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QUOTE OF THE DAY

- B. Mahesh Kumar Goud, TPCC chief P4

Heavy rains disrupt normal life in...

Heavy rains, triggered by low pressure, have severely disrupted normal life in various districts of the Rayalaseema region and Prakasam district on Monday. Control rooms have been established at district headquarters to monitor the situation. In Nellore district, heavy rainfall led to flooding in several busy localities, including Padmavati Centre, Current Officer Centre, Ayyappa Temple Centre, and other low-lying areas, which were submerged under two feet of water. Vehicular traffic in the city was severely affected, with many...

Indians have highest...

The ethnic group with the highest concentration of professional workers in the UK is Indian and considering ethnic minorities as a monolithic group for public policy purposes is now increasingly meaningless in the country, a new think-tank analysis concludes on Monday. 'A Portrait of Modern Britain: Ethnicity and Religion' published by the Policy Exchange reflects an in-depth examination of the demographic, educational health and economic situation of different ethnic groups in the country. The report...

Exports to be major iob creator for...

US-India Strategic Partnership

-PAGE: 8

A disheartened India head coach Amol Muzumdar rued the missed opportunities that could have altered the game's outcome after his team's hopes of reaching the women's T20 World Cup semifinals were dashed by a loss to Australia In a bid to control their own destiny, the Indian team delivered a lackluster performance on the field ultimately resulting in a nine-run loss to defending champions Australia in their mustwin game on Sunday. "I think we were right in the game, right till the last over. Just that...

Allotment of liquor shops in AP peaceful

SHOP OWNERS LIKELY TO STOCK THEIR OUTLETS BY THIS EVENING

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The allocation of liquor shops across Andhra Pradesh concluded smoothly on Monday through a lottery system, with a total of 89,882 applications submitted for 3,396 shops. The process began at 8 AM and was completed by 3 PM, with no major disruptions reported.

In some areas, the atmosphere resembled the intensity of election vote counting, as applicants from various states including Delhi, Maharashtra, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh participated, resulting in a diverse group of licensees. Notably, female applicants had a

strong showing, securing a significant number of licenses in districts like Visakhapatnam, NTR (Vijayawada), and Krishna. Women secured 16 shops in NTR district, 7 Krishna, and 11 in Visakhapatnam.

Supporters of ruling party MLAs were reported to have secured three to five shops each, while larger syndicates, who applied for multiple shops, were less successful, with many receiving only five to ten licenses. Some syndicates that aimed for 10 to 30 shops expressed disap-

Amaravati, the capital city of Andhra Pradesh, will soon be home to the

Ratan Tata Innovation Hub, Chief

Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu announced on Monday. During a

review meeting on policies for indus-

processing, the Chief Minister reiter-

ated that job creation is the top prior-

ity of his government. He emphasized

that the state's industrial policies

should align with this goal and pro-

mote a "Speed of Doing Business" envi-

ronment by attracting investments.

The Chief Minister highlighted

the need for further deliberation on the

policy regarding private industrial

parks and stated that three other poli-

cies would be presented to the Cabinet

in its upcoming meeting.

After officials submitted policy

drafts on these matters, Chandrababu

Naidu conducted an in-depth analy-

sis and shared his insights and expe-

The Chief Minister also announced

riences with the team.

the

that the innova-

tion hub to be

established in

Amaravati

will be named

renowned

industrialist, the

late Ratan Tata

He expressed con-

fidence that this ini-

tiative will signifi-

cantly boost the

state's industrial sec-

after

NS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The lottery process began at 8 AM and concluded by 3 PM.

Female applicants secured more number of licences in several districts. Supporters of ruling party MLAs

secured three

to five shops

Larger syndicates

applying for multiple shops received fewer licences.

disappointment at their lottery

Some syndicates expressed

applications submitted for shops.

A total of

successful applicants after collecting fees. Excise Minister Kollu Ravindra assured strict measures against violations regulations. Liquor shops will

outcomes.

begin to issue

Excise authorities

provisional licences to

not be permitted within 100 meters of temples or schools. Police vigilance has been

strengthened to prevent illegal 'belt' shops.

pointment at the outcome. Following the lottery, excise authorities began issuing provisional licenses to the successful applicants, after collecting the nec-

Shop owners are expected to

begin stocking their outlets by tomorrow evening, and the new liquor shops will open to the public on October 16. Government-run liquor shops will remain operational until the evening of October 15.

Power utilities gear up to face rain threat PNS VIJAYAWADA

In light of the heavy rains expected to hit various parts of the state, particularly Rayalaseema and South Coastal Ándhra regions, the Andhra Pradesh power utilities have been placed on high alert. The districts likely to be affected include Tirupati, Annamayya, Chittoor, Nellore, Prakasam, Sri Satya Sai, and others, with the forecast predicting heavy rains over the next three days, until 17th October 2024, according to the State Disaster Management Department.
Special Chief Secretary for

Energy, K Vijayanand, has instructed the power utilities to be fully prepared for any potential emergencies. During a telephonic review with the CMDs of DISCOMs on Monday, Vijayanand stressed the need for complete readiness and swift restoration of power in case of damage to infrastructure.

He directed the DISCOMs to ensure that foolproof arrangements are in place to restore power in affected areas as quickly as pos-

Continued on Page 2

CM reviews rain preparedness

Asks officials to protect canal, tank bunds

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has stated that the IMD has forecast four days of rain in the State and advised people to remain vigilant near ponds, canals, and other water bodies. He made these remarks during a teleconference with collectors, ministers, and officials regarding the anticipated rainfall.

Chandrababu reviewed the preparedness of government officials and departments. He suggested sending alert messages to people's mobile phones about the impending rains and emphasised the importance of protecting pond and canal embankments. He instructed the installation of warning boards along rivers and canals and urged the government to take precautionary measures to prevent loss of life and property. Naidu also directed the establishment of control rooms to ensure a swift response to public griev-

southwestwards Heavy to very heavy rainfall is expected at isolated

Well-marked low pressure

area likely today

The low pressure area over the

southeast Bay of Bengal contin-

ued to persist in the same region

as of 8:30 AM on Monday. It is

likely to move west-northwest-

wards and develop into a "well-

marked low-pressure" area over

central parts of the south Bay of Bengal by Tuesday.

According to the daily weath-

er report, a cyclonic circulation

is located over the west-central

Bay of Bengal, off the south

coast of Andhra Pradesh,

extending up to 5.8 km above

mean sea level and tilting

NS VIJAYAWADA

places in Rayalaseema over the next four days and in South Coastal Andhra Pradesh over the next three

Ratan Tata Innovation Hub in Amaravati soon

Forum President and CEO Mukesh Aghi on Monday emphasised that exports are going to be a major iob creator for India as the country moves towards becoming a US\$ 5 speaking at an event organised by the USISPF, also stressed that India and the US should continue to strengthen their economic engagements and increase the bilateral trade to US\$ 500 billion going forward. He said creating nearly 1.2 million jobs per month is going to be a...

It may have been different if we...

'PALLE PANDUGA' PROGRAMME

30,000 development works in progress: Dy CM Pawan

PNS MACHILIPATNAM

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister emphasised the importance of various government departments working in a coordinated manner to implement development projects across the state. He announced that 30,000 development works are currently underway.

Pawan Kalyan participated in the 'Palle Panduga' programme held at Kankipadu on Monday, where he laid the foundation stone for road construction and a mini-Gokulam at a cost of Rs 95.15 lakh, as well as the construction of two internal roads at Punadipadu for Rs 52 lakh and a health centre for Rs

Special court to try



54 lakh. In response to a request from Penamaluru MLA Bode Prasad, he sanctioned the reconstruction of the Kankipadu-Royyuru road via Gokavaram.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu asserted on Monday that 'Employment First' is the policy of the State government and directed officials to develop strategies to attract investments to Andhra

During a review meeting on draft policies related to industrial devel-Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) at the State Secretariat, the Chief Minister emphasised the need for the government to act as a friendly facilitator for industrialists looking to invest in the state. He shared his insights and experiences with the attending ministers and

Chandrababu is making every effort to draw significant investments to the state and is currently working on formulating new poli-

opment, food processing, and Micro, cies for various departments. The meeting resolved to present these new policies to the Cabinet at its next session. It was also decided to extend subsidies to those who commit to investing in the state once the

new policies come into effect.

AP unveils 'Employment First' policy

The draft policies indicate that the first 200 companies to submit their Consent of Establishment and Date of Commercial Production may receive additional incentives. Companies that create more job opportunities will be eligible for an

extra 10% incentive. The Chief Minister mentioned that the state government is considering innovative methods of providing industrial incentives through escrow accounts, which he believes will foster industrial growth and create better employment prospects.

"Such critical decisions will facilitate faster job creation. Officials should conduct an in-depth study on the feasibility and necessary procedures," the Chief Minister

AP best destination for industries: Lokesh

gang-rape case?

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has directed officials to take strict action against those involved in crimes against women. He emphasised the need for swift punishment for perpetrators to instill fear among criminals and prevent such offences.



Minister for Education and Information Technology Nara Lokesh stated on Monday that Andhra Pradesh boasts of the most favourable environment and offers superior incentives for establishing industries

Speaking at the prestigious US-India Strategic Partnership Forum Leadership Summit held at a promi-

nent hotel in New Delhi, Lokesh emphasised that "start-up" is not just a slogan for Andhra Pradesh but a transformative tool for governance. He praised the support provided by start-ups during the recent cyclonic storm that impacted the state and expressed confidence in achieving the target of providing 20 lakh jobs to the youth with active cooperation from the private sector.



Mumbai actress case transferred to CID

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The investigation into the case involving Mumbai actress Kadambari Jathwani has been handed over to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), following orders from State DGP Ch Dwaraka Tirumala Rao.

Until now, the Vijayawada police were handling the case, but the government deemed a deeper probe necessary to uncover the mastermind behind the alleged illegal arrest of the actress during the tenure of the previous Chief Minister's Office (CMO).

Kadambari Jathwani has accused the authorities of wrongful confinement and harassment, claiming that she and her parents were falsely implicated in a fabricated case. The investigation also pointed to the involvement of three senior IPS officers—PSR Anjanevulu, Kanthi Rana Tata, and Vishal Gunnialong with an inspector, an Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), and a leader from the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP).

NIJJAR MURDER ROW WORSENS

India recalls top envoy from Canada

EXPELS 6 CANADIAN DIPLOMATS

PNS NEW DELHI

India on Monday announced withdrawing its high commissioner and other "targeted diplomats and officials" from Canada after strongly dismissing Ottawa's allegations linking the envoy to an investigation into the killing of Sikh extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, in a major escalation of tensions amid the already frosty ties between the two

India's decision came shortly after the Canadian Charge d'Affaires Stewart Wheelers was summoned to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and was told bluntly that the

baseless "targeting" of Indian High Commissioner Sanjay Verma and other diplomats and officials was "completely unacceptable".

New Delhi described the charges against Verma as "concocted" and "preposterous imputations" and ascribes the allegations to the "political agenda of the Trudeau government that is centred around vote bank politics"

The MEA said India received a "diplomatic communication from Canada yesterday suggesting that the Indian High Commissioner and other diplomats are 'persons of interest' in a matter related to an investigation in that country".

PNS HYDERABAD Four IAS officers Vakati Karuna,

Vani Prasad, Amrapali Kata, and Srijana Gummalla have approached the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) challenging the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) decision to assign them to the Andhra Pradesh cadre.

This move comes as they try to continue their services in their respective states. The petitions will be heard on Tuesday.

Earlier, these officers held a meeting with Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari at the Secretariat. After extensive discussions, they decided to take the matter to the CAT. All four officers are women, with three hailing from Telangana and one from Andhra Pradesh.

This challenge follows the DoPT's recent rejection of 11 IAS officers' requests to remain in the





IAS officers move CAT over DoPT orders





remains a contentious issue, with several officials taking legal action against the Centre.

The DoPT, after considering the recommendations of Khandekar Commission set up in March 2024, reissued its orders and mandated a report from Andhra Pradesh by mid-October. Consequently, many officials are challenging these orders through the CAT

Ronald Rose also went to CAT

The DoPT's orders also affect IPS officers like Anjani Kumar, Abhilash Bist, Abhishek Mohanty who have

been assigned to the Andhra Pradesh cadre

Telangana cadre.

The DoPT's orders also affect IPS officers like Anjani Kumar, Abhilash Bist, Abhishek Mohanty who have been assigned to the Pradesh. The division of officers

Andhra Pradesh cadre.

This issue stems from the 2014 division of IAS and IPS officers between Telangana and Andhra

Control room set up at Guntur amid rain alert

In response to heavy rainfall warnings, Guntur Municipal Corporation Commissioner Srinivasulu announced on Monday that a 24-hour control room has been established at the GMC headquarters. Citizens of Guntur facing any rain-related issues can contact the control room at 0863-2345105 for immediate assistance.

commissioner emphasised that the control room is designed to provide a quick response to public complaints, and GMC is taking precautionary measures to address potential problems caused by the downpour.

Staff has been assigned to work in three shifts, and key officials including the SE, CMOH, and MHO will coordinate efforts to resolve complaints.

The ADH has been

The Guntur Municipal Corporation (GMC) Commissioner emphasised that the control room is designed to provide a quick response to public complaints, and GMC is taking precautionary measures to address potential problems caused by the

from roads, while engineer-

instructed to have teams on ing officials have been standby to clear fallen trees directed to arrange genera-

water supply in case of power outages at drinking water pumping stations. Srinivasulu added that

preparations are being made to pump out excess water and relocate residents to rehabilitation centres if heavy rains cause flooding in

VMC CHIEF URGES STAFF TO BE VIGILANT

PNS VIJAYAWADA

In light of the heavy rainfall warnings issued for the city, Vijayawada Municipal (VMC) Corporation Commissioner HM Dhyanachandra has instructed all staff to remain vigilant and ensure that no inconvenience is caused to the public. He directed officials to identify blockages and initiate desilting operations in advance to prevent waterlogging on the roads.

On Monday evening, Commissioner Dhyanachandra inspected the drains in Siddhartha Nagar, located in the 8th Division, and immediately conducted a teleconference with zonal commissioners, department heads, secretariat staff, and special officers. During the teleconference, he stressed the importance of staying alert in the wake of the heavy rain

He instructed secretariats to inform the public in their respective areas about the situation and



ing garbage, plastic, and other debris need to be cleared to allow rainwater to flow smoothly. Desilting work should begin before the rains arrive and continue in waterlogging-prone areas to prevent any accumulation.

Once the rains begin, Dhyanachandra emphasized that staff must be on the ground, ensuring there is no stagnation of rainwater. Zonal commissioners were directed to monitor their areas closely. He reminded the team that while we cannot control the rain, proactive measures

PNS VIJAYAWADA

and sectors.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu held a review of the policies on Information Technology (IT), Electronics,

and Drones at the Secretariat on Monday. During the review,

the officials briefed him on the

new policy framework being

introduced after consulting

experts from various states

The CM expressed satisfac-

tion with the proposed

Electronics Policy and recom-

mended that it be introduced

in the upcoming cabinet meet-

ing. Additionally, he reviewed

the IT and Drone policies and

suggested further improve-

ments to ensure effective

the public.

The Commissioner praised the VMC staff for their excellent work during the Budameru floods and Dussehra celebrations. He called on them to maintain the same level of vigilance to safeguard public safety and comfort amidst the current rainfall warnings.

NTR District Assistant Collector Shubham Nokwal, Corporator Chennupati Usharani, Executive Engineer Samrajyam, and other officials participated in the inspection.

New Electronics Policy to be discussed in next Cabinet meet

Drone Summit, scheduled for

October 22 and 23, organized

in partnership with the Union

Ministry of Civil Aviation and

the AP Drone Corporation.

The summit is expected to wit-

ness the participation of

around 400 delegates, includ-

ing representatives from central

and state governments, profes-

sionals, students, and technol-

ogy experts. Drone manufac-

Don't appoint politicians to temple panels: VHP to AP govt

PNS NEW DELHI

The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) on Monday said only "practising Hindus" should be appointed to temple committees in Andhra Pradesh and there should be no political representation in these panels.

It also demanded that only "practising Hindus" be appointed as employees at these temples and the "non-Hindus or non-practising Hindus" appointed as temple staff immediately relieved of their duties.

"Politicians during their election campaigns not only say that they are secular and treat all the religions equally but also participate in prayer programmes in different religious places of worship," the VHP said in a statement. "In this case, if there are political leaders in the temple committees, there is a possibility that they will give priority to their secular feelings rather than the welfare of Hindus," it added. "Hindu temples are not secular centres.... They are spiritual Hindu religious centres and only Hindus should be in their

Allotment of...

Continued from Page 1

AP Excise Minister Kollu Ravindra assured that strict measures would be in place to prevent any violations of liquor regulations. He criticized the liquor policy of the previous YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) government, accusing it of monopolizing liquor production and sales, and promoting its own brand.

The minister explained that the current administration's sub-committee had reviewed the previous policies and introduced reforms to ensure the availability of quality liquor at affordable prices. He stressed that all brands will be promoted equally in the new

Ravindra also mentioned that the large number of applications received, even from international applicants, reflects public confidence in the government's policies. He reiterated that liquor shops would not be allowed within 100 meters of temples or schools, with any violations resulting in immediate closure. Police vigilance has also been intensified to prevent the operation of illegal "belt" shops.

The minister warned that any violation of liquor regulations would result in severe consequences, and the government would take strict action where necessary.

AP unveils 'Employment...

Continued from Page 1

He added that the MSME policy should aim for the concept of 'One Family, One Industrialist.'

The meeting resolved to establish an industrial hub in the state, named after the renowned industrialist, the Late Mr. Ratan Tata, to advance the industrial sector. The Ratan Tata Innovation Hub will serve as a centre for skill development, start-ups, facilitation, and innovation.

These hubs will be set up in five locations across the state, with a major company designated as the mentor for each hub.

The review meeting also explored strategies to enhance the food processing sector, including the aqua and poultry industries, and approved an additional 5% incentive for women entrepreneurs in the MSME and food processing sectors.

TODAY **ALMANAC** Trayodashi: Oct 15 03:42 AM to Oct 16 12:19 AM Oct 16 12:19 AM Chaturdashi: Nakshatram: Oct 15 12:42 AN Purva Bhadrapada: Uttara Bhadrapada: Oct 15 10:08 PM to Oct 16 07:17 PM 2:56 PM to 4:23 PM Rahukalam: 9:07 AM to 10:34 AM Yamagandam: Varjyam: 06:36 AM to 08:00 AM 12:01 PM to 1:29 PM Gulika: 03:00 PM to 04:25 PM Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:38 AM to 12:25 PM VIJAYAWADA WEATHER Forecast: Thundershowers Temp: 32°° Humidity: 81% Sunrise: 6:00 AM Sunset: 5:46 PM **Updated:** October 14, 2024 5:00 PM

Disaster management plan in Tirumala reviewed

A virtual review meeting on the Disaster Management Plan was chaired by the TTD Executive Officer (EO) along with Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary and other officials on Monday. During the meeting, the EO emphasised that all depart-

ments in Tirumala should be on high alert and fully prepared, as the Meteorological Department has issued warnings of heavy rainfall in the next 36 hours. He stated that while the 700-page Disaster Management Plan of TTD is well-designed, certain areas

would serve as the chief of the Executive Committee, and as the plan primarily concerns Tirumala, the Additional EO will act as the Chairperson of the Disaster Management

Former MLA TJ R Sudhakar

Babu has vehemently con-

Chandrababu Naidu and

leaders of the TDP coalition

for devising a "master plan" to

exploit the state's mineral

resources, including sand. He

claimed that the new sand

mining policy was systemat-

ically designed to benefit a

select few while disregarding

Speaking to the media at

the party's central office on

Monday, Sudhakar Babu

highlighted that while the

public was celebrating the

Dussehra festival, TDP lead-

ers were busy profiting illegal-

ly from sand and liquor ten-

ders. He questioned why the

government had failed to

deliver on its promise of pro-

viding free sand, alleging that

corrupt tender processes were

being used to enrich party

leaders. He specifically men-

public interest.



Coordination Committee. A Disaster Management Response Force has also been established, with ground-level staff from various departments in Tirumala working in coordination under the supervision of the Additional EO.

TJR flays CM over sand policy

tioned the disappearance of

half of the 80 lakh tonnes of

sand stored by the previous

YSRCP government, accusing

the TDP of selling it in the

concerns regarding the sand

tender process, noting that

while the base price per tonne

of sand was set between ₹90

and ₹120, bids were submit-

ted at significantly lower

prices, ranging from ₹50 to

He asserted that these price

discrepancies were clear indi-

cators of corruption, claiming

mitting low bids and resort-

ing to intimidation and vio-

that TDP leaders were sub-

₹60 in many districts.

Sudhakar Babu expressed

black market.

require further refinement. Reflecting on past experi-The EO announced that he ences, the EO mentioned that a Hazard-Specific Plan was Management created last year. He instructed officials to develop a Hazard-Specific Handbook covering floods, lightning, landslides, and other risks. The Chief Engineer of TTD was directed

to set up a WhatsApp group for efficient communication between departments.

The EO further noted that Channel 10 of the communication (Manpacks) system would be exclusively used for disaster management, and he urged the CVSO to ensure that all necessary communication equipment is ready.

Tĥe EO also directed key departments-including Temple, Fire, Medical, Health, Transport, IT, Engineering, and Vigilance wings—to remain extra vigilant and have their

lence to gain control of the sand tenders.

he pointed out that tenders for

in just 48 hours, with only

mit bids. He also mentioned

that a bid in Kurnool was

approved without any official

Sudhakar Babu further

accused leaders from the

TDP, BJP, and Jana Sena of

hoarding sand stocks and

selling them illegally on the

black market, circumventing

the official booking system in

several districts, including

He demanded the immedi-

ate cancellation of all sand

tenders and urged the govern-

ment to fulfil its promise of

providing free sand. He

warned that if the tenders

were not cancelled, there

would be direct protests

against the government's poli-

YSR and Palnadu

notification.

TDP leaders allowed to sub-

In East Godavari district.

equipment ready for emergen-

He stressed the importance of maintaining a strong power backup system and ensuring that diesel stocks are available. The IT department was instructed to have alternative mechanisms in place to continue issuing darshan tickets, accommodation, prasadam, and other services in the event of power outages caused by heavy rains.

He further directed the Engineering wing to inspect dam gates and be prepared to handle any boulders that might fall on the Ghat Roads.

Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary underscored the importance of public awareness, urging that, based on past experiences and in the interest of devotees, information be widely disseminated through SVBC, the Public Relations Department, and social media platforms.

Continued from Page 1

Special court...

The CM held a review meeting with the Director General of Police (DGP) and other gang-rape case involving a woman and her daughter-inlaw in Sri Sathya Sai district, discussing measures to ensure such incidents do not

During the meeting, the CM highlighted the need for immediate punishment of the accused and proposed the establishment of a special court to expedite the case. He mentioned that the government would request the High Court to set up this special court. The CM reiterated the government's commitment to maintaining law and order in the state and creating a safe environment for women. He also referenced a previous group assault and murder case in Bapatla district, calling for similar swift justice through a special court.

implementation. The officials also discussed turers and users will showcase the upcoming Amaravati their products and services.

AP best destination for...

Continued from Page 1

The summit, chaired by focused on the accelerated development of Andhra Pradesh in social and economic sectors. Lokesh informed the attendees that the Economic Development Board has been revived to expedite permissions for industries, and an advisory council comprising private sector experts has been estab-

"We are now implementing a Single Point of Contact system for granting permissions to industries, with regular updates provided on a dedicated website regarding permissions and upcoming projects," Lokesh said. He noted that for the first time in the country, the state is undertaking a skill census, gathering household and education data at the micro level.

Lokesh expressed optimism

that the skill census will aid in achieving the goal of provid-ing 20 lakh jobs to youth over Forum Chairman and JC-2 the next five years. "Aligned Ventures founder John with Prime Minister Narendra India, we are striving for a developed Andhra Pradesh

by 2047," he added. Highlighting that Andhra Pradesh has the longest coastline in India, Lokesh mentioned that the state government aims to alleviate poverty by generating wealth. He emphasized that the state is progressing rapidly with its Speed of Doing Business" initiative to facilitate industrial development, noting the crucial role of the Telugu community in the IT sector.

The IT Minister remarked that Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has encouraged the establishment of numerous engineering colleges, contributing to Hyderabad's rapid growth in the IT sector, particularly during the Y2K boom.

Management, and Logistics. Additionally, a special hackathon is being organized as part of the event, and reg-

Public Safety, Healthcare,

A special drone show featur-

ing 5,000 drones is planned,

making it a highlight of the

event. The summit will cover

various themes such as

Management, Urban Planning,

Agriculture,

istrations are underway.

Well-marked low...

Continued from Page 1

Additionally, heavy rain is likely at isolated places in South Coastal Andhra Pradesh on October 17.

nied by lightning are also predicted at isolated locations in Rayalaseema and South Coastal Andhra Pradesh during the next four days, and in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh during the next three

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers are expected at many places or a few places or just one or two places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema over the next seven days.

Heavy rainfall has already been reported in Prakasam district of South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Tirupati district of Rayalaseema, with rainfall occurring at many locations in Coastal Andhra Pradesh and at a few places in Ravalaseema over the last 24 hours, the report added.

30,000 development works in progress... Power utilities gear up to face...

Continued from Page 1

He also instructed officials to address the drinking water contamination issue affecting 43 villages in Nandiwada, Gudivada, and Gudlavalleru mandals in Krishna district. Pawan Kalyan assured that he would discuss the Machilipatnam-Repalle railway line issue with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, stating he would not misuse his proximity to the Prime Minister for personal gain.

During a public meeting, the Deputy Chief Minister highlighted that over 30,000 development projects had been initiated at a cost of Rs 4,500 crore across the state. He stressed that for effective implementation of Panchayat Raj and rural development projects, ten departments need to collaborate efficiently.

He emphasized the need for the funds provided under the MGNREGA scheme to be utilized effectively to ensure work opportunities for all eligible individuals, noting that Andhra Pradesh is set to receive over Rs 10,000 under MGNREGA. He also acknowledged the full cooperation extended by the Narendra Modi-led central government for

the development of Andhra Pradesh. "The government aims to create 25.50 crore workdays for 8 lakh families under MGNREGA. Plans include the construction of 3,000 km of CC roads, 500 km of BT roads, compound walls for 120 primary schools, and rooftops for government offices," Pawan Kalyan stated. Responding to concerns raised by Penamaluru

MLA Bode Prasad about the poor condition of the Royyuru-Godavaram road, Pawan Kalyan ordered officials to take necessary steps for its Collector Balaji reported that the roads in the island villages of Édurumondi and Gollamandala

were in dire condition and required repairs. Pawan

Kalyan approved the necessary repairs for these

Gudivada MLA Venigandla Ramu brought the issue of drinking water contamination in 43 villages of Gudivada and Gudlavalleru mandals to the Deputy Chief Minister's attention. Pawan Kalyan showcased a bottle of the contaminated water during the meeting and directed officials from the rural protected drinking water supply department to visit the villages and resolve the issue.

Continued from Page 1

Vijayanand also instructed the DISCOMs to keep essential materials and transport ready for deployment in districts vulnerable to heavy rains. He emphasised the need for small generators to be available for emergency use and for a sufficient number of de-watering pumps to be ready. He also highlighted the importance of ensuring proper feeder switching during storms to prevent electrocution accidents.

In preparation for the anticipated heavy rains, Vijayanand ordered the establishment of control rooms in rain-prone districts and the appointment of nodal officers for each district to coordinate field operations. He advised the power utilities to ensure the availability of manpower, generators, JCBs, cranes, power saws, and pole drilling machines. Teams equipped with power saws and gas cutters for clearing trees and conducting iron fabrication work should also be arranged in every division. Additionally, detailed computerized maps of Extra High Tension (EHT) and 33/11 KV substations, along with feeders and poles, should be readily available.

Vijayanand urged all staff, from linemen to chairpersons, to closely monitor the situation and maintain a 24x7 presence, with no holidays during this critical period. He noted that Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Minister for Energy Gottipati Ravi Kumar are particularly concerned about public safety and power supply, calling for efforts to be on a war footing during the upcoming heavy rains.

CM reviews rain...

Continued from Page 1

Officials informed the Chief Minister that rain is expected in the districts of Prakasam, Nellore, Chittoor, YSR, and Anantapur. They reported that NDRF and SDRF teams are on standby. Due to sudden floods, nearby railway lines and residents are facing difficulties, prompting Chief Minister Naidu to emphasize a focus on streams and ponds.

After the review meeting, Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu stated that CM Naidu discussed projects like Tungabhadra, Srisailam, and Somasila with officials. The minister noted that officials suggested assessing floodwater in the catchment areas of streams and canals in various districts, including Nellore, Prakasam, Satva Sai, Anantapur, and Chittoor, and taking appro-

priate measures accordingly. They highlighted the need to strengthen the floodwater management system. Minister Ramanaidu

remarked, "We have alerted district collectors about the precautionary measures to be taken in light of the heavy rains. Some districts still need to fill their reservoirs. Many projects have not been properly maintained over the last five years. The Jagan government has not allocated even Rs 3 lakh to Rs 4 lakh. Starting in November, we will prioritize the repair of projects and other works. We are developing a work calendar for the Polavaram project, and diaphragm wall works will also commence in November. We aim to complete the Earthcum-Rockfill Dam as soon as possible," clarified the minister.

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Draw of lots held smoothly for liquor shops allotment

PNS VIJAYAWADA

As per the new liquor policy, Krishna and NTR district administrations conducted the lottery process in Machilipatnam Vijayawada, respectively, on Monday to allot liquor shop (A4) licences for 2024-26. (A4) licences for 2024-26. The lottery process was held peacefully and no untoward incidents were registered. As many as 236 are to be set up in the Krishna and NTR districts, for which 8,767 applications were received, earning the government an income of Rs.175.34 crore.

In Krishna district, applications for 123 shops were invited. However, 2,942 bids (Rs.2 lakh non-refundable amount) were filed and the Prohibition and Excise Department received Rs.58.84 crore in income. Similarly, in NTR district, Rs.116.50 crore was received from the 5,825 bidders for 114 shops.
As many as 1,932 applica-

tions were received for the 39 shops in the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation while 493 tenders were filed for 10 shops under Mylavaram Circle, and 908 tenders for 16 shops under Nandigama Circle. Shop number 96 in Vatsavai mandal received the highest number of 132 applications while shop number 97 received 120 applications. Shop number 117 in Tadigadapa municipality

received 57 applications.
Officials of the Prohibition and Excise Department conducted the lottery process transparently at their respective district headquarters. Police provided tight security. The entire lottery process was conducted under the surveillance of CC cameras.

The NTR District Prohibition and Excise Department conducted the process at a private hall at

Rs 175.34 crore earned through applications for 236 shops in Krishna, NTR districts



NTR District Collector Dr Srijana, along with Joint Collector Nidhi Meena and Excise Deputy Commissioner Srinivasa Rao, conducting the lottery process to allot liquor shop licences, at Gurunanak Colony in Vijayawada on Monday

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Gurunanak Colony in Vijayawada. District Collector Dr G Srijana, Joint Collector Dr Nidhi Meena, Excise Deputy Commissioner T Srinivas, District Officer S Srinivasa Rao, and Distilleries Wing Assistant Commissioner B Swathi conducted the lottery process following the shop-wise gazette number by allotting

applicants. During the draw of lots, the authorities awarded the shop

tokens in the presence of

licence to the first winner. However, they also selected Reserve 1 and 2, in case the first winner fails to pay the first instalment (1/6th amount) of the total licence fees. Collector Srijana claimed that the entire lottery process was conducted transparently. Shops were allotted to the lucky winners and they have to complete the payment system as per the guidelines, she

Meanwhile, Krishna District Joint Collector

Geethanjali Sharma conducted the draw of lots at the Hindu College Auditorium in Machilipatnam in the presence of the Prohibition and Excise Department officials and those who filed tenders for the shops. Interestingly, a person from Karnataka and another from Uttar Pradesh bagged two shops, i.e. 1 and 2 in Machilipatnam. Mahesh A Bathe from Bengaluru bagged shop no.1 and Mahesh Chand from Uttar Pradesh secured shop no.2.

Geethanjali Sharma added that the winners should pay 1/6th of the total licence fees immediately. If they fail to pay the amount, the next chance will be given to the Reserve 1 winner. As per the government guidelines, all lottery winners should start liquor business from October 16, she

Bhavani devotees throng Durga temple

Even after the conclusion of Dasara festivities with Poornahuthi' at the Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam on Saturday, the rush of Bhavanee devotees continued on Monday. A large number of devotees thronged the temple to relinquish their Deeksha. The Durga Temple authorities provided the facilities for the Bhavani Mala Deekha holders to have Durga Devi darshan.

The Bhavani devotees started their Deeksha relinquishment on the last two days of the festivities. A sea of devotees was seen on the day of the Vijayadashami. A large number of Mala Deeksha holders came from North Coastal

Rush leads to traffic congestion on several roads in city



Bhavani devotees waiting in queue lines at the Kanaka Durga Temple in Vijayawada on Monday, to relinquish their Deeksha Photo: Ch Vijaya Bhaskar

districts and relinquished their Deeksha. The rush continued for the third consecu-

Bhavani Deeksha holders conducted the Giri Pradakshina after taking the holy bath in River Krishna.

red colour and 'Jai Bhavani Jai Jai Bhavani' and 'Durga Matha Ki Jai' chanting reverberated in the air. Due to the rush, traffic congestions were seen on many roads in the city. The NTR district police took measures to clear traffic jams. The Vijayawada Municipal Corporation staff distributed drinking water to

Later, they relinquished their

Deeksha. All routes leading to

the Indrakeeladri were seen in

the devotees.

Meanwhile, Kanaka Durga
Temple Executive Officer KS Rama Rao supervised the arrangements and gave appropriate instructions to the temple staff and police.

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

In a major step towards addressing the growing concern of heart disease among the youth, Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha inaugurated the 'Apollo Chest Pain Clinic' at Health City in Visakhapatnam on Monday. The Minister underscored the alarming rise in heart attacks, particularly among younger populations, on the occasion. "In recent times, we have seen an unfortunate increase in heart attacks among our youth," she said. "It is crucial that individuals with any heart-related symptoms seek specialist care immediately. This clinic is a vital addition to the city and will undoubtedly help in reducing cardiac fatalities."

The Apollo Chest Pain Clinic, established under the aegis of Apollo Hospitals, aims to provide timely and specialised care for cardiac issues. The clinic is poised to play a pivotal role in providing early diagnosis and

intervention. Minister Anitha also emphasised the importance of expanding healthcare access to underserved areas. "Apollo should extend its services to rural regions where healthcare infrastructure is limited," she stated.

Home Minister inaugurates Apollo Chest Pain Clinic



as important as access to treatment, and it is our responsibility to ensure both." She also requested Apollo Hospitals to collaborate with the Police Department to conduct health screenings for the force. Responding to this, Apollo's management expressed their

readiness to support such initia-

Y Subramaniam, Regional CEO of Apollo Hospitals, emphasised that the new facility will significantly improve cardiac care in Visakhapatnam by offering specialised services and fostering a healthier future.

"Anyone with chest pain can quickly access life-saving treatment at our clinics," he said, highlighting the cutting-edge technology and 24/7 specialist care. "Our goal is to make heart care accessible to all, without the

Postcard movement launched against **VSP** privatisation

Campaign will see postcards sent from every household across the region to Central Govt

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

In an effort to safeguard the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP) from privatisation, the convener of Uttarandhra Prajasamstha and chairman of the Visakhapatnam Writers' Academy (VWA), VV Ramana Murthy, has announced the launch of a nationwide postcard movement. Addressing a gathering of various organisational representatives

Visakhapatnam, Ramana Murthy outlined plans to mobilise hundreds of thousands of people to protest the proposed privatisation. 'Ŵe will not stand idly by as

the livelihoods of over 10 lakh individuals hang in the balance," declared Ramana Murthy. "Our movement will culminate in a massive protest on January 27, 2025, where we will make our voices heard loud and clear!"

The ambitious campaign will see postcards protesting the privatisation sent from every household across the region to the Central government. "This movement will not be limited to a single rally," emphasised Ramana Murthy. "We will dispatch 10 lakh postcards from every corner of the State to the Centre, demanding an immediate aid package of Rs. 10,000 crores to rejuvenate the

Visakhapatnam Steel Plant." Ramana Murthy condemned Andhra Pradesh Minister Chandrababu Naidu for his conspicuous silence on this critical issue, despite his frequent jaunts to Delhi. "Chandrababu promised to engage with Central leaders, yet we have witnessed no tangible results," he asserted. "Instead, the Modi government is covertly maneuvering to privatise the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant for the benefit of corporate behemoths like Adani and Jindal."

Drawing a parallel to the privatisation of Gangavaram port, Ramana Murthy warned that the steel plant's privatisation would unleash widespread exploitation on the people of Uttarandhra. "The Centre must not treat the citizens of Uttarandhra as expendable commodities," he added. "We stand united in our resistance, and this postcard movement will showcase the indomitable strength

of our cause.' INTUC State vice-president M. Venkateswarlu, Indian Atheist Samaj State president Sri Ramamurthy, national committee member Ravi, along with representatives from various labour unions and civil society organisations were present on the occasion

Tribal coffee farmers to benefit from price hike

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

The Girijan Cooperative Visakhapatnam has announced an increase in coffee procurement prices for the 2024-25 season, a move aimed at improving the livelihoods of tribal coffee farmers amid growing global demand. The new rates are Rs 285 per kg for both Arabica parchment and Arabica cherry, and Rs 150 per kg for Robusta cherry, up from last season's Rs 280, Rs 145, and Rs 70, respectively. The equal pricing for Arabica varieties marks a notable improvement.

Kalpana Kumari, Vice-Chairperson and Managing Director of the GCC, stressed the importance of these revisions for tribal farmers' welfare. "The increase in purchase prices is directly aimed at improving the livelihoods of our tribal coffee growers," she said. "We are determined to ensure that no farmer in the Paderu Agency sells their coffee for less than the announced rates. Our team will make every effort to educate the farmers on the new prices and



assist them in maximising their

The GCC has introduced several initiatives to further streamline the coffee procurement process. Staff will visit remote areas to collect coffee directly from farmers' doorsteps using electronic weighing machines for accuracv. Payments will be deposited into the farmers' bank accounts within 24 hours.

Last year, the GCC collected 565 metric tonnes of coffee from tribal farmers. This season, the target has been set at 2,000 metric tonnes. "We are

confident that this target can be achieved through collaborative efforts and the support of tribal communities," Kumari

The meeting was attended by Director of the Tribal Welfare Department S Bhargavi, ITDA Paderu Project Officer V Abhishek, Coffee Board of India representative Dr. DR Babu Reddy, and Araku MLA Regam Matsya Lingam. They discussed strategies to boost coffee production and ensure that tribals reap the full benefits of the revised pricing

Citizens urge police to enforce 'No Helmet, No Petrol' rule for bikers

'Stricter regulations necessary to drive home the point'

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

The people of Visakhapatnam are urging the police to enforce the "No Helmet, No Petrol" rule for motorcyclists to reduce accidents involving two-wheelers. This initiative has garnered unanimous support from the city's residents, who emphasise the need for law enforcement to adopt this measure.

Local residents shared their concerns and experiences with The Pioneer. Ramesh Kumar, a businessman, lamented, "I've seen too many young lives lost because they weren't wearing helmets. It's heartbreaking. If the police can strictly enforce this rule, it will save lives." Dr Priya Reddy, a neurosurgeon, added, "As a doctor, I've treated numerous cases of head injuries that could have been avoided with proper helmet

Others, like school teacher Lakshmi Menon, highlighted the importance of education and awareness, saying, "Sometimes, stricter regulations are necessary to drive



home the point. This rule will ensure that wearing a helmet becomes a habit, not an option." Anil Sharma, a college student, shared a personal experience, "After seeing a friend's accident, I realised how important helmets are. If petrol stations refuse service to those without helmets, it will make a big difference."

The "No Helmet, No Petrol" policy has been successful in other Indian cities, leading to fewer road accidents and

injuries. The Visakhapatnam police have welcomed the suggestion and are committed to enhancing road safety. A senior police official stated, "We appreciate the public's concern. Enforcing this rule aligns with our road safety objectives.

To ensure the rule's success, local NGOs and community groups are planning awareness campaigns, educational programmes, and subsidised helmet distribution.

Villagers of Nakkalamamidi struggle without proper road

The village, home to 60 tribal families, feels worlds apart from modern amenities

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Residents of Nakkalamamidi, a remote village in Kivarla gram panchayat of Ananthagiri mandal, are facing challenges due to poor road access, which greatly affects their daily lives. This village, home to 60 families from the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group, feels worlds apart from modern amenities. The lack of a proper road has become a central aspect of life for these families, shaping their present and casting uncertainty over their future. Although the village boasts clean air and pure water, progress has largely eluded Nakkalamamidi. This isolation, while appealing to the occasional visitor, presents a harsh reality for its residents.

Each month, a familiar routine unfolds as villagers embark on a long journey to the near est ration depot, situated eight km away. This trek is more than just a shopping trip; it tests their endurance and serves as a stark reminder of their seclusion. The villagers often contemplate this challenging monthly journey, which highlights their resilience but also underscores their struggles. "The journey to get our essentials is exhausting, and it's a constant reminder of how isolated we are," shared Raju, a village elder. "Every step feels heavy when we know it doesn't have to be this way."

The lack of road access can become a matter of life and death when illness strikes. Simple health issues can escalate into emergencies without



Tribals of Nakkalamamidi in a remote village in Kivarla gram panchayat protesting

prompt medical care. The villagers often turn to traditional remedies, but serious health problems leave them with no option but to use a makeshift stretcher called a Doli, made from bamboo and cloth. "It's

terrifying to think about what would happen if one of us got seriously ill," said Lakshmi, a mother of two. "When someone is sick, we have no choice but to carry them on our backs to the nearest hospital.

The difficult journey to medical assistance often stretches for hours, and every jolt along the way feels like a potential setback. "The fear of osing a loved one because help is too far away is something we face every day," Lakshmi shared. "We're not asking for much—just a road, a way to connect with the world beyond us." Her words resonate with her fellow villagers, who echo her feelings in unison, pleading for recognition and support. "This path has witnessed too much suffering. It's time for the government to listen to our cries," she added. "We have endured this hardship for generations, but

our children deserve better." Despite exercising their right to vote, the villagers remain on

the outskirts of development, their needs overlooked and voices drowned out by the progress that seems to have passed them by. "We feel invisible," Lakshmi said. "Our struggles are ignored, and that sense of invisibility is the hardest part of it all." Yet, amid their daily challenges, a flicker of hope shines in the hearts of the Nakkalamamidi villagers. They dream of a day when a road will link them to the outside world, providing access to edu-cation and healthcare, transforming their isolation into a

sense of belonging.

"We fight not just for ourselves but for our future generations," Lakshmi emphasised. We want our children to live with dignity and have the opportunities they deserve.

he pioneer



Heavy rains disrupt normal life in several districts

Heavy rains, triggered by low pressure, have severely disrupted normal life in various districts of the Rayalaseema region and Prakasam district on Monday. Control rooms have been established at district headquarters to monitor the situation.

In Nellore district, heavy rainfall led to flooding in sev-eral busy localities, including Padmavati Centre, Current Officer Centre, Ayyappa Temple Centre, and other lowlying areas, which were submerged under two feet of water. Vehicular traffic in the city was severely affected, with many vehicles stranded on waterlogged roads.

Roads in Kavali, Bogolu, Dagadarthi, and Alluri mandals were inundated, causing significant inconvenience to commuters. The Nellore district Collector, Anand, announced a holiday for schools and colleges, and fishermen were advised against venturing into the sea.

In YSR Kadapa district, heavy rain began lashing the area early in the morning. Several low-lying localities in the Railway Kodur constituency of Annamayya district were flooded, with all thoroughfares submerged, disrupting



vehicular traffic. The situation was similarly dire in Badvel town, where crops across hundreds of acres were marooned in rainwater in Obulavaripalli, Pullampet, Chitveli, and Senakaluru mandals.

In Prakasam district, main thoroughfares in Ongole were inundated with two to three feet of water. The RTC bus stand area and Kurnool Road in the city were also flooded, severely disrupting normal life. Heavy rains were reported in Giddalur, Markapuram, Tangutur, Kondapi, and Santhanuthalapadu constituencies, leading to a complete halt in regular activities. The Gundlakamma canal is overflowing with floodwater, prompting the District Collector to declare a holiday for all educational institutions

Minister for Endowments Anam Ram Narayana Reddy reviewed the situation with officials on Monday, instructing revenue and police personnel to take all necessary precau-tions to prevent loss of life. Minister for Social Welfare Dola Bala Veeranjaneyulu urged people to remain indoors unless absolutely nec-

Minister for Transport M. Ramprasad Reddy advised caution, warning that heavy rain is expected to continue for the next three days.

Prakasam Collector Thameem Ansariya inspected a relief centre established at the ZP High School campus in Alakurapadu. Tahasildar Anjaneyulu informed the Collector that 35 individuals from 11 tribal families were accommodated in the relief camp. The Collector later visited the control room, directing officials to maintain constant vigilance over the situa-

Centre okayed ballistic launching pad at Nagayalanka: I & PR Minister Kolusu

Minister for Housing and I&PR K Parthasarathy has announced that the Central government has given green signal to establish a ballistic launching pad at Nagayalanka.

The Minister participated in the 115 th birth anniversary of former director of DRDA and former advisor in science and technology to the Defence Ministry Dr. Suri Bhagavantham organised on the premises of Sri Sobhanadri Lakshmi Narasimha Vedic school at Agiripalli in Nuzvid

constituency on Monday.

The Minister unveiled the bronze statue of of Dr. Suri Bhagavantham flanked by MLA Mandali Buddha Prasad and former director of DRDA Dr. G Satish Reddy.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, Minister Parthasarathy disclosed that the Centre approved the setting up of ballistic launching pad at Nagayalanka which had been in pending for several years. The Minister said that the former President of India late Abdul Kalam, Dr S Bhagavantham laid the foundation for Indian

defense technology.

Parthasarathy said that a memorial center for Suri Bhagavantham would be established, adding that information will be made available so that people can know the biography of Suri Bhagavantham and his achievements in the fields of defense science and technolo-

Those who have made special contributions in the fields of science and technology would be selected every year. He underlined the need of forming a trust to announce awards in the name of Suri Bhagavantham to present those who strive hard in the field science and technology every year. The Minister announced that he would donate Rs 5 lakh for

MLA Mandali Buddha Prasad lauded DRDA former director Satish Reddy for the vital role he played to set up ballistic launch pad at Nagayalanka. Dr Satish Reddy recalled the efforts of Suri Bhagavathanm in placing India at the forefront of the world in the fields of defense science and

technology. He said said that 25 laboratories were set up during Bhavantham tenure. Dr. Dr. Suri Bhagwantham has taken steps towards strengthening the national defense system with a lot of foresight, India has moved from the level of importing defense equipment to the level of exporting it. In the year 2023-24, weapons worth Rs 24,000 crores have been exported to foreign countries from India, he added.



144 liquor shops allotted in lucky dip in **Eluru district**

PNS ELURU

The process of allotting liquor shops concluded on a peaceful note as 144 liquor shops were allotted to successful bidders here on Monday.

The lucky dip process for allotting liquor shops was held Collector, JC P Dhatri Reddy and excise officers.

Collector K Vetri Selvi said that 5,499 applications were received for 144 liquor shops.

The lucky dip was conducted in the presence of applicants. The process of lucky dip and allotting of liquor shops began at 8 am and concluded at 4 pm. The entire process was held transparently, the Collector added. Excise and Prohibition deputy Commissioner B Srilatha, excise superintendent A Avulaiah, Additional SP N Survachandra Rao and RDO Acyut Ambarish were among a host of officials who were pre-

175 liquor shops allotted in WG through transparent process



PNS BHIMAVARAM

The allotment of 175 liquor shops in West Godavari district was conducted peacefully and transparently on Monday, according to District Collector Chadalavada

Speaking to the media, the Collector said the lottery process for allocating liquor shops began at 8 a.m. and concluded by 2 p.m. She emphasised that the entire process was carried out smoothly and without any irregularities.

The first phase of the lottery was conducted for liquor shops within Bhimavaram town limits. In total, the district received 5,627 applications for 175 shops, with each applicant required to deposit ?2 lakh. A total of ?112.54 crore was collected as the deposit amount, and the 175 successful applicants, who were allotted shops through the lottery, deposited ?19.25

The Collector provided further details on the number of applications received from different towns in the district: Bhimavaram town limits saw 1,287 applications for 40 liquor shops, Tanuku received 877 applications for 33 shops, TP Gudem had 1,224 applications for 36 shops, Palakollu received 873 applications for 19 shops, Narasapuram received 958 applications for 24 shops, and Akividu saw 408 applications for 23 liquor

The Collector reiterated that the entire allotment process was conducted under live video streaming to ensure full transparency. Joint Collector T Rahul Reddy, Excise Assistant Commissioner Prabhu Kumar, District Additional SP V Bhima Rao, District Excise Superintendent Kumareswaran, and RDO Bhavani Shankari oversaw the proceedings.

2 drowned in Gollapalli reservoir



PNS ANANTAPUR

In two tragic incidents, two persons, including a student, drowned in the Gollapalli reservoir near Penukonda in Sri Sathya Sai district. BC Welfare Minister S. Savitha consoled the grieving families.

year-old Chandrasekhar Reddy, a second-year degree student from a private college in Anantapur, had returned to his native village of Ammanavaripalle in Penukonda native mandal for the Dasara holidays.

According to the police, 19-

On Sunday evening, he went to the Gollanalli reservoir with his friends for a swim but slipped recovered on Monday, and the police have registered a case. The body has been sent to the Government General Hospital (GGH) for post-mortem. Minister Savitha visited the reservoir, saw Chandrasekhar Reddy's body, and offered her condolences to the bereaved family, assuring them of all nec-

essary support.
In another incident, 42-yearold Aneesh Khan, who was on a holiday trip with his family, drowned while attempting to board a boat at the Gollapalli reservoir. His body was also recovered on Monday. The police have registered a case, and his body has been sent to the



One killed, 15 injured as RTC bus overturns

PNS ELURU

A woman passenger was killed and 15 others were injured when the APSRTC bus in which they were travelling overturned at Potunur village in Chintalapudi mandal in the early hours on Sunday.

Eluru from Hyderabad. The bus overturned and fell across the road.

A woman passenger Pendurti Kamalabai was killed in the mishap while 15 other passengers suffered various degrees of injuries. The injured were shifted to the GGH in Police said that the RTC Chintalapudi and Eluru in

5k street dogs to be sterilised: Collector

PNS KAKINADA

In the backdrop of increasing street dog menace all over, the district administration has chalked out a ten-day action plan to sterilize street dogs.

Announcing this at the video conference on Monday with the municipal commissioners along with Kakinada commissioner Bhavana Vasista, the district Collector Shanmohan



said in the first phase spanned for ten days 5,000 street dogs

in seven municipalities including Kakinada, Tuni, Pithapuram, Peddapuram Samalkot, Yelesweram would be ster-He said the state government

had constituted a special agency `Sneha' to undertake the job of sterilising the street

instructed the Municipal and

officials to work in liaison and effectively implement the street dogs sterilization programme.

Municipal Health officer Dr Prudhvi charan, district Animal Husbandry Department joint director Ś Suryaprakasarao, DD Krishnamurty, Sneha representative agency Hemantha were among those dogs. Hemantila were among those The Collector further who took part in the delibera-

World Standards Day celebrated



BIS Vijayawada Branch Head and Senior Director MAJ Vinod addressing the World Standards Day celebrations in Viiavawada on Monday

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) Vijayawada Branch celebrated World Standards Day (WSD), Manak Mahotsav, with a technical seminar at the Hotel Hyatt in Gunadala. The theme of the seminar was 'Our Shared Vision for a Better World-Sustainable Development Goal 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure'. The event saw participation of over 170 representatives from various industries, academic institutions, consumer organisations, and government departments.

BIS Vijayawada Branch Head and Senior Director MAJ Vinod outlined the objectives of the BIS during the programme. He emphasised that the primary goal of BIS is to ensure the availability of quality goods to consumers. Operating under the

Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, BIS is responsible for the standardisation, marking, and quality certification (ISI) of goods, as well as management system certification.

MAJ Vinod highlighted BIS's role in contributing to the national economy by ensuring safe, reliable quality products, reducing health risks for consumers, and promoting both exports and import substitutes. He stressed the importance of consumers verifying the BIS quality standards of products and encouraged them to report any defects to seek compensa-

BIS State Deputy Director D Vivek Vardhan Reddy, alongside officials Koushik, D Akhil, SVBS Bhavan Narayana, S Padmalatha, and Krishna Veer were present.

Cabinet expansion soon, says Mahesh

PNS HYDERABAD

The Cabinet will be expanded and the TPCC Executive Committee will be appointed soon, TPCC President B. Mahesh Kumar Goud said.

Speaking to the media on Monday at the party office in Nizamabad, Mahesh said that local body elections will be conducted as soon as possible after the caste census.

He said the dispute between former Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy and former MLA Enugu Ravinder Reddy in Banswada will be resolved soon and the responsibility for solving this issue has been given to the DCC President.

Criticising BRS's social media wing, he said that the BRS uses social media without any social sense. The BRS's social media wing has been propagating lies against the TG government and ministers. This campaign will give them temporary happiness but in the long run, it will certainly harm the BRS, he said

Mahesh said the BRS social media wing is confusing people in regarding the farm loan waiver scheme. One should compare the loan waiver scheme of the BRS during its scheme in Nizamabad city and 10-year rule and Congress's that the Skill India College is



nine-month rule, he said. He said that KCR destroyed the once economically strong Telangana and that there is a need to introduce a Smart City coming to Nizamabad district. Mahesh said the Congress government is also implementing schemes not promised during elections.

Responding to the clash between the followers of Minister Konda Surekha and MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy, he said that the problem arose due to the over-enthusiasm of the followers but there is no dispute between the leaders.

He said the issue is over as he had spoken to both leaders and that he doesn't know the issue of Surekha sitting on the chair of the CI of Geesugonda Police

Ward secretariat ANMs stage dharna for merger with Health Dept

PNS KAKINADA

The village and ward secretariat ANMs staged a dharna in front of the district medical and health officers office here on Monday demanding that they be brought under the control of the Medical and Health Department.

They raised slogans demanding implementation of 35 days of casual leave to them also besides the workload of 60 types of mobile apps to be reduced and also wanted sanction of uniform allowance and vaccine carrier transport allowance.

They are also demanding stoppage of night shift duties to the ANMs working in PHC and CHCs in agency areas, with no duties on Sundays and festival holidays.

Their other demand was that a biometric attendance system or facial recognition system be introduced to the ÁNMs working at ground level. Later they called on the DMHO in a delegation and presented a memorandum listing out their demands.

Protect SRR & CVR College land from encroachers: Alumni

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Plea to launch 'Operation SRR' on the lines of 'Operation Budameru'

The alumni of SRR & CVR Government Degree College (Autonomous) in Machavaram. Vijayawada, have urged the State government to take action to protect the college's land from encroachment. They said that around 6.67 acres of land, valued at approximately Rs. 300 crore, has been encroached upon, and

neither the college management

nor the State government has taken significant steps to address the issue.

The alumni visited the encroached land near the BRTS road in Vijayawada on Monday. Alumni leaders Donepudi Kasinath, Donepudi Sankar, Cherukuri Krishna Kumar, and others addressed the media, expressing their concerns. They

pointed out that a court ruling from 2009 prohibited any con-struction on the disputed land, yet private individuals have continued to buy and sell it. Besides, they criticised the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) for granting construction permis-

sions despite the court order. The alumni reported that some individuals recently



The alumni members of the SRR & CVR Government Degree College visiting the encroached land beside BRTS road in Vijayawada on Monday

attempted to lay a foundation stone for new construction on the encroached land. After bringing this issue to the attention of NTR District Collector Dr G Srijana, the Revenue officials intervened and halted further construction activities.

During the visit to the college's encroached land, one of the encroachers tried to level the land by using a tractor, but the alumni obstructed the move.



ACROSS THE STATES



Eight Bangladeshis held for illegal stay in Karnataka

ight Bangladeshi nationals who were staying illegally in Udupi district here were apprehended, police said on Saturday. They were residing in Hoode village in the district for the past three years without valid passports or visas. According to Udupi Superintendent of Police Arun K, the arrest came after one of the accused, identified as Mohammed Maniq, attempted to flee to Dubai from Mangaluru airport using a fake passport. Suspicion from immigration officials led to his arrest at Bajpe airport in the neighbouring Dakshina Kannada district, he said. "Upon interrogation, Maniq revealed that seven other Bangladeshi nationals were staying with him illegally in Hoode village." The information was relayed to the Udupi police, who subsequently conducted a raid in the area. Police detained the seven individuals on Friday and initiated a detailed inquiry into their illegal stay. During the investigation, it was discovered that the accused possessed fake Aadhaar cards.



Court rejects bail plea of Kannada actor Darshan

sessions court here on Monday denied the bail petitions of Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa and his friend Pavithra Gowda in connection with the murder of 33year-old Renukaswamy, a fan of the actor. Renukaswamy was abducted from his hometown Chitradurga and tortured to death allegedly by Darshan and his gang members. The victim had allegedly sent obscene messages to the prime accused of the case and the actor's friend Pavithra Gowda. which enraged the actor. This alleged provocation is said to have led to Renukaswamy's murder. His body was discovered near a stormwater drain close to an apartment complex in Sumanahalli, Bengaluru, on June 9. In September, the Bengaluru police filed a comprehensive 3,991-page charge sheet implicating 17 people, including Darshan and Gowda, in the case.



Durga Puja: 50 lakh people travel on Kolkata Metro

er 50 lakh people travelled on the Kolkata Metro during the six days of Durga Puja, a statement said on Monday. The passenger count was marginally higher 1.77 per cent, than the previous year, it said. In the Blue Line between Dakshineswar and New Garia, 44.19 lakh people travelled from October 7 and October 12. The Green Line 2, Howrah Maidan-Esplanade, a total of 3.79 lakh passengers travelled, while in Green Line-1 between Sector 5 and Sealdah, 2.53 lakh people travelled. The Dum Dum metro station in the northern fringes of the city recorded the highest footfall of 4.43 lakh people, followed by Kalighat (3.61 lakh) and Sovabazar-Sutanuti (3.11 lakh). The Kolkata Metro extended its service hours and ran special services to handle the festive rush on the two corridors during the

SEXUAL HARASSMENT CASE AGAINST BRIJ

Delhi court records statement of witness

PNS NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Monday recorded the statement of a witness in a case of alleged sexual harassment of female wrestlers by former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Priyanka Rajpoot recorded the statement of the witness and posted the matter on October 19 for further pro-

ceedings. The court on May 10 ordered framing the charge of sexual harassment and other charges

against Singh, a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader, in the case lodged on a complaint from six female wrestlers, observing that there was "sufficient evidence" against him.

It had directed framing of charges against Singh, a six-time former Lok Sabha MP, under Indian Penal Code sections 354 (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 354A (sexual harassment) and 506 (criminal intimidation).

The magistrate framed the charges on May 21 after Singh pleaded not guilty.

'Turn towards Indian talent for sourcing workforce'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday said the need for a "well-trained workforce" in different geographies is only going to grow fur-ther, and urged friendly nations to turn towards the Indian talent for sourcing workforce requirements in their coun-

In his keynote address after launching the eMigrate V2.0 portal and a mobile app here, he also said the government shall remain steadfast in the efforts to create safer and legal channels of emigrating abroad.

Union Minister of Labour and Employment, Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita also joined on dais, while ambassadors of several countries, among others, were present among the audience.

Mandaviya in his address said efforts are underway to integrate the eMigrate V2.0 portal with other digital platforms of his ministry to provide seamless access of relevant documents and profiles of skilled workers by potential

employees sitting abroad.
The revamped version of eMigrate portal is more than just a digital platform, "it is a beacon of hope, a symbol of our commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of our workers in foreign lands", Jaishankar said.

EAM Jaishankar to friendly nations



The revamped version of eMigrate portal is more than just a digital platform, "it is a beacon of hope, a symbol of our commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of our workers in foreign lands", Jaishankar said.

The enhancements in the portal reflect new realities and transformation that is being witnessed in so far as global migration dynamics are concerned, the external affairs

minister underlined. There is a global need for workers who have domain specific knowledge in their particular fields. For several reasons, this need for a welltrained workforce in different geographies is only going to grow further," he said.

This is clearly reflected in the pace at which "we have undertaken negotiations with different countries" on migration and mobility since 2015, and also in how the mobility ecosystem in India itself is tak-

ing shape, the EAM said. In his address, Jaishankar said the government shall remain steadfast in the efforts to create safer and legal chan-

nels of emigrating abroad.

"I am sure that all the Protectors of Emigrants, empowered with technology and through their collective experiences, will gear to work relentlessly towards fulfilling our commitments to the public and to the nation," he said.

"I urge all the participants and particularly the ambassadors who have joined us today, in this inauguration programme, to turn towards the Indian talent and the demographic dividend that India has to offer, for sourcing workforce requirements in your particular countries" the EAM said. The eMigrate Version 2 por-

tal has also been integrated with DigiLocker, and that is also a big step in digital transformation. This will enable the emigrants to submit various documents for obtaining clearances through DigiLocker in a paperless mode, as well as to store them securely, all their important documents like passports, employment contracts, are actually secured, he added. The Ministry of External Affairs has leveraged the use of technology and digital systems to enhance the efficiency and efficacy of this

Opposition MPs boycott Waqf committee meeting over allegations against Kharge



PNS NEW DELHI

Several opposition MPs on Monday boycotted a meeting of the parliamentary committee examining the Waqf (Amendment) Bill alleging that the panel is not functioning in accordance with rules, after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge was accused by a deposer of being involved in Waqf land scams.

The lengthy meetings of the Joint Committee of Parliament have been marked by the exchange of heated words between its BJP and opposition members, and things turned especially stormy on Monday as the latter questioned the rationale behind calling members of Hindu groups for deposition on a law concerning Muslims.

Opposition MPs walked out in protest against the submis-sion of Anwar Manippady, a former chairman of the Karnataka State Minorities Commission and the

is also a former Karnataka BJI vice-president.

Manippady named several Congress leaders from Karnataka, including Kharge and Rehman Khan, and others for their alleged involvement in embezzling Waqf properties.

The opposition MPs cited rules regulating the parliamentary committees' proceedings to claim that "unproven allegations" against "high dignitaries" cannot be made at the meetings of these panels. Manippady, they said, also made an appeal to Muslims not to oppose the Bill, which too

was out of line. An opposition MP said allegations cannot be levelled against someone who is not there to defend himself.

The chairperson of the committee, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Jagdambika Pal, however, overruled their objections and allowed the deposition to continue.

A BJP member said the deposition was relevant to the Karnataka Minorities Bill as Manippady's claims per-Development Corporation. He tained to Waqf properties.

Congress's top leadership involved in 'land grab': BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday alleged that the entire top leadership of the Congress is involved in corruption relating to land transactions and said they should resign on moral grounds after being "exposed" BJP spokesperson and Rajya

Sabha MP Sudhanshu Trivedi's sharp attack on the Congress came after a trust linked to its president Mallikariun Kharge's



family withdrew its request for the allotment of five acres of civic amenity site in Bengaluru to set up a 'Multi-Skill

Development Centre, Training Institutes and Research Centre'. The move by Congress pres-

ident Kharge's son Rahul Kharge, who heads the trust, comes close on the heels of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi returning the 14 sites to the Mysuru Urban Development Authority after the Lokayukta police registered a case against Siddaramaiah, his wife and brother-in-law.

Can finish off Lawrence Bishnoi's network in 24 hours: Pappu Yadav

PNS PATNA

Bihar MP Pappu Yadav said he could "finish off within 24 hours" the network of Lawrence Bishnoi who is suspected to be behind the assassination of former Maharashtra minister Baba Siddiqui.

The Purnea MP made the boastful statement in a post on X, on Sunday, when he called Gopalganj-born Siddiqui "a son of Bihar" and trained his guns at the NDA government in the

"Has the nation become an army of eunuchs? A criminal sitting in jail gets people bumped off at will and all remain mute spectators," wrote Yadav, himself known for strong-arm tactics in politics.

He added, "Maha junprevails in gle raj Maharashtra. The proof is the murder of Baba Siddiqui, who

enjoyed Y security cover and was known to be supportive of the government.

The MP, who redeemed himself politically in the recent Lok Sabha polls after remaining in the wilderness for a long, also said "if law permits, I can finish off within 24

hours the entire network run by this two-bit criminal called Lawrence Bishnoi".

Odisha forms

check distress

task force to

migration

PNS BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government has set up a high-level task force

under Deputy Chief Minister

K V Singh Deo to recom-

mend comprehensive mea-sures to address the issue of

distress migration in the state.

Other members of the task force include another Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida,

Panchayati Raj and Drinking

Water Minister Rabi Narayan

Naik, Chief Secretary,

Development Commissioner,

and secretaries from rele-

vant departments, the state

India to launch updated biodiversity plan at UN conference

PNS NEW DELHI

India has updated its national plan to protect biodiversity in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, officials said on

They said the updated plan will be released at the biannual UN Biodiversity Conference (COP16), scheduled to take place in Cali, Colombia from October 21 to November 1.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), adopted in 1992 to protect the world's biodiversity, requires

PNS LONGDON

The ethnic group with the high-

est concentration of profession-

al workers in the UK is Indian

and considering ethnic minori-

ties as a monolithic group for

public policy purposes is now

increasingly meaningless in the

country, a new think-tank analy-

Ethnicity and Religion' published by the Policy Exchange

reflects an in-depth examination

of the demographic, educational, health and economic situation

of different ethnic groups in the

country. The report calls for a new government-led national

integration strategy, with children

in Britain taught to be proud of

their national heritage in an

inclusive manner that reflects the

country's history and traditions.

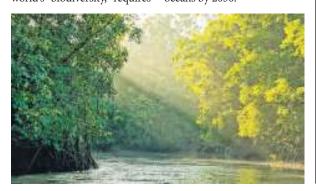
'A Portrait of Modern Britain:

sis concludes on Monday.

countries to create a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), which is a key tool for safeguarding and utilising biodiversity at the nation-

An official said India updated its NBSAP to align it with the new goals and targets set by the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF), adopted at the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) in Montreal, Canada.

One of the main goals of the KM-GBF is to protect at least 30 per cent of the world's land and oceans by 2030.



LAUNDERING CASE

ED raids IAS officer, minister's aides in Jharkhand

PNS RANCHI

The Enforcement Directorate Monday conducted searches against a senior IAS officer, persons linked to a cabinet minister and some others as part of a multi-crore money laundering probe into alleged irregularities in the water and sanitation department of poll-bound Jharkhand, official sources said.

The sources had earlier said that the raids were linked to the Jal Jeevan Mission, a scheme of

the central government. They said alleged illegal commission payments at the rate of 10 per cent was prevalent in the works awarded by the water and sanitation department and these kickbacks were shared among politicians in power, bureaucrats and department officials.

A total of 23 premises in state capital Ranchi and Chaibasa in West Singhbhum district were searched by the officials of the



federal agency.

The ED team was provided security cover by the CRPF, the sources said.

Premises linked to secretary rank IAS officer Manish Ranjan, Harendra Singh, a personal staffer of drinking water and sanitation minister Mithilesh Kumar Thakur, Thakur's brother Vinay Thakur, some government officials, contractors and businessmen were searched by the agency, the sources said.

Ranjan is the secretary of the land, road and building department, and has been questioned by the ED earlier in a separate money laundering case in which it arrested former minister Alamgir Alam.

Reacting to the development, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren said "these are not unexpected" and will "continue as assembly elections are

within these sizeable groupings

at times go unrecognised," it cau-

The report analyses the 2021

UK Census data and other sta-

tistical resources, combining this

government said on Monday. The task force may also coopt experts of national or international repute, as well as academics, development practitioners, and representatives from UN agencies, who will be invited to attend meetings as needed.

This task force will thoroughly examine the challenges faced by migrant workers, aiming to prevent distress migration and determine actionable solutions. It will recommend steps for various government agencies to address and alleviate the difficulties experienced by Odisha's migrant labourers, it said.

The Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Department will serve as the headquarters for the task force, which will convene at least once every six months to review

Indians have highest concentration of professionals in UK: Report that very real forms of diversity

"The ethnic group with the highest concentration of professional workers was Indian with British Indians also having the highest rate of home owner ship – with 71 per cent living in a property which is either owned outright or owned with a mortgage/loan or shared ownership," the report notes.

"The diversity contained with the term 'ethnic minority' is now so broad - both within each minority and between minorities that considering ethnic minorities as a monolithic group for public policy purposes is now



increasingly meaningless," it

"Categories such as 'South Asian' do not only serve to mask

over noteworthy economic and social disparities between Britain's Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis – but also mean

with polling conducted by Redfield and Wilton. Besides a nationally representative sample of 2,000 people of all ethnicities, "booster" samples were used of 1,400 ethnic minority respondents - 200 each from the Black African, Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese and Mixed-Race ethnic groups. www.dailypioneer.com

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Speeding up 'GatiShakti'

GatiShakti gets a fresh boost as PM Modi hails it as a game-changer for India's infrastructure

rime Minister Narendra Modi has lauded 'GatiShakti,' describing it as a transformative initiative poised to revolutionise India's infrastructure. Speaking on the third anniversary of 'GatiShaki' PM Modi hailed its potential to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the country's logistical network, thereby driving economic growth and development. The 'GatiShakti initiative,' introduced by the Central Government in 2021, aims to streamline and integrate various infrastructure projects across sectors, including roads, railways, ports and airports. The programmed seeks to bridge gaps in existing networks, eliminate bottlenecks and promote the use of advanced technology and data analytics in planning and execution. GatiShakti goes beyond traditional infrastructure planning, as it involves the coordination of multiple departments and incorporates feedback from state governments, private sector stakeholders and local communities. The initiative is expected to transform



how infrastructure projects are conceived and executed, bringing about a paradigm shift in the country's growth trajectory. By fostering seamless integration of various sectors and improving the synergy between different modes of transport, GatiShakti is set to play a pivotal role in accelerating India's economic development.

By improving logistical efficiency, reducing costs and promoting seamless connectivity, the initiative can significantly bring down the cost of production. China's rapid economic growth provides a valuable lesson for India. Over the past few decades, China has focused heavily on large-scale infrastructure

development, including extensive networks of high-speed railways, highways and ports. This not only improved connectivity but also drastically lowered logistics costs, making it easier for businesses to thrive. Following a similar path, 'GatiShakti' can serve as a catalyst for India's economic transformation, driving sustainable growth and helping the country achieve its ambition of becoming a \$5 trillion economy.

While 'GatiShakti' promises to transform India's infrastructure, several challenges may hinder its implementation. Key impediments include land acquisition issues, where delays and disputes over land ownership can stall projects. Regulatory bottlenecks also pose challenges, with complex approval processes across different ministries slowing down progress. Additionally, financing constraints may arise, as large-scale infrastructure projects require substantial investment and public-private partnerships. To overcome these hurdles, the government can implement policy reforms to streamline land acquisition and simplify approval procedures, reducing bureaucratic delays. Incentivising private investment through tax benefits and offering risksharing models can attract more participation from the private sector. GatiShakti is the need of the hour and must be prioritised to realise India's growth potential.



Navigating the complex

path of integrity

Ratan Naval Tata: A gem of a person

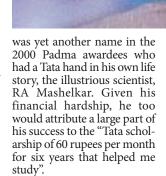


The passing of Ratan Tata has left the nation mourning not just an industrialist, but a rare leader who transcended divides, representing the 'Idea of India'

he year was 2000 and the list of Padma Awardees sent to the Rashtrapati Bhawan had included a list of super achievers. The scholarly constitutionalist in President K R Narayanan went through each name carefully, as he always did. The list had included luminaries like Pandit Hariprasad Churasia, Prof J B Bhagwati, Rajnikanth, Tarlok Singh etc., but one particular name brought a smile to the face of the otherwise reserved and ultra-correct Rashtrapati K R Narayanan, and it was the name of the-then relatively young, 63-year-old Chairman of the Tata Group, Ratan Tata.

Arguably the most accomplished President ever, with a curriculum vitae of achievements that included recognition as the 'best diplomat of Indian Foreign Service, Ambassadorship to countries like USA, China etc., Vice Chancellorship of JNU, 3 consecutive wins as Member of Parliament, posts of Union Minister, Vice President of India, all on merit was no small achievement. Unbeknownst to many, his brilliant journey had the benefit of winds in his sails instilled by the Tata Group, long back! KR Narayanan had never forgotten what the Tatas had done to make its version of the 'Indian Dream' the story from Uzhavoor in Kottayam to the Rashtrapati Bhawan had an unmistakably selfless, generous, and humble hand of the Tatas.

The topper from his school days who overcame unimaginable tribulations of financial and social nature fought against all odds and with the timely aid of the Travancore Royal family. In 1944, KR Narayanan was helped immeasurably by the Tata Scholarship to pursue his obvious genius in economics, politics and journalism at the London School of Economics – it was just the academic break that the precocious talent needed, and the rest as they say is history IRD Tata had beed ed a recommendation letter stating that Narayanan had secured an MA at Travancore University, ranking first. He further noted that he achieved the distinction never sought any favour, conafter surmounting many personal obstacles. Ironically, there



He conflated his own story to that of KR Narayanan's, "Both of us were Tata scholars. We both left India, only to return when we were fairly young with a zeal to do more for our homeland". The surreal moment was described by Mashelkar, "Padma Bhushan, was bestowed on both me, a Tata scholar, and Ratan Tata, head of the house of Tatas. By whom? President Narayanan, another Tata scholar. This was the best endorsement of President Narayanan's remarks about moving from the 'side-lines of the society to the hub

of social standing."
As President Narayanan's Military Secretary, I was responsible for protocols et al, d I distinctly remember the President telling me that presumably Ratan Tata knew of the Tata connection in Narayanan's life, yet he had sideration, or familiarity, out of any sense of entitlement.



HIS DEATH SHOWED WHAT A COLOSSUS HE WAS, WHOSE LOSS IS FELT BY ALL. WITHOUT ANY EXCEPTIONS. HE WAS **UNBELIEVABLY** ABOVE ALL POSSIBLE 'DIVIDES' THAT A 5000-YEAR-OLD

CIVILISATION

CALLED INDIA

AND DEMOCRACY

that perhaps the Tata leaders were not 'Captains of the Industry', but more befittingly 'Generals of the Industry'. As one from the 'Uniform' and knowing Narayanan personally, I knew immediately that the remark was not about seniority (ranks) but about leadership, inviolable values, and personal integrity, which is asked of an individual, as she/he is in a position to walkthe-talk. Much before expressions like affirmative action, corporate social responsibility or corporate trusteeship were defined - Tatas were already doing the same, with no vested interest, whatsoever. It was always about a larger purpose. It is with this sense of immutable responsibility that Ratan Tata stepped into the shoes of the legendary JRD Tata, who had been passed the baton by Nowroji Saklatwala and Jamsetji Tata. The silent dignity, grace, and magna-nimity of the typical Tata way of doing things were upheld - in his passing, the nation lost its most loved son and the 'Idea of India' its finest exponent. The passing away of Ratan Tata has also exposed just

Always one for puns with lan-

guages, he suggested fondly

wounded and polarised times of bitter conflicts between the realms of majority-minority denominations, capitalistsocialist societies, agrarianindustry priorities, and white collar-blue collar dimension it is ironic that Ratan Tata was never ascribed to be working for a restricted denomination. His death showed what a colossus he was, whose loss is felt by all. He was unbelievably above all possible 'divides' that beset a 5000-year-old civilisation and democracy called

Today there are many leaders of political parties, communities, regions, corporations and even perhaps of causes – but none who can be said to be a leader of the inclusive and caring 'Idea of India'. In such desperate times, his passing away has also inadvertently posited the relevance of 'humility' and basic 'decency' that is so sadly missing in the national discourse. So, there may be leaders or even 'Captains of Industry', but 'General' of Leadership (and beyond) absolutely none Ratan Tata was the last of the knights, a first-rate hero.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Åndaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry; views are personal)

RSS CALLS FOR HINDU UNITY

Madam — Apropos of the news 'Hindus be united, empowered, weakness not an option: RSS' (October 13). The message of RSS Sar Sangh Chalak for unity of Hindus amidst political subversion on caste lines has made a wide impact and sensitises Hindus to diminish caste lines. The media made it headlines like never before. This is highly worrisome, as religious conversions by Islamic and missionary institutions and consequent demography change are the most potent threats emanating from caste divisions. Kashmiri Hindus have faced the worst violence and mass exodus since independence and even before, which is yet another consequence of weakened and divided Hindus but which was taboo for a selected media and the intellectuals to even discuss.

Narratives have been set on caste divisions weakening and dividing Hindus for more than a century on misrepresentation of oppression bereft of any evidence, whereas the former rulers of various princely states, entrepreneurs of traditional businesses, and defeated warriors faced persecutions by the Mughal and British rulers and were reduced to penury and ruins and classified later as lower castes. Such nar-

ratives should be busted. The movies and OTT platforms are equally responsible for inculcating inferiority complexes among Hindus selectively. Lately, there is a noticeably undercurrent among Hindus against those who are insulting Hindus and their Gods and undercutting their religious faiths. The constitutional term secular has been misused to the extreme for dividing Hindus. The demand for caste census selectively for Hindus only while excluding other religions, though not provided in the Constitution is yet another shot to divide Hindus and create vote banks. Sangh Pramukh's message is loud and clear.

Vinod Johri | Delhi

TRAIN CRASH SPARKS PANIC Madam—Gruesome rail accidents in the recent past caused concern and created a

Md Siraj appointed as DSP

how poor (in leadership) we

have suddenly become. In



tar Indian pacer Mohammed Siraj has been appointed as Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) by the Telangana state. The post has been extended to him by the state government in appreciation of his exceptional and splendid achievement in international cricket. Sirai no doubt fought all odds to get into the national team and has carved a niche of his own with his superb

performance since his entry. The state in its declaration cited that the young cricketer has made Telangana proud and brought honours to the nation, hence this great honour for him. Among his noteworthy accomplishments are his participation in the Cricket World Cup series and the ongoing series with various teams before World Test Championship finals.

It has to be noted that the state made amendments in its regulations of appointments to felicitate and honour sportspersons as heads of government departments. He now joins the likes of Joginder Sharma (Cricketer), Akhil Kumar, Jitender and Vijender (Boxers) and Hima Das (Athlete) to name a few who became police officers for their contributions to sports. This no doubt will attract more youngsters to sports and encourage them to showcase their best to bring laurels to the state and the nation.

M Pradyu | Kannur

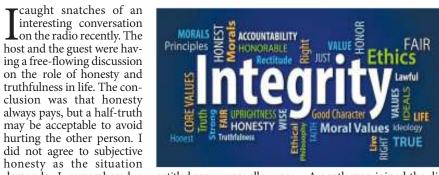
BABA SIDDIQUE ASSASSINATED

Madam — Former Maharashtra minister and Nationalist Congress Party leader Baba Siddique was killed in Mumbai. He was shot outside his office by three unidentified men. Siddique, 66, was a key Muslim political leader in Maharashtra and also served as Minister of State for Food and

Civil Supplies, Labour and FDA. More than politics, Siddique was known for his social image and hosting grand iftar parties every year. During his time as an MLA, Siddique worked extensively on improving the infrastructure of his constituency, focusing on slum rehabilitation, upgrading healthcare facilities, and enhancng educational institutions. It is too premature to say anything as an investigation is going on. The law and order situation is deteriorating. This is not good for the city and state of Maharashtra. If the third shooter is also arrested, then we can make a breakthrough in this murder case.

M R Jayanthi | Trichy

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



posals of illegal gratification.

In a world where honesty is often presented as situational,

staying true to one's principles can be a daunting task

hurting the other person. I did not agree to subjective honesty as the situation demands. I remembered a entitled conveyance allowance few incidents while working for the commute. He gently in the government. These pulled me up and told me that were lessons learned about I could not claim the money integrity and honesty in pubtill the time he chauffeured lic life. I was working on an me. I continued to travel arbitration case a few decades with him till I was elevated and had been provided with back. The advocate representing the contractor an official vehicle. Another approached me to tilt the acquaintance from the private report in his favour for consector informed me about his sideration. I told him that the promotion. Having received case would be dealt with on my congratulatory wishes, he merits. He was expecting elehesitantly told me he was now vation as a High Court judge, in a position of authority to do and I was warned of being something for me. I pointed out that I was better placed to hauled up in his court. I do not know if he was promotdo his company a favour, and ed. I was certainly not sumnot broach the subject again moned. I moved to a governif he wished to remain a ment company in Delhi. I friend and a business associstarted commuting to work ate. We continue to be friends. with my senior colleague in The word got around. I was his official vehicle. New to the not subject to any more pro-

organisation, I claimed the

A gentleman joined the dispute resolution board that I am part of only when he was assured by a former senior colleague about my proven integrity in public life. I am not vain, or at least try not to be demonstrative of my vanity, but I could not resist a proud smile. There were also incidents when I was on the receiving end. I did not live up to the standards that I had set. My father-in-law met an untimely death three decades back. A few days after the rituals were over, I accompanied my brother-in-law to the local post office to withdraw the savings. The dealing assistant's table was piled high with earlier case files. The work

was done within the time

frame promised, without his

touching the money that we

refused and waited out. I chose the easy way. I once read an article that corruption is a global phenomenon. It exists even in developed countries like America and Japan. The difference is that it is at the highest levels and does not affect the common man. I recently flew with a senior corporate leader who echoed exactly similar sentiments. This is the conundrum that I am unable to resolve. We should not be teaching our children conflicting lessons. To me, being truthful or honest are the two sides of the same coin. There cannot be two standards, be it in business, politics, personal life, or at the common man's level. American author, H Jackson Brown Jr said "Live so that when your children think of fairness, caring and integrity, they think of you." That will be the day when we will be truly proud of our-

were asked to put in the office drawer. I could have

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)

panic among railway passengers. This is a serious lapse and it will be treated as a human error to save heads from sacking. Following a collision between Darbhangabound Bagmati Express and a stationary goods train on Friday night, the Railways rdered a high-level inquiry to ascertain

Nine injuries and no fatalities have been reported, although 11 coaches of the express train derailed on impact, leaving parcel van in flames and mangled coaches strewn across the crash site. After crossing Ponneri railway station, the Darbhanga-bound train received the green signal to pass through the main line towards the next station, Kavaraipettai, near Gummidipoondi. However, the express train carrying more than 1,600 passengers experienced a "heavy jerk" while entering the station. It ended up entering the loop line instead and colliding with the rear of a goods train stabled there around 8:30 PM, according to the Railways. This is a serious lapse on the part of the railways and

heads must roll. CK Subramaniam | Mumbai

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FIRST COLUMN THE CHANGING **FACE OF RAM LEELA**

As traditional values blur, concerns grow about the erosion of cultural heritage of Ram Leela



VINOD TAKIAWALA

he connection between Delhi's residents and Ram Leelas is a deeply rooted tradition, with the historic Ramlila Maidan serving as a living testament to this cultural bond. Stories linked to the venue continue to be shared even today. During the Ram Leela performances, the atmosphere in Delhi and the NCR resonates with the chants of "Jai Shri Ram" and "Har Har Mahadev." As evening falls, families eagerly set out to partake in the festivities. I, too, had the opportunity to witness some of these performances. However, to my disappointment, the portrayal of Ram's story often appeared distorted, with dialogues sounding jarring and performances lacking in choreography. It seemed as though the actors, much like the director and scriptwriter, had little familiarity with the original Ramayana.

The Ram Leela I watched during my younger days has transformed into a commercial event, with little regard for the religious and cultural essence of this annual festival. It has become more of an entertainment spectacle than an exploration of the Ramayana's teachings. For some, it's a means to profit, while others use it as a platform to pursue their personal agendas. In the capital, the celebrations—including the enactment of the Ram Leela and the ritual of burning Ravana's effigy—frequently feature prominent figures such as politicians and businessmen as guests of honour. It often feels as though the Ram Leela is being staged to honour them, as the announcements from the stage are filled with praises for their greatness and importance.

Yet, I couldn't help but wonder whether any of them truly embodied the



virtues of Maryada Purushottam Ram. Whether ministers, political leaders, social workers, or other distinguished personalities holding official positions, none struck me as being worthy of comparison to Ram. I kept asking myself, "Is there anyone among them who genuinely understands Ram or upholds his ideals?"

Moreover, the management of the Ram Leelas raises several concerns. From the chaotic parking outside the venues to the giant advertisements plastered on temporary boundaries, the arrangements leave much to be desired. The presence of high-ranking officials, Delhi police, and businessmen with their families often overshadows the experience of the common people. Organisers are granted access to public spaces with government support, including subsidised electricity, water, security, and other amenities. Despite this, substantial funds are collected through donations for staging the Ram Leelas, though there is no clear accounting or auditing of these finances. Only God knows where the money

At one Ram Leela in Delhi, the organisers spared no expense in creating luxurious settings for themselves, while visitors had minimal or no facilities. A statue of Lord Ram was placed in an open field, and the idols of other Hindu deities were carelessly laid out on the ground. Meanwhile, the organisers and their close circle enjoyed lavish facilities in opulent tents with exclusive arrangements for food, photoshoots, and private promotions. Ordinary visitors, who came with their families to enjoy the performance, often struggled to gain entry. Once inside, they were met with private security guards employed to serve the organ-

isers' auests, who sometimes treated the common people poorly. Ram Leelas have now become major attractions and money-making opportunities, with little consideration for the people who come to witness them. The entire event is chaotic, and all one can hope for is that it concludes without any unfortunate incidents. The ideals of Ram seem to be the last thing on the minds of those who organise these events. The essence of Ram Leela has been overshadowed by the spectacle of wealth and status. Even the story of Ram is distorted, and the dialogues are awkward—but that is the reality of modern-day Ram Leela. (The writer is a freelance journalist; views are personal)

Why RBI should not look at food inflation -



Concerns over persistent food price volatility and the need for economic growth support have prompted the Reserve Bank of India to keep its options open



n October 9, 2024, the Reserve Bank of India
(RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das announced the decisions taken by the six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) in its fourth bi-monthly meeting of the current financial year (FY). It has kept the policy rate (the interest rate at which the RBI lends to banks) unchanged at 6.5 per cent. However, it has altered its policy stance from "withdrawal of accommodation" to a neutral stance. In 2016, the Union Government put in place an institutionalised framework to enable the MPC to formulate monetary policy and determine the key interest rates including the policy rate for inflation targeting. It mandated the RBI to fix the policy rate in such a manner as to maintain the Consumer Price Index or CPI (it corresponds to a basket that includes food, fuel, manufactured goods and select services) within the target range of 4 per cent (+/- 2 per cent). The RBI decides the policy rates once in two

The mandate initially given for five years ending March 31, 2021, has since been extended till March 31, 2026. The other crucial policy instrument the banking regulator uses for targeting inflation is Liquidity - a jargon for the quantum of credit available in the banking system. Pumping more liquidity along with a reduction in the policy rate represents a scenario which in jargon is described as an 'accommodative' policy stance. The terminology was coined by Das in June 2019 when he started going for aggressive cuts in the policy rate and an increase in credit availability. Since June 2022 the RBI changed its stance to "withdrawal of accommodation" and has since stuck to

it till date. From October 9, 2024, it has decided to go for what it terms a "neutral" stance. A "neutral" stance connotes that the RBI has vowed to keep its options flexible meaning it will neither squeeze liquidity by restricting credit availability and keeping policy rates high nor go



AS LONG AS FOOD (WHOSE PRICES ARE **FUNDAMENTALLY** AFFECTED BY SUPPLY-SIDE OF THE CPI BASKET, INFLATION TARGETING WILL **ALWAYS REMAIN**

A PROBLEM

for unrestrained lending at low interest rates.

At the time of taking charge in December 2018, Das was confronted with a legacy of policy rate at a peak of 6.5 per cent, courtesy of a tight stance taken by his pre-decessor Urjit Patel. In February 2019, he initiated a process of aggressive cut that led to its plummeting to a low of 4 per cent by May 2020. It stayed at that level for over two years. Beginning May 2022, the RBI delivered a hike of 1.4 per cent during the first half of FY 2022-23 and another dose of 1.1 per cent during the second

A total hike of 2.5 per cent thus restored the policy rate to its earlier peak of 6.5 per cent by February 2023. Since then, the rate has remained unchanged to

Look at the trajectory of the CPI inflation. It had scaled to a high of 7.8 per cent in April 2022. During FY 2022-23, it hovered around 8 per cent. In the following FY, it started decreasing from 7.4 per cent in July 2023 to 5 per cent in September 2023, 4.8 per cent in October 2023 and 5.1 per cent during January/February 2024. For the whole of FY 2023-24, it was 5.4 percent. During the current FY also, the CPI inflation has kept low; 5.08 percent in June 2024 and 3.54 percent in July of 2024. During FY 2024-25, the RBI expects the CPI inflation to be 4.5 per cent. Given the above, from the third quarter of FY 2023-24, the CPI inflation has remained well within the target range of 4 per cent (+/- 2 per cent). Moreover, as per RBI's assessment, this position will be sustained till the end of the cur-

There was thus a strong case for reducing the repo rate. This would

growth besides helping millions of borrowers reduce their EMIs and As long as food (whose prices are helping industries, especially MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) reduce the cost of servicing their loans. Yet, the RBI remains unfazed and has stuck to its stance of 'not reducing the policy rate'. This has to do with a mindset that was reflected in Das's observation while announcing the first bi-monthly policy of the current FY. He had said "The elephant has now gone out for a walk and appears to be returning to the forest. We would like the elephant to return to the forest and remain there on a durable basis." Put simply, he meant there was no need to start reducing interest rates until inflation reached the target of 4 per cent and stayed at that level. If, that figure of 4 per cent was so sacro-Why hasn't RBI reduced the sanct, then why keep (+/- 2 per

The short point is the RBI is clamoring for a scenario that is unlikely and even if it is reached, it won't be possible to stay there for long. A potent reason for this is food inflation which has a weight of around 40 per cent in the overall CPI and is impacted predominantly by supply side/seasonal factors whereas monetary policy instruments work on the demand

Invariably, food inflation maintains an upward trend even as a small disruption in supply caused by seasonal factors can lead to spiralling prices. This, in turn, lifts the CPI inflation more so because of its high weight of 40 per cent. In July 2023, food inflation was 11.8 percent which led to CPI inflation of 7.4 percent. In October 2023, the former decreased to 6.6 per cent, and so did the latter to 4.8 per cent. At the start of the current year, food inflation spurted to around 8 per have given a boost to economic cent and by June 2024, it had fur-

fundamentally affected by supplyside factors) remains a part of the CPI basket, inflation targeting will always remain a problem. There is an urgent need to exclude it while setting benchmark interest rates, an idea that was mooted by the Chief Economic Advisor in the Economic Survey (ES) for 2023-24. The CEA argued that monetary policy has no bearing on the prices of food items, which are dictated by supply-side pressures. For instance, during 2021-22, wheat output was affected by unusually high temperatures. During 2022-23, rains accompanied by hallstorms acted as a spoiler. During the first half of FY 2023-24, food inflation went up due to a spike in the prices of vegetables caused by seasonal factors. The current inflationary trend in food prices also has to do with supply-side pressures only. The RBI can achieve little to control them by keeping the policy rate

The RBI should take the idea mooted in the ES - 2023-24 on board. Meanwhile, it should consider reducing the weight of food inflation in CPI to reflect the contemporary reality. The current 40 per cent weight is based on the Consumption Expenditure Survey (CES) of 2011-12 whereas Summary Statistics from the 2022-23 CES point towards a significant reduction. While formulating its monetary policy, the RBI's prime responsibility is to ensure macro-economic stability its pivotal focus being on keeping inflation within reasonable bounds. However, it can't be oblivious of the dire need to support economic growth which could be adversely impacted if it keeps the interest rates high.

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

Laapataa Ladies: India's Oscar entry poised to captivate the world

This year's selection for Oscar marks a bold statement about the future of Indian cinema and its universal appeal

world once again, not only with its glamorous presence but also with its captivating storytelling at the 2025 Oscars. With Kiran Rao's Laapataa Ladies chosen as India's official entry for Best International Feature Film, the global stage is about to witness a film that exemplifies the power of Indian cinema stands out as a justified film that exemplifies the modernity, and women's stories are told with gradation, strength and authenticity. From the grand stages of Cannes and TIFF to the statement but also a deeper prestigious halls of the journey continues to break

tion of Laapataa Ladies



where tradition meets move that speaks volumes about the direction the Indian cinema will take in the future.

narrative that India aims to Oscars, India's cinematic convey to the world. The decision has stirred passionboundaries, capturing hearts ate discussions about the across the globe. The selec- nature of Indian cinema, the evolving landscape of

global filmmaking, and the ities of Indian womanhood art of storytelling that resonates universally. It signifies not just a bold statement but also a deeper narrative that India aims to convey to the world. One characterised by powerful storytelling and emotional depth, laced with cultural authenticity that delves into the unique yet universally relatable experiences of women.

Kiran Rao's return to the director's chair after more than a decade has proven to be nothing short of a cinematic triumph of her evolution as a filmmaker.

'Laapataa Ladies' offers more than a film, it's an experience that beautifully blends humour and poignant social commentary and a fresh perspective on the complex-

Set against the backdrop of rural India, the story revolves around two brides mistakenly swapped due to their veils, igniting a whirlwind of confusion and identity crisis. But beneath the surface, the film tackles deeper societal themes, portraying the often unspoken struggles women face while navigating tradition and personal identity. Rao's masterful storytelling elevates this from a simple narrative to a cultural dialogue, one that resonates with both Indian and global audiences. It's this jugalbandi of emotion, drama, and humour that makes 'Laapataa Ladies' stand out as a universal story about women's empowerment.



The film doesn't just reflect the plight of Indian women, it taps into the global consciousness of gender roles, the subtle acts of defiance, and the resilience required to reclaim one's identity in a patriarchal society. By sending 'Laapataa Ladies' to the Oscars, India is presenting the world with a film that balances entertainment with a serious undercurrent. This

is the kind of storytelling that Hollywood needs to see an authentic narrative that reflects the socio-cultural realities of a nation while remaining universally relatable. With well-written characters, immersive performances, and a storyline that oscillates between lightheartedness and gravitas, 'Laapataa Ladies' will serve as a testament to Indian filmmaking talent. The performances of Nitanshi Goel and Pratibha Ranta shine, their portrayals brimming with vulnerability and strength, making their characters relatable on a universal scale. This film is not just a story about two women but about the entire spectrum of Indian womanhood—its beauty, complex-

ity, and contradictions. The landscape of global filmmaking is undergoing a revolution.

The world is slowly waking up to the storytelling brilliance that many nations like South Korea, China, Turkey and India have always possessed but are now showcasing with greater confidence and finesse. India's selection of 'Laapataa Ladies' is part of this global wave of cinema that is redefining the narrative structure, giving voice to local stories with universal appeal. Much like South Korea's Parasite, which used the backdrop of class disparity to tell a universally compelling story, 'Laapataa Ladies' uses rural India's traditions to explore gender,

in a way that transcends cultural boundaries. As 'Laapataa Ladies' makes its way to the Oscars, it carries with it the hopes of millions who believe in the power of

authentic storytelling. The film's emotional depth, paired with Rao's visionary direction, is set to make waves on the international stage, showing Hollywood and the world what Indian cinema is truly capable of. With 'Laapataa Ladies', India has not just sent a film-it has sent a message.
(The writer is a former

additional DG, DFF, and festival director at IFFI. Inputs provided by Zoya Ahmad and Vaishnavie Srinivasan; Views are VIJAYAWADA | TUESDAY | OCTOBER 15, 2024

IN BRIEF



HCLTechnet profit rises to Rs 4,235 crore T services company HCL Technologies on Monday reported

a 10.51 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 4,235 crore in the July-September quarter of the current fiscal. It had reported a net profit of Rs 3,832 crore in the year-ago period. Revenue came in at Rs 28,862 crore during the reporting quarter, 8.21 per cent higher than Rs 26,672 crore in the year-ago period. HCLTech CEO & Managing Director C Vijayakumar said that the company's pipeline is very strong, including data & AI, digital engineering, SAP migration and efficiency-led programmes. "Revenue growth has come with an improved profitability. Our EBIT margins in Q2 rose to 18.6 per cent, up 149 bps sequentially. LTM Return on Invested Capital (ROIC) stands at solid 35.7 per cent at company level and 43.5 per cent at services, an expansion of 353 bps YoY and 403 bps YoY respectively," said HCLTech CFO Shiv Walia.



Gold revisits all-time high of Rs 78,700 per 10 grams

old prices rose Rs 200 to revisit the all-time high of Rs G78,700 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday on persistent buying by stockists and traders even as the precious metal lost steam globally, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The yellow metal had closed at Rs 78,500 per 10 grams on Friday. Silver jumped Rs 500 to Rs 93,500 per kg on the back of fresh industrial demand. It had ended at Rs 93,000 per kg in the previous close. Additionally, gold of 99.5 per cent purity climbed by Rs 600 to reclaim its all-time high level of Rs 78,300 per 10 grams. The metal had finished at Rs 78,100 per 10 grams. Earlier, gold prices hit a record Rs 78,700 per 10 grams on October 7. Despite a weak trend overseas, the precious metal gained in the domestic market, mainly due to an increase in demand from jewellers, traders said.



BSE launches World Investor Week

eading stock exchange BSE Ltd on Monday announced the launch of globally popular event World Investor Week 2024 with special focuses on educating investors about technology, digital finance and cyber security. World Investor Week (WIW), a global initiative by the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO), is being observed in India from October 14 to 20 under the leadership of Sebi and other Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIIs). This year's theme "Technology and Digital Finance" focuses on educating investors about online safety, with a sub-theme highlighting the prevention of cybercrimes and frauds, BSE said in a statement. The exchange inaugurated the World Investor Week 2024 with a ceremonial bell-ringing event at its International Convention Hall. As part of the celebrations, BSE is organising various digital, print and on-ground activities to engage a broad spectrum of investors. Key initiatives include a nationwide quiz for the public as well as competitions inviting participants to create jingles and storytelling content centred around the WIW theme.

Banks must ride on advantages of Al and Bigtech: RBI Governor Das

Concerned over the high reliance on AI and machine learning in the banking space, Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday said lenders ought to ride on the advantages of big tech and not the other way round.

Stressing that the latest technological advancements such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) have opened new avenues of business and profit expansion for financial institutions, he said, these technologies also pose financial stability risks.

"The heavy reliance on AI can lead to concentration risks, especially when a small number of tech providers dominate the market. This could amplify systemic risks, as failures or disruptions in these systems may cascade across the entire financial sector," he said in his keynote address at a conference organised by the RBI here.

Moreover, he said, the growing use of AI introduces new vulnerabilities, such as increased susceptibility to cyberattacks and data breach-

Additionally, AI's opacity makes it difficult to audit or interpret the algorithms that drive decisions, he said, adding that this could potentially lead to unpredictable consequences in the markets.

"Banks and other financial institutions must put in place adequate risk mitigation measures against all these risks. In the ultimate analysis, banks have to ride on the advantages of AI and Bigtech and not allow the latter to ride on them," he said.

Growing digitalisation of financial services has enhanced the efficiency of the financial sector across the globe but has also brought in several challenges that central banks have to deal with.

For instance, in the modern world with deep social media presence and vast access to online banking with money transfer happening in seconds, rumours and misinformation can spread very quickly and can cause liquidity stress. Banks have to remain alert in the social media space

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and also strengthen their liquidity buffers.

Talking about the risk of digitisation, the RBI Governor said in the modern world with deep social media presence and vast access to online banking with money transfer happening in seconds, rumours and misinformation can spread very quickly and can cause liquidity stress.

Banks have to remain alert in the social media space and also strengthen their liquidity buffers, he said.

India's power demand to soar to 708 GW by 2047: Power Min

PNS NEW DELHI

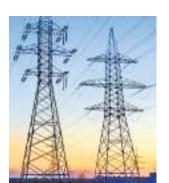
India needs to increase its power generation capacity fourfold to 2,100 GW by 2047 against an anticipated demand of 708 GW, Union Power Minister Manohar Lal said on Monday.

As per official data, India's total power generation capaci-ty stood at around 453 GW as of September 30, while the government's projection for peak power demand this year was 260 GW.

However, it could not be reached due to lower temperatures due to rains, and peak power demand remained around 250 GW.

"By 2047, we anticipate our power demand to reach 708 gigawatts. To meet this, we need to increase our capacity by four times, i.e. 2,100 gigawatts, Lal said, addressing Brainstorming Conclave on Indian Power Sector Scenario by 2047', organised by Central Electricity Authority (CEA) in partnership with industry body

Ficci former president Subhrakant Panda said India's power sector presents vast opportunities in the transition



to clean energy by 2070. The expanding renewable energy sector offers promising growth prospects.

Panda, who is also the Managing Director of Indian Metals & Ferro Alloys, said, "Enhancing local manufacturing and R&D investment will open new avenues for innovation. Extending ISTS waivers and strengthening the transmission and power evacuation system will further boost sector growth, creating numerous opportunities for investors and businesses".

The minister also launched the National Electricity Plan (Transmission), developed in consultation with various stake-

Cement industries growth to slow down to 7-8 pc: Crisil

PNS NEW DELHI

The cement industry is expected to record slower growth of 7 to 8 per cent to 475 million tonnes this fiscal, impacted by lower growth in the first half after registering a double-digit growth from the last two financial years, according to a Crisil report.

The cement demand grew only 3 per cent in the June first quarter of FY2024-25, owing to an extended heatwave and shortage of labour during general elections and is estimated to have grown at a similar pace in the second quarter due to seasonal weakness.

However, the second half is likely to bode well for the sector, the agency in its report said, adding that the margins would be better this fiscal.

"Cement demand is set to grow slower at 7-8 per cent year-on-year to 475 MT this fiscal, after clocking a compound annual growth rate of 2022 and 2024," the report said. However, the operating profitability of cement players is likely to sustain at Rs 975-1,000 per tonne, above the decadal average of Rs 963 per tonne, said the report, which is based on an analysis of 18 cement makers, accounting for over 85 per cent of domestic sales volume.

It expects the growth in the housing segment, which accounts for 55-60 per cent of cement demand, will see a likely revival in rural housing demand supported by the healthy monsoon this year. "Similarly, the government

spending on infrastructure development, which accounts for 30 per cent of cement demand, will support demand too," it said, adding that "though actual spending was sluggish until July, the govern-ment's capex is likely to accelerate from the third a quarter of this fiscal, which will boost cement demand from the

Domestic passenger vehicle sales to grow: SIAM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic passenger vehicle wholesales are expected to grow by 3-5 per cent this fis-cal with the industry pinning hopes on strong performance in the festive period after witnessing a flattish first half, automobile industry body SIAM said on Monday. At the start of the current

fiscal, the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) had pegged the passenger vehicle (PV) sales to grow between 5-8 per cent this fiscal. For the April-September period this fiscal, PV sales stood at 20,81,143 units, registering a marginal growth from 20,70,960 units in the same period of 2023-24. SIAM President Shailesh Chandra said the industry was expecting to post growth in the April-September peri-

Retail inflation hits 9-month high of 5.49 pc

PNS NEW DELHI

Soaring vegetable prices pushed the retail inflation rate to a nine-month high of 5.49 pr cent in September, according to government data released on Monday.

The consumer price index (CPI)-based retail inflation rate was 3.65 per cent in August and 5.02 per in September 2023. The previous high inflation rate was witnessed in December 2023 at 5.69 per cent.

As per data released by the National Statistics Office (NSO), the inflation rate in the food basket rose to 9.24 per cent in September compared to 5.66 per cent in August and 6.62 per cent in the year-ago

"It is likely that the increase in inflation rate for the month of September 2024 is due to



conditions," NSO said.

According to another data released on Monday, the wholesale price inflation (WPI) rose to 1.84 per cent in September as food items, especially vegetables, turned cost-

The wholesale price index (WPI)-based inflation was 1.31 per cent in August. It was (-) 0.07 per cent in September last

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which kept the key

unchanged earlier this month, has been asked by the government to ensure the CPI inflation rate remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side. The annual inflation rate in

the vegetable basket in September was nearly 36 per cent and in 'pulses and products' it was 9.81 per cent. Fruits, too, were dearer. However, inflation in spices

was in the negative in September, compared to the

Jio Platforms net profit jumps 23.4% to Rs 6,539 crore

PNS NEW DELHI

Jio Platforms on Monday reported a 23.4 per cent yearon-year rise in its consolidated net profit for Q2 FY25 to Rs 6,539 crore, as average revenue per user surged to Rs 195.1 per month.

The revenue from operations of Jio Platforms - which houses Reliance Industries' telecom and digital businesses - rose 18 per cent to Rs 31,709 crore in the just-ended September quarter.

The gross revenue stood at Rs 37,119 crore in Q2FY25, 17.7 per cent higher than the corresponding period of the

previous year.

ARPU - a key metric for telcos - increased to Rs 195.1 with the partial followthrough of the tariff hike and a better subscriber mix.

'Research on ethanol blending in diesel in advanced stages'

PNS NEW DELHI

Union minister Nitin Gadkari on Monday said that the research around blending 15 per cent ethanol in diesel is in advanced stages, and the government is exploring ways to prioritise it based on sound evi-

Addressing the Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) Bio Energy Summit 2024, Gadkari further said according to govern-ment data, ethanol blending in India has surged from 1.53 per cent in 2014 to 15 per cent in

Spurred by this progress, the government has set an ambitious target of reaching 20 per cent blending in petrol by 2025, the road transport and highways minister said



Gadkari said the progress on building an ethanol ecosystem -- where ethanol pumps can complement ethanol production and launch of vehicles that can run on ethanol are on fasttrack in four states --Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra.

He pointed out that Indian Oil has decided to put 400 ethanol pump stations.

"We are meeting automakers as well including Suzuki, Tata, and Toyota.

decided to launch flex-engine cars," he said. According to the minister,

other vehicle makers like TVS, Bajaj, and Honda are ready with ethanol bikes and are waiting for the ethanol pumps to come to launch their bikes.

He said the country has moved from the era of 'knowledge to wealth', to a 'waste to wealth'

On CNG, the minister said, "Over 475 projects are in pipeline in CNG, and over 40 projects have already started across Punjab, Haryana, western UP, Karnataka among others." Gadkari emphasised on the need to explore further technologies of conversion of municipal solid waste into bio-CNG, where the cost of raw material becomes zero.

Sensex rises 592 pts, Nifty settles above 25K on gains in IT, banking

PNS MUMBAI

Benchmark BSE Sensex jumped nearly 592 points while Nifty reclaimed the 25,000 level on Monday following gains in IT and banking shares amid a firm trend in global markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 591.69 points or 0.73 per cent to close at 81,973.05. During the day, it surged 690.81 points or 0.84 per cent to hit a high of 82,072.17.

The NSE Nifty rose 163.70 points or 0.66 per cent to settle at 25,127.95. In the intraday trade, the benchmark indices climbed 195.5 points or 0.78 per cent to 25,159.75.

From the Sensex pack, Tech Mahindra, HDFC Bank, Larsen & Toubro, ITC, Infosys, IndusInd Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Titan and HCL Technologies were among the gainers. Maruti Suzuki India, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finance, UltraTech Cement, Nestle India, Axis Bank and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) were among the laggards.

Market capitalisation of BSElisted companies jumped by nearly Rs 1.35 lakh crore to Rs 4,63,62,781.71 (USD 5.51 tril-

lion).
"The Indian market is demonstrating resilience, with subdued Q2 earnings expectations seemingly priced in and oil prices declining. The IT and financial sectors are attracting buying interest after recent corrections," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge rose 0.28 per cent and smallcap index by 0.06 per cent.

Sector-wise, Realty surged the most by 1.53 per cent. Bankex (1.03 per cent), IT (1.01 per cent), Financial Service and Teck by 0.88 per cent each, Consumer Durables (0.69 per cent) and Telecommunication (0.68 per cent) were among the gainers.

Commodities slipped by 0.31 per cent, followed by Metal (0.14 per cent), Oil & Gas (0.06 per cent) and Services (0.04 per cent). On the BSE, Avenue Supermarts, which owns and operates retail chain D-Mart, plunged over 8 per cent to settle at Rs 4,184.45 apiece, after the company's September quarter earnings failed to cheer



Exports to be major job creator for India: USISPF road bumps, we have our

PNS NEW DELHI

US-India Strategic Partnership Forum President and CEO Mukesh Aghi on Monday emphasised that exports are going to be a major job creator for India as the country moves towards becoming a USD 5 trillion

Aghi, who was speaking at an event organised by the USISPF, also stressed that India and the US should continue to strengthen their economic engagements and increase the bilateral trade to USD 500 billion going for-

He said creating nearly 1.2 million jobs per month is going to be a challenge, high-lighting the importance of job

creation to ensure there is no social unrest among the youth.

"As India's economy goes from 4 to 5 trillion dollars, one of the biggest job creators is going to be exports because we have a challenge and the challenge is how do we create 1.2 million jobs (in India) a month and unless we are able to meet that objective we will start seeing some kind of social unrest among the youth

itself...," Aghi said.
"So I think it is important to keep on driving the (bilateral) trade objective of USD 500 billion moving forward," he added

The USISPF President and CEO shared that 5 million Indian Americans currently reside in the US, comprising



"As India's economy goes from 4 to 5 trillion dollars, one of the biggest job creators is going to be exports because we have a challenge and the challenge is how do we create 1.2 million jobs (in India) a month and unless we are able to meet that objective we will start seeing some kind of social unrest among the youth itself...," Aghi said

roughly 1.5 per cent of its population. However, they contribute nearly 6 per cent to the nation's GDP.

"So in every aspect, from people to people, economic, technologically and also geopolitically, these two countries (India and the US) are aligned. Yes, we have our

we see with this government, last 10 years they have stepped up. They have basically working with us to make sure that there is much more ease of doing business," Aghi asserted. The bilateral trade between

challenges, but we keep on

working with that and what

India and the US stood at USD 118.3 billion in 2023-24. Washington was the top trading partner of New Delhi during 2021-22 and 2022-23. However, China emerged as the largest trading partner of India with USD 118.4 billion two-way commerce in 2023-24, slightly edging past the US, according to the data of economic think tank

the pioneer Vijayawada | Tuesday October 15, 2024

what's brewing?

'I DON'T HAVE ₹100 CRORE, JUST **PAYING MY EMIS LIKE EVERYONE ELSE'**

success of *Stree 2*, which became the only Bollywood film to gross over 600 crore in India, Rajkummar Rao revealed that the riches people associate with such success haven't made their way into his bank account. Speaking candidly on the YouTube channel Unfiltered with Samdish, Rajkummar shared that, while people may think he's rolling in wealth, the reality is quite different.

"Honestly, I don't have as much money people might think. I don't have 100 Following the success of *Stree 2*, ore. I'm still paying a hefty EMI for the Rajkummar Rao has taken on a variety of as people might think. I don't have 100 crore. I'm still paying a hefty EMI for the house I bought," Rajkummar explained. He joked about how it's not like he can walk into a showroom and casually buy a car worth 6 crore.

When asked if he could buy a car worth 50 lakh, Rajkummar laughed and said, "I could, but there'd be a discussion about it first. A 20 lakh car would be more comfortable right now." He also admitted that actors receiving too much money too quickly can negatively affect their mindset, which is why

roles. His latest release is Vicky Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video, a sex comedy directed by Raaj Shaandilyaa, where he stars alongside Triptii Dimri, Vijay Raaz and Mallika Sherawat. The film revolves around a newlywed couple whose honeymoon tape gets stolen. Produced by T-Series, the movie is already generating buzz. Up next, Rajkummar will star in the action-packed thriller Malik, where fans will get to see him in a full-fledged action role for the first time.



Rajkumar Hirani honoured with 'Rashtriya Kishore Kumar Samman' for screenwriting

Rajkumar Hirani, known for crafting some of Indian cinema's most cherished films, was awarded the prestigious Rashtriya Kishore Kumar Samman for screenwriting. The honour, which was presented on Sunday, holds special significance for Hirani, who has long admired the leg-endary singer Kishore Kumar. Receiving the award on the anniversary of Kishore Da's passing made the moment even more meaningful for the director.

The award ceremony took place in Khandwa, the birthplace of Kishore Kumar, where Hirani was recognised by the Madhya Pradesh government. Tribal Affairs Minister Vijay Shah presented him with the honour, celebrating his outstanding contributions to the art of

scriptwriting.

During the ceremony, Hirani shared a touching memory from the day Kishore Da passed away. As a young fan who had just moved to Mumbai from Nagpur, he stood outside Kishore Da's bungalow in

songs, where the singer expressed his longing to return to Khandwa to enjoy simple pleasures like milk and jalebi. In a heartfelt tribute, Hirani visited Kishore Da's memorial, offering milk and jalebi as a gesture of respect.

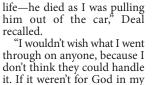
Reflecting on the honour, Hirani said, "It's surreal to think that the same person who couldn't enter Kishore Da's home in Mumbai is now being recognized in his birthplace, Khandwa. Artists and directors come and go, but songs live on forever. I believe Kishore Da's songs will continue to be cherished for the next hundred years."

With this accolade, Rajkumar Hirani joins a distinguished list of previous recipients, becoming the 27th honoree of the National Kishore Kumar Award. This moment is a significant milestone not only for Hirani but also for his fans, as anticipation grows for his next cinematic venture.



In 1997, Sean 'Diddy' Combs and The Notorious B.I.G. attended an after-party that would tragically be Biggie's last. The rapper was fatally shot in a drive-by shooting, a moment that continues to haunt those who were there that night.

Diddy's bodyguard, Gene Deal, was present during the devastating event and later shared his lingering pain and regret. Deal revealed that he had an unsettling feeling before the night even began, believing it was his responsibility to protect the I'll Be Missing You artist. "I saw this kid lose his life—he died as I was pulling him out of the car," Deal



life and people praying for me, I don't know how I would've made it through." Deal explained that before they left Andre Harrell's house, Diddy had told him he didn't need to come along. But Deal's gut told him otherwise. "I knew someone was going to die that night. I did everything I could to keep it from being Puff, and it wasn't him."

Deal's sorrow is intensified by the fact that, though Biggie wasn't his primary responsibility that night, he still feels the weight of the loss. "The guys who were protecting Big didn't do everything they could to prevent it—and that hurts, even though he wasn't my principal. Every time I hear his music, see murals, or those statues, it hurts. It'll hurt until the day I leave this earth."

Sean 'Diddy' Combs, who was nearby when the shooting happened, rushed to the hospital with Biggie. "Then the doctors came out and gave us the news," Diddy recalled in a 1997 interview. "I was on my knees, praying the whole time. I couldn't process it. Everything was happening so fast, I just couldn't believe it was real."

To make things worse, Diddy had to break the heartbreaking news to Biggie's mother. "I had Damien call her, but he broke down in the middle of it, so I had to finish. I had to calm her down and find someone to go to her house."

In the chaotic aftermath, many close to Diddy feared he could be the killer's next target, urging him to flee Los Angeles. "I woke up the next morning to people panicking, telling me to get out of L.A. But I couldn't move—I was just stuck."

Shaheer Sheikh romances two Kriti Sanons in his b'wood

debut, Do Patti

The eagerly awaited trailer for *Do Patti*, starring Kriti Sanon, Kajol and Shaheer Sheikh, has finally dropped and it's left audiences buzzing with excitement. Directed by Shashanka Chaturvedi and penned by Kanika Dhillon, the film promises to be a gripping drama packed with suspense and unexpected twists.

The trailer's standout moment is the fiery love triangle between Shaheer Sheikh's character, Dhruv Sood and the twin sisters, both played by Kriti Sanon. As the rivalry between the sisters escalates, Dhruv accuses one of them of being mentally unstable, setting the stage for a series of thrilling twists that will keep viewers on the

This film marks a first for Kriti

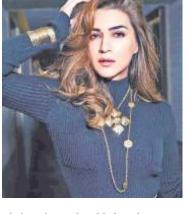
"Everything was

happening so fast—my



portraying two distinct characters in a double role. Meanwhile, Shaheer Sheikh, a beloved television star, steps out of his usual 'lover boy' image to embrace a character with more complexity and darker undertones.

The classic love triangle, with two sisters vying for the affection of the same man, has heightened anticipation, and the sizzling chemistry between Kriti and



Shaheer has only added to the excitement. Do Patti highlights Shaheer's versatility as an actor, showcasing a performance that is markedly different from his past roles. Audiences are eager to see him in this new avatar, and his portrayal is already being hailed as a departure from his previous work.

Also starring Kajol in a key role, Do Patti is set to premiere on an OTT platform on October 25, 2024 and promises to be a thrilling rollercoaster of emotions.

and the director was running

through the scenes for the day.

It felt like a circus in my vani-

ty van during that first hour and

I was honestly overwhelmed." As he flipped through the script, Rathee discovered more

reasons for concern. "The first

scene scheduled was my char-

acter's final scene in the series,

which meant I had to think

about the entire emotional arc

of my character before I'd even fully grasped him. The second

scene was my character's very

first one, which is a critical

moment as it sets the tone for

the audience's impression. And

to top it all off, the only kiss in

the show was also scheduled

for my first day! I hadn't even

met Adah yet, and suddenly we

were supposed to film this

intimate moment."

Despite the jet lag and the pressure, Rathee managed to navigate the chaos like a pro. Speaking about his co-star, he said, "When I finally met Adah, she was wonderful—very professional and full of charm. I've done a number of intimate scenes in my career and I've learned that trust and creative comfort with your co-star are crucial. Fortunately, Adah and I found that naturally. Any initial awkwardness vanished as we discussed the significance of the kiss—why our characters are kissing, what it meant for their relationship and how best to portray the moment. It became a sweet, effortless scene." Reflecting on the experience, Rathee added, "I later

found out that Adah was just as nervous as I was. She admitted she was so preoccupied with the idea that we'd be kissing soon that she didn't really have time to form an impression of me initially. We actors lead unconventional lives, and I feel fortunate to have worked with such great co-actresses along the way."

Reeta Sanyal, a gripping

thriller series, is set to premiere on Disney+ Hotstar on October 14. Directed by Abhirup Ghosh and produced by Rajeshwar Nair, the series stars Adah Sharma, Ankur Rathee, Rahul Dev and Manik Papneia. Adapted from a character created by novelist Amit Khan, it combines fantasy and emotional depth.

edge of their seats.

Sanon, who takes on the challenge of



hair was being cut, the stylists were adjusting my wardrobe, a tailor was taking measurements a bit too close for comfort, and an AD was snapping photos of my new look. Meanwhile, the producer was explaining his vision for the character,

CALVIN AND HOBBES



PAINSTAKINGLY BRUSHED AND SCRAPED SO NOTHING IS BROKEN OR MISSED.

SPEED BUMP

EACH ROCK HAS TO BE



CROSSWORD



GARFIELD

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IT SOUNDS LIKE /

OUR PIANO IS SELF-PESTRUCTING



PEOPLE ONLY HEAR A TINY FRACTION OF WHAT YOU TELL THEM

WELL, DO YOU? HUH? OKAY, I'LL BITE. WHAT'S HUH? FUN?







REALITY CHECK





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GINGER MEGGS







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Vilayawada

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Tuesday October 15, 2024

TASTING LIGHT, SHOOTING FLAVOURS:

RANVEER BRAR'S JOURNEY BEYOND KIT

TEJAL SINHA

anveer Brar's passion for food has driven him to almost every nook and cranny of the world. A journey into culinary that started off as the youngest executive chef at a five-star hotel, today he is not only one of the most celebrated chefs we

have but also has his own cooking shows.
Well, well, well! It's just not the cooking shows. He's been the judge of MasterChef India; he owns several restaurants and is also an avid traveller

India; he owns several restaurants and is also an avid traveller.

But there's another avocation that he enjoys a lot: it's photography! "If there's one thing I am as passionate about as much as cooking, it's photography," begins chef Brar with great excitement. In fact, if he hadn't become a chef, packing his camera gear and travelling the world was definitely what he was keen to take upon. For any artist, their art is their medium of expression and it's no differthrough the food I cook. And my love for photography is an extension of that expression. It's the creative lens to view my creation."

Simply put, "It perfectly matches my culismply put, "It perfectly matches my culismply put, "It perfectly matches my culismply put, "It perfectly matches my culismportant is the presentation, which serves it to tell a story of how the chef wants their to tell a story of how the chef wants their patrons to view their food and inspire conpatrons to v

technique in cooking, I approach photography technique in cooking, I approach photography with the same attention to detail—focusing on light, angles and timing to bring out the essence of a dish. There's something magical about freezing a moment that reflects the soul of a dish, and it's incredibly rewarding to see how both mediums—culinary and visual—can both mediums—culinary and visual—can inspire and connect with people. For each recipe

or dish I create, I make it a point to capture its or dish i create, i make it a point to capture its essence in a photograph, and when I visit various locations and try their local cuisines, I make

or dish I create, I make essence in a photograph, and when I visit visit essence in a photograph, and when I visit visit as point to take a picture; it takes me back to it a point to take a picture; it takes me back to it a point to take a picture; it takes me back to it a point to take a picture; it takes me back to the experience of trying out something new."

Wondered what really goes on while film-wing a particular recipe or an episode of his ing a particular recipe or an episode of his ing a particular recipe or an episode. My behind-the-counter instruction videos. My behind-the-counter instruction videos. My behind-the-counter instruction videos. My idea was to help people connect to what drividea was to help people connect to "I love travelling, especially when it involves discovering known and unknown stories about food," enthuses chef Brar with great exhilaration since Dum Laga ke India has been an intertion since *Dum Laga ke India* has been an interesting journey, for him connecting with people and the food they love, cook, or eat. Needless to say, there were a lot of behind-the-scenes moments and memories to capture.

Well, something that comes naturally to him and acting in front of the camera is a whole new world. "Acting in front of a camera made me feel like I'm back to school; it

whole new world. Acting in front of a camera made me feel like I'm back to school; it was a delightful learning experience," he shares. "I've learned so much about how to convey emotions on camera It's faccinating shares. "I've learned so much about how to convey emotions on camera. It's fascinating. I definitely love being behind the camera, but I also enjoy being in front of it, talking about my recipes, cooking and now acting as well." Talking of his acting front, how could we just miss out on his latest performance in The Buckingham Murders, helmed by Hansal Mehta and starring Kareena Kapoor.

The Modern Love Mumbai fame had no less than an incredible experience on the sets. Oh,

than an incredible experience on the sets. Oh, and of course the positive feedback!

"Kareena Kapoor has been a delight to work with," expresses The Great Indian Rasoi host, with a lightly and lightly account.

with, expresses the Great main rasor nost, who initially was slightly nervous. However, he recalls, "She made me feel comfortable on the recalls, "She made me reel comfortable of the first day itself and all my anxiety vanished instantly. Each and every scene we've worked on together has been memorable, the interrogether access were particularly difficult yet fun on together has been memorable, the interrogation scenes were particularly difficult yet fun to work on because they taught me a lot."

In fact, he further reveals, "We ended up

doing 15 takes for the slap scene because we wanted it to feel just right. It wasn't about getting it perfect technically, but making sure the moment had the right emotion and impact. Sometimes, you have to keep going until it

truly feels authentic."
On the sets of *The Buckingham Murders*, his bond with Hansal Mehta began over their shared passion for cooking. Interestingly, it was a Nihari recipe that initially caught his attention.
"He discovered that I was searching for the recipe online and jokingly said that's what sealed the deal for him to cast me. Our inside joke is

the deal for him to cast me. Our inside joke is the deal for nim to cast me. Our inside joke is that my love for food was the real reason he chose me for the role. In reality, our shared enthusiasm for cuisine helped him understand me better as an actor and it fostered a deeper

enthusiasm for cuisine helped him understand me better as an actor and it fostered a deeper connection between us on set."

Food with a pinch of photography and acting—all three make him a better Ranveer Braine being an extension of culture, the sine being an extension of culture, the MasterChef India judge says, "Photography allows me to capture the cultural essence embedded in every dish. Through my lens, I aim to convey the story behind each recipe, highlighting the traditions, ingredients and people to convey the story benind each recipe, men-lighting the traditions, ingredients and people that make it special. By freezing these moments, I can share the rich cultural context of cuisine With others, making it more relatable and personal. Photography bridges the gap between flavors and emotions, enabling me to showcase the vors and emotions, enabling me to showcase the

with others, make sonal. Photography bridges the gap between sonal. Photography bridges the gap between the vors and emotions, enabling me to showcase the vors and emotions, enabling me to showcase the soul of a dish and its cultural significance."

Food and photography, for him, are two sides of the same coin, with both requiring statention to detail and a passion for story-attention to detail and a passion for story-attention are strived and a passion for story-attention are strived to create dishes that are visually captivating and photographs that capture ally captivating and photographs that capture the essence of my culinary creations. Every the essence of and photographs that capture is the overall angle of the shot, contributes to the overall ang captured on camera somewhere, and so for me, it is the visual memory of the dish that eventually translates into a recipe. That is why evenually translates into a recipe. I hat is why visual memory brings out feelings and emotions," signs off our special interviewee, as this brings us to the end of this flavourful chat.



FROM TAEKWONDO TO TIARA

SHIKHA DUGGAL

shikhaduggalwork@gmail.com

hemonyl Wankhadia, a youthful, vivacious and multidimensional individual from the big city of dreams, is an avid fan of beauty pageants and was just named Miss India International in Bangkok. Wankhadia opens up to us in an exclusive chat about her sincere dream and other things! "Winning the prestigious title of Miss Global International seems like a dream come true. I've been working hard on it since last year and I'm really appreciative that it worked out better than I had anticipated. My dreams and confidence have grown even more as a 🕡 result of this international victory, which has profoundly changed my outlook and given me a sense of empowerment. I benefited much from the emotional support I got from my friends and family, as well as from interacting with other pageant contestants. I feel proud of myself for serving my nation and all the training I've had has helped me

realise a lot about myself," she informs me. Shemonyl is putting in a lot of work in preparation for her sincere goal of representing India on the international Miss Universe stage. To name a few of her pageantry accomplishments, she placed first runner-up in the competition for Miss Global World India 2024: "Patience, resilience and discipline are qualities that are highly valued in pageantry. As an experienced Taekwondo player and teacher, my participation in athletics has greatly aided in my acquisition of

these qualities.

I developed a

With beauty, brains and a flerce spirit, Shemonyl Wankhadia is the ultimate pageant powerhouse. As she prepares to represent India on the world stage, she opens up about her experiences, motivations and mission to redefine heauty standards

from my experience as a Taekwondo coach. It not only increased my physical strength but also taught me how to focus my energy in the appropriate places to push over discomfort barriers."

Regarding her educational background, she holds a degree in International Economics and has two years of experience as a qualified national referee and pet groomer. She is also a national Taekwondo athlete! Oh, Shemonyl has four years of experience as a Taekwondo coach. "My parents have instilled in me the value of academics from an early age and as a pageant winner, I hope to share this knowledge with other young people who may be considering a career in fashion. I think it's critical for individuals to pursue

> of their careers. It has aided me in becoming more extroverted and confident in myself in addition to helping me acquire new abilities and cultivate a varied personality."

interests outside

It does require tremendous mental fortitude and the skill of flexibility to win several titles across different pageants. Speaking from personal experience, "My pageant jour-ney has been filled with a myriad of both minor and large disappointments. For example, I completed my pageant attire, but it didn't appear like But I solved the as a beauty queen."

strong mindset and learned mental discipline wardrobe conundrum by remaining cool, collected and prompt in my team coordination. I'm really passionate about raising awareness of beauty inclusivity and diversity as well as beauty that transcends the shallow standards that the media sets, promoting a variety of ways that beauty is portrayed globally."

In her spare time, Shemonyl enjoys baking, swimming, riding bikes and practicing martial arts. Her strongest suit is her adaptability and fortitude! "In order to empower future pageant hopefuls and models to claim their space and redefine beauty according to their own standards, I intend to start my own pageant academy. I can stay grounded and focused, learn to slow down and make connections with like-minded people because it helps me develop a sense of resilience and humility and lets me express myself in different ways. I therefore take my exercise seriously, stay to a routine and follow it. Before deciding to enter the beauty pageant business, you must undergo extensive and rigorous train-

ing in both the physical and mental domains." For both pageants, the same amount of preparation is needed, but when competing on a worldwide scale, there are higher standards. Participating in an international pageant draws more spectators and increases the amount of unspoken pressure. Additionally, participants must master the dress code and adhere to particular etiquette when representing their country abroad. "One misconception I would like to debunk is that pageant contestants are entitled or superficial; it is actually untrue, as they are very rooted and grounded," she says in her concluding remarks. "Since they are aware of how critical it is to preserve interpersonal ties and place a high value on inner beauty and fitness. Simply believing in your wildest aspirations may seem impossible, but it is possible if you have a well-thoughtwhat I had envisioned it out plan and pursue your true vision. I want would shortly before the to be remembered as a gregarious person who upcoming final round. dared to venture beyond her comfort zone and

Coming arms race in content authenticity

of AI writers

You look at any scenario, a content creator is platforms, the whole world of content creation has under immense pressure for generating new, genuine and unique ideas for their content. And in the present market with cut-throat competition, it becomes difficult to do so. The reason being, there are an infinite number of content creators probably working creative. There are certain debates regarding on similar projects, using similar resources. This limits the number of end results. To overcome such situations and reduce the occurrence of similar content the Al writers have been designed.

How many times has it happened that you thought about writing an article on a topic, but there is a similar article already existing on the web. Although you might have some different take on it, there might be a chance of generating plagiarised content(unintentional plagiarism)

This situation would be demotivating for any content creator! But with the help of such Al writing tools, you don't have to worry about that. These tools are designed in such a way that they can generate unique ideas and genuine content without causing any plagiarism. This helps the

content creators to generate content in a short span of time, brings fresh ideas. and enables the writers to

become more efficient

of AI detectors

There are always two sides to a coin and so are with these advanced technologies. On the one hand we have the AI writers and on the second we have AI detectors. Both the platforms commit to work in favor of content creators and ensuring authentic, genuine and unique content creation.

Al detectors were designed to detect any piece of content generated using an Al tool. These are to ensure that the content that is being published online and is available for the readers online is 100% human generated, authentic and unique in its nature. The biggest application of these tools is in the academics where these Al detector tools help detect any form of Al writers in assignments submitted by students and detect any plagiarism. This encourages the students to generate better and uniquecontent without the help of an Al tool.

lilemma

If you are a content creator or

are associated with any content people who believe that with the use of Al creators, you can clearly understand the ethical and moral dilemma with the application of both the tools. Since both platforms are working to ensure authenticity and uniqueness of the content. There are certain points in both the platforms that work in the favor of content creators and both the debates sound just about right. As a content creator it becomes a moral obligation at times to stick to the traditional method of content creation and ensure the authenticity of the content.

However, in today's time, the fast-paced world doesn't give you enough time to produce quality content with the traditional method. Hence, content creators slightly bend towards the use of Al writers for quick results. Additionally, the content generated using these platforms doesn't always end up being the same for two different users with the same requirements as well. The reason being, one writer might require the content to sound a bit formal and have a firm tone, so with these tools, you can generate the exact content with this specification. And the other writer might require the content to sound casual but informative, so again the response is changed. This enables you to use the Al writer platform as per your preference and generate

content as per your preference. Yet again, the guarantee of authenticity is not there with these tools. Hence, we do need Al detectors at some point to detect any plagiarized content and ensure that the generated content is unique in its

same guery. Hence, to avoid this from happening the implementation of an Al detector tool is

Also, with Al detector tools you can also detect any

required.

intentional or unintentional plagiarism and save

vourself from getting into any trouble for copying

content. Additionally, there is also a group of

writers, the internet will again end up

having the same content. Since they

believe that the tool will generate

the same response for the

ith the rise of advanced tools and

changed. These tools have allowed content

the use and misuse of AI writing tools and

the endless debate on the authenticity of

Moreover, to regulate the use of these Al

writers, certain Al detector tools have

been developed. Although if you look

at a broader picture, the combination of

these two tools have given the world of

content creation a new vision, has

enabled them to offer genuine.

and creative pieces of

content as per the

requirement

audience.

Bottom

of the

empowered the content creators and

the content created by these tools.

creators to become more sufficient, and

technologies like AI (artificial

intelligence) and Al-driven

For any content creator it is essential to be true to their work. But in this fast-paced world, we often need quick results, and for that we are required to strike the perfect balance of both the tools. Leveraging Al writers to generate a unique piece of content with required specifications for audience and using AI detectors to ensure the authenticity of the content and reduce any chances of publishing plagiariesed

(The author, Ravi Kumar is the Founder & CEO of MadHawks.)

IT MAY HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT IF WE TOOK CHANCES: MUZUMDAR

India disheartened head coach Amol Muzumdar rued the missed opportunities that could have altered the game's outcome after his team's hopes of reaching the women's T20 World Cup semifinals were dashed by a loss to Australia.

In a bid to control their own destiny, the Indian team delivered a lackluster performance on the field, ultimately resulting in a ninerun loss to defending champions Australia in their

must-win game on Sunday.
"I think we were right in the game, right till the last over. Just that experience of Australia, saw them through," Muzumdar said at the post match press conference.

"Just a little disappointing with the loss. And I feel we've fielded pretty well. But yeah, a couple of chances could have been, we could have taken those chances and then the things could have been different.

"Maybe 10-15 runs less, even the last over. But at the same time, I would like to say that we put in our best effort



forward in this game," he India dropped as many as three catches, while also missing a stumping opportunity. To add to their woes, a close lbw call also went against them.

In the 17th over of the In the 17th over of the Australian innings, Phoebe Litchfield, batting on 5, had attempted a reverse sweep with the on-field umpire giving her leg-before-wicket after she missed the shot. However, a decision to review

handed her a reprieve because the ball pitched outside leg stump. India players, including vice-captain Smriti Mandhana, protested, claiming the ball pitching outside the leg-stump line should be deemed inconsequential given the batter had switched stances. Litchfield went on to add 10 more crucial runs, helping Australia post the highest team total at Sharjah in the

ongoing tournament.
"What I gathered from that
non-dismissal is that she
didn't move before the ball was released. So, the leg mark, what was there, it stood as it is. That was my only understanding about it.

was up to the umpires to decide or the third umpire. So yeah, it was a crucial one." Australia posted a total of 151/8. In response, India fell short, finishing at 142/9 despite skipper Harmanpreet Kaur's unbeaten 54.
With senior players

With senior players Harmanpreet and Deepti Sharma in the middle, India needed 85 off 10 overs.

Asked what message was being sent to the duo in the middle at the time, Muzumdar said: "First and foremost, it was about the run chase. Second was keeping the net run rate also in account. But the only message was if we take it a little deeper, then we do have a good chance to chase these runs down. "I think Harman's presence was very important till the end. That is what I felt in her run chase. We almost got it through."

India's chances of making the semifinal now hinge on Pakistan beating New Zealand on Monday.

"Well, I just want to wish Pakistan all the best. That's all I can say. But we will be watching the game very closely, that's for sure."

Ben Stokes returns for second Test against Pakistan

PTI MULTAN

aptain Ben Stokes made a return to the England Test team as he was on Monday named in the playing eleven for the second match against Pakistan beginning here Tuesday, after he was declared to have been recovered from an injury he sustained in August.

Stokes, who has been out of action due to a hamstring problem, is one of the two changes in the England side that beat Pakistan in the first Test by an innings and 47 runs.

Fast bowler Matthew Potts was included in place of Gus Atkinson.

Stokes has replaced pacer Chris Woakes while England have retained both spinners Shoaib Bashir and Jack Leach in their eleven.

According to the visiting team management, Stokes has bowled and batted

without any discomfort in the nets in the last few days and was cleared by medical experts to make his comeback.

The 33-year-old all-rounder last played in the Hundred where he sustained his injury in August forcing him to miss the entire three-match series against Sri Lanka at home.

He also missed the first Test against Pakistan here. Pakistan is yet to announce

its playing eleven although the selectors on Sunday dropped Babar Azam, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Naseem Shah for the remaining two Tests and also released Sarfaraz Ahmed from the squad.

England Playing XI:
Ben Stokes (capt), Zak
Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ollie Pope, Joe Root, Harry Brook, Jamie Smith (wk), Brydon Carse, Matthew Potts, Jack Leach, Shoaib Bashir.



Cummins to lead Australia in Pakistan ODIs, McGuirk retained

AP ■ SYDNEY

Pat Cummins will captain Australia's one-day squad for the first time since lifting the Cricket World Cup in November in its three-match series against Pakistan at home next month.

Cummins was named Monday in the 14-man Australia squad for the matches at Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth along with Iosh Hazlewood and Mitchell Starc, the other members regular

Australia's test pace lineup.
Jake Fraser-McGuirk has been given another chance after struggling in Australia's Twenty20 series against Scotland in September, in which he made 16 runs in three innings with two ducks. While he made a 30-ball 50 against England, he wasn't selected for the subsequent five-match ODI series.

Fraser-McGuirk will likely open the batting with Matt Short in the absence of Travis Head and Mitch Marsh who are on paternity leave. The squad also includes batters Steve Smith and Marnus Labushagne and white ball regulars Glenn Maxwell, Josh Inglis and Adam Zampa. Cooper Connolly also has been retained after making

who scored 67 runs in two innings while batting No. 8 and took four wickets in the England series has kept his place while Marcus Stoinis returns after being left out of the England one-dayers. Seamer Sean Abbott also has

held his spot with several bowlers recovering from injuries suffered in England. Nathan Ellis, Xavier Bartlett, Ben Dwarshuis and Riley Meredith all left that series with injuries while Spencer Johnson was ruled out with a side strain before it began. Meanwhile, test allrounder Cameron Green confirmed

Monday he will undergo surgery on a stress fracture in his back and will be out of action for six months.

series against Pakistan will be named later this month. The Pakistan series which comprises matches at the Melbourne Cricket Ground

his one-day and T20 debuts on Australia's September tour to Britain. Allrounder Aaron Hardie

A squad for the Twenty20

on Nov. 4, the Adelaide Oval on Nov. 8 and Perth Stadium on Nov. 10 is Australia's last one-day series before the ICC Champions Trophy

Pakistan in February.

Kohli hungry for runs, no need to judge after every match: Gambhir



lukewarm form of Virat Kohli, insisting that the star batter remains as hungry as he was when he made his debut and should not be judged after every match. Kohli has made only one

fifty, a 76 against South Africa at Centurion in December 2023, in his last eight innings, and him regaining his touch is crucial for India against New Zealand in a three-Test rubber starting on Wednesday and during the five-match series against Australia next month. Gambhir is confident that Kohli will come good very

soon. "See, my thoughts about Virat have always been very clear that he is a world-class

for such a long period of them. It's a sport and people India head coach Gautam
Gambhir is not too concerned about the recent to such a long period of time. He is as hungry as when he made his debut. To now, his hunger is always think if we can get the results, if people are doing reporters here on Monday.

That hunger is what makes him a world-class cricketer. I am sure that he will be hungry to get runs in this series and probably moving forward to Australia as well," he added.

Gambhir said the prolific

batter, once he gets into "those runs scoring phases", is remarkably consistent. "So, I am sure that he will be looking for these three Test matches in the series and then to Australia."

Gambhir reiterated his opinion that a player should not to be judged on the basis of a one bad match or a series.

"You don't keep judging people after every game. If you keep judging people after every game, that's not fair on cricketer. He has performed

what is needed of them to get the results in our favour, that is fine," he noted.

The former opener said his job is to back the players and keep them hungry for success, particularly during a long season where India is scheduled to play eight more Test matches.

"Everyone doesn't have the best days everyday. I think the kind of vibe we have is we keep backing our players. My job is to keep backing the players. My job is to keep selecting the best playing 11, not dropping anyone.

"I'm sure everyone is hungry and they know there are eight Test matches in a row. So, this is probably the start of them looking at eight Test matches in a row and performing well," said Gambhir.



Green ruled out of India Test series, to undergo back surgery

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australia all-rounder Cameron Green was on Monday ruled out of the marquee Border-Gavaskar Trophy Test series against India owing to a stress fracture in his spine that will need six months to heal after

The 25-year-old seam-bowling all-rounder was diagnosed with the problem in his lower back after experiencing pain during last month's tour of the UK. Green has previously suffered four stress fractures in his back but has not encountered any issues in that area since

"Whilst spine stress fractures are not unusual in pace bowlers, Cam has a unique defect in an adjacent area to the fracture that is believed to be contributing to the injury," a CA statement said on Monday.

A six-month recovery time will mean Green misses not just the Border Gavaskar Trophy, but also February's Test tour of Sri Lanka and the Champions Trophy.

participation in the IPL is also in doubt.

Green has decided to opt for a similar type of surgery undergone by several pacers including Jasprit Bumrah, James Pattinson, Jason Behrendorff, and Ben Dwarshuis.

was determined Cameron would benefit from the surgery to stabilise the defect and reduce the risk of future recurrence," CA said. The alternative to surgery

would have involved rehabilitation and restricting his bowling during the fivematch series against India, starting November 22 in Perth.

"The surgery has been performed successfully with elite pace bowlers in the past. Recovery time is anticipated to be around six-months.

"The decision to proceed to surgery is with Cameron's long-term future as an all-rounder in mind," the statement added.

The operation will be performed by New Zealand surgeons Grahame Inglis and Rowan Schouten, which

involves screws and titanium wire to bind vertebrae together, according to 'cricket.Com.Au.'

His absence would mean Australia will have to rejig their batting order. Green had returned to the

Test side following veteran "After thorough consultation opener David Warner's retirement earlier this year with Steve Smith being pushed to open the innings. However, the veteran struggled at the top of the order and will drop back to his preferred number four position, which has been left vacant by Green.

The selectors will now keep an eye on Australia's A series against India where the likes of Cameron Bancroft, and teen prodigy Sam Konstas will vie for the now vacant opening spot.

Additionally, Australia will also have to find someone to bowl Green's overs.

Mitchell Marsh did not bowl in Western Australia's Sheffield Shield match against Queensland and hardly rolled his arm while captaining the white-ball teams over the

Battling accomplished Ashwin, Jadeja crucial for New Zealand: Rachin Ravindra

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Top-order batter Rachin Ravindra said on Monday that nullifying the twin threat posed by senior spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja will be crucial to New Zealand's success in the three-match series against India.

Ashwin and Jadeja together have grabbed over 800 Test wickets, and are among the most experienced bowling pairs in world cricket at

present.
"They've got consistent bowlers who bowl in an area for a long period of time. I mean, you see the two spinners who play consistently, Ashwin and Jadeja, they're two very accomplished bowlers. You know, they can bat too, which makes it a little bit Ravindra told reporters here on Monday.
"They're consistent, they're good to battle, especially in

this part of the world.

conditions, the quality of their bowlers and batters. It shows how hard it is for a team to come and win here. So, it's difficult," he added. Ravindra banked on his previous experience of playing cricket in India to come good in the upcoming Test rubber. The Kiwi played in this part

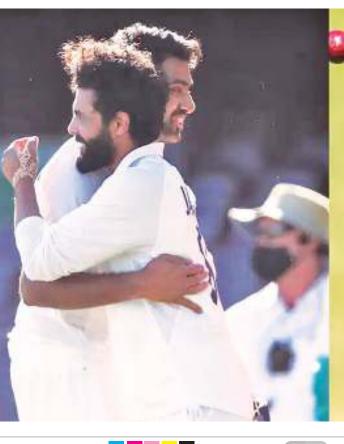
of the world during last year's ODI World Cup before appearing for Chennai Super Kings in the IPL 2024.

"Although it is different formats, it gives you confidence that you can perform in this part of the world. I think it's (Test cricket) a different challenge entirely and it's something I'm really looking forward

"As you've seen, those two tournaments (ODI WC and IPL) were amazing, the crowds and the passion and the hype and the buzz around them. So, I'm excited to have a full-fledged series here," he noted.

Obviously, we know how good India are in their own

From a team perspective, the 24-year-old said the tourists





will have to keep focus on those experiences against their game plans rather than about India's worrying

approach.
"The brand of cricket they play is very positive, especially in their own conditions. The way they've evolved over the last few years has been amazing, especially away (from

home). "As New Zealanders, we don't necessarily try and look at the opposition too much. We know what a quality side they are and what they bring to the table, but I think if we're able to play our game and be consistent and put our best foot forward, hopefully, that will result in a win," he

added. New Zealand's preparation for the series against India has been far from ideal as they lost 0-2 against Sri Lanka recently, while their one-off Test match against Afghanistan was a washout at Noida.

However, Ravindra was confident that the team can lean upon the learnings from

India.

"We did some really good stuff during the Sri Lankan series, obviously, came on the wrong side of the win and loss column. But I think as a group there were times where we really pushed and that first Test was close," he said.

In the first Test against the Islanders at Galle, the lefthander made a fine 92 but the Kiwis lost the match by 63 runs while chasing 275. Ravindra wanted his side not to repeat the mistake of faltering at the crunch

moments. "I think we've got to understand that we've got to do it (fighting) for long periods of time because that's what Test match cricket is about. Obviously, Sri Lanka and India are different places, but similar in terms of the amount of

spin you might play. 'So, we have learnt a lot. So, it's about, you know, seeing how we can play our game and how we can bring that here to India," he added.

tollywood

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RIYA SUMAN

NAVIGATING CHAOS, CINEMA AND CONFIDENT NEW ROLES

AARTI SREENATH aarti.sreenath9@gmail.com

n a world where the silver screen often reflects the chaos and charm of life, Riya Suman is a breath of fresh air, dancing effortlessly between the vibrant realms of Telugu and Tamil cinema. Bursting onto the scene with her debut in Majnu, she quickly turned heads and won hearts, proving that she's more than just another proving that she's more than just another pretty face. With an infectious energy that lights up every frame and a fearless approach to her craft, Riya is not just acting, igniting a sensation. Whether she's tackling serious social issues in *Men Too* or unleashing her inner action heroine in the upcoming thriller *Hitler*, this Bombay-born dynamo embraces every challenge with a wink and a smile.

Navigating the dual worlds of Tamil and Telugu cinema is no easy feat, but for actress Riya Suman, it's been a "hell of a roller coaster." Born and raised in Bombay,

roller coaster." Born and raised in Bombay, she found herself learning new languages, shuttling between cities and adjusting to the complexities of two distinct industries. the complexities of two distinct industries. But while the journey has been chaotic, it's also been rewarding. "It's super chaotic and challenging but at the same time quite a humbling and rewarding experience," she reflects. She candidly shares that her growth has been immense, not just as an actor but as an individual. "I've evolved so much as a person, learned so much about myself, people, and life in general. It's almost like an innocent girl to an assured confident woman transformation. I'm already in love with the woman I'm

Riya made her debut with the Telugu film *Majnu*, which was a commercial success, and continued her journey through Tamil cinema, embracing roles both large and small. When it comes to screen time, she holds a pragmatic view. "Screen time is definitely not something I stress about because in the end, the pace and essence of the film is what matters," she says. Her role in *Men Too*, a film dealing with sensitive themes, allowed her to explore complex dynamics, but she approaches each project without personal judgment. "As an actor, you are never supposed to judge your characters," she states, reinforcing her belief in cinema as a director's medium.

Her latest venture, the political thriller Hitler, offered Riya the chance to explore a challenging character in Sara, a confident yet emotionally complex woman who suffers from fits due to past trauma. "The part to act getting fits suddenly was the most challenging physical aspect of this character," she reveals. Working alongside seasoned actors like Gautham Menon, she found herself in awe of his professionalism, noting that "no matter who, an actor must always go with a clean slate and submit to the narrative of the director."

The *Hitler* star is not content to be pigeonholed into any one type of role. Whether light-hearted romantic characters or intense dramatic ones, she finds herself at home in front of the camera, eager to embrace all genres. "To be honest, you put me in front of the camera, and I already feel I'm home," she shares, with a particular eagerness to explore horror comedies or period dramas like Ponniyin Selvan.

With the rise of OTT platforms and the

global reach of cinema, she believes that experimental roles are finally gaining the recognition they deserve. "Interesting roles were always being offered, like Mani Ratnam has been doing it forever," she says, acknowledging the evolving landscape for female actors in regional cinema. However, she remains grounded, under-However, she remains grounded, understanding that her role in a film is to serve the director's vision: "Once I'm on board for the film, I completely submit to the vision of the director."

As someone who has portrayed every-thing from innocent to morally complex characters, she emphasises that it's a team effort to ensure her roles remain fresh and distinct. "When a director signs me up, they themselves make sure that my look and nuances shouldn't be similar to my previous work," she explains.

previous work," she explains.

Despite her rising profile, she hasn't burdened herself with the expectations of being a role model just yet. However, she is committed to helping others navigate the industry. "The responsibility I do take is to guide well with my own experiences, help with any contacts if needed, and share my thoughts and knowledge trans-

parently," she says.

Looking ahead, she remains open to exploring new creative realms, whether it's experimental cinema or venturing into international projects. But beyond acting, she keeps herself busy by managing her family's real estate business, travelling and enjoying her leisure time. "Experimental roles, international cinema, or cinema in any language basically anything to do with acting, she says of her future aspirations official tions, offering a glimpse of her passion and zeal for the craft.





Chiranjeevi launches Abhishek Nama's new film Nagabandham

Nandamuri Kalyan Ram and Samyuktha, is now directing his second film titled Nagabandham. The previous film, a period drama, was released last December. The new film was launched on Monday at a private studio in Hyderabad, with Megastar Chiranjeevi attending as the special guest. The tagline for *Nagabandham* is 'The Secret Treasure'.

Interestingly, Abhishek Nama is also providing the story and screenplay for this upcom-

Producer Abhishek Nama, who turned ing film, which is produced by Kishore director with the film *Devil*, starring Annapureddy. Virat Karrna, who made his acting debut in *Peddha Kapu*, will play the lead role in Nagabandham, alongside Nabha Natesh and Iswarya Menon as the female leads. Notable actors Jagapathi Babu, Jayaprakash and Murali Sharma will also feature in key roles.

The story revolves around the ancient concept of Nagabandham, linked to the protection of 108 Vishnu temples across India. With a backdrop of hidden treasures, such as those at the Padmanabhaswamy Temple

Thiruvananthapuram and the Ratna Bhandar at the Puri Jagannath Temple, *Nagabandham* delves into a powerful narrative filled with spiritual and adventurous elements, according to the makers. The film is set to release in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam in 2025, with regular shooting scheduled to begin on October 23.

Several industry figures, including BRS MLA Talasani Srinivas Yadav, director Ajay Bhupathi and producer and distributor Asian Suniel, attended the launch to wish Abhishek Nama and the team success.

Kiran Abbavaram's KA joins Diwali race

ctor Kiran Abbavaram is entering the Diwali race with his film s, set to release on October 31. The release date was officially announced by the makers on Monday during a media conference. This film holds special significance for Kiran Abbavaram, as it marks his first release in multiple languages. Directed by the duo Sujith and Sandeep, the film is produced by Chinta Gopalakrishna Reddy.

The story is a period drama with hints of supernatural elements, as teased in the promotional videos. Kiran Abbavaram plays the role of Vasu, a postman.

The plot revolves around mysterious incidents in a village and Vasu's connection to them. Kiran Abbayaram has high hopes for the film and has spoken positively about its potential. Tanvi Ram stars as the female lead

"The film's theatrical rights were bought by Vamsi Nandipati for a high price. Another factor is that the festival holidays will definitely benefit our film. The story's 1970s backdrop is sure to captivate family audiences, so we decided to release the film for Diwali, despite the competition," said Kiran Abbayaram.



Srinu Vaitla collaboration, Viswam, was released on October 11, coinciding with the Dasara festival. However, critics were unimpressed, with many noting that Srinu Vaitla stuck to his usual formulaic approach. This film is particularly crucial for Srinu Vaitla, actor Gopichand, and lead actress Kavya Thapar, all of whom have faced a string of flops in recent

Recently, the makers released a

recovered its budget within two days and entered the profit zone by day three. Yet, many viewers and industry insiders find this hard to believe. According to reports, Viswam was made on a budget of approximately Rs 44 crore, including the remuneration for Gopichand and Srinu Vaitla. Initially, production began under Chitralaya, but due to financial constraints, Peoples Media Factory took over the project. Sources suggest that the theatrical rights for the Telugu States were sold for just Rs 10 crore, a notably low amount for a Srinu Vaitla film in recent years. After its release, many dismissed the film, with social media criticism focusing on

the outdated storytelling. Despite this, the filmmakers seem determined to position *Viswam* as a success, likely due to the challenging phase faced by key members of the team. So, is Viswam truly a hit, or just marketing spin?

Ghatikachalam: A true incident-based horror tale set to thrill

The small film *Ghatikachalam* has sparked interest following the release of its teaser on Monday. Directed by Amar Kamepalli and produced by MC Raju, the film is now being released worldwide by producer SKN and director Maruthi. After watching the film, both decided to back the project,

aiming to support smaller films.

The teaser reveals a horror storyline with a split personality backdrop. Intriguingly, the film is based on a true incident. Director Amar Kamepalli shared that his friend Raju, who resides in the US, sent him a video depicting eerie incidents that occurred in a house belonging to someone Raju knew. This intrigued Amar, who then wrote a story inspired by the event. Raju decided to produce the film. The plot centers around a 19-year-old medical student, with Nikhil Devadula, a former child actor with credits in nearly 70 films, making his debut as a lead actor.

Director Amar revealed that he showed the trailer to Maruthi, who offered valu-



able suggestions for improvements. "I incorporated the changes Maruthi recommended and after seeing the final cut, he decided to release the film," said Amar. He expressed gratitude to Maruthi and SKN for their support in giving the film a wide release. Producer SKN emphasised the importance of supporting small films in the industry. "Many successful actors began with small films, which are essential for keeping theaters running. However, these films often lack the promotion they deserve. After watching Ghatikachalam, I was impressed and decided to release it," said SKN. He praised Nikhil's performance and advised him not to limit himself to lead roles but to explore various character roles.

Nikhil Devadula, who has been acting as a child artist for 15 years, expressed his excitement for the project. "With the experience I gained and the support from the technicians, I gave my best in Ghatikachalam. I hope it will be a great success," he said.