

QUOTE OF THE DAY
 The state government has prepared a plan with an outlay of Rs 5,500 crore to clean the Musi River. The people of Hyderabad are observing the conspiracies of opposition parties. BRS leaders did nothing but say big words for 10 years when the BRS was in power. However, the same BRS leaders are now inciting hatred where the Congress government is functioning. We did not touch the Musi buffer zone and FTL areas. For houses located on the Musi Riverbed, a survey has been going on and the government will rehabilitate them
 - Ponnam Prabhakar, Minister

Published From: HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH BHUBANESWAR RANCHI DEHRADUN VIJAYAWADA

Lokayukta Police register FIR against K'taka CM

TELECOM MANUFACTURING ZONES TO BE SET UP: SCINDIA

Jr NTR's open letter to HIS FANS

DON'T MISS...
 Will bring back Hyd's glory ...

Stating that the Congress government will definitely bring the lost glory to Hyderabad, the Hyderabad incharge Minister, Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar made it clear that the Congress government is ready to solve the problems of the Musi River Front victims. The Minister said that the government will launch Musi beautification works only after assisting the oustees. While speaking to the media on Friday at Secretariat Media Centre, the Minister said that the State ...

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Yadadri temple authorities ...

In the wake of controversy surrounding the alleged desecration of Tirumala Tirupati laddu, officials at the Yadadri Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple have stepped up vigilance to ensure purity of the offerings being provided to devotees. Following a nationwide uproar over the desecration of religious prasadam, the temple authorities have decided to take proactive measures to restore public confidence. Samples of ghee and oil being ...

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'Fiscal profligacy by poll-bound states...

Fiscal profligacy by poll-bound states needs to be watched closely, as higher spending on welfare measures will impact capital expenditure over the coming years, a Swiss brokerage said on Friday. A total of 11 states have gone to polls or are likely to have elections soon, the report by UBS Securities said, adding that four of them -- Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Odisha -- have increased their fiscal deficit targets. "The recent fiscal profligacy seen in poll-bound states should be watched closely," the... -PAGE: 8

Akash Deep, Ashwin keep...

Pacer Akash Deep was impressive in a probing opening spell while Ravichandran Ashwin removed the dangerous Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto before rain halted India's progress in the second Test on the opening day, here Friday. Given the forecast, it was expected to be a weather-hit contest from the beginning. Only 35 overs could be bowled after Rohit Sharma invited Bangladesh to bat in overcast conditions as visitors struggled to 107 for three after a brief resistance through Shanto (31). Mominul... -SPORTS

Deputy CM's house burgled; cops suspect servant's involvement

Thieves burgled the residence of Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and decamped with Rs 80,000 and ornaments on Thursday. Apart from his official residence Praja Bhavan in Begumpet, the Deputy Chief Minister resides with his family in his house in Banjara Hills. He is currently on a foreign tour. They have a servant named Roshan who was absconding from the house and Police suspect him for the burglary. According to Banjara Hills Police, a case has been registered and investigation is on to arrest the suspect.

Historical buildings along Musi to become tourist spots: CM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The historical buildings along the Musi River are set to become tourist destinations due to a new initiative announced by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. Appealing to industrialists, the Chief Minister urged them to contribute to preserving Hyderabad's cultural heritage, emphasizing the importance of these structures to the city's identity. He reaffirmed the government's decision to promote tourism and to make Telangana a welfare state. In a significant move, the TG Tourism Department signed an agreement with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) to restore ancient step-wells in Hyderabad. Speaking at the event, the CM highlighted the government's Musi Riverfront Development Project



and criticised past administrations for neglecting the city's historic buildings, many of which have fallen into disrepair. As part of this preservation drive, the Chief Minister announced plans for the renovation of the old Assembly building. Once completed, the Legislative Council will be relocated to the refurbished structure. Special attention will be given to the preservation

BRS demands Rs 50,000 crore to compensate Musi Project oustees
Says Musi rejuvenation is a scam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtira Samithi leaders P. Karthik Reddy, Chirumalla Rakesh Kumar, Y. Satish Reddy, Gajjala Nagesh and Dasarath criticised the Congress government's proposed Musi Riverfront Beautification Project. Addressing a press conference at the Telangana Bhavan on Friday, Karthik accused the government of engineering a massive scam under

the guise of Musi beautification and added that the administration has failed to prioritize public needs. "The Congress government has no interest in fulfilling the promises it made to the people. Instead, they are focusing on irrelevant projects," Karthik said. He added that Revanth is turning Hyderabad into a jungle, ignoring the state's pressing concerns. He said that during KCR's tenure, Telangana was



Govt arranges educational tours for 1 lakh TG students

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Government has rolled out the Telangana Darshini programme, offering educational tours to one lakh students from second grade to graduation, with focus on cultural, historical and ecological landmarks. Issued through a government order, the programme emphasises experiential

Willy-nilly Future City to benefit BRS leaders

NAVEENA GHANATE naveena.ghanate@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD

Although BRS leaders are alleging land grabbing by Congress activists in the Fourth City, there is a section within the party who are excited about the development. The recently floated tender for the Greenfield Radial Road, which seeks consultancy services for preparing a detailed project report for a road stretching from the Outer Ring Road at Raviryal to the Regional Ring Road at Amangal, has caught the attention of some BRS leaders. BRS leaders are making enquiries about when the government will construct the road, the extent of the road and how it will be constructed, that is, whether in one go or in phases. A BRS functionary who is an aide of KTR and whose property lies

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along the proposed Greenfield Road said, "The real estate here will boom. I was excited when it was initially planned for Pharma City, but with Future City, the gains will be even greater." He added that with the recently floated tender, the project is gaining

momentum making those with properties in the area optimistic. When asked about the allegations made by the BRS on land grabbing, he said, "It is true that Revanth Reddy's aides are buying lands left, right and Centre. Our land has been there for years and it is not land grabbing like that of the Congress. I learnt some officials are also buying land here." It may be mentioned here that last month, Harish Rao said that he would expose details of the land grabbing schemes under the guise of the 'Fourth City' project when the time is right. Continued on Page 5



Ambani donates Rs 20 crore to CM's Relief Fund

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Reliance Foundation has donated Rs 20 crore to the Telangana Chief Minister's Relief Fund. Representatives of the Reliance Foundation handed over the cheque on behalf of Nita Ambani to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy at his residence in Jubilee Hills.

Farmers plan march to Sectt over delay in loan waiver Give Dussehra deadline



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS MLA Harish Rao has issued a stern ultimatum to the Congress government demanding the implementation of the promise to waive farm loans up to Rs 2 lakh by Dussehra. Speaking at a farmers' protest meeting in Nangunuru

Mandal in Siddipet district, Harish expressed resentment at the government's failure to fulfil its promises and warned of massive protests if the situation continues. Harish highlighted the stark contrast between the leadership of KCR and the current Congress admin. He Continued on Page 5

DEMOLITIONS IN AMEENPUR

HC orders HYDRRAA chief, Tahsildar to appear on Monday

REVANTH CHITHALURI revanth.chithaluri@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana High Court has ordered the Commissioner of the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRRAA), AV Ranganath, and Ameenpur Tehsildar Radha to appear in court on Monday (September 30) regarding the demolitions in Ameenpur on September 22. If they can't appear in court personally, they should appear virtually, the court said. Justice K. Lakshman of the HC



heard a writ petition on Friday, which was filed by Mohammed Rafi and Ganesh Constructions. The petitioners said that although there are High Court orders and permissions regarding

ED raids Minister Ponguleti's offices, houses

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) raided Telangana Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy's offices and houses in Hyderabad on Friday. The ED raided multiple premises linked to Ponguleti and some others as part of a money laundering case linked to an alleged smuggling racket involving around Rs 100 crore, official sources said. The money laundering case stems from a Directorate of Revenue Intelligence complaint against Ponguleti's son, Harsha Reddy of the Raghav Group, who is alleged to have purchased seven watches worth Rs 5 crore. The payments for these are linked to an alleged hawala and



'Attempt to topple Congress government'

T PCC president B. Mahesh Kumar Goud said that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) raids on Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy are intended only to topple the Congress government. Mahesh said the ED raids on Ponguleti were conducted as per the advice of the BJP and the BRS and that it is all part of the BJP's vengeance game. Continued on Page 5



'He will come out like a washed pearl if innocent'

R eacting to the Congress criticism against the BJP regarding the ED raids on Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, the BJP's Medak MP, M. Raghunandan Rao, said on Friday that Ponguleti would come out smelling of roses if he had not committed any offences. Raghunandan said that the law is taking its own course and that ED raids



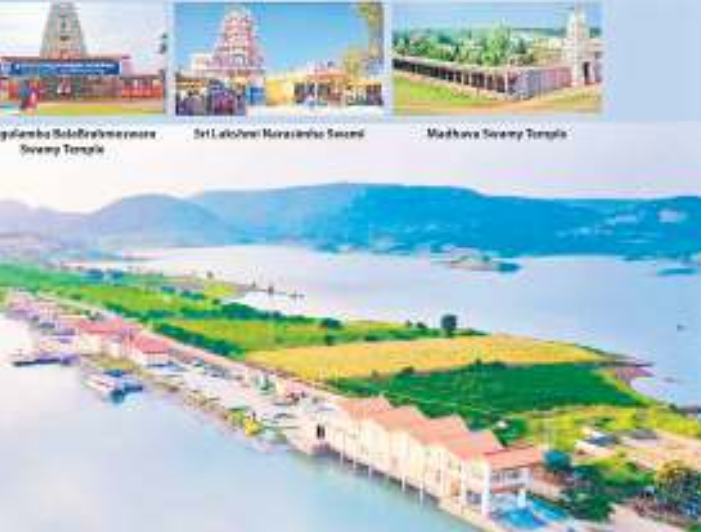
TG's Nirmal and Somasila bag Centre's award

SAMUEL JOSHUA samueljoshua@jmc@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana's Nirmal for Craft and Somasila for Spiritual and Wellness were recognised as Best Tourism Villages by the Union Ministry of Tourism on World Tourism Day observed on Friday. Nirmal District Additional Collector Faizan Ahmed along with Nirmal Toys Arts Society President S. Pentaiah received the award at a ceremony organised by the Union Ministry of Tourism at the Vignan Bhavan in New Delhi. The Best Tourism Villages Competition was

introduced in 2023 to promote tourism in Indian villages. The focus was to identify and recognise villages that preserve and promote cultural and natural assets through community-based values and a commitment to sustainability. The first edition of the Best Tourism Villages Competition in 2023 saw applications from 795 villages. In the second edition of the Best Tourism Villages Competition, a total of 991 applications were received from 30 States and UTs, out of which 36 villages were recognized as winners in eight categories in the Best Tourism Villages competition 2024.

BEST TOURISM VILLAGES



President Murmu to visit Telangana today

President Droupadi Murmu will visit Telangana on Saturday to attend different functions, according to an official statement. During the day-long stay, the President will grace the 21st convocation of NALSAR University of Law at Hyderabad, it said. She will also inaugurate the Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav 2024 at Rashtrapati Nilayam, Secunderabad, said the statement issued by the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Friday.



That sinking feeling: Revanth's rule is déjà vu

Out of the frying pan into the fire. This idiom aptly describes the current governance situation in Telangana. In their haste to escape the frying pan of the dictatorial, corrupt, family rule of KCR-led Bharata Rashtra Samithi (BRS), Telangana voters appear to have jumped into the fire of rudderless, incapable, attention-diverting Congress governance currently led by Revanth Reddy. When the Congress promised "change", voters assumed the party was referring to a "change for the better" - a change in the right direction. Less than nine months into its rule, a review of Congress's governance clearly shows that "pace" - from bad to worse - is the only change Revanth's governance has delivered.

In less than 10 years, KCR succeeded in eliminating all opposition voices and brow-beating the state bureaucracy into submission. Though the disastrous results of his dictatorial and corrupt style started surfacing during his second term, the complete picture of the devastation he caused to governance by engendering a "Yes Boss" culture in administration only became apparent after the voters dethroned him.

Under KCR's rule, the state Finance Department prepared budgets unrelated to actual expenditures year after year. Neither did it exercise control to maintain the sanctity of the budget, even as the state's financial situation crumbled to the level where it could not provide timely salaries to its employees. The Irrigation Department designed and executed projects worth tens of thousands of crores that failed quickly. The Police Department focused on snooping into citizens' private

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lives through mass-scale illegal phone-tapping and transporting black money for the ruling party candidates to fund their election campaigns. The Municipal department got busy taking bribes and providing illegal construction permits in prohibited areas. The Information Technology department got busy hyping the son of the Chief Minister as a globe-trotting, tech-savvy, futuristic leader and forgot to nurture the state into a start-up hub -- a fact that the department's Principal

Secretary himself alluded to in a newspaper interview after KCR lost power.

KCR's nine-and-a-half-year rule had left the state machinery in a shambles. Even as the state's High Court was fuming over tens of thousands of court orders left unimplemented by the disempowered and directionless bureaucracy, no officer of the state's steel frame could muster the courage to declare that the "emperor had no clothes". Consequently, citizens of the state had to suffer sub-par ser-



KISHORE POREDDY

vices in almost every area of governance, including education, health, and land revenue. In this context, the state's voters delivered a mandate for change. The change they hoped for was apparent. They wanted the new government to end corruption, empower institutions—especially the administrative machinery—

allowing them to become responsive and efficient, prioritise the rule of law, improve security, and deliver on the welfare measures the Congress promised through its Six guarantees.

et, the actions of the Congress government indicate that the malaise has only grown. Before the elections, Congress, like the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), made a hue and cry about corruption under the BRS rule. Nine months into its rule, the Congress government has not filed a case against any BRS politician in any significant corruption case. Be it the alleged corruption in the Kaleswaram project, the organised criminality of mass-scale illegal phone tapping, the shrewd distribution scam, the poultry feed scam or any other scam that pointed to the involvement of those at the highest power levels in the

previous administration.

The Congress's actions on the governance front, the focus of this article, are even more baffling. On Thursday, the Chief Minister made shocking comments while handing over appointment letters to the newly recruited Assistant Executive Engineers in Jal Soudha. In all seriousness, he indicated that half of the current engineers in the Irrigation Department are corrupt or inefficient. Yet he said he would not act against them because the department would become empty. His comments leave only two conclusions. He is unable to get a grip on administration due to inexperience; thus, he feels despondent. Or, he likes the status quo and wishes to make no changes because he thinks such officers would, in turn, do his bidding when he needs them to. Either way, the Chief Minister openly says there

would be no "change" from the previous BRS rule.

HYDRAA's actions also indicate a thoughtless and dictatorial "Ready, Fire, Aim" attitude towards governance. In most cases, HYDRAA demolished the dwellings of innocent citizens who had all requisite permissions without providing any compensation. Revanth neither accepted the criminality of the government departments nor took any strict action against officers for their malfeasance or misfeasance. Consequently, lakhs of innocent people who had purchased buildings with all necessary permissions fear losing their life savings and livelihoods. No wonder people feel they have jumped into the Congress' fire in their eagerness to escape the BRS' frying pan.

(The author is BJP TS spokesperson.)

Eatala: How can CM beautify Musi when he is unable to pay employees?

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Asking Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to explain how he will beautify the Musi River area when he is not in a position to pay salaries to government employees, the BJP's Malkajgiri MP, Eatala Rajender, said the CM thinks that the people would believe him even if he speaks lies.

Addressing the dharna staged at Maruthinagar in Kothapet with HYDRAA victims on Friday, Eatala said that Revanth has been demolishing the houses of the poor.

Eatala termed Revanth as a sadist and said that Revanth is



Malkajgiri MP Eatala Rajender stages a sit-in along with HYDRAA victims at Maruthi Nagar, Kothapet on Friday

will have to go to jail if they dance to the tunes of the CM.

Eatala assured HYDRAA victims that the BJP will stand by them. He demanded that the CM should explain what exactly he wanted to do in the Musi area and added that Revanth is trying to give the lands to bigwigs for constructing malls after seizing it from the poor. He said that there are four BJP MPs around the Musi victims and they are G. Kishan Reddy, Eatala Rajender, M. Raghunandan Rao and Konda Vishweshwar Reddy and also BJP MLAs. Eatala said the Congress government will remain in power for only two years.

looking like a heir of the Razakars. Revanth is speaking lies like a broker, Eatala alleged and warned officials that they

Mahesh assures full support to dwarfs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC President B. Mahesh Kumar Goud assured the dwarfs who met him on Friday at the Gandhi Bhavan that he will do everything he can to ensure that they receive the support, regard and benefits they deserve from the government.

Mahesh posted on X regarding this and also posted a video of the dwarfs.

He said in his post on X, "Met with a group of our dwarf brothers and sisters, led by Ms Purnima Mallik garu and was deeply moved by their everyday struggles. Their courage and strength despite facing countless challenges touched my heart. As a society, we have a responsibility to stand by them, and I assure them that I will do everything in my power to ensure they receive the support."

Complete Seetharama Project fast, says Uttam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy directed officials to speed up the Seetharama Project in Khammam district. He emphasized the need to fast-track the tender process and to ensure that there is no delay in land acquisition.

The Minister also stressed the importance of coordination among officials to get technical approvals and urged them to speed up administrative clearances.

The Seetharama Project's pump houses were inaugurated by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on August 15. Reviewing the progress of the tunnel and canal construction work on Friday at the Jalasoudha, Uttam held discussions with fellow ministers Tummala Nageswara Rao and Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and



Seetharama Project must be completed swiftly: Uttam Kumar Reddy

Irrigation Department officials.

The government's Irrigation Advisor, Aditya Das Nath, Chief Secretary Rahul Bojja, Special Secretary Prashant Jeevan Patil, and ENCs Anil Kumar and Nagender Rao were also present. The Seetharama Project CE Srinivas Reddy and Khammam District CE Vidyasagar attended the meeting.

During the review, Uttam pointed out that lethargy in

land acquisition should be avoided. He asked officials to ensure that administrative approvals are processed without delay and to complete tender procedures immediately. He also asked officials to coordinate in addressing technical matters.

Reiterating the commitment made by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, he stressed that the project must be completed within the stipulated time frame.

World Tourism Day celebrated at NITHM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Tourism and Cultural Affairs Minister Jupally Krishna Rao participated in the World Tourism Day celebrations held at the National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Management (NITHM) in Gachibowli.

The event aimed to promote Telangana's tourism, cultural preservation and employment opportunities for the youth through Young Tourism Clubs. During the event, the Minister presented awards to the district collectors of

Mahabubnagar, Warangal and Jagtial, who have made significant efforts in promoting tourism and protecting heritage. He also honoured restaurant and hotel managers for their exemplary services in the hospitality industry.

The event featured captivating dance performances by students and artists, including Shivapriya, Kakatiya, Kuchipudi and Perini dance forms. Special songs and plays showcasing patriotism, Telangana's progress and tourist destinations accompanied these performances.

HCL invites CM to its HITEC City office inauguration



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Roshni Nadar, the Chairperson of HCL Technologies, met Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to personally invite him to the inauguration of HCL's new office in Hyderabad's HITEC City.

The new facility is expected to generate 5,000 engineering jobs, contributing to the region's growth. During their meeting, both leaders discussed a shared vision for bolstering educational and skill development

opportunities in Telangana.

They explored potential collaborations between HCL's GUVI platform and Telangana's Skill University to strengthen training programmes and expand educational initiatives. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy expressed gratitude to Roshni Nadar for HCL's consistent support and presence in Telangana, recognizing the company's role in creating job opportunities across the state.

GHMC orders to close meat shops on Oct 2

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has ordered that all meat shops in the GHMC limits should be closed on October 2, Mahatma

Gandhi's birth anniversary. All the cattle and sheep and goat slaughter houses in the GHMC limits and the retail meat and beef shops shall remain closed on Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary.

Former MLAs criticise govt for failing to help Srisailam evacuees

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former MLA Beeram Harshavardhan Reddy expressed dissatisfaction with the state government, comparing its election promises to empty words and its actions to mere chopper rides.

He criticized the government for failing to resolve the problems of Srisailam evacuees. Harshavardhan recalled that Revanth had accused past governments of committing injustice towards the evacuees during elections.

He said that during KCR's tenure, 78 evacuees were given permanent jobs as 'lashkars,'

and there was a proposal to fill 6,000 such posts, prioritizing the Srisailam evacuees. Although a government order was issued, Harshavardhan pointed out that Revanth's election promises have not been fulfilled.

He also took a dig at ministers visiting the erstwhile Mahabubnagar district, stating that they came in "choppers" and left after making empty promises, without addressing the critical issues faced by the Srisailam evacuees.

He urged immediate action to resolve the problem, remarking that the government's honeymoon period is

over and that public hospitals are in a dire state. He predicted that people would soon revolt against the Congress government.

Former MLA Nomula Bhagat from Nalgonda district also joined in criticizing the state's ministers, accusing them of prioritizing personal agendas over public welfare.

Bhagat specifically called out Komatireddy Venkat Reddy for spreading lies about Mission Bhagiratha, a project that was credited by the Centre for eliminating fluorosis in Nalgonda district when Venkat was an MP.

Nadda coming to Hyd today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BJP President JP Nadda is coming to Hyderabad on September 28, that is, on Saturday.

During his visit, Nadda will first have a darshan of Goddess Ujjaini Mahankali in Secunderabad. Later, he will participate in the BJP membership drive at Khairatabad Bada Ganesh.

After that, a meeting would be held with BJP leaders at the Tourism Plaza in Begumpet.

Nadda will give directions to BJP leaders on strengthening the party and its membership drive.

No more unauthorised wall posters, writings

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Commissioner Amrapali Kata said that unauthorised wall posters and wall writings will be banned with the aim of beautifying and improving the city image. She warned that action would be taken on people if posters and writings were pasted on the walls with-

out permission. The Commissioner ordered the Deputy Commissioners to speak with the owners of printing presses and cinema theatres under their jurisdiction.

In this regard, the Deputy Commissioners have been directed to act strictly and take appropriate action against those who have posted wall posters and wall writing without permission and to impose fines if necessary.

Why is Congress govt sparing houses of the rich, asks Maheshwar

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BJLP leader Alleti Maheshwar Reddy asked whether the Congress government which is demolishing the houses and huts of the poor doesn't see the houses of bigwigs.

Maheshwar also questioned the Congress government which is issuing notices on bigwigs and enabling bigwigs to get stays from courts to explain why it is not issuing notices to the poor.

Addressing the victims of HYDRAA in the Musi Riverbed area after visiting them along with Malkajgiri MP Eatala Rajender on Friday, Maheshwar said the Congress government has been enacting a high drama in the name of HYDRAA.

The government is demolishing the houses of the poor but it is not in a position to demolish the houses of bigwigs. It is only a gimmick of the Congress government to divert public attention from the assurances it gave to the people.

Maheshwar said that many people purchased houses on the Musi Riverbed as they

were not aware that the houses were built in the FTL area. However, officials are demolishing these houses without issuing notices, he said.

The BJLP leader said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is engaging in time-pass politics and touring the US without bothering about the problems of the poor.

Maheshwar asked the CM, who is demolishing the houses of the poor, to explain why he is not demolishing his brother's residence. He said that the BRS government had looted the state in the name of the Kaleswaram Project and the Congress government is looting the state in the name of Musi cleansing.

The government has no money to fulfil its 6-assurances but where from it is getting money to cleanse the Musi River, Maheshwar asked.

Why is the Congress government not demolishing the houses of Old City leaders who constructed buildings encroaching tanks, he asked and added that the Congress government is looting the state like the BRS government.

Traffic curbs imposed for President's visit

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In connection with the visit of the President of India to Hyderabad city on Saturday, there might be traffic congestion in certain areas in the northern part of Hyderabad.

According to the traffic advisory issued by the P Viswa Prasad, Additional Commissioner of Police, traffic will be either stopped or diverted at the Begumpet Flyover, HPS Out Gate, PNT Flyover, Rasoolpura, C.T.O, Plaza Junction, Tivoli, JBS, Secunderabad Club, Karkhana, Trimulgherry, Alwal, Bolarum,

Ranigunj, Greenlands Junction, Monappa junction, Somajiguda Road, Yashoda Hospital, MMTS, VV Statue Junction (Khairatabad), Panjagutta, NFCL, NTR Bhavan and Jubilee Hills Check Post between 10.30 am and 12 noon and between 5 pm and 6.30 pm in the evening. Traffic coming from Risala Bazar towards Bolarum Check post will be diverted towards Freedom Foundation and held 100 meters before the junction. Traffic coming from Lakdawala towards Bolarum Check Post will be diverted towards Freedom Foundation and Bolarum Bazar.

Viatrix contributes Rs 6.4 crore for school breakfast

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Viatrix, as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative, has contributed Rs 6.4 crore to provide nutritious breakfasts to 28,000 students across 312 schools in Kodangal constituency. This initiative aims to enhance students' overall well-being and academic performance by addressing nutritional needs.

On September 27, a MoU was signed between Michelle Dominica, Head of India CSR and Administrative Services at Viatrix, and Kaunteya Dasa, the CEO of the HKM

Charitable Foundation. The signing took place in the presence of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

The CSR wing of the Telangana Government, T-SIG, played a key role in facilitating this partnership through its representative, Archana Suresh. Special Officer Venkat Reddy from KADA also attended the event.

This tie-up highlights the joint efforts of the government and the private sector in improving educational outcomes through nutritional support for students.

Pravasi Prajavani counter inaugurated for Gulf workers

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A special Pravasi Prajavani counter for Gulf workers and NRIs was inaugurated at Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Praja Bhavan on Friday. Hyderabad in-charge Minister Ponnampal Prabhakar officially launched the

counter, which aims to address the issues faced by those working abroad. The first application was received from the family of Sheikh Hussain, a Gulf worker facing difficulties. During the same event, a total of 365 applications were received as part of the regular Pravajani programme.

These included 105 related to revenue issues, 58 for the power department, 42 for the SC welfare department, 29 for the Panchayat Raj and Rural Development departments, 26 for the Minority Welfare department, 22 through the Pravasi Prajavani platform and 83 from other departments,

according to officials.

Dr Chinna Reddy, Vice-Chairman of the State Planning Commission, and Divya, Special Officer of Public Governance, were present and interacted with the applicants, assuring them of action on their concerns.

CITY EVENTS

Annual Cyber Security Conference

Securing the future: Navigating the Intersection of Cybersecurity, privacy and AI. The conference will feature discussions on key cybersecurity trends and issues. Minister for IT D Sridhar Babu to be the chief guest.

Venue

The Westin Hyderabad, Raheja Mindspace, Madhapur, Hyderabad September 28, 9 am.

Fertiproject 2024

Fertility Preservation Society (India)'s International Annual Conference.

Venue

Hotel Taj Vivanta, Begumpet, Hyderabad September 28, 7.30 pm

SERP - SARAS Fair-2024

Venue

People's Plaza, Hyderabad September 27 to October 7

Qadir Ali Baig Theatre Foundation

The premiere of its new play to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the theatre doyen Qadir Ali Baig. In the august presence of Governor of Telangana Jishnu Dev Verma. 'SUNSET - SUNRISE' (English / 60 minutes)

Venue

Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre & HICC, September 29

Mix, stomp & indulge

Enjoy the finer things in life, delicious food, refreshing beverages and delightful moments

Venue

Novotel, Hyderabad Airport, September 29, 12 pm to 4 pm

Dubai Property Show

Property experts coming to your city

Venue

ITC Kohener, HYTEC City, Plot No. 5, Survey No. 83/1, Madhapur, Opposite Inorbit Mall October 5 and 6.

Toxic

By Abhishek Upmanyu

Venue

Shilpakala Vedika November 2

Prateek Kuhad

Shouettes tour.

Venue

Hyderabad international convention centre November 8

Woman ends life in fear of demolition of her house

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a tragic incident, a 66-year-old woman committed suicide by hanging herself to the ceiling fan in her house on Friday morning in Kukattally police station limits.

The woman was identified as Gurrampalli Buchamma and she was a resident of Yadav Basti in Kukattally area. Shivayya and Buchamma have two houses and a site near Nalla Cheruvu and the government demolished some houses near this area a week ago. Fear of losing their houses become a worry for the couple and Buchamma committed suicide, said relatives. Buchamma was a strong lady and the couple worked very hard throughout their life to construct the houses for their daughters, said relatives and neighbours of Buchamma. Demolition notices have been given to some residents of Nalla Cheruvu area and demolished some houses in this area a week ago.

City Pioneer

the pioneer

HYDERABAD SATURDAY | SEPTEMBER 28, 2024

03

RS 5,500 CRORE TO CLEANSE THE MUSI RIVER

Will bring back Hyd's glory: Ponnam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Stating that the Congress government will definitely bring the lost glory to Hyderabad, the Hyderabad incharge Minister, Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar made it clear that the Congress government is ready to solve the problems of the Musi River Front victims. The Minister said that the government will launch Musi beautification works only after assisting the oustees.

While speaking to the media on Friday at Secretariat Media Centre, the Minister said that the State government prepared a plan with Rs 5,500 crore to cleanse the Musi River. He said that the people of Hyderabad were observing the conspiracies of the opposition parties. The Minister said that they did not touch the Musi buffer zone and FTL. However, houses located in Musi River bed survey is going on and the government will provide rehabilitation to them.

Condemning the allegations of the opposition parties that the Congress government is doing injustice to the Musi oustees, Prabhakar offered BRS working president KT Rama Rao, who has been criticising the Congress government



Minister Ponnam Prabhakar speaking to the media in Hyderabad on Friday

sharply in regard to HYDRABAD, to share his views with him if KTR really has love towards people. He alleged that the BRS leaders did nothing but utter big words for 10 years when the BRS was in power. However, the same BRS leaders are now

provoking hatred against the Congress government.

The Minister alleged that the Congress constructed the Outer Ring Road (ORR). However, the previous BRS government sold it for Rs7,380 crore. He demanded

The Minister said that they did not touch the Musi buffer zone and FTL. However, houses located in Musi River bed survey is going on and the government will provide rehabilitation to them

KTR to come for a debate on the money spent on Hyderabad by the previous BRS government. Has the previous BRS government put its efforts to quench the thirst of the people of Hyderabad? The BRS has been in power for 10 years, but the water-logging centres are still in the same situation. He alleged that the BRS party obstructed construction of Metro Rail in Old City.

MRDP: Survey continues, residents protest

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Though the residents have been obstructing the officials not to red mark their homes for the Musi River Development Project (MRDP), the revenue officials have surveyed and marked the structures on the Musi Riverbed and its catchment areas for the second consecutive day.

In Langer house, a protest was conducted against the ongoing project and the government on Friday morning. More than 100 people started a rally at Langer House against the evacuation of the people. They raised slogans against the government and the Chief

Minister Revanth Reddy.

There was tension situation at Satya Nagar, Vinayaka Nagar, Venkatasai Nagar, Maruti Nagar and Phanigiri Nagar in Chaitanyapuri mandal; Langar House in Golconda mandal; Puranapool Darwaja in Nampally mandal; Kashibugga temple, Jiyaguda in Bahadurpura mandal and other areas in the city.

A woman said that it has been 9 months since Revanth Reddy came to power. "He is not looking at our worries. We have paid current bills, water bills and other bills. When we paid that money, didn't the authorities know about this land," she asked.

Min Uttam receives 320 applications from people

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy received 320 applications from the people at Gandhi Bhavan in the 'Face-to-Face with Ministers' programme on Friday. The Minister received the applications relating to land issues, GO No. 317, Mallanna Sagar victims, Sahara, DKZ Technology companies victims, pension, ration cards and other related issues.

The Minister took the applications for four hours, which started at 11.30 am. On this occasion, Minister Uttam enquired about the issues of the applicants and made phone calls to the higher officials and directed them to solve the problems. He recommended the applications to the ministers, MLAs and higher officials concerned.

On the other hand, the

Gandhi Bhavan staff uploaded the applications department-wise on the computers. The Minister received applications from women, pregnant women, handicapped and old-age persons specially.

The Minister said that the government is going to set up special meetings for the sake of ration cards and health cards and the people should submit applications in those special meetings in their respective areas.

Speaking on the occasion, TPCC president B Mahesh Kumar Goud said that people have confidence in the Congress and hence they are approaching the party seeking solution for their issues. He said that they will solve the problems of the applicants following the rules speedily. However, the people should be patient as it is a continuous process, he added.



Residents on Musi Riverbed happy to get 2BHKs

NAVEENA GHANATE
naveena.ghanate@gmail.com
■ HYDERABAD

The relocation of Musi Riverbed houses in Hyderabad has commenced. Officials have estimated about 1,600 houses which are on the river bed for shifting. "An official 68 per cent of the people who are living in the houses are ready to move. The 2BHK units, and the relocation process has already begun. However, due to the ongoing protests, some of them are rethinking their plans. That percentage might be brought down to 60-65%. Priority is to shift those living in shanty houses on the river bed."

This move, part of a broader urban development plan, has been prompted by the State government's goal to restore the Musi River, with aspirations of transforming it into a landmark, similar to the Thames River in London. Officials said that the CM has a clear vision to make the Musi River like Thames and he has been reiterating the importance of the initiative. The areas of Malkapet



and Musharambagh are among those where residents are currently being shifted.

Abdul Raheem, a resident of Shankar Nagar for the past 15 years, expressed his happiness with the move. "I have been told I will be given a 2BHK. They will conduct a lucky draw to allocate the house. I am ready to shift and just need to pack. The allotment information was shared with us in our basti."

Another citizen, Mohammed Azeem, who received a call about the relocation, expressed mixed feelings. "We were told we would be getting a 2BHK in Uppal, but it will be far for my kids to go to school. If I get a house in Saidabad, it would be better," he said, acknowledging

the positive aspect of getting a new home but concerned about the distance.

District Collector Anudeep Durishetty announced that 20 families were moved to their new homes on Friday, with several others scheduled to be relocated soon.

On Friday, six families from Shankar Nagar in Himayatnagar mandal, three families from Vinayaka Veedhi and 11 families from Nampally were relocated. The Collector explained that families from the Musi Riverbed area in Malakpet are being shifted into double-bedroom units at Pilli Gudisela, while others from Nampally were moved to Asif Nagar's Ziaguda.

Govt will rehabilitate families of students, without disturbing academic year

MAUD Principal Secretary and Musi River Development Corporation Limited (MRDCL) managing director Dana Kishore said that as per the orders of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, if there are students in displaced families, the evacuation process will be undertaken without disturbing their academic year. The government has been evacuating the people who are residing in the buffer zone and riverbeds of Musi river. On Friday, a meeting was held at the NIUM conference hall in Masab Tank with the representatives of NGOs on the topics of Musi beautification, resettlement of displaced persons and other issues. Dana Kishore said that a survey will be conducted with a committee consisting of NGO representatives. Based on their report, admissions will be made

in the nearby schools in the double bedroom houses. Those who are interested will also be included in SC, ST, BC and minority residential schools. A survey should be conducted for two days from September 28 to get the details of children who go to Anganwadi centres and to students who go to colleges in Musi area. Officials should conduct a mapping so that the students are admitted to the schools near their 2BHK houses. The government wants to ensure that no student is inconvenienced. The Principal Secretary said that the families who are living in the buffer zone will be rehabilitated and given compensation as per the Rehabilitation Act. He also said that the structures will be removed only after providing all the benefits due under the law.

Mangalya Shopping Mall opened

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Tollywood sensation Samyukta Menon on Friday inaugurated the 21st store of the Mangalya Shopping Mall in Narsingi. Samyukta Menon lighted the lamp marking the inauguration of the store.

Addressing the gathering after the inauguration, the Tollywood heroine observed that Mangalya Shopping Mall emerged as the biggest shopping mall in Telugu states with its wide range of textiles. It is also featuring the most modern varieties of the merchandise. The store offers silk, fancy, Kanchi, Dharmavaram and Uppada silk saris. It also offers a wide variety of the modern collections. The store specialises in offering kids' wear, ethnic wear, men's and women's wear, exclusive textiles for weddings and offers



many other varieties to the delight of the customers.

Shopping Mall directors PN Murthy, Kasam Namassivaya, Kasam Mallikarjun, Kasam Kedarinath, Kasam Siva Prasad and Pulluru Arun Kumar said that the Mangalya Showroom won the hearts of Telugu people for the past 12 years and started 12 outlets.

They hinted at starting another store at Manikonda on

Sunday.

Further, they expressed their desire to expand their business to neighbouring Karnataka.

They thanked the people of Telugu states for patronising Mangalya textiles. Kasam Phani, Kasam Sai Krishna, Kasam Dheeraj, Dr Kasam Preetam, Todupunuri Arun Kumar, Karthik, Vishal, Varun and others took part in the event.

Future would be good, when plastic is banned: Guv

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Governor Jishnu Dev Varma said that plastic should not be used and the future will be good only when it is completely banned. The Governor participated in the Swachhata Ki Bhagidari programme at Indira Nagar Colony in Khairatabad on Friday.

He said that our house, our village, our country should be clean and safe. Everyone should be aware of cleanliness (Swachhata). Cleanliness is also part of the service to the nation.

Principal Secretary Burra Venkatesham said that the Governor has adopted Indira Nagar Colony, which is near to Raj Bhavan and the

Secretariat. Along with the cleanliness of the colony, necessary steps will be taken to develop every house in the colony.

He said that from the Governor's office, NSS volunteers will go to the houses in Indira Nagar Colony to find out what problems they have, collect details about the status of the family and take necessary steps to develop each house in that direction.

GHMC Commissioner Amrapali Kata, Joint Secretary Bhavani Shankar, Additional Commissioner Raghav Prasad, Zonal Commissioner Ravi Kiran, sanitation staff, colony people, women, NGOs, students and others participated in the programme.

Konda Laxman Babuji remembered

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Freedom fighter Konda Laxman Babuji was remembered on his 109th birth anniversary on Friday. Mahesh M Bhagwat, Additional Director General of Police (Law & Order) garlanded the portrait of the freedom fighter at the DGP Office.

In his address, Bhagwat spoke about the pivotal role played by Babuji in various movements that shaped the course of Indian history.

He highlighted Babuji's active participation in the Quit

India Movement, where he fought against British colonial rule with unwavering courage and dedication.

He also praised Babuji's leadership during the Mulki Movement in 1952, which sought to secure employment opportunities for locals in Telangana.

Furthermore, he emphasised Babuji's instrumental role in the 1969 Telangana movement, during which he resigned from his ministerial position to join the struggle for

a separate State.

Cyberabad Police Commissioner Avinash Mohanty, along with other officers garlanded the portrait of Konda Laxman Babuji at Cyberabad Commissionerate office.

Rachakonda Police Commissioner Sudheer Babu also paid floral tribute to Babuji at his commissionerate and said Babuji is a symbol of Telangana self-respect and he played a great role in the Indian independence struggle.



Nobel laureate backs Hyd's Cyber Satyagraha movement

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Nobel Peace Laureate Tawakkol Karman officially supported the Hyderabad's newly launched Cyber Satyagraha movement, highlighting the urgent need to help women navigate the complexities of the digital world. Karman, a well-known Yemeni activist, noted that women are often more affected by cyber violence and misinformation.

During her speech at the World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates, Karman said, "In the fight for digital

peace, we must ensure that women are empowered and protected. Cyber Satyagraha is essential for promoting ethical online behavior and supporting women's rights in cyberspace."

Sundeep Kumar Makthala, who leads Cyber Satyagraha, expressed gratitude for Karman's support. He stated, "Her commitment in supporting women aligns with our mission to create a safer digital environment. By addressing the unique challenges women face online, we can foster a more inclusive cyberspace."

GREEN INDIA CHALLENGE

Spunge tree saplings to be distributed to every temple

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

years.

The Green India Challenge continues its initiative to distribute and plant spunge tree (Prosopis cineraria) saplings to every temple across Telangana, coinciding with the Dasara festival.

Former Rajya Sabha MP J Santosh Kumar, along with priests from Swarnagiri temple, Bhongir, unveiled the programme's poster. Spunge tree, Telangana's State tree, holds spiritual and cultural significance. Traditionally, people pray to the tree and exchange its leaves on Dasara, wishing each other well-being. However, the tree's numbers have declined over the

To address this, Green India Challenge founder Santosh Kumar launched the "Ooru Ooru ko Jammi Chettu - Gudi gudi ko Jammi Chettu" campaign three years ago and is successfully continuing it. In all, 10,000 saplings will be distributed to temples in all villages and towns by the Green India Challenge.

GIC co-founder Karunakar Reddy appreciated the former MP's efforts, recalling that the former Telangana chief minister declared spunge tree as the State tree. GIC assured measures will be taken to ensure the saplings' survival.



e-shram awareness campaign launched

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

The Legal Aid Society of ICAFI Law School, IFHE, in collaboration with ANKITA NGO, conducted an awareness and registration drive for the e-Shram scheme on Friday in Shankarpally mandal. The initiative focused on workers in unorganised sector in the region, aiming to educate them on the benefits of the scheme.

During the event, S Kannan and Brahmam provided an informative overview of the Ministry of Labour's Welfare scheme, which is designed to support unorganized sector workers. The registration process, managed by workers from ANKITA NGO, resulted in the successful registration of 65 workers from Shankarpally's labor market and nearby construction sites.

These registered workers will receive accidental insurance coverage of Rs 2 lakh under the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana.

TTD LADDU ROW

Yadadri temple authorities step up vigilance over prasadam

PNS ■ YADADRI BHUVANAGIRI

In the wake of controversy surrounding the alleged desecration of Tirumala Tirupati laddu, officials at the Yadadri Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple have stepped up vigilance to ensure purity of the offerings being provided to devotees. Following a nationwide uproar over the desecration of religious prasadam, the temple authorities have decided to take proactive measures to restore public confidence.

Samples of ghee and oil being used in the preparation of prasadam are currently being dispatched to a laboratory in Hyderabad for comprehensive testing. Along with it, laddu and pulihora prasadam made at the Yadadri temple have also been sent for rigorous analysis. Reports indicate that the ghee used in the preparation is sourced from Mother Dairy, a well-known and



reputable supplier.

Like in Tirumala, laddu making is automated in Yadadri temple also.

The temple's Executive Officer, Bhaskar Rao, emphasised the commitment to maintaining the

highest standards of quality. "We are dedicated to using only pure ingredients in our prasadam preparation. The ghee is procured at a rate of Rs 609 per kg. To ensure compliance with these standards, the samples are tested

at the local government laboratory in Nacharam.

The potential fallout from the lab results could be significant. A clean report would be reassuring for devotees; however, any evidence of adulteration could ignite political turmoil. The issue has already created friction in Andhra Pradesh.

In the wake of the controversy, major temples across various states have adopted similar precautionary measures.

They are now sending samples of ghee, oil, and milk used in their offerings for rigorous laboratory testing, reflecting a broader initiative to ensure the authenticity of religious prasadam, according to officials in Yadadri.

As this situation unfolds, the commitment to maintaining the purity and quality of prasadam remains a top priority for temple authorities, reinforcing the trust and faith of the devotees.



Minister for Forests and Environment Konda Surekha calling on injured Forest Department officers at a hospital in Warangal on Friday

Forest section officer, Beat Officer assaulted in Mulugu dist

The incident happened when officers tried to stop encroachment on forest land

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Two forest officers were attacked by a mob in the Damarvayi forest area under the Tadvai forest range in Mulugu district on Thursday.

The incident happened when three officers comprising Forest Sector Officer Vinod Kumar, Forest Beat Officer Sharath Chandra and Suman attempted to arrest three persons for illegal tree felling in a bid to grab upon forest land. The three persons who employed an earthmover to fell the trees attacked the Forest Department officials indiscriminately with iron rods. The officers suffered bleeding

injuries.

The attackers, according to Forest officers, were led by Ganta Suraj Reddy.

Upon being informed, Divisional Forest Officer Rahul Jadhav Yadav and staff rushed to the spot and ferried the injured officers to private hospitals. Meanwhile, Minister for Forests and Environment Konda Surekha visited the Forest Section Officer Vinod Kumar and Forest Beat Officer Sharath Chanda at the hospital.

She enquired about the health condition of the officers.

Divisional Forest Officer Rahul Kishan Jadhav explained to the minister the circumstances that led to the clash with the assailants.

The Minister spoke with the family members of the injured Forest officials and assured them of the necessary support on behalf of the government. She directed the DFO to monitor their health condition till they recovered fully.



Shadnagar MLA V Shankar at Bathukamma celebrations in Shadnagar on Friday

MLA leads Bathukamma celebrations at Shadnagar

A large number of NSUI and Youth Congress members participate in festivities

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Admiring nature and glorifying the greatness of Pudami Thalli, Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar emphasised that the Bathukamma festival symbolises the essence of Telangana's rich cultural traditions. The event, organised by the National Students' Union of India (NSUI) and the Youth Congress, witnessed a large gathering of women and stu-

dents at Buggareddy Garden in Shadnagar town.

In his address, MLA Shankar highlighted the importance of Bathukamma as a celebration of Telangana's heritage, while also fostering unity among the participants. The festivities saw the active participation of leaders, including Yuvajana Congress State General Secretary Anand Mohan Mudiraj, former Kesampet ZPTC Vishala

Shravan Reddy, and women's leader Ramadevi. Local MLA Shankar also joined in the traditional Bathukamma games with women from the community, strengthening bonds of camaraderie.

Several other leaders, including Nagamani, Varsha Lakman Goud, Solipur Rajesh Goud, Sai Vamsi, Arjun, Naveen, Pradeep, Narender, and Ajay, were also present, contributing to the vibrant celebration.

Govt will complete all projects in Nalgonda: Rajgopal

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Munugode MLA Kommatireddy Rajgopal Reddy on Friday made it clear that the government is committed to speeding up construction of project, providing water to farmlands and welfare of farmers. He criticised previous governments for depleting the state's finances through excessive borrowing, which posed significant economic challenges. However, he assured the people that the current government, under Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, is actively working to fulfil all promises.

While inspecting drainage system across various villages in the Munugode constituency, he addressed farmers' concerns about the delays in receiving loan waiver benefit due to technical issues. Rajgopal Reddy urged

patience, assuring that officials are committed to resolving their problems.

He also criticised the previous government for diverting funds from crucial projects, promising that irrigation initiatives will be completed with the help of Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy and Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkata Reddy.

Rajgopal Reddy unveiled a bronze statue of Acharya Konda Lakshman Babuji in Gattuppal mandal to commemorate his 109th birth anniversary.

He also stressed the importance of handloom workers, stating that their skills are gaining global recognition. He pledged to bring their issues to the Chief Minister's attention and to ensure that the government supports the purchase of saris made by these artisans.



Munugode MLA Kommatireddy Raj Gopal Reddy unveiling statue of Konda Lakshman Babuji in Gattuppal mandal in Nalgonda district on Friday

Ponnam directs officials to expedite Karimnagar Smart City works

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Minister Ponnam Prabhakar directed officials to expedite the completion of pending works under the Karimnagar Smart City project. He held a review meeting at his chamber in the Secretariat, along with Principal Secretary for Municipal Administration and Urban Development, Dana Kishore.

The municipal officials informed the minister that out of 47 works initiated under the project, 25 have been completed, 20 are ongoing, and two are yet to begin.

Ponnam Prabhakar provided guidance and set a deadline for the completion of pending works, including those at Ambedkar Stadium, which must be finished within a month. In the meeting, the minister reviewed the development of 27 schools under the Smart City initiative and sought details on the progress. He inquired about the facilities and infrastructure provided and directed that the remain-



ing works be completed promptly.

He also questioned the utility and maintenance of the Circus Ground, asking for revenue details and how it benefits the city's residents. Regarding e-learning smart classrooms, Ponnam Prabhakar sought updates on their status.

The development of various junctions under the Smart City project, including Old Power House Junction, HKR Junction, Sadasivampalli Junction, and Telangana

Chowk, was reviewed through a presentation. The minister raised concerns about inflated estimates for some junctions without proper approval and instructed Dana Kishore to gather detailed reports on these. Ponnam Prabhakar expressed his dissatisfaction with the Project Management Committee (PMC) regarding the city's dumping yard issues. He blamed poor management practices for the recent fire at the yard, which led to heavy smoke affecting the city. He discussed possible measures to address the dumping yard problem with the officials. The minister also inspected areas prone to water stagnation during rains, including the ABD zones, Labour Adda Road, and the stretch leading to the Two Town Police Station, directing officials to resolve these issues.

Inquiries were made about the city's Command Control Centre, including the number of cameras and microphone systems installed, and the Wi-Fi hotspots in the city.

New water rides inaugurated at Wonderla

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Film actor Naga Chaitanya inaugurated two thrilling new water rides at Wonderla, offering an exciting experience to visitors. The event took place on Friday at the popular amusement park in Kongara Ravirala, where Naga Chaitanya congratulated the Wonderla management for introducing these attractions to enhance visitor enjoyment.

Arun K Chittilapilli, Managing Director of Wonderla Holidays, was also present at the launch. He emphasised that as



Film actor Naga Chaitanya inaugurating new water rides at Wonderla in Rangareddy district on Friday

India's largest amusement park chain, Wonderla Holidays Limited is constantly seeking ways to provide unique and

entertaining experiences for the public. The two new water rides, imported from Turkey, reflect Wonderla's commitment to offering innovative attractions that bring fun and excitement to people looking to escape their busy routines.

Speaking at the event, Naga Chaitanya praised the park's efforts in delivering exceptional entertainment to Hyderabad's residents. Arun K Chittilapilli further highlighted Wonderla's goal of creating an environment where visitors can enjoy an unforgettable experience filled with joy and excitement.

Dalit dies of burns after alleged ill-treatment by SI

PNS ■ JAGTIAL

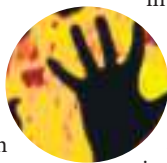
Bollarapu Sivaprasad, who attempted suicide by immolation due to alleged ill-treatment by Korutla sub inspector, died while undergoing treatment at Gandhi hospital in Hyderabad on Friday.

He alleged that the woman sub inspector had slapped him while counselling him and his wife

in a family dispute case. He succumbed to burns

He suffered 40 per cent burns when he tried to immolate him after dousing himself in kerosene.

Following marital discord between Siva Prasad and his wife Kavita, the sub inspector Sweta counselled the couple on Sunday last on the basis of a complaint lodged by wife with the Korutla Police.



Khammam district grappling with drug abuse

A rehabilitation centre is also opened to tackle the problem

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Khammam district is currently grappling with a growing drug abuse. Officials raise concern over growing marijuana addiction, leading to health issues and societal challenges. Despite ongoing police efforts to curb drug trafficking, the rampant trade of marijuana continues unabated. To combat this crisis, a new de-addiction centre has been inaugurated in Khammam.

In recent years, young people, who were once addicted to cigarettes and alcohol, have increasingly turned to marijuana at a young age. A large number of youth in the district have fallen prey to addiction, with many unable to cope without



their daily dose. These individuals are facing severe health and mental health challenges, often losing track of their actions while under the influence of drug.

While police have been actively targeting marijuana

peddling, the smugglers are finding new ways to continue their illegal business on contraband. In response, the government has taken steps to not only clamp down on drug trafficking but also to provide rehabilitation for those affected.

Last year, a de-addiction center was established at the General Hospital in Khammam to facilitate this effort.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has issued directives to law enforcement to intensify actions against drug dealers and strengthen the ongoing anti-drug campaigns in the district.

Under the leadership of Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt, significant seizures of

marijuana have been made across various locations.

The de-addiction centre aims to rehabilitate individuals who have fallen prey to drug abuse. Dr Soumya Grace, the centre's in-charge, emphasised the need to intensify the efforts to weed out drug menace once and for all. She also stressed the need to rehabilitate the youth who are addicted to drugs.

Local authorities emphasise the importance of collective efforts to eradicate marijuana from the district.

District Collector Mujamil Khan stated, "We must ensure that no one falls victim to drug abuse. The de-addiction centre will play a crucial role in providing necessary medical services for those affected."

Officials told to work with a sense of responsibility

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI



District Collector Koya Sree Harsha has directed officials to work with a sense of responsibility to develop Peddapalli into a beautiful town and minced no words when he said that he would not spare anyone constructing buildings without taking approvals.

He directed the officials to take steps to demolish the illegal buildings without hesitation. He reviewed the progress of developmental activities of the Telangana Urban Finance Infrastructure Development Corporation with the officials here on Friday. He enquired about the developmental works initiated in various wards and urban areas with the TUFIDC funds. He asked them to complete the developmental works as per the deadline. He asked the officials to conduct a special drive to maintain sanitation in all wards and pay special attention to the nurseries. He inspected the municipal dump yard in the town, the integrated vegetarian and non-vegetarian markets under development in the agriculture market yard here, SC girls' hostel.

TELANGANA INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE CORPORATION LIMITED, HYDERABAD.
(Govt of Telangana Undertaking)
5th floor, Parklands Business, 4 No. 5-8-2002, Park-Madani Road, Hyderabad - 50. Phone: 23228250 (24) Fax: 23228250 (24) Email: info@ticiil.com

e-Procurement Notice No: 3/GM(P&A)/TGIIC/Outsourcing/2024-25 Date: 23.09.2024.
TN.No 03: Invites quotations from reputed and experienced outsourcing agencies in Hyderabad District for providing personnel on outsourcing basis (Project Engineers (Civil/Electrical/Environmental), Finance Executives, Hardware Engineers, Data Entry Operators, Data Entry Officers, Drivers, Messengers, Security Guards, etc.)

Bid download starts date: 11.10.2024 from 11.00 AM
Last date for submission of bids: 25.10.2024 upto 03.00 PM

The details of tender notices and bid documents can be downloaded from web site: www.tender.telangana.gov.in

DEPR R.O. No.: 452-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2024-25 **General Manager(P&A)**

Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority
4 Floor Swarnajayanti Commercial Complex, Ammapet, Hyderabad.

Public Notification Utn. 15 (4) of HMDA Act, 2005 dated 03.09.2024

(G.O.Ms.No. 114 MA & UD Dept. Hyderabad dated 03.09.2024)

In exercise of powers conferred by Sub-Section (1) of Section 15 of Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority Act 2008 (Act No.8 of 2008), the Government hereby makes the following variation to the road network envisaged in the notified HADA Master Plan approved by the Government vide G.O.Ms.No.267, MA, dt.03.04.2008, as required by sub-section (1) of the said section.

The proposed 24mtrs HADA Master Plan Road passing through in Sy.No. 1,2,8,9,11,31,32,33,34,35,38,112,321,326,324,323 of Mandalipally (V), Balapur(M), Badampet Municipal Corporation, Ranga Reddy(D), approved by the Government vide G.O.Ms.No.267, dt.03.04.2008 is now realigned through existing road passing through Sy.No. 35,34,33,31,326,330,115,113,112,10,1,2,5,12,16,18, 46&47 and village settlement of Mandalipally (V), Balapur(M), Badampet Municipal Corporation, Ranga Reddy (D), as 24mtrs., Master Plan Road (AA-BB to CC-EE), subject to widening of the existing road within the applicants site without affecting the approved layout plots.

The details of the above are available in Web sites (<http://www.telangana.gov.in>) and (<http://hmda.gov.in>)

DEPR R.O. No.: 455-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2024-25 **Sd/- for Metropolitan Commissioner, Director Planning-II, HMDA**

ACROSS THE STATES



MCD wrongly overpowered, mandate stolen: Kejriwal

The BJP has wrongly overpowered the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and stole the mandate, AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal alleged on Friday after the saffron party won the last vacant seat of the civic body's standing committee. The councillors of the ruling AAP and Congress had boycotted the election. With this poll result, the BJP now has 10 members in the panel while the ruling AAP has only eight. Addressing the Delhi Assembly, Kejriwal said that according to rules only the mayor can convene a meeting of the MCD House but the lieutenant governor changed it and directed an additional commissioner of the civic body to do it. "Is this election?" he posed and accused the BJP of resorting to "hooliganism". The former chief minister claimed that as per the rule, a notice has to be sent to every councillor 72 hours before the meeting, but it was not followed. In the election, the BJP's Sunder Singh got all 115 votes of the BJP councillors while the AAP's Nirmala Kumari did not receive any vote.



Villagers panic over 'footprints' of leopard, wolf

The forest department in Uttar Pradesh's Budaun district has stepped up vigil after animal footprints, suspected of leopard or wolf, were reported in a few villages. However, forest officials said the footprints belong to a canine species. The tracks found could be of a dog, jackal or another canine species. There is no evidence of a tiger (leopard) in the area, as the prints belong to the dog family, Forest Ranger Akanksha Gupta said. Locals in Budaun claimed that the prints indicate the presence of a leopard or wolf, amid reports of leopard and wolf sightings in neighbouring Bahraich district. The forest department received calls from Yaad Ram and Mahipal Singh of Nurpur village regarding the sighting of footprints, Gupta said. Villagers of Nurpur, in the Kadarchaak region of Budaun, claimed that they saw the "paw prints" in their fields, causing widespread panic about a possible leopard sighting. A team from the forest department went to inspect the area after they received information. Ranger Gupta, along with her team, examined the footprints and collected samples for further analysis.

HC orders HYDRAA chief,..

Continued from page 1

land, the officials demolished their five-floor hospital building. The counsel of the petitioner said the officials issued a notice on September 21, at 6.30 pm. That day was Saturday. They told the petitioner to vacate the land within 48 hours. But on Sunday, at around 7.30 pm the authorities demolished the building. The counsel said that during the demolitions, the authorities did not allow the petitioner to submit court orders. In an order, which was issued on September 5, the High Court had ordered the officials not to interfere and not to demolish the building in the property without following the due process of law. The counsel for HYDRAA told the court that HYDRAA never visited the subject property and never asked the Ameenpur Tehsildar and the Ameenpur Police to demolish the subject property. However, they will follow the procedure laid down under GO No: 99. The order was disposed of on

September 5. When the authorities issued the notice, the petitioners submitted their explanation. The court pointed out that officials did not consider the letters of the petitioners. The court asked the counsel for the government why the officials did not consider all those replies. After hearing the arguments, the court noted angrily that the authorities had not considered the explanations. The Tehsildar and HYDRAA commissioner should appear on Monday (September 30) in court either virtually or physically. If it is not inconvenient to appear physically, they can appear virtually, but they have to appear, the court said. The Tehsildar seems to have closed his eyes instead of checking the court's orders, the HC said. The court told the counsel for the government, "Let him (HYDRAA Commissioner) come and answer. This is a very serious matter. Buildings cannot be demolished just like that."

BRS demands Rs 50,000 crore..

Continued from page 1

economically prosperous and peaceful. However, under the current government, all systems are collapsing, with people's cries being heard on TV channels. Karthik criticised the HYDRAA initiative, saying that they have served only to instil fear among the public, and claimed that the Congress government is pushing farmers into poverty. "During KCR's rule, the farmer was number one, but now they are beggars," he said. Karthik accused the Congress government of using the Musi Beautification Project as a cover for looting public

money. He pointed out that a DPR was prepared for the project during KCR's rule with an estimated cost of Rs 16,000 crore, and asked how the estimate had now zoomed to Rs 1.5 lakh crore. "How will investing Rs 1.5 lakh crore in a river that barely has water generate returns?" he asked. He mocked the idea of constructing a riverfront on a river that flows only for two months in a year and said that people have no interest in it. Comparing the project to the Namami Gange initiative, which spans 2,400 km and was executed for Rs 40,000

Lokayukta Police register FIR against Karnataka CM

PNS ■ MYSURU

Lokayukta police here on Friday registered a First Information Report (FIR) against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and others in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment case, following the court order, official sources said.



A Special Court in Bengaluru on Wednesday ordered a Lokayukta police probe against Siddaramaiah in the case, setting the stage for filing an FIR against him. The order of the Special Court Judge, Santhosh Gajanan Bhat, came a day after the High Court upheld the sanction granted by the Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot to conduct an investigation against Siddaramaiah on the allegations of illegalities in the allotment of 14 sites to his wife B M Parvathi by MUDA. The Special Court exclusively to deal with criminal cases related to former and elected MPs/MLAs issued the order directing the Lokayukta police in Mysuru to initiate an investigation on the complaint filed by RTI activist Snehamayi Krishna.

The Court issued directions to take up the probe under section 156 (3) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) (that gives a magistrate the power to order an investigation into a cognisable offense.) and file the investigation report by December 24. "Acting under Sec.156(3) of Code of Criminal Procedure, the jurisdictional police i.e., Superintendent of Police, Karnataka Lokayukta, Mysuru is hereby directed to register the case, investigate and to file

"I am being targeted as Opposition is scared of me": Siddaramaiah

PNS ■ MYSURU

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday claimed he was being targeted in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment case as the opposition is "scared" of him and said it's the first such "political case" against him. The Chief Minister reiterated that he won't resign following the court ordering a probe against him in the case as he has done no wrong and asserted that he

would fight the case legally. Accusing the central government of misusing central agencies like CBI, ED and also the office of the Governor in the opposition-ruled states across the country, he said there was a need for a national debate on Governors' "interference" in administration. "I have done no wrong. This is for the first time a political case is being registered against me. This is a political case, please underline," Siddaramaiah told reporters here.

a report as contemplated under Sec.173 of Cr.P.C., within a period 3 months from today," the court had said. It had listed offences punishable under Sec.120B (Punishment of criminal conspiracy), 166 (Public servant disobeying law, with intent to cause injury to any person), 403 (Dishonest misappropriation of property), 406 (

Punishment for criminal breach of trust), 420 (Cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property), 426 (Punishment for mischief), 465 (Punishment for forgery), 468 (Forgery for purpose of cheating), 340 (Wrongful confinement), 351 (Assault) and other relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code.



HC expresses displeasure over non-production of file

Not declaring Jama Masjid 'protected'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court expressed its displeasure on Friday over the failure of authorities to produce before it a file containing the decision of then prime minister Manmohan Singh that the historic Mughal-era Jama Masjid in the national capital should not be declared a protected monument. A bench headed by Justice Prathiba M Singh observed that in spite of an earlier order, "loose sheets" and other documents were tendered to it instead of the record pertaining to the mosque's status as a monument, its current occupants etc. Granting a final opportunity, the court sought an affidavit in the matter from a competent officer of the Archaeological

Survey of India (ASI) as well as the original file on the next date of hearing in October. It also asked the ASI director general to directly supervise the matter and hold a meeting with the central government's counsel -- Lawyers Anil Soni and Manish Mohan -- to ensure that a comprehensive affidavit is filed. The high court was hearing PILs that have sought directions to authorities to declare the Jama Masjid a protected monument and remove all encroachments in and around it. On August 28, it had directed the Union Ministry of Culture and ASI to positively produce before it a file containing Singh's decision that the Jama Masjid should not be declared a protected monument.

Stalin meets PM; seeks funds for Chennai Metro



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday and sought early release of pending funds for Chennai metro and integrated education initiatives, besides an intervention to protect Tamil fishermen. The DMK president, who described the meeting as "purposeful", presented a detailed report on three main issues. "The Prime Minister listened patiently," Stalin told reporters after the meeting. The chief minister sought the speedy release of funds for the Chennai metro project as Rs 18,544 crore has already been spent so far. The state government wants to start work on the second phase of the Chennai metro and the non-disbursement of the pending dues has "caused a delay in the works, he emphasised.

EC seeks explanation from Maha CS, DGP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sending out a stern message, the Election Commission on Friday sought an explanation from the Maharashtra chief secretary and the state's police chief for failing to fully implement its orders on the transfer of officials ahead of the upcoming assembly polls. In a strongly-worded letter, the poll body said despite a directive issued on July 31 to relocate officials who had served in their home districts or cur-



rent posting for over three years, the state administration had not completed the process. According to the Election

Commission's (EC) mandate, the compliance report was due by August 31. While the additional director general of police submitted a partial report, the chief secretary is yet to provide a full response. Sources noted that more than 100 inspector-level officers in Mumbai and revenue officials, many holding key positions in the state, had not been transferred as required. Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar expressed his displeasure over the state administration's non-compliance, stating that the delay undermined efforts to ensure a free and fair electoral process.



BJP raises charges against Vadra

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Friday dredged up the alleged corruption involving Rahul Gandhi's brother-in-law Robert Vadra when the Congress was in power in Haryana by firing a fresh salvo against the opposition party ahead of the assembly polls in the state. BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia claimed the election in the state is a fight between "Haryana ka laal" (son of Haryana) and "dalaal" (fixer) of the Gandhi family, as it questioned the Congress leadership's silence on the corruption charges against Vadra and the party's then government headed by Bhopinder Singh Hooda. He said people of the state have made up their mind to elect the BJP to power for a third straight term, asserting that the central government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the state government headed by Nayab Singh Saini have worked for farmers' welfare.

IFS officer, husband booked for defrauding Lucknow doctor

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

An Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer and her husband have been booked here for allegedly duping a doctor of over Rs 64 lakh on the pretext of investment, police said on Friday. SHO Rajesh Kumar Tripathi told PTI that an FIR in the matter was lodged on Thursday at the Gomti Nagar police station on orders of a court. In her complaint, Dr. Mridula Agarwal alleged fraud

amounting to Rs 64,63,250 against the IFS officer Niharika Singh, her husband Ajit Gupta and their associated companies in Lucknow. A police official said the IFS officer is currently posted in Indonesia. PTI could not immediately contact her for a response. The FIR has been lodged under IPC sections 406 (criminal breach of trust) and 420 (cheating) for the offence that took place between February 2 and 29, 2020.

M V Shreyams Kumar president of Indian Newspaper Society

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

M V Shreyams Kumar of Mathrubhumi was on Friday elected president of the Indian Newspaper Society, an apex body of publishers of newspapers, magazines and periodicals. Kumar succeeds Rakesh Sharma of Aaj Samaj. Vivek Gupta of Samrag was elected deputy president, Karan Rajendra Darda of Lokmat vice president and Tanmay Maheshwari of Amar Ujala honorary treasurer of the society. The 85th Annual General Meeting of the society was held through video-conferencing. The 41-member Executive Committee includes S Balasubramanian Adityan of



Daily Thanthi, Samahit Bal of Pragativadi, K N Tilak Kumar of Deccan Herald & Prajavani, Vivek Goenka of The Indian Express, Mahendra Mohan Gupta of Dainik Jagran, Kundan Vyas of Vyapar-Janmabhoomi, Atidev Sarkar of the Telegraph, K R P Reddy of Sakshi and Pratap G Pawar of Sakal.

Attempt to topple Congress..

Continued from page 1

Speaking to the media on Friday, Mahesh said that the ED raids are an attempt to threaten Congress leaders as the BJP is unable to digest the support the Congress government in the state is getting from the public. He assured that the party would stand by Congress leaders. It is not right to play cheap tricks to topple the Congress government, Mahesh said. He pointed out that 97 per cent of

the ED raids in the last 10 years were against opposition leaders aimed mainly for political purposes. Mahesh said that the BJP is filing 'false' cases against opposition leaders and added that the Congress will face such cases as per law. He said the Congress government would help the poor who had been hit by HYDRAA demolitions. He said the Congress government had waived farm loans up to Rs 2 lakh as assured during the election campaign.

He will come out..

Continued from page 1

are not taking place in Ponguleti's residence for the first time. There were ED raids earlier regarding his son's watches issue, he said and added that the BJP has nothing to do with the ED raids on Ponguleti. Targeting former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, Raghunandan said that Jagan is saying that YSRCP leaders are throwing mud on the BJP as Jagan is not in a position to sign the declaration at Tirumala. He said that it is in the Constitution that people of other religions should sign a declaration before entering Hindu temples.

Historical buildings along..

Continued from page 1

of the iconic Jubilee Hall, a building of historical significance constructed using unique technology. Revanth suggested that the CII should adopt the Jubilee Hall and preserve it. The Chief Minister also spoke about restoring the old Osmania Hospital and plans to build a new facility at the Goshamahal Stadium. He also stressed the importance of protecting the High Court building, revealing that the government has already allocated 100 acres at Rajendra Nagar for the construction of a new High Court building. Other notable structures like the Puranapool Bridge and the Hyderabad City College will also be preserved, with the Charminar Conservation Project already underway.

Willy-nilly Future..

Continued from page 1

"In Kandukur, 385 acres of government land in Survey Number 9 is being grabbed. In Tukkguda, 25 acres of land belonging to poor farmers in Survey Number 895 are being taken over through proxy transactions. In Mucherla, the PAs of government officials are buying lands in the name of bigwigs," Harish said, promising to reveal more details soon.

Govt arranges educational..

Continued from page 1

learning and aims to provide students with practical exposure to Telangana's heritage and diverse sites of interest. The initiative has been carefully structured into four categories based on student age and grade: Students from 2nd to 4th grade will participate in day trips to nearby monuments or heritage sites within their village or mandal. Fifth to 8th grade students will take trips to locations within 20 to 30 km. Ninth grade to Intermediate students will be taken on two-day tours, visiting sites within 50 to 70 km. Graduation students will have four-day trips to destinations outside their district but within the state. The programme has a budget of Rs 12.1 crore, with the cost per student varying by category. The programme's broad goals are fostering an understanding of Telangana's culture and history while encouraging students to explore the region beyond their classrooms. The tours will be organised during school days, with safety and transportation being coordinated by the concerned Collectors and SPs.

Farmers plan march to..

Continued from page 1

emphasized that under KCR's governance, farmers witnessed transformation, with schemes like Rythu Bandhu providing direct financial support and Mission Kakatiya reviving water resources, enabling two crops in a year. "Before KCR, farmers had to stand in line for fertilizers, something that changed completely under his leadership," he said, pointing out the improvements in electricity supply, irrigation and agricultural infrastructure during KCR's tenure. Harish criticised Revanth Reddy's leadership and accused him of betraying farmers with false promises. He pointed to the failure of the Congress government to deliver on the Rs 7,500 per acre promise under Rythu Bandhu and bonuses for fine variety paddy. He added that farmers, despite being promised Rs 2 lakh loan waiver have not received any relief, leading to unrest in the farming community. "Revanth continues to deceive our farmers with his lies," he said.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Playing with lives

CDSCO flags over 50 drugs, including paracetamol, as substandard, raising serious health concerns

In a concerning development, the Central Drugs Standards Control Organisation (CDSCO) has declared over 50 commonly used drugs, including Paracetamol and Pan D, as "not of standard quality" in its latest quality check report. The drugs, which also include vital medications such as calcium and vitamin supplements, high blood pressure medications, and anti-diabetic pills, were flagged in the organisation's August 2024 report, raising serious questions about their safety and efficacy for public use. The CDSCO's monthly quality check, which involves random sampling by state drug officers, identified numerous drugs under the "Not of Standard Quality (NSQ Alert)" category. Among the affected products are popular over-the-counter medicines such as vitamin C and D3 tablets, Shelcal (a calcium and vitamin D3 supplement), paracetamol tablets (IP 500 mg), Glimperide (an anti-diabetic drug), Telmisartan (for high blood pressure), and anti-acid Pan D. These widely used drugs, manufactured by companies like Hetero Drugs,



Alkem Laboratories and Karnataka Antibiotics & Pharmaceuticals Ltd, pose potential risks to consumers due to their substandard quality.

The CDSCO's report included two lists, one naming 48 drugs that failed the quality tests and another listing 5 drugs under investigation as potentially spurious. In response to the findings, some manufacturers have claimed that certain batches of the flagged products were spurious and not manufactured by them. But that is a standard defence. A thorough probe must be initiated against such companies. This isn't the first time the CDSCO has taken action against unsafe drugs. Earlier in August, the central regulator banned over 156

fixed-dose drug combinations (FDCs) across the country, citing "likely risk to humans." These recurring incidents are ringing alarm bells about the quality control standards in India's pharmaceutical industry and the potential health risks posed by compromised drugs on the market. As the investigation into the spurious drugs continues, the public's trust in the safety of medicines remains at stake. Last year cough syrup supplied to Africa had allegedly resulted in deaths of 141 individuals. This not only is inhumane act but also tarnishes the reputation of Indian pharmaceutical industry in the world. For consumers, the key takeaway is to remain cautious about the medications they purchase and consume, particularly from lesser-known sources. Additionally, it is imperative for the regulatory framework to intensify its vigil to ensure that pharmaceutical companies adhere to strict quality standards. And we are not even talking about the Counterfeit medicines that are freely sold in the market. CDSCO report has just scratched the surface of this 65 billion dollar market. Blinded by greed, many companies indulge in manufacturing substandard medicines and even counterfeits. They have scant regard for human life and are fixated on making profits. Indeed the Government has to deal with them with heavy hand and give them the taste of their own medicine.

PICTALK



Performers dressed in traditional attire rehearse for Garba, ahead of Navratri festival, in Ahmedabad

Quad summit: Prioritising security in the Indo-Pacific



SUDHIR HINDWAN

Quad summit reiterated its commitment to ensure regional stability and foster sustainable development in the face of China's growing influence

The fourth Quad Summit, held in Wilmington, Delaware, USA, marked a significant step toward reinforcing the strategic partnerships between the member countries—the United States, India, Japan, and Australia. The Quad, officially known as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, has become an essential platform for collaboration on multiple fronts, particularly in addressing security issues across the Asia-Pacific, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean Region. Over time, the scope of this partnership has expanded to include critical areas such as disaster management, digital infrastructure, and climate change, making it a multifaceted initiative with both security and development dimensions.



One of the key highlights of this summit was Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's proposal to establish a new collaboration between India and the United States in the semiconductor sector. Modi emphasised the potential of AI (American-Indian) power, in reference to both artificial intelligence and the burgeoning US-India partnership. This collaboration, centered on a semiconductor facility near Noida in Uttar Pradesh, promises to bring advanced technologies, including control chips essential to both Indian and American security. The move is seen as a direct challenge to China's and Taiwan's dominance in the global semiconductor market, signaling a shift in the geopolitical landscape of technology. Alongside the semiconductor cooperation, maritime and cyber security remained top priorities for the Quad. The recent summit, attended by US President Joe Biden, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, underscored the strategic importance of these areas. The Quad leaders are working to counter a variety of regional conflicts, including the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, transnational terrorism, and both traditional and non-traditional threats emerging in the Indo-Pacific. The member nations are

particularly concerned about China's increasingly aggressive stance in the Indian Ocean and parts of the South and East China Seas, areas critical to global trade and security. Through dialogue and coordinated efforts, the Quad aims to tackle the growing threat of terrorism, especially in the Indo-Pacific region. By fostering diplomatic engagement and conflict resolution mechanisms, the Quad hopes to promote stability while ensuring economic prosperity for all member nations. The group's shared strategic vision is vital in shaping a multilayered, multilateral strategy for dealing with security challenges in an increasingly interconnected world. The Quad is not only a military alliance but also a platform for fostering development in fields such as education, science, biotechnology, and strategic planning, further strengthening the bonds between its members. India's rising global influence has been evident through its leadership in multiple international organisations such as the G20, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). These roles have allowed India to showcase its diplomatic prowess and address global issues. The Quad summit provided yet another opportunity for India



THE QUAD LEADERS ARE WORKING TO COUNTER A VARIETY OF REGIONAL CONFLICTS, INCLUDING THE ONGOING WAR BETWEEN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE, TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM, AND EMERGING IN THE INDO-PACIFIC

to contribute to the development of a robust, cooperative international system. The discussions during the summit included the need to evolve a new strategic approach to counter threats from nations that seek to destabilise the global order. A key focus of the summit was the Indo-Pacific region, where the Quad aims to ensure a free, open, and secure maritime environment. This area has become a flashpoint for various conflicts, with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) posing a significant challenge to regional stability. To counter this, the Quad members have collaborated on several initiatives, including the "Quad-at-Sea" Ship Observer Mission, which will enhance maritime security by 2025. Moreover, the group is also investing in renewable energy and high-quality infrastructure projects in the Indo-Pacific, aiming to foster sustainable development and reduce reliance on Chinese-led initiatives. Health cooperation was another important topic at the summit, with the Quad leaders announcing a collaborative effort to combat cervical cancer through the Quad Cancer Moonshot initiative. This humanitarian approach, combined with the group's security efforts, underscores the

Quad's commitment to a comprehensive vision for regional stability and prosperity. The focus on addressing modern terrorism, including its funding and cyber threats, also highlights the Quad's adaptive approach to emerging security challenges. The ongoing collaboration among the Quad nations is not limited to traditional security measures. The group is working to enhance policing cooperation, cyber security, and border protection by leveraging technological innovations. These efforts are particularly crucial in addressing non-state actors who engage in smuggling, drug trafficking, and cyber-attacks. By tightening security mechanisms and boosting intelligence-sharing, the Quad hopes to build a more resilient defense network across the Indo-Pacific. The Quad's influence has also extended to humanitarian aid, as seen in its support for Papua New Guinea. The summit emphasised the need for a vigilant, modern approach to security, replacing outdated strategies that no longer fit the current geopolitical landscape. (The writer is recipient of Bharat Gaurav and Rastriya Gaurav Award is a professor and an expert of strategic affairs, views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SIDDARAMAIAH FACES HEAT

Madam — The Karnataka High Court's dismissal of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's petition challenging the Governor's sanction for inquiry against him in the MUDA (Mysore Urban Development Authority) case is a political setback for Siddaramaiah. It is untenable for him to continue in office. The court has paved the way for Lokayukta to investigate the case in which the CM's wife Parvathi has been allotted 14 sites when she should have gotten only two sites as per rules. The judge raised some questions and inferences: Would the allotments have been made, "bending the rule from time to time," if the beneficiary were not the wife of a politician wielding power in various positions? While Siddaramaiah might not have signed any of the allotment documents or issued orders for the same, can he claim that he was not aware of what government favours his wife was getting and that she was claiming and getting benefits beyond her entitlement? These questions naturally lead to the judge's finding that "it prima facie, depicts stretching of the arms of undue influence and portrays abuse of power of the seat of the Chief Minister or Minister or any other post held by Siddaramaiah." For a politician who has had a relatively clean image over a long political career, these observations are damning. These are the very questions that the common man and voter, too, would be asking, given the facts of the case.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Washington

CONCERN OVER CUSTODIAL DEATH

Madam—Now, another custodial death happened under another "double engine" government on September 23. According to the official report, Akshay Shinde, the accused of sexually assaulting two girls at a school in Badlapur, Maharashtra, snatched the revolver of one of the policemen, and he died in retaliatory firing by police. The Bombay High Court expressed serious concerns

Ensure children's safety



Recently, a physical education teacher (PET) was booked under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, as reported in your newspaper. The incident highlights the vulnerability of children but also raises serious questions about the effectiveness of current protective protocols in edu-

cational institutions. This distressing event underscores the urgent need for stronger measures to safeguard our children from such grievous acts. It is critical that schools adopt thorough background checks for all staff members and provide regular training on child protection measures.

Furthermore, the reported stone-pelting incident, which resulted in injuries to four policemen, is an alarming indicator of rising public disorder. It's essential for law enforcement agencies to address such issues swiftly to uphold public safety and order. The authorities should take immediate action to strengthen child protection laws and ensure strict enforcement. In addition, public awareness campaigns should be launched to educate the community about the importance of safeguarding our children and maintaining public order.

Juloori B Saraswathi | Hyderabad

KANGANA'S COMMENTS BACKFIRE

Madam — Actor-turned-politician and the BJP MP Kangana Ranaut once again at the centre of controversy with her recent remark calling for the return of the now-repealed farm laws, though withdrawing it later. Her remark highlights a pattern of provocative statements that raise important questions about her intentions and the broader political implications, leaving the BJP itself in an embarrassing situation every time. The BJP high command must know that while her willingness to engage in controversial topics can energise a segment of the party's base due to her celebrity status, her comments always draw flaks and pose risks. The BJP must ensure that its party members maintain balance in their comments, especially when addressing sensitive topics like agriculture and farmers' rights.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Technology as a force multiplier in education

The intertwining of education and technology has brought about a profound transformation in the way knowledge is imparted

Education gave birth to technology and technology revolutionised education in several ways giving the "Force Multiplier" effect in promoting the main objectives of education. The Covid-19 pandemic has acted as a catalyst in revolutionising the educational system. With many objectives and aims wherein education and technology both became mutually inclusive and dependent. Thus many educational tools emerged, and technology catapulted the availability of much-needed time that can be highlighted in various and innumerable ways, and how technology is promoting education with such tools. It becomes our utmost responsibility to guard against its misuse considering the emerging Artificial Intelligence (AI), Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR). The Information Technology (IT) resources thus aid in academics as well as research. A Learning Management system (LMS) along with an Enterprise resource planning (ERP) has been introduced in educational institutions and universities to have outcome-



based education. The future of higher education thus lies in embracing technology effectively as it is taught by the challenges faced during the Covid-19 pandemic, providing innovative use of e-learning platforms for an effective learning environment. With technological advancements, it is now necessary to enhance education so that it meets the interests of both students and teachers. It is very essential to build awareness about the process of technology with remarkable advances in technology. The way technological advancements are incorporated into the education system for knowledge transfer is remarkable. Thus the teach-

ing learning process has undergone revolutionary changes and posed challenges to forcibly learn the effective use of technology (teaching tools). While the education system is harnessing the several advantages of technology-based tools, it is pertinent and equally important to foresee the negative aspects emerging in some quarters and ponder over the preventive steps to be thought of in the ever-changing world of the education system. Thus Information Communication Technology (ICT) in education has become important for imparting quality education that is ethical, transparent and secure. The ICT tools have transformed how the education sector is evolving. The rapidly emerging technology and the educational field are inseparable and they are like conjoined twins to monitor and improve quality in higher education. However, one needs to address the challenges associated with digital access to transform education. Education requires continuous monitoring, brainstorming and supervision and with the invasion of technology

into the teaching-learning process, it has become very effective. Technology offers accessibility to educational resources such as online platforms and digital libraries that offer a wealth of information making learning very interesting and dynamic. The e-resources aid in a very large magnitude, especially with the integration of artificial intelligence which will increase opportunities for research and academics. The design of technology and its implementation includes the perspectives and the skills that are required for diverse users. Thus technology is an integral part of education with the development of various devices such as laptops, smartphones, and apps that have changed the learning process. Education with technology has progressed by leaps and bounds in modern times. This blend has helped to achieve perfection but with caution that it must not be misused and produce adverse consequences. (The writer is Director Academics, Dr DY Patil Medical College, Pune; views are personal)



P VATSALA SWAMY





FIRST COLUMN

COUNTERING WORKPLACE MANIPULATION

It can quietly undermine trust and productivity, often without employees realising the damage



SAKSHI SETHI

In any workplace, collaboration and effective communication are vital for achieving organisational goals. However, these dynamics can be undermined when manipulation becomes a part of the equation. A manipulative colleague can distort the working environment, leading to decreased morale, distrust among coworkers and even stifled productivity. Manipulative individuals may use various methods, including emotional blackmail, guilt-tripping, gaslighting, or even leveraging workplace politics to gain control or ascend in their careers. This type of manipulation involves the use of deceptive tactics by individuals to influence others for personal gain, often at the expense of colleagues.

Such individuals tend to be skilled at subtly exploiting their coworker's emotions or vulnerabilities, leaving their targets unaware of the manipulation until it has already caused them damage. Manipulative behaviours can manifest in different forms. Some may employ gaslighting, making others question their perception of reality, while others may pit coworkers against each other to create divisions. Moreover, in certain cases, manipulative colleagues present themselves as victims, seeking sympathy to evade accountability.

In more extreme cases, they might distort facts, spread rumours, or even take credit for others' accomplishments. The presence of a manipulative individual in the workplace can create a toxic environment. Manipulation can lead to a breakdown in trust among team members. Coworkers may become wary of each other, questioning each other's intentions and credibility. The tension that manipulation creates can also disrupt team cohesion, leading to a lack of collaboration and efficiency. Additionally, manipulative individuals often prioritise their agenda over the success of the group, negatively affecting overall productivity.



Constant manipulation may cause stress, anxiety, and frustration among colleagues. Individuals who fall victim to manipulation may experience decreased confidence in their abilities or find themselves overloaded with tasks due to guilt or coercion. Over time, this emotional strain may even lead to burnout, poor job satisfaction and higher turnover rates. While manipulation can be difficult to address directly, some strategies can help mitigate its effects and create a healthier work environment. The first and foremost step in dealing with manipulation is being able to identify it which involves recognising patterns of behaviour, such as when a coworker tries to guilt-trip into taking on tasks, using flattery to sway decisions or playing the victim to avoid accountability.

Dealing with a manipulative colleague in the workplace is a challenging task that requires both emotional intelligence and assertiveness. One of the most effective long-term solutions for dealing with workplace manipulation is to foster a culture of transparency, open communication and collaboration. A strong and united team is harder for manipulative individuals to exploit. If the manipulation becomes severe or affects the broader workplace, it may be necessary to seek help from higher management or HR. A neutral party can help mediate conflicts, establish formal boundaries and ensure that manipulative behaviours are addressed appropriately. Involving HR ensures that the organisation is aware of any detrimental patterns, protecting not just but potentially other colleagues as well. By recognising manipulative behaviours, setting clear boundaries and maintaining composure, an individual can mitigate the impact of such individuals. It is equally important to seek support from supervisors or HR when necessary and contribute towards creating a positive work environment. Staying vigilant and proactive can help ensure that manipulation does not compromise the productivity, well-being as well as overall success of the team.

(The writer is an educator; views expressed are personal)

Charting a course for global leadership



GURMEET SINGH

The Government's ambitious Sagarmala project aims to solidify India's position as a dominant maritime power in the coming decades



The existing world order is undeniably in crisis, with geopolitical dynamics undergoing significant changes over recent decades. Historically, the division between East and West, or North and South, largely defined global politics, with rich and poor nations distinctly separated by ideology, economic strength, and resources. However, this traditional world order began to shift dramatically towards the end of the 20th century, erasing the once-clear lines that divided these global spheres. What we see now is a world not defined by competing ideologies, but rather by economic and political strategies aimed at consolidating power and influence.

The latter half of the 20th century and the first two decades of the 21st century have seen discernible shifts in global economic and political power.

The Cold War's end led to a unipolar world dominated by the United States, but cracks in this dominance began to appear, especially in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, which severely damaged faith in market-driven economies. Financial instability across the globe exposed the fragility of once-trusted economic systems. Simultaneously, international relations have grown increasingly strained, compounded by more recent crises like the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022), the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict, and the resurgence of violence in the Israel-Hamas war. These events have brought the global economy back to a state of stress and instability.

This ongoing instability signals that the world is transitioning from a unipolar system, first towards a bipolar or tripolar system, and now, perhaps, toward a multipolar future. As new powers rise and old alliances shift, nations are compelled to reassess their resources and strategic positions. Among the most critical of these resources are those connected to the sea, particularly the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), which provide nations with substantial control over marine resources. These zones are essential for securing economic growth, national security, and environmental sustainability.

Human activity, driven by technological advancements, has increasingly turned towards the maritime domain, not only for international trade but also for security and ensuring open, free access to international

waters. The importance of the seas cannot be overstated, as oceans provide an array of resources vital to sustaining global commerce, energy needs, and food supplies. In recognition of this, international conventions and agreements have been signed to create standardised norms for maritime conduct, aiming to ensure peaceful seas.

One example of this shift is the practice of ships being registered under flags different from their countries of ownership, a practice now followed by more than 60 per cent of the world's ships. This reflects the interconnected nature of modern trade and economic systems. Additionally, with 85 per cent of the world's nations having a coastline and nearly 40 per cent of the global population living within 100 nautical miles of the sea, the importance of the maritime domain for both individual nations and global commerce is clear. Moreover, most of the world's major capitals and economic centers are situated along coasts, and 36 per cent of the ocean's area falls under the EEZ of nations. Critically, 97 per cent of the world's trade is conducted by sea, underscoring the dominance of maritime trade in global affairs.

Oceans represent an enormous economic opportunity, providing vast areas for investment, development, and growth. Many countries, including India, heavily depend on the sea for economic prosperity. Given this, the need for India to build a robust national maritime consciousness is more urgent than ever.

India is uniquely positioned as a maritime power, with a coastline of over 7,500 kilometers, an EEZ covering 2.37 million square kilometers, a continental shelf of 530,000 square kilometers, and nearly 1,200 islands. Since 2011, India has been working to extend its EEZ from 200 nautical miles to 350 nautical miles, which would give the nation access to an additional 1.2 million square kilometers of marine resources.

This extension would significantly bolster India's potential for economic growth through the exploitation of its maritime resources.

Historically, India's maritime heritage has been rich and vibrant. The Satavahanas, Pallavas, Cholas, and Pandyas built strong maritime traditions, engaging in far-flung trade that brought prosperity to their kingdoms. For example, during the 5th to 11th centuries, the Malacca Straits were controlled by the Srivijaya Empire, a critical maritime chokepoint for global trade. Indian ships, reputed for their advanced design and durability, played a significant role in regional and long-distance trade. However, after the arrival of the Mughals and later the British, India's maritime tradition began to erode, as colonial policies discouraged Indian maritime development.

One major oversight in modern Indian education is the neglect of this rich maritime past. Very few students are taught about India's ancient maritime successes, such as how the Chola Empire led military expeditions across Southeast Asia or how the Travancore Navy defeated the Dutch. This lack of awareness has stifled India's maritime aspirations, but there is a growing recognition that the nation must reclaim its historical maritime identity.

India's future as a global economic and political power will hinge on its ability to harness its maritime resources. With advancements in technology, deep-sea mining has emerged as a new frontier, offering the potential for extracting hydrocarbons, natural gas, and rare earth metals from the ocean floor.

In addition, the demand for shipping services is projected to grow as seaborne trade becomes even more critical to global economies. India, where 95 per cent of trade by volume and 77 per cent by value travels by sea, is particularly reliant on maritime trade for its continued economic growth. India must focus on developing multiple sectors

within the maritime domain, including fishing, shipbuilding, ports, coastal tourism, and blue energy. The country has a significant advantage in terms of labor costs and technological know-how, yet it contributes only 1 per cent to global shipbuilding. Furthermore, more than 60 per cent of Indian cargo is carried on foreign vessels, underscoring the need for greater domestic capacity in shipping and shipbuilding.

The Indian government's Sagarmala project, which envisions the modernisation of ports and coastal infrastructure, is a crucial step in developing the country's maritime potential. With an investment of USD 1.42 trillion planned by 2035, this project aims to revolutionise India's coastline, focusing on creating special economic zones, inland waterways, and promoting coastal tourism. India's growth as a maritime power will also enhance its standing as a responsible global player, capable of providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. The Indian Navy's initiative to create the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) in 2008 was an important step in fostering cooperation among regional navies. India is now seen as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean, reinforcing its commitment to maintaining open, rule-based seas. As India looks to the future, building awareness about the maritime domain and its economic potential is essential. Universities and defense institutions must collaborate to design programs that will prepare future generations to embrace India's maritime identity. Through a combination of education, policy, and strategic investment, India has the opportunity to emerge as a true maritime power and an influential global leader.

(The writer is former Vice-Chancellor of Pondicherry University and former Vice-Chancellor of Gandhigram Rural Institute; views are personal. Inputs by A. Subramanyam Raju)



THE COLD WAR'S END LED TO A UNIPOLAR WORLD DOMINATED BY THE UNITED STATES, BUT CRACKS IN THIS DOMINANCE BEGAN TO APPEAR, ESPECIALLY IN THE WAKE OF THE 2008 FINANCIAL CRISIS, WHICH SEVERELY DAMAGED FAITH IN MARKET-DRIVEN ECONOMIES

Education in the Age of AI: Why traditional methods no longer fit the future

As automation and artificial intelligence reshape industries, the education system faces an urgent need for transformation

The growing controversy around entrance exams, particularly regarding paper leaks, has spotlighted the need for reforms in our education and evaluation systems. One obvious solution is transitioning to computer-based exams, which have already been implemented for major tests like JEE Mains, BITSAT, and CAT. These exams feature randomly generated questions and simultaneous distribution across various nodes, effectively preventing paper leaks. Additionally, the possibility of immediate grading offers transparency. Conducting such exams multiple times a year could also alleviate the immense pressure students face. However, while the method of testing is a critical discussion,



RAJNEESH BHANDARI

it is equally important to reassess the fundamentals of our education system. The questions of "why to teach," "what to teach," "how to teach," "how to evaluate," and "why to evaluate" should be at the heart of this debate. Oscar Wilde once remarked, "Education is an admirable thing, but nothing that is worth learning can be taught."

This statement resonates deeply with the current state of education. Our system tends to follow a one-size-fits-all model, assuming that sixty students in a classroom can learn the same material at the same pace and, more importantly, enjoy the process. Rote learning, which dominates the Indian education system, is a clear indicator of how outdated the approach has become, especially in an era of artificial intelligence.

Until 2011, CBSE even offered Typewriting as a subject, reflecting how antiquated parts of the curriculum are. The pressure on students has reached a breaking point, contributing to alarmingly high suicide rates among those preparing for competitive entrance exams. Many stu-

dents begin preparing for entrance exams like the IITs from as early as the ninth grade, which hampers their childhood and overall development.

Each individual is unique, and every human brain functions differently. Despite advancements in pedagogy—the science of learning—we continue to follow an archaic, cookie-cutter approach that aims to mass-produce education. The original purpose of mass education was to prepare individuals for jobs. However, automation and AI are now poised to eliminate many of these jobs. Technological advancements are rapidly rendering certain skills obsolete. A large number of young professionals today are employed in the app and web develop-



ment sectors, jobs that can now be done by generative AI systems like ChatGPT. These systems can create apps or websites based on simple prompts. Furthermore, with tools like generative AI, anyone has the potential to become a writer, artist, musician, or coder, drastically reducing the skill gaps that once existed between experts and novices. The most critical skill in the

future, therefore, will not be the ability to perform a specific task, but the ability to learn and adapt continuously. In an ever-changing world, much of the knowledge we acquire will either become irrelevant or require frequent updates.

Education should not be seen as a one-time investment made during the early years of life. Instead, learning should be recognised as a lifelong journey. The degree one earns at the beginning of their career may be irrelevant by the time they are halfway through it. Traditional degrees, once crucial for securing jobs, may lose their relevance in the coming years. Many software developers, for instance, learn programming from online platforms like Coursera, rather than from formal university

programs. The way companies evaluate job candidates is also evolving. Resumes are increasingly being replaced by portfolio reviews, where individuals can showcase their skills and creativity.

The impact of AI on education is already evident. Last year, ChatGPT made headlines by passing the US Medical Licensing Exam, the law school exam, and Google's coding exam. This has sparked debates about whether AI tools should be banned in educational institutions. Nassim Taleb recently commented on this by stating, "ChatGPT passing is not a reflection of ChatGPT but of the examination system." The core purpose of education should not be to test students by limiting their resources, but

rather to prepare them to solve real-world problems using all available tools. A calculator, for example, is a common tool allowed in many international board exams but still restricted in some Indian boards like CBSE. Generative AI holds the potential to revolutionise education by generating personalised lesson plans and assessments. Virtual tutors providing real-time feedback are already available through platforms like Khan Academy and Duolingo. The future of education lies in learning that is seamlessly embedded in everyday life, facilitated by mentors rather than traditional teachers.

(The writer is founder Founder NeuroEquilibrium; views are personal)

IN BRIEF



Gold hits another record; silver rates climb Rs 500

Gold prices advanced to yet another record high -- for the third straight day on Friday -- rising Rs 50 in the national capital on the back of continued buying by jewellers. Continuing a firm momentum for the third straight session, gold prices rose Rs 50 to hit a fresh high of Rs 78,300 per 10 grams, according to the All India Sarafa Association. On Thursday, the precious metal had finished at Rs 78,250 per 10 grams. Silver also jumped Rs 500 to Rs 94,500 per kg on fresh offtake by industrial units and coin makers. The metal had closed at Rs 94,000 per kg in the previous trade. Traders said increased buying by local jewellers to meet festive and wedding season demand and a firm trend in the overseas markets mainly lifted gold prices to this year's highest level. Further, the US Federal Reserve's optimism that they will maintain an aggressive pace of interest rate cuts this year also boosted the bullion prices, they added.



India's forex reserves swell \$2.83 bn to a new high

India's forex reserves jumped by USD 2.83 billion to a new all-time high of USD 692.296 billion for the week ended September 20, the RBI said on Friday. The overall kitty had increased by USD 223 million to a new high of USD 689.458 billion for the previous reporting week. For the week ended September 20, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by USD 2.057 billion to USD 605.686 billion, the data released on Friday showed. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. Gold reserves increased by USD 726 million to USD 63.613 billion during the week, the RBI said. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up by USD 121 million to USD 18.54 billion, the apex bank said.



MP govt receives investment proposals of Rs 23,000 crore

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Friday said investment proposals of Rs 23,181 crore were received at the Regional Industry Conclave (RIC) held here on Friday. Sixty per cent of these proposals were for investment in Bundelkhand region itself where the gathering was held, the chief minister noted. "During the RIC, the state has received investment proposals of Rs 23,181 crore which will generate 27,375 employment opportunities," Yadav told reporters at the conclave. Proposals worth Rs 22,241 crore came from large industries while remaining proposals worth Rs 940 crore came from Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), he said. Letters of Intent were issued to 96 units for allotment of 240 acres of land which will attract investment of Rs 1,560 crore and generate employment for 5,900 persons, Yadav said. Investment proposals of Rs 3,200 crore were received from Pacific Meta Steel in Niwari district while Data Centrics proposed investment of Rs 1,700 crore at Surkhi in Sagar district.

Telecom manufacturing zones to be set up: Scindia

PNS ■ CHENNAI

The government of India is setting up telecommunication equipment manufacturing zones in the country, as the sector is expected to go through a revolution in attracting foreign direct investments, Union Minister Jyotiraditya M Scindia said on Friday.



said at an event here.

Elaborating, he said, "India had close to USD 98 billion of FDI and in the last 10 years. We have grown by 60 per cent to Rs 160 billion FDI. The same revolution will happen in the telecom sector". "With USD 39 billion worth of FDI, now it is time for the telecom equipment manufacturing sector to go through the same evolution. We had the fastest 5G roll out in India and 98 per cent of our cities have been covered," he said.

Scindia said PM Modi has mandated that the government-owned telecom major Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd

(BSNL) would set up its 4G services based on indigenous 4G stack.

"We are the sixth country in the world to produce our own 4G telecom stack and we would have rolled out 1 lakh towers by mid next year and by mid 2025, we would have ensured 4G saturation across India," he said.

Scindia along with Tamil Nadu Minister for Industries TRB Rajaa were here at the inauguration of the first manufacturing facility of US-based network equipment maker Cisco.

Accompanied by senior officials, the ministers visited

the manufacturing facilities later.

Sharing some images later in the day, Scindia on his social media post said: "Telecom transformation, technological triumph. On our mission to make India the global telecom manufacturing hub, inaugurated the CISCO-FLEX manufacturing facility in Sriperumbudur."

The state-of-the-art facility would fuel India's growth through employment generation, innovation and world-class ideas, while showcasing the power of 'Made in India' products, he said.

Tamil Nadu Industries Minister Rajaa said the state-of-the-art facility of Cisco would cement state's position as the advanced electronics capital of India.

The factory would manufacture Network Convergence System routers, bringing more high quality jobs to the state, he said.

The Sriperumbudur facility of Cisco would also export the products to Mexico, Japan, Australia, Netherlands and the United States of America, he said.

Meta hit with \$102 million privacy fine from EU regulator

PNS ■ LONDON

Meta was punished Friday with a fine worth more than USD 100 million from the social media giant's European Union privacy regulator over a security lapse involving passwords for Facebook users.

The Irish Data Protection Commission said it slapped the US tech company with the 91 million euro (USD 101.6 million) penalty following an investigation.

The watchdog started investigating in 2019 after it was notified by Meta that some passwords had been inadvertently stored internally in plain text, which means they weren't encrypted and it was possible for employees to search for them.

Deputy Commissioner Graham Doyle said it's "widely accepted" that user passwords

should not be stored in plain text, "considering the risks of abuse."

Meta said a security review found that a "subset" of Facebook users' passwords were "temporarily logged in a readable format."

"We took immediate action to fix this error, and there is no evidence that these passwords were abused or accessed improperly," the company said in a statement.

"We proactively flagged this issue to our lead regulator, the Irish Data Protection Commission, and have engaged constructively with them throughout this inquiry."

It's the latest in a series of hefty fines for Meta and its social media platforms from the Dublin-based watchdog, which is the company's lead regulator under the 27-nation EU's stringent data privacy rulebook.



Pinnacle Group sets up APAC regional headquarters in Chennai

Aims to triple employee base

PNS ■ CHENNAI

US-based global workforce solutions company, Pinnacle Group, has expanded its global footprint with the opening of a new office in Chennai that will be the regional headquarters in the Asia Pacific region, a top official has said.

The new facility on the Rajiv Gandhi Salai (popularly known as the IT Corridor) would be able to deepen the company's relationships with its existing customer base.

Pinnacle Group has been operating in India since 2007 and with the inauguration of the new facility, the company expects to double or triple its employee base in the near future, Pinnacle Group Chairman and CEO Nina Vaca said here.

"We currently have about 100 employees in India, and I



am hoping to double or triple the number of employees in the future. We do not serve customers for years, we serve them for decades... The company is committed to extend the investments in people and technology to drive further innovation and serve more of our customers in India and beyond," she said in a brief interaction on Friday.

"We have made significant investments in India since 2007 and we are one of the fastest growing companies in the region," she said.

Pinnacle Group was ranked America's greatest workplace for women and asked about it, Vaca said the employee base in the United States for Pinnacle comprises 60 per cent women and 40 per cent men.

Ramping up hiring in India; focus on freshers, says Accenture CEO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IT services and consulting firm Accenture is ramping up its hiring efforts in India, with a continued focus on freshers, company CEO Julie Sweet has said.

Sweet, Accenture Chair and Chief Executive Officer, during an investor call, emphasised the company's commitment to recruiting new college graduates and refreshing its workforce pyramid.

She said a majority of these new hires will be concentrated in India, which is seen as a significant growth driver for the company as it heads into fiscal year 2025.

The company operates on a September-August fiscal calendar.

"We are hiring primarily in India... a lot of that hiring is technology in India, and of course it also addresses refreshing our pyramid at this time, so you've got kind of the new college graduates coming in, so there's really no change



in our talent strategy.

"We hire all over the world, and in technology, which is a big driver of the growth that we're seeing now, and going into FY2025, that is a lot of hiring in India," Sweet said.

The IT major is steadily betting on GenAI and "reinventing" its services, she said, adding that Accenture's FY2024 growth was driven by its clients seeking to reinvent using tech, data, AI and new ways of working.

"We have continued to steadily increase our data and AI workforce reaching approx-

imately 57,000 practitioners against our goal of 80,000 by the end of FY 2026. We invested in our people to continue to develop their marketable skills and to help us reinvent our services using GenAI," she said.

Accenture employees had approximately 44 million training hours this year, representing an increase of 10 per cent predominantly due to GenAI training, Sweet added.

Ireland-headquartered Accenture is one of the largest employers in the Indian IT services sector, with over 3,00,000 staff.

Its global employee count stands at 7,74,000.

Accenture reported revenues of USD 16.4 billion for the fourth quarter ending August 2024. This marks a 2.62 per cent increase from USD 15.99 billion in the year-ago period.

Revenues for fiscal 2024 came in at USD 64.90 billion, compared with USD 64.11 billion in the previous fiscal.

Cross-border infra projects to be developed

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and Bhutan on Friday held discussions to expedite development of certain cross-border infrastructure projects, including setting up of an integrated check post to promote bilateral trade.

The issues were deliberated upon in the meeting of Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal and Secretary, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment (MoICE) Bhutan Dasha Tashi Wangmo in Thimpu. They decided to expedite the development of cross-border and connectivity infrastructure.

Govt to increase number of airports to 350

Boosting connectivity and tourism

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu on Friday said as India strives towards becoming a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047, the ministry is seeking to increase the number of airports in the country to 350 and boost tourism.

In his address at an event held to mark the World Tourism Day at Vigyan Bhawan here, he also said his ministry is working on connecting more hinterlands locations which are close to unexplored sites. Naidu emphasised the government's vision of boosting domestic connectivity and providing better facilities and warm hospitality at airports to welcome foreign tourists, as airports are "gateways to a country".

"Today, we have 157 airports but in the next 20-25 years, when we are going to see the real Viksit Bharat in 2047, we want to increase the number of airports which is 157 today to the tune of 350," he said at the event hosted by the Tourism Ministry.

He also congratulated the tourism ministry after Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat announced that under the 'Chalo India' campaign, one lakh foreign tourists will be exempted from paying visa fee in coming times.

"4.6 crore travellers landed in India in 2014, and now that we have increased the number of airports from 74 to a staggering 157... we are seeing almost 7 crore people landing in the country today.

'Fiscal profligacy by poll-bound states needs to be watched'

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Fiscal profligacy by poll-bound states needs to be watched closely, as higher spending on welfare measures will impact capital expenditure over the coming years, a Swiss brokerage said on Friday.

A total of 11 states have gone to polls or are likely to have elections soon, the report by UBS Securities said, adding that four of them -- Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Odisha -- have increased their fiscal deficit targets.

"The recent fiscal profligacy seen in poll-bound states should be watched closely," the report said.

In the last few years, states managed to control their fiscal deficit under the 3 per cent level proposed by the Fifteenth Finance Commission, the report said, acknowledging that the Centre has also been bringing



In the last few years, states managed to control their fiscal deficit under the 3 per cent level proposed by the Fifteenth Finance Commission, the report said, acknowledging that the Centre has also been bringing down the fiscal deficit.

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The poll-bound states are increasing their welfare spending and stimulus, which has led to a widening in their aggregate FY25 fiscal deficit estimates by 0.20 per cent in the budgets presented in June or July, it said.

"We believe this could also weigh on states' own capex spending over the coming years due to higher revenue expenditure directed towards populist promises," it added.

It can be noted that in Maharashtra, the Eknath SHinde-led government

has announced to deposit Rs 1,500 into the accounts of women, which will result in an annual spend of over Rs 35,000 crore.

Meanwhile, the brokerage said it does not expect the RBI to start the rate cut cycle at the next month's pol-

icy review and the earliest that the monetary policy committee would act will be in December.

The RBI is set to cut by a deeper 0.75 per cent during the current cycle, it said, adding that factors like low food inflation and decent monsoons will offer more comfort.

India's consumption growth will pick up to over 6 per cent in FY25 from 4 per cent in FY24, the brokerage said, adding that even after the acceleration it will still be trailing the long-term average.

There is a "fatigue" in the premium segment which will lead to a narrowing in the "k-shaped" consumption pattern seen over the last few years, it said.

The GDP growth will come at the 6.5-7 per cent levels pegged in the Economic Survey and will not come at the RBI's estimate of 7.2 per cent, it said.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
ROADS & BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
NIT No. 04/ITS/SEHQ/CC/3rd Floor/2024 Dtd: 26.09.2024
(1) Name of works and approximate Estimate Contract Value details: Construction of third floor over existing G+2 (Ground plus Two floors) building of City Civil Court, Hyderabad, ECV: Rs. 6,60,70,998/- (2) Last Date and Time of Issue of Tenders: 30.09.2024 at 1.00 PM. (3) Last Date and Time of Receipt of Tenders: 14.10.2024 upto 1.30 PM. (4) Date of opening Tenders: Technical Bid: 14.10.2024 at 2.00 PM, Price Bid: 17.10.2024 at 2.00 PM. Further details can be seen at 'e-Procurement market place at https://tender.telangana.gov.in/ from 30.09.2024 from 1.00 PM onwards. Sd/- Superintending Engineer (R&B), Headquarters circle, Hyderabad.
R.O.No: 485-PP/CLAD/IT/1024-25, Dt: 27.09.2024

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
E-PROCUREMENT SHORT TENDER NOTICE
NIT No. 24/EE-Div.28/SBZ/GHMC/2024-25 Dated: 27-09-2024
Name of the Work: Construction of water ponds for visarjans of Bathrukammis on eve of Dussehra at wards, Div-29, Secunderabad, SBZ, GHMC. (for the year 2024). Estimate Amount / ECV: Rs. 17.88 lakhs. Start date / Last date / Time for receipts of Bids: From 28-09-2024 @ 2.00 A.M to 01-10-2024 @ 2.00 P.M. Name & Address of officer Cell No.: Executive Engineer, Div-29, GHMC, Sec'bad, Cell No.: 6309920591. Further details can be seen at e-Procurement @ https://www.tender.eprocurement.gov.in
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Div-29, Sec'bad, GHMC.
R.O.No: 489-PP/CLAD/IT/1024-25, Dt: 27.09.2024



Drag Kings take centre stage in *The Gentlemen's Club*

TEJAL SINHA
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We are sure the majority of our readers do have a special inclination towards entertainment and acting, for that matter. But let's not forget how theatres have been the foundation stone for many actors! Well, the love and respect that one has for theatres is beyond just eternal.

Are we going back to the history of theatres? Well, certainly not. But the recent talk of the town was none other than the second season of *The Gentlemen's Club*. The National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) had presented the electrifying new version of their hit show. Following the exhilarating lives of the city's drag kings, headlined by the enigmatic Rocky, also known as Shammsher. His act was a tribute to the legendary Shammji Kapoor and the golden era of Hindi cinema. Alongside Rocky, a diverse ensemble of women

a hint of everyday revolution." The inspiration for this show came from various conversations. They were keen on exploring the creation of drag queen characters. Meanwhile, Vikram Phukan was in discussions with Gaysi Family, a queer organisation, to write a show about drag queens. When Vikram and Pooja (Soho Theatre) met for coffee one day, they decided to merge the two ideas and that's how *The Gentlemen's Club* was born.

"Gender is a construct and does not belong to anyone," they affirm. "Nobody owns masculinity or femininity. Drag is about commenting on, celebrating, mocking and essentially playing with gender. Through drag, we can blur the lines between traditional ideas of gender, making the audience question what is 'real' and what is simply performance. The show is also about artists, inspiration and relevance. These are universal themes that we hope audiences will be able to find resonance with."

While the first season took place in 2015, the second is now here after nine years. Reason? "There has been no gap! We have toured and performed this show from 2015 all the way till 2019. We took a break because of the pandemic and now finally we are ready to start touring again."

In this season, Rocky's character draws inspiration from Bollywood icon Shammji Kapoor, who was known for his flamboyant style and larger-than-life screen presence in the 50s and 60s. While drag kings weren't a visible or popular phenomenon in India during that era, Rocky's Shammji is a playful nod to the cultural moment Kapoor represented—one of charm, rebellion, and fluid masculinity—which makes Rocky's character both nostalgic and subversive in a drag king context.

The previous year, they had also achieved a historic milestone by presenting Zakir Khan at the Royal Albert Hall and supporting Urooj Ashfaq's win of 'Best Newcomer' at the Edinburgh Fringe. This time they had a different move: bringing India's first show about Drag Kings to the UK! "Soho Theatre is London's leading producer of Indian comedy and has supported and facilitated monumental moments in the comedy exchange between the UK and India. This co-presentation is the culmination of so many galvanising conversations with Indian theatre makers and playwrights and we hope it will pave the way for future artist development programmes and co-productions of audacious new theatre shows. I've not seen a show quite like this - neither in India nor the UK - and I know that it's unique exploration of gender and drag will resonate with our audiences on Dean Street," she enthuses.

Going ahead, we also get the chance to interact with Bruce Guthrie, Head, Theatre & Films, NCPA and he speaks of gender and masculinity in performance, but the way in which it has been received over the years really spoke to how powerful these themes are for audiences as well. The name refers to a club that features a motley crew of drag kings, from a Shammji Kapoor stand-in to a hip pop icon to a Bengali intellectual-type and it is set in an imagined Mumbai that is inclusive and adventurous. It's aspirational but still very real in terms of what we explore. And it has something for everyone—song and dance, dress-up and make-believe, playfulness and

The National Centre for the Performing Arts, India presented an electrifying new version of *The Gentlemen's Club*, making its international debut in London's Soho Theatre. *The Pioneer* brings to you some behind-the-scenes and the making of this season, following the exhilarating lives of the drag kings

embraced the art of drag, delivering a cabaret-style performance that transported one to a gritty, hidden world where you can be anyone you desire. Featuring a dazzling mix of dance, music and projection, this show unfolded an exciting and provocative narrative celebrating women and their exploration of masculinity.

Following its run in India, the production made its way to London, where it showcased at Soho Theatre, marking its international debut. Guess what? As the weekend arrives, sit back with your morning cup of chai or coffee, because *The Pioneer* brings to you some behind-the-scenes of the second season of *The Gentlemen's Club*.

As per the team of the production house, "*The Gentlemen's Club* has become a labour of love for all of us. We wanted to explore notions of gender and masculinity in performance, but the way in which it has been received over the years really spoke to how powerful these themes are for audiences as well. The name refers to a club that features a motley crew of drag kings, from a Shammji Kapoor stand-in to a hip pop icon to a Bengali intellectual-type and it is set in an imagined Mumbai that is inclusive and adventurous. It's aspirational but still very real in terms of what we explore. And it has something for everyone—song and dance, dress-up and make-believe, playfulness and

FLEXING DREAMS

Hyd's homegrown fitness hero is here!

AARTI SREENATH
 aarti.sreenath9@gmail.com

Shafi Shami's journey is a remarkable tale of resilience, grit and perseverance. In the land of biryanis and bad traffic, Shafi Shami decided to take the road less travelled—literally, because he prefers the gym over the streets of Hyderabad! Born into a family of pehelwans and Army men, Shafi swapped cycles for dumbbells and stitched together a fitness empire with sweat, muscle and a lot of *jugaad*. From his humble beginnings to training Indian soldiers and opening 24/7 gyms across the city, Shafi's journey is a mix of grit, gains and endless gym stories. If you think Hyderabad's famous for its food, wait till you hear about its homegrown fitness legend.

Shafi faced tremendous challenges from a young age, including the loss of both his parents. "I was really young when it happened, so I don't have a strong memory of it," he recalls. Raised by his maternal grandparents, Shafi found solace in his work ethic and early responsibilities. His maternal grandfather was a *tahsildar* and his paternal grandfather, along with his father, served in the Indian Army, establishing a legacy of discipline and duty.

From a young age, he balanced school and work. He attended government schools and by the age of 8-10, he was already working to support himself. This duality of student and worker shaped his character and worldview. Despite the hurdles, he went on to complete his BA from Osmania University.

But it wasn't just academics that shaped his path. His passion for fitness, specifically *desi pehlwani* (traditional Indian wrestling), was ignited by his uncles. "They were *desi pehalwans*, managing and practicing traditional *pehlwani*. I got inspired by them," he shares. While his uncles trained for dangals (wrestling matches), Shafi channelled his energies into fitness.

His entry into bodybuilding in 1998-99 marked the beginning of a lifelong love affair with the gym. Back then, gym culture wasn't widespread and access to fitness facilities was limited. He fondly recalls how he managed to pay his gym fees for just one month—after which the gym owner, recognising his dedication, waived the fees and welcomed Shafi to train without worry. "I used to keep the equipment back after the others were done. That's how much I loved being in the gym," he says.

His hard work didn't go unnoticed. In time, he became a coach for the Indian Army, where he trained soldiers under the supervision of colonels and captains. "It was a golden era for me," he reminisces. The pride he felt in training India's soldiers remains one of his greatest achievements. Even as he thrived in this role, his passion for bodybuilding grew and he began competing in various contests, earning top positions in Mr. Hyderabad, Mr. Andhra Pradesh and Mr. South India.

Despite his accomplishments, he faced the reality of bodybuilding's declining popularity. Aware of the financial challenges it posed, he diversified into business, joining multinational companies like Bank of America and Deloitte. His earnings surged, but his heart remained in

Shafi Shami has been a much-celebrated face in the world of bodybuilding. Today, for our special segment of Hyderabad, *The Pioneer* connects with him as he discusses his childhood here in the 'City of Nizams', growing around *pehelwans* and more



fitness. By 2015, he took a bold leap and opened his gym, 24/7, in Gachibowli, a venture that turned into a massive success. Today, he owns multiple fitness centers across India and continues to organise bodybuilding shows.

Reflecting on his journey, he expresses deep gratitude to the mentors who helped shape his career, including the strongest pillars of support, Ram and Srinivas Yadav. He also feels strongly about fostering inclusivity, emphasising that throughout his life, no one questioned his religion or background when offering him support. Bhaskar Reddy also coached him and has played a significant role in his bodybuilding career.

When it comes to his fondest memories of Hyderabad, his connection to the city runs deep. From Charminar to Golconda, his love for the city's heritage is palpable. His favourite place? The Hanuman Vyayam Shala, a nod to his traditional roots.

When it comes to food, he sticks to a no-nonsense diet that's as disciplined as his fitness regime. He avoids anything that's too rich or indulgent, opting for a "dead" diet—his term for meals without salt, oil, or masala. True to his old-school roots, Shafi still enjoys a simple *desi thali*, reminiscent of the Telangana-Andhra era when wholesome, balanced meals were the norm. For him, it's all about keeping the calories in check and staying aligned with the fitness principles that have shaped his life.

However, Shafi's wisdom isn't limited to fitness alone. He urges young athletes to avoid shortcuts like steroids, stressing the importance of natural training and proper guidance. "Youngsters today are playing with their bodies as if life came for free," he cautions, highlight-

ing the rise of health issues due to steroid abuse. At the end of our conversation, he leaves us with a powerful message: "Never give up. Hard work is essential, but smart work is just as important." This philosophy, he believes, is what transformed him from Shafi to Shafi Shami—a self-made man who rose above his circumstances to create a lasting legacy in the fitness industry and beyond.

India's rise as a plastic surgery powerhouse

In recent years, India has emerged as a beacon of hope for individuals seeking transformative plastic surgery procedures. Plastic surgeons have witnessed firsthand the country's remarkable growth into a global hub for cosmetic excellence. But what's driving this phenomenon and what sets India apart?

Surgeon's perspective

India's plastic surgery landscape has undergone a significant transformation, with a new generation of skilled surgeons leading the charge. We're not just technicians; we're artists, innovators and patient advocates. Our expertise is matched only by our passion for



delivering exceptional results. With rigorous training and experience, Indian plastic surgeons have honed their skills in the latest techniques and technologies.

World-class infrastructure

State-of-the-art facilities, cutting-edge technology and rigorous safety protocols have become the norm in Indian plastic surgery. From accredited hospitals to specialised clinics, patients can expect a seamless, high-quality experi-

ence. Investments in infrastructure have enabled Indian healthcare to rival global standards, ensuring patient comfort and safety.

Affordability without compromise

India offers a unique value proposition: world-class plastic surgery at a fraction of the cost. This hasn't compromised quality; rather, it's driven innovation, efficiency and excellence. Patients

can access advanced procedures without financial burdens, making India an attractive destination for medical tourism.

Government support and initiatives

Proactive government policies have fostered a conducive environment for medical tourism, streamlining regulations and encouraging investment in healthcare infrastructure. Initiatives like the 'Make in India' campaign have promoted medical device manufacturing, reducing costs and enhancing accessibility.

Patient-centric approach

At the heart of India's plastic surgery success lies a patient-centric approach. We prioritise empathy, education and empowerment, ensuring individuals make informed decisions about their bodies. Patients are treated with dignity and respect and their concerns are addressed with compassion and understanding.

(The author, Dr. Anmol Chugh, is the Lead Consultant and Plastics & Aesthetics Centre at CK Birla Hospital.)

Future of plastic surgery in India

As demand continues to soar, India must remain committed to:

- **Safety and ethics:** Upholding the highest standards of patient care and professional conduct.
- **Innovation and research:** Staying at the forefront of technological advancements and surgical techniques.
- **Patient education and awareness:** Empowering individuals with knowledge about plastic surgery options and benefits.

By doing so, India will solidify its position as a global leader in plastic surgery, transforming lives and redefining beauty standards. With a growing pool of skilled surgeons, world-class infrastructure and patient-centric approach, India is poised to revolutionise the plastic surgery landscape.

what's brewing?

Sujana

Uday

Asmita

Isshika and Khushi

Archie

Kashish

Villa Marie Degree College for Women presented their "RangelaRaas" mini navratri festival. Dr. Philomena, the founder director, was present at the event together with Chinnamma, the secretary, Srinivas Rao, the joint secretary and principal Revati Devi Mathur. The festival, which has been a beloved college tradition for the past two years, is being celebrated for the third time this year. The Department of Commerce organised the Dandiya festival with the goal of raising money for a good cause: adopting a child from the Balyam Orphanage Home in Osmangunj, Hyderabad, so that he might receive education.

Sujana and Keerthi

Aswini

Hyderabad Models have announced the eighth season of "Celebrity Dandiya Nights." An amazing Navaratri experience is promised for this 11-day (October 2-10) Dasara Festival celebration, which will include DJ music, vibrant Dandiya dances, mouthwatering food, celebrity visits and more. The Flip Side Adventure Park in Gachibowli, Hyderabad, is the venue for the event. Actress Keerthi Bhat and Hyderabad models founder attended the poster unveiling ceremony, among others.

PARTY

In its bid to elevate critical care across the country, RED.Health has now forayed into the city of Hyderabad through a strategic partnership with Basavatarakam Indo-American Cancer Hospital & Research Institute. The partnership was officially launched at a flag-off ceremony on 26 September 2024, presided over by Dr. K. Krishniah, CEO and Sunil Tandon, COO, of Indo-American Cancer Hospital and Mr. Prabhdeep Singh, Founder & CEO of RED.Health.

For Telangana, JSW MG Motor India has introduced the MG Windsor at PPS Motors, LB Nagar Showroom in Hyderabad. The newest car was unveiled in front of representatives from MG Motor and PPS Motors by Chief Guest Naina Jaiswal, the South Asian and national table tennis champion.

Dr. Arunkumar from the Ministry of Textiles Weavers Service Centre head office marked his presence at the silk and cotton fabrics expo announcement, which is being held by the ministry at Ameerpet Kammassangham. The expo will be from October 1 to October 15.

Five pupils from Shadnagar's Children Learning Center, run by the ASWA Foundation, have been chosen to compete in the 15th Indian National Memory Championship on October 20 in Hyderabad. At Jubilee Hills, a press conference was scheduled for this occasion.

FUN

ARCHIE

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CALVIN AND HOBBS

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GARFIELD

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SPEED BUMP

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CROSSWORD

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NANCY

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CARTOONIST NOTE:
ANY QUESTIONABLE ART FROM NOW ON IS BECAUSE NANCY AND SLUGGO ARE USING A SNAPCHAT FILTER.

SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

SUDOKU

Yesterday's solution

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

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

ACROSS

- Speed up
- Someone on a horse
- Keep your money in this
- Coming nearer to
- A ship for carrying people across a river or sea channel
- Grass colour
- A jam flavour

DOWN

- This liquid chemical will dissolve metal
- Expensive
- Jump over
- A barber cuts this
- Dish-washing liquid

SOLUTION

A	R	R	O	S		G	R	A	B
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Jr NTR's open letter to his fans

Jr NTR, who is now in the USA promoting *Devara*, posted a big note thanking the director and the important technicians of the film. The actor also thanked his fans for showing love to him. Jr NTR and director Koratala Siva's combination film *Devara* released on Friday and the actor is coming up with a solo film nearly after six years. On this occasion, he wrote a heartfelt note to his fans.

"The day I had been waiting for is finally here. Overwhelmed by your incredible reactions. Thank you, Koratala Siva garu, for envisioning *Devara* with such engaging drama and emotional experience. My brother @anirudhofficial, your music and background score brought this world to life. Special thanks to my producers, Harikrishna Kosaraju garu and Sudhakar Mikkilineni garu for being the strongest pillars. Huge gratitude to @RathnaveluDop sir, @sabucyril sir, @sreekar_prasad sir, and every technician for their amazing work (sic)," said Jr NTR on his social media. Apart from the technicians, the actor also thanked his fans for making celebrations of *Devara*.

"To my fans, witnessing your celebrations for *Devara* makes me so elated. Forever indebted for your love. Glad you're enjoying it as much as I did. I promise to keep entertaining you all," said Jr NTR.



Devara falls short of expectations!

SURESH KAVIRAYANI

Cast: Jr NTR, Janhvi Kapoor, Saif Ali Khan, Prakash Raj, Ajay, Shruti Marathe, Srikanth and Shine Tom Chacko, among others.

Writer and Director: Koratala Siva

Producer: Sudhakar Mikkilineni, Kosaraju Harikrishna

Music: Anirudh Ravichander

Cinematographer: R Ratnavelu

Rating: 2.5/5

Director Koratala Siva has made a name for himself in Telugu cinema with his unique blend of socially conscious and commercially viable films. His previous collaborations have consistently delivered impactful messages alongside entertainment. Koratala Siva and Jr NTR have reunited for *Devara* after their successful partnership in *Janata Garage*. This film marks Jr NTR's return to solo leads after nearly six years, following the multi-starrer blockbuster *RRR* alongside Ram Charan. *Devara* also stars actress Janhvi Kapoor to Telugu cinema, making her debut alongside Jr NTR. Saif Ali Khan joins the cast, bringing his signature style to the film. The music composition is handled by Anirudh Ravichander.

REVIEW

The story unfolds in Ratnagiri, a coastal town on the Andhra-Tamil Nadu border, where four villages—Erra Samudram — are nestled amidst hills and forests. *Devara* (played by Jr NTR) and Bhaira (played by Saif Ali Khan) are leaders of these villages, resorting to ship robberies to survive. However, they soon discover they're unwittingly aiding Muruga's (played by Murali Sharma) gang in smuggling illegal arms. A tragic turn of events changes Devara's perspective. After a village boy falls victim to an extremist landmine, Devara realises the devastating consequences of their actions. He decides to cease collaborating with Muruga and urges his villagers to do the same. Bhaira disagrees, sowing discord between the two former allies. Devara takes drastic measures, eliminating Bhaira's crew when they continue pirating ships. He disappears, leaving behind a legacy of fear, as he continues to target anyone engaging in illicit activities at sea. Years pass and

early Janhvi Kapoor's character, Thangam. The influx of characters and action-oriented approach overshadows the storyline. The climax, expected to set the stage for the sequel, falls short. Koratala Siva's earlier films demonstrated emotional depth, but *Devara* missed the mark. Refining his writing skills could have elevated the film.

What drives Vara's actions? Who is Thangam (Janhvi Kapoor) and what's her connection to Devara's family? What strategies will Bhaira employ to lure Devara back to the villages? What brings the Ajay group to Erra Samudram? The answers lie within the film.

ANALYSIS

Director Koratala Siva ventures into new territory with *Devara*, shifting from emotionally charged social dramas to action-packed cinema. Set against the backdrop of a seaside town, the film explores the lives of four villages dependent on the coast. Initially, Siva strikes the right balance, introducing Devara and Bhaira as leaders of the villages. However, as Devara's moral awakening transforms the narrative, the pace slows. The story becomes overly focused on Bhaira's vendetta against Devara, lacking impactful moments due to the sluggish pace. Siva excels in capturing the initial ship-robbing scenes and vibrant festival episodes, but repetition and subpar graphics detract from the experience. The first half shows promise, while the second half falters. Notably, Koratala Siva's trademark strong female characters are underutilized, particu-

larly Janhvi Kapoor's character, Thangam. The influx of characters and action-oriented approach overshadows the storyline. The climax, expected to set the stage for the sequel, falls short. Koratala Siva's earlier films demonstrated emotional depth, but *Devara* missed the mark. Refining his writing skills could have elevated the film.

PERFORMANCES

The performances in *Devara* are spearheaded by Jr NTR, who shoulders the responsibility with ease. He delivers a powerful performance as Devara and later as Vara, showcasing his exceptional acting prowess. Jr NTR is undoubtedly one of Telugu cinema's finest actors, and his talent shines through in this film. While Jr NTR steals the show, Saif Ali Khan's character lacks depth and fails to leave a lasting impression. Janhvi Kapoor's role is limited to a cameo appearance in one song and a few scenes. Srikanth, Prakash Raj and Ajay have brief roles, with limited screen time. Murali Sharma also makes a fleeting appearance. The female characters, including Shruti Marathe as Jr NTR's wife, are underdeveloped due to inadequate writing. Fortunately, Anirudh Ravichander's background score elevates the film, compensating for the lackluster songs. His music stands out, particularly in the sole Jr NTR-Janvi duet. Ratnavelu's cinematography captures memorable moments, although the graphics are inconsistent.

VERDICT:

Ultimately, *Devara* caters primarily to Jr NTR fans, with his performance being the film's standout aspect. Anirudh's background score serves as another redeeming factor. However, *Devara* falls short of Koratala Siva's usual standards, lacking depth in its storyline and emotional resonance.

Narne Nithin Sri Sri Sri Rajavaru ready for Dasara

Jr NTR's brother-in-law, Nithin, was initially set to make his debut in Satish Vegesna's *Sri Sri Sri Rajavaru*. However, due to significant delays, Nithin went on to act in other films that were released first. Nithin's filmography began with *MAD*, a college-based story that became an instant hit. He then starred in *Aay*, another superhit film. With two successful films under his belt, the makers of *Sri Sri Sri Rajavaru* are now gearing up to release his original debut film.

Paidipally had launched the film's teaser. On this occasion, Vamshi praises director Satish Vegesna. "Director Satish Vegesna, who previously won a National Award with *Shatamanam Bhavati*, seems to be following a similar flavor with this movie. I have known Narne Nithin since the time of NTR's marriage, and he has been growing as a promising actor with films like *MAD* and *Aay*. I hope this film will be another hit for him," said Vamshi Paidipally. The producer is confident that this film will definitely give a hat-trick of success to Narne Nithin. He praises director Santish Vegesna for coming up with another entertaining story with this one. Senior actors like Rao Ramesh and Naresh are also playing some important roles in the film.



STANDALONE



Ustaad Ram Pothineni brings the house down in Nizamabad! His stylish entry steals the show at the CMR shopping mall.

Sai Pallavi transforms into Indhu in Amaran

Sivakarthiseyan stars in the upcoming multilingual film *Amaran*, directed by Rajkumar Periyasamy and produced by Kamal Haasan, R Mahendran and Sony Pictures International Productions. Sai Pallavi plays the female lead, Indhu Rebecca Varghese and her character's emotional journey is highlighted in a newly released first look. It features original footage from the 2015 Republic Day parade, where Indhu receives the Ashok Chakra from President Pranabh Mukherjee. Sai Pallavi brings depth and authenticity to her portrayal of Indhu. The promo focuses more on Sai Pallavi's character. The film is based on the chapter "Major Varadharajan" from the book titled *India's Most Fearless*, written by Shiv Aror and Rahul Singh. *Amaran* is set for its theatrical release on October 31 for the Deepavali festival. Nithin's father, Sudhakar Reddy and his sister, Nikhitha Reddy, will release the movie in Telugu states through the Sreshth Movies banner.

Satya Yadu goes from watching RGV's films to working with him

SHIKHA DUGGAL

The teaser for RGV Den's upcoming psychological thriller dropped like a bomb, sending shivers down our spines! *Saaree* promises a hair-raising ride as Satya Yadu's chilling portrayal of a stalker spirals into madness, fixated on Aaradhya Devi's captivating character. Readers, obsession turns deadly, boiling over into blood-curdling violence and mind games that will leave you gasping. So, we're going to reveal the details of our upcoming exclusive interview with the movie's lead actor.

For those who don't know, Satya Yadu, a few of his noteworthy short films are *Dashansh*, *Steps* and *Galat Sahi*. He also made a brief appearance in the well-liked television series *Kumkum Bhagya*. And now the leading man for this captivating story of love and passion! "Through a buddy who provided the project details in August 2023, I was able to secure the lead role in *Saaree*. I had no idea that Ram Gopal Varma was working on the project at the time. After submitting my profile in the required format and waiting three months, I received a call from the casting department informing me that RGV had liked it and wanted to talk about the role." Oh, that's how he landed the role in *Saaree*.

Next up, "RGV, the gentleman, didn't disclose that the character was the lead during our talk; instead, he just described it. He promised to update me later. But after two months there was no news; I thought maybe someone else had been cast. RGV sir called me again two months later and said he would send me the first draft. I was requested to read my character and get back to him. I knew at that point that I had the role. I found out my character was the project's lead after reading the script." A moment of congratulations!

The birthplace and upbringing of Satya Yadu are from Uttar Pradesh. He completed his schooling in

his hometown and later graduated with a degree from Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar University. His mother is a stay-at-home mom and his father works in the private sector. While he continues to talk about his debut, he mentions, "I studied the screenplay for two months, reading it through about fifty times, in order to get ready for this complicated character. I was able to fully comprehend the character's intricacies and feelings as a result of this. In order to completely put myself in the character's shoes, I also conducted self-reflection tests and developed a simple framework to direct my representation. 90% of the character was already developed by the time I went to the workshop and the final 10% was honed there."

As everyone is aware, Ram Gopal Varma, who was previously praised as one of the best directors of Hindi cinema, has had difficulties lately due to the lackluster reception his films have received. Not to be deterred, RGV is currently taking on new projects. RGV hopes to revitalise Satya Yadu's cinematic presence by presenting him as the main character. "I was aware of his distinct approach, having grown up watching his films. There were moments during filming when I found it difficult to capture the character's feelings, but RGV's advice enabled me to give outstanding performances. He is incredibly talented at getting his actors to give excellent performances," Satya gives his producer acclaim.



Satya Yadu, who is all set to make his debut in RGV's *Saaree*, speaks exclusively with *The Pioneer* about landing a lead role in the film, getting to work with RGV and more

"Since *Saaree* was my debut, I was first anxious. Nevertheless, my worries vanished as soon as filming started because of the welcoming and helpful environment on set. I was given the creative freedom to thrive in my part by director Giri Krishna Kamal, who encouraged me to offer my thoughts. Because of Aaradhya's genuine personality, we were able to click with her off-screen and it easily transferred to our on-screen chemistry. From playing a character, transitioning from love to obsession was challenging; the director's guidance made it smoother, and working on it taught me teamwork's importance in filmmaking. Every crew member's role is vital! Moreover, RGV encouraged me to push limits and his supportive nature made challenging scenes manageable. Initial nerves were overcome by the team's support; my first day on set, surrounded by dedication and living my dream, was surreal. I learned to control emotions to separate my character's feelings from my personal life," continues Satya.

Regarding the future, he comes to a conclusion: "I'm excited to explore diverse roles with compelling stories. My first day on set was unforgettable. My journey as an actor has just begun. Regardless of the character, the story should be good."

AKASH DEEP, ASHWIN KEEP INDIA AHEAD ON RAIN-HIT DAY 1



PTI ■ KANPUR
Pacer Akash Deep was impressive in a probing opening spell while Ravichandran Ashwin removed the dangerous Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto before rain halted India's progress in the second Test on the opening day, here Friday. Given the forecast, it was expected to be a weather-hit contest from the beginning.

Only 35 overs could be bowled after Rohit Sharma invited Bangladesh to bat in overcast conditions as visitors struggled to 107 for three after a brief resistance through Shanto (31). Mominul Haque (40 batting) and veteran Mushfiqur Rahim (6) were at the crease when heavens opened up. Overnight rain had delayed the start of the match by an hour. Heavy overcast conditions influenced India's team

selection as the hosts kept all three pacers from the Chennai Test, which meant that local boy Kuldeep Yadav missed out on another Test match. Akash (2/14 in 10 overs), who bowled round the wicket to the left-handers, consistently hit the good length areas and got the ball to either shape away or come in with the angle. Shanto (57 balls, 4x6), though, batted with positive intent, if not combative, to ensure Bangladesh don't lose way

from the start. As expected, the initial bounce and seam movement had openers Zakir Hasan and Shadman Islam playing in circumspect manner. Islam (24) worked the ball around but an overcautious Hasan (0) simply couldn't get going. Jasprit Bumrah had the openers squared up as the away-going deliveries kept landing in Rishabh Pant's gloves. Mohammed Siraj induced edges that flew to the slip

cordon but none carried to the fielders. Shadman hit couple of boundaries off Bumrah in a single over, the first was a flick off the pads, and the second was an uppish drive. On the other side, Hasan consumed 23 dot balls and was yet to open his account. Akash, who came in as a second-change, ended his misery by inducing an edge that flew to Yashasvi Jaiswal who went low on his right to

grab the chance. Akash soon sent back Shadman on a ball that came in and caught him in front of the wicket. The opener reviewed the decision but to no avail. Shanto, who has been in good rhythm, began with two shots to the fence in a sort of statement that he won't get intimidated by the classy Indian bowlers. He also got a boundary off Siraj but those were not the cleanest of hits. His reverse sweep off off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin though stood out. Ashwin, who did not get a wicket in the opening session, trapped Shanto in the third over of the second session. Shanto played for the turn but was beaten. The umpire had no hesitation in raising his finger. The Bangladesh skipper reviewed the decision hoping against hope. Seasoned Mominul grew in confidence as he spent more time at the crease. He hit two boundaries off Akash in a single over and later hit an exquisite drive through mid-off. He raised Bangladesh's hundred with another four. Only nine overs were bowled in the second session when bad light stopped play even as the flood lights were on, forcing the players off the field. Light drizzle followed and soon it was pouring.



Bravo retires from all forms of cricket, joins KKR as mentor

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
World Cup-winning West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket and will join IPL side Kolkata Knight Riders as its mentor, a move that marks the end of his long-standing association with Chennai Super Kings. In KKR, the 40-year-old will replace Gautam Gambhir, who left the role to take over as India's head coach earlier this year. Bravo's last season in the Caribbean Premier League was cut short due to an injury that he sustained earlier this week. "Today is the day I say goodbye to the game that has given me everything," he wrote on Instagram on Thursday. "Twenty-one years as a professional cricketer - it's been an incredible journey, filled with many highs and a few lows. Most importantly, I was able to live my dream because I gave you 100 at every step."

Apart from KKR, he will be in charge of the other franchises under the Knight Riders label in T20 leagues. The new role puts an end to his long association with CSK. "We're also pleased that Bravo will be involved with our other franchises globally, including CPL, MLC, and ILT20, Mysore said. Talking about his role in KKR, Bravo said: "I've been part of the Trinbago Knight Riders for the last 10 years in the CPL. Having played for and against the Knight Riders in various leagues, I have a lot of respect for how they operate. "BODY CAN NO LONGER ENDURE THE PAIN": Ahead of the ongoing CPL season, Bravo had declared it would be his final tournament. However, a groin injury sustained while fielding against the St. Lucia Kings in Tarouba earlier this week cut his CPL stint short. "My mind wants to keep going, but my body can no longer endure the pain, the breakdowns, and the strain. I can't put myself in a position where I might let down my teammates, my fans, or the teams I represent," Bravo wrote in his Instagram post. "So, with a heavy heart, I officially announce my retirement from the sport. Today, the Champion bids farewell." During his illustrious career, Bravo played 582 T20 matches and took 631 wickets, besides scoring nearly 7,000 runs. "Though this ending is bittersweet, I have no regrets about my career or this decision. Now, I look forward to my next chapter. Once again, thank you. See you soon on the other side," he added.

Injury is fine now, next big target is 2025 world championship: Neeraj Chopra

PTI ■ SONEPAT
Promising to be 100 per cent fit for the new season, India's two-time Olympic medal-winning javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra on Friday said a podium finish in the 2025 Tokyo World Championships is the next big target on his mind going forward. The 26-year-old is back in the country after winding up his season with a second-place finish at the Diamond League finale in Brussels. This was after he became the first Indian track-and-field athlete to claim successive Olympic medals by adding a silver in Paris to the momentous gold clinched in Tokyo. "The season is over now. The biggest target for next year is the World Championship, and we will begin preparations for that now. The Olympics are always on our minds,

but we have four years for that," Neeraj told PTI Videos on the sidelines of a conference on 'Mission Olympics 2036' organised at the Sports University of Haryana here. The world championship is scheduled to be held from September 13 to 21 next year. Chopra battled an adductor muscle niggle throughout the year and it also affected his performance at both the Olympics and the DL finale, where he also competed with a fractured left hand. He had spoken about consulting doctors at the end of the season to decide whether to go for a surgery to fix the problem. Asked about his fitness, Chopra played down concerns and also stated that he will look to improve his technique. The Haryana-lad is trained by renowned German biomechanics expert Klaus Bartonietz.



"It was an injury-plagued year but injury is fine now, I will be 100 per cent fit for the new season," he asserted. "Technical issues are also there but we

will work on them. I will look to improve my technique. I do like to train in India but when competitions start, I prefer to train abroad," he said. Reflecting on India's Olympic

performance, which yielded six medals but no gold this time, Chopra pointed out that the country could have got more as reflected by the half a dozen fourth place finishes. "There were a lot of fourth positions. (But) this time, we had a very good performance in the Paralympics and won several medals. "In the coming times, we expect strong performances in both the Olympics and the Paralympics," said Chopra. Chopra has been working hard to hit the 90m mark but hasn't managed so far despite coming close. In the Paris Olympics, his silver-winning throw was 89.45m and he was bested by Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who broke the Games record with a 92.97m effort. At the DL finale, Chopra threw 87.86m to miss the top finish by just one centimetre.

Medvedev beats Monfils in Beijing, Draper upsets Hurkacz in Japan

AP ■ BEIJING
Daniil Medvedev safely navigated a tricky first outing at the China Open on Friday, winning 6-3 6-4 against French veteran Gael Monfils. The third-seeded Medvedev, runner-up to Jannik Sinner here last year, broke Monfils' serve three times in a dominant opening set. After trading breaks in a closer second set, former No. 1-ranked Medvedev clinched the match with another service break to seal the win in 92 minutes. Roman Safiullin, who made the main draw as a lucky loser in qualifying, beat three-time major winner Stan Wawrinka 6-3 6-4 and will face top-ranked Sinner. No. 3-ranked Carlos Alcaraz, seeded second in Beijing, begins against No. 51 Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard of France later Friday. In the women's draw, sixth-seeded Emma Navarro was upset by Chinese wildcard Zhang Shuai 6-4 6-2 in 75 minutes. The 35-year-old Zhang, a doubles specialist, played well above her current singles



ranking of No. 595 as she took five of her seven breakpoint opportunities against the U.S. Open semifinalist. Zhang will play Greet Minnen of Belgium, who beat 28th-seeded Anastasia Potapova 7-5 2-6 6-4 in the third round. Also, 12th-seeded Diana Shnaider beat former Australian Open winner Sofia Kenin 6-2 6-3 and Yulia Starodubtseva had a 6-2 6-2 win over 27th-seeded Katerina Siniakova. Second-seeded Jessica Pegula was due open her tournament later Friday against Diane Parry of France, and Coco Gauff faced Clara Burel in a night match.

US Open champion Aryna Sabalenka plays Saturday against Thai qualifier Mananchaya Sawangkaew. Top-ranked Iga Swiatek was not playing this week for personal reasons. **JAPAN OPEN:** Second-seeded Hubert Hurkacz lost 6-4 6-4 to US Open semifinalist Jack Draper in the second round in Tokyo, a day after top-seeded Taylor Fritz and third-seeded Casper Ruud were eliminated from the tournament. While the 22-year-old Draper and Hurkacz were evenly matched on aces and winners, it was the Polish player's 30 unforced errors, to Draper's 20, that proved costly. Draper will next play either Brandon Nakashima or Ugo Humbert in the quarterfinals. Defending champion Ben Shelton also progressed to the quarterfinals with a 6-4 6-3 defeat of Mariano Navone. Shelton, along with Fritz, traveled to Japan from the Laver Cup in Berlin, where they represented Team World in a loss to Alcaraz's Team Europe.

India U-17 face Nepal hurdle in semifinals

PTI ■ THIMPHU
Buoyant Indian football team will take on Nepal in the semi-finals of the SAFF U17 Championship here on Saturday, hoping to continue its good run of form in the continental age-group tournament. The Blue Colts eased into the last four as Group A table toppers after beating Bangladesh (1-0) and Maldives (3-0). Nepal, on the other hand, sneaked into the semi-finals, thanks to a late winner against Bhutan in their last group match, which lifted them to second place in Group B behind Pakistan, who will face Bangladesh in the second semi-finals later on Saturday. India have had ample rest between their matches so far, including three full days to prepare for their semi-finals. Head coach Ishaq Ahmed stated that the rest days for



players are more about recovery and staying injury-free. "This rest is about recovering because we are playing on artificial turf. It's not easy to play and train on turf everyday. It has its negative impacts also. We've been training mostly to recover our boys. "It has been raining here everyday and we are stuck inside the hotel. Sometimes that can be a good thing because you spend a lot of time with each other and that helps.

mark for the Indian backline as the Nepalese striker is the competition top-scorer with four goals, including a hat-trick against Sri Lanka and the all-important match winner against Bhutan. "I rate Nepal as a good side. They are not afraid of playing. They have done quite well, coming from 0-1 down, showing character and beating the hosts," said Ahmed. "Since it's a knockout match, you have to take your chances. In both matches so far, we created a lot of chances but failed to make the most of them. Whether it was a good save by the goalkeeper or a missed shot, it doesn't matter. We need to convert our ball possession into goals. "If we get an early goal against them, it will be a little bit easier for us. We wouldn't want the match to stretch because then you have to keep one eye on the defence as well," Ahmed added.

Tottenham overcomes early red card to post 3-0 win in revamped Europa League

AP ■ LONDON
Tottenham marked its return to European competition after one-year absence by overcoming an early red card to beat Qarabag 3-0 in the revamped Europa League. Defender Radu Dragusin was sent off in the eighth minute for bringing down Juninho to prevent the forward from going in alone on goal. But the hosts opened the scoring just four minutes later. Brennan Johnson's angled shot was his third goal in three games. Pape Sarr doubled the advantage early in the second half off a corner kick and Dominic Solanke finished it off on a rebound in the 68th. "The red card was not ideal, we started really sloppily but the reaction afterwards was good," Spurs manager Ange Postecoglou told TNT Sports. "We wanted to press high, even

with ten men." Johnson also scored in a 3-1 win over Brentford in the Premier League and had a stoppage-time winner in a 2-1 victory over second-division Coventry in the English League Cup three days earlier. Tural Bayramov wasted a golden opportunity to score from the spot when the Azerbaijan visitors were 2-0 down. Travel disruptions forced the game to start 35 minutes late. Roma blows lead Roma allowed a late goal and settled for a 1-1 draw with Athletic Bilbao following the Italian club's turbulent recent stretch that included firing coach Daniele De Rossi. Aitor Paredes headed in the equalizer in the 85th minute to offset Artem Dovbyk's first-half goal. Roma beat Udinese 3-0 in Serie A on Sunday in the first game under new coach Ivan Juric. Bilbao winger Nico Williams



came on as a substitute for last 30 minutes in his return from an ankle injury. Ajax cleans up Mika Godts had two goals, Kian Fitz-Jim and Kenneth Taylor added one each for Ajax in a 4-0 rout of Besiktas. Czech side Viktoria Plzen scored two late goals from Prince Adu and Vaclav Jemelka to hold high-flying Eintracht Frankfurt to a 3-3 away draw.

Frankfurt, the 2022 Europa League winner led 3-1 on goals from Hugo Ekitike, substitute Junior Dina Ebimbe and defender Rasmus Kristensen. Olympiacos, last year's

Conference League champion, started with a 2-0 loss to Lyon in France on second half goals by Rayan Cherki and Said Benrahma. Braga rallied to beat nine-man

Maccabi Tel Aviv 2-1. Romania's FCSB beat Latvia's RFS 4-1 in Bucharest. Fenerbahce, Rangers score early wins Fenerbahce opened the competition with a 2-1 home win over Belgian club Union Saint-Gilloise with both teams finishing the game with 10 men. Defender Caglar Soyuncu opened the scoring for Jose Mourinho's team in the 26th with a half-volley from close range and Christian Burgess' own goal in the 82nd made it 2-0 for Fenerbahce. Ross Sykes scored in stoppage time for the visitors. Union defender Kevin Mac Allister received a red card in the 74th and Fenerbahce substitute Bright Osayi-Samuel was sent off in the final minute. Last season, Fenerbahce eliminated Union in the round of 16 of the third-tier Conference League. Europe's second tier is a familiar turf for Mourinho, who led

Manchester United to the 2017 title. He took the Fenerbahce job in the offseason. With Mourinho in charge, Roma lost the 2023 final to Sevilla after a penalty shootout. In another early game, Rangers won 2-0 at Malmo. The 2022 Europa League beaten finalist didn't waste time. Nedim Bajrami scored in the opening minute. Ross McCausland scored in the second half. Rangers lost in the 2022 final to Eintracht Frankfurt. The German club will be in action later Thursday, hosting Czech side Viktoria Plzen. As in the Champions League, the traditional group stage of the Europa League has been replaced with an expanded league phase with all 36 teams competing in a single standings. Each Europa League team will play eight games against eight different opponents through Jan.