

sunday pioneer

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Decision to transform J&K into UT is 'temporary': Modi



EAM reaffirms India's COMMITMENT to boost ties with BIMSTEC



Smita Sabharwal: The QUINTESSENTIAL bureaucrat

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The pioneer

In Telangana, the BJP got 77 lakh votes in the Lok Sabha elections and eight LS seats. It is not tough to complete the 50 lakh membership when the party bagged 77 lakh votes. BJP posts will be given to leaders who enrol more members. Leaders should take up local issues apart from the membership drive



- P Nadda, BJP President

DON'T MISS...

Murmu pitches for network of ...

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday urged the NALSAR University of Law here, including its alumni, to enlist the support of all stakeholders and help in setting up a nation-wide network of women advocates and law students to make efforts to prevent atrocities against women. The President, who attended the 21st annual convocation of NALSAR University of Law, said, "The network will work with the mandate to make concerted efforts to prevent atrocities against women and deal with cases of such atrocities". She ...

-PAGE: 3

Tension still high in violence ...

Prohibitory orders under Section 144 BNS banning the assembly of more than four persons in public in Jainoor, are still being enforced. It shows that the situation on the ground remains unchanged and tension is still running high. The traders have not yet opened the shops posing a problem to the residents of the town. Normal life has continued to be hit. On September 5 two groups -- Advaisis and those belonging to a minority group -- clashed in Jainoor town following attempt to outrage the modesty of a woman and murder her. The prohibitory ...

-PAGE: 4

6-7 K'taka Ministers will ...

Hitting out at the Siddaramaiah-led government in Karnataka on a host of issues, including "corruption", JD(S) leader and Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy on Saturday said if he released the documents in his possession, six to seven state Ministers will have to resign. He claimed that the Congress administration was trying to "fix" him in some cases, after he began cornering the state government in connection with some alleged irregularities and started publicly discussing them in public. "Siddaramaiah had accused (previous BJP ...

-PAGE: 5

Majority of employees feel...

Even as the corporate sector in India is taking steps to address mental health issues at workplaces, a majority of employees believe companies could do more to improve their overall well-being, a survey report said on Saturday. Over 79 per cent of those participated in the survey opined their organisations could do more to address mental health issues and well-being, according to the report by HR services and workforce solutions provider Genius Consultants. "We must recognise that employee well-being is not just a trend, but a crucial aspect of organizational success. The data reveals that a significant number of employees are grappling with anxiety and feeling overwhelmed in their work environments..."

-PAGE: 8

OBTUSE ANGLE



'HYDRAA is going ahead targeting bigwigs'



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA), Commissioner AV Ranganath, said that big people are the main target of the HYDRAA. Hydra does not treat the poor the same way as the rich, he added.

We have received complaints about Owaisi College, Mallareddy College, Palla Rajeshwar Reddy College and other institutions, he said. If we demolish those structures thousands of students would be affected, he added.

"Not only demolition, our job is to retrieve the lake. A workshop is going on to ... [Continued on Page 5](#)

'Nobody will be forcefully evicted'

The MD of the Musi River Development Corporation Limited (MRDCL), Dana Kishore, said the government will not forcibly remove people who are now living in the Musi River area. The CM told us, "Not a single person will be forcibly evicted."

MRDCL MD Dana Kishore along with the HYDRAA Commissioner [Continued on Page 5](#)

Woman must be considered head of household: Revanth

- Ration, health and other scheme details will be included in the Family Digital Card
- Households will be identified based on current data
- Pilot field level study from October 3

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy ordered officials to consider the woman as the owner of the house. The names of other family members will be mentioned on the back of the digital family card which would soon be issued in the state.

The Chief Minister conducted a review on issuing Family Digital Cards (FDC) at the secretariat on Saturday. The authorities gave a PowerPoint presentation on the study on Family Digital Cards conducted in Rajasthan, Haryana, Karnataka and Maharashtra from October 25 to 27. The officials explained to the

FAMILY DIGITAL CARDS



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CM the details collected from the states, the design of the cards and also its advantages and disadvantages. After reviewing the use of

Family Digital Cards in other states, the CM gave orders on the design of the Family Digital Cards. The CM suggested that families

should be identified on the basis of available data in existing ration cards, Rajiv Arogyasri, IT, agriculture and other welfare schemes.

The Chief Minister asked officials to adopt the best practices in the design and issuance of cards from other states and also to rectify defects if any. The CM asked officials to stop collecting unnecessary information like bank accounts and PAN cards. [Continued on Page 5](#)

Will stand by Musi Project victims: BRS



Victims meet party leaders Harish, Sabitha; seek their intervention

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Families who are likely to lose their homes due to the Musi Beautification Project visited the Telangana Bhavan on Saturday to seek help from Siddipet MLA Harish Rao. The affected people, many of whom had legally purchased land and built homes with bank loans expressed their deep anguish over the looming demolitions and pleaded for Harish's intervention. The people wanted to meet KTR

Bhavan on Saturday morning. As KTR was not well, Harish and Sabitha Indra Reddy attended to the victims. One of the victims from Rajendra Nagar said, [Continued on Page 5](#)

Rs 1.5 L cr Musi project meant for loot: KTR

BRS Working President KTR raised serious allegations regarding the Congress government's plan to spend Rs 1.5 lakh crore on the Musi River Beautification Project. He questioned how many farmers would benefit from this massive investment, comparing it unfavourably with the Kaleshwaram Project which cost Rs 80,000 crore. KTR said the Congress [Continued on Page 5](#)

Justice Ghose vents ire on Kaleshwaram Ex ENC

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Justice PC Ghose reportedly vented ire during the commission hearing against former ENC Nalla Venkateswarlu and questioned his responses regarding secant piles and the raising concern over the accuracy of the information provided to the Kaleshwaram Commission of Inquiry.

Venkateswarlu, previously associated with the Kaleshwaram Project as EnC, attended a hearing before the commission on Saturday.

During the session, he was questioned about several matters, including his decision to use secant piles for the Medigadda Barrage. In response to the commission chairman's question on who recommended the use of secant piles, Venkateswarlu cited instructions from the CDO CE. Justice Ghosh, visibly displeased with Venkateswarlu's responses.

"If he has the plans and designs, why is he providing false information to the commission?" The commission's chair [Continued on Page 5](#)

Three to 5 working presidents for TPCC: Mahesh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC President B. Mahesh Kumar Goud said that three to five working presidents will be appointed soon.

Stating that the PCC working group will be completely purged soon, Mahesh said the posts of district presidents will not be abolished. After the appointment of PCC positions, we will think about the DCC presidents, Mahesh said.

During a chat with scribes on Saturday at the Gandhi Bhavan, Mahesh said that there will be changes and additions in the Hyderabad City Congress.

He said that there is a proposal to give DCC responsibilities to MLAs.

He said that he would meet AICC leaders, who were busy with five state elections soon to discuss TPCC Executive Committee appointments. [Continued on Page 5](#)



Be active in membership drive, get party posts: Nadda

Asks leaders to launch movements on local issues

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BJP President JP Nadda said that party posts will be given to leaders, who add more members during the membership drive. He said that BJP leaders have to launch movements on local issues besides participating

in the membership drive, he added. He directed BJP leaders to complete the 15-day scheduled membership drive's goal.

Nadda held a meeting with party leaders including MPs, MLAs, MLA candidates and the BJP's Executive Committee [Continued on Page 5](#)

Utmost transparency in govt

No acts of corruption in last 9 months: Sridhar Babu

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Industries and IT Minister Sridhar Babu addressed the media to clarify on the recent allegations about financial mismanagement and bill delays within the current government.

He emphasised that the government operates with complete transparency, unlike the BRS admin, in which power was concentrated in the hands of a few individuals. "There is no undue influence on the government machinery, and every-

thing is proceeding without compromises," he stated.

Sridhar said that the accusations made by some media outlets, particularly those aligned with the BRS, were baseless.

He expressed disappointment over a recent report alleging that the finance department was demanding commissions of 7%, 8%, and even 20% for releasing bills. "This kind of malicious reporting is not justified," Sridhar asserted.

The Minister remarked that in the nine months

after the Congress came to power, no substantial acts of corruption have been found, and the baseless allegations seem to be aimed at tarnishing the image of the government. "If there are issues, they should be presented with evidence," he said, adding that terms like 'rumours' and 'speculation' used in reports expose the weaknesses of the claims. Sridhar also acknowledged that there was indeed a shortage of funds, primarily because of the higher expenditure on welfare schemes. However, he dismissed the impression that the delay in bill payments was due to commissions, calling it "a blatant lie." [Continued on Page 5](#)

Jagan must not back down on Tirumala visit

BY B KRISHNA PRASAD

With Andhra Pradesh's former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy deciding on Saturday to postpone his planned visit to Tirumala, it is now amply clear that he neither has proper advisors who can give him appropriate advice on sensitive matters nor does he heed his advisors. At a time when the Tirumala Srivari laddu controversy has attracted global attention with tens of millions of deeply hurt devotees anxious to know whether their prasadam had indeed been prepared with ghee adulterated with fish oil, lard and beef tallow as established by lab reports; Jagan has apparently backed down in the face of stiff opposition to his visit unless he declares his faith by signing the mandatory declaration under Rules 136 and 137. After

He just had a golden chance of going to Tirumala, signing the declaration, offering prayers and may be going for a tonsure to make a strong political statement and win the deeply hurt hearts of millions of devotees of Lord Venkateshwara across the globe. Instead, he has chickened out and taken a step backward

internal deliberations, he has used an excuse to postpone the visit.

In this episode, we have to understand that, before announcing his visit to Tirumala, he did not even think of giving the declaration at TTD office regarding his faith. This again reflects lack of planning on the part of his advisors or his own disinclination to heed his advisors, as the case may be.

The twist to the Tirumala laddu issue also makes it clear that Jagan has not learned his lessons from the disastrous defeat in the recent

Assembly polls. He just had a golden chance of going to Tirumala, signing the declaration, offering prayers and may be going for a tonsure to make a strong political statement and win the deeply hurt hearts of millions of devotees of Lord Venkateshwara across the globe. Instead, he has chickened out and taken a step backward. That is not all. He has the cheek to cite his previous visits to Tirumala when he was not required to sign the declaration of faith.

What Jagan has forgotten or



ignored is the fact that the very rule requiring signing of declaration of faith by non-Hindus was introduced at Tirumala after his controversial visit in 2012. Subsequently he has visited Tirumala about three times. Since he did so as then chief

minister, it is but natural that no official in his senses would have dared to ask him to sign the declaration. Today, when he is asked to sign the declaration like any common non-Hindu, he cannot cite those visits for his non-willingness to sign the declaration during the proposed visit. His logic is like, "Yesterday night, I ignored the red light and crossed the signal. Why am I being stopped today?" As Leader of the Opposition, he cannot question law-keepers' adherence to rules now.

It is of course possible that tomorrow, he may choose to visit Tirumala and do the needful to strike a chord with the devotees, if not political circles. But the damage is already done. He has lost a golden chance to make a strong political retort and win the hearts of millions of devotees of Lord Venkateshwara.

'When was the last time that BJP pulled off a statewide protest?'

When was the last time that the Bharatiya Janata Party pulled off a statewide protest? This is one question that even die-hard saffron party loyalists might struggle to answer. For, ever since the Congress government took over, the BJP has been noticeably quiet. It has not organized any major protest across the state, though occasionally the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha continues to hold demonstrations and token protests here and there. The absence of BJP's voice (let alone garjana) in the larger political landscape is striking. Although the Congress has staged protests against the BJP, there have been no counters, no significant response, and certainly no large-scale protests concerning people's issues. The once active and vocal party appears to have taken a back seat now. As political watchers begin to interpret the silence in a differing manner, many people are left wondering whether the BJP has an undeclared plan or if the Congress government has managed to tame what was once an opposition eager to hit the streets at the drop of a hat.

Bhavan, raising suspicions of an orchestrated visit. At the end of the day, what cannot be denied is the authenticity of the victims' plight. BRS working president KT Rama Rao could not meet the victims as he was stated to be down with viral fever. Aside from politics and compulsions of civic needs over HYDRRA ops; the distress of those affected by the rehabilitation issues was palpable. Sharp-eyed newshounds see this as a pilot for BRS activists and leaders to translate into action KCR's July 3rd words urging his party to stay strong and remain engaged with public concerns.

Punctuality exception rather than the rule in government events

Punctuality seems to have become the exception rather than the rule in Telangana government's official functions, going by the happenings over the past week, with several high-profile events running way behind schedule.

REPORTERS' DIARY

KCR's prediction coming true?

Back on 3rd July, when Bharat Rashtira Samithi chief and former chief minister K Chandrasekhar asserted "Soon, people will come with torch lights looking for BRS leaders", few would have believed his studied statement would turn prophetic. It then seemed like a remote possibility and the rant of a CM who had lost power. KCR had then emphasized that BRS leaders should focus on public issues and keep the party intact, awaiting the time when people would inevitably seek them out. Fast-forward to 28th September, KCR's words found an echo in reality when victims of the Musi rehabilitation project trooped in at Telangana Bhavan, headquarters of the BRS, for garnering support. While it did not appear to be a conducted visit, the buzz in political circles suggests that it might not have been entirely coincidental. For, despite having the option to approach Praja Bhavan or Gandhi Bhavan, the victims came to Telangana

Multi-tasking TPCC chief leaves much to be desired for scribes

Recently appointed Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president B Mahesh Kumar Goud is quite unlike his immediate predecessors, when it comes to dealing with scribes. It is not that he is unapproachable; rather, he is quite accommodating despite his crucial position as the vital link between the state party unit and the state government currently led by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. While Mahesh was chit-chatting with invited scribes on Saturday, newshounds noticed that he has the habit of always lending his ears to all. For, even while engaged in conversations with media persons, he took incoming calls on his phone without any qualms. That is not all. He gave room amidst scribes to party leaders who had come to Gandhi Bhavan to meet him. What did not go unnoticed was the fact that former TPCC presidents, including Revanth Reddy and N Uttam Kumar Reddy, used to keep their phones on silent mode while chit-chatting with scribes. At the end of the day, Mahesh, given his multi-tasking skills, left a lot to be desired among media persons. Scribes did not get much in edgewise from the TPCC president though the chit-chat session lasted half an hour.

Nizam Club's food for thought baffles FSSAI officials

In a bizarre turn of events, just a day after the 140-year-old Nizam Club in Hyderabad was raided by food safety offi-

cial, the Congress party chose to hold a pre-planned event right there. Following the raid, which had caught many off-guard, it was found that the prestigious club, where food and drinks are regularly served for the city's elite, had never obtained a food safety licence! The club's technicalities-based claim that it is 'not running a business' has baffled food safety officials. With the Secunderabad Club and the Fateh Maidan Club so far not under the lens of food safety officials, the well-heeled ones across the twin cities are wondering how come the Nizam Club managed to avoid scrutiny for so long.

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(With inputs from Naveena Ghanate and Venkateshwarlu)

Butchamma's death is murder by HYDRRA: Eatata

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Declaring that the death of Butchamma is a HYDRRA murder, the BJP's Malkajgiri MP, Eatata Rajender, said that the government should stop its destruction at least now. He said that Kukatpally Nallacheruvu HYDRRA victim Butchamma's death was not a suicide but a murder by the admin.

After paying floral tributes to Butchamma's body on Saturday, Eatata demanded that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy should take responsibility for Butchamma's death.

He said that the curse of HYDRRA victims will not go away easily and that knee-jerk decisions and indiscriminate demolitions are killing people. He said that Butchamma had land with proper title deeds at Nallacheruvu and that she had constructed houses working hard and had given them to her three daughters. Butchamma committed suicide when officials threatened to demolish her houses, he said and added that this death was nothing but a murder by HYDRRA.

CM wants focus to shift to experiential tourism

Hyd biryani will be an experience

Tourists will be given a chance to take part in traditional dances, art forms

NAVEENA GHANATE naveena.ghanate@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has outlined a plan to develop Telangana's tourism industry by focusing on experiential tourism. The CM emphasised Telangana's unique blend of spiritual, cultural, historical and environmental attractions that can position the state prominently on the global tourism map. The Tourism Department has been tasked with developing a strategy to enhance visitors' engagement with the state's heritage, art forms and local traditions. The initiative aims to give tourists a chance to participate in cultural and traditional functions that will leave them

with lifelong memories. The CM emphasised the importance of connecting tourists with the history and traditions associated with tourist sites. For example, a visit to the Ramappa Temple would not only include viewing the site but also learning about the history and significance of the Perini Dance, a local traditional art form, and giving tourists a chance to participate in the dance wearing traditional costumes. This would offer tourists a unique hands-on experience that reflects Telangana's culture. In places like Adilabad and Bhadrachalam, visitors could join traditional dances like the Gussadi and Kommu performed by local tribes, while at the Golconda Fort, they could

dress up as Qutb Shahi rulers. At Charminar, tourists could witness how the famous bangles are made or even partake in learning the art of making the Hyderabad biryani. Revanth also directed that Telangana's culinary traditions should be highlighted. For example, tourists will have the opportunity to witness the process of preparing the Hyderabad biryani as per methods handed down from the Nizam's kitchens. In rural Telangana, tourists will be able to sample regional specialties like Ankapur chicken from Nizamabad, sarvapindi from Karimnagar and bongo chicken from Bhadrachalam, with the added experience of learning how to prepare these dishes.

Gandhi Hospital patients approach Harish, complain about lack of medicines

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

During a visit to the Gandhi Hospital to see the body of Bucchamma, who committed suicide allegedly due to HYDRRA harassment, BRS MLA Harish Rao was approached by patients who voiced their frustration over the dire conditions in the hospital. Patients complained that essential medicines were unavailable and that they were being directed to purchase all medicines from private medical shops.



Harish, visibly moved by their plight, expressed shock at the lack of basic medicines in the hospital. "How can there be a shortage of even basic tablets?" he asked.

KTR alleges graft in Revanth's mining department

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS MLA KT Rama Rao posted on X saying that there is massive corruption in Revanth's Department of Mining and claimed that fake documents and receipts were created to loot 1,50,000 tonnes of sand worth Rs 150 crore, from the Telangana Mineral Development Corporation. He stated that these "home thieves" diverted the sand under the pretext of supplying it to Hyderabad Metro Water Works.

KTR emphasized that such a scam could not have occurred without the knowledge of top government officials and demanded an immediate investigation to identify the culprits involved in the sand theft. "Strict action must be taken against these sand thieves," he asserted.

'Why is the Cong Govt not demolishing Owaisi brothers' illegal buildings?'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Asking the Congress government to explain why it is not demolishing the illegal buildings of the Owaisi brothers, the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, asked how far it is right for the government to demolish houses which have all necessary permissions, whose owners are paying taxes and have been constructed with bank loans. Sanjay said the Congress is a closed shop. The HYDRRA, the 6-guarantees and the pending bills of former sarpanches

will see the end of the Congress, he added. Sanjay said that the Musi beautification project is a big scam and that these things are being heard for the last 30 years, but nothing has happened till now. "Once funds were acquired from Japan in the name of Musi cleansing and again from Jamaica and it was spent. Someone said he would clean the Hussain Sagar and make its water as pure as coconut water. What happened in the end? The same Musi and the same bad smell, but funds went into the pockets of the Congress and BRS leaders. However, the peo-

Paul to approach High Court on HYDRRA

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Declaring that the Congress government is enacting dramas in the name of HYDRRA after throwing governance to the wind, Prajashanthi Party chief KA Paul said that he will file a House Motion in the High Court. He said that the Congress government is making the poor fall on the road and is not doing anything regarding the illegal buildings of the rich.

Speaking to the media on Saturday, Paul demanded that the Congress government

should do justice to the poor, who have been thrown on to the roads. He also demanded that the government should take action against the officials responsible for allowing illegal buildings. He demanded that the government should stop HYDRRA demolitions immediately and provide alternatives to the poor.

Massive military expansion in India: Pak

PNS ■ UNITED NATIONS

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday accused India of "massive expansion of its military capabilities" and issuing threats to cross the LoC for taking over Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, as he raised the Kashmir issue again in his address at the United Nations General Assembly.

Sharif demanded that New Delhi should reverse the 2019 abrogation of Article 370, which gave Jammu and Kashmir a special status, and also charged India of trying to subjugate its Muslim population and obliterate its Islamic her-

itage. Pakistan routinely raises the Kashmir issue at the annual UN debate. India was expected to exercise its right of reply to counter Sharif's allegations. Sharif said "like the people of Palestine", the people of Jammu and Kashmir have "struggled for a century for their freedom and right to self-determination". Referring to the abrogation of Article 370, Sharif said India must reverse the "unilateral and illegal measures" to secure durable peace, and enter into a dialogue for a peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir issue in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions and "wishes of the Kashmiri people".

Revanth is doing now what KCR could not do: Chamala Kiran

Harish Rao, KTR lying about HYDRRA: Chamala Kiran

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Stating that HYDRRA is meant for the future and posterity, the Congress's Bhongir MP, Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is now doing what former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao could not do. BRS leaders T. Harish Rao and KT Rama Rao are telling lies, he said.

Addressing the media in New Delhi on Saturday, Kiran said that 80 per cent of the peo-

ple have welcomed HYDRRA. The remaining 20 per cent who are



opposing HYDRRA are politicians who have encroached on lakes

with political support in the last 10 years, he said.

He said that there is a need for the Congress government to protect the brand image of Hyderabad.

He recalled the statement of KCR that there were 28,000 illegal buildings built atop drains in Hyderabad and that the city could not survive unless they were demolished. But now his son KTR and nephew Harish Rao are speaking differently, he said.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah is killed in Beirut strike

PNS ■ TEL AVIV

Israel said Saturday that it killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, dealing its most significant blow to the Lebanese militant group after months of fighting. There was no immediate confirmation from Hezbollah.

If the claim is true, Nasrallah is by far the most powerful target to be killed by Israel in weeks of intensified fighting with Hezbollah. Ali Karki, the Commander of Hezbollah's Southern Front, and additional Hezbollah commanders, were also killed in the attack, the Israeli military

said. The military said it carried out a precise airstrike on Friday while Hezbollah leadership met at their headquarters in Dahiyeh, south of Beirut.

Israel's Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi, said Saturday that the elimination of Nasrallah was "not the end of our toolbox," indicating that more strikes were planned. He said that the strike targeting Hezbollah leadership was the result of a long period of preparation.

The Lebanese Health Ministry said six people were killed and 91 injured in the strikes Friday, which leveled six apartment buildings.

COMPLAINTS ON ELECTORAL BONDS

FIR registered against FM Nirmala

PNS ■ BENGALURU

A case was registered on Saturday against Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and others on the directions of a court here, following a complaint relating to the now-scrapped electoral bonds scheme. According to police, an FIR was registered under IPC sections 384 (pun-

ishment for extortion), 120B (criminal conspiracy) and 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) against Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, ED officials, office-bearers of the BJP at state and national level, based on the order of a special court. The complaint was lodged by Adarsh R Iyer, Co-President of Janaadhikaara Sangharsha Parishath (JSP) alleging that the accused "committed extortion under the guise and garb of electoral bonds and benefitted to the tune of 8,000 and more crore of rupees." The complainant further alleged that Sitharaman through the clandestine aid and support of ED officials facilitated extortion of thousands of crores of rupees for the benefit of others both at the state and national levels.

Yechury was 'glue' that brought INDIA bloc together

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sitaram Yechury was the 'glue' that brought the INDIA bloc together, leaders of the alliance said on Saturday as they paid tributes to the CPI(M) general secretary, calling his death a loss for the opposition.

A condolence meeting for the Communist Party of India (Marxist) general secretary, who passed away on September 12 after battling a lung infection, was attended by leaders from the INDIA bloc parties, including Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah, Samajwadi Party leader Ramgopal Yadav,

Leaders hail him at condolence meeting



among others. Remembering Yechury as a "friend who operated in the political system", Gandhi said he played the role of a bridge between the Congress and other parties in the INDIA bloc and the UPA. He said he observed Yechury

and he also allowed us to understand where he was coming from," he said.

"He was a bridge, in a sense, between certainly the Congress party and other parties in the Indian government (during the UPA rule). There are people who are visible, and they are up front, you see them, and then there is the glue that is not visible, that is hidden, but is actually what holds the structure together," Gandhi said.

"Mr Yechury was such a figure, who in the INDIA alliance, and the last UPA alliance held the architecture together. And he held the architecture together because he was flexible, because he listened," he said.

Will end 'decade of pain' in Haryana: Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said the Congress' "incoming government" in Haryana will end "the decade of pain" and the party has resolved to fulfill the hopes and aspirations of the people of the state.

Gandhi made the remarks after the Haryana Congress rolled out its detailed poll manifesto for the October 5 state assembly polls, making a host of promises, including setting up of a commission for the farmers' welfare, Rs 2

crore for the families of martyred soldiers, promoting labour-intensive units for generating employment and reconstruction of the Haryana Minority Commission.

Haryana Congress chief Udai Bhan, Leader of Opposition Bhupinder Singh Hooda and former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot among other leaders were present on the occasion of manifesto launch.

In a post in Hindi on X, Gandhi alleged that in a decade, the BJP has snatched away Haryana's prosperity,

dreams and power.

The Agniveer scheme snatched away the aspirations of patriotic youth, unemployment snatched away the smile of families and inflation snatched away women's self-respect, he alleged.

"By bringing black laws, they tried to snatch away the rights of farmers and through demonetisation and wrong GST, they snatched away the profits of lakhs of small traders," he said.

They even snatched away Haryana's self-respect to benefit their chosen "friends", Gandhi alleged.

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 atre doyen Qadir Ali Baig. In the august presence of Governor of Telangana Jishnu Dev Varma. '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 Kohenuur, 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

Silhouettes tour.
Venue
Hyderabad international convention centre
November 8

FTL, Buffer Zones maps to be uploaded on HMDA, GHMC websites

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MAUD) Principal Secretary M Dana Kishore said that "We are going to launch an application to bring every matter related to the Full Tank Level (FTL) and Buffer Zones of lakes before the public.

He said that Final notification of the FTL maps will be uploaded on HMDA and GHMC websites soon. Preliminary notifications also will be uploaded on other government websites.

"We have TGBPASS for scrutiny for the building permissions. We are going to bring new technology to give permissions.

We are including buffer zones and FTL areas. People could use 3D view. With that technology people could see every structure with measures", he said.

He said that this is the first kind in the country. We could see the surroundings. "There are 565 lakes in the limits of ORR. preliminary notification was given to 563 and final notification issued to 138 lakes. Outside the ORR and inside the HMDA jurisdiction, 2,693 lakes have been identified.

Of those, preliminary notification was issued to 2,052 lakes and final notification issued to 138 lakes", he added.

City Pioneer

Murmu pitches for network of female advocates to check atrocities on women

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday urged the NALSAR University of Law here, including its alumni, to enlist the support of all stakeholders and help in setting up a nation-wide network of women advocates and law students to make efforts to prevent atrocities against women.

The President, who attended the 21st annual convocation of NALSAR University of Law, said, "The network will work with the mandate to make concerted efforts to prevent atrocities against women and deal with cases of such atrocities".

She expressed confidence that the graduating students would utilise their education in NALSAR as an effective instrument of social justice and development.

Referring to the principle of equality as mentioned in the Constitution, Murmu said the unfair situation of a poor person not getting the same access to justice as a rich person must change for the better.

The ideal of equality, enshrined in the Preamble of the Constitution and



President Droupadi Murmu at the 21st annual convocation of NALSAR University of Law in Hyderabad on Saturday

Fundamental Rights, also finds expression in one of the directive principles of state policy concerning delivery of justice, she said.

The directive seeks to provide equal justice and free legal aid. It makes the state responsible

"...to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities."

The vision statement of NALSAR also underlines a particular focus on social justice to the

marginalised communities. "Unfortunately, a poor person does not get the same access to justice as a rich person. This unfair situation must change for the better. I expect your generation of legal professionals to be the change agents," the

President said.

She also said graduating students should use technology as a tool for professional advancement and also as a means of social justice.

Highlighting the high legal traditions of the country, she said Megasthenes (Greek historian) had described Indians as remarkably law-abiding people. Chanakya's Artha-Shastra enumerates the high standards set for the officers responsible for the administration of justice.

"For a great country like ours, a sense of history arouses national pride and aspirations. Democratic traditions and practices of ancient India were highlighted by Dr B R Ambedkar in his concluding speech at the Constituent Assembly," Murmu said.

Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, Telangana High Court Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

Earlier, the President was accorded a warm welcome by the Governor, CM, his Cabinet colleagues and senior officials when she arrived at the Begumpet airport here.

Resuscitation summit to prepare roadmap for training in CPR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

American Heart Association and Apollo Hospitals detail that only 2 per cent of India's population is trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and objective is to have at least one family member being trained at the maiden resuscitation summit in India at Hyderabad

The Summit themed on managing cardiovascular diseases, stroke and sudden heart failures, was inaugurated by the Chief guest Dr Sangita Reddy, IT Managing Director, Apollo Hospitals Group.

More than 800 resuscitation science experts and life support trainers from India and across South Asia are deliberating to create a roadmap for a 'Nation of Lifesavers' initiative. The American Heart Association is also establishing its first international training center in India at Apollo Hospitals, Hyderabad, on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion Dr Sangita Reddy said, The significance of this Summit lies in its mission to empower individuals with life-saving CPR skills.

With sudden cardiac deaths and heart attacks becoming silent killers that claim millions of lives each year without warning, the need for increased awareness and preventive measures has never

been more urgent. The ability to perform CPR promptly can double or even triple the chances of survival, turning bystanders into first responders and providing critical care when every second counts. By equipping more members of the public with these essential skills, we can ensure that anyone, anywhere, can step up and act swiftly in an emergency, making a real difference and potentially saving lives.

Dr Imron Subhan, Chairperson, Organising Committee, Resuscitation and Healthcare said, The objective of this Summit is to train all the Doctors and nurses properly to handle heart attacks and strokes. Also to ensure that the healthcare system rises to the occasion in an emergency like heart attacks or strokes. We want to ensure that the standards set by AHA along with the guidelines are followed scrupulously.

Dr Sachin Menon, Consultant Regional Director India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Lanka, American Heart Association said, when someone suffers from cardiac arrest the chances of her getting CPR support in India are just about 2%, only 2% of Indian population is trained in performing CPR. The theme of this Summit is that no one should die due to lack of CPR.

Author Vijaya Bharati no more

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Dr B Vijaya Bharathi, author and former director of Telugu Academy who has also been the first Dalit woman to have PhD in Literature from Osmania University, passed away on Saturday.

Dr Bharathi was the wife of the late Bojja Tharakam, a well-known Human Rights lawyer in Telugu States.



was the author of Dr BR Ambedkar's life history which inspired many Telugu people. Mahatma Phule life History - first translated into Telugu in 1983. She edited the copies of four volumes of Dr BR Ambedkar's writings and speeches - published by Telugu University. Authored Critical books on Ramayana and Mahabharat - published by Hyderabad Book Trust. Dr Vijaya Bharathi is the daughter of Padma Bhushan, Boyi Bheemanna. In a statement the near and dear ones were informed that her mortal will be kept on 28-29 September 2024 for visiting and paying tributes at Bungalow No. 2, in IAS Officers Colony Kundanbagh Begumpet Hyderabad.

President opens Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday inaugurated the Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav 2024 at the Rashtrapati Nilayam here.

The eight-day-long Kala Mahotsav showcases the art, culture, crafts, and culinary diversity of the north eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura.

Speaking on the occasion, she said the cultural diversity, music, art and traditional attire of the northeastern states are the country's heritage.

The 'Mahotsav' is an effort to make the countrymen familiar with the traditions and the communities of the region, she said.

Murmu expressed confidence that the cultural event would act as a bridge between the northeast and the south of the country.

She hoped that many people would visit the 'Mahotsav' in the next eight days and connect with the culture of northeast.

The event is also an opportunity to promote cultural exchanges. The people of northeast are known for their hospitality, hard work and enthusiasm and she got

people's love whenever she visited there, she said.

It is our collective responsibility to preserve and promote the country's rich cultural heritage.

She appreciated the artists and others who participated in the event and also the Union Ministries of Culture and DONER (Development of North-East Region) for organising the event.

Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma, Nagaland Governor La Ganesan, Arunachal Pradesh Governor Lt Gen Kaiwalya Trivikram Parnaik, Assam

Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya, Tripura Governor N Indrasena Reddy, Meghalaya Governor C H Vijayashankar, Sikkim Governor Om Prakash Mathur, Telangana Panchayat Raj Minister Danasari Anasuya Seethakka were present on the occasion.

Earlier in the day, the President attended the convocation of NALSAR University of Law here.

The President was accorded a warm welcome by the Telangana Governor, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, his Cabinet colleagues and senior officials when she arrived at the Begumpet airport here.



Hyderabad Collector Anudeep handing over agreements copies to residents from Shankar Nagar after shifting from Musi Riverfront in Hyderabad on Saturday

Shifting of families from Musi Riverfront continues

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The shifting of people has continued overnight in a few areas of Old Malakpet division under the Musi Riverfront Development project.

Those families willing to be shifted to 2 BHK houses from Shankar Nagar of Old Malakpet division were rehabilitated.

Hyderabad District Collector Anudeep Durishetty handed over agreement papers to various residents and communicated with them as part of counseling to relocate hundreds of the residents.

Musi River Front Development Corporation Managing Director Dana Kishore, at a presser on Saturday, had stated that he would get the count of residents being relocated by the end of day from Hyderabad District Collector Anudeep as it could be more than 400 residents and officers on ground are counseling the people to shift to safe places.

The Revenue Department officials also interacted and helped the residents who agreed to move away from the locality. The officials took photos with the residents who agreed to move to double bedroom houses and the photographers were shared with The Pioneer on Saturday.

However there were residents of Shankar Nagar, who explained that they were unhappy with their allotment to Chanchalguda 2BHK complex.

DCA conducts raid on quacks' clinics

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Based on credible information, officials from the Drugs Control Administration (DCA) conducted the raid on the premises of quacks, who were practicing medicine without proper qualifications at their clinics.

During these raids, DCA officials seized substantial quantities of medicines stocked for sale without a drug license were found.

Quacks are identified as Mullagiri Ravi, Majeedpur village, Ranga Reddy district, Kurimilla Venu Kumar, Nandini First Aid Clinic, Hanumakonda Mandal, Yedugani Venkateshwar, Kotagalli, Nizamabad, Kanchi Dhanunjai, Velpur Mandal, Nizamabad district, Poleboina Bikshapathi, Mothkur Mandal, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district, T Raja Babu, Hayath Nagar Mandal, Ranga Reddy district, Guduru Srinivasa Reddy, Kurnavally village, Khammam district and Anantha Sudharshan Reddy, AS Reddy Clinic, Old Bowspanally village, Medchal Malkajgiri district.



GHMC organised Ghazal and Shayari in city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) on Saturday organised Ghazal and Shayari cultural programmes at MJ Market to preserve the heritage of Hyderabad city and promote cultural arts. GHMC organises similar programmes to preserve Hyderabad's heritage and promote arts. Prominent ghazal and shayari artists participated in the programme.

GHMC said that these programs are organized with the intention of not only introducing the cultural heritage to the people of the city, but also to sensitize them.

Khairatabad Zonal Commissioner Anurag Jayanthi, Deputy Commissioner, Prashanthi AMO, Bhargav Narayana, Srinivas Reddy and others participated in this programme.

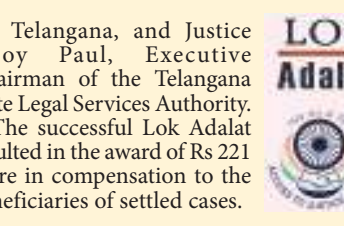
National Lok Adalat settles over 9 lakh cases

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A National Lok Adalat held on Saturday in Telangana settled a staggering number of 9,07,065 cases. This included 4,44,172 pre-litigation cases and 5,42,193 pending court

cases. Under the guidance of the Telangana State Legal Services Authority, the Lok Adalat was organised across the state to resolve a wide range of disputes. The initiative was spearheaded by Alok Aradhe, Chief Justice of the High Court

for Telangana, and Justice Sujoy Paul, Executive Chairman of the Telangana State Legal Services Authority. The successful Lok Adalat resulted in the award of Rs 221 crore in compensation to the beneficiaries of settled cases.



Choreographer Jani Master remanded in judicial custody

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Tollywood choreographer Jani Master, who was arrested in connection with a POCSO case and allegations of sexual harassment against a female choreographer, was remanded in judicial custody after his four-day police custody ended on Saturday. Narsingi police, who had interrogated Jani Master during his police custody, produced him before Upparapalli Court. The court remanded him in judicial custody until



October 3. He was then moved to Chanchalguda Jail.

According to the sources, Jani Master's wife filed a complaint with the Film Chamber of Commerce, accusing the female choreographer of deliberately implicate her husband in the case. She claimed that the choreographer had approached Jani under the guise of work and then subjected him to harassment, feigning love.

Jani's wife asserted that Jani is innocent and that the truth would come out.

'India recording two cybercrime complaints a minute'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

While sharing the data on cybercrime cases, Bhavesh Mishra, Deputy Secretary, IT and Electronic Department, Government of Telangana, said around two cybercrime cases are reported per minute and people are losing around Rs 1.3 to Rs 1.5 lakh on an average in India.

Speaking at an annual conference titled "Securing the Future: Navigating the Intersection of Cyber Security, Privacy, and AI," organized by ISACA Hyderabad Chapter at The Westin Hyderabad, Raheja Mindspace on Saturday,

Bhavesh Mishra said around 120 cyber crimes are reporting per hour and people are losing around 80 lakh money to cyber criminals every hour.

Eight billion cybercrimes have occurred within a year, but recovery rates remain below 20 per cent, he said. The Third World War could be a 'mathematician war', IT, data, police departments and auditors should work together against cybercrimes. He also mentioned that the Telangana government has allocated 200 acres for AI development and will support companies working in this field. Speaking at this annual conference, Cyberabad Police Commissioner Avinash Mohanty has urged the public to be cautious of cyber fraudsters.

He highlighted that these fraudsters exploit two key human traits that are fear and greed. He mentioned that cybercrimes currently account for 30 percent of all crimes, a number that could rise to 50 percent in the future. Online betting and loan app scams have seen a significant increase, with fraudsters using UPI payments and crypto networks to carry out large-scale scams.

Underlining the dynamic nature of cybercrimes, the Commissioner highlighted an urgent need to speed up the regulatory framework with coordination between government and industries.



Cyberabad Police Commissioner Avinash Mohanty lighting the lamp at the annual conference on Cyber Security in Hyderabad on Saturday

The Commissioner also called out banks to strengthen their KYC procedures, improve oversight and audit and ensure compliance to regulation.



Debts incurred over online gambling drive constable to suicide

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

In a shocking incident, an Armed Reserve (AR) constable ended his life by shooting himself with his service rifle while on duty at the Rangareddy District Collectorate in Kongara Kalan. The incident, which happened in the early hours of Saturday, has left his family in shock.

The constable, identified as Dusari Balakrishna Goud (28), from Manchal mandal, had reportedly been addicted to online betting. According to the police, Balakrishna had been participating in online gaming and betting for some time and he got sucked into quicksand of debt. Unable to cope with the huge debts, he took the extreme step of ending his life. On the night of the incident, Balakrishna was on night patrol at the Collectorate. He reportedly went into the bathroom, locked the door from inside, and fatally shot himself with his service rifle. His colleagues, who were also on duty at the time, immediately informed the authorities. Upon receiving the report, the Adibatla police arrived at the scene and transferred Balakrishna's body to Osmania Hospital in Hyderabad for further investigation.

Tension still high in violence-ridden Jainoor

PNS ■ ASIFABAD

Prohibitory orders under Section 144 BNS banning the assembly of more than four persons in public in Jainoor, are still being enforced. It shows that the situation on the ground remains unchanged and tension is still running high.

The traders have not yet opened the shops posing a problem to the residents of the town. Normal life has continued to be hit. On September 5 two groups -- Adivasis and those belonging to a minority group - clashed in Jainoor town following attempt to outrage the modesty of a woman and murder her.

The prohibitory orders have continued on 22nd day on Saturday. The market in the mandal headquarters town still remains closed.

Internet services in Jainoor, Sirpur U, Lingapur, Kerameri in



Police guarding the streets in Jainoor village in Asifabad district

Agency areas still remained suspended, paralysing the online services of the state government. No transaction is taking place in the SBI branch of Jainoor even now. The farmers are not able to get crop loans for the past three weeks. The private educational institutions in Jainoor still remain shut, according to parents who are concerned over the education taking backseat in the mandal. The Mee Seva centres remain closed, making it difficult for the needy to obtain caste, birth, residence, income, death certificates. The people living in Lingapur and Sirpur U are dependent on Jainoor for their procurement of goods from market. Therefore, the rural people have been facing difficulties to get the supplies of essential commodities. Since the shops remain shut for the past 22

days, the rural people would have to travel to Uttoor, which is 30 km away from Jainoor.

However, the police authorities relaxed the prohibitory orders to enable the people to go to the vegetable market located at a distance of one km away from the mandal and buy vegetables for a few hours.

The police have been relaxing the prohibitory orders from 8 am to 11 am and again from 4 pm to 7 pm. The vegetable vendors are not keen to run the shops there as the relaxation period is limited.

Meanwhile, the police have been initiating measures to maintain the law and order in the town. Tight police security has been thrown in around the town. The police have been thoroughly searching the vehicles travelling towards Jainoor. They are also noting down the vehicle numbers.

Police adopt multi-faceted approach to make Nalgonda drug free dist



Sharat Chandra Pawar

PNS ■ NALGONDA

In an effort to create a drug-free society, Nalgonda District Police, led by Superintendent of Police Sharath Chandra Pawar, has launched an innovative program called "Mission Transformation." This initiative aims to combat the illegal cultivation and use of cannabis, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of crimes in the district.

The police have established check-posts along district borders and conducted rigorous surveillance on inter-state and intra-district routes to curb the trafficking and sale of cannabis. In a campaign akin to drunk-driving tests, the police have deployed cannabis testing kits across the district. Not less than 327 individuals were tested positive for cannabis use.

To address the issues arising from cannabis use, the individuals addicted to drugs were given an opportunity to undergo counseling by psychiatrists in the presence of their parents. A follow-up test revealed that 321 individuals tested negative, while six remained positive. These individuals were referred to the de-addiction center at Kamineni Hospital for treatment and counseling. Short films highlighting the

dangers and repercussions of cannabis and drug use have been screened in 471 schools and colleges, reaching around 20,000 students. The initiative has intensified monitoring of cannabis users and small-scale dealers, resulting in the arrest of 327 individuals, with legal action taken against 21 key suppliers.

Police teams have also visited 1,783 remote villages to educate the public about the dangers of cannabis use, utilizing police arts teams, videos, and wall posters to raise awareness. From January 2024 to the present, 31 cases have led to the arrest of 131 individuals, with 771 kilograms of cannabis worth over ₹1.40 crore seized. Additionally, 5,036 kilograms of previously seized cannabis have been destroyed under the supervision of the District Drug Destruction Committee.

This multi-faceted approach not only aims to eradicate drug abuse but also focuses on community engagement and education, fostering a healthier environment for the citizens of Nalgonda District.

As the initiative progresses, the police remain dedicated to sustaining these efforts and adapting strategies to meet the evolving challenges of drug abuse in the region.

Jagadish vows to fight against 'demolition raj'

PNS ■ SURYAPET

Former minister and BRS MLA G Jagadish Reddy on Saturday fired salvo at the Congress government, accusing it of creating chaos in the name of reclaiming water bodies in and around Hyderabad. The government, he said, has unleashed chaos using Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency (HYDRAA).

Speaking to the media here, Jagadish Reddy said, "The Congress government is acting with political vendetta and wreaking havoc. The actions by the government has robbed the people of their peace of mind. Instead of fulfilling their promises, they are hatching conspiracies to suppress potential public uprisings," Jagadish



Former minister G Jagadish Reddy speaking to the media in Suryapet on Saturday

Reddy stated. He emphasised that the government must not only conserve water resources but also ensure the welfare of the residents living in these areas. "People are residing in these locations with permissions

granted by various government departments, and now the government is conducting surveys on Full Tank Level (FTL) and buffer zones, threatening demolitions. They are creating unnecessary fears even in areas around Tank Bund," he added.

He estimated that the ongoing actions could result in losses worth Rs 1,000 crores in Suryapet alone. He vowed to stand with the poor, opposing the government's oppressive measures, even if it cost lives.

"If the government is at fault, why should the people be punished? We will take legal action against these meaningless government projects. Immediate scientific decisions must be made regarding FTL and buffer zones of the lakes," he declared.

Yadadri temple nets over Rs 19 lakh revenue

PNS ■ YADAGIRIGUTTA

Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple at Yadagirigutta registered a significant revenue of ₹19,02,687 on Saturday. A total of 1,000 devotees offered their hair to the deity, contributing to the temple's income. The sale of prasadam alone generated ₹6,70,380. Additionally, the temple

received Rs ₹1,12,050 from VIP darshan and Rs ₹1,48,800 from break darshan services.

Various services such as vehicle poojas, vrathams, and Kalyana Katta contributed to the revenue, with devotees participating in large numbers. The Annadanam (free meal service) saw donations amounting to Rs 0097,765.



Postal dept's failure to deliver proves costly for youth

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

In a distressing incident in Vengalipet village, Pegadapalli mandal, Karimnagar district, a young man lost out on chances of getting a government job due to the negligence of a postman. Anil, who had been eagerly awaiting a call letter, missed his interview because the postman failed to deliver the letter in time.

Anil, who lost his father at a young age, was raised by his hardworking

mother, who ensured he received a good education. He completed his studies in government schools and colleges and later worked as a lecturer in a private college. Alongside his teaching job, Anil was preparing for a government job.

In February of this year, he applied for the office subordinate post at the Telangana Electricity Regulatory Commission. He was shortlisted based on merit, and interviews for shortlisted candidates were scheduled for

September 20. The relevant department sent call letters to candidates through speed post.

However, the postman delayed the delivery, and Anil received his letter on September 23, three days after the interview had taken place. Anil expressed his anguish, stating that if he had attended the interview, he would have secured the job. He appealed to the government for justice, lamenting that he missed the opportunity due to the postman's carelessness.

FSSAI authorities inspect food quality in schools, hostels

PNS ■ SIDDEPET

Telangana State Food Commission Chairman, along with his team members, on Saturday visited Siddipet constituency inspecting the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) and Telangana State Social Welfare Residential Educational Institution in Mittapalli village of Siddipet urban mandal.

Besides the Chairman Srinivas Reddy, members Jyoti, Anand, Bharati and Goverdhan Reddy toured the constituency.

They made a surprise visit to the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya and Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institution and inspected the food being served to students and the essential commodities being used to prepare the food for the students. Later, they interacted with students in class rooms and enquired about the food quality.

They enquired about the measures initiated by the school management to protect their health and conduct of the diagnostic tests on them.

The students would remain healthy provided they receive nutritious food. Therefore, they asked the principals of these institutions to provide nutritious food as per the menu.

Later, they visited ZP High School in Chinna Koduru mandal and checked the kitchen shed of the school.

Later, they questioned eighth class students whether the school authorities provide nutritious food to them and whether the taste of the food is good or not.

Woman's mutilated body found in Shadnagar

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

In a horrifying incident, the body of an unidentified woman was found at Srinivasa Colony in Shadnagar town in the district. The police found the body wrapped in a blanket inside a plastic cover. The body presented a gruesome sight.

The woman, who appeared to be between 35 and 45-years-old, was dressed in a yellow outfit. Upon receiving information, Assistant Commissioner of Police Rangaswamy, accompanied by Circle Inspector Vijay Kumar and sub inspector Sarath, rushed to the scene to inspect the situation. The police were later joined by a Clues Team, which was

deployed to collect crucial evidence from the site.

Addressing the media, Rangaswamy expressed strong suspicions that the woman was killed elsewhere and her body was then dumped in the colony. Further investigations revealed that both of the woman's earlobes were cut, suggesting a possible motive of theft or a heinous attempt to hide her identity.

The case is being closely monitored under the supervision of Shamsabad Deputy Commissioner of Police Rajesh.

The police urged anyone with information regarding the woman's identity or suspicious activity in the area to come forward to give information to the police.

Officials told to make arrangements for Komaram Bheem death anniversary

PNS ■ KUMURAM BHEEM ASIFABAD

District Collector Venkatesh Dhotre on Saturday directed the officials of all government departments to work in coordination with elected people's representatives and make arrangements for observance of the 84th death anniversary of Komaram Bheem on October 17.

He was chairing a meeting of the officials held at a museum in Jodeghat in Kerameri mandal of Asifabad district. Superintendent of Police DV Srinivasa rao, Uttoor ITDA Project Officer Khushbu Gupta, Additional

Collector Deepak Teewari, Asifabad and Khanapur MLAs Kova Lakshmi, Vedma Bojju, DRO Lokeshwar Rao, officials of 29 government departments and others took part in the review meeting on the arrangements to be made for the death anniversary event.

He said that the government has decided to conduct the death anniversary event of Komaram Bheem who fought for Adivasis' development with his slogan Jal, Jungle and Jameen. The ITDA, Education, police departments should take care of the law and order, electricity department should ensure uninterrupted supply of power



Kumaram Bheem Asifabad Collector Venkatesh Dhotre paying floral tributes at Komaram Bheem statue in Asifabad on Saturday

to Jodeghat and other adjoining areas, the rural water supply department, power grid, Mission Bhagiradha department should provide clean drinking water to the people.

The GCC should supply food while the ITDA also take care of the food arrangements for the media representatives and to the people. R and B and Tribal Welfare Engineering

department should work with coordination to reserve space for parking of vehicles and construct ramps wherever necessary.

The ITDA EE should raise tents, take steps to fill the ditches on the road and ensure that the lights and fans at the museum are in perfect order, take care of levelling the ground, erection of barricades and undertake repairs to the road from Hatti to Jodeghat. To ensure 24x7 power supply, two power generators should be kept ready; the RTC should run bus services to Jodeghat bring people from other districts. Medical camps should be conducted and 108 and 104 ambulances

should be kept ready; he said. Stalls of the self-help groups should be set up in the area. Mobile toilets should be set up for the visitors.

He inspected the venue of Darbar to be held in Jodeghat, the construction of helipad, the place reserved for parking of vehicles and so on.

committee chairman Pendur Rajeshwar, convenor Motiram 5Pendur Rajeshwar, convenor Motiram, leaders Madavi Raghunadh, Atram Lakshmana Rao, Kumram Sooru Vardhanti Committee chairman Madavi Raju, adivasi leaders and others took part in the event.

BJP membership campaign launched at Mogiligidda village

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

As part of the BJP's ongoing membership campaign, a registration programme was organised at Mogiligidda village, Farooq Nagar mandal, where Nelli Srivardhan Reddy, a member of the BJP state working committee, served as the chief guest.

The event saw the participation of several key BJP leaders, including District General Secretary Ashok Goud, District Spokesperson Kakkunuru Venkatesh Gupta, and others, who rallied local support for the party. During his address, Nelli Srivardhan Reddy emphasised the need to "insist" on the construction of the Lakshmidivipalli Reservoir, a project promised under the Palamuru upliftment scheme.

He accused the BRS party of misleading the people of Shadnagar for over a decade by failing to deliver on the promise of the reservoir. He also took aim at the Congress party, claiming they had similarly betrayed

voters during the recent Assembly elections by campaigning on the same issue and not delivering on their six guarantees.

He further criticised the Congress for failing to help various segments of society including farmers, women, unemployed youth, and students. He emphasised the importance of building a developed India and encouraged the people of Telangana to join the BJP as partners in this mission.

Highlighting the BJP's plans for expansion, he stated that the party would focus on bringing in more youth and women, aiming to become the largest political party in the world. He expressed confidence in the BJP's success in the upcoming local elections and vowed that the party would continue to fight against the anti-people policies of the Congress.

Several senior BJP leaders, including Mogili Narasimlu, Sara Anjaiah, Pallegattu Srinu, and Kotla Ravi, along with local village heads, attended the event, which marked another step in the BJP's efforts to strengthen its presence in Telangana.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
Revenue (Land Acquisition) Department
FORM - VII
DECLARATION
Under Section 19 (1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Central Act 30/2013) and as per the state rule 25 (1)

Collector's File No. 61/1988/2023 Date: 25-09-2024
Spl. Deputy Collector's File No. B/28/2023 Date: 02-09-2024
Gazette No. 123/2024 Date: 25-09-2024

As per the directions of the Government of Telangana/District Collector, Siddipet, the below mentioned Acres 0.33 guntas of land is needed in Ghanpur village limits of Nangnour mandal of Siddipet district for public purpose i.e. for construction of the LD10-RM2 pump house of the RMC of the Ranganyeska Sagar Reservoir as part of the Kaleswaram Project. Therefore, the declaration has been issued under Section 19 (1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act of 2013.

Ac 0.33 Guntas of land as mentioned in the below is required in Ghanpur village of Nangnour mandal of Siddipet district for the above said construction of the project. Therefore, the declaration has been issued.

SCHEDULE									
Village Ghanpur Mandal: Nangnour District: Siddipet									
Sl. No.	Patna No.	Area to be acquired	Name of the Patidar	Name of the Enjoyer	Boundaries	North	South	West	East
1	100/101	0.33	Dankona Bheskar S/o Jangalish	Dankona Bheskar S/o Jangalish	101	135	1103	V/B	1-100/101-1103/135
Total Extent: 0.33									

Since no objections is received under Section 15 (Central Act 30/2013), the declaration has been issued.

The acquisition of the land in Ghanpur village of Nangnour mandal of Siddipet district is limited to relatively very small area of the land holding of the people. Moreover, the construction of the canal will improve irrigation facility to their lands and their livelihoods and habitats are not going to be affected by the said land acquisition. Therefore, the question of rehabilitation and resettlement is not applicable here.

Mines of coal, iron-stone, slate or other minerals lying under the said land or any particular portion of the said land are not needed or may be used if they are useful to the project.

The plan of the above said land to be acquired may be inspected in the office of the Special Deputy Collector, Land Acquisition Department-1, Siddipet, during working hours on any working day.

Sd/- Sd/- Sd/-
Sd/- Tahsildar, Spl. Dy. Collector (L.A.) Addl. Collector Dist. Collector
Nangnour Kaleswaram Project Unit-1 Siddipet Dist. Siddipet Dist.
Mandal Siddipet

DIPR No.288/LA/PP-Pub/2024-25

ACROSS THE STATES



Man, four daughters found dead in Delhi

The decomposed bodies of a 46-year-old man and his four daughters, two of them differently-abled, have been found from their rented accommodation in southwest Delhi's Vasant Kunj area, police said on Saturday. The deceased have been identified as Heeralal Sharma, who worked as a carpenter at the Indian Spinal Injury Centre in Vasant Kunj for the last 28 years, and his four daughters -- Neetu (26), Nikki (24), Neeru (23) and Nidhi (20). The bodies, found on Friday afternoon, did not have any injury mark. Police found three packets of cephos poison, five glasses and a spoon containing a suspicious liquid from the house. Police suspect it to be a case of suicide as no evidence of any foul play has been found. While police said the two youngest daughters of the man were differently-abled, neighbours claimed that all four were physically challenged.



Govt mulling tuition stipend for new lawyers: Fadnavis

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Saturday said the state government is considering a proposal to provide tuition stipend to new lawyers. He was speaking after laying the foundation stone of the Advocate Academy and Research Centre in Talaja in neighbouring Raigad district. "It is a pleasure that the country's first advocate academy is coming up in Maharashtra. I congratulate the Maharashtra and Goa Bar Council for taking the lead in this initiative. The state government has earmarked Rs 10 crore for this academy," the Deputy CM said. This academy will be a transformative force in legal education and practice, he added. "There is a proposal being considered by the Maharashtra government to provide tuition stipend to lawyers entering the profession," Fadnavis said.

Woman must be..

Continued from page 1
The government will launch a pilot project to issue Family Digital Cards in two habitations in all Assembly constituencies. The Chief Minister asked officials to submit details regarding the compilation of information of family details with updates in the form of a report to the cabinet subcommittee consisting of Ministers N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, P. Srinivas Reddy and Damodara Raja Narasimha. The CM also asked officials to prepare a comprehensive

list of items which are to be added and deleted as per the recommendations of the Cabinet Sub-Committee. The Chief Minister asked officials to identify two areas (two rural areas in all rural Assembly constituencies and two wards or divisions in urban Assembly constituencies) for issuing Family Digital Cards on a pilot basis. Authorities have been asked to conduct a door-to-door pilot field study in select areas from October 3 based on available data regarding the identification of families and details of Family Digital Cards.

HYDRAA is going ahead..

Continued from page 1
revive lakes in the city. If permission is granted in the FTL or buffer zone, permission will be revoked on the other side," he said. We have not crossed our limits. Even some of the areas outside the ORR also come under HYDRAA jurisdiction. "Why are you people thinking that we are silent? Background works are going on for illegal constructions. At the right place and time we will do our duty," Ranganath said. "We are demolishing illegal buildings. 'Invalid and illegal structures have no permission,' said the Commissioner. If the poor have residences in the FTL and

buffer zones, HYDRAA will not demolish those structures. When the Convention was demolished the adjacent huts were not removed, he said. Ranganath said that some people are doing illegal business in FTL areas and buffer zones. When HYDRAA comes to demolish their structures they get tensed and use kerosene and petrol. "We are giving them time to evacuate from the lake areas, then we are demolishing the structures. We are not going to demolish the houses of the poor and the middle class," he said. He said that people on social media should stop projecting HYDRAA as an enemy.

Will stand by Musi Project..

Continued from page 1
"We spent every rupee we had to build our home, and now it's being taken away from us. We are terrified and don't know where to go. We are unable to sleep thinking about what can happen the next moment. We have permission from the days of United Andhra Pradesh." Another lady said, "My father worked in the RTC and my father-in-law in the railways doing small jobs. They brought us to this level. From here they expect us to grow and not fall."

Another tearfully added, "We borrowed lakhs from banks to construct our home. Now, it is being demolished and we fear our children will end up on the streets." Moved by their stories, Harish assured them of his unwavering support and lashed out at the Congress government and the CM, Revanth Reddy, for allowing the demolitions and for ignoring public interests. "Is Revanth giving his brother time to respond to a notice, while bulldozers are being sent overnight to demolish the homes of the poor?" he asked.

Decision to transform J&K into UT is 'temporary': Modi

PNS ■ JAMMU

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the decision to transform Jammu and Kashmir into a Union Territory is "temporary" and the BJP-led government will restore the statehood to the region.

Launching a scathing attack on the opposition Congress, National Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), he accused them of 'inflicting wounds' on the people by depriving them of their rights.

The prime minister said it is the BJP, which has ended discrimination and is providing balm on the wounds of the victims of the three families.

Addressing a massive election rally at M A M Stadium in the heart of Jammu a day before the conclusion of campaigning for the final phase of the assembly polls on October



1, Modi said the decision to transform Jammu and Kashmir into a Union Territory is temporary.

"BJP is the only party which will restore statehood to the region," he reiterated.

Escalating his attack, the prime minister said the "Congress, NC and PDP are

annoyed by the changes in Jammu and Kashmir because they do not like your development".

"They are saying they will form the government to revive the old system - the same discriminatory approach which led Jammu to be the biggest sufferer," he added.

Modi said the Jammu region in particular faced "decades of injustice" at the hands of the three parties which not only defamed the Dogra legacy but also their rulers.

"The most corrupt Congress family is accusing the Dogra rulers to be corrupt," he said, adding it was the BJP which ended the "historic discrimination" and provided justice to the region during the last 10 years.

Referring to the setting up of various education and health institutions, including the IITs and AIIMS and infrastructure projects like tunnels, the prime minister said the Congress, NC and PDP inflicted "wounds on the people" by depriving them of their rights but the BJP reached them, irrespective of their religion, and rubbed balm on their wounds by giving them voting rights, reservations and empowering women.

Urban voter apathy matter of concern: CEC Rajiv Kumar

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar on Saturday expressed his concern over the urban voter apathy, and said efforts are being made to ensure maximum polling in the ensuing Maharashtra assembly elections.



Addressing a press conference in Mumbai after reviewing poll preparedness for the Maharashtra assembly elections, Kumar singled out areas like Colaba and Kalyan in and around Mumbai which recorded "among the lowest" voter turnout in the Lok Sabha polls held this year. Daily wage earners and others in the unorganised sector should be informed by the administration that voting day will be a paid holiday for them, he said.

"Our effort will be to ensure that there is maximum enrolment and voting in Maharashtra assembly elections," he said.

"We have asked Maharashtra Government to shift officials who have served in their home district or current posting for

over three years," Kumar said, adding he has asked for a compliance report for the same in the next couple of days.

The CEC said it is the right of voters to know if any candidate has criminal background. The political parties should also inform people reasons for fielding such candidates, he added.

"There will be checking of all helicopters (during electioneering) to ensure inducement-free assembly elections in Maharashtra," he said.

Wrapping up his two-day visit to the state, Kumar said those spreading fake news and using deep fake tech on social media ahead of Maharashtra polls will be dealt with sternly.

'Viksit Bharat not possible without women and education'

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Saturday underlined the importance of women education, saying the dream of a developed India was incomplete without women and education.

"Women and education are the two wheels of the chariot that will drive the nation," Dhankhar said while interacting with the students and teachers at the India International School in Jaipur. "Education is the biggest leveller in society and it brings equality and it is a necessity for democracy to flourish in any society. Education brings about equality, education cuts into inequities," he added.

Dhankhar said, "If we look into our Vedas, great emphasis was laid on education and participation of women. We lost our way somewhere in between."



The vice president said that during the Vedic era, women were on the same footing and were policy and decision makers and were guiding forces.

He also praised the recently enacted Women Reservation Bill that mandates one third reservation in Parliament and state legislatures.

Underlining India as the most happening place globally in terms of investment and opportunity, he stated, "The country has seen historic exponential development, economic upsurge unknown to us. The world class

infrastructure, our opportunity basket is increasing day by day." Lauding the National Education Policy, the vice president said there can be no change without education.

He said that education has to be beyond degree. "Pursuit of degrees one after another is not the right approach to education and that is why after three decades the country came to have a national education policy that allows students full exploitation of their talent," he added. Drawing attention to the equal application of law in the country, Dhankhar said, "Equality before law, provided by the Constitution, had eluded us for long, some people thought they are more equal than others, some thought we are beyond the reach of the law, we are above the law but a big change that has taken place is equality before law is now a ground reality."

6-7 K'taka Ministers will have to resign if documents are released

H D Kumaraswamy hits out at Siddaramaiah govt

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Hitting out at the Siddaramaiah-led government in Karnataka on a host of issues, including 'corruption', JD(S) leader and Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy on Saturday said if he released the documents in his possession, six to seven state Ministers will have to resign.

He claimed that the Congress administration was trying to "fix" him in some cases, after he began cornering the state government in connection with some alleged irregularities and started discussing them in public.

"Siddaramaiah had accused (previous BJP government) of being 40 per cent commission govt and came to power. Today his own party is saying after this



government coming to power it is more than 40 per cent (commission). Mr Siddaramaiah, did people give you power for this?" Kumaraswamy asked.

Addressing reporters here, he said, "I have things (with me), I'm not running away. If I release the documents I have, six to seven Ministers will have to resign...I will release, will not run away with fear, no hit and run..."

Targeting the CM on the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment case, the JD(S) state president asked, "If he (Siddaramaiah) had no role in the Mysuru (MUDA) scam, then why are certain decisions are being made by the cabinet hurriedly?" citing the government withdrawing general consent given to CBI to investigate cases in the State.

Accusing the government of bringing in a new kind of legal system in the state as per which arrests are being made in several cases just because someone gives a complaint, he said, "but in your (Siddaramaiah) case despite 48 hours, after the court issued directions, FIR was not registered."

Paper leak cases will be probed if BJP voted to power in Jharkhand: Shivraj

PNS ■ MEDININAGAR

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday said the alleged "paper leak" cases that took place during the tenure of the JMM-led government will be investigated if the BJP is voted to power in Jharkhand.

Addressing a rally in Palamu district as part of the BJP's 'Parivartan Yatra', Chouhan claimed question papers were leaked 17 times during the tenure of the JMM-led government, and subsequently, the examinations were cancelled. "The JMM government is cheating youths. Papers leaked 17 times in Jharkhand and examinations were cancelled. Chouhan said Rs 2,100 would be credited to the bank accounts of women every month if the BJP is voted to power in the state.

He reiterated that Jharkhand's 'mat' (land), 'beti' (daughter) and 'roti' (bread) were under threat due to infiltration from Bangladesh.



he provided financial assistance for Rs 2,000 per month for two years so that they could prepare for government jobs.

"When the BJP comes to power in the state, the decision to fill 2.87 lakh vacant posts in government departments will be taken in the very first cabinet meeting," he said.

Chouhan said Rs 2,100 would be credited to the bank accounts of women every month if the BJP is voted to power in the state.

He reiterated that Jharkhand's 'mat' (land), 'beti' (daughter) and 'roti' (bread) were under threat due to infiltration from Bangladesh.

RAHUL TO JAISHANKAR Press Sri Lanka for release of TN fishermen

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Saturday raised with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar the issue of the arrest of 37 fishermen from Tamil Nadu and urged him to take up the matter with the Sri Lankan authorities to ensure the early release of the Indian nationals and their boats.

In a letter to Jaishankar, Gandhi said the "recurring incidents of small and marginal Indian fisherfolk being apprehended by Sri Lankan authorities and the unjust seizure of assets and imposition of hefty fines by them warrants strict condemnation".

Referring to the arrest of 37 Tamil fishermen and the seizure of their boats by Sri Lankan authorities on September 21, 2024, the Congress leader said,



"R Sudha, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) from Mayiladuthurai Parliamentary Constituency informed me that the arrested fishermen are small-scale fisherfolk operating close to the coast, and that on the day of the incident they had attempted to rescue a Sri Lankan boat in distress."

It was stated that despite contacting Sri Lankan author-

ities for assistance with the rescue, the fishermen were arrested on the grounds of crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line, he said.

Furthermore, the fishing boats seized were community property purchased through pooled resources, he said.

"A copy of Adv. R. Sudha's representation is enclosed herewith...," he said.

Be active in..

Continued from page 1

Members at the Haritha Plaza on Saturday.

Addressing BJP leaders, Nadda said that he has been roaming across the nation in connection with the membership drive. As part of it, he said he came to Hyderabad from Patna on a special flight. He enquired about the party's membership drive. Nadda directed the leaders to launch the membership drive so that the party can have more than the expected 50 lakh membership in Telangana. He said the BJP got 77 lakh votes in the Lok Sabha elections and eight LS seats from TG.

He said that it is not tough to complete the 50 lakh membership as the party had bagged 77 lakh votes. He said that party leaders have to complete the membership drive along with all sections of the people.

Nobody will be forcefully..

Continued from page 1

held a press conference at the secretariat on Saturday to clear the apprehensions of Musi River residents.

In Hyderabad district, a survey was conducted and 974 houses were marked. Many people are willing to go, he said. He said that according to the Land Acquisition Act, if any person possesses patta land, double compensation (market value) should be given to the owner. If there is any house where the government should pay double the rate to patta holders. We have noted 10,200 structures and have allocated 15,000 houses, he said. Dana Kishore said that Hyderabad is in the centre of the state. Do you think it is possible to demolish so many houses? Government officials always abide by the law and follow due

process, he said.

He said that by 2026, pure water will flow in the Musi River and it will reach Nalgonda and Suryapet districts. The tender process has been completed for the Aggregate Master plan for the Musi River. Agencies from various countries are showing interest. They will complete the job in two years. The estimated cost of the project is Rs 10,000 crore.

He said that when the authorities lift the gates of dams people living on the riverbed are affected. All of them have applied for 2BHK houses and they also want to go to those houses.

He said the CM ordered MLAs, in-charge ministers and other officials to go to the people who are living in the Musi to show the MRDCL project and future development in the city.

Rs 1.5 L cr Musi project

Continued from page 1

had initially estimated the project cost at Rs 50,000 crore, but it has now tripled, indicating a significant financial scandal.

He accused the government of planning to siphon off funds without even moving a single inch of soil.

KTR demanded that the Congress government should explain how many acres of farmland would benefit from this project, how much water would be stored, and the expected industrial benefits.

He emphasized that the Kaleshwaram Project, which transformed the lives of Telangana's farmers, faced opposition from the Congress over its cost, yet now they plan to spend Rs 1.5 lakh crore on a beautification project without clear benefits.

"Is the Congress trying to replicate the Thames River in London, or is this just a game plan to loot money?" he asked. KTR also criticized the Chief Minister, alleging that he shows more interest in the Musi Project than in the Palamuru-Rangareddy Project, which is nearing completion.

He expressed disbelief that the CM seemed to disregard his own birthplace by neglecting the Palamuru-Rangareddy project in favour of the Musi. "Why is the government delaying Palamuru-Rangareddy and instead focusing on Musi? This is nothing but a ploy to loot money under the guise of development," KTR said.

He warned that the people of Telangana are watching the Congress's backdoor dealings closely and would punish them at the right time.

Three to 5 working..

Continued from page 1

He said that local leaders are having trouble with the inclusion of MLAs from other political parties. We are trying to coordinate between the new and old leaders, he said, adding that more seats will be given to BCs in future.

With HYDRAA and the plan for developing Musi, even if there is some trouble for commoners, Hyderabad will gain, he said.

Criticising senior BRS leader T. Harish Rao for criticising HYDRAA, Mahesh asked Harish to explain whether he did not see the tears of Mallanna Sagar devotees for so many days.

Utmost transparency..

Continued from page 1

He clarified that during the last Cabinet meeting, there was no discussion about contractor payments, as reported. "The idea that some ministers expressed concern is merely an attempt to spread misinformation," he said. He also rejected the claim that 8% was being collected to send it to the Congress high command, calling it "completely false."

Justice Ghose..

Continued from page 1

further expressed concern that no attempts should be made to mislead them, emphasizing the importance of submitting accurate documentation. Venkateswarlu requested an opportunity to review his responses, but this was rejected by the commission. Justice Ghose said that the former ENC would only be allowed to amend his submissions if suitable documents were presented. Additionally, Venkateswarlu admitted to having a limited command of English.

A TASTE OF HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Durga Puja brings feeling of home for everyone. For those in Delhi, *Oh! Calcutta* offers the flavours of Bengal. It Celebrates 25 years, serving authentic Bengali food, making it a perfect spot to enjoy the festival in all its grandeur, writes **SAKSHI PRIYA**



Photos: Pankaj Kumar



Durga Puja is more than just a festival; it's an emotion, a time when everyone feels an irresistible pull towards home. The smell of incense, the rhythm of the 'dhak' and the sight of the majestic idols fill hearts with nostalgia. For those who find themselves far from Kolkata during this time, there's a place that offers a slice of home: *Oh! Calcutta*.

Oh! Calcutta has been serving the flavours of Bengal for 25 years. As the city prepares to welcome Durga Maa, this iconic restaurant remains a favourite for all those hoping for the familiar taste of home-cooked Bengali food. Recently celebrating its silver jubilee, *Oh! Calcutta* has not only kept the essence of Kolkata's cuisine alive, showing that the spirit of Bengali food remains strong and proud, no matter where you are.

Established in 1992, *Oh! Calcutta* was born from a passion to showcase the unique flavours of Kolkata's 300-year-old culinary traditions. The restaurant's menu is a tribute to the city's gastronomic legacy, influenced by British, Armenian, French and Mughal cultures. This blend of influences captures Kolkata's essence as a melting pot of communities. The founder, *Anjan Chatterjee* and his team of chefs envision their cuisine as a tribute to the rich and diverse culinary heritage of Kolkata, which has been shaped over centuries. As they say, "Kolkata's khabar mane sudhu peth bhora noi, eta hridoy bhora" (In Kolkata, food is not just about filling the stomach but the heart).

As part of its silver jubilee celebrations, *Oh! Calcutta* has introduced a special anniversary menu that beautifully captures Kolkata's culinary heritage. The menu, curated by *Chatterjee*, marries traditional recipes with a contemporary touch, ensuring that the authenticity of Bengali cuisine remains at its heart. Signature dishes such as *Aam Ada Grilled Bhetki*, *Jackfruit Tikki* and *Prawn Malai Curry* are shining examples of the restaurant's dedication to preserving the old while embracing the new.

One of the highlights is the crispy *Hilsa Fish Fingers*, served with a tangy mustard mayo that brings back memories of home-cooked meals. The *Calcutta Fish Fry* is another star, with its tantalising blend of spices that capture the essence of family gatherings. And, of course, there's the *Bhetki Machher Paturi*,

where fish marinated in mustard and coconut, wrapped in banana leaves, and steamed to perfection.

Mutton dishes hold a special place in Bengali cuisine, and *Oh! Calcutta's* offerings don't disappoint. The rich, slow-cooked *Kosha Mangsho* (mutton curry) is simmered with spices that warm the soul, while the *Railway Mutton Curry*, inspired by the classic railway-style preparation, evokes nostalgia and comfort. These are dishes that remind you of home-cooked meals during Pujo and family journeys. The vegetarian fare at *Oh! Calcutta* is

equally delightful. Dishes like *Mochar Ghonto* (Banana Floret Subzi) and *Cholar Dal* (Bengal gram lentils cooked with coconut and spices) highlight the rich vegetarian tradition of Bengal.

And let's not forget the *Begum Bhaja*, deep-fried slices of eggplant that are the perfect accompaniment to the *Cholar Dal*. For seafood lovers, there's the *Prawn Malai Curry*, a creamy and indulgent prawn dish cooked in coconut milk and lightly spiced. And for those seeking something lighter, the *Maacher Dom Jhol* (fish curry) with *luchi* offers a delicate blend of spices with fresh

vegetables and fish. This simple yet heartwarming dish is a staple in Bengali households and is often served during Durga Puja feasts.

No Bengali meal is complete without a sweet ending, and *Oh! Calcutta* makes sure this tradition is upheld. The restaurant offers a range of traditional sweets, including *Sandesh*, *baked Rasgulla* and *Mishti Doi* is a staple at the end of every Bengali meal. As they say, "Bangalir mishti priyo, eta tog shobar jana" (Everyone knows that Bengalis love sweets).

What sets *Oh! Calcutta* apart is its tireless commitment to authenticity. The restaurant sources key ingredients directly from Kolkata, ensuring that every dish retains its traditional flavour. From the *Kakra Chingri Bhapa* to the fragrant *Gobindobhogher Bhaat* (a special variety of rice), every ingredient is carefully chosen to maintain the integrity of Bengali cuisine. This attention to detail ensures that each dish not only tastes authentic but also evokes a sense of nostalgia.

The atmosphere at *Oh! Calcutta* further enhances the dining experience. The decor, featuring traditional Bengali art and nostalgic photographs of Kolkata, creates a warm and inviting setting. The staff, always attentive and knowledgeable, make sure that guests feel at home, guiding them through the menu and sharing the stories behind each dish.

As the festivities unfold, the connection between food, culture and family shines brightly at *Oh! Calcutta*. It's a place where both Bengalis and non-Bengalis can celebrate the rich and diverse cuisine of Kolkata. This Durga Puja, let the flavours of Kolkata fill your heart and your plate as you indulge in the culinary brilliance that has delighted guests for 25 years. As they say, "Banglar khabar mane sudhu taste noi, eta hridoy er kotha" (Bengali food is not only about taste, but it's also a matter of the heart).

So, this Pujo, if you find yourself longing for the flavours of home, head over to *Oh! Calcutta* in GK-2, New Delhi. With dishes like *Kosha Mangsho*, *Mochar Chop* and *Gol Morich Chicken*, you will be treated to a culinary journey that's as close to Kolkata as you can get without leaving Delhi. Let the food fill your heart with joy, warmth, and a taste of home, reminding you that the spirit of Durga Puja can be felt wherever you are.



"KOLKATAY Khabar Mane Sudhu Peth Bhora Noi, Eta Hridoy Bhora"
(In Kolkata, food is not just about filling the stomach, but the heart)

SIP THE ESSENCE OF ASIA: A UNIQUE BEVERAGES EXPERIENCE

Yauatcha's 'Asia In A Glass' is more than just a cocktail menu, it is an homage to the traditional flavours and modern techniques that define Asian cuisine, says **SHARMILA CHAND**

Yauatcha, the well-known contemporary Dim sum Tea House in Bengaluru is celebrating a unique cocktail menu, 'Asia In A Glass'. It is a vibrant celebration of Asian ingredients, masterfully crafted into exquisite cocktails that promise to transport guests on a sensory journey across the continent. I was thrilled to see how they have gone beyond their culinary fare to extend their philosophy seamlessly into the heart of their bar program, where mixology transforms into an art form.

THE DRINK'S NARRATIVE

Ranging from classic cocktails with a unique twist to refreshing fruit-forward and tea-infused concoctions, each libation at this London-style bar is a meticulously crafted narrative. The carefully designed cocktail menu embodies innovation and sophistication in showcasing Asian ingredients.

"When I was working on the 'Asia In A Glass' article, I had the pleasure of meeting with Merwyn and gained a deeper understanding of the evolution of Yauatcha's cocktail scene. Yauatcha has always been at the forefront of mixology trends, being one of the pioneers in implementing an innovative ice program. Sitting down with Merwyn provided invaluable insights that helped shape the story. It's truly gratifying to see this meticulously crafted menu come to fruition with this article," said *Aslam Gafoor*,



who inspired the creation of this cocktail menu with his article in the *Yauatcha Life* magazine, titled 'Asia In A Glass'. As the name suggests, Asian ingredients take the spotlight in Yauatcha's cocktail program philosophy, turning every cocktail into a distinctive masterpiece. From the invigorating zing of lemongrass to the comforting warmth

of ginger, Yauatcha's Head Mixologist, Merwyn Alphonso, has curated a sensory experience that reflects Asian culinary heritage in every sip. Furthermore, the glassware and ice story transform into canvases for expression, enhancing visual allure and turning the bar into a dynamic masterpiece where flavours dance and evolve. Sharing his

excitement about the launch of the new cocktail menu, Merwyn said, "Discussing the beverage program at Yauatcha, it's clear that it's more than just a dim sum restaurant. When Allen Yau founded Yauatcha, it was built on the four pillars of hospitality, patisserie, dim sum, mixology and tea. To this day, these pillars guide us in crafting every cocktail

that we put on our menus. The 'Asia In A Glass' menu was created with this ethos in mind, and we hope our guests enjoy these beautiful libations. The cocktails draw inspiration from across the Asian continent, incorporating traditional Asian ingredients such as Yuzu, Lychee, Pandan and Lemongrass. The result is a series of exclusive beverages that are as visually stunning as they are delicious, each one

telling a story of its own."

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MENU

- **Tian Shang:** A refreshing blend of Gin, Vodka, raspberry liqueur, lemon, fresh raspberries, elderflower foam.
- **Jian Mei:** A tea twist with Gin, sake, floral tea liqueur.
- **Around The World:** A delightful concoction of White rum, limoncello, Aperol, lychee, homemade apricot compote, rosemary twig.
- **Ginger Martini:** A zesty, aromatic blend with White rum, ginger, green apple, orgeat, lime.

Each cocktail is a testament to the skill and creativity of Yauatcha's mixologists, who have drawn inspiration from the diverse culinary landscapes of Asia. Experience the vibrant flavours and innovative creations that set Yauatcha apart. The drinks echo Yauatcha's ethos, embodying innovation and sophistication in showcasing Asian ingredients. The concoctions are more than just drinks, they are conversation starters and memory makers. Step in, have your pick from the 'Asia In A Glass' menu and see how a world of flavours is waiting to be explored by you! Cheers!

Address: Yauatcha Bangalore, Level 5, 1 MG Road Mall, MG Road, Bangalore.
Contact - +91922222800

Sharmila Chand is an author and consulting editor. She writes on food, travel, lifestyle, Culture.

IF ATHEISM SOLVED ALL HUMAN WOE, THEN THE SOVIET UNION WOULD HAVE BEEN AN EMPIRE OF JOY AND DANCING BUNNIES INSTEAD OF THE LAND OF CORPSES
— JOHN C WRIGHT



MOSCOW

A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME: FROM SOVIET SHADOWS TO MODERN MARVELS

From the historical depths of Red Square to the majestic Kremlin, each corner of this sprawling metropolis reveals layers of history - burnt, rebuilt and revived - beckoning travelers to explore its rich tapestry of culture and heritage, writes GYANESHWAR DAYAL

As I step off the plane at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Alexander S. Pushkin International Airport, the brisk, cold breeze is a refreshing change from the humid warm air of Delhi. This is my second trip to Moscow; my first visit occurred shortly after the Soviet Union disintegrated and Russia emerged as a new entity. Indeed, Moscow has transformed significantly since then. The city's infrastructure has improved dramatically, making it almost unrecognisable; the roads and the cars on them wear a fresh look. Yet, amidst this change, Moscow retains its unique character—inviting yet inherently private.

Over its 877-year history, the city has withstood a lot. Moscow lives fully, with its history woven into every brick and stone. Each regime has left its imprint, manifesting in monuments and relics scattered throughout the city, which now stand in contrast to modern architecture.

Moscow, the capital of Russia, boasts a rich and complex history that spans over 800 years. Founded in 1147 by Prince Yuri Dolgoruky, the city initially served as a minor trading post. Its strategic location on the Moskva River facilitated trade and communication, contributing to its gradual rise in importance. By the 15th century, under Ivan III (Ivan the Great), Moscow emerged as a significant political and cultural centre, ultimately overthrowing Mongol dominance.

In 1547, Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible) was crowned as the first Tsar of Russia, marking the official establishment of the Tsardom. This period was characterized by territorial expansion, the consolidation of power, and the construction of iconic structures like St. Basil's Cathedral, which symbolizes Moscow's architectural heritage.

Red Square, the iconic heart of Moscow, was established in the late 15th century, specifically during the reign of Ivan III (Ivan the Great). Originally, the area served as a marketplace and a central hub for various activities, but it gradually evolved into a political and cultural centre. It is now a must-visit tourist attraction. And if one wants to understand Moscow brace up for a long walk.

Red Square transports you to the 15th century. Our guide, an enthusiastic and energetic lady tells us Red is not for colour though the bricks and stones used are Red. Red in Russian means beautiful so it is a beautiful square and I couldn't agree less. You have colourful St. Basil's Cathedral overlooking the square, commissioned by Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible) in 1555 to commemorate the conquest of Kazan. Done in Disney style (or maybe it is the other way round). This style of structure painting is categorised of Russia and is called "Russian patterning." It is the place to click selfies.

Red square is also the place where Lenin's embalmed body is kept and many other Generals were buried. We don't get a chance to go inside as it is closed by the time we reach. Vladimir Lenin, leader of the October Revolution and the first leader and founder of the Soviet Union, died in Gorki aged 53 after falling into a coma on January 21,



1924. It has been 100 years since he died. The GUM Department Store is a major shopping destination nearby. It is beautiful no doubt and has best brands on offer. I buy nothing but being it is an experience; the aura of the place is awesome. Nearby there is a souvenir shop which has a good collection of memorabilia and offers discounts and prices are negotiable, feels like home. I buy a few souvenirs. Red Square has been the site of numerous significant events throughout Russian history, including military parades, public gatherings, and political demonstrations, making it a symbol of both the historical and contemporary Russian state. Then there is a change of guards where every two hours Presidential guards change their duty. They say you have to be the best to be presidential guards. Three tough



a smoking burning building. They were restored and did not look burnt now. We moved on to the churches where Tsars were baptised, crowned and laid to rest. All have shining brass tops. Don't know how they keep them so shiny. I can't keep my small Buddha statue that shiny anyway.

Moscow became the capital of the new socialist state, undergoing rapid industrialisation and significant urban development, exemplified by the construction of grandiose structures like the Seven Sisters skyscrapers. These seven huge buildings still stand tall and are landmarks. They now house a university, a government ministry, a hotel and no idea about the others. Interestingly the underground in Moscow was used as bunkers by the Muscovites during the second world war. The stations are indeed nothing short of a palace with large murals exquisitely done and preserved. We decide to take a ride. The coaches are neat and people are friendly. We exchange smiles with fellow passengers. Our short but sweet journey comes to an end we are back to our hotel.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked another pivotal moment in Moscow's history. The city transitioned from a socialist regime to a market economy, leading to significant social and economic changes. Modern Moscow has seen extensive urban development and globalisation. Moscow has now become a business hub and opened to inter cultural relations and tourists from all over the world. Today, Moscow stands as a vibrant metropolis that beautifully blends its rich historical heritage with modernity, attracting millions of visitors each year who come to explore its vast cultural treasures, including historic churches, museums, and vibrant neighbourhoods. Each brick and stone of this ancient city tells a story of resilience and transformation, reflecting the enduring spirit of its people. Moscow is a foodie's paradise. I enjoyed Zhivago's food, excellent food served with a charming smile. Apart from Dr Zhivago there are many restaurants that dot the city and have amazing food and vibes. Moscow is a vibrant city where culinary culture thrives, offering a rich tapestry of dining experiences that

reflect both tradition and innovation. From elegant restaurants serving classic Russian fare like 'borscht' and 'pelmeni' to trendy eateries embracing global influences, the city's food scene is diverse and sophisticated.

In the heart of Moscow, Café Pushkin stands as a symbol of elegance, offering a nostalgic ambiance reminiscent of 19th-century aristocratic Russia. For those seeking modern Russian cuisine with a twist, White Rabbit is a must-visit, famous for its innovative take on local ingredients and breathtaking views of the city.

For a more casual yet equally delightful experience, LavkaLavka, a farm-to-table restaurant, emphasizes sustainable dining, offering dishes made from fresh, locally sourced ingredients. Meanwhile, Dr. Zhivago of course presents a chic, contemporary take on traditional Soviet-era dishes in a stylish setting. For travellers and locals alike, these eateries are more than just places to dine—they offer an immersive experience into Moscow's rich cultural heritage and evolving modern palate.

Moscow has a good number of Museums too; they are a must visit if you have taste beyond Malls and Restaurants which Moscow has plenty. The guides are funny and knowledgeable at the same time. Moscow has a huge collection of paintings from bygone eras. Mostly of the Christ, kings but also of the people their life and woes. One could spend a day just watching the masterpieces. For the intellectually inclined, Moscow has a number of libraries with excellent collection of books.

Russian libraries are not just repositories of books but vital cultural institutions that embody the country's rich literary and intellectual tradition. The most iconic among them is the Russian State Library in Moscow, one of the largest in the world.

Founded in 1862, it holds millions of volumes, including rare manuscripts, maps, and other historical documents, making it a treasure trove for researchers and scholars. The library's architectural grandeur reflects its significance, with vast reading rooms and meticulously curated collections covering a wide range of disciplines. Beyond the Russian State Library, Moscow is home to numerous other libraries, such as the Lenin Library, which is also highly regarded for its expansive catalogue of works. But the best thing about Moscow is its people; friendly courteous and always willing to help.

The warmth of the Russian people is often a pleasant surprise for those visiting the country for the first time. Once you break through the initial formalities, you'll find that Russians are deeply hospitable, warm-hearted, and generous, especially when it comes to welcoming guests into their homes. The tradition of hospitality runs deep—guests are treated with great respect, and hosts often insist on sharing hearty meals and meaningful conversations, making you feel genuinely at home. As we pack bags, they are filled with souvenirs and memories one would share back home. As you board the flight and bid goodbye to Moscow you are still yearning for more.

“MOSCOW, THE CAPITAL OF RUSSIA, BOASTS A RICH AND COMPLEX HISTORY THAT SPANS AROUND 800 YEARS. FOUNDED IN 1147 BY PRINCE YURI DOLGORUKY, THE CITY INITIALLY SERVED AS A MINOR TRADING POST. ITS STRATEGIC LOCATION ON THE MOSKVA RIVER FACILITATED TRADE AND COMMUNICATION, CONTRIBUTING TO ITS GRADUAL RISE IN IMPORTANCE”

”

IN BRIEF



Iron ore output rises 7.4 pc to 116 million tonnes

The production of iron ore and manganese ore witnessed a growth during the April-August period of the ongoing fiscal. The output of iron ore rose by 7.4 per cent to 116 million tonnes (MT) during the said period compared to 108 MT registered in the corresponding period of previous fiscal, according to a provisional data released by the mines ministry. The production of manganese ore jumped by 15.4 per cent to 1.5 MT during the April-August period as compared to 1.3 MT in the previous financial year, the ministry said in a statement. Iron ore accounts for about 70 per cent of the total mineral production in terms of value. In the non-ferrous metal sector, primary aluminium production rose to 17.49 lakh tonnes (LT) during April-August from 17.26 LT in the year-ago period.



NLCIL produces 1,234 crore units of clean power

State-owned NLCIL has produced 1,234 crore units of green power, thereby preventing the emission of one crore tonne of carbon dioxide, a coal ministry statement said. Primarily a lignite-based power generating company, NLCIL is targeting 10,000 MW renewable energy capacity by 2030. NLC India Ltd (NLCIL) ventured into renewable energy with 1,380 MW of solar power plants and 51 MW of wind power plants. To achieve the target of 10,000 MW, NLCIL has formed new subsidiaries—NLC India Renewables Ltd (NIRL) to focus on asset monetisation and NLC India Green Energy Ltd (NIGEL) to spearhead clean energy initiatives. Furthermore, NLCIL's membership in the International Solar Alliance (ISA) underscores its commitment to environmental sustainability within the coal sector. With a current renewable energy capacity of 1.4 GW, NLCIL is set to quadruple this figure by 2030.



IDFC FIRST Bank announces completion of IDFC Ltd merger

IDFC First Bank on Friday announced the completion of merger of IDFC Limited with the bank. This follows the receipt of all requisite shareholder and regulatory approvals, the bank said in a statement. The merger is effective from October 1, 2024, it added. As a result of the merger, it said, 155 equity shares of the bank will be allotted for every 100 equity shares of IDFC Limited held by such shareholder in IDFC Limited as on the Record Date i.e., October 10, 2024. The shares are expected to be credited to shareholders of IDFC Limited on or before October 31, 2024, subject to regulatory processes and clearances, it said. Post the amalgamation, there will be a simplified corporate structure at the Bank with no holding company, it said. "The shareholding structure will be like other leading institutional Indian private sector banks with no promoter holding. The bank will continue to be professionally managed institution," it said.

EAM reaffirms India's commitment to boost ties with BIMSTEC

PNS ■ NEW YORK

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has reaffirmed India's commitment to wider engagement with the seven-nation grouping BIMSTEC in line with its Neighbourhood First and Act East policies. Jaishankar, who is in the US to attend the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly, on Friday chaired the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation's informal Foreign Ministers' meeting in New York on the sidelines of the high-level session.

The meeting was held to prepare for the BIMSTEC Leaders' Summit.

"Took stock of our close cooperation in health, food security, trade, investment, economy and energy. Focused on improving physical, maritime and digital connectivity across the region. Explored opportunities for capacity building, skill development and improving people-to-people ties," Jaishankar said in a post on X.

"The development of BIMSTEC Centres of Excellence is a collective resolve. Reaffirmed India's commitment to wider engagement with BIMSTEC in line with Neighbourhood First, Vision SAGAR and Act East Policy," he said.



Under its 'Neighbourhood First' policy, India is committed to developing friendly and mutually beneficial relations with all its neighbours. India has developed maritime cooperation with regional partners in consonance with its vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR).

India's Act East Policy is an initiative that aims to strengthen economic, cultural, and strategic ties with countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

The BIMSTEC member countries are India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

Separately, Jaishankar along with Dominican Minister for Foreign Affairs Vince Henderson co-chaired a meeting of the India-CARICOM Foreign Ministers.

CARICOM, the Caribbean Community, has 15 members - Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curacao and Turks & Caicos Islands are Associate Members of the Community.

"A great meeting of the India-CARICOM Foreign

DPIIT working on 100 rules to decriminalise minor offences

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) on Saturday said it is working on about 100 rules and laws of various departments to decriminalise minor offenses to promote ease of doing business.

The exercise is part of bringing the second edition of Jan Vishwas bill. The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, which was rolled out last year with the primary objective of decriminalising minor offences across 42 central Acts, eliminated 183 criminal provisions across 19 ministries/departments.

The Joint Parliamentary

Committee, which reviewed the Jan Vishwas bill, has recommended extending the exercise to further Acts, ensuring the continuous modernization of India's regulatory framework, it said.

The first edition of the Jan Vishwas Act introduced civil penalties and administrative actions for minor technical and procedural lapses, reducing the fear of criminal penalties and enhancing the ease of doing business and living in the country.

"The DPIIT is working on about 100 rules and laws of various departments of government to bring Jan Vishwas 2.0 bill to achieve a greater ease of doing business environment," it added.



Chouhan calls for training of agri startups in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday emphasised the importance of training of agricultural startups in the country and called for well-researched training modules and curriculum.

"The training of agricultural startups is very important today," Chouhan said after virtually laying the foundation stone of the Executive Hostel Block and Training Block of the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management, Hyderabad.

He suggested the institute pay attention to every aspect of the extension work. For which, the training modules and courses should not only be traditional, but should also be able to meet today's requirements, an official statement said.

He also called for crop diversification, value addition and promotion of natural farming. Chouhan, who is in Daltonganj in Jharkhand, expressed concern over decline in cultivation of pigeon peas in the state and announced the Centre will procure the pulses. A team will also visit the state and encourage cultivation of pigeon peas and other pulses in this region.

Meanwhile in Delhi, Agriculture Secretary Devesh Chaturvedi held a meeting with World Bank Vice-President, South Asian Region, Martin Raiser and discussed the priorities of the government in the agriculture sector.

He informed that the government is making efforts to achieve self-sufficiency in pulses and oilseeds, promoting sustainable agriculture, implementing policies to overcome the challenge of small holding size, and implementing policies to improve delivery of services

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Govt exempts non-basmati white rice from export duty

Sets floor price at USD 490/tonne

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Withdrawing a blanket ban on overseas shipments of non-basmati white rice, the government on Saturday imposed a floor price of USD 490 per tonne and exempted the commodity from export duty.

Exports of non-basmati white rice have been banned since July 20, 2023 to boost domestic supply.

"The export policy for non-basmati white rice (semi-milled or wholly milled rice, whether or not polished or gazed) ...is amended from prohibited to free, subject to MEP (minimum export price) of USD 490 per tonne with immediate effect and until further orders," the directorate general of foreign trade (DGFT) said in a notification.

The measures came at a time when the country has ample stock of rice at government godowns and retail prices are also under control.

The government has exempted non-basmati white rice from export duty, while reducing the levy on parboiled rice to 10 per cent.

The duty cut came within a fortnight of the government's decision to remove the minimum export price on basmati rice.

In a notification issued on Friday, the revenue department under the finance ministry said it has also reduced export duty on husked (brown rice), and rice in the form of husk (paddy or rough) to 10 per cent.

The export duty on these varieties of rice as well as non-basmati white rice was 20 per cent so far.

These duty changes are effective from September 27, 2024, the notification said.

Earlier this month, the government had scrapped the minimum export price for basmati rice to boost outbound shipments and enhance farmers' income.

The country has exported non-basmati white rice worth USD 189 million during April-July this fiscal. It was USD 852.52 million in 2023-24. Though there was a ban on the exports, the government was allowing the shipments to friendly nations like Maldives, Mauritius, the UAE and African countries.

Exporters heave sigh of relief

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Stakeholders of West Bengal's rice industry on Saturday heaved a sigh of relief after the Centre removed the ban on overseas shipments of non-basmati white rice. The government's move is expected to help reopen 500-600 rice mills in the state, which had been closed for the past one year due to a slump in demand in the wake of export restrictions, Bengal Rice Mills Association president Sushil Kumar Choudhury said. The lifting of the ban on exports will also enable farmers to fetch better prices over the minimum support price (MSP), he said. "The removal of the export ban will not only boost the operation of rice mills but also improve the average realisation for farmers, which had been subdued in the past year. Of the 1,400-1,500

mills in West Bengal, 500-600 had been closed due to weak export demand and mounting losses," Choudhury said. On average, each mill directly and indirectly employs around 500 people, he said. Earlier in the day, the government removed the blanket ban on overseas shipments of non-basmati white rice and imposed a minimum export price (MEP) of USD 490 per tonne. Exports of non-basmati white rice have been banned since July 20, 2023 to boost domestic supply. "The export policy for non-basmati white rice (semi-milled or wholly milled rice, whether or not polished or gazed) ...is amended from prohibited to free, subject to MEP of USD 490 per tonne with immediate effect and until further orders," the directorate general of foreign trade (DGFT) said in a notification.

Jaipur Rugs expands global footprint

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Handmade rugs maker Jaipur Rugs on Saturday said it has opened a new flagship store in Singapore, expanding its presence in the global market.

This is the fourth international store of Jaipur Rugs. It launched a store in London in June. Besides, it operates stores in Dubai and Milan.

"This marks the second international opening in just three months, following the launch of the brand's London showroom earlier this year, as Jaipur Rugs continues its strategic push into the global design landscape," the company said in a statement.

Besides, it has a presence in the US, China and Russia through sister concern and franchise model.

Goyal calls for using made-in-India goods more to cut imports

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Saturday called for increased usage of made-in-India goods in order to promote domestic manufacturing and cut the country's imports.

Speaking at the UP International Trade Show at Greater Noida, Goyal also said that out of the 20 approved industrial townships, one is coming up at Greater Noida and in that, the first phase is already sold out.

For next phase, talks are on with the state. "Manufacturing and selling of made-in-India products within the country and abroad will reduce imports, boost MSMEs, help 'One District One Product' scheme to grow," he said.

Puri says consensus needed for bringing fuels under GST

PNS ■ PUNE

Last month, the Union Cabinet approved setting up of 12 industrial smart cities including in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, with an overall investment of Rs 28,602 crore.

Goyal also said that India's intellectual property rights (IPR) regime has improved so much so that in 2014, only 6,000 patents were granted in 2014 but last year, the number has jumped to one lakh patents.

Noting that India's identity in the world is now as a provider of quality goods and services, he said: "We should buy products from each other to try to reduce goods made in other countries and instead use products made in India as that would support MSMEs and promote One District One Product scheme."

Stalin lays foundation stone for Tata Motors' Rs 9k cr plant

PNS ■ RANIPET (TAMIL NADU)

Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri on Friday said he favoured bringing petrol and diesel under the Goods and Services Tax, but the decision needs unanimous support of the states.

Puri was delivering a lecture on "strategy and measures for enhancing India's energy security in the coming decades", organised by the Pune International Centre here.

"...there is a suggestion to bring petrol and diesel under GST, which I was advocating for a long period of time. Now my senior colleague, the finance minister also has spoken about bringing fuel under GST on several occasions," he said.

Stalin lays foundation stone for Tata Motors' Rs 9k cr plant

Unit to rollout SUVs, sports cars

PNS ■ RANIPET (TAMIL NADU)

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin laid the foundation stone for Tata Motors' new facility here to produce sports cars and SUVs.

The auto major's plant, which entails an investment of Rs 9,000 crore would produce next generation vehicles for both Tata Motors and Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), the British arm of the car maker, the company said.

According to Tata Motors, production at the factory is expected to begin in a phased manner and the facility would reach a capacity of 2.50 lakh units a year, over

the next five to seven years.

The ground breaking ceremony was held at Panapakam in this district, about 115 km from Chennai. The facility is expected to generate 5,000 new jobs.

Besides the CM, senior DMK Ministers Durai Murugan, TRB Rajaa, Chief Secretary N Muruganandam, along with Tata Sons Ltd Chairman N Chandrasekaran participated in the ground breaking ceremony.

The plant would cater to both domestic and overseas markets and utilise renewable energy for running the operations.

ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Majority of employees feel their organisations can do more

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Even as the corporate sector in India is taking steps to address mental health issues at workplaces, a majority of employees believe companies could do more to improve their overall well-being, a survey report said on Saturday.

Over 79 per cent of those participated in the survey opined their organisations could do more to address mental health issues and well-being, according to the report by HR services and workforce

solutions provider Genius Consultants.

"We must recognise that employee well-being is not just a trend, but a crucial aspect of organizational success. The data reveals that a significant number of employees are grappling with anxiety and feeling overwhelmed in their work environments. Companies need to take proactive steps to foster a supportive atmosphere that prioritises mental health and work-life balance," Genius Consultants Chairman and



We must recognise that employee well-being is not just a trend, but a crucial aspect of organizational success. The data reveals that a significant number of employees are grappling with anxiety and feeling overwhelmed in their work environments

Managing Director R P Yadav said.

The report is based on a survey carried out between

August 5 and September 2, 2024, among 1,783 employees working across sectors.

It further showed that over 45 per cent of employees experience anxiety and anxiousness every Sunday evening when they prepare to return to work on Monday, while 13 per cent carry mixed feelings about the same.

Moreover, 78 per cent respondents reported a harsh workplace characterised by peer pressure and behavioural expectations from management and colleagues, it said.

Only 17 per cent disagreed with this assessment, highlighting the need for a more supportive culture within organisations, the report said.

Meanwhile, 66 per cent of employees feel overburdened by their current work structures, believing that their work-life balance is being severely disrupted, said the report. This alarming percentage suggests that a substantial portion of the workforce is struggling to manage their professional and personal lives effectively, it added.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
 'E' PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
 NIT No. 27/EE-21/SBZ/PMC/2024-25 Date: 27-09-2024
 Name of the Work: Maintenance Works Others-01, Estimate Amount: Rs. 1.50 Lakhs. Bid Submission Start date & Time / Bid Submission of Closing Date & Time: 28-09-2024 @ 11.00 AM / 30-09-2024 @ 11.00 AM. Name & Address of the Officer: Executive Engineer, 9154795465. For further details can be sent at e-procurement@http://www.tender.telangana.gov.in
 Sd/- Executive Engineer, Division No. 28, GHMC.
 P.O.No: 472/PH/AD/VT/12024-25, Dt: 28-09-2024

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
 PUBLIC HEALTH & MUNICIPAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
 'E' PROCUREMENT SHORT TENDER NOTICE
 NIT No. 204/EE/PH/AD/VT/12024-25 Date: 27-09-2024
 'e' procurement tenders are invited by the Executive Engineer, Public Health Special Division, Adilabad from the Eligible Contractors as mentioned vide e-Procurement Notice No. 204/EE/PH/AD/VT/12024-25. Date: 27-09-2024 for Execution of (5) No's of works worth Rs. 232.00 Lakhs with TUFIDC Loan Assistance in Bellampally Municipality. Bid submission Start Date & Time: 30-09-2024 from 3:00 PM. Other Particulars, if any required, can be had from the Executive Engineer, Public Health Special Division, Adilabad, during office hours on all working days from Mobile No. 9849906339 in e-Procurement Plot form i.e., www.telangana.eprocurement.gov.in
 Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.O.No: 4896/PH/CL/AD/VT/12024-25, Dt: 28-09-2024 Public Health Spl Division, Adilabad

"The best way to approach Navratri is in a spirit of celebration. This is the secret of life: to be non-serious but absolutely involved"
- Sadhguru



Over the centuries, Durga Puja has evolved from a private affair of Zamindars to a mass celebration on a global scale. It is now much more than just a religious festival – it's a cultural spectacle, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

DURGA PUJA

A SYMPHONY OF TRADITION AND TRANSFORMATION

Some September and everyone is busy making plans for the 'Puja', a festival dedicated to Goddess Durga, in eastern India. Of course it is Kolkata which is the epicentre of all celebrations. Over the years, *Durga Puja* has evolved into a pan-Indian and global festival. With unmatched fervour and devotion, people across the world now come together to honour the goddess, celebrating her victory and divine power.

Durga Puja, one of the most revered and vibrant festivals in India, particularly in West Bengal, celebrates the victory of the goddess Durga over the demon Mahishasura, symbolising the triumph of good over evil. Rooted in Hindu mythology, the festival commemorates the goddess as the embodiment of Shakti, or divine feminine power. Over the years, *Durga Puja* has transformed from a primarily religious observance into a grand socio-cultural extravaganza that has few parallels.

Durga Puja marks the victory of Goddess Durga, a fierce yet compassionate deity, over Mahishasura, who threatened to disrupt the balance of the universe. According to legend, Mahishasura received a boon that no man could defeat him. As he unleashed terror, the gods united to create Durga, a divine warrior goddess, who fought and eventually killed Mahishasura. The festival celebrates Durga's strength, resilience, and protective nature, while also invoking blessings for peace, prosperity, and protection against evil forces. That is mythology for one and all but it is a metaphor which might have fewer takers but nevertheless the message is crystal.

The metaphor and hidden message of Goddess Durga lie in her embodiment of divine feminine power, resilience, and protection. As a multi-armed warrior goddess, Durga symbolises the shakti (cosmic energy) within all beings, representing the strength needed to overcome life's obstacles. Each weapon she holds signifies various tools required to defeat inner and outer evils like fear, ignorance, pride and injustice. Metaphorically, Durga's battle with Mahishasura, the demon king, is a reflection of the ongoing struggle between good and evil, not just in the cosmic realm but within individuals and society at large. Her victory underscores that evil - be it oppression, greed or violence - can only be defeated through righteous action, courage and the collective strength of the divine and human will.

It is the triumph of dharma (righteousness) over adharma (immorality), a reminder that good eventually prevails even in the face of insurmountable odds. Furthermore, Durga, as a motherly figure, embodies compassion and protection, highlighting the balance between fierceness and nurturing, teaching that strength does not negate love and compassion. Goddess Durga conveys the message of empowerment, particularly for women, demonstrating that power and authority lie in embracing one's true self and purpose. In a broader sense, Durga's story speaks to the need for balance between action and patience, destruction and creation, power and empathy.

The festival is observed during the Hindu Calendar month of Ashwin



DURGA PUJA IS AN ELABORATE AND COLOURFUL FESTIVAL, TYPICALLY SPANNING FIVE DAYS - SHASHTHI, SAPTAMI, ASHTAMI, NAVAMI AND VIJAYADASHAMI. EACH DAY IS MARKED BY RITUALS, PRAYERS, CULTURAL EVENTS AND, OF COURSE, THE UNVEILING OF THE IDOL OF GODDESS DURGA IN PANDALS (TEMPORARY, ARTISTICALLY DESIGNED STRUCTURES). THE CELEBRATION BEGINS WITH THE RITUAL OF BODHON, OR THE WELCOMING OF THE GODDESS, ON THE SIXTH DAY



(September-October), culminating on Vijaydashami, the tenth day when Durga's victory is celebrated and her idols are immersed in water, symbolising her return to Mount Kailash, her celestial home.

Durga Puja is an elaborate and colourful festival, typically spanning five days - Shashthi, Saptami, Ashtami, Navami and Vijaydashami. Each day is marked by rituals, prayers, cultural events and, of course, the unveiling of the idol of Goddess Durga in pandals (temporary, artistically designed structures). The celebration begins with the ritual of Bodhon, or the welcoming of the goddess, on the sixth day.

FROM ZAMINDAR PUJA TO PUBLIC CELEBRATIONS

Historically, *Durga Puja* was a private affair, celebrated within the homes of wealthy zamindar (landlord) families. However, during the late 18th century, it began to shift towards community-based celebrations. In Kolkata, the first publicly organised *Durga Puja*, known as the Barowari Puja, was held in 1790, and since then, the practice has spread across Bengal and beyond.

The first major move toward a community-based *Durga Puja* or Barowari Puja, took place in 1790 in Hooghly district, near Kolkata. A group of twelve friends organised this puja to make the festival more inclusive and community-oriented, free from the exclusivity of the zamindar class. This concept of collective worship was revolutionary at the time and set the foundation for public celebrations of the festival. The term "Barowari" comes from baro (twelve) and yari (friends), representing this group's efforts to democratise *Durga Puja*. Raja Nabakrishna Deb, an influential zamindar of the Shobhabazar Rajbari in Kolkata, played a critical role in popularising *Durga Puja* beyond the private confines of aristocratic families. In 1757, following the British victory at the Battle of Plassey, Nabakrishna Deb invited British officers, including Robert Clive, to his *Durga Puja* celebration, creating a hybrid of Indian tradition and colonial influence.

In the late 19th century, Swami Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Mission also played a pivotal role in giving *Durga Puja* a broader, more public dimension. Through the Ramakrishna Mission, *Durga Puja* became associated with nationalistic and cultural identity, with an emphasis on social service and community welfare. Swami Vivekananda himself performed

the festival as both a spiritual and community event.

PANDAL HOPPING

The centrepiece of the festivities is the pandals, where elaborate idols of Durga, along with her children - Lakshmi, Saraswati, Kartikeya and Ganesha - are displayed. These pandals often feature intricate themes that range from mythological tales to contemporary social issues.

Durga Puja pandals have evolved far beyond simple religious displays, becoming powerful platforms for artistic expression and social commentary. Every year, these temporary structures turn into creative masterpieces that reflect not just devotion to Goddess Durga but also highlight contemporary issues ranging from politics to global events and pressing social concerns.

Some pandals artistically engage with local and national politics, offering thought-provoking critiques or support for political movements. For example, some recent themes have explored elections, portraying the goddess battling forces of greed and dishonesty, metaphorically addressing societal upheaval.

Several pandals focus on international matters, such as climate change, world peace or refugee crises. They utilise innovative materials and designs to depict how these global challenges affect humanity. For instance, some recent installations have depicted the Amazon rainforest fires, the pandemic or refugee struggles, merging Durga's fight against evil with the global battle for environmental protection or humanitarian aid.

Many pandals are now powerful vehicles for raising awareness about social issues. They have addressed women's rights, child labor, education and even mental health. Some pandals creatively use Durga's weapons to symbolise the tools needed to fight social evils like gender inequality or poverty, aligning the goddess's mythology with contemporary societal struggles. Themes such as women empowerment, gender justice and communal harmony are depicted with a blend of artistry and symbolism.

In recent years, with growing awareness about environmental conservation, eco-friendly pandals have gained popularity. Artists use biodegradable materials like clay, bamboo and jute to create these installations, while themes often focus on

sustainability and environmental consciousness. These efforts not only contribute to reducing pollution during idol immersion but also send a strong message about the urgent need to protect nature.

These innovative pandals transform *Durga Puja* into not just a religious celebration but a cultural forum where tradition and modernity intersect, sparking dialogue on critical societal and global issues. Through artistry, they encourage introspection, inspire change, and bring communities together in shared reflection.

RITUALS AND PRAYERS

Devotees perform elaborate rituals, such as the pushpanjali (flower offerings) and aarti (lamp offerings), invoking the goddess's blessings. On Ashtami, the main day of the festival, the Sandhi Puja, symbolising the transition from Ashtami to Navami, is performed with great fervour. Kumari Puja, where young girls are worshiped as manifestations of the goddess, is also a key ritual.

CULTURAL PERFORMANCES AND FEASTING

Beyond its religious aspect, *Durga Puja* is also a cultural celebration. Communities organise music and dance performances, theatrical productions and art exhibitions. The festival is a time for feasting, with special foods like bhog (a sacred offering) and traditional Bengali sweets such as sandesh, rasgulla, and mishti doi adding to the festive charm. While *Durga Puja* retains its core religious significance, the festival has undergone significant transformations over the centuries, evolving into a social, artistic, and commercial spectacle.

GLOBALISATION OF DURGA PUJA

Today, *Durga Puja* is not confined to Bengal. Thanks to the global Bengali diaspora, the festival is celebrated with grandeur in cities like London, New York and Dubai. Modern technology, social media and live streaming of rituals have expanded the reach of *Durga Puja*, allowing devotees from across the globe to participate.

Durga Puja has also seen commercialisation, with sponsorships and advertisements driving the festival economy. The shopping, food, and tourism sectors receive a massive boost during this time, as people from across the country and the world flock to experience the grandeur of the celebration.

Durga Puja is more than just a religious festival; it is a vibrant, living tradition that has evolved with time. While the core message of the triumph of good over evil remains intact, the festival has grown to embody the cultural and social heartbeat of Bengal, touching the lives of millions across the globe. As *Durga Puja* continues to transform, it serves as a powerful reminder of the enduring strength of faith, community and creativity. In today's society, with the increasing disregard for women's dignity, the timeless message of Goddess Durga appears to be lost in the din. People seem more focused on indulging in the festive revelry rather than embracing the deeper significance of Durga's empowerment. Yet, this is the fate that most festivals eventually meet - a shift from reflection to celebration.

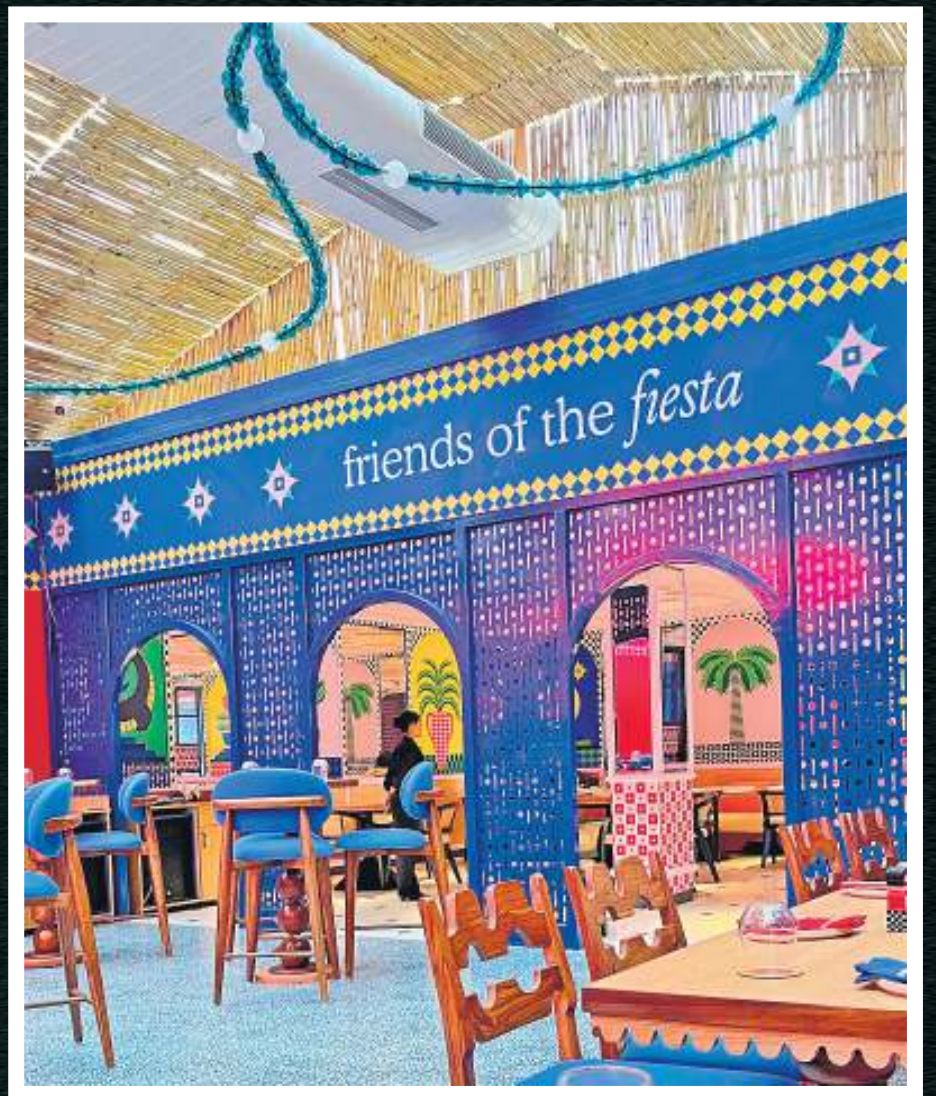
Taco 'Bout Mexican fiesta!

AARTI SREENATH
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Stepping into Mexarosa was like being whisked away to a wild Mexican fiesta where every dish was a celebration and each cocktail was a toast to good times. The air hums with the energy of sizzling fajitas and the guacamole arrives like it knows it's the star of the show – smooth, creamy and a total scene-stealer. Tacos? They're more like tiny edible adventures, with flavours that dance the cha-cha on your taste buds. And the churros? Let's just say, if heaven had a dessert, this would be it.

At Mexarosa, every bite felt like a vibrant celebration and by the time you hit the tequila, you'll be convinced this is where happiness lives, wrapped in a tortilla and topped with salsa. The ambience was a vibrant fusion of Mexican charm and festive energy. The space was adorned with an explosion of colours, each corner exuding warmth and character. The walls were painted in bold

hues reminiscent of traditional Mexican art, with patterns and textures adding depth to the lively decor. The flooring, with full stone tiles, gave a rustic touch, evoking a cozy, earthy feel. Intricate details, from the colourful sombreros hanging on the walls, completed the immersive experience. The food matched the atmosphere delectable, rich in flavours and deeply tied to the authenticity of Mexican cuisine. Dining was like being teleported to a fiesta where the food danced on your taste buds and the cocktails gave you the courage to join in (even if you're rhythmically challenged). Let's kick things off with the Mexarosa Corn Ribs—I'm pretty sure these corn ribs were once the life of the party. Grilled to perfection, they were paired with the guac so smoothly it felt like witnessing a salsa duet in slow motion and those nacho chips? Crispy backup dancers. But the real firestarter? Mexarosa Prawn Fiesta—these prawns were fried so crisp you could hear their crunch before they hit the table. Tossed in a fiery hot sauce and lemon chili seasoning, they were hotter than the salsa on a summer day in Mexico. Thank goodness for the cooling sour cream; without it, I might've needed a fire extinguisher. For a true test of patience and flavour, the Mojo Pork Carnitas and Lamb Birria won the slow-cooking Olympics, with the pork smoked for eight hours and the lamb simmering for five. Honestly, after tasting those melt-in-your-mouth bites, I'm thinking of slow-cooking everything in my life, including my morning coffee. Now for the cocktails—the liquid courage to



match the menu's heat! La Unión Latina was like a cultural exchange program in a glass. Rum, pisco, coconut and coffee teamed up to connect the Caribbean and South America, while mole bitters brought the warmth (and a little spice) that made me feel festive with every sip. El Son del Mezcal was like a smoky tango on your palate. Mezcal,

ancho chile and charred bell pepper created a fiery yet balanced concoction that hit me with enough boldness to make you want to shout, "Viva México!" By the end of the night, I left Mexarosa full, happy and possibly fluent in taco. This place didn't just serve food—it served a fiesta for the senses and I'll be back to RSVP soon.

FORK LORE



SMOOTH & PORELESS SKIN

Say goodbye to disturbing excess sebum, unconcealable enlarged pores, white flakiness and achieve smoother, more refined skin with Innisfree's Super Volcanic Pore Clay Mask. Harnessing from the natural wonders of Jeju, this powerhouse mask combines volcanic clusters and AHA to absorb excess sebum and impurities, purifying your skin from the inside out. The dual-action formula works as a chemical and physical exfoliate, removing dead skin cells and evening out your skin texture for a radiant glow.

Price: INR 1,100



NEW HYDRATING JELLY TINTS

Type Beauty has launched their stunning collection of hydrating, exfoliating and brightening jelly tints! Designed to give your skin the ultimate nourishment, these tints deliver a flawless, dewy glow that radiates perfection—all with zero compromises. It added another feather to their beauty hat by launching the most hydrating jelly tints.



WHAT'S NEW

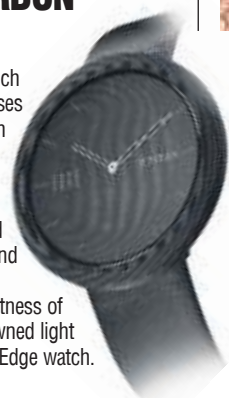


GARNIER ENTERS SUNCARE CATEGORY

Garnier has forayed into the suncare category with the launch of its ground-breaking Super UV Invisible Serum Sunscreen. The lightweight formula offers broad-spectrum protection with SPF50 and PA++++ that safeguards the skin from 99% sun damage. Enriched with Vitamin C, this sunscreen not only protects but also helps correct dark spots.

EDGE BY TITAN INTRODUCES CARBON FIBRE WATCH

Edge by Titan is delighted to launch an ultramodern timepiece that fuses the lightweight strength of carbon fibre with its iconic minimalist aesthetics to bring together unparalleled durability and style. Originally used in automotive and aerospace engineering, the dial and the case of this watch have been crafted in it to enhance the robustness of the watch coupled with the renowned light weight experience of wearing an Edge watch.



VAI RA'S NEW COLLECTION

Each earring boasts 14 exquisite stones, featuring a delightful blend of princess, baguette, and pear cuts, for a total of 2.8CT of stunning moissanite and lab diamonds. Their graceful half-hoop design is not just about beauty; it's crafted for comfort, with a secure pushback closure that can easily be converted to a Bombay screw for added peace of mind. Available in 925 silver, solid 10KT, 14KT, or 18KT gold and in breathtaking finishes of white, rose, or yellow gold, these hoops are perfect for celebrating special moments or for simply adding a touch of sparkle to your everyday look.

BLUSH FOR PERFECT FLUSHED LOOK

Achieve a radiant, natural glow with Anastasia Beverly Hills Blurring serum blush. This hydrating, liquid blush offers a soft-matte, blurred finish, enriched with skin-loving ingredients like niacinamide and pomegranate peel extract. Its lightweight, gel-like formula grips the skin for a "flushed-from-within" effect, while the precision applicator ensures easy, flawless application.



ELEVATE YOUR TABLE SETTING

AMARA, the first tableware product in the OG green gold, Bamboo, with cotton piping in various colours. Made using strips of bamboo that are woven into sheets with a handloom, the mat is held in shape by stitching on a cotton border. Make mealtimes more graceful as you use these as soft tablemats, either directly for your crockery or as a layered base for your chargers.

Price: 2,350.00/-



BLING STRIPE AURORA BUBBLEGUM PINK CO-ORDS

The Terra Luna CO-ORDS in bling stripe aurora bubblegum pink bring together effortless style and comfort. The Elba top, with its flattering V-neck, cap sleeves and ruching details, pairs perfectly with the Drai shorts, featuring an elasticated waistband and side slits for a relaxed fit. Made from 100% organic Khadi cotton, this set is both eco-friendly and chic, offering a versatile look those transitions seamlessly from beach to brunch or bar.

Price: ₹6,999



GARDEN OF JOY EARRINGS

Crafted from 14kt gold, the Garden of Joy earrings feature natural diamonds that sparkle brilliantly, complemented by vintage-inspired rose cut diamonds. South Sea pearls add a touch of opulence, while vibrant emeralds provide a splash of colour and symbolise renewal. Inspired by a blooming garden, each element is carefully chosen to evoke a sense of joy and harmony, making these earrings a cherished addition to any collection.



MYNDSHROOM

Introducing Awshad Myndshroom, a superfood designed to elevate your brainpower! It offers high levels of energy, focus and mental clarity with its powerful blend of Cordyceps, Lion's Mane and L-theanine. Safe and easy to consume, Myndshroom provides cognitive support and enhanced mental performance with minimal side effects. Perfect for today's fast-paced world, it is your non-prescription solution for boosting brain health!

Price: ₹2400



HOROSCOPE

ARIES

(March 21 - April 19)

You'll meet someone attractive this week. Be persistent, avoid high expectations, and embrace your strengths. Manage stress wisely and communicate effectively, and success will follow.



TAURUS

(April 20 - May 20)

You'll feel drawn to new connections. Stay harmonious, be patient with career delays and trust your instincts. Avoid rash decisions and channel your energy into meaningful work.



GEMINI

(May 21 - June 20)

Your attraction to beauty will lead to new opportunities. Stay resilient despite setbacks, focus on your goals, and trust your co-workers. Maintain a positive mindset for success.



CANCER

(June 21 - July 22)

Be gentle with yourself and your loved ones. Resolve misunderstandings, balance your principles and embrace support. Stay loyal and focused. Your efforts will bring success.



LEO

(July 23 - August 22)

You'll attract someone who opens your heart easily. Stay calm amid family pressures. Offer support and focus on meaningful work. Your energy and encouragement will bring success.



VIRGO

(August 23 - September 22)

Your guiding nature benefits loved ones. Balance your personal growth with obligations. Stay calm, avoid emotional blowups, and focus on projects. Manage stress and practice self-control.



LIBRA

(September 23 - October 22)

Your drive and resilience will overcome setbacks. Strengthen relationships and address minor suspicions with your spouse. Obstacles may delay your project. Stay positive and focused.



SCORPIO

(October 23 - November 21)

You'll face financial pressure but remain calm. Support from friends will aid success. Embrace others' ideas and stay determined. Recognition will follow. A pleasant trip brings joy.



SAGITTARIUS

(November 22 - December 21)

You will find a stimulating partner and should express your feelings before it's too late. Stay confident despite setbacks and focus on your future. Success and good health await.



CAPRICORN

(December 22 - January 19)

You'll feel attracted to someone and enjoy harmony this week. Strengthen relationships, nurture your body and communicate effectively. Students need to focus on their studies.



AQUARIUS

(January 20 - February 18)

You'll feel attraction this week; persist despite initial rejections. Address emotional struggles, communicate with your spouse and don't let work hinder your plans. Recognition is on the way.



PISCES

(February 19 - March 20)

Embrace unexpected attractions that could transform your life. While seeking beauty and harmony, avoid overindulgence. Prioritize quality time with loved ones to boost your relationship.



CHAT-O-CINO

RAMP TO REIGN: Sophiya Singh dolls up for MISS ASIA PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL '24

her career as a wealthy entrepreneur with her role as an actress in hit serials. We were curious to find out how she is thriving in both artistic and entrepreneurial jobs. The model continues, "I was determined to establish a name for myself in the Indian television industry when I was eighteen years old. I was the youngest ever Femina Miss India pageant winner. Look at me now—my passion for participating in these pageants hasn't faded. Nonetheless, my modelling career began in the city of Egypt! You could say I was overrun by consignments from the media industry because I was getting them one after the other. Under the tutelage of none other than the television tycoon Ekta R Kapoor, I worked for Balaji Telefilms for about a year." Principally, she made a life-changing detour to pursue her true passion—beauty pageants. This sparked her entrepreneurial spirit too, leading her to establish a business. Her institute offers comprehensive training in makeup and self-grooming, empowering women to shine in pageants. The journey hasn't been easy, but after nine years, she has established herself as a reputable figure in the pageant world.

Contemplating social causes to champion at Miss Asia Pacific International, she highlights women's empowerment through education and financial autonomy, challenging societal norms and promoting self-acceptance, saying, "Beauty pageants are about more than just physical appearance; they're also about advocating for meaningful causes. As a competitive individual, I'm drawn to addressing a pressing global issue: violence against women. This isn't just an Indian problem; it's a pervasive, worldwide crisis. Sexual assault and human trafficking persist, affecting women every minute. It's imperative we acknowledge this ongoing struggle and take action."

Singh expressed her excitement and nervousness: "India is already an incredible nation, renowned globally for its rich heritage. Many international individuals are eager to experience our vibrant culture. As a melting pot of diverse religions coexisting harmoniously, India stands unique. Then, stereotypes are shaped by our surroundings. Social media can be a powerful tool for change. I've seen many girls struggle with body image and mental health issues due to the beauty industry. Rather than shattering stereotypes, I aim to normalise female empowerment—with or without beauty. I'm committed to learning and promoting inclusivity, inspiring other girls to do the same." Cheers to that!

"Participating in a popular reality show unexpectedly boosted my confidence, preparing me for the camera and glam appearances. However, my ultimate goal remained representing India, proudly wearing the national flag. Leaving acting to pursue this dream was a risky decision, but I'm driven to make a difference. I'm open to exploring politics to achieve this vision, alongside other passionate individuals," highlights the beauty pageant holder. On the other hand, the entertainment industry is undergoing a transformative shift, prioritising inclusivity and shattering

stereotypes. But there's a flip side to it too! She shares her perspective: "Be prepared for the ultimate test of resilience if you're entering this industry. You'll face a myriad of challenges, from intense scrutiny and exploitation to fierce competition and cultural scrutiny. Additionally, you may encounter unforeseen negative publicity or find yourself at the center of controversy—all under the media's relentless spotlight."

Driven by societal standards and media influences, women strive to enhance their physical attractiveness from a young age. This perpetual pressure links beauty to self-confidence, making grooming essential for success across all industries. And then there are people who can't afford how to understand doing make-up, so, "I founded my institute for those in need since there are many who cannot afford to learn how to apply make-up. Makeup and styling are quite expensive in our field. Some are demanding lakhs for it! I give poor girls free education and all of these things for a very minimal price."

Anticipating to display her uniqueness in the pageant, she hopes, "Through the Miss Asia Pacific pageant, I aim to highlight India's rich cultural heritage and unique beauty. Winning is crucial for me, as it will enable me to share my culture globally. My community's expectations are high and I feel the weight of responsibility. Preparing for this competition feels like training for the Olympics—I'm striving for gold. With just eight days left, I'm nervous but determined to make my country proud."

In this same pageant, Zeenat Aman and Dia Mirza have both brought pride to India. Their approach inspires our very own Sophiya too: "Zeenat Aman's acting career took off after winning Miss Asia Pacific International 1970 at 19, making her the first Indian to claim the title. She initially secured the 'First Princess' title in Femina Miss India before triumphing in the Philippines. This victory launched her as Bollywood's leading lady, setting glamorous trends. Decades later, Dia Mirza replicated this success in 2000, winning Miss Asia Pacific International with elegance and charm. Notably, Dia defied convention by wearing a one-piece swimsuit, standing against objectification. I vow to reclaim the crown for India after a 24-year hiatus, reminiscent of 2000's triumphant haul of three international titles."

At the end of the interview, an adamant Sophiya desists, "Participating in pageants helps develop essential skills like communication, public speaking, confidence and poise, while also teaching valuable lessons in handling pressure, competition and criticism. As a titleholder, I'll serve as a role model, utilising my intelligence, knowledge and social skills to drive positive change. Pageants have evolved, prioritising cultural and social awareness, inclusivity and diversity, looking beyond physical beauty. Although physical appearance remains significant, the focus has shifted towards empowering individuals to make a meaningful impact. Inspired by Angelina Jolie and Princess Diana, my ultimate goal is to become a social activist, leaving a lasting legacy."



ACTRESS AND MODEL SOPHIYA SINGH IS GEARED UP TO REPRESENT INDIA AT THE PRESTIGIOUS MISS ASIA PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL 2024 PAGEANT. AS A TALENTED MULTI-HYPHENATE, SOPHIYA'S MODELING CAREER HAS CATAPULTEHER TO THIS MILESTONE. IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE PIONEER BEFORE HER DEPARTURE, SHE EXPRESSES HER ENTHUSIASM AND SHEDS LIGHT ON PRESSING ISSUES ON A GLOBAL SCALE

SHIKHA DUGGAL
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Nothing short of remarkable is Sophiya Singh's journey from winning back-to-back major beauty pageant crowns to her brilliant career today. Her success has been defined by her steadfast faith, hard work and dedication. She has also inspired countless others with her path. Sophiya discusses the great points and difficult moments that have moulded her incredible journey—from her time as a top model to her candidacy as Miss Asia Pacific International 2024—in this exclusive conversation. Come along as we take a closer look at the life of this versatile individual, examining the events that have influenced her career and the experiences that have made her who she is today.

Who knew that watching her on a contentious reality show would lead to an interview for the opportunity to represent India at Miss Asia Pacific International, just like Zeenat Aman and Dia Mirza? Before the competition, she shares, "As everyone knows, competing for Miss India is not an easy feat; thus, I come from a very long journey in the beauty pageant world! There's fierce rivalry. Undoubtedly one of the most challenging pageants in which I have ever competed. Without a doubt, my charm and self-assurance helped me to win. That's what made me want to represent my nation in the international pageants. Miss Asia Pacific International is a pageant that attracts girls from fifty different nations and let me explain to you that international delegates are also involved."

Oh, the woman is well-known for juggling

TRENDING

DWAYNE BRAVO

PERSON

Former West Indies captain and legendary all-rounder Dwayne Bravo, took to Instagram on Thursday to confirm his retirement from cricket.

BHAANG BLUNDER

VIDEO

Something rather shocking has recently taken place involving British internet personality and influencer Sam Pepper, who postponed his India tour after being hospitalised with severe digestive issues, allegedly from drinking bhang.

DEVARA PART 1

MOVIE

Jr NTR's fans vandalised Venkateswara theatre at Paloncha in the district on Friday over the delay in screening the first show of Devara movie.

MERE MEHBOOB

SONG

Internet feels sorry for Triptii Dimpri getting 'cringe' steps in Mere Mehboob! While the catchy tune and beats have had fans tapping their feet along, the choreography has evoked mixed reactions.

MELONI, MUSK'S PICTURE WENT VIRAL

PICTURE

Tesla CEO Elon Musk has reacted to dating rumours with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni after his fan club posted their picture from an event that sent the internet into an overdrive.

Fuel your fertility with preconception nutrition!

TEJAL SINHA
tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

Studies have indicated that preconception nutrition is linked to fertility health for both women and men. Moreover, some substances can impede fertility. Eating a diet that includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, and dairy products can help you meet your recommended intake of vitamins and minerals for optimal reproductive health. Preconception nutrition refers to the dietary and nutritional adjustments that women make before attempting to conceive, either naturally or through assisted reproductive technologies like IVF.

IMPORTANCE FOR WOMEN PLANNING IVF

Dr. Spoorthy Chennamaneni, IVF Specialist, Fert9 Fertility Center, Kukatpally, highlights that for women planning to undergo IVF treatments, preconception nutrition plays a significant role in multiple ways:

Hormonal balance: A well-balanced diet helps regulate hormones, which are critical for ovulation and maintaining a healthy endometrial lining for embryo implantation.

Egg quality: Adequate intake of nutrients such as folic acid, omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants, vitamins (like D, E, and B complex), and minerals (such as zinc and selenium) is known to improve egg quality, which is vital for successful fertilisation and embryo development in the female body.

Reducing inflammation: A nutrient-rich diet with anti-inflammatory properties can

improve the body's environment, reducing conditions that may affect fertility.

Enhancing uterine environment: Proper nutrition ensures the uterine lining is healthy and receptive, enhancing the likelihood of embryo implantation and increasing the chances of successful pregnancy.

BALANCED DIET FOR SUCCESS RATE OF IVF TREATMENTS

A balanced diet significantly influences the success rate of IVF treatments by supporting various aspects of reproductive health. "Firstly, it improves hormonal function by ensuring a stable supply of essential nutrients that help regulate hormones such as estrogen and progesterone, which are crucial for a successful IVF cycle. A good balanced diet also enhances egg and sperm quality; diets rich in antioxidants, healthy fats, lean proteins, and whole grains are linked to better egg quality in women and improved sperm health in men, both of which are directly correlated with higher IVF success rates," shares Dr. Spoorthy.

Maintaining a balanced diet also helps in preventing weight-related complications.

KEY NUTRIENTS IN PRECONCEPTION DIET

"A balanced preconception diet for women preparing for IVF should be rich in essential nutrients that support reproductive health and overall well-being of the women," explains Dr. Vaishali Chaudhary, Director-IVF & Fertility, Sahyadri Hospitals MomStory, adding the key nutrients to focus on include the following:

Folic acid (Vitamin B9): is crucial for preventing neural tube defects in the developing fetus. Women should aim for 400-800 mcg daily, ideally starting at least three months before conception.

Having a healthy diet before getting pregnant is a suggested factor that can be changed to reduce the risk of infertility. Nevertheless, there is no formal advice available for women during the preconception phase on which dietary strategies could enhance fertility. Worry not! *The Pioneer* brings you a detailed analysis as we connect with health experts

Iron: Anaemia is more common in women and it is vital to prevent it, which can affect energy levels and the health of the reproductive system also.

Calcium and vitamin D: essential for bone health and the proper functioning of the reproductive system. These nutrients support the healthy development of the fetus and help maintain maternal bone density during pregnancy.

Omega-3 fatty acids: important for regulating hormones, improving egg quality, and reducing inflammation in the body.

Zinc: plays a role in cell division, which is vital for embryonic development.

Antioxidants (Vitamins C, E, and Selenium): These protect the reproductive cells from oxidative stress, which can damage eggs and sperm.



Protein: Essential for cell growth and development, especially during the formation of the embryo.

SPECIFIC FOODS TO BE PRIORITISED:

Dr. Vaishali further explains, "Whole grains like brown rice, millets (such as ragi, bajra, and jowar), and whole wheat are excellent sources of fiber that help regulate blood sugar levels and maintain hormonal balance. Including seasonal and local fruits and vegetables like palak, methi, bhindi, lauki, amla, and guava ensures a wide range of essential vitamins, antioxidants, and fiber that support reproductive health. For lean proteins, incorporating dal, chana, rajma, paneer, and lean meats like chicken and low-mercury fish (such as rohu and pomfret) is beneficial. Healthy fats are crucial and can be sourced from ghee (in moderation), nuts (almonds, walnuts), seeds (flaxseeds, chia seeds), and oils

al sweets (mithai) and sugary sodas, should be minimized to prevent insulin resistance, which is linked to infertility and poor egg quality. By focusing on nutrient-rich foods and avoiding potential dietary pitfalls, women can better prepare their bodies for IVF success.

POOR DIETS IMPACT ON EGG QUALITY

Dr. Arati Adhe Rojekar, Consultant-Gynecology at P.D. Hinduja Hospital and MRC, highlights that it's not only your diet but whatever you consume, like fruits, vegetables, nuts, non-vegetarian food, or even addictions like tobacco, alcohol, anabolic steroids and recreational drugs. She further shares, "After consumption, it doesn't get completely absorbed by the body. The nutritive portion will get utilised while harmful products called oxidative radicals are managed by antioxidants. Still, some portion remains in our body as oxidating radicals and can be harmful for the DNA of our cells, particularly gametes like sperm and eggs. These oxidative radicals have a negative impact on the structure and motility of sperm and ultimately the fertilising potential of our gametes. Supplements such as zinc, selenium, Omega 3 fatty acids, vitamins A, C, and E, coenzyme Q10, and folic acids can counteract the free radicals, hence called the antioxidants and ultimately prevent sperm and egg damage and preserve its fertilising potential."

DIETICIAN/NUTRITIONIST IN PREPARING A NUTRITIONAL PLAN

The nutritionist should take down a complete history of the couple undergoing infertility treatment, or IVF. Their daily requirements, their daily-required allowances, consider their diet. Also note down addictions and then suggest the diet accordingly. If their diet is not sufficient, then medicinal nutrition supplements should be provided.

Smita Sabharwal, a senior IAS officer, who proudly calls herself a 'classic textbook bureaucrat', is known for her grounded and methodical approach to governance. In an interview with Naveena Ghanate of *The Pioneer*, Smita shares vignettes of her life's journey from childhood, being IAS topper, working in fields as well as family and children

Smita Sabharwal: The quintessential bureaucrat



CHILDHOOD AND EARLY MEMORIES

Being an Army brat, I grew up in a very secure environment of cantonment where we kids could play until late in the evening without a care in the world. Sundays were all about endless cycling and swimming. Academically, I did well, but I would not say I was overly studious. I excelled in school from an early age and topping my class wasn't something extraordinary at home. My father would never make a big deal over it. We lived in a typical Bengali household, filled with music, movies and rich cultural discussions. My father, in particular, had a love for classic Hollywood films—he wasn't too fond of Bollywood flicks. So, we grew up watching films like *Ben-Hur* and *The Ten Commandments* and classics rather than popular Hindi movies of the time. It was a very intellectually stimulating and holistic environment like most Bengali families. My mother is a strict disciplinarian and growing up under her watchful eye shaped much of who I am today. As a child, there were no shortcuts when it came to academics, thanks to her.

WANTED TO JOIN MILITARY

A lot of the raw guts comes from dad and mom. As the eldest daughter, I always carried a sense of responsibility. My sister is much younger than me, so I was the one who had to take charge of things. Even when it came to scheming pranks, I was the one in command (smiles). Growing up in an army household, I naturally admired my father's uniform and the discipline it represented. For years, I dreamt of joining the military myself as we were hardly into the civilian world. At that time, in the late 90s, there was a lot of talk about women entering the armed forces and the Short Service Commission had just opened up. Many young women from army families, like mine, were joining. It seemed like a natural path for me. But my father had a different perspective. One day, he sat me down and told me about the civil services. I didn't even know about it then. He explained, "In military, you'll retire by 27, but in the civil services, you can serve the nation for a much longer time and have a greater impact. You have the brain and the innovation to do something bigger." It was the first time I had even thought about a career in civil services.



TOPPER IN CIVIL SERVICES

The civil services exam was notorious even then for being one of the toughest exams in the country. Most people who cleared it were older, around 27 or 28. But I didn't let that intimidate me. I've always loved a challenge and this was no different. I was 21. Instead of heading to Delhi, which is where most people go for coaching, I stayed in Hyderabad and studied with whatever resources I could find. I cleared it on my second attempt and ranked 4 among the toppers. The media attention that followed was a bit overwhelming, but what truly mattered to me was cracking that exam. Even this, my father told me not to get it to my head and that kept me grounded through out my career. In my interview for IAS, I said 'no' to a few questions and didn't even take wild guesses. I was possibly one of those who got the highest marks in an interview that year. One of the biggest lessons I've learned in life is the importance of saying "no". I've always known when to step away and that clarity has guided me throughout my life. If I didn't make it in my second attempt, I wouldn't have pursued further and gone for MBA.

BALANCING WORK DURING PREGNANCY

A significant challenge I faced was managing my work during my pregnancies. Sometimes your worst experiences are from your own bosses! Mine was a very borderline case and I almost lost my first baby. It was so bad and because my husband is a doctor, he managed the situation at the last moment. I should have just said no to my bosses and relaxed. But I being me, I was like, I must do my best. I used to get up at seven in the morning, go on the field tours. And some days it was not my choice. I was instructed to do certain things. So, this is totally avoidable. In fact, it nearly resulted in premature labour due to the stress I was under. Looking back, I regret not taking the time to step back and relax when I should have. It was a tough lesson, but one I took to heart. By the time I was expecting my second child, I learned my lesson. I had a much more peaceful and comfortable pregnancy and I took the necessary time off. Coincidentally, my daughter and I share the same birthday—June 19—so I took leave on the day she was born and this time, I made sure to focus on my wellbeing.



FAILED TELUGU EXAMINATION

One of my biggest fears in my career was learning Telugu. During my stint as sub-collector Madanapalle, I failed twice and it became a headline that IAS topper failed in Telugu! It was frustrating because language is a critical aspect of administrative work, especially in connecting with the local population. After my failure, my father nudged me. The fear of not mastering Telugu started to overwhelm me. I even had a tutor who would come every evening to help me, but I was so anxious that I stopped absorbing what she was teaching. Eventually, she realised I needed practical exposure and pushed me to start speaking Telugu with local people. I learned the language by interacting with the community, slowly overcoming my fear. It took me two years.

MY FAVOURITE INITIATIVES

Of all the initiatives I've worked on, *Amma Lalana* remains closest to my heart. It focused on reducing unnecessary Caesarean deliveries in government hospitals. It initially appeared headed for failure, but it picked up pace. Childbirth became happy event as private hospitals were charging exorbitant fees for C-sections, draining families financially. Several people from Karimnagar would tell me how this initiative helped them. Another initiative I am particularly proud of is the *Nutrition Kit* scheme, *Breakfast Scheme* in Telangana. I've always believed that education and health go hand in hand and the scheme played a crucial role in improving both. I also take great pride in the *Mission Bhagiratha* water supply project I oversaw. While it was more of a supervisory role, the impact it had on people's lives was profound. Clean water at their doorstep improved sanitation, health and overall well-being. It wasn't just about drinking water; it was about improving people's everyday lives. During Covid, handwashing became convenient and a narrative on good sanitation and health. In some ways it was health infrastructure. SHE Teams and CCTV cameras in city, the idea for it came during a trip to Singapore, where I learned about their strict laws and enforcement measures to ensure public safety, especially for women. Singapore is known for its safety and I was intrigued by how they maintained such discipline. I realised that deterrence played a significant role and that was something we could apply back home.

EARLY CHALLENGES IN FIELD

The first 6-7 years of my career were spent learning the realities of fieldwork. It wasn't easy. I had to deal with land disputes, visit rural areas to listen to people's problems and settle conflicts. I remember a particular incident that left a lasting impression on me when I was sub-collector Madanapalle. One evening, after a long day, I was heading home when I saw an old woman waiting by the office gates. She looked desperate and was crying uncontrollably. She fell at my feet and begged me to sanction her old-age pension. She said her daughter-in-law would throw her out of the house if she didn't get the pension today. That moment changed me. It made me realise how vulnerable people are and how much they rely on even the smallest interventions from the government. Another heartbreaking experience was when a village fire broke out and several younger children died. When I went to meet a grieving mother, the first thing she said was, "How much compensation will the government give us?" She had just lost her child, but her mind was focused on survival and making sure the government didn't forget about her. It was a sobering reminder that for many people, survival is the first priority, even in the face of immense personal tragedy.

CARTOON CONTROVERSY AND SUPREME COURT CASE

In 2015, a magazine published a cartoon that was not only deeply offensive but also misrepresented my role as an IAS officer and involved the sitting Chief Minister. The caricature targeted me in a way that felt highly inappropriate and disrespectful, both as a woman and as a public servant. It wasn't just a personal attack—it was an attack on the dignity of all women in professional roles and I knew I had to take a stand. It was a reminder that women, no matter how senior or accomplished, are often judged harshly in ways that men aren't. I made a lot of noise as women had to be respected for the job. The Telangana government decided to file a defamation case, given that the cartoon also reflected poorly on the state's leadership at the time and also had an image of the Chief Minister. The then government's cabinet passed a resolution allowing Rs. 15 lakh to be provided to cover legal expenses in official capacity. This amount was deposited in court and I pursued the case as a matter of principle. The case eventually made its way to the Supreme Court, where the high court's earlier directive to return the legal fees was stayed. While there were reports that claimed the case didn't go in my favour, the Supreme Court intervened, recognising that the money wasn't given to me personally, but rather as part of the state's legal representation. The case has since been under the purview of the Supreme Court, which upheld the stay, and as of today, the matter remains unresolved but firmly in the courts' hands. As a matter of principle, didn't agree for an out-of-court settlement.

MY HUSBAND AKUN: IDEAL PARTNER

Akun, my husband, is an incredible person. There are times when I wonder if I truly deserve such a wonderful partner. He's always been extremely supportive of my career, though he does sometimes express concern over how seriously I take my work. Sometimes he jokes that I'm too immersed in my work and says "duniya yaad nahi rakhti hai, tum apna khoon maat jalaad". He has taught me an important life lesson: never get too comfortable. He's someone who thrives on pushing boundaries and I truly admire that about him. We decided early in our marriage that we would never interfere with each other's career paths. Both of us come from defense backgrounds—he's an Air Force brat and I'm an Army brat. Only in Vizag, we have been together. Right now, he's posted at the Northeast Frontier, ITBP, a role where he's defending the country's borders firsthand. I never interfere with his decisions and I support him fully because I know that's where his heart is. For us, it's always about the opportunities and what's best for both of us in our careers. We've always kept that understanding and it's what has made our relationship work so well over the years.



BENEVOLENT MOTHER

One of the toughest personal sacrifices I've had to make throughout my career is choosing between my work and my children. There were days when my kids were unwell and they needed me by their side. I was fortunate that my children grew up to be incredibly mature and understanding. They always knew that "Mama is busy," and they accepted it. But even as they grew up quickly, I've come to realise that some days it's just not worth prioritising work over their wellbeing, as it can lead to regrets later. At home, my husband Akun and I balance our parenting roles well. While he is the stricter parent, often playing the "bad cop," I'm more of the benevolent mother, the "good cop." My children know they can come to me for comfort and to share their thoughts. My own mother, who was quite strict, had a huge influence on me, and she has played an important role in my children's academic lives. They never take chances with her because when Nani gives them homework, they know it has to be done! I've always tried to be the parent they can talk to, cuddle up and come to when they need someone to listen. I'm proud to say that whenever something happens in their lives, I'm the first person they want to share it with. It's a bond I've worked hard to nurture and it means the world to me.



Honestly, I've never understood why certain people make casual comments about me or my work and the chopper rides. I don't take them too seriously because, at the end of the day, what truly matters is your body of work. Sometimes, I think people don't fully grasp the requirements of the job. For example, when you're overseeing projects in remote areas, like deep forests, road travel simply isn't feasible, so helicopter travel becomes necessary. It was the decision of the government of the day. Chopper rides are far from glamorous—they're risky and I often found myself wondering, "Why am I putting myself through this?" But the job demanded it and the government trusted me to get it done. I've travelled in all sorts of modes of transport, from hours in my car to helicopters, depending on the need. While certain aspects of my work might get attention, like the chopper rides, the countless hours spent on the road or in meetings are rarely discussed.



MY CHILDREN: NANAK AND BHUVI

My children, Nanak and Bhuvi, have been my greatest sources of joy and pride. Nanak, my eldest, is currently pursuing his studies in computer science in the United States. He's a calm, thoughtful and easy-going boy, very different from me in that sense. While I've always been goal-oriented and driven, Nanak is more relaxed and believes in living in the moment. His serene approach to life has taught me so much about slowing down and appreciating the little things. He's truly my soul child and I admire his ability to take life as it comes, without getting caught up in unnecessary pressures. Bhuvi, my younger daughter, is quite the opposite. She's fiercely ambitious and driven, much like me. Currently in her 12th grade, Bhuvi is a perfectionist who takes her studies and goals very seriously. She's highly focused, and sometimes I joke with her, trying to convince her to take a break from studying, but she's always determined to get things done. Both of them have such distinct personalities, yet they balance each other out perfectly. Neither wants to be an AIS officers.

MEMBER SECRETARY FINANCE COMMISSION IS AN HONOUR

When I received the posting to the Finance Commission, I knew it was going to be a big shift. This position is usually reserved for very senior officers, often retired chief secretaries. So, when I was chosen, I felt honoured that the government believed in my ability to take on such a responsibility. While I've always been involved in fieldwork, development projects and supervision, the finance domain is completely new to me. But I love challenges and I see this as an opportunity to expand my knowledge. I'm trying to sharpen my skills, especially when it comes to understanding and working with financial numbers. Even as my career progressed and I took on more senior administrative roles, my heart remained in the field. It's where I feel most effective and connected to the real purpose of public service—making a tangible difference in people's lives. My true passion in public service has always been being out in the field. There's something deeply fulfilling about being on the ground, interacting with people directly and witnessing the immediate impact of the policies and initiatives you're implementing. At this point of time, if you say do that you want to go as collector again, I'd say yes. I truly love that. Yeah.



RAPID FIRE

- Hobbies:** I am obsessive gardener
- Goal:** I want to retire knowing that I made a significant impact in public life.
- Tea or coffee:** Tea, definitely. Darjeeling
- Current book:** *The Idea of India*
- Favourite actor:** Shah Rukh Khan
- Favourite movie:** I have several, but *Andaaz Apna Apna* is one I can watch anytime.
- What are you watching:** I am into sports documentaries. Journey of athletes, fighting their odds and continuous perseverance even when there's nobody clapping and they make it inspires me
- Sports:** I used to be a 100m sprinter in my earlier days. I played badminton for state level.
- Something about you that people would be surprised to know:** I'm a very carefree, very fun person and I'm nothing like my bureaucratic image of a stiff role model.
- Are you going to Central Deputation:** NO
- Spiritual:** I am very spiritual and sometimes, I feel I am very detached to world
- Night owl or morning person:** Total night owl! I function best late at night.
- Favourite vacation spot:** Goa.
- Favourite colour:** I love all colours, but white and beige have a special place for me.
- Favourite singer:** Lata Mangeshkar is my all-time favourite. Her voice is like no other.
- Song I keep humming:** Lately, since my son is away from me, it's been *tujha jahaaj chahlega, mera saayaa saath hogaa*.
- Hidden talent:** I'm a trained classical singer. I learned Hindustani classical for 15 years.
- Fashion sense:** I am fashionista and I've always taken fashion seriously. In my initial career days, I used to dress up to look older, so people took me seriously. I feel best in a saree at work, but my personal style changes with the occasion.