



# sunday pioneer

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

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

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Oil se

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**

**The pioneer**

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

**- Revanth Reddy, CM Telangana**

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## DON'T MISS...

### Book ration dealers if found...

NTR District In-charge Collector, Dr Nidhi Meena, has instructed officials to take strict action against ration dealers who divert essential goods. She directed them to register cases under Section 6A of the Essential Commodities Act if any irregularities are found. Dr Meena gave these instructions during a meeting with officials from the Revenue and Civil Supplies Department. So far, 54 cases have been registered against ration dealers under Section 6A in the NTR district. Dr Nidhi Meena, made it clear that...

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### Manohar lays stone for works...

Minister for Civil Supplies Nadendla Manohar laid the foundation stone for the Rs 1.30 crore worth of development works at Kollipara village in Tenali on Saturday. The development works will be taken up with the MGNREGA funds. Speaking on the occasion, Nadendla Manohar said that the coalition government in Andhra Pradesh has launched massive development programmes across the State and improved the basic amenities in the rural areas. In order to create infrastructure in rural areas and augment civic amenities...

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### 'Breast cancer rising among young...

Breast cancer, a disease long associated with older age groups, has surged enormously in women aged below 50 in the last three decades, according to experts. Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer affecting women worldwide, as well as in India. The recent data from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) showed that breast cancer accounted for 28.2 per cent of cancers in women. Celebrities like Sonali Bendre, Tahira Kashyap, and Mahima Chaudhry who battled breast cancer under...

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### Govt eyes record rabi output...

The Centre on Saturday said it was confident of achieving record foodgrain production in the 2024-25 rabi season despite fertiliser shipment delays, citing favourable soil moisture conditions and adequate water levels in reservoirs. Speaking at a national conference here, Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said there was sufficient availability of key fertilisers such as urea and diammonium phosphate (DAP) despite delay in shipments due to geopolitical tensions. "The shipments are delayed... However, there is no shortage of fertilisers. We have made arrangements and there is enough supply for the rabi season," Chouhan said. The ministry has set a foodgrain production target of 164.55 lakh tonne for the...

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# AMARAVATI BACK TO LIFE

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu resumed the development works for the capital city of Amaravati on Saturday, promising to bring the city back to life. He announced that Visakhapatnam will be developed as the financial capital, while a High Court bench and new industries will be established in Kurnool. The CM emphasised, "We will rebuild Amaravati as a self-financing project. However, certain vested interests, particularly those in power earlier, spread false propaganda that it would require lakhs of crores to develop the city."

The Chief Minister reiterated that his government's Vision-2047 is solely aimed at the state's development. He noted that in response to his call, 29,881 farmers voluntarily contributed 34,241 acres of land for the Amaravati project, and credited the TDP with this achievement.

Chandrababu further remarked, "A sacred and powerful force has protected this land, where even the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone. After the bifurcation, the residuary Andhra Pradesh was left without a capital and faced many challenges, including a 16 per cent budget deficit."

He criticised the previous government for wasting five crucial years, under the pretext of insufficient funds, and reminded everyone that Amaravati had already been declared a self-financing capital. "In Hyderabad, we didn't invest any

## CM Naidu vows to develop Vizag as Financial Capital Kurnool to host a High Court bench and industries



Naidu praises 29,881 farmers for donating 34,241 acres for Amaravati's development.



- He criticises the previous government for halting progress and reaffirms Amaravati's potential to generate jobs and support welfare schemes.
- Institutions like VIT, SRM, and Amrita Universities are already operating in Amaravati, with plans for XLRI and a law school to follow.
- Naidu proposes a bullet train connecting Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Amaravati, with World Bank support for the project.
- The State faces a Rs 7,000 crore burden due to previous mismanagement, while the Centre has committed Rs 15,000 crore for development.
- Naidu highlights the TDP, Jana Sena, and BJP alliance's focus on the state's welfare and urges people to remove corrupt elements.

Residential towers for ministers and officials will soon be completed in Amaravati.

direct funds either. We allocated land and provided water, which led to the city's development. The same principle applies to Amaravati," he said.

The CM declared that Amaravati would be developed without burdening the state exchequer. He described the city as a goldmine for

creating employment and implementing welfare schemes for the poor.

Continued on Page 2

## Heavy inflows into Prakasam Barrage likely



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Due to heavy inflows into the Srisailem and Nagarjuna Sagar Projects on the Krishna River, the Prakasam Barrage in Vijayawada has been receiving large volumes of floodwater.

This rise in water levels is a result of the excess water being released from the upstream reservoirs to manage the inflow and ensure the safety of the dams.

On Saturday, the Prakasam Barrage received approximately 77,500 cusecs of water from the Pulichintala Project. In response,

the Irrigation Circle in Vijayawada discharged around 77,750 cusecs into the sea by lifting all 70 crest gates. Out of these, 40 gates were raised to a height of 2 feet, while the remaining 30 were raised to 1 foot. To maintain the water level at the barrage at 12 feet, authorities also released 6,547 cusecs into the Krishna Eastern and Western Canals.

Simultaneously, the officials at the Srisailem, Nagarjuna Sagar, and Pulichintala Projects opened their gates to release surplus water into the Krishna River.

As a result, the Water Resources Department expects the Prakasam Barrage to receive around 1,20,000 cusecs of water from upstream in the coming days.

In light of the anticipated rise in water levels, the Irrigation Circle officials have issued an alert to the downstream areas, urging residents to remain vigilant.

Continued on Page 2

## Rains forecast

PNS ■ GUNTUR

The trough extending from the centre of the low pressure area over the east-central Arabian Sea to the south Andhra Pradesh coast, passing through south Karnataka and Rayalaseema, has become less marked.

Under its influence, heavy rain is likely to occur at isolated places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh over the next 48 hours, while South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema may experience heavy rain in the next 24 hours.

Continued on Page 2



## Four crest gates of Srisailem Dam lifted

PNS ■ KURNOOL

The Srisailem reservoir is experiencing heavy inflows, prompting authorities to lift four crest gates on Saturday to discharge excess water downstream.

According to project engineers, the Srisailem reservoir is receiving 1.90 lakh cusecs of water due to heavy rains in the catchment areas. As a result, the engineers lifted four crest gates to release over 1.11 lakh cusecs of water downstream to the Nagarjuna Sagar project. The water level at the Srisailem project currently stands at 884.90 feet, just below its full capacity of 885 feet.

At the Nagarjuna Sagar project, twelve crest gates were lifted to a height of five feet to release 97,000 cusecs of water downstream to the Pulichintala project.

Continued on Page 2

## Teenage girl set on fire, her condition critical



PNS ■ KADAPA

In a tragic and disturbing incident, a teenage girl student from Badvel was set on fire by an acquaintance, sustaining 80 per cent burns. The girl is now in critical condition and is being treated at the Government General Hospital (GGH), Kadapa.

According to Superintendent of Police Harshavardhan Raju, the victim is an Intermediate student from Ramanjaneya Nagar in Badvel. The accused, Vignesh, a childhood friend and resident of the same locality, had been harassing the girl in recent months despite being married.

On Saturday morning, Vignesh called the girl, insisting she meet him. He took her in an autorickshaw to a secluded spot near PP Kunta in Gokavaram village, where he lured her behind bushes. There, he doused her with petrol and set her on fire before fleeing the scene.

The girl's screams alerted passers-by, who rushed to help and informed the police. The police rushed to the scene, and the girl was taken to RIMS hospital in Kadapa. Four special teams have been formed to capture Vignesh, who is currently absconding.

Continued on Page 2

## Harassed by stalker, girl ends life

PNS ■ KURNOOL

In a tragic incident, a 16-year-old girl allegedly ended her life after enduring continuous harassment from a stalker. The incident occurred on Saturday at BC Colony in Nagaruru village, Aspari mandal, where the girl, consumed pesticide in her home.

CI Mastanvali informed the media that the girl was a first-year Intermediate student at a private institution. A 17-year-old boy had been harassing her persistently, pressuring her to enter into a romantic relationship with him.

Continued on Page 2



# New political alternative is on cards in Telangana

BY B KRISHNA PRASAD

Is Telangana set to witness the emergence of a new political force? Is there a vacuum in the political arena of Telangana with the Congress party losing ground fast and with the Bharat Rashtira Samithi far from being in a position to stage a comeback? These are among the plausible questions that are making rounds in political circles now.

An aide of Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan is working assiduously to identify the Jana Sena's individual prospects in Telangana. Simultaneously, the party is discussing with local leaders of Telugu Desam Party and Bharatiya Janata Party possible alliances with them to determine which of the alliances could click for it in Telangana. Jana Sena believes strongly that the prospects of the party's expansion in Telangana are bright, provided it latches on to a strong alliance partner.

Telugu Desam Party supremo N Chandrababu Naidu is also planning to rejuvenate the party

unit in the state, with some leaders having clout like Teegala Krishna Reddy and Malla Reddy indicating their willingness for ghar wapsi during their recent interaction with the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, who can now influence the NDA government the Centre.

For BJP, however, it is formidable battle ahead in Telangana. The party is bracing up to come to power by beating both the Congress and the BRS. For, the party is of the considered opinion that the Congress is losing its ground very fast, while the BRS has not made headway in regaining public confidence over the last 10 months.

Although the efforts of BRS working president K T Ramarao have started yielding some results, people in general are not very happy with KCR's lackluster attitude towards major issues including HYDRAA ops, delayed Rythu Bharosa and incomplete farmers' loan waiver. "People are yet to forgive KCR for his dictatorial functioning; till it continues, the prospects of BRS would not brighten," commented a senior



BRS leader.

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

Repeated changes in dates and schedules of government job exams have widened the gap between the unemployed and the state government. With the advent of HYDRAA ops, the real estate sector, which had pushed the Hyderabad to next level during the BRS regime, has reported nearly a 40 per cent drop. With no sales, and with investors under pressure to return the money they had taken in advance for executing projects, those who had planned their ventures near and around lakes have almost been pushed to bankruptcy.

But the moot question is: Is there a real political vacuum in Telangana or is it the dream of those who are idle in various political parties?

Statistically speaking, TDP still has sizeable vote banks in Khammam, Nalgonda, Ranga Reddy and Hyderabad districts, apart from marginal presence in Nizamabad and Warangal. The Jana Sena has no strength at all in Telangana as per records. The BJP is vying for the top slot and wants to grab power in the upcoming Assembly elections. If the three

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

All told, if the new alliance takes shape, the contest will be three-cornered, giving a fair chance to the Congress party too.

## OBTUSE ANGLE



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

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

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

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

### Misinformation confuses scribes as well as politicians

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

### Ex-MLA in hot water again

Former legislator and Tadipatri Municipal Chairperson JC Prabhakar Reddy has landed in hot water again with his provocative remarks targeting liquor shop licence holders in his home turf. In a video that has gone viral, he is seen suggesting that they should contribute 15% of their profits for the town's development,

## REPORTERS' DIARY

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

### At last, scribes saw them do their job

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

apart from giving him 20 paise per bottle of liquor sold as his personal share. The video, captured during a meeting he had with his supporters in Peddavuduguru, has sparked widespread outrage and heated debate. He also spoke against 'non-locals' obtaining liquor shop licences in Tadipatri as 'unacceptable'. His remarks have attracted sharp criticism from various quarters, including scribes, with many questioning his ethics as well as his nerve to spike political tensions in Tadipatri.

### Ex-minister raises eyebrows at Vijaya Dairy

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

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

## APTRANSCO panel meet on Oct 21

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

APTRANSCO CMD K. Vijayanand has announced that the APTRANSCO State Coordination Forum meeting will take place on October 21 in Kurnool. He stated that the meeting would be presided over by APERC Chairman Justice Nagarajuna Reddy.

Attendees will include APGENCO MD Chakradhar Babu, APTRANSCO JMD Keerthi Chekuri, and DISCOM CMDs PattanShetty Ravi, Prudhvi Tej Immadi, and Santosh Rao, along with senior officials from NTPC, SECI, and other organisations.

Vijayanand explained that the primary purpose of the meeting is to seek approval for the State Electricity Plan covering the financial years 2024-25 to 2028-29. He mentioned that, with the Chairman's consent, other relevant topics may also be discussed during the meeting.

## AP TWENTY POINTS PROGRAMME

# Lanka Dinakar takes charge as Chairman

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

BJP leader Lanka Dinakar officially assumed charge as Chairman of the AP Twenty Points Programme at the Secretariat on Saturday. He took office in the presence of BJP AP State organising secretary N Madhukar. Several leaders, including SEEDAP Chairman Deepak Reddy, Maritime Board Chairman Damachhara Satya, SMSE Chairman Sivashankar, and MLC Ashok Babu, extended their congratulations to him on the occasion. Members of the Amaravati Capital Women Farmers, led by Puvvada Sudhakar, also conveyed their best wishes to Dinakar.

In his first address after taking charge, Dinakar expressed his gratitude to Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and BJP State president D Purandeswari for entrusting him with the



responsibility, adding that it was made possible with the coordination of BJP Central leaders.

He highlighted that the Twenty Points Programme is being implemented as part of the Central government's "Viksit Bharat 2047" initiative, aimed at achieving the Swarnandhra@2047 vision for the development of Andhra Pradesh. Dinakar emphasised that the vision of Prime

Minister Narendra Modi is to create a developed India, while Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's goal is a developed Andhra Pradesh.

Highlighting the efforts of Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, Dinakar pointed out the importance of the Jal Jeevan Mission, which aims to provide tap water to every household and empower Gram Panchayats.

## Govt apathetic to diarrhoea outbreak: Jagan

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP Chief and former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has sharply condemned the TDP coalition government for its negligence, which has resulted in a serious health crisis in Gurla mandal of Vizianagaram district, where a severe diarrhoea outbreak has tragically claimed 11 lives and affected hundreds.

In a statement on the social media platform X, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy criticized the government led by Chandrababu Naidu for failing to respond adequately, despite the presence of well-equipped hospitals nearby. He pointed out that patients were being treated on benches in schools, highlighting the government's inability to provide emergency healthcare.

He further noted the deterioration of essential health services, including the 104 and 108 ambulance systems, with employees facing delays in salary payments. He condemned the government for crippling the state health scheme Aarogyasri by failing



to clear Rs 1,800 crore in dues and scrapping the Aarogyasri scheme. He mentioned that key healthcare initiatives, such as the Family Doctor program and the 'Nadu-Nedu' scheme in hospitals, have been stalled, raising concerns about the potential privatisation of public healthcare institutions for personal gain.

YS Jagan urged the government to take immediate corrective actions, emphasising the urgent need for improved medical care and access to clean drinking water in the affected areas to prevent further health crises.

## YSRCP seeks white paper on medical education

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chairman of the YSR Congress NTR District Doctors Wing, Dr Ambati Naga Radhakrishna Yadav, has expressed deep concern over the current state of medical education in Andhra Pradesh. He lamented that the state government has failed to submit any applications to the National Medical Commission (NMC) for the increase of postgraduate (PG) medical seats in government medical colleges for the academic year 2025-2026.

Dr Radhakrishna pointed out that, with the NMC extending its application deadline to November 8, 2024, there is still an opportunity for the state government to address this issue. However, he criticised the current administration for its inaction, describing the situation as 'disheartening' and a 'grave injustice' to medical PG aspirants in the state.

Dr Radhakrishna high-

lighted the achievements of the previous administration under YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, during which Andhra Pradesh witnessed an unprecedented increase of over 600 PG medical seats in just one year. This progress now appears to be reversing under the current government, which he accused of colluding with private interests to undermine the state's public medical hospitals and education system.

"We demand transparency on this issue," Dr Radhakrishna said, calling for the release of a white paper on the status of medical education in Andhra Pradesh. He emphasised that the public deserves to know the reasons behind the decline in PG medical seats and urged the government to take immediate action to rectify the situation.

He further criticised the government, saying, "It's time for the state to prioritise medical education over other interests."

## Nara Lokesh inspects school, library

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

State Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh made surprise visits to Nehru Bazar Municipal Elementary School and the Nehru Bazar Regional Library in Visakhapatnam on Saturday. His visit led to key decisions aimed at improving education and library services.

At the schools, Minister Lokesh spent time in the Anganwadi children's room, interacting with young students. He playfully asked them about their ABCs and rhymes, and the children responded happily by singing and playing.

Lokesh stressed the importance of



good nutrition for the students, urging teachers to provide eggs and nutritious meals to support the children's growth. Before leaving, he distributed chocolates and took a group photo with the

smiling students.

Earlier, Lokesh visited the Nehru Bazar Regional Library and was disappointed to find it closed at 9:45 a.m., despite its scheduled opening time of 8 a.m.

He called this unacceptable and announced measures to improve the library system, including appointing a special officer to monitor public libraries across the state.

Lokesh highlighted the crucial role libraries play in helping students and job seekers prepare for competitive exams, emphasising the need to strengthen this system for better learning opportunities.

## Vasamsetti refutes YSRCP charges

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Labour Vasamsetti Subhash has strongly condemned the allegations made against him by YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) leaders, calling them unfounded and an attempt to tarnish his image. In a video statement released on Saturday, he clarified his recent interactions with aqua farmers in Ramachandrapuram town, dismissing the allegations as politically motivated.

The controversy arose from a meeting Subhash held with aqua farmers at the Lions Club in

Ramachandrapuram two months ago, where he addressed the illegal aqua farming operations in the area. He noted that around 12 to 15 aqua ponds had been operating unlawfully since the previous YSRCP administration. The farmers, who had invested significant amounts into these ponds, requested additional time to cease operations.

Acknowledging the financial difficulties faced by the farmers, Subhash agreed to allow them to complete the current crop cycle before halting their activities, an arrangement the farmers accepted. During the meeting, he also

expressed concerns about the impact of aqua farming on the local water supply, highlighting that the nearby drinking water pond had become polluted, causing issues for the town's residents. He urged the farmers to contribute to the development of a drinking water plant, which they agreed to.

Subhash accused YSRCP leaders, whom he referred to as the "Paytm batch," of editing and misrepresenting his remarks in a bid to smear his reputation. He reaffirmed his commitment to the development of his constituency and his responsibilities as a minister.

## Tribal youth dies after torching self at police station

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

Protest erupted at Palakurthi Police Station. The protesters, including women, blocked the ambulance carrying the body of the tribal man, identified as Lakawat Srinivas.

## Rains forecast...

Continued from Page 1

In the daily weather report, it was noted that a cyclonic circulation is present over the Central Andaman Sea, extending up to 5.8 km above mean sea level.

A low-pressure area is expected to form over the East Central Bay of Bengal and the adjoining North Andaman Sea on October 21. It is likely to move north-westward and intensify into a depression around October 23.

Thunderstorms accompanied by lightning are expected at isolated places in Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema over the next three days. Light to moderate rain or thundershowers are likely at a few places in Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema over the next seven days.

Heavy rainfall has already been reported in SPSR Nellore District of South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Tirupati district of Rayalaseema in the last 24 hours. Rainfall was observed at many places in Coastal Andhra Pradesh and at most locations in Rayalaseema during the same period, the report added.

## TODAY

### ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha

Tithi: Oct 20 06:46 AM  
Chaturthi: Oct 20 06:46 AM to Oct 21 04:17 AM

Nakshatram: Oct 20 08:31 AM  
Rohini: Oct 20 08:31 AM to Oct 21 06:50 AM

Rahukalam: 4:20 PM to 5:47 PM  
Yamagandam: 12:00 PM to 1:27 PM

Variyam: 11:24 PM to 12:53 AM  
Gulika: 2:54 PM to 4:20 PM

Amritakalam: 06:21 AM to 07:48 AM  
03:52 AM to 05:21 AM

Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:37 AM to 12:23 PM

### VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Scattered Thunderstorms  
Temp: 32°C  
Humidity: 77%  
Sunrise: 6:03 AM  
Sunset: 5:39 PM

Updated: October 19, 2024 5:00 PM

## Amaravati back to...

Continued from Page 1

"Amaravati holds great sanctity, being the capital for the Gods," Naidu said, highlighting that prominent institutions such as VIT, SRM, and Amrita Universities have already begun operations there.

He also mentioned that the Xavier School of Management (formerly XLRI) will soon set up its unit in Amaravati, along with a law school. The CM expressed his desire for all top 10 institutions in the country to establish their branches in Amaravati. "I have already appealed to the Centre for a bullet train connecting Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Amaravati. The World Bank has also approved a loan for the city. I want all the work to be completed on time," Naidu said.

The CM reiterated that rivers like the Vamsadhara,

Godavari, Krishna, and Pennar will be interlinked, making Amaravati one of the most beautiful cities in India. He regretted that the state is now facing an additional financial burden of Rs 7,000 crore due to the damage caused by the previous administration. He mentioned that the Centre has already committed Rs 15,000 crore to support the state's development. Additionally, residential towers for Ministers, MLAs, and All India Service officers will soon be completed. "The stature of Andhra Pradesh has significantly improved after the mandate given by the people in the recent elections," Naidu said. The CM highlighted the alliance between the TDP, Jana Sena, and BJP, stating that their focus is on the welfare of the state. "People should now drive out the evil from the state once and for all," he asserted.

## Teenage girl set on fire, her...

Continued from Page 1

The incident has sent shockwaves through Badvel town. The victim's parents, who were inconsolable at the hospital, confirmed that Vignesh had been harassing their daughter for months. A magistrate has recorded the victim's statement, and doctors have said her condition is critical.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has taken note of the incident, instructing district officials to provide the best medical care to the victim and expedite the arrest of the accused. The authorities have urged the public to remain calm and cooperate with the investigation.

The police are calling for vigilance and warning the public to be cautious in social interactions, emphasising the importance of reporting any suspicious or threatening behaviour. This incident highlights the urgent need for public awareness regarding harassment and violence, especially against women.

## Harassed by stalker...

Continued from Page 1

On the day of the incident, he reportedly visited her house, argued with her, and continued to insist that she loved him. Unable to bear the constant harassment, the girl consumed pesticide. She was immediately rushed to the GGH in Adoni, where doctors declared her brought dead. In their complaint, Ashwani's parents stated that their daughter took the extreme step due to the harassment and the boy's insistence on marriage.

Sub-Collector Mourya Bharadwaj visited the hospital to pay respects to the deceased girl. CI Mastanvali confirmed that, based on the parents' complaint, the girl committed suicide after being unable to cope with the harassment from the accused.

## Heavy inflows into...

Continued from Page 1

The NTR and Krishna district administrations, along with the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC), have been informed to take necessary precautions to avoid any untoward incidents. In response, VMC Commissioner HM Dhyanchandra has opened a Special Control Room on the VMC premises to address flood-related issues. He has invited the public to submit any complaints regarding the flood situation, assuring them of the VMC's preparedness to handle the situation in coordination with the Water Resources Department. The Commissioner also conducted a teleconference with officials to coordinate flood response measures. Residents are encouraged to send their complaints via WhatsApp to 8181960909 or call the hotline numbers 08662427485 and 2424172 for assistance.

## Four crest gates...

Continued from Page 1

The Nagarjuna Sagar project is receiving 1,38,338 cusecs of water, which is being released in equal measure downstream. At the Pulichintala project, five gates were lifted to release 1.36 lakh cusecs of water downstream to the Prakasam Barrage, while the Pulichintala project is currently receiving 1.18 lakh cusecs of water.

# Book ration dealers found diverting PDS items: DC



NTR District In-charge Collector Dr Nidhi Meena at a meeting with Revenue and Civil Supplies Department officials at the collectorate in Vijayawada on Saturday.

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District In-charge Collector, Dr Nidhi Meena, has instructed officials to take strict action against ration dealers who divert essential goods. She directed them to register cases under Section 6A of the Essential Commodities Act if any irregularities are found.

**NTR District In-charge Collector, Dr Nidhi Meena, made it clear that she would not tolerate any irregularities in the distribution of essential goods under the Public Distribution System (PDS). She instructed officials to take stern action against those involved in diverting goods and to register cases under Section 6A of the Essential Commodities Act. Additionally, she urged the officials to expedite the recruitment process for new ration dealers in the district.**

So far, 54 cases have been registered against ration dealers under Section 6A in the NTR district. NTR District In-charge Collector, Dr Nidhi Meena, made it clear that she would not tolerate any irregularities in the distribution of essential goods under the Public Distribution System (PDS). She instructed officials to take stern action against those involved in diverting goods and to register cases under Section 6A of the Essential Commodities Act.

Dr Meena convened the meeting with officials from the Revenue and Civil Supplies Department at the Pingali Venkaiah Meeting Hall, located on the collectorate premises in Vijayawada on Saturday. The primary focus of the meeting was to ensure the proper distribution of essential goods, and she sought updates from officials regarding the pricing of these goods.

She directed officials to set up special counters in all Rythu Bazaars to sell essential items like palm oil, red gram dal, and onions. Dr Meena highlighted the issue of some ration dealers diverting goods, stressing that the

Civil Supplies Department should closely monitor the PDS to ensure timely distribution to ration cardholders.

Furthermore, she instructed that no one should be excused if found guilty of diverting goods, and cases must be registered under Section 6A. Over the past three months, 54 cases have been registered against ration dealers for such irregularities, and 627 tonnes of PDS rice have been seized, she noted.

Dr Meena also suggested that Revenue officials conduct weekly inspections of all ration depots within their jurisdictions. She urged them to closely monitor Mobile Dispensing Units (MDUs) to

ensure they are delivering goods properly to the public.

Dr Meena announced that a notification would be issued on October 20 for the appointment of new Fair Price (FP) Shop Dealers. A written test for the applicants will be held on November 5, and the recruitment process will be completed by November 12. She explained that, as per government orders, 82 new ration depots will be established in the NTR district by bifurcating existing depots that have more than 800 ration cards.

She also mentioned that, along with rice, jowar will be distributed through ration depots, with each ration cardholder receiving 3 kg of jowar. Additionally, she directed officials to take steps to sell palm oil at Rs 110 per litre, sunflower oil at Rs 124, and red gram at Rs 150 per kg in all Rythu Bazaars.

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Commissioner HM Dhyanchandra, DRO V Srinivasa Rao, Civil Supplies Department District Manager Venkateswarlu, DSO Papa Rao, RDOs K Chaitanya and Madhuri were also present at the meeting.

# Doctors should dedicate time to rural healthcare: Venkaiah Naidu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former Vice President Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu stressed the need for improved healthcare in rural areas, urging doctors to allocate time for rural communities where medical services are limited. He made this appeal while inaugurating a free medical camp organised by Aster Ramesh Hospitals and Akira Eye Hospitals at the Swarna Bharathi Trust's Vijayawada Chapter in Atkur, Ungutur Mandal, Krishna District.

Naidu highlighted the work of the Swarna Bharathi Trust in promoting healthcare, mentioning that they have conducted around 48 free medical camps, benefiting about 15,000 people. He assured that such initiatives would continue with the support of hospitals and encouraged doctors to contribute to bridging the gap between rural and urban healthcare.

Speaking on the importance of a healthy lifestyle, he urged people to focus on a nutritious



Former Vice President of India Venkaiah Naidu addressing a programme at Swarna Bharathi Trust at Atkur in Ungutur mandal of Krishna district on Saturday.

diet, particularly green vegetables, while reducing the consumption of unhealthy foods like pizzas, burgers, and fried items, which contribute to various health issues. He also advocated for organic farming and the reduction of chemical and pesticide use. Naidu further highlighted the significance of

physical activity, especially yoga, in maintaining overall health. He encouraged parents to motivate their children to participate in sports and physical activities along with their studies. He also advised the younger generation to limit their time on electronic devices and use social media wisely. The event was attended

by Gannavaram MLA Yarlagadda Venkata Rao, Kaikaluru MLA and Swarna Bharathi Trust Chairman Dr Kamineni Srinivasa Rao, former Uttar Pradesh minister Siddharth Singh, and other Trust members, including G. Viswanath, B. Prasad Reddy, G. Sumathi, and Jasti Satish.

## ITAAP holds HR conclave in city

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The IT Association of Andhra Pradesh (ITAAP) successfully hosted the HR Conclave 2024, themed 'Shaping Tomorrow's Workforce', on Saturday in Vijayawada. The event brought together HR professionals, industry leaders, and policymakers to discuss innovative strategies and best practices for transforming the human resource function in the digital age. The inaugural session, titled 'Reimagining Talent for a Future-Ready Andhra Pradesh', featured G. Ganesh Kumar, Managing Director and CEO of the Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC), as the chief guest.



District Collector Flags Off Educational Tourism Itinerary Buses

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In a bid to make tourism more inclusive and educational, the district has launched a new program aimed at providing students with insights into its rich history and ecological diversity. Speaking at the launch, Lecturer MN Harendhira Prasad highlighted the significance of this initiative, stating, "Our goal is to allow students to learn about the district's historical and environmental significance while making tourism accessible to all."

The educational tourism policy was officially launched by the District Collector on Saturday, with students from Gayatri Vidya Parishad and Aganampudi Zilla Parishad schools flagging off buses for the inaugural tours. The Marine Museum educational tour will allow students to explore the district's coastal tourist spots, including the Sea Harrier Museum, TU-167, INS

## Educational tourism takes off in Vizag

Kurusura Submarine, and the Maritime Museum. The tour also includes tide pooling activities for students to study marine life and coastal ecology. The biodiversity tour will take students to the Indira Gandhi Zoological Park, the Biodiversity Park near Kapulupada, and include a trekking experience in the Kambalakonda Sanctuary. The Coastal Ecosystem tour will introduce students to research efforts being made in the region, including visits to the Biology Laboratory at Andhra University, the Mangrove Research Center, and the Fisheries Survey of India Museum.

The District Collector expressed his enthusiasm for the initiative, stating, "We want students from Visakhapatnam and surrounding areas to take full advantage of this educational opportunity. This initiative will not only enrich their learning but also instill a sense of responsibility toward environmental conservation." District Tourism Officer Gnanveni, DEO Chandrakala, Maritime Board Officer Subbireddy, along with other officials from the Forest and Fisheries Departments, members of the Tourism Council, and students participated in the event, making the launch a grand success.

## CPI warns of protests if power charges are hiked



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Communist Party of India (CPI) State secretary, K Ramakrishna, has issued a stern warning to the TDP-led NDA government, stating that his party will launch a protest if the government proceeds with increasing electricity charges in the state. In collaboration with other Left parties, he announced that the CPI would organise a state-wide struggle. Ramakrishna reminded that Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu had previously assured the public that True-up charges would be reduced, and power tariffs would be lowered. He also recalled that Naidu had criticised the implementation of smart meters.

Addressing a press conference at Dasari Bhavan in Vijayawada on Saturday, Ramakrishna claimed that the government is planning to impose an additional burden of Rs 8,114 crore on the public in the name of True-up charges. He alleged that before the elections, Chandrababu Naidu had promised not to implement these charges if the NDA returned to power, but the government has failed to keep this commitment. He demanded an immediate withdrawal of the proposed True-up charges.

Ramakrishna pointed out that the current True-up charge is Rs 1.03 per unit, but the government is planning to impose an additional Rs 1.27 per unit, further burdening the people. He also criticised the government for planning to spend Rs 7,000 crore to install smart meters for agricultural connections, stating that the Andhra Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission

(APERC) awarded the contract to Hinduja Company without proper approvals, amounting to Rs 1,234 crore. He further accused CM Chandrababu Naidu of following in the footsteps of former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy by allegedly colluding with the Adani Group. Ramakrishna alleged that Naidu has continued old policies and surrendered to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The CPI leader strongly condemned the government's policies and the imposition of True-up charges.

Ramakrishna also criticised the government's decision to the Annadata Sukheebhava Scheme, which offers Rs 20,000 financial support to farmers from next year. He questioned why the scheme could not be implemented in the current financial year and demanded that CM Chandrababu Naidu and Agriculture Minister Achannaidu ensure its immediate implementation.

Additionally, Ramakrishna announced that the CPI would organise a mass submission of applications at all Sachivalayams on November 18, demanding the government fulfil its promises of providing house sites to the poor and covering the construction costs. He said around 32 lakh beneficiaries are expected to participate in this programme.

He also discussed issues such as the free sand policy, the spread of liquor shops, corruption, and the privatisation of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant.

CPI State Secretary members Jalli Wilson, G Eswaraiah, Akkineni Vanaja, and others attended the press conference.

## PALLE PANDUGA

# Home Minister unveils developmental plans



PNS ■ ANAKAPALLI

Home Minister Vangalapati Anitha attended the Palle Panduga Program at Pettugolapalli in S Rayavaram mandal, Anakapalli district, where she laid the foundation stone for a new road. Addressing the media people on the occasion, Minister Anitha emphasized the importance of village festivals, saying, "These celebrations reflect the spirit of unity and joy across the state. They are being observed with great enthusiasm, fostering a sense of community."

Anitha highlighted the NDA government's development strides, contrasting them with the previous administration's lack of progress. "In the last five years, villagers faced numerous

challenges due to little to no development," she remarked. "However, within just 100 days of the NDA government, we have initiated key development works, accelerating the construction of new roads and drainage systems".

The Home Minister specifically mentioned the Addurordu-Kotauratla road, which was neglected by the previous government. "The road was in a deplorable state, having been ignored for years. We are committed to completing new roads across the state by Sankranti," she assured. Anitha also pointed out the previous government's suspension of NREGS projects, leaving even YSRCP sarpanches waiting for the NDA's leadership to resume developmental initiatives

Anitha brought attention to the plight of Dalits over the past five years, citing the deaths of Dr. Sudhakar and Varaprasad. "Dalits have been victims of continuous atrocities, with some even losing their lives on the streets," she said. "Now, those who raise the Dalit card, why were they silent earlier?" Anitha asked, emphasizing that the law does not discriminate based on caste.

In a direct critique of the previous administration, Anitha said, "During their regime, 23 cases were filed against me. I ask, what is the caste of the real criminals?" Her speech highlighted the NDA government's commitment to both development and justice, assuring the people that their welfare remains a top priority.

# Migraine a common but under-diagnosed disease: Expert

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Renowned neuro-ophthalmologist and Headache Medicine specialist from the USA, Dr Deborah Friedman, highlighted the debilitating effects of migraines, especially among women, during the Third day of the 31st National Conference of the Indian Academy of Neurology (IANCON-2024) here in Visakhapatnam. "Migraine is a major health issue that affects one in five women and one in ten men," Dr Friedman stated. "Although

there is no definitive cure, migraine is the most manageable of all neurological disorders. With the right diagnosis and treatment, individuals can greatly reduce the frequency and severity of their attacks."

Dr Friedman, who has served on the Board of Directors of the American Headache Society and was the former president of the North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society, stressed the importance of early diagnosis and effective management. "Recognizing and avoid-



Dr Deborah Friedman, neuro-ophthalmologist from the USA

ing triggers is essential for preventing migraine attacks. Common triggers include disrupted sleep, irregular eating habits, dehydration, and stress, she noted.

She recommended lifestyle changes to help manage migraine episodes. "Adopting simple strategies such as keeping consistent sleep schedules, sticking to regular meal times, staying hydrated, and managing stress can significantly reduce both the frequency and intensity of migraine attacks," Dr Friedman advised.

Dr Friedman discussed the latest advancements in migraine treatment, including CGRP inhibitors, medications such as lasmiditan and triptans, and devices like Nerivio. "New therapies are making a significant impact, providing relief to those who suffer," she noted.

She also emphasized the frequently overlooked issue of migraines in children. "Unfortunately, many parents dismiss their children's symptoms, thinking they are just trying to avoid school or chores," Dr Friedman explained. "It's

essential to recognize early signs of migraine attacks in children, like mood changes, unexplained fatigue, and sensitivity to light. Early diagnosis and treatment can help prevent unnecessary suffering and enhance their quality of life."

"Identifying and addressing migraine symptoms promptly is vital," Dr Friedman concluded. "Increased awareness and better access to treatment can greatly improve the quality of life for those affected by this often misunderstood yet highly manageable condition."

# Manohar lays stone for works worth Rs 1.30 cr



**PNS ■ GUNTUR**  
Minister for Civil Supplies Nadendra Manohar laid the foundation stone for the Rs 1.30 crore worth of development works at Kollipara village in Tenali on Saturday. The development works will be taken up with the

MGNREGA funds. Speaking on the occasion, Nadendra Manohar said that the coalition government in Andhra Pradesh has launched massive development programmes across the State and improved the basic amenities in the rural areas. In order to create infrastructure in rural

areas and augment civic amenities, development works would be carried out in the villages in a phased manner. The Civil Supplies Minister said that 21.67 km of roads would be reconstructed at a cost of Rs 2.55 crore in Kollipara and Tenali mandals with the funds of MGNREGA.

As part of the programme, an 11.05 km CC road would be constructed in Kollipara mandal for which the stone was laid today, he stated. He said that CC roads would be constructed at Annavaram, Hanumanpalem, Tummaluru, Atthoti and Siripuram villages.

## Minister Savitha praises CM for relaunching Amaravati works

**PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA**

State BC, EWS, Handloom, and Textiles Minister S Savitha expressed her happiness over the resumption of construction work in the capital, Amaravati. She expressed confidence that Swarna Andhra will become a reality under the leadership of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu.

In a press release on Saturday, she stated that Amaravati is the dream capital of the people of Andhra Pradesh, and all Telugu people, both in the country and abroad, are eagerly awaiting the construction of the capital. In fulfilling the aspirations of the Telugu people, CM Chandrababu Naidu has taken steps to resume the construction of Amaravati, bringing joy to Telugu communities worldwide.

Before the recent elections, CM Chandrababu Naidu had promised to build Amaravati as the state capital. Keeping his promise, the Chief Minister restarted the capital works on Saturday.



## 3 money-lenders arrested for harassing borrowers

**PNS ■ ELURU**

Three private money lenders were arrested for harassing the borrowers and registered cases against them under various sections.

SP K Pratrapp Shiva Kishore told the media here on Saturday that private money lender Medapati Sudhakar Reddy was lending money at higher interest rates and he was annoying the borrowers to pay interest.

Sudhakar Reddy was also maintaining a gang to collect money from borrowers using

unfair means. The gang members barged into the houses of borrowers and forcibly took the valuables including motorcycles and electronic gadgets, if the borrowers did not pay money.

Medapati Sudhakar Reddy forcibly took signatures on blank papers from the borrowers and took signatures on promissory notes and bank cheques.

He used to abuse women when they were alone in the house if they did not pay her money.

The victims lodged com-

plaints with Eluru 1 town, 2 & towns, T Narasapuram and Musunuru police stations against the harassment of money lender Sudhakar Reddy and his gang.

The police arrested Medapati Sudhakar Reddy, Allada Lavanya and Veeramalla Rajesh and registered cases against them under various sections.

The SP warned of stringent action against the private money lenders if they indulge in such forcible collection of money from the borrowers.

## Dialysis centre will be set up in Palakollu GGH soon: Minister

**PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM**

Minister for Water Resources Management Nimmala Ramanaidu has announced that a dialysis centre will be set up in the Government General Hospital in Palakollu by 60 days.

The Minister held a meeting with medical and health officials in Palakollu on Saturday and reviewed the construction of the 100-bed hospital and setting up a dialysis centre in the GGH. He directed the officials concerned to expedite the work of the GGH. He visited the Government hospital in Palakollu on Saturday saw the wards interacted with the patients and inquired about the medical services and welfare being provided.

Later talking to the media, he said that two dialysis centers have been sanctioned in the State, one in Palakollu and the second in Dharmavaram. Minister Ramanaidu said that the needy people of Palakollu town and surrounding villages would have to go to the GGHs in Eluru, Bhimavaram,



Tadepalligudem or Amalapuram to get dialysis. Keeping in view the problems of patients, he said, he had convinced Chandrababu Babu and headed the government to set up a dialysis centre in the GGH in Palakollu.

Ramanaidu revealed that in 2019, the GGH in Palakollu was upgraded from a 50-bed hospital to a 100-bed hospital with a grant of Rs 12.60 crores with the help of NABARD. The construction of the hospital had to be completed in 18 months. But unfortunately, the previous YSRCP government

neglected the work and it was not completed in 18 months, he lamented. He recalled that in 1998, the then Chandrababu Naidu-headed government upgraded the 30-bed Palakollu GGH to a 50-bed hospital. The Minister ordered the officials to plant saplings around the hospital to make it pleasant and beautiful. AP Medical Corporation EE USY Rambabu, DCH Dr P Suryanarayana, DE M Srinivas Reddy and hospital superintendent Dr O Ravi Kumar were among those who were present.

## Call to make Drone Summit a success

**PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA**

Andhra Pradesh Drone Corporation Managing Director (MD) K. Dinesh Kumar has stated that following the directives from Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, all departmental officials should work collectively to ensure the success of the Drone Summit and Drone Show in Vijayawada, scheduled for October 22 to 23. He emphasized that the state government is striving to position Andhra Pradesh among the leading states, and urged everyone to actively participate in this prestigious event.

On Saturday, AP Drone Corporation MD Dinesh Kumar, NTR district in-charge collector Dr. Nidhi Meena, Police Commissioner S.V. Rajasekhara Babu, and Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Commissioner H.M. Dhyanaachandra conducted a coordination meeting with relevant departments at Punnami Ghat in Bhavanipuram, Vijayawada. They also inspected the arrangements for the cultural event and drone show set to take place at Punnami



AP Drone Corporation MD Dinesh Kumar, NTR district in charge collector Nidhi Meena, CP Rajasekhara Babu and VMC Commissioner Dhyanaachandra inspecting the Drone Show arrangements at the Punnami Ghat in Vijayawada on Saturday

Ghat on October 22. During the coordination meeting, Dinesh Kumar provided necessary suggestions to all officials, noting that the Drone Summit will be held at the CK Convention Centre in Mangalagiri, while the Drone Show will take place at Punnami Ghat. He mentioned that many prominent companies from various states will participate in the

event and urged all departmental officials to contribute to making it a grand success.

In addition, collector Nidhi Meena, Police Commissioner Rajasekhara Babu, and VMC Commissioner Dhyanaachandra discussed arrangements and security measures with the concerned officials. They announced that a cultural evening pro-

gramme would take place from Punnami Ghat to Babburi Grounds on October 22. Alongside cultural programmes, the event will feature a laser show, groundfire displays, a music band, and other performances. Later, Commissioner Rajasekhara Babu revealed that the police department is implementing a stringent security plan for the Drone Show.

## APNGO Assn to take arrears issue to govt's notice

**PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA**

Andhra Pradesh Non-Gazetted Officers' Association (APNGO) NTR district president A Vidyasagar stated that he would bring the issue of pending arrears to the attention of the State government and work towards resolving the employees' problems. Speaking at the APNGO Association Vijayawada City executive committee meeting on Saturday, Vidyasagar criticized the previous government for neglecting employees' issues over the past five years. He noted that the past government failed to pay DA arrears and neglected GPF and APGLI payments. He highlighted that around Rs 20,000 crore in dues remain pending for employees and mentioned that more than 4,000 cases were registered against employees and teachers involved in the CPS movement, PRC, and DA struggles.

## Govt failed to control sand & liquor mafia: Botsa

**PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM**

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, Botsa Satyanarayana, has strongly criticised the Andhra Pradesh government for its inability to control sand and liquor mafias operating unchecked across the region. "The government's negligence in planning and executing these policies has led to chaos, allowing mafias to thrive," Botsa stated, expressing deep concern about rising prices of essential goods. He attributed this inflation to the government's inability to control the economic situation. "While the people are struggling, the government seems indifferent to their plight."

Botsa also addressed the recent health crisis in Gurla mandal, Vizianagaram, where multiple diarrhoea-related deaths have been reported. "This tragedy is a direct consequence of government neglect. Authorities must provide immediate compensation to affected families and ensure urgent medical attention for those still suffering," he urged. He criticized the government's unfulfilled promises, saying, "Despite claims of reducing liquor prices and implementing effective sand policy, the reality is that the public has seen no relief." Referring to Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's comments on possible midterm elections, Botsa concluded, "We have initiated a countdown on the government's performance, and it is high time they start delivering on their commitments to the public."

## YSRCP demands justice for flood victims

**PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA**

YSRCP leaders met Governor S Abdul Nazeer and submitted a representation of the injustice faced by flood victims due to the negligence of the coalition government. The delegation included NTR District YSRCP President Devineni Avinash, former ministers Velampalli Srinivasa Rao and Malladi Vishnu, Mayor Rayana Bhagyalakshmi, and others.

Speaking to the media after the meeting, Velampalli Srinivasa Rao criticized the government for not providing adequate compensation to flood victims despite receiving



Rs 500 crore in donations. He accused Chandrababu Naidu of exploiting the situation for political gain by staying in a bus only because floodwater entered his house. Devineni

Avinash pointed out the government's lack of focus on the issue, highlighting daily protests outside the NTR Collectorate. Malladi Vishnu and Rayana Bhagyalakshmi

emphasized the flawed enumeration process, with many victims not being properly recorded, and called for immediate financial relief for the flood-affected people.

## 'HYDRAA fear gripping BRS brass'

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

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

Declaring that BRS Working President KT Rama Rao, BRS MLA T. Harish Rao and BJP MP Eatala Rajender are afraid of the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency (HYDRAA), Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that he will invite an all-party team to check whether the farmhouses of KTR and Harish Rao are legal or not.

"Let's bring out the truth using the fact-finding committee. Is it not right that KTR has a farmhouse in Janwada and Harish Rao a farmhouse in Azeed Nagar? We will decide what to do with them after visiting these farmhouses," the CM said while addressing the Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Yatra Commemoration Award function held at Charminar on Saturday.

"The KCR family is a family of thieves. The KCR family earned lakhs of crores by misusing power. BRS leaders who did not even have footwear are now going around on flights," he said.



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

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

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

Pointing out that the government has not carried out any demolitions for the Musi Project, the CM said that BRS leaders are enacting dramas in the name of the Musi Project to save their farmhouses. "Their concern is only to protect their assets. If they are concerned about the public, Harish and KTR should fight for the public after demolishing their farmhouses. They are trying to protect their farmhouses by using the public as shields," he said.

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

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



## Crops worth Rs 400 cr damaged due to rains: Minister

**PNS ■ ONGOLE**

Minister for Social Welfare Dola Bala Veeranjanya Swamy has said that crops worth up to Rs 400 crore have been damaged due to incessant rains in Prakasam district.

The Minister, accompanied by Collector A Thameem Ansariya and other officers, visited some of the rain-affected agriculture fields at Kondayapalem village in Podili mandal, at Ramabhadrapuram and Madhavaram villages in Talluru mandal on Saturday. The Minister and Collector saw the damaged jowar, paddy and other crops. They interacted with the farmers and assured them to take steps to ensure that input subsidy and

crop loss compensation were paid at the earliest.

Later talking to the media, the Minister revealed that crops including horticulture worth Rs 300 to Rs 400 crore were damaged in the district due to incessant rains which occurred recently due to depression.

He noted that crops including paddy and jowar were damaged while horticulture crops including papaya, tobacco and black gram were also damaged due to heavy rains. He said that the incessant rain badly affected 17 mandals in the district.

Collector Thameem Ansariya said that crops in 4,749 hectares were damaged due to the recent heavy rains and 3231 farmers incurred

crop loss. She said that horticulture crops were damaged in 560 hectares. Preliminary reports on crop loss had already been sent to the Government, she stated.

MLA Kandula Narayana Reddy said that crops were damaged in Markapur constituency in Podili, Konakanamita, Tarlupadu and Markapur mandals.

The tobacco and jowar farmers were the worst affected as they incurred huge crop losses, the MLA lamented. He appealed to the Minister and Collector to take steps to disburse crop loss compensation and input subsidy to the affected farmers the earliest. RDOs and Agriculture officers were among those who accompanied the Minister.

ACROSS THE STATES



Union Min Joshi's brother held for duping woman

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



Naxal couple lays down arms in Gadchiroli

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



36% of Delhi families experiencing pollution-related ailments

Amid deteriorating air quality, 36 per cent of the families in Delhi-NCR have one or more members experiencing pollution-related ailments like sore throat, cough, and breathing difficulty, a survey revealed. With over 21,000 responses from the residents of Delhi-NCR, the survey -- conducted by digital platform LocalCircles -- has revealed the impacts of air pollution on the people of the national capital region. The findings show that 36 per cent of families have one or more members experiencing sore throat, cough, and breathing difficulty due to pollution and 27 per cent of the families have one or more members with a runny nose and congestion. Twenty-seven per cent of respondents said they were not facing any health issues related to the poor air quality, according to the survey. With Delhi's Air Quality Index (AQI) in the 'poor' category, the survey asked the respondents about their plans to cope.

'Derogatory language against women has no place in courtrooms'

PNS ■ PANAJI

Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Saturday said all forms of derogatory language, particularly against women, has no place in courts, noting that insensitive words can perpetuate stereotypes and may disproportionately affect women and marginalised communities.



mantle all barriers to have truly democratic access to justice".

"As we strive for inclusivity within our courtrooms, the language which we use must reflect our ethos. We must be vigilant in our choice of words ensuring that our language is not only precise but also respectful and intrusive," the CJ said.

Addressing a gathering at the inauguration of the North Goa District Courts Complex near Panaji, the CJ said, "We must actively work to dis-

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

PNS ■ MOSCOW

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

Besides India and Russia, the

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rahul accuses BJP of controlling EC, CBI, ED

PNS ■ RANCHI

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

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

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



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

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

'Modi govt 'anti-farmer'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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



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

Disappointed over offer of Jharkhand assembly : RJD

PNS ■ RANCHI

Fissures surfaced among INDIA bloc partners ahead of the Jharkhand assembly elections as the RJD on Saturday expressed disappointment over the announcement of JMM and Congress contesting 70 of 81 seats in the state.

The RJD said the decision on seat sharing by the two INDIA bloc constituents was "unilateral". It also made it clear that "all options were open" to the party. The assembly polls will be held in two phases on November 13 and 20 and counting will take place on November 23. "We express our disappointment over the offer of seats to us.

Asserts all options are open



The decision is unilateral," Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) spokesperson Manoj Kumar Jha said.

Earlier in the day, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren announced that the JMM and the Congress would contest 70

seats in the upcoming assembly elections. Jha claimed, "We were not consulted. All options are open to us." He said that the RJD has identified "at least 15 to 18 seats" in Jharkhand where it has the potential to defeat the BJP on its own.

CIC's role important for PM's vision of transparency : Jitendra Singh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday said the Central Information Commission's (CIC) role is important to live up to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of transparency and citizen participation in the functioning of the government, according to a statement issued by the personnel ministry. During a meeting with Chief Information



Commission Heeralal Samariya, who had called on the minister, Singh said it was during the Modi government's tenure that a 24-hour portal

service was introduced for the e-filing of RTI applications at any time of the day or night and from anywhere in the country or abroad.

The minister of state for personnel said "the role of the Central Information Commission is important to live up to Prime Minister Modi's vision of transparency and citizen participation in the functioning of the government".

Stay prepared to tackle adversaries weaponising tools, tech: Rajnath

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday called upon Indian military leaders to think critically to gain a "strategic advantage" in today's ever-evolving geopolitical landscape, and said there was a need to stay prepared to tackle the possibility of adversaries "weaponising" tools and technologies.

"From drones and autonomous vehicles to artificial intelligence and quantum computing, the technologies shaping modern warfare are evolving at a breath-taking pace. Our officers must understand these technologies and be able to harness them," he said in his address at a convocation ceremony of the National Defence College (NDC) here.

Singh urged the officers to become strategic thinkers who are capable of "anticipating future conflicts", understanding global political dynamics and leading with both intelligence and empathy.

The defence minister urged the officers to have a firm grasp of geopolitics, international relations and the complexities of global security alliances as the decisions made by them can have "far-reaching consequences that extend beyond the battlefield" and into the realm of diplomacy,



The defence minister urged the officers to have a firm grasp of geopolitics, international relations and the complexities of global security alliances as the decisions made by them can have "far-reaching consequences that extend beyond the battlefield" and into the realm of diplomacy, economics and international law.

He called upon them to think critically, adapt to unforeseen circumstances and leverage latest technological advancements to gain a "strategic advantage in today's ever-evolving geopolitical landscape," the defence ministry said in a statement.

Singh underlined the need to stay prepared to tackle "the possibility of adversaries weaponising" the tools and technologies used by people on a daily basis.



FRENCH GOVT LAUNCHES

'Choose France Tour 2024' to attract Indian students

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The French government and Campus France on Saturday began a five-city "Choose France Tour 2024," reaching out to Indian students with diverse academic opportunities in the European nation.

This tour brought together over 50 prestigious French universities and higher education institutions, according to a statement. France offers excellent career prospects, with over 600 French companies operating in India and employing more than 4,00,000 people. As France continues to attract international students with its education, culture, and promising career prospects, the 'Choose France Tour' serves as a crucial bridge between Indian talent and French academic excellence.

"The Choose France Tour widely opens France's doors to Indian students. Choosing France for higher education means choosing a guarantee of quality and excellence that will strengthen your career prospects. French universities are world-class.

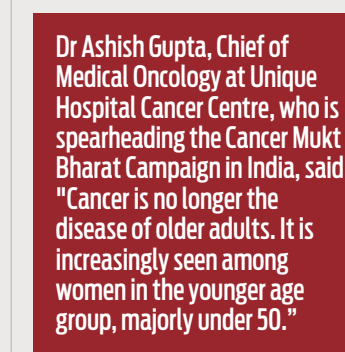
'Breast cancer rising among young women in India'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



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

Mukt Bharat Campaign in India, said "Cancer is no longer the disease of older adults. It is increasingly seen among women in the younger age group, majorly under 50."

The early onset of breast cancer is majorly due to genes,

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

According to a recent study by Cancer Mukta Bharat

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

Rose Café

A BLEND OF NOSTALGIA AND NEW CULINARY DELIGHTS

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



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

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



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



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



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



INDIA'S LARGEST FOOD FESTIVAL

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

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



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



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

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

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

CHEERS TO CULINARY CHAMPS!



BY TEAM AGENDA

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



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

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

Photos: Pankaj Kumar



# SAFEGUARDING 'UNPROTECTED' CULTURAL HERITAGE AND INTACH

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

BY SUKHDEV SINGH

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

IN BRIEF



UCO Bank posts 50 pc jump in net profit

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



Vedanta to invest over Rs 1 lakh cr in Rajasthan

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



Abhyuday Jindal assumes charge as ICC president

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

GST on elders health insurance premiums may be exempted

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

Luxury watches, shoes to draw 28 pc



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

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

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

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

Talking to reporters after the GoM meetings, Bihar Deputy

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

PNS ■ BHOPAL

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

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

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

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

America is rich because American roads are good."

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

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

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

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



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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Afcons projects cover five major infrastructure business verticals.

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

India seeks critical minerals partnership agreement with US

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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



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

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

from the sector in the American market.

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

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

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

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

Biotech startup to boost air purifier biz growth

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

DGCA chief Vikram appointed coal secretary

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Aviation regulator DGCA chief Vikram Dev Dutt has been appointed as coal secretary, as part of a top-level bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre on Saturday.

Dutt is a 1993 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the

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

Senior bureaucrat V Umashankar has been appointed as secretary, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Umashankar, a 1993 batch IAS officer, is presently working in his cadre state Haryana.

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

HDFC Bank net up 6%; aims to grow faster



PNS ■ MUMBAI

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

On a standalone basis, the largest private sector lender's post-tax net grew to Rs 16,820.97 crore during the reporting period, as against Rs 15,976.11 crore in the year-ago period.

Its core net interest income grew 10 per cent to Rs 30,010 crore on the back of a 7 per cent increase in gross advances and the margins being stable at 3.46 per cent.

The bank, which had guided towards doubling in size in four years recently, is operating as per market dynamics right now, its Chief Financial Officer S Vaidyanathan told reporters here on a call.

Pointing to the 15 per cent deposit growth, he said it is focusing on the liabilities and

keeping the credit growth just at par or lower than the market, and will grow faster than the industry next year and get back to growing at the legacy growth rates the year after, he said.

On the advances growth front, the large ticket wholesale advances degrew 2.8 per cent during the quarter, and Vaidyanathan blamed it on pricing issues.

He said the rates being demanded by corporate borrowers are too low from the bank's risk perspective, and added that only half of the 2.50 per cent in rate hikes seem to be transmitting into the loan market for corporate borrowers.

There is not much demand from the corporates on the private capex front, he said, adding that this might be the result of companies opting to operate at higher capacity utilisation levels in the absence of a certainty on the demand for the goods they produce.

Govt eyes record rabi output

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

Says fertiliser supply adequate



enough supply for the rabi season," Chouhan said.

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

lakh tonne of pulses.

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

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

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

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)

Director General Himanshu Pathak expressed optimism about the upcoming season.

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

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

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



'FORK'LORE

# 'NO'HO OTHER PLACE LIKE THIS!

AARTI SREENATH  
aarti.sreenath9@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



**FOOD TO TRY**  
Tan Tan Ramen



**DECOR**  
dim lit, cozy yet regal dining



**PRICE**  
3000 for two people (approx.)



**VERDICT**  
★★★★

# Karwa chauth favourites

## MAKHANA KHEER

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

### INGREDIENTS:

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



### METHOD:

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

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

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

### INGREDIENTS:

#### For the Mathri:

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

#### For the sugar syrup (Chashni):

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

### METHOD:

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



## PHIRNI

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

### INGREDIENTS:

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

### METHOD:

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

### TIPS:

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

## WHAT'S NEW

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

## GIFT COMBOS

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



## CELEBRATE WITH ISHATVAM

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



## RECREATE YOUR CARMA LOOK

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



## MAKE IT UNFORGETTABLE

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



## CELEBRATE ETERNAL LOVE

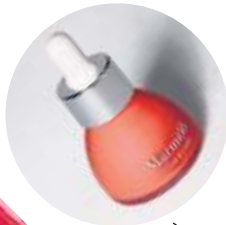
Embracing the festive spirit with Rangriti's specially curated Karwa Chauth collection. In a printed pink set with printed dupatta, add vibrancy and charm to your celebrations. Whether you're dressing for the evening puja or a family celebration, it ensures you look stunning while honouring traditions.



## SECRET TO RADIANT, DEWY GLOW

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

Price: INR 2199/- Quantity: 18 ML



## SPOTLIGHT ON BEAUTY!

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



## ELEVATE GLAMOUR WITH PLATFORM HEELS

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



## HOROSCOPE



### ARIES

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



### TAURUS

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



### GEMINI

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



### CANCER

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



### LEO

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



### VRIGO

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



### LIBRA

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



### SCORPIO

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



### SAGITTARIUS

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



### CAPRICORN

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



### AQUARIUS

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



### PISCES

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

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

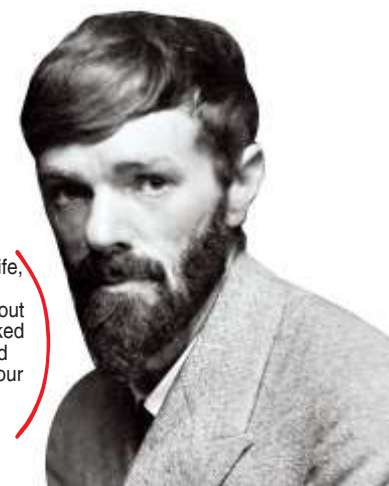


PHOTO: SATISH JAKHMOLA

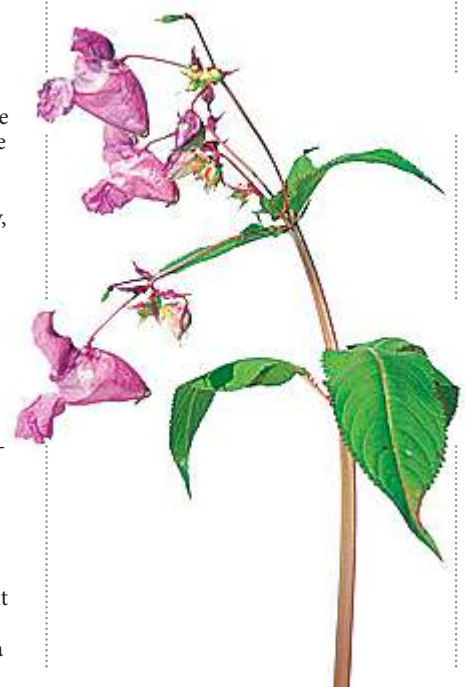
A journey to the Valley of Flowers is nothing short of a magical experience. It overwhelms and rejuvenates like no other place on the planet, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

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

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

The journey to the *Valley of Flowers* began in Rishikesh, a bustling town known for its spiritual significance and adventure activities. After a night of rest, we set off early in the morning, winding our way through the scenic roads that led us to the small village of Govindghat. The drive itself was a prelude to the beauty that awaited us, with the Alaknanda River accompanying us on one side and towering mountains on the other. From Govindghat, we embarked on a 13-kilometre trek to Ghangaria, the base camp for the *Valley of Flowers*. The trail was a blend of steep ascents, gentle slopes, and narrow pathways, each offering a unique view of the surrounding landscapes. Along the way, we encountered cheerful pilgrims heading to Hemkund Sahib, a sacred Sikh shrine situated nearby.

One particular moment that stood out during the trek was a sudden downpour. As we took shelter under a large rock, a local guide shared tales of how the valley transforms with each season, painting vivid pictures of snow-covered landscapes in winter and vibrant blossoms in summer. His stories, combined with the rhythmic sound of raindrops, added a mystical charm to our journey. Reaching Ghangaria, we spent the night at the Gurudwara, preparing ourselves for the main highlight of the trip. It is a



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



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



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

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

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

TEJAL SINHA  
tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TRENDING

LIAM PAYNE



PERSON

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

NICK JONAS RUNS OFF STAGE AFTER BEING TARGETED BY LASER POINTER



VIDEO

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

DO PATTI

MOVIE

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



BHOO BHULAIYAA 3

SONG



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

STATUE OF LADY JUSTICE

PICTURE



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

CHAT-O-CINO

HEALTH

## HIGH COST OF BURNOUT AT WORKPLACE

AARTI SREENATH  
aarti.sreenath9@gmail.com

In today's fast-paced and high-pressure work environments, the well-being of employees has become a critical concern for organisations. The increasing toll of workplace stress and health issues can lead to tragic outcomes, including fatalities. Employers are urged to take immediate action by implementing proactive wellness measures, stress management strategies and fostering harmonious work cultures. By prioritising employee well-being, organisations can combat the rising tide of workplace-related health crises by investing in initiatives such as health screenings, stress mitigation efforts and promoting a balanced work-life culture.

Enhancing the health and wellness of employees at the workplace is paramount. Jitin Bhasin, CEO and Founder of SaveIN, emphasises, "In today's fast-paced work environment, the well-being of employees is paramount. Employers have realised that it is imperative to implement effective strategies to prevent health crises, support mental wellness and promote a culture of sustainable delivery across the workforce. This means that such programs need to go much beyond providing a vanilla health insurance cover to their employees, which becomes applicable only for hospitalisation events and a lot of focus needs to be on preventive care, work-life balance and overall well-being."

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

**Establishing clear employee wellness program**

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

**Key elements of successful employee health and wellness program**

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

**Mental health and stress management**

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

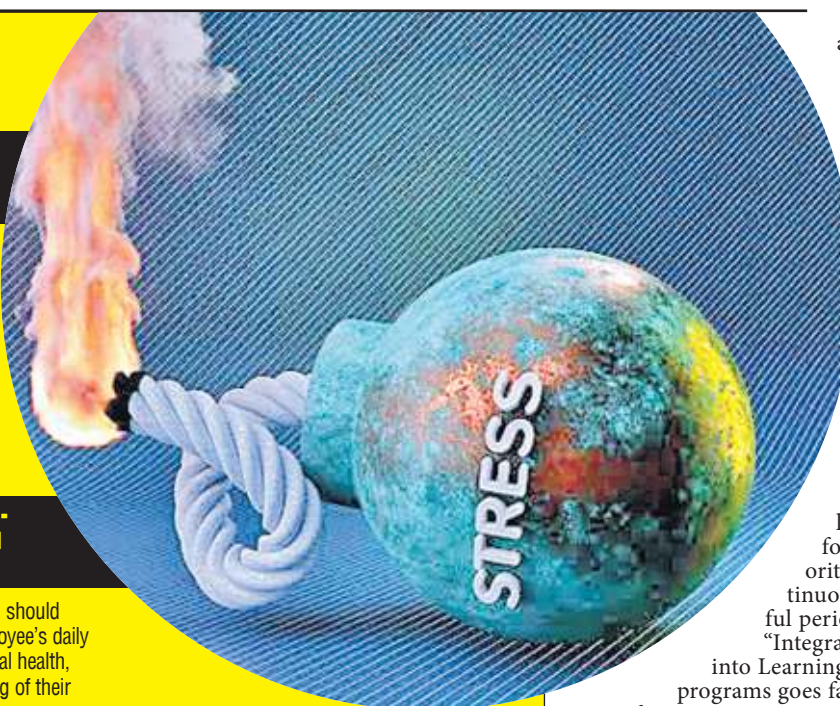
**Safety protocols and emergency response systems**

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

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

**Creating a Culture of Health and Fitness**

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



**RAPID FIRE**

**Describe yourself in three words:** Disciplined, forgiving and loving  
**Favourite holiday destination to go to:** Africa  
**A city you wish to visit:** I want to go into the jungles now; cosmopolitan life is so boring these days. I want to enjoy those waterfalls!  
**Favourite colour:** Red & Green  
**Favourite dish:** Depends on my mood, have a soft spot for onion omelette & my mother's sambhar

**FASHION**

**THE MAKING OF BEAUTY QUEEN**

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



**LIBERATING ADVENTURES**

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

**IDENTITY BEYOND GLADRAGS**

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

**FROM WEST FASHION TO SOUTHERN HERITAGE**

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

**SEWING HER LAST SEAMS PROFESSIONALLY**

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



**HEALTHY HABITS**

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



**HER BAJAJ CHETAK DAYS**

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



**WHEN REDDY GIRL'S SECRET WIN IGNITED HYD**

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

**DREAM MARRIAGE**

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

**ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH**

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



**SIBLING REVELRY**

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



**IN-LAWS' ENCOURAGEMENT**

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



**13 YEARS OF SPIRITUAL SADHANA**

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

**AMALA GARU — GUIDING LIGHT IN HER LIFE**

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

**GREENING**

