

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**  
 The pioneer  
**Drug tests must be conducted on all BRS MLAs and the karyakartas who defend them. BRS leaders are coming out and speaking loudly whenever drug rings are busted. We demand that the police should conduct drug tests on all BRS leaders and karyakartas. The BRS should be ashamed to support Raj Pakala and Vijay Madduri**  
 - Anil Kumar Yadav, Rajya Sabha member P2

**'Adapt to rapidly evolving geopolitical threats'**  
 5

**LOOKING FORWARD TO ADVANCING EU-INDIA FTA TALKS: PEDRO**  
 8

**ANR award is crown jewel of my cinematic journey: CHIRANJEEVI**  
 P11

**DON'T MISS...**

**HMDA contract workers seek ...**  
 Contract workers of the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) in the Buddha Purnima Project in Hussain Sagar limits, struggling financially for years, sought an increase in pay as per GO Ms. 60 at Prajavani. In all, 588 people submitted their grievances at the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Praja Bhavan on Tuesday. When asked Workers Union president J Kumar Swamy said that all contract workers in housekeeping and sanitation for the Buddha Purnima Project were paid Rs13,600 monthly by contractor Ixora Corporate ...  
 -PAGE: 3

**Hygiene violations flagged ...**  
 There has been widespread public outcry regarding the alleged substandard food being served at the Ramagundam Singareni Medical College and the Godavarkhali Government General Hospital, besides the canteen attached to the institutions. Allegations have emerged that medical college students and hospital patients are provided with poor-quality food, including expired products. In light of these accusations, Dr R Dr Anusha, the district food ...  
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**India fastest growing major...**  
 India is the fastest growing major economy and is likely to become the third largest economy soon, President Droupadi Murmu said on Tuesday. Addressing an event in Delhi, she said the Indian economy had been demonstrating resilience in the face of geopolitical challenges and the country's economy was likely to grow tenfold by 2047. "India is the fastest growing major economy and is likely to become the third largest economy soon," Murmu said. According to the latest World Bank estimate...  
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**Maxwell reveals Kohli blocked ...**  
 Australian all-rounder Glenn Maxwell has revealed that Virat Kohli had blocked him on Instagram after he mocked the Indian batting maestro following his shoulder injury during the 2017 Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Kohli and Maxwell were not the best of friends until the Australian joined IPL franchise Royal Challengers Bengaluru in 2021 for a whopping Rs 14.25 crore. Maxwell said that he tried to follow Kohli on Instagram, only to discover that he had been blocked by the former India...  
 -SPORTS

**Formula E bomb to explode!**



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The incident began in February 2023 when the first-ever Formula E race was held in Hyderabad on a 2.8 km track around Hussain Sagar, marking the city's debut in the global racing circuit. After its success, plans were made to host another race on February 10, 2024, with the BRS admin entering into an agreement with Formula E Operations (FEO) in October 2023. The HMDA reportedly transferred Rs 55 crore to FEO to facilitate this, an action that is now under scrutiny. Municipal officials said the funds were transferred without seeking approval from the finance department bypassing financial protocols. The unilateral decision to release funds without ...  
**Continued on Page 5**

**Municipal officials file complaint with ACB**

The Telangana government has reportedly reached out to the Raj Bhavan, seeking 'prosecution sanction' against a former BRS minister. Highly placed sources said a file concerning the prosecution is on its way to the Governor's desk. However, Raj Bhavan sources indicated that they are clueless about the file as the Governor is out of station. Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy said that ahead of Diwali there will be political fireworks. The government has reportedly reviewed the Formula E race agreements. "This is not the first Formula E race. It was held in the past too, but the second one didn't get permission from the Congress government. The government has detected many irregularities in ...  
**Continued on Page 5**

**Govt seeks Guv's nod to prosecute ex-minister?**

The Telangana government has reportedly reached out to the Raj Bhavan, seeking 'prosecution sanction' against a former BRS minister. Highly placed sources said a file concerning the prosecution is on its way to the Governor's desk. However, Raj Bhavan sources indicated that they are clueless about the file as the Governor is out of station. Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy said that ahead of Diwali there will be political fireworks. The government has reportedly reviewed the Formula E race agreements. "This is not the first Formula E race. It was held in the past too, but the second one didn't get permission from the Congress government. The government has detected many irregularities in ...  
**Continued on Page 5**

**'No differences with AICC'**



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Cabinet will be expanded only after the Maharashtra Assembly elections, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said. There are no differences between the AICC and me, the CM added. "Some people are spreading lies to confuse Congress activists. In Telangana, the AICC and I are one," he said. The Chief Minister said they have taken a decision regarding the Musi Project and there is no question of going back. "We think a thousand times before taking a decision and there is no going back after that. The foundation stone for the Musi Project will be laid on November 1. Work will start at the Babu Ghat first. Tenders will be invited in November. We are ready to discuss the project with the opposition. All-party meetings will be convened soon," the CM said. During a chat with journalists on Tuesday at the secretariat, the CM said ...  
**Continued on Page 5**

**We know how to deal with KTR & Harish: CM**

Declaring that former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's political career will end in a year and that the name KCR will not be heard in the state after that, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said the Congress targeted KCR using his son KT Rama Rao and now is targeting KTR using T. Harish Rao. ...  
**Continued on Page 5**

**Only 6 Ministers attended 'Face to Face with Ministers' programme**



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

Only six Ministers attended the successful 'Face-to-Face with Ministers' programme held at the Gandhi Bhavan in the first month. The programme attracted people and Congress cadres in a big way and they submitted petitions. The programme started on September 25 with Health Minister Damodara Raja Narasimha and TPCC chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud. The six Ministers Damodara Raja Narasimha, Seethakka, N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, Tummala Nageshwar Rao, Ponnampaluri Prabhakar and Duddilla Sridhar Babu accepted petitions from the public and Congress activists. Some problems were solved on the spot while for others the ministers called the officials concerned on the phone. However, Ministers Konda Surekha, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and Jupally Krishna Rao have not yet attended the programme. Gandhi Bhavan sources said they will attend in coming weeks. The new TPCC President B. Mahesh Kumar Goud introduced this unique programme announcing it at his oath-taking ceremony and it became a big success. The TPCC chief prepared the 'Face to Face with Ministers' programme so that Ministers can attend it on Wednesdays and Fridays to address the grievances of the people and party activists. The main intention of the programme is to address the problems of Congress activists. However, the public is also attending the programme making it a big success. Gandhi Bhavan sources said the programme will be conducted once a week from now onwards as the ministers have a busy schedule. The TPCC cancelled the Wednesday (October 30) 'Face to Face with Ministers' programme as Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is attending a meeting on the caste census.

**Shah launches mobile app for birth, death registration** 2

**12 killed as bus rams into flyover wall in Rajasthan** 5

**Sanjay issues counter notice to KTR, demanding public apology**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar issued a counter notice to BRS Working President KT Rama Rao's legal notice, demanding that KTR withdraw his remarks against him and tender a public apology. It may be recalled that KTR had issued legal notices to Sanjay alleging that he had made defaming comments. However, on Tuesday Sanjay said that there was nothing wrong in his comments and that

**'RKH gov't' running in TG**

Alleging that the RKH (Revanth Reddy, KTR, Harish Rao) government is running the State, Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar said that when the police raided the Janwada farmhouse KTR's brother-in-law Raj Pakala was by the side of ...  
**Continued on Page 5**

KTR's legal notice was just political criticism. He made it clear that there is no question of fearing that notice. Moreover, Sanjay demanded that KTR should take back the remarks against him immediately and tender a public apology. Sanjay warned that he would take legal action if KTR fails to withdraw his notices. Sanjay's lawyer issued a notice to KTR alleging that KTR had served a legal notice on his client (Bandi Sanjay Kumar) containing baseless allegations without any proof.

**'Five Congress MLAs contacted KCR'**

KCR is sure CM cannot waive farm loans in full

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Even though Chief Minister Revanth Reddy claimed that he had 'silenced' BRS chief K. Chandrasekhar Rao, it is learnt that five Congress MLAs have got in touch with KCR. Highly placed sources said that KCR himself said that five Congress MLAs had reached out to him seeking a future within the BRS. Disillusioned with the government's performance and concerned about their political future in the context of the forthcoming delimitation of constituencies, these Congress MLAs reportedly expressed interest in shifting loyalties. "Five MLAs got in touch with KCR as they don't believe that the Congress will form a government again. They want to be accommodated in the BRS when

delimitation occurs. KCR didn't want to encourage them," sources said. KCR, who is known for his calculated political manoeuvres reportedly didn't encourage the idea. KCR has sensed growing friction within Congress ranks, the sources said. In a conversation with visiting political leaders, KCR repeatedly emphasized his belief that any new government requires at least a year to settle before it can be judged. He cited the Congress government's handling of the much-discussed crop loan waiver as a "disaster." KCR is learnt to have said, "Initially promised at a staggering Rs 49,000 crore, the loan waiver amount was later cut to Rs 45,000 crore, then to Rs 31,000 crore, and finally just Rs 18,000 crore was sanctioned."

KCR is sure that the Revanth Reddy government will not be able to waive farm loans in full as promised. The BRS chief, however, cautioned his party activists not to rush into hasty protests during the Assembly session. While some MLAs were reportedly planning to raise issues concerning Rythu Bandhu, KCR advised patience, suggesting that the strategy for the session would be finalised closer to the date. KCR's approach, sources say, is one of patience as he navigates the political environment, reportedly indicating that ...  
**Continued on Page 5**



**AICC to take over TPCC's social media ops**

NAVEENA GHANATE naveena.ghanate@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD

The All India Congress Committee (AICC) is stepping in to take charge of the TPCC's social media strategy and to overhaul what insiders call a 'lacklustre' digital presence. Supriya Shrinete, the Chairperson of the party's social media and digital platforms who recently visited the state, reportedly didn't hold back her criticism and voiced disappointment over the TPCC's digital silence. Supriya is learnt to have said that the opposition is strong in Telangana and that the Congress is failing to gain momentum. The TG media sympathises with the opposition mostly, she is learnt to have said. Highly placed sources said Supriya expressed disappointment indicating that apart from the Chief Minister's profile, the TPCC's social media accounts would now be managed directly from



Surpiya is learnt to have said that the Opposition is strong in Telangana and that the Congress is failing to gain momentum. The TG media sympathises with the Opposition mostly, she is learnt to have said

New Delhi. Sources said that a New Delhi-based agency is expected to take up the responsibility, signalling a strategic shift in the TPCC's social media operations. Supriya is said to have conveyed her dissatisfaction with the current social media handlers,

Satish Manne and Naveen Pettem, who have come under scrutiny for failing to maintain an active online presence that clicks with Telangana. It is learnt that a woman leader belonging to the social media wing is likely to get promoted to bring a dose of fresh energy and visibility to the party's web outreach.

**BRS gov't imposed Rs 24,594 cr burden on public through power tariff hikes**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BRS admin had placed a massive financial burden on all sections of Telangana's society through continuous power tariff hikes over the last decade, Telangana Government sources said. Now, BRS leaders falsely claim that power tariffs were not raised during their rule which goes against facts. In 2015-16, Telangana's power distribution companies (DISCOMs) - NPDCL and SPDCL - collected Rs 18,845 crore through power tariffs from domestic, non-domestic and all other categories. By 2023-24, by the end of BRS rule, these tariffs surged to Rs 43,439 crore. In 10 years, this increase

amounts to an additional burden of Rs 24,594 crore on consumers. "In 2015-16, a 5% increase in power tariffs and a larger 8% hike in 2016-17, and a massive 16% hike in 2022-23 burdened consumers with over Rs 6,000 crore," sources said. Before 2020, fixed charges were

not levied on domestic consumers. However, the BRS government imposed fixed charges on this category, burdening the middle-class and low-income households. While claiming there was no hike in power tariffs for five years, they discreetly imposed hidden charges raising costs by an additional Rs 0.50 to Rs 1 per unit. They also increased fixed customer charges ignoring protests from consumers. Sources said that the BRS government did not disclose the profit and loss details of power companies pushing Telangana's DISCOMs into substantial debt. The government also did not submit the Annual Revenue Requirement (ARR) reports, ...  
**Continued on Page 5**



# Family feud may tarnish Jagan's political image

The ongoing family feud over sharing assets among siblings of late Dr. YS Rajasekhara Reddy, if not handled properly by their well-wishers, could take an ugly turn and eventually tarnish the image of his YSR's son and former chief minister of Andhra Pradesh YS Jaganmohan Reddy. It is a different matter that Jagan played it down, calling it 'ghar ghar ki kahani'.

Upon the death of YSR, the family more or less projected Jagan as the head of the business empire with assets running into thousands of crores of rupees. People are not aware of the assets created by Jagan particularly during the regime of YSR and during his own political journey in the Congress party. According to informed circles, Jagan's growth in the business world has been jaw-dropping and could be compared with that of Dhirubhai Ambani, founder of the Reliance group, who took 35 years to reach the peak stage. For Jagan, it has taken just five years of doing business.

YSR, during his days as Leader of the Opposition in the undivided AP Legislative

**According to informed circles, Jagan's growth in the business world has been jaw-dropping and could be compared with that of Dhirubhai Ambani, founder of the Reliance group, who took 35 years to reach the peak stage. For Jagan, it has taken just five years of doing business**



**M D RATNA KUMAR**  
Senior Journalist

Assembly, once defended himself for providing personal surety for a power project being set up by his son. He brushed aside the criticism made by his political detractors at the behest of then ruling party Telugu Desam Party (TDP).

As for the assets of YSR's family and competing claims over them, both his son and daughter are now heading two political parties. The

properties, according to his daughter Sharmila, who had initially moved to Telangana, after being marginalized in YSRCP, to float a new political party in YSR's name. Her political journey was not smooth in TG. Jagan has been claiming sole rights over the family's assets. The fight between the siblings is now in the open, perhaps hurting YSR's widow Vijayalakshmi.

Among the Telugus, family relations and strong bonds among siblings are valued highly. When a girl gets married and is sent to her in-laws' place; parents as well as brothers get emotional.

Jagan too has emotionally described his sister as his 'elder daughter'.

Irrespective of the sentiments involved, Jagan will have a bumpy road on the next phase of his political journey in view of the family feud over sharing of YSR's assets. The relations among the siblings will be discussed widely among the people. It will be hard for Jagan to get over the stigma of possible wrongs attributed to him.

As one who had been desirous of ruling the state for decades, Jagan should not have given room for negative shades in his family life. Most people opine that the issue

should have been resolved within the four walls of the home, instead of letting it spill onto the streets.

Generally every leader boasts in the presence of the electorate that they all are 'like brothers and sisters' to show their commitment to women. They say 'Charity begins at home'. The spirit of this maxim can be imbued by those who want to prove themselves responsible, particularly while dealing with women members of the family.

Any injustice done to siblings would lead to adverse impression in the public domain. It cannot do any good to Jagan's public life.

## Conduct drug tests on BRS MLAs, says Anil

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Appealing to the police to conduct drug tests on all BRS MLAs, Rajya Sabha Member Anil Kumar Yadav said that BRS leaders come out whenever drug rings are busted.

BRS MLAs should face drug tests if they have any shame left, Yadav said. BRS MLAs should be ashamed to support people like Raj Pakala and Vijay Madduri, he added.

Speaking to the media at Gandhi Bhavan on Tuesday, he said that BRS Working President KTR's real proxy is Vijay Madduri. People knew how the BRS government sidetracked issues, he said alleging that the 'Janwada farmhouse incident means controversy'.

He said BRS leaders said once that the Janwada farm-

house party was connected to Diwali and later they said that it was a housewarming party.

The BRS government has the credit of taking drugs to schools. However, the Congress is trying to make the state drug-free. But BRS leaders are still trying to encourage the drug culture. What do the KCR family want with Telangana, he asked.

Vijay Madduri himself admitted to the police that he consumed drugs and that Raj Pakala gave the drugs to him, Yadav said and added that the same Vijay Madduri has now changed his stance.

Moreover, KCR is troubling the DGP by calling him on the phone, Yadav said. Yadav asked KCR in what way he is interested in it.

## KTR celebrating Diwali with liquor instead of crackers: CM

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Pointing out that everyone celebrates Diwali with 'Chichu Budlu' (crackers), Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that BRS Working President KT Rama Rao is celebrating Diwali with 'Saara Budlu' (liquor bottles).

During a chat with journalists at the secretariat on Tuesday, the CM asked whether KTR celebrated Diwali with illegal foreign

liquor. The BRS's cock and bull stories about the Janwada farmhouse party are ridiculous, he said.

"We don't know that Diwali can be celebrated in that manner also. Why is KTR's brother-in-law Raj Pakala at large if he has not done anything illegal? Why did Raj Pakala seek anticipatory bail? Why is there a need for casino coins and foreign liquor at family parties?" the CM said.

He appealed to the media to support the good works of the

government and added that the government would not go back on the Musi Project even if Congress loses politically.

"We will certainly do it as we have decided to do good for the people. My dream of becoming the CM has been realised and my dream now is to do something good for the people," the CM said.

He said that he would launch a padayatra in the Musi catchment area when the time comes.

"I will launch a padayatra from Vadapalli to Vikarabad if the need arises. The BRS is spitting venom at us on social media with its illegal funds. I introduced HYDRAA after a lot of thinking. The BRS campaigned in such a manner that now the entire nation knows about HYDRAA. It is not right to say that the real estate market crashed after HYDRAA. There is stagnation in the real estate sector all over the nation," the CM said.

## Harish slams CM over TGSP removal, calls it 'insult'

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

BRS MLA T. Harish Rao reacted angrily to the decision to remove the Telangana Special Police from providing security to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

He termed the move an "insult" to the force which comprises around 17,000 men and added that it was deliberate disregard for their contributions and morale.

Harish demanded the immediate reinstatement of the suspended and dismissed Special Police personnel and questioned the decision to side-line them without consultation.

"The special police force is like the military of our state, offering critical protection. The Chief Minister's actions are a direct blow to their self-confidence," he said, pointing to the importance of treating the force with respect.

He also called for the setting up of a Cabinet subcommittee to address the grievances of Special Police personnel. He reminded the public of the Chief Minister's pre-election promise to implement a unified police policy and criticised the CM's silence on the unrest in the force.

Harish criticised a recent circular imposing restrictions on the Special Police by the Chief Secretariat Security Officer, which reportedly includes disciplinary action against personnel even for social media activity.

Calling this an "abuse of power," he said that such restrictions infringe upon the constitutional right to free speech. He demanded the immediate withdrawal of the circular, stating that no authority has the right to curtail basic freedoms guaranteed to police personnel.



## Over 150 injured in fireworks accident at Kerala temple

SIT to probe matter

**PNS ■ KASARAGOD (KERALA)**

A fire accident during a Theyyam performance at a temple near Neelawaram late last night left 154 people injured, eight of them seriously, when firecrackers stored in the vicinity exploded, police said on Tuesday.

Kasaragod District Police Chief D Shilpa announced the formation of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe into the fire accident.

The district administration said that the additional divisional magistrate has been directed to carry out an inquiry separately into the incident and submit a report.

The incident happened at Anjootanbalam Veererkavu Temple near Neelawaram in this northernmost district of Kerala, police said.

Nileswaram police have reg-

istered a case into the firework accident under the Explosive Substance Act and various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

The firecrackers were burst in the temple premises without any legal permission, and the accident happened due to its careless handling and negligence by the accused, police said. Eight people were booked, and four of them were taken into custody, a senior police officer said.

Though police earlier said that all those booked are temple committee members, they later clarified that one among them is a local man who burst firecrackers.

The incident occurred as hundreds of people, including women and children, had gathered to have a glimpse of the Theyyam performance at the shrine.

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The BRS is all set to celebrate all over TG its success in halting the proposed Rs 18,500 crore increase in electricity charges.

BRS Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) called on party cadres to organize celebrations on Wednesday in district and constituency centres, marking this victory as a momentous achievement for the people of Telangana.

KTR praised the moves made to prevent the burden

from falling on the public, highlighting that, unlike the current government's move to raise power charges within 10 months, the BRS admin maintained stable electricity rates over the last decade.

"Our participation in public hearings and presenting objections to the proposal logically led to the Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC) rejecting it entirely," KTR said.

He emphasized that this is the first time in the history of Telangana that the ERC has considered the opposition's

rationality and fairness, thereby dismissing the government's attempt to increase electricity tariffs arbitrarily.

KTR described this decision as historic, underscoring the BRS's role as a true representative of the people.

Following the directives of BRS leader K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR), KTR, along with former Power Minister Jagadish Reddy and senior BRS leaders approached the ERC to cancel the proposed hike.

Former ministers

Prashanth Reddy and former Speaker Madhusudana Chary also actively participated in public hearings, vigorously voicing the concerns of the public.

KTR recounted his involvement in the Sircilla hearing, ensuring that the people's objections were effectively conveyed to the ERC.

KTR extended his gratitude to the ERC for considering the overwhelming public opposition and preventing the imposition of a massive financial burden on the people.

## Will consider only constructive criticism: Vijay

**PNS ■ CHENNAI**

The Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam will always play a constructive role in politics and will achieve its goals in the 2026 Assembly election, its president Vijay said on Tuesday.

Throughout its political journey, the TVK will take into account only constructive criticism and ignore the

baithers, the actor said, and cautioned his party workers that criticism against the TVK was bound to intensify in the coming days.

Vijay, who made a mark through his maiden political speech on October 27, said in a letter addressed to his party workers that their work should be oriented towards meeting the aspirations of the people.

## Police search Vijay Madduri's house

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The Cyberabad Police searched the residence of Vijay Madduri, who was allegedly present at the gathering at KTR's brother-in-law's farmhouse.

Vijay Madduri, a central figure in the case, was accused of consuming drugs at the Janwada farmhouse party.

Raj Pakala, the brother-in-law of BRS Working President KT Rama Rao, is also an accused in the case.

Sources said that during the party, Vijay allegedly evaded the police by handing over a woman's phone instead of his own to the police, raising suspicions about his attempts to

derail the investigation.

Despite multiple summonses, Vijay has avoided cooperating with the police and also failed to appear for questioning, raising questions about his involvement in the incident.

The Mokila Police conducted a thorough search at Vijay's residence in Jubilee Hills. The search focused on locating his phone which is believed to contain crucial information about the party and possible links to drug use.

The police are determined to collect evidence that may shed light on the events of the night and are pursuing leads to ensure a comprehensive investigation.

## New chapter with integration of Ayurveda, modern medicine: Modi

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said in the past decade, India has witnessed the beginning of a new chapter in the health sector with the amalgamation of knowledge of Ayurveda with modern medicine.

The progress of a nation is directly proportional to the health of its citizens, Modi said at the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) here as he inaugurated and laid foundation stones of multiple projects related to the health sector worth over Rs 12,850 crore on the occasion of Ayurveda Day and the birth



anniversary of Dhanvantari, the Hindu god of medicine. He also extended the Centre's flagship health insurance scheme Ayushman Bharat to all senior citizens aged 70 years and above.

Quoting sages and saints, the prime minister explained that health is considered the supreme wealth and this

ancient notion is finding acceptance across the world in the form of yoga.

"Ayurveda Day is being celebrated in more than 150 countries today. It is proof of the growing attraction towards Ayurveda and India's contribution to the world from its ancient past," Modi said.

## Ayodhya temple not to use Chinese Diwali decorative items: Trust

**PNS ■ AYODHYA**

The Sri Ram Janmabhoomi Tirath Kshetra Trust, which manages the Ram Temple in the city, has decided not to use Chinese decorative items during Diwali to promote local craftsmanship, according to officials.

The city of Ayodhya is preparing for a grand Deepotsav this year -- it will be the eighth edition of the event and the first since the consecration ceremony at the Ram Temple in January.

**TODAY ALMANAC**

Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha

Tithi: Trayodashi: Oct 29 10:32 AM to Oct 30 01:15 PM

Chaturdash: Oct 30 01:15 PM to Oct 31 03:53 PM

Nakshatram: Hasta: Oct 29 06:33 PM to Oct 30 09:43 PM

Chitra: Oct 30 09:43 PM to Nov 01 12:44 AM

Rahukalam: 11:59 AM to 1:25 PM

Yamagandam: 7:43 AM to 9:08 AM

Variyam: 06:44 AM to 08:32 AM

Gulika: 10:34 AM to 11:59 AM

Amritkalam: 02:56 PM to 04:44 PM

Ahijit Muhurtham: Nil

**HYDERABAD WEATHER**

Forecast: Scattered Showers

Temp: 31°C

Humidity: 66%

Sunrise: 6:14 AM

Sunset: 5:45 PM

Updated: October 29, 2024 5:00 PM

## Shah launches mobile app for birth, death registration

Unveils statue of Sardar Patel

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday launched a mobile application for seamless and hassle-free registration of birth and death at the click of a button.

The Civil Registration System (CRS) mobile app, prepared by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, is expected to significantly reduce the time required for the registration of birth and death.

"Under PM Shri @narendramodi Ji's Digital India vision to integrate technol-



ogy with governance, launched the Civil Registration System mobile application today. This application will make registration of births and deaths seamless and hassle-free by allowing citizens to register at any time, from any place, and in their state's official language," Shah wrote on his 'X' handle.

## INDIA-CHINA DISPUTE

# Disengagement at two friction points in final stages: Sources

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Troop disengagement at two friction points at Demchok and Depsang Plains in eastern Ladakh following a key agreement signed last week.

Adhering to agreements between the two sides, Indian troops then began to pull back equipment to rear locations in these areas. The disengagement at the two friction points is in its "final stages", an official source said on Tuesday.

On October 25, Army sources had said the process is likely to get completed by October 28-29. The agreement framework was "signed" first at the diplomatic level and then military-level talks took place, the Army sources had said, adding the nitty-gritty of the agreement was worked in the Corps Commander-level talks,



which was signed last week.

Sources last week said the agreement was arrived at only for these two friction points, and "talks were still underway" for other areas.

The sources have said that patrolling will begin at these points once the disengagement that began last week

is completed and both sides will move their respective troops and dismantle temporary structures.

Eventually, they added, the areas and patrolling status is expected to be moved back to pre-April 2020 level.

The patrolling will be done by armed personnel and structures to be dismantled include temporary sheds and tents, a source said.

The process follows the agreement signed between the two countries on patrolling and disengagement of troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, a major breakthrough to end the over four-year standoff.

## CITY EVENTS

### Music

Get ready for an unforgettable night at TOS Club! Join us for MRP Night featuring the one and only DJ Sykar, spinning the best of Bollywood tunes. Dance to your favorite beats while enjoying an unbeatable offer All Bottles at MRP! It's the ultimate Bollywood night where the music is loud, the vibe is electric, and the drinks flow at amazing prices. Don't miss this chance to party like never before.

### Venue

TOS Club & Lounge, Hyderabad  
October 30 | 8am

### Saxophone Play

Saxophone Play By Nidamanooru Nataraja & Team is an upcoming event in Hyderabad.

### Venue

Ravindra Bharathi, Lakdikapul Road, Saifabad, Lakdikapul, Hyderabad  
October 30

### Musical Orchestra

Live Hindi & Telugu Musical Orchestra by Balaji International Arts Foundation is an upcoming event.

### Venue

Sri Thyagaraja Gana Sabha, Behind Sudha Hotel, Vivek Nagar Road, Ashok Nagar, Chikkadpally, Hyderabad  
October 30

### Pro Kabaddi League Season 11

Pro Kabaddi League Season 11 : Gujarat Giants vs Tamil Thalaivas is an upcoming event.

### Venue

GMC Balayogi Athletic Stadium, Gachibowli  
October 30

## Rs 182.48 cr okayed for cop's surrender leave payments

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a significant budget allocation the State government has approved Rs 182.48 crore for surrender leave payments to police personnel on Tuesday. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, along with Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka have given final approvals to address a long-standing request from the police force.

The Finance department has issued official orders to facilitate these payments, much to the appreciation of police officers' associations, which have welcomed the move. The government has also committed to clearing remaining dues in phases, aiming for swift disbursement, said the statement from the Police department.

## DCA raids 15 medical shops and issues show cause notices

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Drug Control Administration (DCA) raided 15 private medical shops situated within government hospital premises in Hyderabad, Secunderabad, Warangal and Karimnagar and issued show cause notices to these shops.

According to the DCA, the targeted shops included Vyshnavi Medical and General Stores, Jeevan Usha Sravanthi Generic Medical Stores and others within Osmania Hospital in Hyderabad. Similar actions were taken against Sai Pharmacy and Amrit Pharmacy at Niloufer Hospital and Jana Jeevani Jyothi Stores at Government Maternity Hospital, Petlabuz. Additional raids occurred at

Gandhi Hospital in Secunderabad and MGM Hospital in Warangal, affecting stores like Thirumala Medical and General Stores and Rani Rudrama Devi Jeevandhara Pharmacy. In Karimnagar, Jeevandhara Pharmacy and Praja Aarogya Pharmacy were also raided.

During the inspections, the DCA officials found numerous violations for sale of drugs without prescriptions, lack of a registered pharmacist, poor maintenance of drug registers, missing sales records, improper storage conditions and the presence of expired medications.

The DCA officials stated that action will be taken against these shops after reviewing their explanations in response to the notices.



# City Pioneer



HYDERABAD WEDNESDAY | OCTOBER 30, 2024

03

### MOMO INCIDENT

## GHMC and FSSAI launch special drive against unlicensed eateries

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In response to reports of food poisoning related to momos in Hyderabad, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) initiated a special inspection drive across the city, targeting eateries selling momos.

In regard to multiple individuals suffering from food poisoning after consuming momos at an establishment in Nandi Nagar, Banjara Hills, the GHMC's Food Safety Wing traced the location running under WOW Hot Momos and Delhi Hot Momos. Additionally the officers vis-

ited Swathi Hospital and Tanvir Hospital and confirmed that 13 people had been admitted with food poisoning symptoms attributed to the same momo vendor. GHMC officials visited both hospitals, met with the affected patients and their doctors.



Following these incidents, the GHMC conducted an extensive inspection drive on Tuesday visiting 110 momo vendors across Hyderabad. A total of 69 samples were collected and sent for testing to ensure compliance with food safety standards. Food handlers were educated on proper hygiene and sanitation practices to prevent future incidents of contamination.

## HMDA contract workers seek pay hike at Prajavani

SAMUEL JOSHUA samueljoshuamjmc@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD

Contract workers of the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) in the Buddha Purnima Project in Hussain Sagar limits, struggling financially for years, sought an increase in pay as per GO Ms. 60 at Prajavani. In all, 588 people submitted their grievances at the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Praja Bhavan on Tuesday.

When asked Workers Union president J Kumar Swamy said that all contract workers in housekeeping and sanitation for the Buddha Purnima Project were paid Rs13,600 monthly by contractor Ixora Corporate Services Pvt. Ltd. from July 1, 2021, to February 2021, as per GO Ms. No. 60. However, when Krishna Constructions took over, the pay dropped to Rs 9,400, reducing each worker's monthly earnings by Rs 4,211. Swamy called this reduction unfair and against natural justice.

When the union workers raised this with the Budha Purnima Project authorities, they were informed that GO Ms.11 (dated January 17, 2012) would replace GO Ms. No. 60. Swamy highlighted that this cut affects workers struggling with ris-



Vice-Chairman of the State Planning Board G Chinna Reddy, and Special Officer of Public Administration D Divya addressing the grievances at Prajavani on Tuesday

ing living costs and harsh working conditions.

He emphasised that while they perform similar tasks as regular workers in other HMDA projects, they are not only denied minimum pay scale but also face significant wage cuts.

On behalf of 173 workers, Swamy, along with 20 other workers, submitted the application at Prajavani and noted that the officials responded positively.

Meanwhile, the workers mentioned that only a free bus scheme

for female workers has been implemented by the new administration with no other welfare schemes implemented properly even after 10 months in office. The workers urged for immediate action and called for a State-wide protest if their problem is not solved soon.

According to the officials, 221 applications were received for minority welfare, 84 for electricity, 55 for revenue department, 98 for PR & RD department, four for Pravasi and 126 for other departments.



## 20-year-old male giraffe Basant dies at Zoo Park

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 20-year-old male giraffe named Basant of Nehru Zoo Park died on Monday night at 11:30 pm due to complications related to old age. Born during the 2004 tsunami at the National Zoological Park in New Delhi, Basant was brought to Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad in 2009 through an animal exchange programme.

According to the Director of the Zoo, Dr Sunil S Hiremath, the giraffe had been suffering from arthritis in hind legs for the past two years and was under treatment led by Dr MA Hakeem, Deputy Director (Vet) at the zoo.

With Basant's passing, only one male giraffe, Sunny, remains at the zoo. He noted that the veterinary experts conducted a post-mortem to determine the exact cause of death.

Samples have been sent to VBRI for further analysis. The director, along with the zoo staff, paid tributes to Basant. Dr Sunil also mentioned that Basant was a star attraction, drawing many visitors with his graceful presence.

## Gandhi Hospital enhances security with CCTV cameras

DEEPIKA PASHAM deepikapasham2015@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD

The three newly appointed doctors in higher positions at Gandhi Hospital are actively engaged in processing and approving files related to security and surveillance enhancements aimed at alleviating the growing concerns regarding the facility's safety, which have become prevalent in recent times.

With an allocated budget of nearly Rs 20 lakh from the health department, an additional 28 CCTV cameras have been installed and integrated with two plasma TVs, collectively forming a Command Control Room. Furthermore, a dedicated team has been hired to oversee the continuous monitoring of surveillance within and around Gandhi Hospital.

Senior doctors emphasised that the presence of CCTV cameras would help mitigate incidents similar to those involving RG KAR, as well as the rising cases of theft occurring within Gandhi Hospital.



In addition, hospital officials are in the process of launching an account for Gandhi Hospital on the social media platform X, which will be utilised to share updates about successful surgeries.

Currently, a total of 148 CCTV cameras are operational within Gandhi Hospital. The initiative to install these cameras was in response to demands from the Junior Doctors Association following the RG KAR incident and various thefts targeting doctors on duty during nighttime hours.

Dr K Sunil Kumar, Deputy Superintendent of Gandhi Hospital, explained to The Pioneer, "The installation of

CCTV cameras was one of the primary demands of the Junior Doctor Associations. Moreover, we must remain updated with the guidelines set forth by the National Medical Commission (NMC), which mandates the installation of cameras in certain key areas."

Another significant factor is the high daily foot traffic at Gandhi Hospital, which ranges from 15,000 to 20,000 individuals everyday. Each patient may be accompanied by two to three attendants. Just a week ago, a handbag belonging to a house surgeon in the emergency department was stolen; it contained valuable items such as a mobile phone and a tablet. During the investigation, it was discovered that a patient who had visited the doctor had stolen the bag.

This is merely one incident, as numerous vehicles belonging to doctors have been stolen from the parking area; these cameras are expected to aid in solving such cases in the event that a crime occurs, he added.

## Secunderabad Sub-Registrar arrested in land scam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Secunderabad Sub-Registrar Jyoti has been arrested by Jeedimetla Police in connection with a land-grab case on Tuesday.

Jyoti, who previously served as the Sub-Registrar of Quthbullapur during the BRS administration, is accused of facilitating the illegal registration of 200 yards of land in Subhash Nagar using fraudulent documents.

Following her arrest, Jyoti was taken for a medical examination and subsequently produced in court, where she was remanded to judicial custody for 14 days. Padmaja Reddy, the alleged beneficiary of the forged registration, was recently arrested and remains in police custody as the investigation deepens.

Police report that Jyoti's role was central to enabling the fraudulent transaction and further inquiries are underway.

## Appointment letters issued to 628 part-time yoga instructors

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In celebration of the 9th National Ayurveda Day, a special programme was held at the Ayurvedic Medical College in Erragadda. Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha attended as the chief guest and distributed appointment letters to 628 newly appointed part-time yoga instructors.

The Minister emphasised that Ayurveda and Yoga are rooted in Vedic wisdom and are for the benefit of all humanity. He noted that our ancestors taught us how to live in harmony with nature, a tradition we

have not fully continued.

He clarified that Yoga and Ayurveda are not religious concepts but pertain to the well-being of the human body, mind and intellect. He encouraged people to understand the importance of these practices. The Minister called for spreading the awareness of Yoga and Ayurveda, especially to rural areas and encouraged teaching these to children.

He shared that efforts are underway to strengthen the AYUSH Directorate and Drug Control Administration and that additional yoga instructors will soon be appointed to fur-

ther these initiatives.

Christina Z Chongthu, Secretary to Government, Health Medical and Family Welfare department, mentioned that yoga instructors are now available for free in 421 health centres across the State. The Health Secretary encouraged the public, especially children to take advantage of these services.

After the programme, the Minister visited the Ayurvedic College and Hospital, interacted with patients and reviewed hospital facilities. He conducted an on-site inspection of various departments.



Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha speaking at a meeting after distributing appointment letters to 628 part-time yoga instructors in Hyderabad on Tuesday



## GHMC engineer caught in ACB bribery sting

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a swift operation, the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) apprehended assistant executive engineer Venkoba, of Circle XI, GHMC, Rajendranagar, while accepting a bribe of Rs 50,000.

The officer allegedly demanded the amount from a contractor to log measurements in the M Book for completed project work.

The tainted cash was recovered from Venkoba's possession and chemical tests on his hands turned positive results, confirming his involvement. Authorities report that he exploited his position for personal gain by improperly executing his duties. Venkoba has been taken into custody and will appear before the I Addl. Special Judge for SPE and ACB cases.

## TiE Hyd's Grad Plus finals' winners announced

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The winners of Hyderabad's TiE Grad Plus Regional Finals 2024 were announced on Tuesday. TiE Grad Plus, an entrepreneurship programme, aims to create innovative business ideas among students. This year, 12 teams competed.

According to TiE Grad Plus, Green Fusion, an energy-monitoring startup from Vishnu Institute of Technology, Bhimavaram, won the first prize, earning Rs1 lakh. G-Eye, a low-cost eye examination device from G Narayamma Institute of



The winners of the TiE Grad Plus Regional Finals, taking home Rs 1 lakh in prize money

Technology & Sciences, took the 1st runner-up spot with Rs 50,000. Red String, a talent solutions platform

from Gokaraju Rangaraju Institute of Engineering & Technology, won 2nd runner-up and Rs 20,000. Green Fusion also received the People's Choice Award for Best Elevator Pitch, adding Rs 10,000.

The event celebrated student talent, offering winners a path to prestigious events like the TiE Global Summit 2024 in Bengaluru and the Rice Business Plan Competition (RBPC).

Chief Guest Joginder Tanikella, CEO of T-Works, encouraged students to use T-Works for prototyping support.

## TGTDC upgrades skills of its hotel managers

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A training programme to enhance skills and professionalism in hospitality was held by the Telangana Tourism Development Corporation at the Plaza Haritha Hotel on Tuesday. Managing Director of TGTDC, N Prakash Reddy stated that 43 members from 24 units of TGTDC Haritha Hotels & Resorts participated. They received training in areas such as housekeeping, rooms division, guest experience, food and beverage services, and leadership and communication skills, led by experienced hospitality professionals. Reddy emphasised that high-quality training programmes would create a strong and profitable workforce, boosting productivity, operational efficiency, leadership and customer satisfaction.

## Fire Disaster Dept issues precautions for Diwali

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana's Fire Disaster Response, Emergency, and Civil Defence Department issued fire safety guidelines for Diwali celebrations. According to the Fire Disaster Department, 6,953 applications were received for fire-crackers shops, while 676 applications were pending with 6,104 applications approved and 173 rejected.

The department advised to only buy from licenced ven-

dors. Purchase firecrackers only from authorised shops in government-approved, open areas. Light crackers in open areas like parks, away from buildings and vehicles.

Have water or sand ready to handle emergencies. Wear cotton clothing: Cotton reduces fire-related injuries compared to synthetic fabrics. Supervise children: Adults should always watch children using firecrackers. Dispose properly: Place used crackers in water to prevent leftover sparks. Light one



at a time: Avoid lighting multiple crackers together and check the wind direction.

The Fire Disaster Department advised not to use indoors to light crackers

inside or near confined spaces. Avoid loose clothing: Loose garments can easily catch fire. Keep away from flammable items: Stay clear of dry leaves, gas cylinders and vehicles. Don't relight: If a cracker doesn't ignite, don't attempt to relight it. Never block exits: Avoid setting off crackers near emergency exits. In emergencies it is advised to call: Fire Control Room (101, 9949991101) or visit Fire Department website for more details.



Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy distributing bicycles to students

## Govt giving priority to education, healthcare: Ponguleti

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on Tuesday emphasised that children should fulfil their parents' aspirations. On Tuesday, he distributed free bicycles to girls in Classes 8, 9, and 10 at the Government High School in Thirumalayapalem, facilitated by the PSR Trust.

Speaking on the occasion, he stated that the State government is committed to giving priority to education and healthcare. The government is taking measures to improve infrastructure to promote education.

During the event, the Minister remarked that "hard work always yields positive results, and those results provide lasting happiness." He acknowledged that parents go through many struggles for their children's future and stressed that it is the responsibility of children to fulfil their parents' expectations.

He stressed that the teachers of government schools should rise to the occasion to match the quality of private schools, highlighting that the government has spent Rs 637 crore to improve infrastructure in schools.

The Minister announced plans to establish skill universities to bring out hidden talents in students.

He noted the recent inauguration of the Young India Skill University in the fourth city, mentioning that a

grand building will be constructed for it. Branches would be set up in Madhira, Huzurabad and Adilabad, with plans for a branch in Paleru shortly.

He urged students not to rely solely on government jobs but to strive to create employment opportunities for others. The Minister allocated Rs 8 lakh for establishing science labs in four mandals within the constituency, granting Rs 2 lakhs for each school. He mentioned plans to install reverse osmosis (RO) plants in all government schools soon and confirmed that bicycles would be distributed annually, starting from the 4th grade to girls in the 8th grade.

Looking ahead, the Minister indicated that he would take steps for the welfare of boys as well. He said, "The responsibility of increasing enrolment in government schools lies with both teaching and non-teaching staff." Teachers must implement plans to ensure a minimum of 200 students are enrolled in each high school. He called for improved faculty and teaching quality to build trust among students and their parents.

Muvva Vijay Babu, Chairman of the State Irrigation Development Corporation, Additional Collector P Srinivas Reddy, District Education Officer Somasekhara Sharma, Headmaster Vijayakumari, and other officials.

## Hygiene violations flagged at medical college, hostel, canteen

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI

There has been widespread public outcry regarding the alleged substandard food being served at the Ramagundam Singareni Medical College and the Godavarikhani Government General Hospital, besides the canteen attached to the institutions. Allegations have emerged that medical college students and hospital patients are provided with poor-quality food, including expired products. In light of these accusations, Dr R Dr Anusha, the district food safety officer, inspected both the medical college and the government hospital two days ago, leading to the finding of several hygiene violations.

When the Food Safety Officer went to inspect the kitchen of the medical college and the government hospital, she was prevented by the hospital staff. This incident, where the district food safety officer was denied permission to conduct an inspection, went viral in the district.

Dr Anusha, while talking to *The Pioneer*, confirmed that she was initially not allowed to inspect the



Peddapalli District Food Safety Officer R Anusha inspecting Godavarikhani Hospital canteen at Godavarikhani in Peddapalli district on Tuesday

medical college and hospital. She inspected after the police intervened and warned the hospital staff. Dr Anusha expressed her anger over the poor quality of food being served at the Singareni Medical College. She stated that the use of expired ingredients was posing a risk to students' health. During her surprise inspection, she discovered contaminated food items, such as rice and pulses infested with weevils.

When she tried to visit the canteen at the Singareni Area Hospital, officials denied her entry, which further disappointed her. With the intervention of higher authorities and local police, she ultimately gained access to the hospital canteen, where several violations came to light, she said. She expressed outrage over the preparation of food for patients using items, including rotten tamarind and expired products.



Tamarind infested with insects at the canteen

She mentioned that the identified low-quality items have been sent to the lab for testing. Based on the lab reports, further actions will be taken, Dr Anusha said.

The refusal to allow the district food safety officer to conduct inspections indicated the extent of alleged corruption and malpractice that took place in the institution.

Higher authorities must take this matter seriously and not ignore such incidents, students said. The district administration is reportedly seized of the matter and may order a probe into the entire episode.



Ganesh

## Online gaming debts drive youth to suicide

PNS ■ WARANGAL

A third-year engineering student committed suicide after he lost heavily in online betting, according to police. The incident took place at Ghatkesar where the police registered a case. Investigation is underway.

The deceased was identified as Ganesh (22). He hailed from Kadarigudem under Wardhannapet mandal in the district.

He had been pursuing third year engineering course at a private college at Ghatkesar. He reportedly became addicted to online betting. He borrowed nearly Rs 7 lakh and spent it in online betting. Unable to repay the loans, the youth allegedly committed suicide by consuming pesticide.

## Man takes to crime after heavy loss in online betting; jailed

PNS ■ HANAMKONDA

A man who took to crime after losing heavily in online betting landed behind bars here on Tuesday. The police, according to Warangal Police Commissioner Amber Kishore Jha, seized from the arrested person gold ornaments weighing 334 grams worth approximately Rs 28.5 lakh, silver ornaments weighing 1.6 kg, Rs 13,000 in cash, a motorcycle, a mobile phone, and tools used for theft.

The suspect is a 30-year-old Kondapalli Dharmaraju. He hailed from Rayaparti in the Warangal district. He was residing in the Subedari locality in Hanamkonda when he was arrested. Dharmaraju completed his degree and ran a biryani hotel in Rayaparti for a while, but suffered losses. Subsequently, he moved to a rented accommodation in Hanamkonda under the guise of being a student, the Police Commissioner said.

To recover his lost money, he borrowed money and engaged in online betting, leading to heavy losses. He was unable to repay debts. This drove him to choose the path of theft to earn easy money. He acquired tools for breaking in and used his motorcycle to identify locked



Warangal Police Commissioner Amber Kishore Jha speaking at a media conference in Warangal on Tuesday

houses during the day, later breaking into them at night.

In total, the suspect committed 17 burglaries within the Warangal Police Commissionerate. Eight of the burglaries took place in the limits of the KUC police station 2 each in the limits of Hanamkonda and Hassanpur police stations, and one each in Subedari, Sangem, Ghanpur, Palakurthi, and Devarupula police stations, Amber Kishore Jha revealed.

Police formed special investigation teams under the supervision of Central Zone Deputy Commissioner of Police Shakeel Saleem. Using advanced technology, they identified and monitored the suspect. On Tuesday, police

received credible information that the suspect was heading to KUC with stolen items in his vehicle.

The CCS and KUC police jointly apprehended him at KUC Cross during a vehicle inspection. During interrogation, he confessed to the crimes, and the stolen items were recovered, the Police Commissioner said.

The Central Zone DCP Saleem, along with Additional DCP Ravi, Crime ACP Bhoja Raju, Hanamkonda ACP Devender Reddy, and the CCS inspectors, were commended by the Warangal Police Commissioner for their efforts in apprehending the suspect and recovering the stolen property.

## 'Congress government continues to focus on welfare of people'

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkat Reddy on Tuesday came down heavily on the previous BRS government for depriving the youth of jobs. He was laying the foundation stone for a high-level bridge over Somanna Vagu and several rural roads at Pagidimarri village. The Minister criticised the previous BRS, stating that there were no jobs for the unemployed and no houses for the poor during its regime. He emphasised that upon coming to power, the Congress government provided jobs to 11,000 people through the District Selection Committee (DSC).

He mentioned that the Srisailem Left Bank (SLBC) tunnel works would commence in two months,

and various development projects have already begun in the district with an investment of Rs 600 crore through the Road and Board department. He assured that the Rs 2 lakh loan waiver would be completed soon.

The minister laid the foundation for the bridge and roads with an expenditure of Rs 38 crore. He alleged that there has been no substantial development in nine years under the BRS government and pointed out that there is no evidence of double-bedroom houses being provided to the poor. He claimed that once the Congress party came to power, it started focussing on developmental and welfare activities. He noted that KCR has not attended the Assembly sessions even once, despite there were sessions so far.



Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkat Reddy speaking at a public meeting in Nalgonda district on Tuesday

## Farmers asked not to sell cotton below MSP

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

During his visit to the Husnabad constituency in Siddipet district, Minister for Transport and Backward Classes Welfare Ponnam Prabhakar inaugurated a cotton procurement centre at RK Ginning Mill (Mirzapur Road) in Potharam (S). He checked the moisture content of cotton and took measurements. On this occasion, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar extended Diwali greetings to the



people of Husnabad.

He announced the opening of the cotton procurement centre on behalf of the Cotton Corporation

of India, which is overseeing cotton procurement across the country. The cotton support price and procurement centres will be monitored by the Central government, and the state government will assist in providing basic facilities. He acknowledged that delays in setting up procurement centres by the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) could cause losses to farmers. He appealed to Central Minister Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay, to ensure that cotton pro-

urement begins at the 322 centres across Telangana.

He emphasised that farmers should not be forced to sell the produce below the minimum support price and that all kinds of facilities should be ensured for seamless procurement operations. He advised farmers not to rush into selling at low prices. He mentioned that if the moisture content of the cotton is below 8 per cent, the price would be higher, he said.

## Ingredients used in preparation of temple prasaadam found to be good

PNS ■ BHADRACHALAM

The quality of ingredients used in preparation of the prasaadam of Sri Sitaramachandraswamy temple at Bhadrachalam was found to be good, according to a laboratory report received by the temple authorities.

In the wake of allegations levelled over the adulteration of the Tirumala laddu, the Bhadrachalam temple executive officer L Rama Devi sent samples of the ingredients being used in preparation of the temple prasaadam to a food laboratory in Hyderabad.

The laboratory authorities thoroughly checked the quality of the ingredients.

The laboratory certified that the ghee, pulses, rice and other commodities being used in the preparation of the prasaadam were of good quality, she said adding that her office received report in this regard.

## Cong govt will fulfil all its promises: MLA

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Veerlapalli Shankar, Chairman of Public Organisations and Shadnagar MLA, voiced concerns over Telangana's financial situation, attributing the State's substantial debt to the previous BRS government.

Speaking as the chief guest at an Agricultural Labour Union seminar held at mini universities, Shankar criticised the previous BRS administration, alleging that it drove Telangana, once a surplus state, into debt of Rs 7 lakh crore. Shankar pointed out that Congress, led by Revanth Reddy, has begun implementing key welfare



Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar speaking at a public meeting of Agriculture Labour Union in Shadnagar on Tuesday

promises, including free bus services, 200 units of free electricity, subsidised gas, and loan waivers for farmers. He

also stressed the need to fulfil BRS-era promises such as double bedroom housing, Indiramma house construction, and an increase in women's pensions to 2,500 rupees.

In his remarks, Shankar praised the efforts of communists who, he said, continuously fight for public welfare. He pledged that Congress would support their efforts and remain dedicated to addressing the problems faced by the public. He encouraged constituents not to be swayed by negative campaigns against the Congress government, emphasising Congress' commitment to resolving issues of public concern. The event was chaired by Vyakasa

district General Secretary Buddhula Jangaiah, with state presidents Kalakonda Kantaiah and N Bala Mallesh, along with CPI district secretary Palamakula Jangaiah, speaking as chief guests. Other notable attendees included Gram Panchayat Workers Union State President Tanguturi Narasimha Reddy, Vyakasa District President J Anjaiah, CPI Chaudharyguda Mandal Secretary G Venkatesh, CPI Kondurgu Mandal Secretary Bhagas Narasimha, Vyakasa Division Leader Ramesh, and several Congress leaders including Chendi Tirupathi Reddy and former Sarpanch Kommu Krishna.

## Medical college AO, junior assistant land in ACB net

PNS ■ BHADRADRIKOTHAGUDEM

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials on Tuesday allegedly caught red-handed medical college administrative officer and junior assistant Sudhakar and Khalilullah while demanding and accepting Rs 3 lakh for doing official favours to an agency entrusted with the responsibility of recruiting outsourced employees.

In fact, the duo, according to ACB officials, struck a deal with the agency for payment of Rs 7 lakh bribe to pay the pending bill of Rs 15 lakh to the agency.

According to the ACB Deputy Superintendent of Police Y Ramesh, the college in the past had issued a recruitment notification to fill vacancies in the medical college on outsourcing basis. On the basis of the

notification, the posts had been filled. However, the officials of the medical college told the agency that the college is keen to dispense with the services of 23 employees and also did not pay salaries to them due to unavoidable reasons.

When the agency questioned the college authorities over the dismissal of 23 employees from service and not paying them wages, the Administrative officer and junior assistant have demanded the agency to pay them Rs 15 lakh so that the college will continue 23 staff members on the rolls and pay them full salary. However, the agency struck a deal with them for Rs 7 lakh and paid them Rs 3 lakh on Tuesday when the ACB officials caught them red-handed while demanding and accepting the bribe.

## SP threatens to invoke PD Act against mischief-makers

PNS ■ KUMRAM BHEEM ASIFABAD

District Superintendent of Police DV Srinivasa Rao on Tuesday threatened to initiate stern action against those who indulge in crimes frequently and try to vitiate.

He quoted the example of how the police had invoked the Preventive Detention Act against Muddoomb who tried to outrage the modesty of an Adivasi woman and tried to murder her in Jainoor, following which violence erupted leading to law and order problem in Jainoor.

The police machinery would discharge its duties so as to get the accused in criminal cases receive stern punishment, he said.

"Everyone is equal before law. The court will award punishment to the guilty. Taking action against the criminals by invoking the Preventive



DV Srinivasa Rao

Detention Act will help reduce crime rate," he said.

The accused in Jainoor incident was on Tuesday handed over the certificate in Charlapalli central jail, he said adding that the invoking the Preventive Detention Act would reduce the crime rate.

**NORTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LIMITED**  
CIN No. U40109TG2000SGC034119

**"E" PROCUREMENT, SHORT TENDER NOTICE No. 12/2024-25 OF CE (PROJ)/TGNPDCL, KMM**

Bid No. 1-104/2024-25. Name of the work: Installation of Rooftop solar plants for 1024 beneficiaries (2177K Wp) in Sitapuram (V) in Khammam (Dist) under PM - Surya Ghar - Muft Bij Yojana Scheme. For further details visit: [www.eprocurement.gov.in](http://www.eprocurement.gov.in) & [www.tgnpdcl.in](http://www.tgnpdcl.in).  
Sd/- Chief Engineer (Projects) TGNPDCL, Warangal

**SHORT TENDER NOTICE No. 01/2024-25 OF SE/OP/INMIL WITH SPECIFICATION No. 49/2024-25 to 52/2024-25**

Sealed tenders are invited from TGNPDCL registered contractors for various works in Operation Circle, Nirmal. The details of the work can be obtained from our website: [www.tgnpdcl.in](http://www.tgnpdcl.in)  
Sd/- Superintendent Engineer, Operation Circle, Nirmal

**"E" PROCUREMENT, SHORT TENDER NOTICE No. 11/2024-25 OF CE/PROJECTS/TGNPDCL/WARANGAL**

Bid No. 1-144/2024-25/CE/PROJECTS/TGNPDCL/WARANGAL  
Name of the work: AWC of Hardware, Software, LAN/WAN Network, Peripherals of Computer Systems and UPS units in TGNPDCL. For further details visit: [tender.telangana.gov.in](http://tender.telangana.gov.in), [www.tgnpdcl.com](http://www.tgnpdcl.com).  
Sd/- Chief Engineer (Projects) Operation : TGNPDCL, Warangal

R.D.No.: 599-PPICL-AGENCY/ADVT/11/2024-25, Date: 29.10.2024

ACROSS THE STATES



Women outnumber men in Mizoram's draft voter list

Mizoram has a total of 8,58,534 voters, comprising 4,42,667 women and 4,15,867 men, according to the draft voter list published on Tuesday. Female voters outnumber their male counterparts by 26,800. The draft electoral rolls were prepared for the special summary revision of the voter list to include people turning 18 years old on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 in 2025. Aizawl district with 12 assembly constituencies has the highest number of voters at 2,88,962 followed by Lunglei district at 1,01,002, which has six assembly constituencies. Hnahthial district, which was created in 2019, has the least number of electorate at 16,276. Claim (inclusion) and objection can be filed between October 29 and November 28, an official said. The final rolls will be published in January next, they said. There are 40 assembly constituencies and 1,301 polling stations in Mizoram.



Chaos in Ghaziabad court, lawyers clash with police

Lawyers and baton-wielding police personnel come to blows in a courtroom in Ghaziabad on Tuesday. It was not immediately clear what led to the altercation at the District and Sessions Court complex in the Raj Nagar area here and there were no immediate reports of any serious injuries. However, purported video clips of the incident doing the rounds on social media showed a large number of police personnel and lawyers in a confrontation in the courtroom. Some police personnel brandished batons, while one even wielded a wooden chair, gesturing as if to strike the opposing side. A lawyer was also purportedly seen with a wound on his head in a related photo shared on social media.



ABVP, Left clash over 'derogatory' remarks

A clash erupted between students from the Left outfits and the ABVP early Tuesday during a University Governing Body Meeting (UGBM) at the Jawaharlal Nehru University over alleged derogatory remarks against Lord Rama. The JNU Students' Union (JNUSU) alleged that the ABVP members hurled casteist slurs at office-bearers of JNUSU. The meeting was convened by the JNU Students' Union (JNUSU) to discuss their participation in the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) elections — a body established to address sexual harassment complaints on campus. The JNUSU has long been opposing the setting up of ICC in place of Gender Sensitization Committee Against Sexual Harassment (GSCASH) which was scrapped by the varsity in 2017. In a statement on Tuesday, the JNUSU alleged that Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) members disrupted the proceedings of the UGBM by forcibly occupying the stage, and heckled and threatened its members.

No differences with..

Continued from page 1

that BRS leaders should express their objections to the Musi Project. BRS leaders can meet Ministers and officials if they want to, the CM said. "We will develop the area 21 km from the Bhapu Ghat. Water will be pumped from Mallanna Sagar to the Musi. Tenders will be invited to pump Godavari water from Mallanna Sagar to Musi in November. We will send city public representatives to study the Musi Project and city MLAs and councillors to Seoul. I raised the curtains to discuss the Musi Project.

People became aware of the Musi Project through the discussion. The project will lead to the development of tourism also," he said. The CM said the compensation package for those who give up land for the Musi project will satisfy them 100 per cent. "The government will not take over lands by force. There is a meaning if NGOs oppose the Musi Project. No one understands why the BRS which was in power for 10 years is opposing the Musi Project. KTR thinks that he is a world-class intellectual. KTR should reveal his ideas regarding the Musi," the CM said.

BRS Govt imposed Rs 24,594 cr..

Continued from page 1

mandatory for submission to the Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC) every year. Reports for 2014-15, 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22

were never filed. Sources said the Congress has not raised power tariffs by taking over the Rs 1,200 crore proposed hike by DISCOMS preventing additional burden on consumers.

'Adapt to rapidly evolving geopolitical threats'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday urged the military leadership to be prepared to adapt to rapidly evolving geopolitical threats and opportunities and emphasised that a more "whole-of-government" approach is needed to effectively advance national security.

He said this in his address at the closing day of the second phase of the Army Commanders' Conference 2024 which witnessed the Indian Army's senior leadership deliberating on critical strategic issues affecting both border security and the hinterland.

The conference happened at a time when troop disengagement at the two friction points at Demchok and Depsang Plains in eastern Ladakh is in its "final stages", following a key agreement firmed up between India and China.

Jaishankar's address was themed -- 'Global and Geopolitical Intricacies: Opportunities for India and Expectations from the Armed Forces'.

Jaishankar urges military leadership



In a post on X, Jaishankar wrote, "Pleased to address the Army Commanders Conference in Delhi today. Discussed the intricacies of current geopolitics, as well as its challenges, possibilities and opportunities. Urged that a more 'whole of the Government' approach is needed to effectively advance national security."

Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi shared the dais with the Union minister.

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Government' approach is needed to effectively advance national security."

The Ministry of Defence later issued a statement on the conference, saying it reaffirmed the Indian Army's unwavering commitment to readiness and adaptability, as the senior leadership "resolved to accelerate ongoing transformational initia-

tives" and actively contribute to various national endeavours.

Emphasising a forward-looking approach, the Indian Army remains fully dedicated to preparing for present and emerging challenges, ensuring a progressive, resilient, and future-ready force aligned with India's strategic interests, it said.



'India needs stronger security measures to tackle cyber attacks'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The cyber security experts on Tuesday raised concern over the increase in cases of cyber attacks in India and stressed the need for stronger measures to tackle the problem.

The thoughts were shared during a release of a report titled 'The Invisible Hand' by PRAHAR, an NGO, which focuses on such issues in the public domain which, if not addressed, can cause helplessness among Indian citizens.

According to PRAHAR's statistical projections, India will be attracting nearly one trillion cyber attacks annually by 2033. By the time the country turns 100 in 2047, it will face a target of 17 trillion

cyber attacks.

"This staggering scale underscores the urgent need for a robust, large-scale cyber defence apparatus to safeguard the nation," it said.

Expressing grave concerns on cyber attacks, Abhay Mishra, national convener and president of PRAHAR, said there are two types of cyber attacks. The first involves traditional hackers who exploit vulnerabilities in systems for financial gain or disruption, he said.

"The second, the more insidious form, targets citizens, recruiting them to engage in anti-national activities through manipulation, coercion or threats. Such tactics are most likely to be used on illegal betting apps," he said.

12 killed as bus rams into flyover wall in Rajasthan

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Twelve people died and around 30 passengers got injured after a private bus crashed into the wing wall of a flyover in Rajasthan's Sikar district on Tuesday afternoon, police said.

District Superintendent of Police Bhuvan Bhushan Yadav said the bus coming from Salasar rammed into a part of the flyover in Laxmangarh while taking a turn.

According to the police, the bus was speeding and filled with passengers due to which the driver lost control and the



vehicle rammed into the wing wall of the flyover.

The right side of the bus got completely crushed and the driver died on the spot. A crane

was called to take out the passengers stuck inside, they said.

Sikar IGP Satyendra Singh said some of the injured have been referred to Jaipur and oth-

ers are undergoing treatment at SK Hospital here.

Twelve people have died in the accident, he said.

Vinita, Seema, Kiran Kanwar, Kamla, Banarasi Meghwal, Aditya Meghwal and Pramod Singh are among those killed in the accident. Efforts are on to identify the rest, the police said.

A team of doctors and administration has taken control of the situation and all arrangements have been made. Passengers are local residents. Their family members have been informed, the IGP said.

He said that the reason

behind the accident is yet not known.

Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma has expressed grief over the accident.

"The loss of life in the bus accident in Sikar's Laxmangarh area is extremely sad and heart-breaking. My deepest condolences are with the bereaved families of the deceased. The concerned officials have been directed to ensure proper treatment of the injured. I pray to Lord Shri Ram to give place to the departed souls in his feet and grant speedy recovery to the injured. Om Shanti," Sharma said on X.

CEC KUMAR TO MAHA DGP

'Clampdown on politically motivated crimes'



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar on Tuesday expressed concerns over politically motivated crimes in Maharashtra and asked its police chief to ensure a strict clampdown on crimes that vitiate the electoral atmosphere, sources said.

The poll watchdog held a review meeting with the chief secretaries, police chiefs and other top officials of Maharashtra, Jharkhand and their neighbouring states to assess the law-and-order situation for the assembly elections.

During the review, CEC Kumar expressed concerns over politically motivated crimes in Maharashtra and asked the state's director general of police to ensure a strict clampdown on such crimes, the sources said.

The recent killing of NCP leader Baba Siddique in the state has created a political furor.

CEC Kumar also cautioned the administration and law enforcement authorities in Jharkhand to be even-handed in their dealings with political functionaries and ensure that no authority is exercised in a mala fide manner, they said.

Govt seeks Guv's..

Continued from page 1

it involving former Municipal heads," sources said.

Legal experts said that under the Prevention of Corruption Act (PCA), the Governor holds discretionary powers to approve or refuse prosecution sanction, particularly in cases involving high-ranking officials like the Chief Minister or Ministers. The Governor is competent to grant sanction for prosecuting the Chief Minister or Ministers for offences committed under the PC Act, 1988, and in such cases, the Governor may act independently or against the advice of the Council of Ministers by exercising his discretionary powers under Article 163.

Sources said that "Seeking the Governor's nod will add more value and credibility to the probe than seeking the Speaker's permission as he belongs to the Congress.

'Will stand with Wayanad families just like Rahul'

PNS ■ WAYANAD (KERALA)

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday said that just like her brother, Rahul Gandhi, she was committed to standing with the families of the hill district.

Referring to the life of Wayanad native Siji, a mother of three, Priyanka said the woman benefitted from the Rahul Gandhi Kaithangu Project that was funded by the MP's funds when her brother represented the hill constituency. The Congress leader said that the mother of three and her family now have a home "that brings them the comfort and stability they had long yearned for", according to a party statement. "Siji's story is one of grit and determination. A resident of Mukkam, and a courageous single mother of three, Siji has



tirelessly created a safe, loving space for her children, two of whom have special needs.

"Siji's journey reminds me of the resilience that defines so many families in Wayanad. I am committed to standing by families like hers, carrying forward Rahul's vision to ensure every person feels the warmth of support and solidarity," she said in the statement. Priyanka, who marks her electoral debut

in this by-poll, is contesting against the LDF's veteran leader Sathyan Mokeri, a former MLA, and the BJP's Navya Haridas, a two-time councillor of the Kozhikode Corporation.

The by-election was necessitated after Rahul Gandhi vacated the seat following his victory in the Rai Bareli constituency in the recent parliamentary elections. The by-election will be held on November 13.

Continued from page 1

the police and after that he disappeared. Asking who helped KTR's family members to escape from the farmhouse, Union Minister Sanjay said the Revanth Reddy government could not even catch a mouse after digging a hill. He said that Revanth Reddy and KCR's son KTR are one.

Speaking to the media at Visakhapatnam on Tuesday

RKH govt..

after participating in the Rojgar Mela. Sanjay said, "One should be ashamed of conducting Dawaths (parties) in farmhouses. One can conduct Dawaths during Dasara. Can anybody conduct Dawaths during Diwali? Laxmi Pooja can be conducted during Diwali but not Dawaths."

Sanjay said that the BJP is the only party that can face the Congress and the BRS. He warned that the BJP would bend the neck of the Congress if it fails to implement its six guarantees. Sanjay reacted with anger at BRS leaders for staging dharnas and asked them to explain why they were staging dharnas when KTR's brother-in-law was caught for liquor offence. He said that BRS leaders are enacting fake dramas to hide their mistakes.

We know how to deal with..

Continued from page 1

During a chit-chat with journalists on Tuesday at the secretariat, the CM said that quarrels are going on inside KCR's family and that KTR's politics will end along with that of Harish Rao.

The CM said that 'he made' KCR confine himself to his farmhouse and brought KTR out and that he knows how to deal with KTR and Harish Rao. "My politics' style and KTR's style are different like the different styles of film directors

due to the pressure from KTR and Harish Rao, the CM said.

A probe is going on regarding phone tapping and power purchase agreements, the CM said and added that there would not be any vengeful acts during the inquiry. Action would be as per the report of investigating agencies, he said.

The CM said the loans of farmers which had technical loopholes could not be waived. Telangana is the only state that filled 50,000 posts in government service within 10 months, he said.

He hinted that the unfolding situation is only the beginning of what he called a "long-drawn battle of political vendetta," forewarning of more confrontations and anticipated backlash from opposition forces.

"Let's get ready for vicious personal attacks, conspiracies, fake propaganda and outright lies peddled as facts," he said, suggesting that the Congress, along with the BJP and the TDP, would employ tactics like deep-fake technology, smear campaigns and coordinated trolling to target the BRS.

KTR urged his supporters to

Formula E bomb to..

Continued from page 1

cabinet consent has raised serious questions about transparency and due process.

Sources indicate that the funds were allegedly disbursed based on directives given over the phone by BRS Municipal Minister KT Rama Rao during his tenure.

After the Congress came to power in December 2023, FEO cancelled the 2024 race due to "non-compliance with government regulations."

If the event had been held, the HMDA would have had to bear a burden of around Rs 200 crore. After the cancellation attention shifted to the nature of the fund transfers, sparking a political and administrative debate.

It may be mentioned here that in the past, the Chief

Secretary issued notices to a senior IAS official involved in the decision. In his reply to the notice issued regarding the sanction of Rs 55 crore for the Formula E race, senior IAS officer Arvind Kumar said that KTR who was the competent authority then was kept informed at every stage of the agreement.

"It is clarified that the competent authority, that is, the minister handling MAUD, was kept informed at all stages and that permission was obtained from the competent authority. It is clarified that season 10 was not yet over and legal action against the then promoter would have been launched as per the law and it is open for the TG government to go ahead accordingly," he told the CS in his reply to the memo.

ignore what he termed as "malicious actions" and instead focus on holding the Congress accountable.

"Don't let them distract you. Let's focus on the fight for the people of Telangana. Let's resolutely expose their corruption, incompetence and hypocrisy," he emphasized, reiterating his commitment to scrutinize the Congress's unfulfilled promises and their six guarantees. Ending his message with a "Jai Telangana," KTR's post sparked a flurry of responses online, setting the stage for what promises to be a fierce political showdown.

The #CongressFailedTelangana began trending as supporters echoed his call to keep Congress in check and to prioritize the state's welfare.

Battle has begun..

Continued from page 1

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KTR urged his supporters to

Five Congress MLAs..

Continued from page 1

he is simply "engaged in time pass" while observing how the situation unfolds over the next four years.

In his discussions, KCR is said to have referenced Congress leader Jeevan Reddy's recent open letter criticising his party, as well as

another letter by an MLA regarding fisheries.

With confidence in his long-term vision, sources hinted that KCR plans to reconvene his team for a strategic briefing before the Assembly session, signalling a carefully calculated approach to maintaining political stability.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Delhi water woes

Political blame game erupts as toxic ammonia levels in Yamuna spark crisis and residents are supplied with unpotable water

As images of a frothy Yamuna flooded the media, Delhiites were shocked and alarmed. Pollution levels in the river have soared beyond what anyone could have imagined. This has disrupted the Delhi water supply and Delhiites are forced to consume polluted water. Delhi is in the grips of a severe water crisis as elevated ammonia levels in the Yamuna River disrupt water supply across the capital. With water treatment plants at Sonia Vihar and Bhagirathi struggling to manage the contamination, residents face widespread shortages. The AAP and BJP have engaged in a heated blame game, with the AAP accusing the BJP-led Haryana government of neglecting pollution controls upstream, while the BJP criticizes Delhi's administration for failing to bolster treatment facilities. As political tensions rise, Delhiites are left hoping for swift, actionable solutions to restore their water supply. The ammonia levels in the Yamuna have surged to nearly 0.9 parts per million (ppm), far exceeding the safe limit of 0.5 ppm required for effective treatment. This spike is severely affecting the functionality of the Sonia Vihar and Bhagirathi water treatment plants (WTPs), which play a pivotal role in providing clean water to the city. When the Upper Ganga Canal—Delhi's primary source of clean water—is closed for annual maintenance, as it was from October 12 to 31, the city becomes increasingly reliant on the Yamuna, compounding the water scarcity problem. Amid mounting public dissatisfaction, the political sparring has escalated. The AAP has blamed the BJP-led Haryana government, accusing it of being 'hostile' towards Delhi's interests by failing to curb the industrial waste entering the Yamuna. AAP officials claim that Haryana's callous attitude has left Delhi residents without a reliable water supply, with no proactive steps being taken to control the pollutants entering the river. On the other hand, the BJP's Delhi unit responded by holding AAP accountable for the water crisis, criticising the Kejriwal administration for what they call "mismanagement." They say that the AAP government has failed in two major areas: maintaining operational sewage treatment plants and equipping existing WTPs, such as those at Sonia Vihar and Dwarka, with the capacity to handle ammonia contamination. Indeed it is a classic case of passing the buck and Delhi has had enough of it. Rather than blaming each other both Delhi and Haryana government would do well to mitigate this disaster. The Yamuna water is coming from Haryana so no two opinions about where the source of contamination is but AAP should have managed the situation well as it new well in advance that Upper Ganga Canal would be closed for the maintenance till October 31. Right now water remains the biggest concern for Delhi. Yamuna is no better than a drain. Apart from being visually appalling it is a health hazard and the water being supplied is not fit for bathing let alone drinking. But is anybody listening?



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### PICTALK



A Vendor sell flowers ahead of the Diwali festival, at the Ghazipur flower market in Delhi

## The forgotten legacy of Odisha's unsung iron lady

Pallavi Rebbapragada unveils Nandini Satpathy's profound journey of resilience and lasting impact in her book 'Nandini Satpathy, The Iron Lady of Orissa'

Women have played a critical and active role in shaping the political future of India. But unless they have risen to positions of power, most of them have remained unsung and forgotten. It is then a paradox that Nandini Satpathy, one such spunky politician who governed her state of Odisha as its first woman chief minister and never lost an election as a member of the legislative assembly, faded out of not just public memory but also found little or no mention in many official records of her time in office. Why is so little known about Satpathy, the astute politician who legislated several groundbreaking state land reforms and was a passionate conservationist, poet and author? Despite being a Rajya Sabha member and minister of Information and Broadcasting in former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's cabinet, why was her legacy largely confined to her family and friends? Was she deliberately isolated because she dared to oppose the imposition of the Emergency despite being a trusted friend and



close aide of Indira Gandhi? Did this step sound the death knell for Satpathy's association with Indira Gandhi? Answers to these questions can be found in Pallavi Rebbapragada's well-researched book on the second woman to become chief minister of a state in India. Titled 'Nandini Satpathy, The Iron Lady of Orissa', Rebbapragada, a journalist and public policy consultant, chronicles the story of a girl who first defied odds to be born and then, went on to show not just Cuttack, the city where she was born, but also her state and the country that her birth would one day herald new beginnings. The first time she made her presence publicly known was when she did the unthinkable by pulling down the Union Jack atop

her Ravenshaw college and hoisting the national flag. Satpathy, then just 15, showed no remorse even though she was imprisoned by the British police for this act of defiance. It was also to be a turning point in her personal life. It was in jail that she met activist Devendra Satpathy whom she later married. While she accomplished several milestones during her stint in office including the setting up of the Free Bangla Radio as I&B minister in Indira Gandhi's first government during Bangladesh's struggle for independence, her contribution when out of power is no less significant. Except perhaps for students of law, not many know about her case. PL Dani, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Vigilance, led to a historic 1978 Supreme Court judgment that expanded the scope of the right against self-incrimination and provided guidelines for police interrogation, ensuring individuals could not be compelled to provide evidence against themselves at any stage. This came about when Satpathy, then former Chief

Minister of Odisha, refused to answer certain questions invoking her right against self-incrimination under Article 20(3) of the Constitution when she was called for police interrogation in connection with a corruption case. The police contended that her refusal to answer questions constituted an offence under Section 179 of the Indian Penal Code. The case reached the Supreme Court and paved the way for reaffirmation of the Right to Silence as a fundamental right, protecting individuals from being compelled to answer incriminating questions during police interrogation and the Right to Legal Assistance allowing individuals to consult with a legal practitioner before answering any questions during police interrogation, promoting fair treatment and safeguarding against coercive practices. Importantly, the judgment continues to remain a key reference today for ensuring the protection of individual rights during the investigative process. (The writer is a social activist and freelance writer; views are personal)



SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

## A mirage of progress on the LAC

The path to restoring the status quo appears fraught, with divergent interpretations between the two countries clouding any clear progress

The 21st October Agreement to disengage from Demchok and Depsang and resume patrolling as in April 2020, is being hailed as a breakthrough. It's not quite that: now Indian soldiers have to inform the Chinese of the timetable for patrolling and grazing. The government has called this disengagement as a pathway to return to conditions on the ground that existed in April 2020. It is also hoped this will lead to the disengagement of troops deployed in buffer zones, de-escalation, de-induction and return to status quo ante (RSQA) in April 2020. This is wishful thinking. COAS, Gen Dwivedi has expressed fear that the Chinese may encroach into buffer zones, so low is the trust factor. He has called the latest disengagement a 'low hanging fruit'. But the government has given the impression as if RSQA is around the corner. Far from it. From day one after the intrusions had taken place government has covered LAC in a smokescreen: making unilateral statements and blocking debate in parliament as it would undermine troop morale. But PM Modi's famous statement after Galwan that no one came in and no one is in, took the cake. The government has banned former COAS Gen Naravane's book Four Stars of Destiny as it removes some of the smoke screen. India has its interpretation of the 21st October Agreement and China its own. There were no joint statements after the Agreement and Modi-Xi Jinping bilateral on 24 October. The Chinese readout of the 21st October Agreement and the bilateral are different from India's like chalk from cheese. In the Agreement, the Chinese say: "two sides have reached a solution to relevant issues which has been evaluated positively. In the next step China will work with India to implement above solution". There is no mention of RSQA April 2020, and no details of "the solution" and "relevant issues". Similarly, on the bilateral which was scheduled for 45 minutes (more than half the time is taken up in translation) Indian readout mentions "complete disengagement"; "properly handling differences and disputes"; "Special Representatives would meet to resolve border dispute". China's readout: "two sides agreed on holding talks between Foreign Ministers and officials to bring relationship back to sound and steady development at early date"; "it notes progress and development on both sides and in border areas and recommends more communication and cooperation" ... in short China has shown a vague inclination to implement border agreement. For China border talks and bilateral relations are separate issues. For India normalcy on the border is linked to bilateral relations. Positions are poles apart. As there is no road map to RSQA with timelines, one will never know the progress on the three Ds: Disengagement, De-escalation and De-induction. Chinese will engage in endless military and diplomatic talks, making India the supplicant. We will continue to grope in the dark as we have for the last five years about the situation along the LAC. For example, no one knew about the establishment of a Buffer Zone on Kailash Heights after we foolishly vacated it till Ladakhi graziers revealed that the Rezangla Memorial and other man-made forms had been obliterated. The loss of patrolling and grazing rights was revealed at a police conference where an



ITBP officer mentioned losing 26 of 65 patrolling sites. The government has said frequently Chinese had amassed troops in violation of border protocols and "attempted to alter status quo". They have altered it. True, there is a difference in the perception of LAC; there is no mutually recognised LAC but an Indian and Chinese perception of it. One precaution above all is paramount. Go by Chinese deeds, not their words, and verify before trust. Last time verification of the status of the Galwan post resulted in a horrific medieval clash which led to the question of new protocols/agreements. Will troops be armed and have ammunition in their chargers? Former NSA Shivshankar Menon had suggested that a new modus vivendi is required for restoring trust as the one agreed between Rajiv Gandhi and Deng Xiaopeng after the Sumdorongchu imbroglio that took ten years to resolve but compared to intrusions in East Ladakh it was a single point intrusion. The government has a fair idea of the framework agreement China calls the 'solution' and India's 'RSQA'. It must share it with Parliament as any agreement on full disengagement must not create a 2017 Doklam-like situation where the Chinese hoodwinked India and Bhutan and established full control over the

plateau— with fortifications, infrastructure and dual-use villages— which leads to the Siliguri corridor. India has gone cold over its treaty commitment with Bhutan even as Thimphu was on its way to clinching a Doklam package deal with China which would have been a big strategic setback for India. Our non-strategic economists must be cautious about Chinese FDI contrary to what the Chief Economic Advisor has suggested — a carte blanche inflow of FDI. It must be verified case by case as per Press Note 3. Ban on Chinese apps must stay and Chinese 5G, 6G, Huawei and ZTE blocked. The trade deficit with China has rocketed to USD 105bn which is more than India's defence budget of 2025-26. What India has achieved on the LAC is just a baby step in the restoration of RSQA in April 2020. Chinese have obliged in disengaging from Demchok and Depsang friction points because these pre-date the April 2020 intrusions. Let India not be under any illusion that it has overpowered Chinese coercion through deterrence. Far from it. (The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. The views expressed are personal)



LAST TIME VERIFICATION OF THE STATUS OF THE GALWAN POST RESULTED IN A HORRIFIC MEDIEVAL CLASH WHICH LED TO THE QUESTION OF NEW PROTOCOLS/ AGREEMENTS. WILL TROOPS BE ARMED AND HAVE AMMUNITION IN THEIR CHARGERS?

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### THE MENACE OF DIGITAL ARREST

Madam — The PM Narendra Modi has chosen a most relevant topic in his latest episode of "Mann ki baat" programme to alert the people against the menace of digital arrest. While the digital age has brought about incredible convenience, it has also given rise to a new class of cyber-criminals who use technology to trick innocent people. One of the most dangerous scam is the "Digital Arrest". It is a type of sophisticated cyber fraud where cyber-criminals impersonate law enforcement officials or other authorities. Criminals play into the victims' fear by threatening them with imminent arrest, legal consequences, or public humiliation if they don't cooperate with a series of urgent demands. Fraudsters behind digital arrests are masters of psychological manipulation. They understand that fear and urgency are powerful motivators that can cloud judgment and lead people to act against their best interests. By creating a fabricated sense of crisis, they pressure victims into making hasty decisions without the chance for rational thought or verification. Hence, digital arrests are a stark reminder of the need for constant vigilance in the digital world. By understanding the tactics, staying informed, and taking precautions, we can drastically reduce our vulnerability. Additionally, spreading awareness and collective action are vital in the fight to dismantle the global networks behind these devastating scams. N Sadhasiva Reddy | Washington

#### HATHRAS ADULTERATION SCAM

Madam — The Hathras adulteration scandal has put forward critical concerns over food safety to the vanguard. In a recent raid, authorities captured large proportions of adulterated ghee that was being sold as top-quality product. Analysts found out that the supposed "ghee" was excessively diluted with poor-quality oils and some other substances, making it undoubtedly hazardous to consumers' health. This exposed a prevalent racket where traders were profiting by doing

#### Who cares about Delhi air pollution?



propos news item, "AAP, BJP spar over plunging air quality", published on Oct. 28, this is my response. Like every year, the national capital is under the spell of air pollution at the start of winter this year. The air quality of Delhi and cities in the National Capital Region (NCR) has reached the

poor and very poor categories. The cause of Delhi's severe air pollution is primarily due to geographical and local factors. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), because of the calm winds, the polluted gases, smoke, and dust particles spread in the local environment are not spreading to distant places and are polluting the local air. Adding to the woes, Delhi's toxic air is caused by vehicles and industrial emissions. Stopping trucks from plying within Delhi city limits between 6 AM and 6 PM, doing construction activities with proper draping, enforcing a total ban on bursting fire-crackers, and moving brick kilns outside Delhi are some of the means by which the local government can fix the air-pollution problem. Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

malpractices. The incident raised alarm about the commonness of such practices, especially with essential ingredients like ghee, which holds a lot of nutritional value in Indian households. This scandal is a portentous event and a wake-up call for stricter regulations, increased food examination, and heightened public awareness to corroborate safety in the food sector. Neha Tomar | Ujjain

#### FOLLOW THE PROCESS

Madam — M S Dhoni very often in his post match presentations used to emphasize 'the importance of following the process right'. As the saying goes 'all that starts well ends well'. In the Bangalore when the sky is over cast after having lost the first day's play in a rain affected pitch which was visibly moist, Rohit opting to bat after winning the toss was more than a gamble and without application of mind. Here the absence of experienced Ravi Shastri or a mentor like personality Rahul Dravid was felt. The score of 46 all out was a morale sagging innings and los-

ing the first test despite scoring 400 plus runs in the second innings was because of the fact that the team never recovered from the first innings shock. In the Pune test again a fourth spinner, in the place of a second pace bowler, an Axar Patel who can bowl flattish deliveries like Santner would have made much difference and Axar can also score some useful runs when the chips are down. When the opponents strategies go wrong to capitalize on such wrongs an intelligent captain Tom Latham cleverly used the opportunity to their advantage. The lackadaisical approach of skipper Rohit to the game, lack of application to the task of the Indian top order batting, not sticking to the basics in the guise of trying innovations by the think tank under the leadership of Gautam Gambhir are all causes for the team India's failure. Hopefully the team will learn from their mistakes before it is too late!! Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



## FIRST COLUMN MERGE YOURSELF IN LIGHT OF LIGHTS

This Diwali, light a lamp of love, blast a chain of sorrow and shoot a rocket of prosperity and happiness



RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI

The biggest and the brightest of all the festivals celebrated across India as well as the whole world is about to arrive and fill our lives with joy and happiness. Yes! We all know that's none other than "Diwali" or as we say "Deepawali" in India. Such is the magic of this festival that throughout the 4-day celebrations, illuminates the whole nation with its brilliance, and dazzles all with its joy. Though each of the four days during Diwali is separated by a different tradition, what remains true and constant is the celebration of life, its enjoyment and goodness. We all know that as per the Hindu calendar, Diwali is celebrated on the darkest night of the month of Kartik. That is why it is also considered an occasion of victory of light over darkness or good over evil. Kartik month is the 8th lunar month of the Hindu calendar.

This month is considered the holiest of all the months in the Hindu calendar. Kartik Snaan (Bath) is given a lot of importance by Hindus wherein it is customary for people to go to the holy rivers or oceans because it is a general belief that your sins or bad karmas are washed away or forgiven when you perform this ritual, but all these are only symbolic. However, Kartik means change or transformation from the old to the new.

It is the last festival in the year that is celebrated as the conquest



of the virtues over the vices by 'bathing in the ocean of knowledge' i.e. 'Gyaan Ganga' to cleanse the soul of all the impurities accumulated in the dark ages. It is thus a unique process to change a man (Nar) from ordinary to an elevated perfect man or deity called "Narayan".

Going by history, the festival of Diwali can be traced back to ancient India, when it was probably an important harvest festival. However, various legends are pointing to the origin of Diwali or 'Deepawali.' Some believe it to be the celebration of the marriage of Shri Lakshmi with Lord Vishnu. Whereas in Bengal the festival is dedicated to the worship of Mother Kali, the goddess of strength. Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed God, the symbol of auspiciousness and wisdom, is also worshipped in most Hindu homes today. In Jainism, Deepawali has an added significance to the great event of Lord Mahavira attaining the eternal bliss of nirvana.

Diwali also commemorates the return of Lord Rama along with Sita Ji and Lakshman Ji from his fourteen-year-long exile and vanquishing the demon-king Ravana. In joyous celebration of the return of their king, the people of Ayodhya, the Capital of Lord Rama, illuminated the kingdom with earthen diyas (oil lamps) and burst crackers.

Each day of Diwali has its tale, legend and myth to tell, but one should not forget the fact that behind each of these legends, myths and stories lies the significance of the victory of good over evil; and it is with each Deepawali and the lights that illuminate our homes and hearts, that this simple truth finds new reason and hope. So, this Diwali, merge yourself into the light of lights who is Supreme of all and enlighten yourself from within.

*(The writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist, views are personal)*

# The web of conspiracy theories and the US election



SANTHOSH MATHEW

Conspiracy theories have captivated society for centuries, spinning intriguing narratives that challenge our sense of truth—and the recent US elections are no exception



In every era, conspiracy theories have captivated the public imagination, creating a whirlwind of suspicions, accusations, and intrigue. Today, with the American presidential election in the rearview mirror, the air is thick with conspiracy theories, some rooted in historical patterns and others fueled by recent global events.

From ancient prophecies to modern speculations, these narratives show how deeply conspiratorial thinking is woven into society, even influencing one of the most powerful democracies in the world. During the COVID-19 pandemic, a wave of theories dominated headlines, each offering a different perspective on the virus's origin and spread. For example, when former U.S. President Donald Trump labelled COVID-19 the "Wuhan virus," he fanned the flames of speculation that the virus was the result of Chinese bio-engineering. Simultaneously, however, a counter-narrative gained traction, suggesting that the virus was an American creation, designed and disseminated as part of an alleged biological warfare program.

Even within the conspiracy community, viewpoints diverged: was COVID-19 a lab-born pathogen or a consequence of environmental manipulation? A particularly unique theory even claimed the virus spread through the electromagnetic signals of 5G towers, resulting in people burning down cell towers in the United Kingdom. The COVID-19 narrative was far from alone in raising eyebrows. Conspiracy theorists link current fears to past events—from the HIV/AIDS epidemic to natural disasters. Some hold that HIV was an engineered product of the U.S. military's biological weapons division, first tested on prisoners in the 1970s before it spread outside government control.

Others go back further in history, believing that HIV stemmed from scientific mutations, a theory allegedly supported by Russian virologists who argue that HIV was a modified form of the VISNA virus, created in a laboratory setting. Nobel laureate Wangari Maathai also claimed in 2004 that



ALTHOUGH LICHTMAN'S PREDICTIONS ARE BASED ON A WELL-FORMULATED SYSTEM, HIS TRACK RECORD AND THE NICKNAME HE'S ACQUIRED SEEM TO LEND CREDENCE TO THE IDEA THAT PROPHECY AND FORESIGHT HAVE A PLACE EVEN IN THE MOST RATIONAL DOMAINS

AIDS was no accident, attributing its origin to American laboratories.

Natural disasters, too, have not escaped the lens of conspiratorial imagination. In the wake of the catastrophic 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, rumours spread that U.S. military tests were to blame. The claim was that sophisticated nuclear weapons testing off the coast of Indonesia could manipulate the weather and disrupt seismic activity. Alongside such theories, another narrative has taken shape, labelled the "Thucydides Trap"—a concept rooted in the belief that rising powers, such as China, often seek to destabilize dominant powers, exemplified by the release of COVID-19 as an alleged bio-weapon against the United States. Conversely, some assert that COVID-19 was a means for the U.S. to undermine China, spurring a dramatic escalation of mutual suspicion. Even the 9/11 attacks are rich ground for conspiracy theories. There are over four million articles online dissecting and speculating on every aspect of the attack, including claims of prior U.S. knowledge and deliberate inaction. Such theories propose that the tragedy served as a pretext for increased American military involvement in the Middle East, bolstering the economic interests of defence industries.

In such an environment, it is hardly surprising that suspicion surrounds recent American presidential elections. Election season in the United States has always been a prime opportunity for conspiracy theories, with the latest election being no exception. In this context, Nostradamus, the French astrologer and reputed seer of the 16th century reappears in the collective imagination. Nostradamus is often cited as having "predicted" world events, from the rise of Hitler to the terror of 9/11. As American political dynamics shift, believers inter-

pret Nostradamus' cryptic prophecies to suit contemporary issues, citing his supposed foresight about Trump's ascension and even a second term. Such theories proliferate because they tap into pre-existing beliefs, adding layers of mystery to the already intricate political landscape. One particularly respected figure in the American election-prediction community is historian Allan Lichtman. Dubbed the "Election Nostradamus," Lichtman has accurately forecasted the outcomes of multiple presidential elections over the past few decades.

Although Lichtman's predictions are based on a well-formulated system, his track record and the nickname he's acquired seem to lend credence to the idea that prophecy and foresight have a place even in the most rational domains. Lichtman's projections of a Democratic victory fueled hope among Biden and Harris supporters, while some conspiracy theorists proposed that the "powers that be" were covertly steering the election outcome to align with Lichtman's track record. In the age of social media and instantaneous communication, conspiracy theories spread rapidly.

The adage, "A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes," aptly describes how quickly misinformation can take hold. The rise of the internet has only amplified this effect, granting conspiracy theories a global platform.

Notably, the Flat Earth Society has found new life online, continuing to challenge the scientifically accepted fact that the Earth is round. The society's followers persist in their belief, interpreting satellite imagery and NASA's findings as government propaganda. Similarly, speculation surrounds the historic 1969 moon landing. Despite NASA's documentation

and evidence, sceptics argue that the moon landing was an elaborate hoax staged to one-up the Soviet Union in the Cold War space race. Believers insist that the televised moonwalks were filmed on Earth, attributing the iconic image of Neil Armstrong to American propaganda efforts. The moon landing controversy may be one of the most persistent conspiracy theories, as it continues to captivate audiences more than 50 years later.

As much as conspiracy theories focus on the United States, they are not exclusive to any single nation. Still, America's global influence and extensive media presence make it especially susceptible to scrutiny. Government mistrust underpins many of these theories, exemplified by the Roman historian Tacitus, who posited that the actions of untrustworthy rulers breed public suspicion.

According to Tacitus, regimes that lose the faith of their citizens tend to fuel the fires of conspiracy, using public confusion as a tool to maintain control. In the current political climate, where truth is elusive and media narratives frequently conflict, conspiracy theories are likely to thrive. They emerge not only from a need to question authority but also from an inherent fascination with the unknown.

For every piece of verified information, there is a counter-theory that rejects it, and conspiracy theories transform historical and current events into captivating narratives for believers and sceptics alike.

As American democracy continues to face these claims, it's clear that conspiracy theories are not going away any time soon. Rather, they will evolve, adapting to each new event and generation with the same intensity that has fueled them for centuries.

*(The writer is an associate professor; views are personal)*

# Bootstrapped startups: The resilient path to sustainable growth

By starting small and reinvesting profits, bootstrapped startups prioritise sustainable growth and operational agility over rapid scaling

Entrepreneurship is a dream journey for many young minds full of innovative ideas and pioneering thoughts. And many times, they are left to fend for themselves. Before the world believes in their ideas, entrepreneurs have to believe in themselves and their ideas first. For their entrepreneurial ventures to see the light of the day, entrepreneurs, therefore, first turn towards themselves and become their investors. This idea is known as bootstrapping, which is the process of developing a business with limited resources, without the financial and managerial support of an investor, more particularly an angel investor. So, in this case, the entrepreneur starts his business with little or no money, all the while



HIMA BINDU KOTA

ploughing back the funds generated by customer-driven business into the operations to achieve growth. A bootstrapped startup is characterized by full control of the founder over the business without the pressures of outside investors. This provides the founder with elbow room to be flexible and agile in decision-making. The challenge to sustain

the startup brings out creativity and resourcefulness in problem-solving. Combined with lean operations and focus on revenue generation, the founder manages to survive and thrive which leads to high founder satisfaction, self-reliance and long-term sustainable growth. Although it is difficult to dampen the spirit of entrepreneurship, the statistics sure leave us disheartened. According to an article in Harvard Business Review by Prof. Tom Eisenmann, nearly 63 per cent of startups never end up with a positive return. By another metric, only 15 per cent of startups ever see through their first round of funding. So, in situations where the survival of startups is difficult, being bootstrapped

can make it even harder. While bootstrapping provides entrepreneurs with increased financial independence and control, there can be several disadvantages. Liquidity crunch is one of the major disadvantages of a bootstrapped enterprise. A steady flow of funds is essential for any operation and all the more important for a startup.

A bootstrapped company has to generate enough profits to cover the daily operational expenses and more often than not, because of lack of financial cushion, it is difficult to withstand sudden economic crises, disruptions, and market downturns. Secondly, it is difficult for bootstrapped companies to attract and hire talented employees with limited budgets. Additionally, in such



situations, founders end up multi-tasking even though they may lack specialized skills in some of the key function areas of a business, like production, sales and marketing, new business development, and daily operations, which may affect long-term growth prospects.

So, are bootstrapped companies less valuable than funded companies? This is a quintes-

sential question. Well, to answer this, let's try to see what is value. For starters, a company is valuable if, irrespective of its size, can develop a product or service and generate revenue.

By doing so, over some time, the revenue base starts helping the company to grow organically and lo behold, it manages to cross the 'valley of death'. So, a company that can grow with its revenues and survive and sustain on a long-term basis is far more valuable than a funded company that can show growth metrics only on the backing of funding received, which may be short-lived, if it is unable to generate revenue-backed growth quickly. Therefore, in a start-up world where 9 out of 10 startups fail, bootstrapped startups have a

greater chance of survival as they are 55 per cent more likely to establish positive cash flows within the first three years of operations and generate a sustainable revenue stream.

This makes their failure rate 47 per cent lower than VC-funded startups. What one cannot ignore is the fact the value of a bootstrapped startup also comes from the intangible qualities of the founder like determination, passion, grit, resourcefulness and agility. These qualities are the mainstay of any bootstrapped startup that navigates it through the uncertain world of entrepreneurship. They are like the secret ingredients for the success of a bootstrapped startup—a battle between the wit and creativity of a founder versus

the deep pockets of a VC. By focusing on customer acquisition and revenue generation, bootstrapped startups demonstrate their qualities of innovation, resourcefulness, flexibility and agility, in navigating the uncertain world of entrepreneurship. By keeping themselves lean and using cost-effective strategies, bootstrapped startups facilitate higher profit margins that in turn lead to long-term sustainable growth.

In a startup world that is fixated with high growth fancy ideas and flamboyant entrepreneurs, bootstrapped startups stand out as beacons of efficiency, proving that sometimes slow and steady truly does win the race.

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

IN BRIEF



**SBI Card profit down 33 pc to Rs 404 cr**

SBI Cards and Payment Services Ltd (SBI Card) on Tuesday reported a 33 per cent fall in net profit to Rs 404 crore for the September quarter on increase in delinquency. The pure-play credit card company, promoted by the country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI), had reported a net profit of Rs 603 crore in the previous quarter a year earlier. However, SBI Card said in a regulatory filing that its total income in the second quarter of the current fiscal year rose 8 per cent to Rs 4,556 crore, from Rs 4,221 crore a year ago. Interest income grew 20 per cent to Rs 2,290 crore, while income from other sources declined 2 per cent to Rs 2,131 crore. There was slight deterioration in the company's asset quality with the gross non-performing assets rising to 3.27 per cent of the gross advances as of September, from 2.43 per cent a year earlier.



**Canara Bank profit rises to Rs 4,015 crore**

State-owned Canara Bank on Tuesday reported an 11 per cent rise in its net profit to Rs 4,015 crore in the second quarter ended September 2024. The Bengaluru-based lender had earned a net profit of Rs 3,606 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Total income increased to Rs 34,721 crore during the quarter under review against Rs 31,472 crore in the same quarter last year. Canara Bank said in a regulatory filing. The bank reported an interest income of Rs 29,740 crore during the quarter, higher than Rs 26,838 crore in the same period a year ago. On the asset quality front, the bank witnessed improvement with gross Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) declining to 3.73 per cent of the gross loans by the end of September 2024 from 4.76 per cent a year ago. Similarly, net NPAs or bad loans moderated to 0.99 per cent from 1.41 per cent at the end of the second quarter of the previous fiscal. Provision Coverage Ratio (PCR) rose to 90.89 per cent as of September 2024 against 89.22 per cent as of June 2024 and 88.73 per cent as of September 2023.



**RBI ups domestically-held gold by another 102 mt**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) added another 102 metric tonnes to the domestically held gold in the April-September period, as per a disclosure made on Tuesday. The overall quantity of the precious metal stored in local safes stood at 510.46 metric tonnes as of September 30, which was up from over 408 metric tonnes as on March 31, 2024. The central bank said it added another 32 metric tonnes of gold reserves in the six-month period to take the overall tonnage to 854.73 metric tonnes, as per the half yearly report on management of foreign exchange reserves. India has been gradually moving gold reserves to local vaults – said to be located in the financial capital and Nagpur – over the past few years. In FY24, it had moved 100 metric tonnes more from the UK to domestic locations. The movement of the commodity, happening at time of increased geopolitical tensions globally, was said to be one of the biggest movements of gold undertaken by India since 1991, when it had to pledge a substantial part of the gold holding to tide over a foreign exchange crisis.

**Looking forward to advancing EU-India FTA talks: Pedro**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Spanish President Pedro Sánchez on Tuesday said he looks forward to advancing EU-India FTA negotiations, highlighting the "enormous" potential for a stronger relationship between India and the 27-nation European Union bloc, including Spain.

The European Union (EU)-India proposed a free trade agreement (FTA) aimed at further boosting bilateral trade and investments between the two regions. The two sides are negotiating FTA, investment protection treaty and agreement on geographical indications (GIs).

"The potential for a stronger relationship between India and the European Union (including Spain) is enormous. Spain is one of the largest economies in the world and has invested USD 4.2 billion in India... We look forward to advancing negotiations on a European Union-India free trade agreement. This will help our markets grow in size and diversity," Sánchez observed while addressing the



**The European Union (EU)-India proposed a free trade agreement (FTA) aimed at further boosting bilateral trade and investments between the two regions**

CII Spain India Business Summit in Mumbai, a statement issued by the industry body said.

"We have a lot to offer to India with our experience in solar and wind power. Our expertise can help India reach its goal of 500 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2030. We are committed to partnering with India to boost its energy security and green transition. By combining

Spanish innovation with India's potential, we can make a big impact on the global economy and the environment," President Sánchez said. He further said Spain's advanced railway systems, subway networks, and transport solutions can greatly benefit India's infrastructure projects. He expressed willingness on the part of Spanish engineering firms in terms of sharing their expertise in creating efficient and sustainable transport systems.

**Regulation on curbing spam calls likely soon: TRAI**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) expects to finalise by January, updated and tighter regulations on curbing spam calls and messages after holding extensive discussions on its recent consultation paper, Chairman Anil Kumar Lahoti has said.



Lahoti further said based on a recent reference from the Telecom Department, TRAI will prepare and float a consultation paper on the regulatory framework for telemarketers.

The TRAI Chief said series of measures taken over the past months by the regulator to combat spam calls and malicious/fraudulent messages is leading to "significant and perceptible clean up of the system" but noted that "more needs to be done". "Our consultation paper was floated in August-end...we have already received

comments and counter comments on it and now we will be analysing all the views and hold an open house discussions. It will take about three months for regulations to be finalised...

so around January, we will come out with updated regulations on curbing spam," Lahoti said.

TRAJ had, in August, issued consultation paper on 'Review of the Telecommunications Customer Preference Regulations, 2018' where the regulator amongst other issues sought stakeholder opinion on whether a higher tariff should be introduced for calls and SMS-es beyond a certain limit, in a graded manner. The regulator in the consultation paper mooted that telecom subscribers making over 50 calls or sending out even 50 SMS-es a day, along with certain other markers, should be scrutinised as a potential pesky callers.

**GST returns to be time-barred after 3 yrs from early 2025**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

GST Network on Tuesday said beginning early next year, GST taxpayers will not be able to file monthly and annual GST returns after three years of the original filing due date.

In an advisory, Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) said GST outward supply returns, besides returns related to payment of liability, annual returns and tax collected at source, will become time-barred after the expiry of a period of three years from the due date of furnishing the said return.

"The said changes are going to be implemented in the GST portal from early next year (2025). Hence, the taxpayers are advised to reconcile their records and file their GST returns as soon as possible if not filed till now," GSTN said.

AMRG & Associates Senior Partner Rajat Mohan said the recent GSTN update concern-

ing the barring of GST return filings post a three-year deadline introduces a significant compliance shift.

"This move aligns with a broader intent to ensure timely compliance, enhance data reliability, and potentially reduce the backlog of unfiled returns within the GST system. By capping the period for delayed filings, taxpayers are motivated to reconcile and rectify their records promptly."

"However, it may also create challenges for taxpayers with historically unfiled returns, especially those facing administrative or logistical constraints in consolidating older records," Mohan said. Businesses are advised to proactively audit their filing history and address any outstanding returns within the remaining window, he said, adding that the action will prevent future compliance issues and penalties that may arise once the portal enforces this three-year limit.

**HDFC Standard Life buys PNB Housing Fin's shares**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

HDFC Standard Life Insurance Co on Tuesday bought shares of PNB Housing Finance worth Rs 90 crore through an open market transaction.

According to the block deal data available on the BSE, HDFC Standard Life Insurance Company Ltd purchased a little over 10 lakh shares or 0.4 per cent stake in PNB Housing Finance.

The shares were picked up at an average price of Rs 900 apiece, taking the transaction value to Rs 90 crore. Meanwhile, a foreign investor Asia Opportunities V (Mauritius) Ltd trimmed its stake by offloading shares of PNB Housing at the same price. After the transaction, Asia Opportunities V holding in PNB Housing has come down to 0.94 per cent from 1.34 per cent.

**Sensex advances 364 pts on buying in banking, oil shares**

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex recouped its early losses to close higher by nearly 364 points on Tuesday, extending gains to the second day on the back of late buying in banking and oil shares.

The 30-share BSE barometer climbed 363.99 points or 0.45 per cent to settle at 80,369.03 with 16 of its components ending higher and 14 closing lower. The index opened lower and fell by 583.69 points to 79,421.35 in late-morning deals. However, buying in banking, financial and oil shares in the second half helped recoup losses and close the day higher. The index hit a high of 80,450.48 in day trade. The NSE Nifty rose 127.70 points or 0.52 per cent to 24,466.85.

Firm global trends and unabated buying by domestic institutional investors (DIIs) helped in the rebound, traders said. From the 30 Sensex pack,



State Bank of India jumped 5 per cent, followed by ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finserv, NTPC, Adani Ports, Bajaj Finance and Larsen & Toubro.

In contrast, Maruti, Tata Motors, Sun Pharma, Bharti Airtel, IndusInd Bank and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the laggards.

"Nifty extended its recovery for a second consecutive session on Tuesday rebounding well from morning lows. Banks (including PSU Banks) did well for the second consecutive session," Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities, said.

The BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.74 per cent and smallcap index went up by 0.71 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, banking services (2 per cent), realty (1.46 per cent), capital goods (1.28 per cent) and utilities (1.26 per cent).

Consumer Discretionary, telecommunication, IT and tech were the laggards.

A total of 2,242 stocks advanced while 1,623 declined and 126 remained unchanged on the BSE.

"The Nifty started on a negative note, but resilience in select heavyweights, particularly in the banking sector, spurred a steady rebound as the session advanced," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 3,228.08 crore on Monday, while DIIs bought equities worth Rs 1,400.85 crore, according to exchange data.

**Sugar industry demands hike in price to help cut losses**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sugar industry body ISMA has demanded that the minimum selling price (MSP) of the sweetener should be increased to Rs 39.14 per kg from the current Rs 31 per kg as millers are facing losses due to high production cost.

In a statement on Tuesday, the Indian Sugar and Bio-Energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA) called for an increase in the Minimum Sale Price (MSP) of sugar, which has remained unchanged at Rs 31 per kg since February 2019.

During this period, it said the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane has increased five times, with the FRP now standing at Rs 340 per quintal for the 2024-25 sugar season.

Under the Sugar Price (Control) Order of 2018, MSP



determination should account for FRP levels, but the current MSP fails to reflect these rising costs.

"As sugar contributes over 85 per cent of the industry's revenue, ISMA stresses that the ex-mill price of sugar must be sufficient to cover cane purchase costs and support financial viability," it said.

Present ex-mill sugar prices average Rs 36.5 per kg, which falls below the calculated production cost of Rs. 41.66 per kg.

To address this, ISMA has advocated for an MSP of Rs

39.14 per kg.

"This adjustment would ensure mills can remain financially viable and make timely payments to farmers, avoiding arrears that strain the rural economy," ISMA said.

The association said the increase would have minimal impact on consumers, as over 60 per cent of sugar is used by industries capable of absorbing the cost.

ISMA President M Prabhakar Rao, said, "We need urgent support from the Government to increase the MSP of sugar to reduce losses being faced by the industry."

The increase of MSP will protect the minimum ex-factory price particularly during the crushing season during which the prices tend to go below the cost of production, bleeding the mills and making them financially unviable, he added.

**Manufacturers told to cut price of 3 anti-cancer drugs**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has asked the companies to reduce prices of three anti-cancer drugs to pass on the benefit of customs duty exemption and GST reduction to the consumers.

In line with the government's commitment to ensure the availability of drugs at affordable prices, the National Pharma ceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has issued an office memorandum directing the concerned manufacturers to reduce the MRP on three anti-cancer drugs, Trastuzumab, Osimertinib and Durvalumab.

This is in pursuance to the announcement made in the Union Budget for the year 2024-25 exempting these three anti-cancer medicines from customs duty.

**Gold rises Rs 300 to Rs 81,400 per 10 grams**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gold price rose by Rs 300 to Rs 81,400 per 10 grams, near its record high level, in the national capital on Tuesday due to heavy demand for Dhanteras by jewellers and retailers, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

Silver increased by Rs 200 to Rs 99,700 per kg on rising demand by industrial units and coin makers. It had closed at Rs 99,500 per kg in the previous close on Monday.

Traders said they are preferring silver coins for token buying while ignoring the traditional purchases of gold at existing levels.

Additionally, gold of 99.5 per cent purity jumped Rs 300 to near an all-time peak of Rs 81,000 per 10 grams.

On Monday, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent and 99.5 per cent purity had closed at Rs 81,100 and Rs 80,700 per 10 grams.

In futures trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold contracts for December delivery appreciated by Rs 178 or 0.23 per cent to Rs 78,744 per 10 grams. "Gold prices in MCX remained positive, with Dhanteras adding enthusiasm for long positions. More buying

occurred on this auspicious day, pushing the prices on the MCX and trading above Rs 80,000 in the physical jewellery market," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

Silver contracts for December delivery bounced Rs 786 or 0.81 per cent to Rs 98,210 per kg on the MCX. Globally, Comex gold futures rose 0.23 per cent to USD 2,762.20 per ounce.

"Gold advanced toward a record in the European trading hours on Tuesday amid concerns about the US Presidential election and escalating US debt crisis continue to fuel safe-haven demand, pushing flows into the precious metal," Saamil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

According to Pranav Mer, VP - Research (Commodity & Currency) BlinkX and JM Financial, gold continues to trade positively with buying seen at every small correction over the past three trading sessions.

Focus this week will remain on the US Presidential elections and the Federal Reserve's monetary policy outcome next week, Mer said.

**India fastest growing major economy: Murmu**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is the fastest growing major economy and is likely to become the third largest economy soon, President Droupadi Murmu said on Tuesday.

Addressing an event in Delhi, she said the Indian economy had been demonstrating resilience in the face of geopolitical challenges and the country's economy was likely to grow tenfold by 2047.

"India is the fastest growing major economy and is likely to become the third largest economy soon," Murmu said.

According to the latest World Bank estimate, India contributed 16 per cent to global economic growth in 2023.

"Our economy is likely to grow tenfold by 2047," the president said, addressing probationers of the Indian Trade Service and the Indian Cost Accounts Service who had called on Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

With a rapid economic growth of 8.2 per cent in 2023-24, the Indian economy has been demonstrating resilience in the face of geopolitical challenges, she said.



India needs to attract private investment to increase per capita income levels and get to continued high levels of

growth, even amid a turbulent global environment, Murmu said.

The Indian government has

an investor-friendly policy, where most sectors are open for 100 per cent FDI (foreign direct investment) under the automatic route, she said.

"Several initiatives of the government of India are creating an enabling ecosystem for growth. India is the third largest start-up country, only after the US and the UK," Murmu said.

She also asked the officers to keep learning and updating themselves about the advancement of artificial intelligence and make the best use of related technologies in their functioning to contribute

towards increasing India's global competence.

Murmu said that with the government's enhanced focus on boosting manufacturing, "it will be your responsibility to facilitate the creation of an enabling environment and infrastructure for increasing trade across borders".

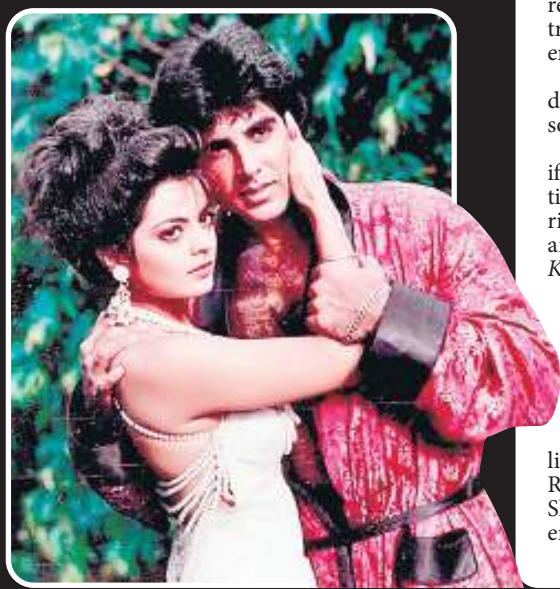
"You are expected to bring up new dimensions in trade negotiation, create innovative policies and provide new impetus to boost India's trade. I know that you will live up to the expectations of the country," the president told the officers.





## 'I'VE BEEN RECLUSIVE, NOT RETIRED'

**BEYOND THE GLITZ AND GLAMOUR OF BOLLYWOOD, SHEEBA AGARWAL SHARES HER TRUE SELF IN AN EXCLUSIVE CONVERSATION WITH THE PIONEER. WITH JIGRA MARKING HER SUPPOSEDLY RETURN TO THE BIG SCREEN, SHE REFLECTS ON HER JOURNEY, A NOT-REALLY COMEBACK AND ALSO HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL FITNESS AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN THE FILM INDUSTRY**



TEJAL SINHA  
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With a sparkle in her eyes and a flair for the dramatic, Sheeba Agarwal has established herself as a beloved and respected figure in Indian cinema. The queen of 90s Bollywood glamour with her timeless beauty has captivated audiences with her mesmerising presence in *Rangeela*, *Aar Ya Paar* and *Dil Ka Rishia*.

She once again reignited the silver screen with passion, drama and intrigue in the Alia Bhatt-starrer *Jigra*. With over two decades of cinematic excellence behind her, Sheeba's irresistible charm, wit and dedication to her craft promise an unforgettable experience.

Sheeba Agarwal plays the role of Mrs. Mehtani in *Jigra*. In a candid and insightful discussion, the renowned actress shared her thoughts on her remarkable journey in the film industry, offering a glimpse into her experiences, struggles and future endeavours.

But before anything else, she sits down with us to clear the air about her so-called "comeback" in Bollywood. "I never really left the industry," clarifies the *Sanam Teri Kasam* fame. "I continued to act in films even after my marriage. I also had a great guest appearance in *Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahaani* last year."

"My journey hasn't been as gratifying as I would have liked it to be," she acknowledged, looking back on her career. Despite not achieving 100% career satisfaction, she takes pride in her extensive body of work, having collaborated with prominent actors like Akshay Kumar, Salman Khan, Rajinikanth, Saif Ali Khan and Suniel Shetty. "I worked with the entire generation of people," she added.

This film, in fact, saw her sharing

screen with her real-life husband. For the first time, folks!

When asked about breaking back into the industry, she emphasised the importance of choosing projects wisely. "When you do a very small part in a very huge film, you still get noticed," she noted. Her recent guest appearance in *Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahaani* and upcoming role in *Jigra* exemplify this strategic approach. "I did it mainly because of Dharma and Karan Johar and such a big ensemble cast."

*Jigra* marks her second collaboration with Dharma Productions, a partnership she cherishes. "To be seen with them, to work with them, is a very great high for an actor," she exclaimed. Praising Alia Bhatt, she added, "Today, Alia is one of the best in our industry. She's an actress who's very, very young, yet draws you into the scene." She expressed her admiration for women-led projects, citing *Jigra* as an example. "It's very satisfying to watch a woman helm a film, enact it and produce it. Alia is kick-ass in the film."

The actress frankly discussed the frustrations of an actor's life, including waiting for good roles, making mistakes and facing job insecurity. "Our mental health awareness is lacking. Do not work on your physical fitness; work on your mental fitness," she advised newcomers. She also highlighted the constant struggle to find meaningful work, saying, "It's not a part of an actor's journey; it's the actor's whole journey. Constantly waiting for good parts, constantly making mistakes and being jobless."

She condemned the prevalent body shaming and bullying in the industry. "People feel it's their right to say whatever comes to their mind because they feel you're public property... They don't understand that you're not a property." She recalled a recent instance of severe trolling faced by a young actress, say-

ing, "That girl will be heartbroken. She just started her journey."

She further acknowledges being selective about projects, choosing quality over quantity. "There's not a question of me going somewhere and then making my comeback. It's just that I have been reclusive and chose not to work a lot."

For now, her focus is on being part of good projects and ensuring decent releases. "I would like to be noble and say I'm focusing on the good parts, but good parts will come when I'm seen and when people know I want to work." She welcomed the seamless transition between film, TV and OTT platforms. "Today, an actor can make a transition from medium to medium, language to language, without compromising on the integrity of the actor."

Apart from *Jigra*, she mentioned her upcoming project, *Sonosuit Patel*, a thriller set against a Punjab-city backdrop, where she plays a poor Punjabi woman. However, she clarified that she opted out of *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3* due to a significantly reduced role.

Meanwhile, the actress reflected on her past projects, cherishing memories of films like *Suryavanshi*, *Hum Hain Kamaal Ke*, *Athisaya Piravi* and *Yeh Aag Kab Bujhegi*. Each film, she said, had its special moments and she cherished the friendships formed with her co-stars.

As the conversation concluded, it was evident that this veteran actress continues to navigate the industry's challenges while embracing new opportunities and championing women-centric storytelling.



## Dialogue with mortality

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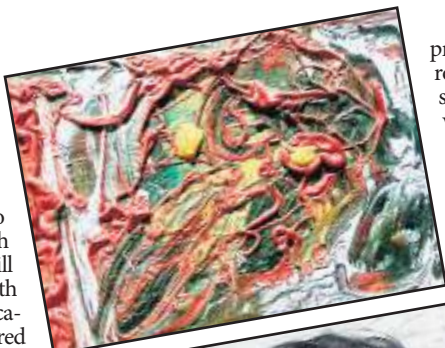
Shadows of memory and delicate whispers of mortality filled Art Houz this past week, as *Memento Mori*, the striking solo exhibition by Nikil Inaya, transformed the gallery into a space of quiet reflection. Inspired by his late grandmother, Shanthanayaki Balasubramanian, Inaya's art drew viewers into an intimate world where every stroke seemed to echo both the fragility and the beauty of life. Grayscale portraits and symbolic still lifes blended classical finesse with a personal touch, evoking scenes both familiar and dreamlike. A centerpiece multimedia installation, an evocative tribute to his grandmother, resonated deeply, touching on the shared human experience of loss and remembrance.

Nikil Inaya, an artist known for his meditative approach to art, provides viewers with this much-needed pause. His latest exhibition, *Memento Mori*, goes beyond mere still-life or portraiture; it's a bridge to self-reflection, inviting viewers to ponder life, memory and mortality.

As the artist recounts, his artistic journey wasn't an intentional pursuit from childhood, but rather an organic evolution. "About ten years ago, I picked up a paintbrush," he recalls. Back then, he was chasing dreams of theater and drama in London, channeling his creative energies into auditioning for school plays and community projects. But even while immersed in the communal art of performance, Nikil found himself increasingly drawn to the solitary art of painting. Unlike theater, where countless individuals and moving parts contribute to the final production, painting offered him something precious—a "one-on-one conversation" with his own thoughts. It was just him, the canvas, and the silent language of paint. This self-guided immersion in art is rooted in his family history. His mother, grandmother and younger sister are all artists in their own rights, trained in classical Indian music and Bharatanatyam. Art was simply "in the air," he says. Yet, the freedom of painting allowed Nikhil to distill his introspections into strokes and shades—a process that, as he describes, sometimes took on a life of its own.

In July, upon hearing of the passing of his grandmother Shanta Bala, the artist began a series of colored pencil works on paper as a tribute to their profound bond. For him, the series was more than a simple homage; it was a deeply introspective exploration of memory and loss. While odes felt overly formal and elegies transient, sonnets, with their rhythmic structure, inspired his approach. He envisioned these portraits as visual sonnets—not just capturing the subjects themselves, but the intricate relationships they shared with the ephemeral, encouraging viewers to find their own connections to memory and transcendence. In an accompanying multimedia installation, her essence is preserved in a photographic montage, depicting her surrounded by family, friends, and the broader community she touched. Set to David Lang's evocative composition *Just (After Song of Songs)*, the installation combines image and sound to create an ethereal homage, preserving her presence through a blend of visual and auditory storytelling.

One of the most defining moments of his creative journey came when he began working on *Memento Mori*. Initially a compilation of still-lives and portraits, the exhibit took on deeper meaning following the recent passing of his grandmother. The very act of collecting these pieces was both an homage to her memory and an exploration of the emotions that come with loss. "The flat seemed so empty," he shares, describing the profound silence that followed her departure. This empty space, both literal and emotional, formed the heartbeat of *Memento Mori*. The exhibition title, *Memento Mori*, translates from Latin as "Remember, you must die." It's a theme heavy with historical and philosophical connotations, yet his approach is gentle rather than didactic. "I paint, but I don't want to dictate what viewers should feel," he explains. His aim is not to guide viewers across a



Delving into the heart of his artistic vision, Nikil Inaya speaks with THE PIONEER about *Memento Mori*, an evocative solo exhibition that not only honors his grandmother's memory but also illuminates the universal human experience of love, loss and legacy

predefined emotional journey but to leave room for their interpretations. The works, he suggests, are merely a bridge, a gateway to individual reflection. Themes like mortality, memory, and the brevity of life linger as undercurrents, providing a canvas for viewers to confront their personal narratives.

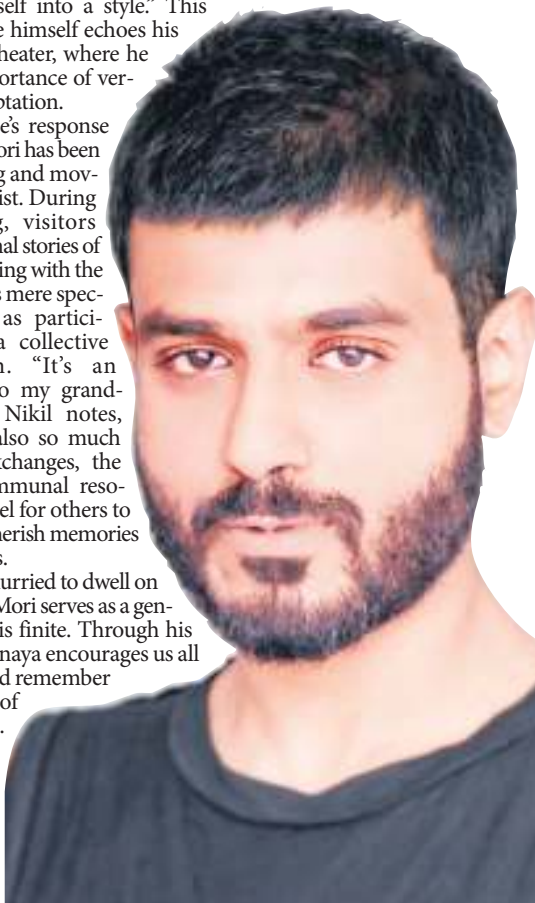
The ongoing portrait series, inspired by his last memories with his grandmother, alternates between abstract and figurative styles, capturing floral arrangements, perishables, busts and cherished items from his grandparents' collection. Each piece marks a distinct phase in his creative journey, as he used art to both reflect and express his evolving emotional landscape. Although most artists find their audience within themselves, for him, his grandmother was that audience. Her eclectic and discerning eye for art was a source of encouragement and insight, as she eagerly awaited each new piece and shared her unique interpretations.

The artworks themselves are reflections of Nikil's varied experiences with different artistic mediums. He has dabbled in oil, acrylic, and watercolors, each technique lending its unique texture and energy to his creations. Watercolors, he says, respond to his very breath, carrying an ethereal quality that mimics life's transience. Oil painting, on the other hand, feels like a battle, its density and texture demanding a more assertive approach. "It's like attacking the board," he laughs, acknowledging the fierceness required.

Through this creative dialogue, he achieves a blend of styles that defy easy categorization. His works range from haunting grayscale portraits to carefully composed still-lives. He confesses, "I don't want to box myself into a style." This refusal to confine himself echoes his background in theater, where he learned the importance of versatility and adaptation.

The audience's response to *Memento Mori* has been both humbling and moving for the artist. During the opening, visitors shared personal stories of loss, connecting with the works not as mere spectators but as participants in a collective reflection. "It's an homage to my grandmother," Nikil notes, "but it's also so much more." In those exchanges, the exhibit took on a communal resonance, becoming a vessel for others to confront, mourn, and cherish memories of their own loved ones.

In a world often too hurried to dwell on life's fragility, *Memento Mori* serves as a gentle reminder that time is finite. Through his evocative works, Nikil Inaya encourages us all to pause, look closer, and remember the beauty and brevity of each passing moment. Nikil Inaya's work is not only an ode to memory but also an invitation to see art as a living, breathing relic of those who came before us.



## Surviving and thriving as working parent

For many families today, balancing work and parenting can be daunting, especially in light of establishing quality time between work and family. A proper work-life balance is conducive to the emotional comfort of both parents and children, averting prevalent symptoms of anxiety and stress conducive to care. Such balance should allow parents to enjoy their jobs while being available to their families. This is precisely how routines are set for toddlers: they need uninterrupted attention during play. Taking them out to play outdoors or engaging them in creative activities creates positive growth while strengthening family ties.

### Balancing act: Why it matters

This role of being a working parent does not create an individualistic concern but has also impacted society. The Pew Research Center states that 27% of the parents believe that this role as the working parent has stalled their career advancement. This challenge is particularly more significant in the case of mothers where 40% report that parenthood makes their career progression cumbersome compared to only 15% of fathers. This tension also builds up to bring in a feeling of inadequacy as a startling 38% of parents believe that, by working, they hinder effectiveness in being a good parent. A new study revealed that 55 percent of working mothers and their children under 18 are victims of work-family conflict, leading to forgoing personal and professional development. For many children, parenting plays an important role in well-being, but there's always that nagging decision weighing the fulfillments of work obligations against being available for significant family events.

### Ripple effects

This imbalance affects the entire community at the family level. Their stored stress experienced while trying to thrive in both spheres leads to burnout, anxiety, and depression among working parents. Studies have reported that work- and parenting-related stress can cause severe mental health problems in parents and among their children. The pressure of being a good parent and a perfect employee easily becomes a vicious circle of guilt and self-doubt easily heightened by parenthood's demanding nature.

### STRATEGIES TO MAINTAIN BALANCE AT:

Parents can use a few strategies to chart a smooth course through the choppy waters of work and family life. Among the tips to achieve that elusive balance are:



- 1. Achieve realistic expectations:** No human is perfect. Strive for balance rather than perfection in both roles.
- 2. Prioritize and delegate:** Identify your most important tasks and delegate less critical ones. This will help focus your energy on what truly matters, both at work and at home.
- 3. Communicate openly:** Educate your employer about your needs and be open to flexible work arrangements. Most companies are flexible nowadays when adopting parents' needs.
- 4. Utilise networks of support:** Develop a good network of support of foster parents, family, and friends who can offer you the proper support at any given opportunity. This minimizes pressure on you as you pursue opportunities in your career.
- 5. Accept flexibility:** Should it be possible, seek flexible working arrangements with greater control over one's schedule. Work from home or flexible timings and compressed work weeks can be considered.
- 6. Care for your self:** Look after your body and mind. This tends to contribute not only to your well-being but also to that of your family as well.
- 7. Tolerate the imperfect:** Realise that it is perfectly okay to make mistakes. Parenting is a learning experience, and it's too stressful to be too hard on oneself.
- 8. Kids at work:** Many companies or workspaces allow parents to bring their kids to work. Bringing your toddlers to crèche at workplaces allows you to connect with them from time to time. This does not only allow
- 9. Stay connected:** Technology has reduced distance drastically. Nowadays, it is very easy to connect with people over FaceTime or via social media. Parents can use this to their benefit by calling their young ones at frequent intervals. This not only helps them to stay informed about their kid's well-being but also helps them to reduce stress after a strenuous meeting.

Balancing work and parenting is not only a personal challenge but also an imperative for society. The practice of conducting a family life and a professional career in harmony with each other can bring greater joy and health to your family relationships along with higher performance and achievement at your place of employment. The road is a tough one, but worth the effort. This helps parents balance work and family life more effectively through open communication and support. As we rethink the modern workplace, it's time to create family-friendly environments that benefit everyone and make life easier for parents and kids alike!

(The author, Preeti Bhandary, is the co-founder and director of Curriculum at Little Elly.)

# what's brewing?



● Rukshar, Bhanupriya and Rachna



● Chhavi



● Affan, Ghufraan and Azhar Mujahid



The students of Lakhotia College of Design, Hyderabad, hosted a spectacular Diwali celebration at its Banjara Hills Campus, filled with the festive spirit and creative energy. This grand event, conducted on Tuesday, brought together students, faculty and staff in a delightful celebration of Diwali's traditions, including mesmerising student performances, a Rangoli competition and a festive cracker-bursting session.



● Shreya, Kasturi and sanjana



● Anuyha and Rishika



● Yashwini, subhashri and Umang

Mia by Tanishq has launched its largest store in Chandanagar, Hyderabad, just before the festive season. With this new store, they now boast 11 locations across the state. This unique legacy adds charm to its offerings, perfectly reflecting its youthful and vibrant spirit.



● Paulami Sen



● Basith Ali & Namrata Sadhvani



● Dr. Nabat Lakhani



● Mohd Zubair Ali

PARTY

Photos by- SV Chary



In an influential move aimed at enhancing health and sports within the Hyderabad community, Hyderabad Football Club (HFC) and Continental Hospitals announced their partnership at a press conference on Monday. The event was attended by key figures, including Dr. Guru N Reddy, founder and Chairman of Continental Hospitals; Dr. Raghu N Reddy, director of Continental Hospitals and Dhruv Sood, CEO of HFC.



Indian Ocean is celebrating over three decades of the band's groundbreaking music in a special 35th-anniversary concert tour across India, presented by Royal Challenge American Pride Soda. This tour promises an unforgettable experience for fans of the band's unique blend of rock, Indian classical and folk music.



In a first-ever undertaking by PATRÓN, one of the world's most renowned tequila makers, hosted prominent Indian celebrities like Ali Fazal, Neha Dhupia and others at their historic Hacienda estate. The visit to the iconic facility in Jalisco, Mexico, included a complete tour of the traditional tequila making process. Guests had the opportunity to view the hand-selected blue Weber agave and sophisticated distillation techniques.

## FUN

### ARCHIE



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### GARFIELD



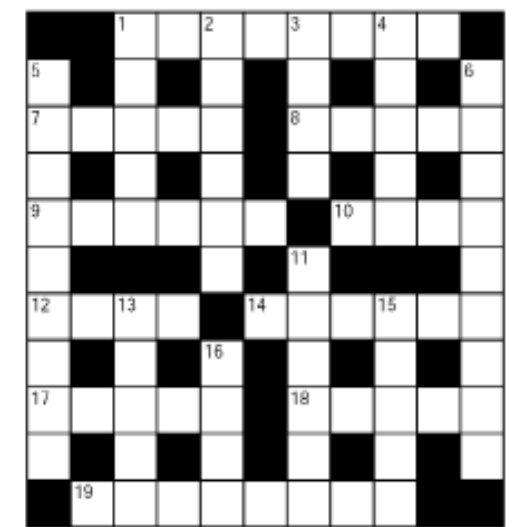
### REALITY CHECK



### SPEED BUMP



### CROSSWORD



### NANCY



### SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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

- 1 Fish tank
- 7 Fewest
- 8 Narrow shell
- 9 Ottawa is the capital of this country
- 10 Journey
- 12 Slightly hot
- 14 Thief
- 17 Sweeten a drink with this
- 18 A feeling of rage
- 19 Obstinate

### DOWN

- 2 Once more
- 3 Messy, disorganised
- 5 Tumble over and over
- 4 Beneath
- 5 A watch's hands move in this direction
- 6 Not permanent
- 11 A red fruit used in salads
- 13 Correct
- 15 Start
- 16 A creature with rippers



### GINGER MEGGS



## Raghava Lawrence stars in *Kaala Bhairava*, his 25th film

Koneru Satyanarayana, famous for creating successful movies such as *Rakshasudu* and *Khiladi*, is currently occupied with the production of various projects. Not long ago, a movie was revealed to have Ramesh Varma as its director. The main actor in the movie is the multi-talented and energetic Raghava Lawrence. By the way, this movie will be Raghava Lawrence's 25th film as an actor after transitioning from being a choreographer. The same production house that collaborated with Director Ramesh Varma on *Rakshasudu* and *Khiladi* is also working on this Raghava Lawrence film.

The movie is said to be of the action-adventure genre and is currently being filmed. The initial glance and the headline were revealed on Tuesday. The film was named *Kaala Bhairava* and the first look of Raghava Lawrence was unveiled. The initial poster captivates with fascinating

features. This enormous venture is being executed with a substantial budget of 200 crores. Koneru Satyanarayana and Manish Shah have produced *Kaala Bhairava* on a large scale. The makers have been diligently and passionately working to offer audiences an unparalleled theatrical experience. *Kaala Bhairava* is set to have a big launch in Telugu, Tamil and Hindi languages. Filming will start in November 2024 and the movie is scheduled to be released in summer 2025.

## JATHARA TRAILER PROMISES SPINE-CHILLING EXPERIENCE

The thriller *Jathara* is set to hit screens soon. Directed by Satish Babu Ratakonda and produced by Radhakrishna Reddy and Shiva Shankar Reddy, *Jathara* promises an intense and raw drama with a unique storyline, as seen in the trailer released on Tuesday. The film is set against the backdrop of Chittoor district, according to the makers. The trailer was unveiled by renowned producer Raj Kandukuri at an event in Hyderabad.

In the film, mysterious incidents occur in a village where dark forces target the protagonist, a devoted follower of the goddess. Alongside suspense, the film weaves spiritual and action elements, as well as a compelling love story. The makers have assured viewers that the movie will deliver a truly thrilling experience, filled with goosebumps.

Based on true events, *Jathara* promises a nail-biting narration and stunning visuals. The trailer showcases exceptional performances and high technical standards. Satish Babu not only directs the film but also stars as the lead actor and serves as the writer. Deeya Raj plays the female lead. The makers are planning for a release next week.



# ANR AWARD IS CROWN JEWEL OF MY CINEMATIC JOURNEY: CHIRANJEEVI

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Almost all Tollywood celebrities received awards at the ANR National Award ceremony for 2024, held at Annapurna Studios. Initiated by Akkineni Nageswara Rao (ANR) himself, these awards aim to perpetuate his legacy by honouring individuals who have significantly impacted Indian cinema. This year, the ANR National Award was presented to Megastar Chiranjeevi for his remarkable contributions to Indian cinema. The award was given by none other than the legendary actor Amitabh Bachchan.

In addition to many Tollywood personalities and other celebrities, the entire Akkineni family attended this prestigious ceremony. The event began with a musical performance by MM Keeravani. Singers paid tribute to ANR by performing his classic songs, evoking cherished memories. The atmosphere turned especially emotional when ANR's last words from the ICU were played, deeply moving everyone. The final visuals of ANR brought the audience to tears, creating a poignant moment that honoured his enduring legacy.

During the event, Nagarjuna shared, "The three letters ANR mean the world not just to me, but also to my family, friends, fans and well-wishers. My father believed in philosophy, humanity, empowering people, family and friendship in diversity. Most of all, he believed in cinema. Today, people strive to have just a few of these qualities. But he had all of them. That's why people like him remain a concept and a legend—a legend that lives on." Nagarjuna added that the ANR Award is an effort to honour such personalities and to thank them for setting an example for future generations, showing that a true hero shines even after the director says "cut."

At this event, Nagarjuna described the "ABC" of Indian cinema: "A, B and C—the legend who walks, Amitabh Bachchan Ji, and the Megastar, Chiranjeevi," he said. He shared that this year is especially meaningful to his family because the award was given to his dear friend and brother, Chiranjeevi. "The award has been presented by another legend whom I admired all my



family for keeping alive the legacies we had the privilege to observe—legacies that walked this earth, enriching Telugu cinema and the entire film industry with happiness, joy, entertainment and culture. It's challenging for anyone to match ANR's contribution to Indian cinema. Nag, to you and your family, I want to express my gratitude for carrying on your father's legacy," said Bachchan.

He also shared his admiration for Chiranjeevi's unwavering support over the years. "I'm deeply honoured that you've chosen me to present this award to my dear friend and colleague, Chiranjeevi. Now I proudly say that I'm a member of the Telugu film industry. I want to thank Chiranjeevi for his friendship, concern, love, affection, humility and hospitality. He sent me so much lunch that I could have fed the entire hotel. Please consider me a member of the Telugu film industry from now on," he added.

Upon receiving the award, Chiranjeevi expressed his admiration for Amitabh, calling him a guru, mentor and source of inspiration. "Whenever something good happens in my life or any occasion occurs in our family, he's the first to send messages of good wishes and blessings. Sometimes, he even graces these events with his presence. I feel incredibly fortunate to have such a prominent figure of India here with me as I receive this award," said Chiranjeevi. He recalled a fond memory from his Hindi film *Pratibandh* (1990), when Amitabh praised his performance as "powerful" and "purposeful." "Those words gave me immense energy. I felt like a child that day," said Chiranjeevi. During the making of *Sye Raa*, Chiranjeevi asked Bachchan to play a cameo as his guru and Bachchan immediately accepted, much to everyone's delight.

Chiranjeevi also recalled how Amitabh travelled to Hyderabad at his own expense for *Sye Raa* and completed his role without any formality, showing love and affection in his own way. "On the last day, I hesitantly asked him about fulfilling the formalities and he simply refused," said Chiranjeevi.

Reflecting on his journey, Chiranjeevi shared, "I once received the legendary award during the *Vajrotsavam* celebrations and while it made me incredibly happy, it didn't feel like a complete win. Receiving the Great ANR award from Amitabh Bachchan and hearing my friend say I have all the qualifications makes me feel like I have won both at home and beyond," he said.

Chiranjeevi also revealed that his mother is a big fan of ANR. "She's a senior fan of ANR. She was pregnant with me in Mogalthur when one of ANR's films released. Despite a minor accident, she insisted on watching the film. I feel my admiration for ANR came through her. I grew up dancing to his songs. ANR was my inspiration for dance. I'll never forget his words in an interview: 'I might have been the first dancer in Telugu, but Chiranjeevi brought grace to that dance,'" he said.

Chiranjeevi recalled working alongside ANR in several films, describing him as a fatherly figure. Over time, that affection extended to Nagarjuna, whom he credits with sharing health tips that keep him looking young. "He's not only my friend and brother but also a doctor to me. The principles he taught me are the reason I look so young. Their family feels like my own," he said. "Receiving this award after legends like Dev Anand, Lata Mangeshkar, Amitabh Bachchan, Shyam Benegal, Rekha and K Balachandrar completes my cinematic journey. I'll cherish this moment for a lifetime. I'm very grateful to Subbarami Reddy's committee for selecting me and I extend my gratitude to them as well," Chiranjeevi concluded.

## Jai Hanuman's first look drops today!



Tollywood fans, brace yourselves! Following the phenomenal success of *HanuMan*, which captured hearts and shattered box-office records, Prasanth Varma is back with a bang! The visionary director is all set to launch the eagerly awaited sequel, *Jai HanuMan*, part of his grand Prasanth Varma Cinematic Universe (PVCU). And with the powerhouse production of Mythri Movie Makers backing the project, the excitement is visible.

*HanuMan* wasn't just a film; it was a sensation. This sleeper hit raked in a staggering Rs 350 crore worldwide, making it the second highest-grossing Telugu and South Indian film of 2024 and the fourth highest-grossing Indian film of the year. It even carved a spot as the eighth highest-grossing Telugu movie of all time!

As Diwali approaches, fans are buzzing with excitement for what's to come. The pre-look poster, recently unveiled, shows an awe-inspiring visual of Lord Hanuman walking toward an ancient temple, a sight that has only intensified anticipation for the first look, set to be revealed today. Prasanth Varma's grand vision for *Jai HanuMan* is not only expected to honour Indian mythology but also to kick-start what could be the biggest superhero universe inspired by the richness of Indian history.

With producers Naveen Yerneni and Y. Ravi Shankar promising high production values and cutting-edge technical standards, this Diwali teaser promises to be just the beginning. And with no lead actor announced yet, fans are eagerly speculating who will don the mantle of the mighty Hanuman!

## A SEQUEL COULD BE DEVELOPED FOR KA: PRODUCER GOPALAKRISHNA

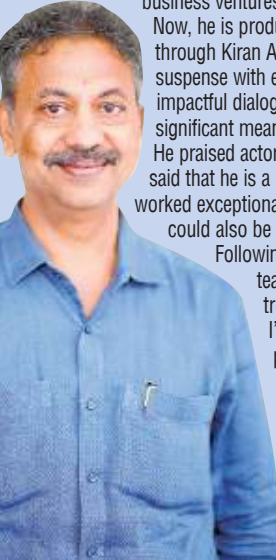
The film *KA* stars Kiran Abbavaram with Nayan Sarika and Tanvi Ram as the female leads and it is produced by Chinta Gopalakrishna Reddy. Sujith and Sandeep are the directors and the film is releasing on October 31.

Talking about the film, producer Gopalakrishna Reddy said that he hails from Rajahmundry from a farming family. "My passion for music since childhood sparked my interest in films," said Reddy. He produced a film titled *Ippudu Kaaka Inkeppudu* during the lockdown, aiming to support new talent. "My goal is not to make money, but I want to gain experience by producing smaller films. Recognition for creating quality cinema is what truly matters to me," said Reddy.

He then worked as a co-producer for the film *Yashoda* that starred Samantha. "I gained experience and recognition with that film. I entered this field with the intention of helping others and providing employment, so I believe I won't face difficulties as a producer. I balance filmmaking with my business ventures," he said.

Now, he is producing *KA* which he got through Kiran Abbavaram. "It combines suspense with emotional depth, featuring impactful dialogues that convey significant meaning," said the producer. He praised actor Kiran Abbavaram and said that he is a dedicated actor who worked exceptionally hard on *KA*. "A sequel could also be developed from this film."

Following the release of our teaser trailer, it became a trend, and as a producer, I'm thrilled that so many people are discussing our movie today," he said. Gopalakrishna Reddy is also co-producing a movie titled *Sarangapani Jatakam* with producer Sivalekha Krishnaprasad.



## Chandoo Mondeti takes up a challenge with *Rahasya Idam Jagath*

National Award-winning director Chandoo Mondeti released the trailer for *Rahasya Idam Jagath* on Tuesday. The trailer indicates that the movie is a blend of science-fiction, thriller and includes mythological elements. The promotional content hints at a mix of science fiction, ancient myths and epics. The movie is scheduled to be released on November 8.

The main roles are being played by Rakesh Galebi, Sravanthi Pratiapati, Manasa Veena and Bhargav Gopinatham. Komal R Bharadwaj directed the film and Padma Ravinuthala and Hiranya Ravinuthala produced it. "The concept of this film excites me, especially because it aligns with topics I personally connect with, read about and research. The idea of wormholes is fascinating to me," said Chandoo Mondeti, who attended as the chief guest and released the trailer.

He cited the example of the Malaysian Airlines 370, which disappeared in 2014. "A flight disappeared without a trace, despite our advanced technology. In my deep research, the concept of wormholes came up, and I found it intriguing to link it with mythology—stories of Hanuman, the Skanda Purana and Narada. Balancing these aspects has made this film a unique project. It's a challenge to make a film like this," said Chandoo. Director Komal R. Bharadwaj said that he made this film with the inspiration from Chandoo Mondeti's *Karthikeya*. "This film will provide a grand theatrical experience, blending mythological and science-fiction elements in a way that resonates with modern viewers. I believe it will offer audiences a novel experience with visually stunning scenes and engaging themes," said director Komal.

## Satya Dev's *Zebra* locks release date

Actors Satya Dev and Kannada star Daali Dhananjaya lead the cast in *Zebra*, directed by Eashwar Karthic and produced by SN Reddy and S Padmaja. On Tuesday, the filmmakers announced the release date as November 22. The teaser, released a few days prior, has generated anticipation and was well received. Satya Dev expressed high hopes for the film, calling it a promising break for the entire cast.

Promotions have already begun, and since many cast members come from different film industries, *Zebra* will also be released in multiple languages. The film stars Sathyaraj, Satya Akkala, Jennifer Piccinato, Sunil, and Priya Bhavani Shankar in key roles. Ravi Basur, famed for *KGF*, provides the music for the film.



# Maxwell reveals Kohli blocked him on Instagram for mocking his shoulder injury

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australian all-rounder Glenn Maxwell has revealed that Virat Kohli had blocked him on Instagram after he mocked the Indian batting maestro following his shoulder injury during the 2017 Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Kohli and Maxwell were not the best of friends until the Australian joined IPL franchise Royal Challengers Bengaluru in 2021 for a whopping Rs 14.25 crore. Maxwell said that he tried to follow Kohli on Instagram, only to discover that he had been blocked by the former India captain. "When I knew I was going to RCB, Virat was the first guy to message me and welcome me to the team. When I turned up for the pre-IPL training camp, we obviously got chatting and



spent a fair bit of time training together as you do," Maxwell said during the Willow Talk podcast on LISTNR Sport.

"So, I go to his social media (to) follow him. Didn't even think about it before that. Never really crossed my mind.

I was like, 'I can't find him.' 'I'm sure he's on social media somewhere, so I didn't think anything of it. Not really that

maybe he wasn't savvy with Instagram. "Didn't really understand why he wasn't coming up, and then, someone mentioned that 'He might have blocked you. That is the only way you're not able to find him.' I was like, 'Surely not.'" During the 2017 Test series in India, Kohli suffered a shoulder injury while fielding during the Ranchi match. Later during the Test, Maxwell imitated Kohli by clutching his right shoulder. Kohli, who missed the subsequent Dharamsala Test due to injury, did not like it. "I went and asked him 'Have you blocked me on Instagram?' And, he was like, 'Yeah, probably. It was when you mocked me during that Test match. I think I got the sh\*\*\* and decided to block you,'" Maxwell continued. "I was like, 'Yeah, that's fair

enough.' So yeah, he (then) ended up unblocking me, and we became great friends after that." "WE'VE HAD QUITE A FUNNY RELATIONSHIP": Since then, the two have settled their differences, working together at RCB. "It was a nice little story to have as a little side note, but we've had quite a funny relationship leading up to playing the IPL together. Sharing that dressing room and sharing experiences, becoming parents, I suppose, around the same time," Maxwell said. "From the days we were both young and brash and going hard at each other on the field. We were in the front and centre of all that as well, sort of being the orchestrator like 'Maxi, get into his face. Say some words to him and get the young guy to do the hard work," he added.



## Harshit Rana to join Indian squad in Mumbai ahead of third Test

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Rookie pacer Harshit Rana will join the Indian squad ahead of the third Test against New Zealand in Mumbai after starring in Delhi's first outright win of the ongoing Ranji Trophy season. Rana, who was already among the reserves, was released for Delhi's match against Assam before the second Test in Pune that India lost by 113 runs to concede an unassailable 0-2 lead in the series. This was the team's first loss in a Test rubber at home in 12 years. Rana will join the Indian squad in Mumbai on Wednesday, two days before the match gets underway at the Wankhede Stadium. But it remains unclear if his presence in the dressing room will be as a reserve or as a member. The 22-year-old has been picked in the main squad for the five Tests in Australia beginning November 22 in Perth. "Harshit will join the team tomorrow," said a BCCI source. With Indian team management carefully monitoring the workload ahead of the

Australia tour, there is a possibility that spearhead Jasprit Bumrah is rested from the third Test, raising the possibility of Rana's debut. Rana had taken a five-wicket haul against Assam in the first innings and followed it up with two wickets in the second essay. Delhi won the game by 10 wickets. Delhi head coach Sarandeep Singh said Rana is ready for the grind of Test cricket. "He is ready to play Test cricket. He is a positive guy, he knows what he is doing. He is ready for the highest level," Sarandeep, a former BCCI selector, told PTI. "He bowled his heart out for Delhi, he is always looking for wickets and is handy all rounder. He is like a horse, can bowl long spells. I hope he does really well in Australia," he added. Rana bowled 19.3 overs in the first innings for his five wicket haul against Assam before taking two wickets in 11 overs in the second. His 59 in the first innings helped Delhi take the first innings lead. Rana had also impressed in two games he played in the Duleep Trophy last month.



## Deepti Sharma reaches career-high second spot in ICC ODI bowlers rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

India off-spinner Deepti Sharma has been rewarded for her excellent recent form as she moved up two places to reach career-high second spot in the latest ICC women's ODI rankings for bowlers on Tuesday. On the back of some strong performances in the recent ICC Women's T20 World Cup in the UAE, Deepti has been one of India's best players through the opening two matches of her side's ongoing white-ball series against New Zealand at home. Deepti has three wickets from two matches against the White Ferns at a miserly economy rate of 3.42. It has seen Deepti gain two places to move to second on the table, and the senior India spinner has closed in on England tweaker and No.1 ranked ODI bowler Sophie Ecclestone. There is also some movement outside the top 10, with the New Zealand trio of Lea Tahuhu (up three places to 12th), Amelie Kerr (up one

spot to 13th) and Sophie Devine (up nine rungs to equal 30th) building on their recent success at the T20 World Cup. Devine (up three rungs to eighth) and Kerr (up one spot to 11th) also gain some ground on the latest list for ODI bowlers, with compatriots Suzie Bates (up two spots to equal 15th) and Maddy Green (up seven places to 18th) making gains following some decent scores against India. Right-hander Jemimah Rodrigues (up three rungs to equal 30th) is the big winner on the ODI batter rankings from an India perspective, while Deepti (up one place to third) and Devine (up two spots to seventh) both make some ground on the latest list for ODI all-rounders. There is also some joy for a pair of Zimbabwe players, with Chipo Mugeru-Tiripano gaining 21 spots to move to 28th on the batter rankings and teammate Josephine Nkomo improving 13 places to move to 32nd on the list for ODI bowlers after some impressive efforts in their recent series against the USA.

## Paine says he doesn't regret sledging Ashwin in 2020-21 Sydney Test

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Former Australia captain and wicketkeeper batter Tim Paine doesn't regret sledging Ravichandran Ashwin during the third Test of the 2020-21 Border-Gavaskar Trophy, saying he did it to unsettle the India off-spinner, who was "annoying" him by getting his wicket frequently. After losing the series opener at Adelaide, India defied all odds to clinch the series 2-1. Ashwin played a vital role in drawing the third Test in Sydney, batting for 42.4 overs with an aching back alongside Hanuma Vihari. After failing to break Ashwin's resolve with the bat, Paine started poking the Indian from behind the stumps. "I can't wait to get you to the Gabba, Ash, I'll tell you what, woohoo," Paine said ahead of an over from off-spinner Nathan Lyon. But Paine does not regret it. "No, I don't because to this day Ashwin didn't play in that (Brisbane) Test match. I wasn't talking to the Indians, I was talking



to him. I said we cannot wait to get you to the Gabba. "...Because he was annoying us, fair to say. He is a fantastic cricketer. He was getting me out all the time and that was annoying me as well," Paine said in a podcast of 'thegradecricketer'. Ashwin too replied in kind to Paine, saying: "Just like we wanna get you to India. That will be your last series."

Paine said the sledge was aimed at the Indian spinner. "But no, that was purely directed straight at him and he pulled out of that 'Test match because of back spasm.'" "Did I have a great game in that match? No, but I fronted up. Actually day one of the Test match he (Ashwin) was jogging laps. Those back spasms couldn't have been that bad," he added.

## NZ batter Kane Williamson to miss third Test against India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Senior batter Kane Williamson will miss the third Test against India at Mumbai to ensure full recovery from a groin injury ahead of the home series versus England, starting from November 28. Williamson did not play in the first two Tests against India, which the Kiwis won to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series. It also ended India's 18-series winning streak at home dating back to 2012. The final Test of the rubber will be played at the Wankhede Stadium from November 1. "Kane continues to show good signs, but isn't quite ready to jump on a plane and join us,"



NZ head coach Gary Stead said in a media release. "While things are looking promising, we think the best course of action is for him to stay in New Zealand and focus on the final part of his rehabilitation so he'll be good to go for England," Stead added.

The first Test between New Zealand and England will be played at Christchurch. "The England series is still a month away so taking the cautious approach now will ensure he is ready for the first Test in Christchurch," Stead said. The series defeat against the Black Caps has pruned India's hopes of qualifying for next year's World Test Championship (WTC) final despite still holding on to the top spot with 62.82 percentage points. Now, they need to win the third Test against the Kiwis, and also ensure a series victory over Australia in the five-match rubber starting next month.



## Aussie wicketkeeper batter Matthew Wade retires, moves to coaching role

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Matthew Wade, a T20 World Cup winner in 2021, on Tuesday retired from international cricket, and will now start working in a coaching role in Australia's white-ball set-up. Wade, a wicketkeeper batter, will join Australia's coaching staff under Andre Borovec for the upcoming T20I series against Pakistan, and the Tasmanian will also be with the group for the ODI series starting at Melbourne next week. The 36-year-old has played 36 Tests, 97 ODIs and 92 T20Is in a career that spanned across 13 years, and his last appearance for the national team was in this year's T20 World Cup. However, Wade will continue to play domestic cricket for Tasmania and Big Bash League for Hobart Hurricanes at least for the next two seasons. "I was fully aware my international days were most likely over at the end of the last T20 World Cup. My international retirement and coaching have been a constant conversation with George (Bailey) and Andrew

(McDonald) over the past six months," Wade said in a statement released by Cricket Australia. "Coaching has been on my radar over the last few years and thankfully some great opportunities have come my way, for which I am very grateful and excited," he added. The left-handed batter thanked CA and teammates for the support throughout his career. "As my international career closes, I want to thank all of my Australian teammates, staff and coaches. I enjoyed the ride as challenging as it can be at international level," Wade said. "Without good people around me I would have never got as much out of myself as I did," he added. Cricket Australia CEO Nick Hockley said: "Congratulations to Matthew on what has been a wonderful international career during which his skill and versatility has made him an outstanding performer across all formats. "I'm delighted he will add to his massive contribution by coaching the next generation of stars."

## Rizwan was initially reluctant but later accepted Pak white-ball captaincy: Source



PTI ■ LAHORE

Pakistan's new white-ball captain Muhammad Rizwan, after initial reluctance, has agreed to the PCB's new selection policy and will not have any voting right in the short-listing of touring squads or the playing eleven, according to a source in the board. "After discussions with the (Pakistan Cricket) Board chairman, Mohsin Naqvi, and senior selector, Aaqib Javed, Rizwan agreed to the new system where his input in the selection process would be strictly advisory," a source said. Pakistan's white-ball head coach, Gary Kirsten, resigned on Monday as he did not agree to be a part of the selection process in an advisory capacity. He also had some other issues with the PCB. The source said that Rizwan had been assured by the PCB and Aaqib that he would be consulted in finalising teams but the final decision would rest with the five selectors. "Under the new policy, the selection committee is now responsible for selecting touring squads and the playing eleven," the source said. The new regime was introduced by the PCB after Pakistan suffered a massive defeat against England in the first Test in Multan earlier this month. Following the innings defeat, new selectors Aaqib, Azhar Ali and Aleem Dar were added to the committee and they were given sweeping powers to select the teams without the consent of the captain or head coach. The PCB is also sending national selector Asad Shafiq with the team to Australia for the white-ball matches to select the playing eleven after speaking with the other selectors in Pakistan.

## After Sumit's ton on day three, pacers power Delhi to 10-wicket win over Assam

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sumit Mathur's batting heroics coupled with pacers brilliant performance powered Delhi to a comprehensive 10-wicket win over Assam in their Ranji Trophy Group A match to notch up their first victory of the season here on Tuesday. Courtesy left-handed batter Mathur's 112 off 230 balls, Delhi posted 454 in reply to Assam's first innings total of 330, and reduced the visitors to 44 for 3 in their second essay on Monday. On the fourth and final day, Assam were bowled out for 182 in 42 overs with the Delhi pacers doing their job to perfection. The pacers accounted for eight Assam batters in their second innings at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. Just after the start of the day, Assam lost three quick wickets for the addition of a mere one run. Sibsankar Roy (4), Bhargav Dutta (0) and captain Danish Das (1), who retired hurt on Monday but came back to bat on Tuesday, were dismissed in the space of eight balls. Number 7 batter Sumit Ghadigaonkar (76 not out off 96 balls) made a spirited late-order resistance but his colleagues did not give him company and he ran out of partners in the end. Delhi pacer Harshit Rana, who has been named in the Indian squad for the



marquee Test tour of Australia starting next month, took another wicket on Tuesday to add to the one on Monday for innings figure of 2/61. His pace colleagues Siddhant Sharma (3/24) and Money Grewal (3/50) grabbed three wickets apiece to rattle Assam in the second innings. Off-spinner Jonty Sidhu (1/0) also got one

wicket, while the other was run-out. Assam added 138 runs for the loss of seven wickets on Tuesday and faced 27 overs. Set a target of 59 runs, Delhi openers Sanat Sangwan (34 not out) and Gagan Vats (25 not out) knocked off the required runs in 16.1 overs without losing any wicket.

Delhi made 62/0 in 16.1 overs in their second innings to collect seven points. Assam did not get any point. Delhi are in third place with 11 points in Group D, having drawn their earlier two matches. On Monday, all-rounder Mathur, ignored in the first two games, showed his prowess with a patient century to put Delhi in sight of an outright victory against Assam.

### BRIEF SCORES:

**IN DELHI:** Assam 330 and 182 all out in 42 overs (Sumit Ghadigaonkar 76 not out; Siddhant Sharma 3/24, Money Grewal 3/50, Harshit Rana 2/61). **Delhi** 454 and 62/0 in 16.1 overs (Sanat Sangwan 34 not out; Gagan Vats 25 not out). Delhi won by 10 wickets. **Points:** Delhi 7, Assam 0. **IN COIMBATORE: Chhattisgarh** 500. **Tamil Nadu** 259 and (f/o) 264/4 in 76 overs (Vijay Shankar 106 not out, Narayan Jagadeesan 60; Ajay Mandal 2/49). Match drawn. **Points:** Chhattisgarh 3, Tamil Nadu 0. **IN JAMSHEDPUR: Jharkhand** 202 and 130 all out in 50.3 overs (Sharandeep Singh 64, Virat Singh 30; Nishunk Birla 3/17, Raj Bawa 3/22, Vishu Kashyap 3/46). **Chandigarh** 290 and 45/0 in 3.3 overs. Chandigarh won by 10 wickets.