Over time, the consumption of these additives can have unknown or potentially negative long-term effects on health.

### LACK OF NUTRIENT REPLENISHMENT

Sports drinks lack important nutrients like vitamins, minerals, and protein, which are crucial for muscle recovery and repair. After a short workout, it's better to focus on a balanced meal with essential nutrients rather than sugary drinks that offer minimal post-exercise recovery support.

### INCREASE IN INSULIN LEVELS

Consuming a sports drink that is high in sugar post-workout can cause a rapid spike in blood sugar levels, leading to an insulin surge. For people looking to maintain steady energy levels and metabolic balance, this sudden rise and fall of blood sugar might hinder recovery rather than aid it.

(The author, Dr Aabid Amin, is the Medical Director and Consultant Internal Medicine of Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals.)

## Transforming Kartik Aaryan from flab to fab

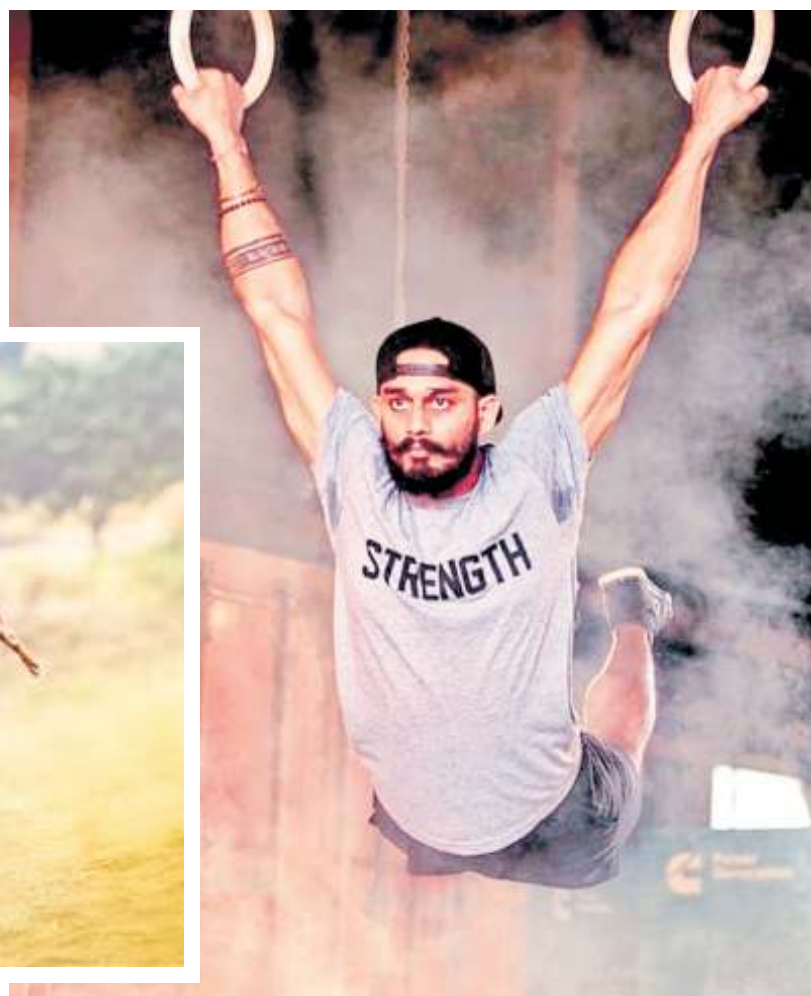
In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, **Tridev Pandey**, the mastermind behind Bollywood's most stunning transformations, reveals the secrets behind his success, his approach to fitness and his unwavering commitment to shaping India's sports and fitness landscape

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**A** simple journey that began with playing basketball on the national level, Tridev Pandey's life took an unexpected turn when a knee injury forced him to give up basketball, a sport he had excelled in, earning three national-level medals.

Determined to stay in the sports arena, Pandey turned to boxing, a passion he had nurtured since his school days. Under the guidance of renowned coach Chote Lal Yadav, Pandey's boxing journey began, yielding gold medals in state and regional tournaments and eventually landing him a spot in the India camp. However, a nationwide ban on boxing due to administrative issues left Pandey uncertain about his future. It was during this challenging period that he discovered his true calling—coaching. With the encouragement of a fellow boxer, Pandey decided to pursue coaching, and his life changed forever.

And now here he is, 10 years later, working with several celebrities to transform



into the unbelievable. Who did he first start working with, you wonder? Well, it was the extremely talented Sanya Malhotra.

A remarkable work that has currently made him the talk-of-the-town is the mind-boggling transformation of Kartik Aaryan for *Chandu Champion*. We hark back to how it all happened and he shares, "I got a call from the production house of *Chandu Champion* that we are making a film like this, where the lead actor is supposed to play a boxer and they asked me to send my resume."

Right from Slow Cheeta, Vikrant Massey, to his coaching with Sanya, he shared all of it, and post that, he got a call from the team asking how much time is it going to take for the training since they had to make a proper boxing movie. "I later got to know that I had to train Kartik Aaryan and transform him into an athlete. It was not just for the sake of showing the audience but as a proper boxer. When I met Kabir sir, I assured him that whatever sessions I would take for the training, I didn't want anyone else to body dub on his behalf but teach him boxing completely. Thanks to Kartik bhai that he took it seriously. In fact, he used to also send me videos about how we can try the training." Not just the training, but fitness was something that they were keen on with the push-ups, pull-ups, headstands and all of it.

They had no big goals but the small ones. But how? It was post-Freddy that he had to begin transforming into *Chandu Champion*. While back then, he was of 90 kg, he shares, "We wanted to start with 85 kg first. We had to look into what all we are supposed to do and how much intake of calories is required. I did not really want to exhaust him since the beginning; he was also shooting for

*Satyaprem Ki Katha*. He used to not get proper time because he was shooting for 12 hours straight. The time was a challenge and then the injuries because your body is not recovering completely, not getting a proper 8 hours of sleep, so we really had to be alert about the techniques we wanted to learn. We used the AM/PM routine. Then, of course, I was maintaining the discipline, but slowly things came in track. We are proud that without any steroids or injections, we came up with this body. It was a result of pure hard work."

While in Kartik Aaryan's case, it was much clear that he had to do all of it for the role; on the other hand, he was working with Shweta Tripathi Sharma, with whom the goal was to get fit. "She hadn't done any training or any such sort of thing earlier. She just wanted to workout and that's how we began the training. Simultaneously, *Mirzapur 3's* shooting was also supposed to start where she had to use a gun and do some actions. That's how we began and you can see the result. As compared to Golu in Season 1 and Season 3, we made a strict diet and heavy lifting. Her weight is about 48 and she was lifting a 50-55 kg deadlift and 40 kg squats. It was not that the story wanted Golu to look in a certain way. It was all her wish to do all of it that could be visible on-screen with her confidence."

While he continues to train Kartik Aaryan, Shweta Tripathi, Shivani Raghuvanshi and Sanya Malhotra on a regular basis, he is also working on a Dharma project. As Pandey looks to the future, his goal remains clear: to continue making a meaningful impact in the lives of his clients and contributing to the growth of Indian sports and fitness.

# what's brewing?



Actress Shraddha Das, along with Amjad Habib, Vamshi Krishna Marella and Jagadeeshwar Goud opened the Amjad Habib Premium Salon, on Monday at Nallagandla in Hyderabad. The salon, which has a century-long history, is growing through franchising throughout Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. It has additional facilities in the city and intends to continue growing.



PARTY

Photos by - SV Chary

Taruni, in partnership Phoenix Mall of Asia and She for Society has today flagged off the bike rally - "Her Ride, Her Rules," at Phoenix Mall of Asia. This inspiring event aimed at breaking stereotypes and celebrating the multifaceted nature of femininity. The uniqueness of this event was to showcase women from diverse backgrounds, with a special focus on women bikers who embody strength, independence and grace.



The 15th Indian National Memory Championship 2024 took place at The Manohar Hotel, Begumpet, Hyderabad, on Monday, organised by the Indian Memory Council. Chief guest Dr. Jayaprakash Narayana emphasised the importance of such events for boosting cognitive abilities. Prizes were distributed by Indian Memory Council President Squadron Leader Jayasimha and sponsors.



Satyajit Tripathy, Member (Distribution) at the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), inaugurated the two-day Insurance Conference 2024 with a lamp-lighting ceremony at IIRM Campus, Nanakramguda, Gachibowli, Hyderabad, on Monday.



Hodd's Cocktail Bar at Hyatt Gachibowli hosted a vibrant and exclusive bar takeover event featuring the spirits from Suntory Spirits. Led by Portfolio Advocate Tanvi Dandekar, the event unfolded amidst an ambience of sophistication and style, captivating cocktail enthusiasts and casual visitors alike.



KLH Bachupally Campus hosted the ACM India Regional Chapter Summit, bringing together the brightest minds and influential leaders in computing to encourage a dynamic platform for innovation, discussion and networking.

## FUN

### ARCHIE



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### GARFIELD



### NANCY



### GINGER MEGGS



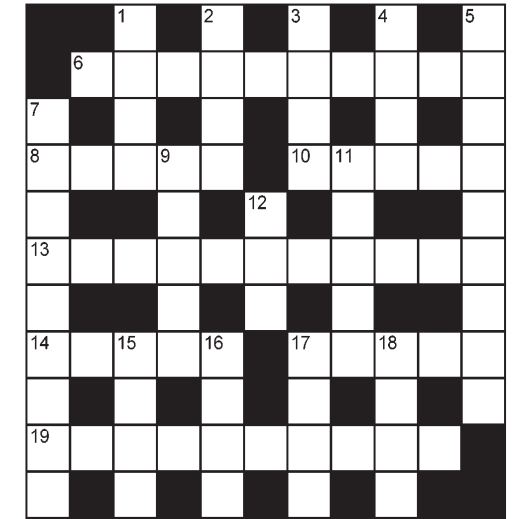
### REALITY CHECK



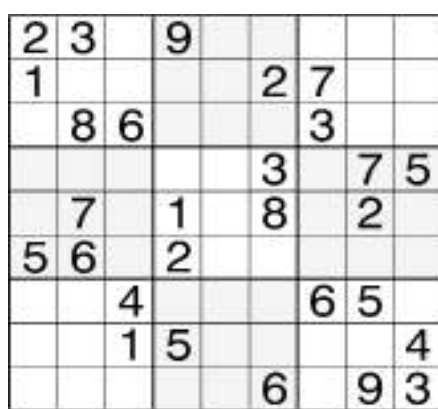
### SPEED BUMP



### CROSSWORD



### SUDOKU



**Yesterday's solution**  
2 4 9 6 3 7 1 8 5  
3 7 1 8 2 5 9 4 6  
8 5 6 4 9 1 7 2 3  
9 6 3 2 8 4 5 7 1  
5 1 8 7 6 3 4 9 2  
4 2 7 5 1 9 6 3 8  
1 9 4 3 5 8 2 6 7  
7 3 2 1 4 6 8 5 9  
6 8 5 9 7 2 3 1 4

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

### ACROSS

- 6 Broken down; not working properly (3,2,5)
- 8 A word for a taxi driver
- 10 A sung musical drama
- 13 Saying you are sorry
- 14 Light soft modelling wood
- 17 Part of a poem or song
- 19 Follows seventeenth

### DOWN

- 1 A round underground part of some plants
- 2 A small type of horse
- 3 A toy that spins around a held string (2-2)
- 4 The part along the side or end
- 5 Three-sided figures
- 7 A way of cooking eggs

- 9 These ring at churches
- 11 Stick wallpaper on with this
- 12 The number of years someone has lived
- 15 Use these when running
- 16 Small busy insects
- 17 An opinion
- 18 Animals like large mice

**SOLUTION**  
S T A R T S I D O L  
I U S R I  
C A G E S H O U T S  
K U N A M T  
I S R A E L I E  
O T U L D N  
X I G N O R E D  
Y M H W P C  
G U E S T S H A L L  
E A V R A  
N I N E P A I S T R Y



'TELOGU AMMAYI' ANANYA NAGALLA IS RECEIVING ACCLAIM FOR HER PERFORMANCE-ORIENTED ROLES AND IS NOW AIMING FOR A BIG COMMERCIAL SUCCESS WITH HER UPCOMING FILM POTTEL. SHE SHARES HER JOURNEY INTO FILMS AND MUCH MORE



# ANANYA AWAITS HER BIG COMMERCIAL SUCCESS

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Ananya Nagalla left her job at an MNC to enter the film industry. She initially thought she would land some cute roles, but her experience turned out quite different. "When I entered the industry, I didn't have maturity. But once my debut film *Mallesham* happened, people saw me in a different light. Maybe they thought I was suited for mature roles, so they started offering me those kinds of roles. I feel happy that I connected with different sections of the audience, especially when they think of performance-oriented actresses. So, I am happy with what I am doing right now," said Ananya Nagalla. The actress has been receiving more village-backdrop characters and even in *Pottel*, she is portraying a similar role. She plays a young mother living in a village. "When the director narrated this role, I had done a web series with a similar character, so I thought it was repetitive. But the two directors' thought processes were not alike, so when the shooting began, I found that this role was completely different. The film has a good story and concept and not only my role, but every character in this film is going to be highlighted," said Ananya. The actress expressed that she is not concerned about playing a mother role again, as her focus is on being an actor. "I never felt that way because I wanted to be an actor. Some may enter the industry wanting to do glamorous roles, but I stepped in because I wanted to be a good actor," she explained. Perhaps the filmmakers noticed her in *Mallesham*, where she played a village girl with a Telangana backdrop. "In this film too, it relates closely to my first film, so they did a look test and tried a different approach. More than my look, I feel that the colour grading has given more depth to the film," she added. Ananya mentioned that she didn't do any

homework or research for this role. "Whatever director Sahith told me, I simply followed him and did what he wanted. I didn't do any homework. My first scene is with Ajay, where he kicks me in the stomach! You can see it in the trailer too. It was a serious moment in the film, but while the director was preparing to shoot, I was playing with the kid," she recalls. She added that director came to her a few times, asking if she could remember her dialogues. "I told him not to worry about it. When the shot was ready, I did it and the director was very happy," said Ananya. After that scene, the director never came to her with concerns about dialogues or anything else, as he became fully confident in her abilities. The film's story revolves around a father struggling to provide a good education for his daughter. Reflecting on the current education system, Ananya shared her views. "Nowadays, education feels like a business because of the high fees. People from the lower-middle class are losing interest in sending their children to school, opting instead to earn a few thousand rupees when they go to work. After this film, I hope people understand how someone struggles to ensure their child is educated. Some people don't know the value of education; we need to create awareness," she said. Ananya stated that she has no regrets at the moment. "When I entered the industry, I did a film, and then the pandemic struck. The success vanished with Covid and I had to stay at home because there was no work. At that time, I felt bad," she said. She added that later, work began to come in continuously. "But now, frankly speaking, I haven't had any commercial success," admitted Ananya. Ananya is currently receiving three to four scripts and is selecting projects that interest her. "I am not sitting idle now as I am working continuously," she said. She added that she is not concerned with competition, as

she is not in that mindset. She shared that while she doesn't receive great support from her parents, they haven't discouraged her either. "I love acting, so they didn't say 'no,' but they haven't fully supported me either, as they didn't particularly like it. However, whenever I go out, they say, 'take care of yourself, be careful,'" she said about her parents. The actress expressed her hope that her mother will be pleased after the release of *Pottel*. "After *Pottel* releases, my mother should feel proud after seeing my performance. She will definitely say that her daughter did a good film," she said. Speaking about Telugu girls in the industry, she noted it is only about 30 percent. "If you look at the Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada industries, they choose local girls 70 percent of the time and they give outsiders a chance only 30 percent of the time. But here in the Telugu industry, they give 80 percent of the opportunities to outsiders and only 20 percent to Telugu girls," said Ananya. Discussing her upcoming projects, she mentioned that she has signed a film titled *Kathakali* with director Satish Vegesna. She also has two other projects, *Srikakulam Sherlock Holmes* and a comedy film *Lechindi Mahila Lokam*.



Saloni's new look for *Matka* is out!

Varun Tej is starring in a period drama titled *Matka*, alongside Meenakshi Chaudhary and Nora Fatehi. The film is directed by Karuna Kumar of *Palasa* fame and its story is set in the 1980s, primarily in Visakhapatnam. The filmmakers constructed the famous Poorna Market set specifically for this film. Until now, they had kept the character of Salloni under wraps, but on Monday, they revealed her look. Salloni rose to fame after the success of *Maryada Ramanna*, directed by Rajamouli many years ago. After that film, she appeared in a few more projects before taking a long break due to a lack of good opportunities. Now, she is making a comeback with *Matka* and her look is generating interest. She appears in a saree, embodying the style of a woman from the 80s. Despite there being two other female leads, Salloni's role in the film seems to be significant. Vijayender Reddy Teegala and Rajini Talluri are producing this film, which is set to release on November 14.

## 'Samudrudu depicts struggles of fishermen'

Director Nagesh Naradasi is helming a film titled *Samudrudu*; as the title suggests, it centers on the lives of fishermen. "I depicted the struggles and lives of fishermen in this film, but I didn't approach it like a documentary. I added all the commercial elements and blended them with the fishermen's stories," said director Nagesh. Senior actor Suman plays a pivotal role in this film, alongside lead actors Ramakanth, Avantika and Bhanusree. "When the fishermen ventured deep into the sea, their struggles and what happened to them afterward, every detail is portrayed intensely in this film," explained the director. He also praised lead actor Ramakanth for his performance. Produced by B Kishan, the film is scheduled for release on October 25. The pre-release event was held recently, where Suman commended the director. "After *Annamayya* and *Sriramadasi*, I didn't want to take on mythological roles, but director Nagesh Naradasi came to me with a mythological film *Satyanarayana Swami* which I liked and took part in. Now, the same director has brought a different concept with *Samudrudu* about fishermen and I played an important role in it," said Suman. He expressed confidence that this film will be a great success.



## PRABHAS' 'KING OF SWAG' AVATAR CREATES ONLINE FRENZY

Rebel Star fans are eagerly anticipating updates from the highly anticipated film *The Raja Saab*, directed by the talented Maruthi and starring Prabhas. On Monday, the makers announced that they would release an update in celebration of Prabhas's birthday on Wednesday. The *Raja Saab* is produced by TG Vishwaprasad under the People Media Factory banner. As Maruthi ventures into the romantic horror genre—a first for Prabhas—curiosity about the film is growing. In the poster released during the update announcement, Prabhas looks ultra-stylish. His new look and makeover for *The Raja Saab* promise to be refreshing. The shooting of *Raja Saab* is currently in its final stages.



## 'Pasupu Danchatam' ritual marks beginning of Sobhita-Naga's wedding

The marriage of Naga Chaitanya and Sobhita Dhulipala is the subject of much discussion in the town. On October 21, the actor from *Made in Heaven* posted images from 'Pasupu Danchatam', a traditional Telugu pre-wedding ritual symbolising the start of wedding celebrations. Shortly after Sobhita posted the pictures, numerous fans started wondering about their wedding date. The pair became engaged in a private ceremony on August 8 of this year. Sobhita Dhulipala posted photos from the 'Pasupu Danchatam' ceremony held at her residence on Monday. She donned a pink-orange saree adorned with a border of gold and green for the ceremony. The women in her family are all around her. Sharing the photos, she wrote, "Godhuma Raayi Pasupu danchatam. And so it begins! (sic)." "Pasupu Danchatam, also called 'Pasupu Kottadam', is a ritual practiced in Telugu traditions. During the ceremony, turmeric is crushed using the traditional method, which involves a stone grinder. It is the same as the haldi ceremony.



## Akash Puri launches Taskarinchuta

The movie *Taskarinchuta*, featuring Sunny as the lead, was launched on Monday. Produced by Shake Afrin under the Rachel Pictures banner, this crime comedy thriller is directed by Shivaprasad Chaluvaadi. The event was held at Ramanaidu Studios in Hyderabad, with young hero Akash Puri and producer Bellamkonda Suresh as special guests. During the ceremony, Akash Puri presented the script and switched on the camera, followed by the movie's poster launch. Producer Bellamkonda Suresh clapped for the muhurtham scene. Akash Puri said: "The title poster of *Taskarinchuta* looks great. Congratulations to Sunny for

his introduction as a hero. I wish the entire movie team all the best and hope the film achieves great success." Meanwhile, Sunny expressed his gratitude to Akash Puri for attending the launch event. "We are making a good effort with this project, which will be a crime comedy. We will make a film that everyone will enjoy." Director Shivaprasad at the event stated, "We are set to create *Taskarinchuta* as a fresh crime comedy thriller. Regular shooting will begin on the 15th of next month, and we are working on a unique presentation. Well-known artists will be part of our film, and their details will be revealed soon."

## JITHENDER REDDY ALL SET TO HIT THEATRES THIS NOVEMBER

After a long hiatus, director Virinchi Varma is returning with a film titled *Jithender Reddy*. He previously directed *Uyyala Jampala* with Raj Tarun and later *Majnu* with Nani. Both films performed well, but Virinchi Varma did not direct any further films for a considerable time. Now, after a lengthy break, he is back with *Jithender Reddy* starring Rakesh Varre in the lead role. The makers have announced that they are planning to release the film on November 8. The story of *Jithender Reddy* is inspired by real incidents that took place in Jagtial during the 1980s. The film is produced by Muduganti Ravinder Reddy. The promotional videos of the film have been intriguing, generating curiosity. The movie portrays *Jithender Reddy's* struggles with Naxalites and his fight for public issues since his college days. The trailer also depicts his entry into politics and interactions with a senior political leader who was the chief minister at the time. Vaishali Raj, Riya Suman, Subbaraju and Ravi Prakash play significant roles in the film.



# NEW ZEALAND WHITE FERNS SPLIT \$ 2.3 MILLION AFTER WINNING T20 WORLD CUP

AP ■ WELLINGTON

Members of the New Zealand White Ferns cricket team which beat South Africa by 32 runs in the final of the women's Twenty20 World Cup in Dubai on Sunday will split prize money of around USD 2.3 million. That works out at around USD 155,000 or NZD 256,000 per team member, a life-changing windfall for players who for years have struggled for years to achieve financial parity with their male counterparts. New Zealand's first-ever victory in the World Cup of cricket's shortest format was a massive surprise. The White Ferns had lost 10 consecutive T20 matches before beating South Africa in a warm-up match. That pre-tournament success proved a turning point for New Zealand who beat India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan, losing only to Australia on the way to the semifinals. South Africa ousted six-time champion Australia in a massive upset in the semi in which New Zealand beat the West Indies. New Zealand made 158-5, batting first in the final, helped by Suzy Bates who made 32, Amelia Kerr who made 43 and Brooke Halliday who made 38. Kerr then took 3-24 and Rosemary Mair 3-25 as New Zealand restricted South Africa to



126-9. "Pretty unbelievable to be honest," Mair said. "Coming into the tournament all the odds were against us so for the group to bounce back like they have is unbelievable. "We just care so much about each

other. We've been through a lot of lows in the last 18 months, and we've just stuck by each other and kept working hard for each other." Captain Sophie Devine was leading the New Zealand team for the last time. She and Bates have played in

all nine T20 World Cups since the first in 2009. New Zealand reached the final of the first two tournaments in 2009 and 2010, losing to Australia on both occasions. "This means everything to us," Bates said. "When you play team sport,

you want to be a world champion. "We've fought our way back to the top. (Devine) has been so outstanding leading this team... So calm and believing in us. We'll probably have a cuddle for even longer later because there's been some dark times that only the people in the (locker room) understand." New Zealand was coached to victory by Australian Ben Sawyer and former Black Caps batters Dean Brownlie and Craig McMillan. The White Ferns' success was praised Monday by New Zealand Sports Minister Chris Bishop. It came at the end of a weekend in which New Zealand also retained sailing's America's Cup and in which the New Zealand men's cricket team beat India in a test in India for the first time in 36 years. "And then to round out a truly amazing sporting weekend, at 3am Monday morning (NZT) the White Ferns, led by Sophie Devine, stepped up to face South Africa in the women's T20 World Cup final in Dubai and absolutely smashed it, bringing home their first World Cup since the One Day International in 2000," Bishop said. "Amelia Kerr's 43 runs off 38 balls and then taking 3 wickets for 24 set our team up for their magnificent performance."



## I am pain-free, need to play domestic cricket to make strong case for Australia tour: Mohammed Shami

PTI ■ GURUGRAM

Seasoned India pacer Mohammed Shami on Monday declared himself pain-free but insisted on proving his fitness in domestic cricket by playing at least "one or two" games to make a strong case for selection for the marquee tour of Australia starting next month. Shami, who has not played since the ODI World Cup final last November, bowled full tilt in the nets after India's opening Test against New Zealand in Bengaluru on Sunday. This was a few days after skipper Rohit Sharma revealed that he had swelling in his knees which has affected his rehabilitation from an ankle injury sustained last year. "I am very happy with how I bowled yesterday. I was bowling from half run-up before that because I didn't want to take too much load. But yesterday, I decided to go full tilt, and I bowled at a 100 per cent," the 34-year-old told reporters on the sidelines of an event organised by Eugenix Hair Sciences. "The result was good. I am 100 per cent pain-free. Everyone has been wondering for a long time about whether I will make it for the Australia series but it is still some time away." India are expected to leave for Australia two weeks before the series opener in Perth beginning November 22, leaving Shami just about enough time to feature in two Ranji games for Bengal. Bengal take on Kerala at home from October 26 before travelling to Bengaluru to face Karnataka from November 6. Is he ready for Bengal's next game?

"The only thing on my mind is to ensure that I am fit and how strong I can be for the Australia series. I can see what kind of attack we need in Australia." **INJURIES TEACH YOU PATIENCE:** Shami was forced out of action for more than a year after suffering a knee injury during the 2015 ODI World Cup. The 34-year-old is now in a similar phase and he feels injuries only make you stronger. "2015 also I was away for that long. Injury teaches you to fight against yourself, you have to keep frustration at bay, focus on fitness and game. It is difficult to get back on track after an injury. "Injuries teach you patience and add purity to your game. After your comeback the main thing is if you can maintain your fitness. Yes rhythm is important but your skills won't leave you. "You need to fight for regaining fitness," said Shami, who has taken 229 wickets in 64 Tests and 195 wickets in 101 ODIs. While he was recovering from his ankle injury, India were able to end their ICC trophy drought in the Caribbean. Did Shami, who was the standout bowler for India in the ODI World Cup at home last year, miss being part of the triumphant T20 World Cup squad? "It depends on luck as well. I feel one should not be disappointed as you gave your best for the country. You can't fight your luck. If you get injured there is nothing you can do about it," he said. India have already started preparing the next line of pacers though the likes of Shami, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj still have a lot of cricket left in them. Asked about his thoughts on the transition, Shami had only one advice for the next generation of fast bowlers. "It is a circle and will keep going on. Whether it is Mayank Yadav, Akash Deep Mukesh Kumar, Harshit Rana, I would only advise them to talk at length with the seniors in the nets, that teaches you a lot. "Last 8 to 10 years, we have bowled as a unit. Before that, we never had 140 plus pacers playing at the same time. "From those to the ones on the bench also bowl at 145kmph. So opponents don't get to relax and that creates fear. We all have different skills and that is what we have shown at home and overseas conditions." Can India win their third series in a row in Australia? "The conditions suit us. All our fast bowlers are different type and if we get bounce it only makes us better. Batters need to score a bit, rest we will manage (laughs)," Shami added.

## Mumbai cruise to nine-wicket win over Maharashtra to earn full points

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Defending champions Mumbai got their Ranji Trophy campaign back on track with an emphatic nine-wicket win over Maharashtra in their second group A league game here on Monday, offsetting the heavy loss to Baroda in the opening game. Needing 74 to win, Mumbai went into the final day at 13 for no loss.

While Ayush Mhatre's (15) dismissal robbed them off a bonus point, Prithvi Shaw (39 not out off 36 balls) and Hardik Tamore (21 not out off 26 balls) earned six points for the team in just 13.3 overs. This was after the 42-time champions lost to Baroda by 84 runs in the opening Ranji Trophy fixture but in the second match at the BKC ground, Mumbai excelled in all departments of the game. The match was won and lost on the first day itself when Mumbai bowled out Maharashtra for 126 in their first innings and then rode on 17-year-old Mhatre's smashing 176 and Shreyas Iyer's belligerent 142 to score 441.

While Maharashtra fared much better in the second innings with centuries from Ruturaj Gaikwad and veteran Ankit Bawne, apart from a 98 from former India U-19 batter Sachin Dhas, the damage was already done.

### BRIEF SCORES

**In Mumbai:** Maharashtra 126 and 388. Mumbai 442 & (Target 74) 75/1 (Prithvi Shaw 39 not out). Points: Mumbai 6; Maharashtra 0. **In Shillong:** Tripura 1st Innings 377/8. Meghalaya 222 and 138. Tripura won by an innings and 17 runs.

## Pressure on Siraj after only 19 wickets from 13 Tests in India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian skipper Rohit Sharma believes in consistency when it comes to team selection but he will have to take a leap of faith to retain speedster Mohammed Siraj in the playing eleven for the second Test against New Zealand considering his poor run in home conditions. The match starts in Pune from October 24 and inclusion of spin bowling all-rounder Washington Sundar as the fifth slow bowler is an indication that coach Gautam Gambhir and Rohit might go for the jugular on a spin-friendly track. The 30-year-old Hyderabad batsman has so far taken 80 wickets in 30 Test matches but 61 of those scalps have come in 17 away Test matches in three of the SENA countries (South Africa, England, Australia). Only 19 wickets after bowling 192.2 overs in 13 home Tests are figures that imply that Siraj has struggled in sub-continental conditions unlike



Jasprit Bumrah and Indore and Delhi where he got to bowl only 10 and six overs respectively. But what has been disappointing is that the last seven home Tests have yielded only 12 wickets for him which is less than two per match. Also, he hasn't been consistent enough to get initial breakthroughs leaving Bumrah with all the heavy-lifting to do with the new ball. PTI spoke to a coach, who has worked extensively with some of the current national team bowlers, and he thinks that Siraj's length is erroneous for Indian conditions. He explained the technical flaw that has cropped up in his bowling. "If you see Siraj's record, he has five-wicket hauls in Australia and South Africa where there is more bounce. The six to eight metre length away from the batter is considered to be ideal Test match length. But it varies from country to country depending on the bounce," the coach, who was a top domestic performer during his time, told PTI on condition of anonymity. "The ideal length in Australia is eight metres, it is around six metres in England and on low bounce Indian wickets, it is 6.5 metres. If you pitch it around 6.5 metres and get

movement, you are in business for both outside edge, bowled and leg before. "Siraj is bowling around eight metre length and in India with that length, you can't hit top of off (stump). He isn't pitching it up enough," he further explained. However, the coach is confident that once Siraj goes Down Under, for the five-match series starting November 22, he will again find his mojo as the length. Which he is hitting here, will work like magic in those conditions. "When you are hitting eight metre length on Indian tracks which are devoid of pace, the batter has more time to gauge the line and it becomes hittable. "I am not sure how effective he will be in Pune or Mumbai although latter was the only venue where he looked menacing against New Zealand in 2021. Problem is when you play white ball, this back of length in Indian conditions can still fetch you wickets," he reasoned.

## Reports say hockey set to be axed from 2026 Glasgow CWG; CGF, FIH mum

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Hockey is set to be axed from the 2026 Commonwealth Games as the host city of Glasgow looks to cut costs, several media reports here stated but both the International Hockey Federation (FIH) and the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) remained tight-lipped on the matter. Hockey has featured in each CWG since making its debut in 1998, but according to reports here, the Glasgow Games organisers want to drop it from the schedule along with net ball and road racing to ensure a trimmed programme that would be easy on the budget. Scotland stepped in to save the 2026

Games after the Australian state of Victoria pulled out due to rising costs. The schedule is due to be unveiled on Tuesday. When reached out by PTI, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) declined comment till the roster was officially out. "In a couple of days, the situation will be clear - you will get the information accordingly. From our side, until there is any official communication from CGF, we are not in a position to provide you any comment," an official said. The CGF also gave a similar response. "The sports programme for the 2026 Commonwealth Games will be confirmed tomorrow," read a statement from the body when it was approached for a clarification on the media reports.



Hockey's probable omission could also be down to the fact that the Games, to be held from July 23 to August 2, are being organised close to the World Cup that is scheduled two weeks later from August 15 to 30 in Wavre, Belgium and Amstelveen, Netherlands. To cut costs, the Glasgow Games organisers have reduced the number of

sporting disciplines from 19 (in 2022 Birmingham) to 10 with only four proposed venues — Commonwealth Arena and Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome, Scotstoun Stadium, Tollcross International Swimming Centre and Scottish Events Campus. None of these venues have a hockey turf. Hockey's exclusion from the Games would be a major blow for India as their men's team is a three-time silver-winner and two-time bronze-medallist in the sport. The women have won three medals, including a gold in the 2000 edition. The biggest hit would be to Australia, which has won the men's gold for a record seven times and the women's top honours in four editions.

## Ronaldo and Al-Nassr's ACL game moved amid Iran security fears

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Cristiano Ronaldo and Al-Nassr's AFC Champions League Elite game with Esteghlal of Tehran on Tuesday will be as closely watched in India as it is in Saudi Arabia and Iran. The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) said in a statement released last Tuesday that Esteghlal had to move its home fixture with Al-Nassr to the United Arab Emirates city of Dubai due to the security situation in Iran. The decision was greeted by surprise in India as, on Oct. 7, the AFC ruled that Mohun Bagan Super Giants of Kolkata had been "considered to have withdrawn" from the second tier AFC Champions League Two for refusing to travel to Iran to play its Oct. 2 fixture against Tractor SC in the northwestern city of Tabriz. It is not only Al-Nassr's game that has been relocated. Tractor's home game against Ravshan of Tajikistan, scheduled for

Wednesday, has been switched to become an away tie. Iran's national team also had to move its Oct. 15 World Cup qualifier against Qatar to Dubai. "... (Mohun Bagan) notes that the AFC has indeed recognised the volatility of the situation in Iran and as such, has rescheduled or shifted venues for several games," a spokesperson for Mohun Bagan told Associated Press, adding that the confederation had taken the same geopolitical instability into account that the club had. "Failing to apply the same standard to Mohun Bagan would result in unequal treatment by the AFC." According to the spokesperson, Mohun Bagan had made a request to the AFC that the game's date or venue be changed before it decided not to travel. "We consistently communicated concerns about the volatile and unsafe conditions in and around Iran, particularly regarding the safety of players and staff," the official added.



The Indian Super League club said that it had appealed the decision to the relevant AFC committee and hoped to be reinstated into the tournament. The AFC did not reply to an invitation to comment. Al-Nassr has four points from the first two games and can take a big step towards the second round with a win. The revamped tournament now consists of two groups of 12 - divided into west and east geographic zones - with the top eight from each advancing to the Round of 16. Nassr is going well in the Saudi Pro League with a 97th minute penalty from Ronaldo giving the team a 2-1 win over Al-Shabab on Friday to stay in third place. "There are a lot of games at the moment and it is not easy," said Stefano Pioli, Al-Nassr's coach. "We will do our best to maintain our performances in the Asian Champions League." Saudi Arabia has three of the four top teams in Group A. Al-Hilal is

first and the four-time winner meets defending champion Al Ain of the United Arab Emirates and could welcome Neymar back to action after a year out through injury. Jeddah club Al-Ahli also has maximum points and travels to Qatar to face Al-Rayyan. **FRONT RUNNERS MEET IN EASTERN ZONE:** In the eastern zone the top two meet. Gwangju FC of South Korea is making its first ever appearance in Asian competition and is the only team with two wins from two. It takes on Johor Darul Ta'zim of Malaysia. Australia's Central Coast Mariners has lost both games so far and head to China to take on Shanghai Port, coached by former Australian international Kevin Muscat, also seeking a first win. Last season's defeated finalist Yokohama F. Marinos also travels to China and meets Shandong Tiashan while three-time winner Pohang Steelers of South Korea faces Thailand's Buriram United.