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Modi projects India as land of opportunities



GAUTAMI KAPOOR
TALKS OF EMOTIONAL ROLES & HER JOURNEY IN GYAARAH GYAARAH



'It's not about fitting into the mother's character but Nivetha Thomas doing it well'

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The Congress ruled the state for the maximum number of years after Independence. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy should agree that Congress CMs and officials under them committed illegal acts and must recover money from them. But there is no action against those who grabbed lands. HYDRAA has been demolishing buildings on Saturdays and Sundays thinking that courts are closed on these days. The victims are the poor who had purchased lands.

- Eatala Rajender, the BJP's Malkajgiri MP

DON'T MISS...

CM to monitor situation until...

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu visited Ajitsingh Nagar and other areas affected by heavy rains over the past two days. Following a tour of the inundated regions in an NDRF boat, the Chief Minister addressed the media, expressing deep concern over the thousands of residents suffering as floodwaters have breached their homes. Naidu remarked that the entire area has been inundated by Budameru water, impacting thousands of people. He stated, "I have never witnessed such a situation in Vijayawada throughout my political career"...

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How space travel affects body...

Space travel can cause shifts in the gut that might suppress the immune system of astronauts and affect their metabolism, according to a study. The findings help understand how space missions of long durations could affect health of astronauts, researchers said. Using genetic technologies, a team of researchers, led by those at Canada's McGill University, analysed changes in the guts, colons and livers of mice onboard the International Space Station or the ISS over a period of three months...

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Majority of mobile users receive daily...

Vast majority of mobile subscribers who took part in a survey have said they receive pesky calls every day with most calls coming for financial services and real estate, online survey firm Localcircles said on Sunday. According to the survey, 95 per cent mobile subscribers confirmed receiving pesky calls every day with 77 per cent getting three or more such calls daily. Besides, vast majority confirmed receiving calls in the last 12 months despite being registered in the Trai's do not disturb (DND) list...

-PAGE: 8

Mandhana and five other Indian...

Six Indian cricketers, including vice-captain Smriti Mandhana, will be part of the upcoming Women's Big Bash League (WBBL), starting October 27, after being picked by different teams. While Mandhana was pre-signed by Adelaide Strikers, Dayalan Hemalatha will play the league for the first time after the top-order batter was drafted by the Perth Scorchers, where she will add firepower to their line-up. Wicketkeeper-batter Yastika Bhatia will also make her WBBL debut after being picked up by the Melbourne...

-SPORTS

Holiday for edu institutions today

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

As heavy rains continue to batter several districts of Andhra Pradesh, causing severe damage and flooding in various areas, the State government has announced that all educational institutions, both government and private, will remain closed on Monday, September 2. The State government stated this decision on Sunday.

Torrential rains have wreaked havoc in Vijayawada and Guntur, with coastal areas continuing to receive heavy rainfall on Sunday. The state has been experiencing persistent downpours due to a depression in the Bay of Bengal, which made landfall at Kalingapatnam early this morning.

Deluge pours woe on AP

In the past two days, Andhra Pradesh has been struck by severe rainfall triggered by a depression, resulting in widespread damage to crops and paralysing life in State. Heavy rains have caused massive flooding in several districts. Vijayawada city bore the brunt of the downpour with the Budameru drain breaching and wreaking havoc in the city. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, recognising the severity of the impact, inspected affected areas of the city in a boat.

The continuous downpour has resulted in swollen rivers and rivulets, which have breached, further worsening the flood situation. The National Highway between Vijayawada and Hyderabad remained cut off due to breaches to tanks. Krishna, Guntur and East Godavari districts have been the worst affected, with several villages reported to have been submerged. The State government has initiated rescue and relief operations, deploying teams to assist affected people and provide essential supplies for them.

Additionally, infrastructure has suffered, with a number of roads and bridges damaged. Authorities are working to assess the full extent of the damage and provide support to those in need. The situation remains critical as efforts continue to manage the floodwaters and mitigate the effects of the ongoing rains. Meantime, the NDRF and SDRF teams are engaged in rescue operations. Helicopters have been deployed to reach cut-off areas and provide necessary assistance.

CM assures all help to rain victims



● 1,11,259 hectares of Kharif crops and 7,360 hectares of horticulture crops damaged. ● 17,000 people from low-lying areas shifted to 107 relief camps

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has assured that the government will provide all possible assistance to those affected by the incessant rains over the past two days.

The CM said that the primary focus is on safeguarding lives amidst the crisis. He reviewed the impact of the weather conditions with the Home Minister, Chief Secretary, and senior officials at the AP Disaster

Management Authority office in Vijayawada on Sunday.

During the review, the Chief Secretary briefed the CM on the cyclone's impact and the recorded rainfall.

The CM enquired about the flood situation, particularly in the downstream areas of the Prakasam Barrage, and assessed the conditions in Budameru.

2

ASSESSMENT AND ACTION: Drones and CCTV to be used for real-time updates and damage assessment; reports on crop and property damage to be sent to the Union government.

RAINFALL: Statewide rainfall has exceeded normal levels by 28.5 cm, with varying impacts across districts.

SUPPORT MEASURES: Distribution of essential items like rice, redgram, sugar, and vegetables is underway.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT: The Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority reported high inflows and outflows at Srisaillam Dam, Nagarjuna Sagar Project, and Pulichintala Project.

PUBLIC ADVISORY: Residents in low-lying areas have been advised to avoid water bodies, move their fishing boats and cattle to safety, and stay alert.



Budameru breach drowns V'wada

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

For the first time in two decades, Vijayawada City has been submerged due to the Budameru flooding, following a breach in the drain at Pamula Kalva near Ambapuram in Vijayawada Rural mandal. This breach resulted in floodwaters inundating thousands of homes across the city, particularly in the Vijayawada West Assembly constituency.

The floodwaters exceeded the capacity of the Budameru Regulator at Velagaleru, causing the major drain to overflow, which subsequently submerged the entire city. Areas such as Old City, Wynchpet, Chittinagar, Bhavanipuram, Vidyadharapuram, Low Bridge, and the Chittinagar Tunnel were all heavily affected, with many homes completely inundated. As a result, vehicle movement between One-Town and Two-Town was brought to a standstill. Residents had to be evacuated to rehabilitation centres arranged by the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation. In addition, Payakapuram, Ajith Singh Nagar, Kandrika Colony, Devi Nagar, and Jakkampudi Colony were completely cut off from the rest of Vijayawada due to the inundation.

Continued on Page 2

2nd warning at Prakasam Barrage

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Prakasam Barrage in the city witnessed its second-highest floodwater discharge into the sea since October 5, 2009, with all 70 crest gates fully opened to 10 feet. During the 2009 floods in the Krishna River, around 11,10,404 cusecs of floodwater were discharged into the sea at 11 pm on October 5.

A decade and a half later, the Prakasam Barrage discharged 9,17,476 cusecs of floodwater downstream, with the barrage levee reaching a height of 19.7 feet. The floodwater inflow towards the barrage was 9,17,976 cusecs, of which 500 cusecs were released into canals, and 9,17,476 cusecs were discharged into the sea.

Continued on Page 2



Surplus - 9,94,476 cusecs
Canals - 500 cusecs
Total - 9,94,976 cusecs
Barrage Level - 20.7'
70 No's gates - Clear
Realised Inflow
9,94,976 cusecs



V'wada-Hyd highway cut off

VIJAYAWADA: Traffic between Vijayawada and Hyderabad has come to a standstill due to continuous heavy rains over the past two days. Flooding has occurred on the highways, with several streams and ponds breaching their banks and causing water to overflow onto the roads, leading to significant traffic disruptions. The persistent rainfall has severely impacted the region, submerging many villages, disrupting road transport, and flooding low-lying residential areas, resulting in considerable hardships for residents.

The heavy rainfall has severed road connections between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Chimiryala Lake, situated on the AP-Telangana border, is currently inundated near Ramapuram village. Additionally, rainwater has overflowed onto the Hyderabad-Vijayawada National Highway near Nallabandagudem village, causing a massive traffic jam near the interstate checkpoint. Floodwaters have also spilt onto the National Highway near Ithavaram village in the Nandigama mandal, halting transportation on the highway. Consequently, the RTC has suspended bus services between Vijayawada and Hyderabad temporarily. The disruption has left many people stranded, as railway services are also affected due to tracks being washed away near the Mahabubabad-Warangal railway station.

Cyclone makes landfall near Kalingapatnam

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

A well marked low-pressure area in the Bay of Bengal intensified into a deep depression on Sunday and made landfall near Kalingapatnam, impacting coastal regions of North Andhra Pradesh and South Odisha. The landfall occurred between 12:30 AM and 2:30 AM, bringing heavy rain and strong winds.

According to the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), the system is now moving northwest and is expected to continue its path across North Andhra Pradesh and nearby areas in the coming days. An IMD spokesperson said, "Residents of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, Alluri Sitharama Raju, and Anakapalli districts should be prepared for widespread rain, with isolated heavy to very heavy showers."

The cyclone's impact has been significant, with widespread rain expected across Coastal Andhra on Monday. IMD's Srinivasa Rao warned, "Given the severity of the situation, we have issued a red alert for Palnadu, NTR, Guntur, and Prakasam districts, and an orange alert for Eluru, Krishna, and Bapatla districts."

Red alert issued for Palnadu, NTR, Guntur, and Prakasam districts, and an orange alert for Eluru, Krishna, and Bapatla districts.

He stressed the need for caution due to the ongoing weather conditions. Local authorities have issued warnings about strong gusty winds and advised residents to avoid unnecessary travel. Fishermen have been cautioned against venturing out to sea due to rough conditions.

District Collectors in the affected areas have highlighted the importance of preparedness and activated emergency response teams to manage potential emergencies. "The safety of our citizens is our top priority," said Visakhapatnam District Collector MN Harendhira Prasad. "We are closely monitoring the situation and have taken all necessary precautions to ensure a timely response."

In light of the cyclone and forecasted heavy rain, Ronanki Kurmanath, Managing Director of the Disaster Management Agency, has urged residents to remain vigilant.

"Residents affected by the cyclone should stay alert during this period of unpredictable weather," he emphasised, highlighting the critical importance of preparedness and caution to manage potential flooding and other hazards.

The Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) has set up a control room at the City Operations Centre (COC) with the helpline number 180042500009 to address the impacts of the low-pressure system.

Continued on Page 2

Heavy rains disrupt normal life in Telangana

Heavy rains wreaked havoc across Telangana including the capital Hyderabad, claiming the lives of at least nine people and inundating many low-lying areas. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Ministers have taken immediate steps to reduce hardships to people.

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Heavy rains continued to lash many parts of Telangana, including Hyderabad. In its weather warning, the Met Centre here on Sunday said very heavy to extremely heavy rain is very likely to occur at isolated places in Adilabad, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Kamareddy, Mahabubnagar, Nagarkurnool, Wanaparthy, Narayanpet, Jogulamba Gadwal, Mahabubabad, Jangaon districts of Telangana from 8.30 am of Sunday till 8.30 am of September 2. It issued a red warning for this forecast.

Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy said that despite all precautions, nine people were

killed in rain related incidents across the state. However, he said that there is no need to panic and that the government would take all possible measures to help people.

Speaking to the media after a review with Collectors, SPs and Police Commissioners on Sunday at the Secretariat, Ponguleti turned emotional saying that the government tried to save a family in his constituency Palair who were stuck in the floods. However, the rescue teams could save only one member of the family of three and they are trying to save the other two. He said they tried to send helicopters to the spot, however, the weather did not allow it. He directed collectors and the



police to be on alert as the weather department said that rain would continue on Monday too. "We have been able to prevent loss of life and property. As per the Chief Minister's directions, the CS, the DGP and district administrations have taken steps to prevent loss of life and property. Flood

Suryapet, Bhadradi Kothagudem and Khammam districts the government has been able to rescue many villagers.

In view of the situation's seriousness, he said he had directed the Chief Secretary to cancel leaves for all staff. Collectors have been asked to declare holidays for educational institutions on Monday keeping in view of the possibility of heavy rains in the next 24 hours.

He said that due to rain water submerging the railway line between Mahbubabad and Dornakal trains have been stopped. Passengers on the train were provided food by the state government.

Monday Mirchi

CAPABILITY OVER 'COMMITMENT': TG CM'S MESSAGE TO BABUDUM

During the heyday of former PM Indira Gandhi, she had advocated the concept of 'committed bureaucracy' and questioned the relevance of certain basic assumptions underlying the Indian bureaucracy such as neutrality, impartiality, anonymity and the like.

WHO IS NEXT IN LINE FOR CHIEF SECRETARY POST?

In Telangana, although the current Chief Secretary is comfortably in place, there are whispers in the corridors of power as to who could be the next incumbent. The buzz is not just about names but also on factors like whether the next CS will be 'local' or 'non-local'.

all up in the air for now, though the speculations aren't going to die down anytime soon.

'CORRECTIONAL' RESHUFFLE IN MINING DEPARTMENT?

Administrative reshuffles are intended to mend matters, improve efficiency; or better yet, combine both. If the underlying purpose is not obvious, there could be more to it than meets the eye.

COMMITTING 'EXCESSES' IN UNIFORM

'Normally' khaki-clad police officials run into trouble if they commit excesses while dealing with delinquent aam aadmi. HYDRABAD Commissioner AV Ranganath may be making waves by razing structures raised illegally on buffer zones or full tank level of lakes across the twin cities.

--Yours truly

Jagan stresses unity and hope during Pulivendula visit

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP president and former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, on the second day of his visit to Pulivendula, interacted with party workers, leaders, and the public at the Bhaskarapuram camp office in Pulivendula.

13,227 people from 294 villages evacuated: HM

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Home Minister Vangalapati Anitha on Sunday said 13,227 people were evacuated from 294 villages in five districts due to torrential downpours in the past two days.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu reviewed the weather situation with senior officials and asked them to incorporate technologies such as drones to assess the deluge and accordingly plan the relief works.



over north Andhra Pradesh and south Odisha coasts, which has been causing heavy rainfall over the past two days, moved

northwestwards to cross the southern state's coast near Kalingapatnam in the wee hours of Sunday, said an / India Meteorological Department official.

Further, she highlighted that the command and control rooms and toll-free numbers were set up in all the districts, along with the appointment of nodal officers to monitor the situation.

places. As many as 17 NDRF and SDRF teams undertook rescue operations at 22 submerged places in seven districts," she said in an official release.

Citing preliminary estimates, Anitha said 62,644 hectares of paddy crops and 7,218 hectares of orchards were submerged.

Hidden cam scam fabricated by 'blue' media: Nara Lokesh

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

An investigation is currently underway concerning the issue of hidden cameras at SR Gudlavallu Engineering College. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu is personally monitoring the situation, regularly consulting with the district Superintendent of Police (SP) and Collector. The SP has designated CI Ramanamma as the lead investigator for this case.

On a separate note, Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh dismissed the claims about hidden cameras in the ladies' washrooms at SR Gudlavallu Engineering College.



To divert attention from these scandals, he claimed the YSRCP had orchestrated the hidden camera scandal. He questioned whether anyone had seen the camera or the alleged videos, which purportedly number over 2,000.

The minister alleged that the entire issue was fabricated by Blue Media to distract the public from various scams over the past five years. Speaking to the media after visiting rain-affected low-

lying areas in the Mangalagiri constituency on Sunday, the minister accused YSRCP leaders of being involved in multiple scams, including the Mumbai actress harassment, liquor scam, land grabbing scam, and sand scam.

He questioned whether anyone had seen the camera or the alleged videos, which purportedly number over 2,000. The minister added that he cares for students as he would his sisters, unlike YS Jagan, who he accused of sending his family away.

YSRCP slams TDP govt for negligence amid V'wada flooding

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP leaders Velampalli Srinivas, Malladi Vishnu, and Devineni Avinash criticised the TDP coalition government for its failure to manage the recent floods in Vijayawada.

Speaking to the media at the party central office here on Sunday, the three YSRCP leaders expressed deep concern over the severe flooding in the city, attributing it to the government's lack of preparedness and ineffective response measures.

They pointed out that despite early warnings from the meteorological department, no preventive actions were taken, resulting in widespread destruction and loss of life.

Velampalli Srinivas questioned the whereabouts of key government

officials, including the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, ministers, and MLAs, stating that they were preoccupied with personal leisure activities while the city suffered.

Malladi Vishnu highlighted the failure of the irrigation department and criticized the government's overall inaction, which left lakhs of Vijayawada residents waiting for help. Devineni Avinash noted that YSRCP leaders and workers had taken the lead in relief efforts, filling the gap left by the government.

The YSRCP leaders demanded immediate government action to provide relief and compensation to the affected residents, warning that their party would hold the government accountable if it failed to act.

2nd warning at...

Continued from Page 1

The Water Resources Department (WRD) issued a second flood warning at the Prakasam Barrage on Sunday, following the first warning on Saturday as floodwaters continued to rise.

Within nine hours of the first warning, the barrage experienced a significant flood, prompting the second warning. The administrations of NTR and Krishna districts remained on high alert as low-lying areas downstream of the barrage were inundated.

WRD officials anticipate that the flood inflows to the Prakasam Barrage will continue to rise, potentially crossing 10 lakh cusecs by midnight. The floodwaters are originating from Nagarjuna Sagar, Pulichintala, Munneru, Keesara, and other rivulets in Telangana.

All 70 gates of the barrage have been lifted to discharge the floodwater towards the Bay of Bengal. By 4:30 pm, the barrage had realised an inflow of 8,56,261 cusecs, with the same amount being discharged into the sea. An additional 500

cusecs were released into the canals. By 6 pm, the inflow had increased to 9,02,576 cusecs, with 9,02,076 cusecs discharged into the sea and 500 cusecs released into the canals.

At 7:30 am, the barrage was discharging 5,82,110 cusecs of water, with the first flood warning still in effect. As the flood increased, the second warning was issued and remains in force.

Managing Director of the Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA), Ronanki Kurmanath, reported that the inflow at Srisailem Dam was 3,60,030 cusecs, with an outflow of 4,86,715 cusecs. The inflow at Nagarjuna Sagar Project was 4,93,782 cusecs, with an outflow of 5,75,903 cusecs.

The inflow at Pulichintala Project was 6,20,900 cusecs, with an outflow of 6,75,230 cusecs. By noon, the inflow and outflow at the Prakasam Barrage were 7,69,443 cusecs.

Kurmanath urged residents in low-lying areas to avoid water bodies, and fishing, and to remain alert. He advised people to move their fishing boats and cattle to safety and to avoid crossing any water bodies.

Cyclone...

Continued from Page 1

GVMC Commissioner P Sampath Kumar instructed officials to take all necessary precautions to prevent loss of property and lives.

"It is crucial to alert residents in hilly areas, regularly clear debris from geddads and culverts, and ensure that all manholes are properly closed," Kumar said.

Authorities continue to monitor the situation closely and have deployed emergency teams to assist with evacuations and relief efforts.

Residents are advised to follow official instructions and take all necessary precautions to ensure their safety during this adverse weather period.

Govt machinery 'mute spectator'

Rahul slams govt for continuous attacks on Muslims

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday accused the BJP government of being a "mute spectator" in the face of "continuous attacks" on minorities, especially Muslims, and demanded the strictest action against "anarchist elements" behind such incidents.

His comments come in the wake of two incidents of mob violence in BJP-ruled Haryana and Maharashtra. On August 27, a Muslim migrant from West Bengal was beaten to death allegedly by cow vigilantes in Haryana's Charkhi Dadri over suspicions that he had eaten beef. Another person was injured in the attack.

In Maharashtra, an elderly man was abused and beaten up in a train on the suspicion of carrying beef. He was travelling to Kalyan.



Sharing screenshots of the two incidents, videos of which have been going the rounds on social media, Gandhi said those who have climbed the ladder of power by using hatred as a political weapon are continuously establishing the rule of fear in the country.

"The hateful elements hiding in the form of the mob are openly spreading violence, challenging the rule of law. These miscreants have got a free hand from the BJP government, that is why they have developed the courage to do so," the former Congress chief said in a post in Hindi on X.

140 trains cancelled, 97 diverted by SCR

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

South Central Railway (SCR) officials have cancelled approximately 140 trains and diverted 97 others on Sunday due to persistent rains affecting both Telugu states over the past two days. The heavy rains have led to significant disruptions, with passengers experiencing considerable difficulties.

The inundation of tracks between Kesamudram and Intekanne, Tadla Pasapalli and Mahabubabad, and at Rayanapadu railway station has led to the cancellation and diversion of train services. In response, SCR has

mobilised its resources to address the situation promptly.

Emergency Control Rooms have been established at Secunderabad, Guntur, and Vijayawada, staffed around the clock by a team of senior officers. Officials from the Vijayawada Division are closely monitoring the situation at Rayanapadu, where the heavy rains have severely disrupted train services.

Help Lines have been set up at major stations, including Hyderabad, Secunderabad, Kazipet, Warangal, Khammam, Vijayawada, Rajahmundry, Guntur, Narasaraopet, Nalgonda, Miryalguda, Nandyal, Donakonda, and Nadikudi in the Secunderabad,

Vijayawada, and Guntur divisions to provide updates on the current status of train services. These numbers have been widely publicised through the media.

In Vijayawada, the railway staff have arranged a total of 84 buses from Rayanapadu and Kondapalli to assist long-distance passengers. According to a release from the Vijayawada DRM, 5,900 breakfasts and 6,050 litres of water were provided for passengers on three special trains (two heading to Chennai and one to Visakhapatnam) carrying a total of 4,100 passengers.

At Rayanapadu, tractors and JCBs were deployed to assist with the deboarding of passengers due to the heavy inflow of water. Srinivasa Rao Konda, ADRM Operations, and Vavilapalli Rambabu, Sr DCM, oversaw the rescue and restoration operations.

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Deluge pours woe...

Continued from Page 1

He urged officials to use the recent rains as a learning opportunity and to assist every victim affected by the downpour. Given that reservoirs are nearly full due to the widespread rainfall, authorities have been directed to implement immediate measures to manage water flow into streams and ponds, and to maintain a state of readiness until normalcy returns.

The CM instructed that real-time updates be provided through drones and CCTV cameras. He also requested a comprehensive report on crop damage as soon as floodwaters recede, in addition to property damage details, so that these can be forwarded to the central government. Drones will be used to assess crop damage to ensure fair compensation for farmers. Reports indicate that 1,11,259 hectares of crops and 7,360 hectares of horticulture crops have been damaged.

The government has provided shelter to 17,000 people across 107 relief camps. Statewide, rainfall has exceeded normal levels by 28.5 cm. Three districts recorded rainfall exceeding 60 per cent above normal, while 19 districts experienced 20-50 per cent above normal rainfall, and four districts saw average rainfall.

In response to the crisis, authorities are distributing rice, red gram, sugar, and vegetables to those affected. The CM reiterated that the government will support all sections of the community impacted by the heavy rains and urged continued relief efforts. He appealed to the public to actively participate in the relief measures.

Budameru breach...

Continued from Page 1

The Vijayawada-Nuzvid R & B Road was closed to traffic as floodwaters from the Budameru Drain covered the road and extended to the Nunna-Gunadala Road.

Heavy rains over the past two days in the NTR and Krishna districts caused the Budameru Drain to overflow, engulfing New Rajarajeshwari Pet, Rajiv Nagar, Ajith Singh Nagar, Prakash Nagar, Pipula Road, Devi Nagar, Kandrika Colony, Rayanapadu, and other areas in the Vijayawada Central, West, and Mylavaram Assembly constituencies, which were completely submerged by Sunday morning.

The sudden overflow of the Budameru Drain left thousands of homes flooded. Rescue operations were swiftly carried out by the Police, Municipal Corporation, and Revenue authorities, with stranded residents being evacuated from the ground and first floors of their homes to relief centres.

Locals have criticised the authorities

for failing to issue flood alerts or warnings about the possibility of the Budameru Drain overflowing. A resident of Jakkampudi Colony reported that floodwaters began entering homes at around 8 am on Sunday, quickly submerging them in waist-deep water, with the water level continuing to rise. Another resident, K. Narasimha Rao of Payakapuram, noted that this is the first time in 20 years that their homes have been flooded by the Budameru. The last such event occurred in 2005, when parts of Vijayawada were similarly submerged.

The Railway Under Bridge (RuB) at the Ajith Singh Nagar flyover and the Rythu Bazaar were also completely submerged by the floodwaters. In response to the heavy inflows into the Budameru Drain, authorities released 30,000 cusecs of floodwater downstream by lifting 11 head regulator gates at Velaguru in G. Konduru Mandal. Floodwaters overflowed onto the railway tracks at Rayanapadu station, prompting authorities to halt train services.

TODAY ALMANAC Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha Tithi: Amavasya: Sep 02 05:22 AM to Sep 03 07:25 AM Nakshatram: Magha: Sep 01 09:48 PM to Sep 03 12:20 AM Purva Phalguni: Sep 03 12:20 AM to Sep 04 03:10 AM Rahukalam: 7:38 AM to 9:10 AM Yamagandam: 10:43 AM to 12:15 PM Varjyam: 09:17 AM to 11:04 AM Gulika: 1:48 PM to 3:20 PM Amritakalam: 09:41 PM to 11:27 PM Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:51 AM to 12:40 PM VIJAYAWADA WEATHER Forecast: Cloudy Temp: 30° Humidity: 78% Sunrise: 5:54 AM Sunset: 6:20 PM Updated: September 1, 2024 5:00 PM

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CM to monitor situation until normalcy returns

Helpline to be set up; food & water supply via boats

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu visited Ajitsingh Nagar and other areas affected by heavy rains over the past two days. Following a tour of the inundated regions in an NDRF boat, the Chief Minister addressed the media, expressing deep concern over the thousands of residents suffering as floodwaters have breached their homes.

Naidu remarked that the entire area has been inundated by Budameru water, impacting thousands of people. He stated, "I have never witnessed such a situation in Vijayawada throughout my political career." He assured the public that he would take up residence in the affected area and monitor the situation regularly until normalcy is restored.

The Chief Minister attributed the breach of Budameru to the previous YSRCP government's negligence and inadequate maintenance of bunds.

Chandrababu pledged that boats would be deployed to distribute food and water to those in need, noting that approximately 25,000 individuals have been affected by the flooding. He advised that elderly, ill, and young children could use the boats for transport. He also urged residents of apartment buildings to accommodate dis-



placed families on higher floors until conditions improve. The Chief Minister assured that NDRF teams will assist residents and that hourly monitoring will be conducted.



Mandatory helmet rule for pillion riders to be enforced

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In a bid to enhance road safety, the city police have implemented a strict rule requiring two-wheeler users including pillion riders to wear helmets starting from September 1. The new regulation, mandated by the Supreme Court, comes with severe consequences for non-compliance, including the seizure of the rider's driving licence. Speaking about the enforcement, City Police Commissioner

Dr. Shankhabrata Bagchi emphasised the critical need for this measure. "Visakhapatnam has witnessed a surge in road accidents involving two-wheelers, leading to tragic fatalities," he said. "While the rule for riders to wear helmets has been in place, we are increasingly seeing pillion riders suffering severe head injuries. This enforcement is not an option but a necessity." The city police have been actively raising public awareness about the impending rule, urging citizens to comply. "Beginning September 1, it is mandatory for both the riders and the pillion rider on any two-wheeler to wear ISI-certified helmets," Commissioner Shankhabrata Bagchi declared.

Minister revives Chinnasana lift scheme, criticises YSRCP govt

Project was launched in 2018 with an investment of Rs 25 crore to irrigate 2,200 acres

PNS ■ SRIKAKULAM

State Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu has officially announced the revival of the Chinnasana Lift Irrigation scheme in Kotabommali mandal. The project, originally launched in 2018 with an investment of Rs 25 crore to irrigate 2,200 acres, had fallen into disrepair following the change in government.

Addressing a gathering at the re-launch event, Atchannaidu strongly criticised the previous YSRCP Congress Party government for failing to maintain this crucial agricultural scheme. "The neglect of the Chinnasana uplift scheme is just one example of the apathy shown by the previous government towards the agricultural sector," he remarked. "This is a farmers' government, and we will not allow any neglect of their needs. We are committed to reviving and sustaining these crucial initiatives."

The Chinnasana scheme, which had been abandoned, suffered from thefts of motors and transformers, rendering it inoperative. The revival comes as part of a broader initiative by the newly formed coalition government, which has allocated Rs 80 lakh to restore various uplift schemes across

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the district. Atchannaidu emphasised the government's commitment to ensuring the effective operation of these schemes moving forward. "The revival of this scheme is a testament to our dedication to the agricultural community. We are taking every step necessary to make sure farmers receive the support they deserve."

The Minister also announced forthcoming elections for irrigation associations linked to the lift schemes, underscoring the importance of democratic participation in managing

these resources. "We are considering the privatisation of these schemes to improve efficiency and service delivery. Farmers should not suffer due to administrative delays or neglect," he further stated. The event saw the presence of local leaders, activists, and key figures such as mandal leaders, Telugu youth, ITDP representatives, and former PACS president Kinjarapu Harivaraprasad. The participants voiced their support for the Minister's efforts, recognising the importance of these initiatives for the prosperity of the region's agricultural sector.

Ministers review flood impact in V'wada

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development, P. Narayana, along with the Minister for Mines & Geology and Excise, Kollu Ravindra, conducted a review meeting on Sunday to assess the impact of severe flooding caused by the Krishna and Budameru rivers, which has led to significant submergence in Vijayawada City. The ministers directed officials and local representatives to take urgent action to mitigate the flood's effects, ensure continuous monitoring, and relocate residents to safer areas.

Dr. G. Srijana, the NTR District Collector, presented a detailed report on the district administration's relief efforts. She outlined the actions taken to rescue individuals, manage the flood situation, and establish rehabilitation centres for displaced residents. Dr. Srijana stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among



Ministers Narayana and Ravindra at a review meeting with NTR District Collector Srijana, MP Chinni, MLAs Bonda Umamaheswara Rao and Gadde Rammohan Rao at the collectorate in Vijayawada on Sunday.

various government departments and emergency services to effectively address the crisis.

Dr. Srijana noted that this level of flooding had not been seen in Vijayawada City for two decades. She reassured the ministers that all necessary relief measures were being implemented and that the dis-

trict administration was actively managing the situation on the ground, with officials deployed across the city. Health camps have also been organised at the rehabilitation centres with the assistance of the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation.

The meeting was attended by key figures including

Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath alias Chinni, Vijayawada East MLA Gadde Rammohan Rao, Central MLA Bonda Umamaheswara Rao, Joint Collector Nidhi Meena, Municipal Commissioner H.M. Dhyanchandra, Assistant Collector Shubham Nokhwal, and other important officials.

Help flood victims: Naidu to TDP cadre

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, on Sunday, urged party activists across the State to extend every possible assistance to those affected by the floods. During a teleconference with party leaders and activists, the Chief Minister emphasised that preventive measures could mitigate the loss of lives despite the unexpected and widespread flooding.

The Chief Minister recalled that even when the TDP was in Opposition, the party provided whatever help it could, often using personal funds. He stressed that whenever the TDP is in power, all efforts are made to ensure that the public does not face any undue hardship.

Chandrababu Naidu called upon party activists to actively participate in the relief efforts, particularly those in the Krishna River basin, urging them to support the flood victims. "If government assistance is needed, inform the relevant authorities immediately," he advised.

The Chief Minister also instructed all MPs, Ministers, and MLAs to conduct ground visits, noting that their involvement in the relief operations would be reviewed. "The public will only hold a favourable opinion of us if we act effectively while in power. During the Hudhud cyclone in the Visakhapatnam area, we stayed there for an entire week to restore normalcy, which led to four TDP candidates being elected in the 2019 polls, and recently, they won with a significant majority," he added.

Chandrababu Naidu asked party activists to remain on the ground for three days, starting Sunday and fondly recalled that on this very day 30 years ago, he took the oath as Chief Minister. Reflecting on his three decades in politics, he acknowledged both the positive and negative experiences. The Chief Minister also expressed satisfaction that, despite the heavy rainfall, 93 per cent of pensions were successfully distributed.

Hill gangs, drone surveys to ensure safety of KK line

Handling rockfalls, landslides, and other monsoon-related hazards

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In a move to bolster railway safety and efficiency during the monsoon season, the Waltair Division has introduced a series of advanced measures to manage the treacherous terrain of the KK line in the Ananthagiri Hills. Speaking to *The Pioneer*, Divisional Railway Manager Saurabh Prasad stated, "The KK line is a critical artery for iron ore transportation, and its safety and efficiency are paramount." He added, "The measures we have implemented are designed to minimise disruptions and ensure swift restoration of operations in any emergency situation."

To navigate the challenging terrain effectively, the division has established specialised hill gangs equipped with advanced tools and techniques. These gangs are trained to handle various challenges, including rockfalls, landslides, and other monsoon-related hazards. "The hill gangs are our first line of defense in ensuring the safety and integrity of the KK line," said Prasad. "They are equipped with the latest tools and techniques to respond to emergencies quickly and efficiently."

To identify potential hazards and plan maintenance strategies, the division is conducting drone surveys of the KK line. Drones provide a bird's-eye view of the terrain, allowing officials to identify vulnerable areas and take proactive measures to mitigate risks. "Drone surveys are a valuable tool for identifying potential hazards and planning maintenance works," said Prasad. "They allow us to assess the situation quickly and efficiently, and take appropriate action to prevent disruptions."

To prepare its workforce for the demanding conditions, the division has sent over 50 staff



members for specialised training at the National Institute of Mountaineering. These trained personnel will be crucial in handling emergencies and maintaining the line's integrity. "The training provided to our staff members will equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to respond to emergencies effectively," said Prasad. "They will be able to work safely and efficiently in challenging conditions."

To address potential disruptions, a new track material relief train has been deployed at Srungavarapukota station. This train, along with the existing one at Araku, is equipped to swiftly clear boulder obstructions and restore services. "The track material relief trains are a vital component of our emergency response plan," said Prasad.

To enhance safety within tunnels, emergency communication sockets and retro-reflective indicator boards have been installed. "These measures will help to ensure the safety of trackmen working in tunnels," said Prasad. "They will be able to communicate with each other and be easily seen in low-light conditions."

Power supply restoration underway: Vijayanand

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Special Chief Secretary of the Energy Department, K Vijayanand, has announced that the damaged power supply system in Andhra Pradesh is being restored on a war footing following heavy rains across the state over the past two days. On Sunday morning, he inspected the Dr Narla Tata Rao Thermal Power Station in Ibrahimpatnam, as well as the control room, electricity substation, and SALDC set up in APCPDCL, to review the power supply and restoration efforts.

Acting on the directions of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar, Vijayanand has been conducting



regular reviews with AP Genco MD KVN Chakradhar Babu, AP Transco Joint Managing Director Keerthi Cherukuri, and other officials. He noted that both the Chief Minister and the Energy Minister are closely monitoring the electricity supply situation and the ongoing restoration efforts across the state.

During his visit, Vijayanand instructed the Department's offi-

cial to take all necessary measures to ensure an uninterrupted power supply. He informed the public that they can report any power-related issues by calling the electricity department's toll-free number, 1912, for assistance. He also commended the staff working tirelessly, day and night, in challenging conditions to restore power. Constant vigilance is being maintained from the control room to address any problems reported by the public.

Vijayanand reported that the electricity department has suffered a loss of Rs 101.838 lakhs due to the heavy rains, including Rs 16.85 lakhs to APEPDCL and Rs 84.998 lakhs to APCPDCL, with damages particularly noted in Vijayawada, Krishna, and Guntur areas.

ENFORCEMENT OF SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Industrial accidents in Vizag expose laxity

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

A series of fatal accidents in Visakhapatnam district has brought the inadequate enforcement of safety protocols in local industries under intense scrutiny. The recent tragedy at Essentia Pharma Company, which claimed 17 lives, has highlighted the critical risks faced by workers in the region's pharmaceutical sector.

In response to the growing concerns, district authorities have mandated internal audits in all industries and halted production until safety issues are addressed. However, the implementation of these measures has been slow, and subsequent accidents have further exposed the dire state of safety in the district. "It's deeply concerning that vigilance isn't heightened after

such close calls," remarked an industry insider. The lack of adequate training and awareness among workers has also contributed to the recent tragedies. Many workers are not informed about the hazardous chemicals they handle or emergency response procedures. This was evident in an incident at Shrawan Shipping Godown where five workers fell ill after inhaling chemical fumes. "Basic safety precautions, such as the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), are being neglected," said a safety expert familiar with the region's industrial practices. "It's shocking

that such fundamental measures aren't consistently enforced. PPE isn't optional—it's a lifeline."

Despite the clear dangers, it has come to light that, even after a week, the internal audits ordered by the collectors have not yet commenced. An official from the industries department admitted, "We plan to start the audits on the 3rd of September. Committees are being formed, and we're establishing the inspection protocols." Given the district's high density of industrial activity, there is an urgent need for a more proactive approach to safety. "These audits cannot be mere formalities," warned an industry consultant. "We need real, actionable outcomes to prevent further tragedies. The lives of workers are at stake."

Drain out water from flooded fields: Agri Director

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In light of the recent receding rains and the passing cyclone, State Director of Agriculture S. Dilli Rao held a teleconference on Sunday with agricultural officers from all districts and heads of departments. The discussion centred on immediate measures to protect crops and reassure farmers.

The Director specifically addressed officials from the NTR, Krishna, Guntur, Bapatla, Palnadu, and Eluru districts, where floods have heavily impacted crops. He instructed the officials to swiftly identify farmers whose fields have suffered damage and to pinpoint areas where waterlogging persists. Coordination with local district administrations was emphasised to ensure the rapid drainage of water from affected



fields. As rainwater continues to flow from the Telangana region into low-lying areas of the state, rivers like Munneru, Kattaleru, and Budameru in NTR district have overflowed, submerging fields. The authorities were urged to remain vigilant.

Officials were also instructed to inform farmers, through various media channels, about scientific methods to protect crops such as paddy, cotton, maize, and red gram.

Minister Nimmala visits submerged paddy fields

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

Minister for Water Resources Development Nimmala Ramanaidu visited some of the flood-affected agriculture fields at Penumadam village in Poduru mandal on Sunday.

He saw the submerged paddy crop and interacted with the farmers who explained to the Minister the loss which they incurred. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Ramanaidu said that unprecedented rains devastated some districts and some districts are still facing rain threats under the influence of depression.

The Chief Minister reviewed the situation from time to time and directed the officials concerned to take all steps to ensure there would be no loss of life or property due to floodwater. The Chief Minister is getting information from all over the state about the havoc being wracked by the incessant rains.

The official machinery has been directed to put the people living in low-lying areas on



high alert. He ordered the engineers of various projects to inspect the crest gates and how they were functioning.

The Minister told the officials to set up relief camps for the rain-affected people and keep ready rice, gas and essential commodities to supply them. He also orders them to take steps to supply drinking

water in the rain-affected localities.

Voicing concern about the embankments of the river Godavari, the Minister instructed the officials to keep ready sandbags to plug breaches if takes place. He underlined the need to shift pregnant women from the submerged villages to the hospitals.

The government machinery should be well prepared to face any eventuality in the coming 48 hours, Minister Ramanaidu told them. The Minister appealed to people not to come out of their houses unless urgent work normally prevailed. Along with officials, the TDP, BJP and JSP leaders accompanied him.

Rains wreak havoc in Guntur, Palnadu

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Unprecedented heavy rainfall has caused a deluge, wreaking havoc across the combined districts of Guntur, Krishna, and the Nuzvid constituency in Eluru district.

All irrigation tanks, canals, and nalas are brimming, with several roads, including national highways, submerged under three feet of water in the two districts. Numerous irrigation tanks and canals have developed breaches at various locations, leading to extensive flooding of paddy fields. A large number of people have been relocated to relief camps from the low-lying areas in these districts.

Official sources report that Guntur, Palnadu, NTR, and Krishna districts have been the most affected. Officials suspended vehicular traffic on the Vijayawada-Hyderabad National Highway at Itaram village, as over two feet of water was flowing across the road, leaving hundreds of passengers stranded mid-journey. The New Delhi-Chennai Tamil Nadu Express was detained at Rayanapadu due to the tracks being submerged in rainwater.

Although there was no heavy rain on Sunday, the unprecedented rainfall that occurred on Friday night and Saturday wreaked havoc in the two dis-



tricts. Officials are making all efforts on a war footing to restore vehicular traffic on the highway and relocate people from low-lying areas," said the officials.

The NTR and Krishna districts are now facing a flood threat following heavy rains in Telangana, officials have warned. Residents have been advised to remain indoors unless absolutely necessary. The Munneru rivulet is in spate following heavy rains in the catchment areas of Khamman district in Telangana.

In the Eluru district, hundreds of vehicles were stranded on either side of the road at the Kalaparru toll plaza, as the highway was submerged in floodwa-

ter. The Peddacheruvu at Nuzvid developed a breach, causing water to gush onto the national highway. Authorities suspended vehicular traffic between Eluru and Hanuman Junction, and vehicles travelling from Visakhapatnam were halted on the outskirts of Eluru.

Efforts are being made to drain rainwater from the highway, with road dividers demolished in some places to allow water to flow into the fields, clearing the traffic.

In Nuzvid, several residential colonies were marooned after the Peddacheruvu breached. Officials used a JCB to relocate some residents to safety, with SP

Shiva Kishore overseeing the operation. The situation was exacerbated as the Tammileru River also swelled due to heavy rains in the catchment areas.

The villages of Appanaveedu and Tallamudi in Peddapadu mandal were surrounded by floodwater, prompting NDRF personnel to spring into action, relocating residents to relief centres under the supervision of MLA Chintamaneni Prabhakar. A breach in the road leading to Chekkapalli village in Mudinepalli mandal resulted in thousands of acres of paddy crop being inundated. However, no rain-related casualties were reported on Sunday.

Three boys drowned in water sump



PNS ■ ONGOLE

In a tragic incident, three boys drowned in a water sump at Kothapalli village in Peddaravudi mandal in Prakasam district on Sunday. Police said that the deceased boys Kottapalli Shiva (11), Araviti Yedukondalu (9) and Kottapalli Manu (9) entered the water sump for play.

As the six-foot-deep water sump is brimful of water, the

boys slipped into it and drowned. The deceased Shiva was studying sixth class at a private institution, Yedukondalu and Mani was studying fourth class at mandal parish school.

The bodies were retrieved from the sump and sent to the GGH for postmortem. Sub-collector and the police officials saw the water sump. A pall of gloom descended on Kottapalli village with the death of three boys.

Officials asked to shift people from low-lying areas to relief centres

PNS ■ ELURU

District Collector K Vetri Selvi directed the officials to shift people living in low-lying areas to the relief camps.

The Collector visited some of the rain-affected areas including Velammampet, petrol bunk area, Tiuruvur road and lorry union locality in Nuzvid constituency, accompanied by Joint Collector P Dhatri Reddy and SP K P Shiva Kishore on Sunday.

The Collector inspected the flood relief centre set up at Girls High School. She inquired with the victims about the accommodation and food facilities arranged for them.

Collector Vetri Selvi directed the Municipal Commissioner to undertake special sanitation programs in Nuzvid town and at the rehabilitation centers. The Collector told the officials that those who are living in dilap-



idated houses should be identified and shifted to the relief centres as a precautionary measure.

The Collector, SP and JC inspected the houses at Velampet where they found some houses in a dilapidated

state. Collector Vetri Selvi noticed an elderly woman Sarojani living in a dilapidated house and directed the authorities to shift her to a relief camp immediately.

Joint Collector Dhatri Reddy directed the officials to

the college for the details of damaged houses due to rain and submitted the details to her. Nuzvid RDO Y Bhavani Shankari horticulture DD Rammohan and other officials were among those who accompanied the Collector.



Strengthen tank embankments: Min

PNS ■ ELURU

Minister for Housing and Information & Public Relations, K Parthasarathy, has directed irrigation officials to take immediate steps to reinforce the embankments of irrigation tanks and canals.

On Sunday, the Minister toured the rain-affected areas in the Nuzvid constituency, including Gandhi Nagar, NRT Colony, Appa Rao Pet, Battulavari, and Yalamandala. He visited the marooned colonies and interacted with the affected residents, instructing officials to relocate those impacted by the rains to relief camps.

Minister Parthasarathy assured the victims of all necessary support and advised them to remain in the relief camps

until the rains subside. He further directed officials to ensure the provision of food, water, and other essential facilities for the rain-affected people at the relief camps.

The Minister highlighted the importance of desilting canals and modernising irrigation tanks to prevent future devastation. He also emphasised the need to remove encroachments from canals and irrigation tanks.

Later, the Minister inspected a relief centre established at the ZP High School, where he spoke with the displaced residents. He also visited 70 junior college students who had been relocated to a social welfare hostel, checking on their well-being. Minister Parthasarathy distributed clothes and cash to the students, sponsored by Helping Hands, a voluntary organisation.

TG govt enacting dramas in the name of HYDRAA: Eatala

Accuses govt of destroying livelihoods of poor

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Warning Chief Minister Revanth Reddy that he will not remain silent if the houses of the poor are demolished, the BJP's Malkajgiri MP, Eatala Rajender, said that the CM has been enacting dramas in the name of HYDRAA. He said the government should punish those responsible for the illegal buildings and recover money from them.

Speaking to the media on Sunday at the BJP office, Eatala described the CM as a true heir of the Congress which killed people who protested the demolition of their houses at Delhi's Turkman Gate in 1976.

He said that HYDRAA is issuing notices to people who had constructed houses with government permission and also had patta issued by the government.

He said that 200 people constructed houses after purchasing land in a layout in Alwal in 1968 and the government put up fences on 17 acres saying that



the area was lake area. However, now HYDRAA has issued notices to 200 people saying that the lake area is 48 acres giving jitters to residents. Besides Alwal Cheruvu, there is Hasmathpet Lake and 200 poor people have been living there from 1982 paying taxes. HYDRAA issued notices to 160 people in Peerzadiguda and to 310 people in Rajiv Gandhi Nagar, Sardar Nagar and Gayatri Nagar in Allapur Division, Rajender said and ridiculed the CM for issuing notices to a burial ground, temple and community hall.

"HYDRAA has been demolishing houses on Saturday and

Sunday thinking that courts are closed on these days. The victims are the poor," he said.

He also criticised the report that the government had recovered illegal assets worth Rs 75 crore at Gaganpahad.

Corporator Thokala Srinivas Reddy's father purchased it in 1978 and it was registered in 1980 and a factory was being run there. They never received any notice from the government saying that the land was in a buffer zone. However, the government demolished it on Saturday. They destroyed it even though the owners requested time to shift the costly machinery, he said.

Air India Express launches V'wada-B'luru daily flights



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Air India Express commenced daily direct flights on the Vijayawada-Bengaluru route on Sunday. The airline deployed a new 176-seater Boeing 737-8 aircraft, featuring tail art inspired by the traditional Kalamkari style, for this maiden flight, connecting the capital city of Andhra Pradesh with the capital city of Karnataka. Additionally, on Sunday, Air India Express launched daily direct flights between Hyderabad and Guwahati.

On the launch of the new daily direct service from Vijayawada, Union Minister of Civil Aviation Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu stated, "The Government remains steadfast in its commitment to enhancing regional connectivity and making air travel more convenient and accessible.

Direct flights like these not only simplify travel for professionals, students, and tourists but also contribute to the economic growth of Vijayawada and adjoining regions. I congratulate Air India Express on its continuous efforts to improve connectivity from tier 2 and tier 3 cities."

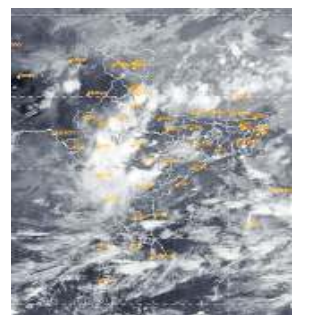
Commenting on the introduction of the new route, Aloke Singh, Managing Director of Air India Express, said, "At Air India Express, we are thrilled to contribute to the rising success of Vijayawada Airport. We now connect the city to two key domestic destinations — Bengaluru and Hyderabad — as well as one international destination, Sharjah. As we continue our rapid expansion, we remain committed to fostering meaningful connections for India's tier 2 cities, which are the powerhouses of New India."

Depression over AP moves west-northwest

PNS ■ GUNTUR

A depression that formed on Saturday over southern Odisha and adjoining areas of northern Andhra Pradesh and southern Chhattisgarh has been moving west-northwest at a speed of 20 km/h over the past six hours.

As of 0830 hours today, the depression was centred over southern Odisha, northern Andhra Pradesh, and southern Chhattisgarh. It was approximately 60 km southeast of Jagdalpur (Chhattisgarh), 70 km northeast of Malkangiri (Odisha), 150 km northwest of Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), 190 km west-northwest of Kalingapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), and 310 km east of Ramagundam (Telangana), according to the Meteorological Centre. The Met department's daily weather report indicated that the depression is expected to continue moving west-northwest across southern Odisha, southern Chhattisgarh, and



Vidarbha. It is forecasted to weaken into a well-marked low-pressure area within the next 24 hours.

The southwest monsoon has been vigorous over Coastal Andhra Pradesh and active over Rayalaseema. Under its influence, heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely at isolated places in south coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema in the next 24 hours. Heavy rainfall is also expected at isolated locations in north coastal Andhra Pradesh during the same period.

15 YSRCP corporators join TDP in Eluru

PNS ■ ELURU

The Opposition YSRCP has suffered another blow in the Eluru district as 15 municipal corporators and Co-opted members quit the YSRCP and joined the TDP.

The 15 municipal corporators and Co-opted members joined the TDP here on Sunday in the presence of TDP MLA



Badeti Radhakrishnaiah (Chanti). It may be mentioned here that Mayor Sk. Noorjahan and his husband co-opted member SMR Pedababu quit the YSRCP and joined the TDP a few days ago.

The total strength of Eluru municipal corporation is 50 of which the YSRCP has 47 corporators and the TDP has three members.

YSRCP condemns attack on Perni Nani in Gudivada

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) has strongly condemned the attack on former Minister Perni Nani and former MLA Kaile Anil Kumar in Gudivada today, while they were visiting the home of a party leader.

Speaking to the media in Guntur, Ambati Rambabu

expressed deep concern over the deteriorating law and order situation in the state, highlighting that despite the incident occurring hours ago, the police have yet to take any action. He criticised the behaviour of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and Jana Sena Party workers, who attacked and pelted stones at the former minister and former MLA. Rambabu also ques-

tioned the police's inaction, noting that former Minister Botsa Satyanarayana had to intervene by contacting the SP, yet no immediate measures were taken. He expressed serious concerns about the misuse of power, referencing the arrest and subsequent release of Inturi Ravi Kiran, who was detained for a social media post made before the elections.

ACROSS THE STATES



Maharashtra records 9.5 cr voters in final electoral rolls

With more than 16 lakh new voters registering in the electoral rolls, Maharashtra now has around 9.5 crore voters eligible to exercise their franchise in the upcoming state assembly elections, according to the Election Commission of India (ECI). The ECI published the final electoral rolls on August 30. The state has 9,53,74,302 voters, including 4,93,33,996 men, 4,60,34,362 women and 5,944 transgender voters, according to the electoral rolls. As per the data shared by the ECI, 16,98,368 new voters were registered in the electoral rolls. As many as 18.67 lakh voters are in the age group of 18 to 19 years, 1.81 crore in the age group of 20-29 years, and 25.4 lakh are 80 years and above. The 80-plus age group has seen a dip of 45,208 voters in the revised list, it was stated. There are also 21,558 divyang voters in the state. As per the ECI data, Nandurbar, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Bhandara, and Gondia districts have more women voters than men.



Man 'possessed by evil spirit' kills infant son in Rajasthan

A 38-year-old man who claimed to be 'possessed' by an evil spirit allegedly killed his infant son in Rajasthan's Bundi district on Sunday, police said. The alleged incident occurred in the Dollar village around 5 am. Ten-month-old Ansh was asleep with his mother Gayatri when the accused Jitendra Bairwa alias Jittu allegedly picked him up and slammed him to the ground. Kapren SHO Kamal Singh said. The police said the family took Ansh to a local hospital where doctors declared him dead. A case of murder has been registered against the accused under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the SHO said. The body has been handed over to the family members after post-mortem, he added. Bairwa, a native of Badunda village, had been living at his in-laws' with his wife and son for around a year. He was visiting an exorcist for "treatment" to get relief from an "evil spirit", Singh said.



Rajasthan: Five trainee SIs arrested for role in paper leak

Five trainee sub-inspectors, including two women, who had been detained earlier for questioning, were arrested on Sunday by the Special Operations Group (SOG) for their alleged involvement in a paper leak incident of the sub-inspector recruitment exam, officials said. All five accused were produced before a court from where they were sent for police remand till September 7, they said. According to an official statement, among the arrested trainees include Shobha Raika and her brother Devesh Raika. Both are children of former Rajasthan Public Service Commission member, Ramuram Raika. Other three trainees include Manju Devi, Avinash Palsania and Vijendra Kumar, the statement read. All five trainees were taken into custody from Rajasthan Police Academy (RPA) and brought to the SOG office for interrogation on Saturday.

SHIVAJI STATUE COLLAPSE

MVA holds protest; Modi's apology smacks of arrogance: Uddhav

The opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi on Sunday took out a march in Mumbai to protest the collapse of Shivaji Maharaj's statue and rejected Prime Minister Narendra Modi's apology over the incident, stepping up the political confrontation with the ruling Mahayuti ahead of the assembly polls. Claiming that the statue incident was being "politicised" by the Opposition, the ruling BJP also demonstrated in various parts of the state. The 'jode maro andolan' (hitting with slippers) protest reflected the unity among the Maha Vikas Aghadi partners-

Shiv Sena (UBT), NCP (SP), and Congress, pitted against the ruling trioka of Shiv Sena, BJP, and NCP. Sharad Pawar, Uddhav Thackeray, and state Congress chief Nana Patole laid wreaths at a memorial dedicated to the martyrs of the joint Maharashtra agitation in south Mumbai, before leading the march from Hutatma Chowk to the Gateway of India. They slammed the Union and state governments over the statue crash, with Thackeray dismissing Modi's apology as one "smacking of arrogance". Pawar alleged the statue episode was an example of corruption.

Modi projects India as land of opportunities

Promises reforms, stable policy regime



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Projecting India as the land of biggest opportunities globally, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday promised the business sector facilitation, reforms, a stable policy regime and high growth. Addressing the ET World Leaders Forum, Modi, in turn, asked investors to commit to innovation, performance, positive disruption and high-quality products, as he stressed that the country respects wealth creators. With the opposition often taking

aim at his government over its reduced majority, the prime minister asserted that his dispensation has begun its third term with more determined intentions and is full of hope and confidence, citing a host of decisions it has taken for the welfare of various sections of society and boosting infrastructure. While people in most countries that went to polls this year voted for a change, Indians preferred continuity, political stability and economic growth, Modi said, asserting that a new neo-middle class is driving the country's progress and setting the

direction for its market. India is writing a unique success story, and the impact of its reforms is visible in the economy's performance, he said. In this dynamic world, he said, his government's policies and strategy are dynamic as well. It takes necessary steps as per the needs, setting its policies not based on the past but on the evolving future. "Our focus is on the future. We want to prepare the country for the challenges and opportunities that await us," he said, underlining his government's initiatives in the fields of green hydrogen, semiconductors, deep ocean and space.

WAYANAD LANDSLIDES

Rahul calls for concerted efforts to revitalise tourism

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Sunday said it is imperative to make a concerted effort to revitalise tourism in Wayanad and encourage people to visit the area by dispelling the notion that it is "dangerous" place in the aftermath of the recent landslides. Gandhi made the assertion during a virtual meeting with some Kerala Congress leaders and Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.



In a post on X along with a video clip of the online meeting on relief and rehabilitation efforts in Wayanad, Gandhi said Wayanad is steadily recovering from the devastation caused by the tragic landslides. "While there is still much to be done, it is heartening to witness people from all communities and organisations coming together in relief efforts," he said. "There is one crucial aspect I wish to highlight that will greatly aid the people of Wayanad - tourism. Once the rains cease, it is imperative that we make a concerted

effort to revitalise tourism in the area and encourage people to visit," the former Congress chief said. It is important to note that the landslide was localised to a specific area in Wayanad, not the entire region, he said. Wayanad remains a stunning destination and will soon be ready to welcome tourists from across India and the world with all its natural charm, Gandhi said. "As we have done in the past, let us come together once again to support our brothers and sisters in beautiful Wayanad," he said. During the meeting, Gandhi said that for promoting tourism it is important to dispel the notion that it is not a safe place as it can damage the brand of Wayanad if people think that it is a "dangerous place". "There are four-five things we need to put pressure on - inter-departmental coordination on relief and rehabilitation, inadequate compensation, rent issue that I have raised, many people have lost livelihood, and finally the impact on tourism," he said.



No idea about Hema committee; related demands: Rajinikanth

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Superstar Rajinikanth on Sunday said he was not aware of the Justice K Hema Committee and demands to set up a similar panel in Tamil Nadu.

When reporters asked him about the panel of the neighbouring state and several people demanding setting up in Tamil Nadu a panel like the Kerala's Justice Hema Committee, he told reporters: "What? I am not aware of it, sorry." The Justice Hema committee was constituted by the Kerala government after the 2017 actress assault case, and its report disclosed instances of harassment and exploitation of women in the Malayalam cinema industry



'Kavach will be implemented in mission mode in country'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Modern technology like Kavach that was developed in the country will now be implemented in a mission mode, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has said. The minister stated this in his welcome address before the flagging-off of three Vande Bharat trains by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday. Vaishnaw that India has elected the leadership of PM Modi for the third time that is decisive, visionary and forward-looking and its impact is visible in every aspect of life including in Railways. "It always lacked technology and investment and nothing changed for decades," Vaishnaw said alleging that a technical organisation like the Railways was politicised. "PM Narendra Modi brought exten-

sive changes to it. Investment in Railways was ten times enhanced. He encouraged us to adopt new technologies. And above all he changed our mindset," Vaishnaw said. The minister referred to various initiatives like the electrification of tracks, the introduction of Vande Bharat trains, the trial of Vande Metro and the deployment of the Kavach anti-collision system. He said 1326 railway stations are being redeveloped in the country which is the biggest redevelopment project in the world. "Modern technology like Kavach was developed in the country and now it will be implemented in a mission mode in the country," he said. According to the government, the Kavach Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system is a highly technology-intensive system, which requires safety certification of the highest order.

Will dialogue with Pakistan end terrorism in valley? BJP asks NC

PNS ■ JAMMU

Slamming National Conference for advocating dialogue with Pakistan, Jammu and Kashmir BJP president Ravinder Raina on Sunday asked it to clarify whether initiating dialogue with the neighbouring country will end terrorism and bloodshed in the Union Territory. He also played down the protests and resignations by his party leaders and workers over the selection of candidates, saying he is confident the BJP will form the government on its own. The assembly election in Jammu and Kashmir is scheduled to take place on September 18, 25, and October 1. Votes will be counted on October 8. "Unfortunately, the NC leaders do not talk about the welfare of the people, the Pakistani gun which brought death and destruction to our land. By advocating for dialogue with Pakistan, they are not doing the right thing," Raina said. He said starting a dialogue with Pakistan is the prerogative only of the

central government and the foreign minister. "NC leaders should know that our former PM A B Vajpayee went to Pakistan in a bus to extend the hand of friendship but Pakistan backstabbed India by starting Kargil war. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also went to Lahore on his return from Afghanistan but the terror attacks and killing of innocents continued," he said. Asked about resentment within the party over ticket distribution, he said BJP is like a family and works together like a team. "When you have 15 lakh registered members in J&K, political activists have their own aspirations but only one name is finalised for each segment. "We are all together because our party believes in nation first, party second and self last," he said. He said Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah have turned around the fate of Jammu and Kashmir with restoration of peace, prosperity, and development.

MEDIC'S RAPE-MURDER

Rallies, demonstrations continue in Kolkata

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Film director Aparna Sen and numerous other prominent personalities from the Bengali film industry on Sunday joined thousands of people in a massive rally demanding justice for a trainee doctor who was raped-murdered at RG Kar hospital here last month. In addition to the 'Mahamichhil', two other rallies took place elsewhere in the city. While one was organised by the alumni of Ramakrishna Mission-run educational institutions, another involved students and past pupils from a

well-known convent school, both echoing the demand for justice for the medic. At the mega rally that kicked-off at College Square, Sen, accompanied by fellow artistes such as Swastika Mukherjee, Sudipta Chakraborty, Chaiti Ghosal, Sohini Sarkar, and others, marched along Central Avenue demanding justice for the post-graduate trainee doctor. Asked by reporters, the eminent actor-turned-director said, "We are walking on the road together, demanding justice. If needed, I will hit the road again." "Common people have the

right to demand answers and know the truth. The deep-rooted anguish comes from the bottom of our hearts. But we have faith in the judiciary, and we are hopeful about the investigation," she added. Swastika Mukherjee voiced her concern, saying, "So many days have passed since the Aug 9 incident. After one arrest, we have not heard any further updates from the investigating agency. The initial attempt by the hospital administration to dismiss the death as a suicide and the arrest of only 1 person have compelled the people of this state to come out of their homes."

Only 6.7% court infrastructure at district level female-friendly: CJ

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Sunday said the fact that only 6.7 per cent court infrastructure at the district level is female-friendly needs to be changed. Speaking at the 'National Conference of the District Judiciary', Chandrachud said it should be ensured that courts provide safe and accommodating environment for all members of the society.

"We must without any question, change the fact that only



6.7 per cent of our court infrastructure at the district level is

female-friendly. Is this acceptable today in a nation where at the basic level of recruitment in some states over 60 or 70 per cent of the recruits are women? Our focus areas are on increasing accessibility measures which can be understood by carrying out infrastructural audits. "Opening in-court medical facilities, crèches and technological projects like e-seva Kendras and video conferencing devices. These endeavours aim to increase access to justice.

How space travel affects body systems, study examines

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Space travel can cause shifts in the gut that might suppress the immune system of astronauts and affect their metabolism, according to a study. The findings help understand how space missions of long durations could affect health of astronauts, researchers said. Using genetic technologies, a team of researchers, led by those at Canada's McGill University, analysed changes in the guts, colons and livers of mice onboard the International Space Station or the ISS over a period of three months. An international collaboration of NASA and other space agen-



cies, the ISS is a spacecraft in the Earth's orbit. It is a unique science lab and serves as a "home" where crews of astronauts' live, according to the NASA. The authors found signifi-

cant shifts in gut bacteria that indicated changes in the mice's liver and intestinal genes, suggesting that spaceflight might suppress the immune system and alter metabolism. "These interactions suggest disruption of the signals, metabolites, and immune factors exchanged across the gut-liver axis which are likely to drive glucose and lipid (fat) dysregulation," the authors wrote in the study published in the journal npj Biofilms and Microbiomes. "Collectively, these multiomic findings suggest host-gut microbiome interactions during spaceflight are likely to underlie widespread changes to host physiology which could pose a risk to health," they wrote.

Sunita Kejriwal, seeks votes for AAP to build 'new Haryana'

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita Kejriwal on Sunday accused the BJP government in Haryana of doing nothing in 10 years and urged the people to vote for AAP to build a new Haryana. Assembly polls in Haryana will take place on October 5 and the results declared on October 8.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

On a sound footing

PM Modi emphasises India's 90% economic growth in the past decade, outpacing the global average of 35%

India's resilience shines through in its remarkable economic growth, a testament to its enduring strength in the face of global challenges. It was recently reiterated in a recent statement by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He highlighted the impressive growth of the Indian economy, stating that while the global economy expanded by 35% over the past decade, India's economy surged by 90%. This bold claim not only underscores India's economic resilience and rapid development but also invites a closer examination of the factors driving this growth and what it means for the future. PM Modi's claim reflects a period of substantial economic transformation in India, marked by key reforms, increased foreign investment, and a burgeoning middle class. India has implemented significant structural reforms in the past decade, including the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), and digital financial inclusion initiatives. These reforms have streamlined business processes, improved tax compliance, and enhanced the overall ease of doing business in India, making the economy more attractive to investors. India's young and growing population has been a crucial driver of its economic expansion. This demographic advantage, has fuelled domestic demand and boosted economic growth.



The digital revolution in India has transformed various sectors, including finance, retail, and services. The rise of digital payments, e-commerce, and fintech has created new economic opportunities and driven growth in the formal economy. Juxtaposed to it the global economy's 35% growth over the same period reflects a more subdued pace, influenced by various challenges, including geopolitical tensions, trade wars, and the impact of the pandemic. The disparity between India's growth and the global average highlights the country's relative resilience and potential as an emerging economic powerhouse. However, it's important to note that global economic growth has been uneven, with advanced economies experiencing slower growth rates, while emerging markets, including India, have driven much of the expansion. Despite the optimistic growth figures, India faces several challenges that could impact its future economic trajectory. High unemployment rates, income inequality, and a struggling agricultural sector remain pressing issues. Additionally, the global economic environment is becoming increasingly uncertain, with rising protectionism and geopolitical instability posing risks to sustained growth. The Indian government will need to continue implementing reforms and addressing structural challenges to maintain its growth momentum. Ensuring inclusive growth, enhancing job creation, and investing in infrastructure and education will be critical to sustaining long-term economic development. India's impressive growth over the past decade suggests a bright future, but the path forward is not without obstacles which must be addressed in the right earnest.

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PICTALK



People walk down a road during rain, in Shimla.

The decline of Parliamentary decorum



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

Recent debates in the Lok Sabha, marked by factual blunders and misguided accusations, underscore the pressing need for well-prepared and knowledgeable representatives

The saying parliament is the temple of democracy has become a cliché phrase. Still, it is heard across the world where democracy is in vogue. In India, even the Communists, Dravidians and even Maoists use this term despite their nationalist views. The functioning of a nation's parliament symbolizes its civility. No doubt, the names of Benjamin Disraeli, who served twice as Prime Minister of Britain and William Gladstone, who had a 12-year term as Prime Minister (spread over four non-consecutive terms) are two names students of political science would never forget.

Disraeli was premier during 1868 and 1874-1880 and served as leader of the opposition. Gladstone was his contemporary and both were known for their tongue-in-the-cheek retorts. Though the verbal duels at times crossed all levels of parliamentary decorum, both the parties they headed (Conservatives and Labor Party) never had any issues with their style of exchange of words. "If Gladstone fell into the Thames, that would be a misfortune. But if anyone pulled him out, that I suppose would be a calamity," Disraeli reportedly told the Parliament once.

Similarly, Gladstone was named as GOM (Grand Old Man) of British politics and Disraeli said that GOM stood for God's Only Mistake. India, described as the world's biggest democracy has its colourful past. The likes of Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Mahavir Tyagi and Pilloo Modi are some of the names that come to mind while thinking of the Indian parliament. The debates and discussions featuring them remain eternal classics in the annals of the country's parliamentary democracy. Those were the days when Television and live telecasting of proceedings of the House were unheard of. Not any more. The proceedings of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha are being aired live by the LSTV and RSTV.

After watching the Lok Sabha debate on the motion of thanks to the President's address to the joint session of the Houses, what



struck my mind was the scarcity of good leaders or speakers in the Opposition benches. K C Venugopal, as of date, the strongest leader in the Congress after the Gandhi clan, made a "bloomer" when he charged that the last ten years of Modi rule saw 2.5 lakh persons getting killed in train accidents across the country. Though Jagadambika Pal, a Congress turncoat occupying the chair asked him to check the facts, the Kerala Chanakya (as KC is addressed by his followers) stood his ground and reiterated that more than 2.5 lakh had perished in train mishaps during the last ten years. A senior railway official had a hearty laugh when asked about the charge made by the Congress leader.

Many members of the Lok Sabha are not competent to occupy the treasury or opposition benches. Thol Thirumavalavan, of the VCK, a Dalit outfit, blamed the Center for the recent hooch tragedy in Tamil Nadu's Kallakurichi which claimed 63 innocent lives.

Had Thirumavalavan spent at least 15 minutes of his time reading the Constitution of India presented to him by Rahul Gandhi, he would not have made this blunder. The



THERE ARE THREE KINDS OF PEOPLE IN THE WORLD, ACCORDING TO SHIV KHERA, A MANAGEMENT GURU— THOSE WHO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN, THOSE WHO WATCH THINGS HAPPEN AND THOSE WHO WONDER WHAT HAPPENED

manufacture, distribution and sale of liquor is the exclusive prerogative of the State governments under the seventh schedule of the Constitution. When one comes to the House to deliver an important speech like thanking the president for the address to the joint session of both Houses, one has to do some homework.

Gumma Tanuja Rani, a tribal leader representing Araku constituency in Andhra Pradesh was a major relief. She spoke from the bottom of her heart about the inadequacies in the education system for tribals in her constituency. The absence of good teachers costs the tribal students quality education. India, which has dozens of communication satellites of its own could dedicate one or two transponders for educating the tribal teachers making use of the quality teachers available in the country.

The words of representatives like Tanuja Rani should not be confined in the records of the House. The ministers of science and technology and human resources development should sit with the ISRO chairman and work out an action program to launch tribal schools through our satellites. Amrinder Singh Raja Warring, a Congress MP from Punjab,

spoke about the eternal pain of farmers in his State as well as the rest of the country.

This is proof of how our ministers in charge of agriculture failed to resolve the hardship faced by the farming community.

Wherever one goes in India, the farmers wail over their difficulties in getting water for irrigation, bank loans and of course the lack of marketing facilities.

A research scholar may be able to get a PhD for his thesis on how the politicians succeed in keeping the farmers in perpetual poverty and how they are forced to resort to extreme steps. Period.

Discussing an inconsequential comment made by the Leader of the Opposition about Sanatan Dharma is a waste of time. The ruling party should understand that he has to make some statements to stay relevant. There are three kinds of people in the world, according to Shiv Khera, a management guru. Those who make things happen, those who watch things happen and those who wonder what happened. Our LOP does not belong to the first two categories!

(The writer is special correspondent with The Pioneer; views are personal)

Paswan family power struggle may split the LJP

The recent meetings of the BJP leader with former LJP MPs Pashupati Paras and Prince Paswan, have intensified tensions within the Paswan family and the LJP

The recent meeting between former LJP MPs Pashupati Paras and Prince Paswan with Amit Shah has significantly elevated Chirag Paswan's political profile. Despite this boost, Chirag Paswan's statements during the last parliamentary session have left many observers puzzled, as he voiced positions that often contradicted those of the BJP. Issues such as the creamy layer in reservations, lateral appointments, and the Waqf Board Amendment Act 2024 saw Chirag taking stances that directly opposed the BJP's views.



Mukesh Roshan has alleged that the BJP is targeting LJP R MPs. Furthermore, three MPs from Chirag Paswan's party are reportedly in communication with senior BJP leaders.

However, the emergence of the Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party (RLP) poses a threat to the NDA, particularly as it fields candidates against NDA allies like Chirag Paswan's party.

This increases the likelihood of vote splitting, whether it results in a reduction or redistribution of votes. Within the RJD, Ram Vilas Paswan's son-in-law, Anil Kumar Sadhu, has been vocally critical of Chirag Paswan. Should Pashupati Paras align with the India Alliance, internal conflicts could escalate, with figures like Sunny Paswan from Congress already preparing to oppose Chirag. Former Samastipur MP Prince Paswan could also emerge as a significant political challenger to Chirag Paswan. Despite these tensions, Pashupati Paras has publicly expressed a willingness to mend relations with his nephew, stating that familial bonds could overcome political differences. In media statements, he emphasized that "blood is blood," indicating his desire to reconcile with Chirag Paswan. Pashupati has communicated his intentions to the NDA

leadership, aiming to thaw the strained relationship. Nevertheless, Chirag Paswan has accused Pashupati Paras of previously undermining the LJP by breaking away MPs and seizing party offices established by their father, Ram Vilas Paswan, thereby betraying the family. Despite these accusations, Pashupati Paras now appears to be seeking reconciliation. This scenario may reflect the BJP's damage control efforts or a strategic policy shift aimed at balancing the factions within the LJP. The BJP aims to prevent the LJP from splitting into the Rashtriya Lok Janshakti and LJP (R) factions. During the Lok Sabha elections, Pashupati Paras was a target of BJP's strategies. The Paras faction suffered losses during the Lok Sabha elections, losing both MPs and Union Minister positions. When they sought a seat allocation for Sunil Pandey in a by-election, the BJP appropriated their candidate. LJP remains caught in a predicament of political uncertainty.

(The writer is a senior journalist; views are personal)



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

THE ROT RUNS DEEP

Madam — It was Prajwal Revanna (EX PM Deve Gowda's grand son) a few months back in the news for exploiting women in his home town in Karnataka for satisfying his sexual needs and it is now the Senior artistes and technicians of Malayalam Film industry exploiting the weaker sex. Several such news involving netas from other parts of India are frequent. When such leaders take law in their hands and involve in crimes the law administration agencies are also silenced by the power acquired through position, money and family influence.

The victims are forced into silence to protect themselves. In rare cases the matter reaches the court also despite all their influence very rarely the perpetrator gets conviction as the witnesses as required by the law turn hostile for fear of their lives. As the saying reads "Yatha raja thatha praja" (Artha sastra-267) (Subjects follow their King) individuals consider women as soft targets and involves in acts of crime and in cases only where the victim acts boldly and complains the perpetrator gets the punishment and in rest of the cases victims remain so. It is incumbent upon on the leaders of the political party or the head of the institution to ensure strict moral conduct is maintained by their members. The wrong doers must be kicked out immediately and ostracized. Other considerations should not blunt their decision in matters such as these.

Gopalswamy J | Chennai

IMPORTANCE OF BALANCED DIET

Madam — A healthy mind cannot exist without a healthy body, and the reverse, too, holds true. People from different walks of life are oblivious to the thin line of differentiation between overeating and healthy eating. Intake of essential nutrients in adequate proportion is an art. Everyone should know that both undernutrition and overnutrition can be an individual's death knell. Fruits, veg-

The golden girl



The game of shooting had been a piece of cake for the Indian Continent no matter the game is Olympics or Paralympics. Just a few days back, star Indian shooters Manu Bhaker and Sarvijot Singh managed to lift medals in the Olympic event, and now it's just the beginning

of Paralympics that Avani Lekhara clinched the gold medal alongwith Mona Agarwal in the 10 m air rifle. This victory of Paralympics players in the initial events, is a clear indication of the fact that our para players are equally eager to made podium finish done once again this time at Paris. Avani's gold is a cherished moment for all the Indian back home.

She improved her own records, become first Indian women to win two Paralympics gold in the 10 m category and initiate the medal tally at Paris for India. Nation wishes her and all the players, heartfelt congratulations on their hard efforts and success.

We hope that more and more medals and more podium finishes will be ensured this time. With Indian flag and India's national anthem keep on mesmerising maximum time in the podium zone of Paris Paralympics 2024.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

etables, grains, meat, fish and skimmed milk are invariable components of a healthy food intake for supply of energy, protein, vitamin and minerals among others. Right from childhood, the significance of balanced nutrition has been unequivocally underscored by doctors and nutritionists.

Plenty of crippling diseases and lifestyle disorders may be prevented by a balanced, nutritious diet. Smart eating from the start can act as immunity booster. It is more important to know what not to eat than what to eat. It is said that junk food can satisfy for an hour but good food can do so for life. However, poor economic status can turn all nutrition plans topsy turvy. The governments should encompass all sections to foster a healthy society. The "National Nutrition Week" is observed annually from September 1 to 7 since 1982.

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

THE COLLAPSE OF SHIVAJI'S STATUE

Madam — The apology expressed by the PM Narendra Modi over the collapse

of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue in Maharashtra suggests the lapses by the authorities in ensuring the quality of the construction. The 35-foot statue, unveiled with fanfare by Modi himself less than a year ago, lies in ruins, a victim of rusted nuts and bolts. This monumental blunder is not merely a case of shoddy workmanship; it is emblematic of the rot that has set in at the core of the government's projects.

The contractor, conveniently linked to those in power, stands accused of collusion, fraud and endangering public safety, while the government scrambles to shift the blame onto anything but its own negligence. The steel used in the statue had already begun to rust; yet, despite repeated warnings, no action was taken. The bigger issue beneath the surface lies a pattern of cutting corners, favouritism and a blatant disregard for quality and accountability.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN CULTIVATING INNER STRENGTH

It often begins with cultivating a calm, unclouded mind



RAVI VALLURI

Aeons ago a neophyte Zen student was an apprentice at a temple of knowledge. Regrettably, his mind was not robust enough and kept vacillating; so much so his mind and soul were not satisfied with "mere" breathing practices and meditation techniques imparted at the monastery. Petals of knowledge revealed. In a state of haughtiness, the Zen student arrived at another temple of knowledge where he remarked, rather dramatically that, "The human mind, Sakya Muni Buddha and other sentient beings, in reality do not exist." The pontiff of the monastery was silently listening to the outburst but uttered nothing for a while.

And then abruptly and quite unexpectedly he whacked the tutee with his prized bamboo pipe which angered the student. The Zen Master compassionately inquired of the tutee that if nothing existed, from where did his bout of anger and arrogance emerge? The mentee was momentarily nonplussed and then fell at the feet of the Zen Master, begging for forgiveness.

A hollow and empty mind

The percipient Master agreed to admit the whippersnapper but with a few stipulations. It was incumbent upon the greenhorn to remember the cardinal principle of trying to keep the mind hollow and empty. Lord Krishna's flute There is an interesting parable about Lord Krishna and his flute. It is believed that he used to visit a garden and whisper, "I love you" to all the flora and fauna. In unison, the flora and fauna reciprocated their unalloyed and unadulterated affection



towards Lord Krishna. It so transpired that one day, an animated Lord Krishna approached a bamboo tree in the garden. The Lord broke the cataclysmic news that he would have to snuff out the life of the bamboo plant. The entire garden was aghast as the news spread; several plants and trees were however secretly joyous that they were spared of the torture. The bamboo mulled upon the news for a while and then languidly responded, "Lord, you and I have no choice.

At the altar of the Master of the Universe, I am willing to sacrifice my life." Hearing this, Lord Krishna beamed. With surgical precision, he struck the bamboo plant. Soon the bamboo was fashioned into a flute for Lord Krishna himself. The flora and fauna, all the gopis and gopikas were now covetous of the bamboo, that in its new avatar it would always be inseparable, constantly in the hands of Lord Krishna.

The exultant bamboo flute was to become a triumphant possession of Lord Krishna. "What was so noteworthy about you, that you were the chosen one?" was an incessant refrain faced by the flute. "Nothing but my singular capitulation to will of the Master; willing to be an instrument of the Lord," was the refrain of the flute. The classical epic Mahabharata is populated with numerous valorous characters. But the ace archer Arjuna stands out prominently. Why is that so?

Arjuna is the Sakha, the Nara through whom Narayana revealed the divine celestial song - The Bhagavad Gita. It was Arjuna's unflinching devotion to the Lord that made the character so robust and aerobicized. He faithfully carried out all the commandments of the Lord. Only inner strength and a mature mind transfigure an individual to establish contact with the source of our inner energy. This is possible through the process of authentic surrender. Breathing techniques like Sudarshan Kriya help to make the mind hollow and empty. "A mature mind is one who understands the impossibility of knowing the ultimate, and with this understanding there is a new dimension, the dimension of the being," said the philosopher, Osho.

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)

Diplomacy: India's neighborhood quandary



PARUL CHANDRA

Despite its vigorous 'Neighbourhood First' policy, India has struggled to maintain stable and lasting relationships with neighboring countries



Ironic as it might seem, despite a vigorous pursuit of a 'Neighbourhood First' policy in tune with its strategic imperatives, India has floundered to build lasting and steady bilateral relations with countries in its backyard. The pendulum of India's fortunes continues to swing up and down with regime changes in the neighbourhood.

Despite intense diplomatic engagements and regular outreach at the highest political levels in its neighbourhood, India often finds itself out in the cold each time a party or leadership not so inclined towards it sweeps to power. Nepal, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and even Afghanistan are cases in point. And now, with the ignominious exit of the Awami League's Sheikh Hasina as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, India has lost the only loyal and steadfast friend it had in the neighbourhood for over a decade. Indeed, so heavily was New Delhi invested in Sheikh Hasina's prime ministership that it was even accused of interfering in the country's elections to favour her when she won a fourth consecutive term this January.

If her ouster took Sheikh Hasina by surprise, it also caught New Delhi completely unawares. India was blindsided, even though the Sheikh Hasina government was being accused of increasing authoritarianism and a ruthless decimation of the Opposition with backsliding of democracy. New Delhi saw no reason to complain with Sheikh Hasina delivering on what it wanted - connectivity, crack-down on north-east insurgents sheltering in Bangladesh, not making too much noise about the unfulfilled Teesta waters agreement and keeping India's interests in mind while building ties with China. Under Sheikh Hasina, the cordial bilateral ties were not impacted even when the Indian government brought in the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, which fast-tracks citizenship for persecuted



IN BANGLADESH WHERE THE OPPOSITION HAD BRIEFLY INITIATED AN 'INDIA OUT' CAMPAIGN, INDIA WILL FACE AN UPHILL TASK IN BUILDING TIES WITH THE NEW GOVERNMENT ONCE ELECTIONS ARE HELD

non-Muslim minorities from neighbouring countries, though it created considerable disquiet in Bangladesh.

Likewise, she chose not to make a fuss over the controversial National Register of Citizens in Assam, which was seen as targeting illegal Bangladeshi immigrants. For sure, India's ruling party's hyper-nationalism does not help the country's cause in its neighbourhood either, especially in Muslim-majority Bangladesh and the Maldives. Moreover, India's propensity to openly back a particular regime often works to its detriment. It leaves not only the government of the day open to charges of being India's lackey but equally helps the Opposition there fuel anti-India sentiments. In Bangladesh where the Opposition had briefly initiated an 'India Out' campaign, India will face an uphill task in building ties with the new government once elections are held. Likewise in the Maldives, the Opposition had launched an 'India Out' campaign, which helped propel current President Mohamed Muizzu and his party to power.

Along with its required development initiatives, India threw its entire weight behind Muizzu's predecessor, Ibu Solih and his Maldivian Democratic Party, but failed to see him win a second term. Given these experiences, it's time India extended support to its neighbours in a more discreet and calibrated manner instead of being seen as an emperor doling out largesse to subjects. India may like to be seen as a close friend, benefactor and net security provider in the

Subcontinent and the Indian Ocean Region, and it does do a lot for all this, but there is a marked shift in how it is now perceived.

For one, neither the polity nor the people of these nations want to be seen as mere appendages of a big neighbour even though their countries seem inevitably tied with India owing to their geographical location.

Second, small as they may be, there is a growing assertion of national identity and sovereignty among them. Third, they know that India isn't the only big power they can turn to for financial and other assistance.

China, with far greater financial muscle, after all, is only too happy to step in. Indeed, with China's expanding footprint in the Subcontinent and beyond, India has considerably stepped up its financial assistance for infrastructure projects and sought to forge strong economic linkages and trading ties with its neighbours, among other things. It has also sought to be the 'first responder' when they require humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Even so, those days when India was seen as the sole provider for its smaller neighbours are long gone. In Nepal, the Kalapani border dispute was drummed up as a sovereignty issue by then Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli to rally public support for his government. Oli even altered Nepal's map to show the disputed area as part of Nepal.

New Delhi could have simply prevented matters from escalating by holding a meeting at the foreign secretary level as was demanded

by Kathmandu to discuss the territorial dispute. But India looked the other way instead of addressing Nepal's concerns. Consequently, Kalapani remains a major irritant in the relationship. India did something similar with the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) report prepared jointly by a team of experts from the two countries, with one of its mandates being to review the Nepal-India Friendship Treaty of 1950 that Kathmandu wants revised in keeping with present times.

It's been ready since 2018 but has been given a quiet burial by New Delhi even though Kathmandu had been pressing that its findings be made public. In Sri Lanka too, India's fortunes change with the change of guard. The going was difficult with the Rajapaksas in power, though India now appears to have regained some lost ground after it provided the island nation with loans after its economy was badly hit during the pandemic.

However, this does not mean that India will enjoy the goodwill of all political parties there for all times to come, given that relationships in the neighbourhood appear to have acquired a transactional character. Going forward, India will do well to not put all its eggs in one basket and seek to engage more vigorously with parties across the political spectrum in its neighbourhood, while continuing to help the countries with financial and other assistance. It should come across as a benevolent friend, not be perceived as an overbearing bully.

(The writer is a senior journalist; views are personal)

Transforming the India Islamic Cultural Centre: A vision for progress and reform

With a new leadership poised to take charge, the Centre faces the challenge of dispelling stereotypes and promoting a progressive vision of Islam

While showcasing the rich heritage of Islamic literature, culture, art, and traditions, the India Islamic Cultural Centre (IICC) must also foster a culture of debate, discussion, and dialogue. This can be achieved by organizing conferences and seminars on crucial issues such as democracy, human rights, justice, peace, and global affairs.



TARIQ ASHRAF

The Centre should present a gentle and progressive face of Islam to our fellow citizens, countering media-generated stereotypes through engagement and cross-cultural interactions. This can be facilitated by hosting lectures and seminars led by renowned Islamic scholars.

In this context, I offer a few suggestions for the consideration of the new IICC leadership. While maintaining an apolitical stance, the IICC could engage in research and documentation on contemporary issues through fellowships. Additionally, it should enhance its modest library into a comprehensive resource center for reference, research, and docu-

mentation. The IICC must also regularly publish reports and monographs on current issues affecting the community. There is an urgent need to add a small academic block to the building, providing a co-working space for authors and writers to interact.

A significant issue within the Muslim community has been the breakdown of communication with other communities. The Centre should actively engage with civil society groups and the media to cultivate healthy relationships and dispel misconceptions. Special emphasis should be placed on involving women from the community in the Centre's



activities, exposing them to an open, liberal, and progressive environment. The Centre can also advocate for much-needed reforms in Muslim society through dialogue and discussion, involving the Muslim clergy. By doing so, the IICC can become a serious hub for advocacy,

reform, and the promotion of moderation and cultural exchange. It should broaden its scope by involving a larger section of the community, not relying solely on financially resourceful members. The IICC is not intended to be a center for coaching and career counseling, but

rather a space for intellectual discussions, cultural and artistic events, akin to its neighboring institutions like the India International Centre (IIC) and the India Habitat Centre (IHC). There is no better person than Mr. Salman Khurshid to lay the foundation for this transformation during his tenure. With his visionary leadership and persuasive skills, he is expected to leave a lasting impact by establishing a strong visionary and regulatory institutional framework for future generations. There will undoubtedly be resistance from influential members who have treated the IICC as a social club for networking. However, Mr.

Khurshid, a charismatic and widely respected figure, has the capacity to lead effectively and develop the Centre into a progressive, representative, and responsible space that showcases the rich and ever-evolving Islamic culture—especially in a rapidly changing geopolitical environment, both locally and globally. We will see how things unfold for the Centre in the coming days. In conclusion, the India Islamic Cultural Centre (IICC) stands at a pivotal juncture, poised to redefine its role as a beacon of intellectual discourse, cultural exchange, and societal reform. Under the leadership of Mr. Salman Khurshid, the Centre has

the potential to transform into a progressive and inclusive institution that not only preserves the rich heritage of Islamic culture but also fosters a spirit of dialogue and engagement. As the IICC embraces this visionary path, it could become a model for moderation, diversity, and meaningful community interaction, impacting both the Muslim community and the broader society positively.

(The author is an alumnus of Hindu College, Delhi University and has been associated with the Centre for Policy Research, IIM Lucknow, University of Delhi South Campus, and Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi; views are personal)

IN BRIEF



Mauritius invites SMEs to leverage export benefit

Mauritius is inviting Indian Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to set up their units in the island country to capitalise on duty-free export benefit under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), an envoy said here. This AGOA offers duty-free shipments to the US market, presenting significant opportunities for Indian businesses, he said. Replying to a question, High Commissioner of Mauritius to India Haymandoyal Dillum said, "Indian industries should make the most of the AGOA agreement with African countries and the US." Dillum, who visited Kolkata on Saturday to attend a programme of the Bharat Chamber of Commerce, encouraged the leather industry to explore value-added opportunities in Mauritius to gain a competitive edge in the US market. The West Bengal leather sector has been facing a slowdown in traditional markets like the US and Europe due to a slowdown in the economy after the COVID-19 pandemic. Leather exports from West Bengal account for approximately Rs 6,000 crore.



Ohmium International to invest Rs 400 cr in TN

Tamil Nadu has secured a Rs 400 crore investments from US-based Ohmium International, Inc., to set up a manufacturing facility in the state, Chief Minister M K Stalin said on Sunday. Stalin accompanied by Minister for Industries TRB Rajaa and senior government officials were present at the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between Ohmium and the state government for the upcoming project in neighbouring Chengalpattu district. "Another successful day in San Francisco. We have secured a Rs 400 crore investment from Ohmium in Chengalpattu district, creating 500 jobs," Stalin said. The chief minister is currently on a visit to the United States seeking investments to Tamil Nadu. "This (the signing of MoU with Ohmium International) marks a significant step in nurturing the ecosystem for green energy production and fuelling a sustainable future," the chief minister wrote in a social media post. According to the website of Ohmium International, the company designs, manufactures modular, scalable Proton Exchange Membrane (PEM) electrolyzers that enable cost-competitive green hydrogen production. The company's suite of electro-chemical products help customers achieve their sustainable energy goals across various industrial transportation and energy projects.



Govt to amend CPSE capital restructuring guidelines

The government is working to amend its 2016 guidelines with regard to dividend payment, bonus issues and share buyback by CPSEs, officials said. The finance ministry had in May 2016, issued a comprehensive guidelines on 'Capital Restructuring of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs)' in 2016 for efficient management of government investment in CPSEs. "With the CPSEs now more strong in terms of balance sheet and having improved on their market capitalisation, it is now time for a relook of the capital restructuring guidelines," an official told PTI. The amended guidelines are expected to be issued by the finance ministry this month, another official said. As per the capital restructuring guidelines issued, CPSEs that do not have plans to deploy their capital optimally for business purposes should have a professional look at the surplus funds available to them. As per the guidelines issued by the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) in May 2016, every CPSE is required to pay a minimum annual dividend of 30 per cent of PAT or 5 per cent of the net worth. Also, every CPSE having net worth of at least Rs 2,000 crore and cash and bank balance of over Rs 1,000 crore were required to opt for share buyback.

India has trade surplus with 151 nations: GTRI



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has recorded trade surplus with 151 countries, representing 55.8 per cent of its exports and 16.5 per cent of its imports, totalling USD 72.1 billion, "GTRI said in a report.

The biggest surpluses were with the USA (USD 21 billion) and the Netherlands (USD 11.6 billion) during January-June this year.

"India had a trade deficit with 75 countries, which accounted for 44.2 per cent of its exports and 83.5 per cent of its imports, resulting in a USD 185.4 billion deficit, much larger than India's overall trade deficit," it said, adding this situation highlights the need to reduce reliance on specific imports and strengthen domestic production.

The data analysis by the think tank also showed that with 23 of 75 countries, India's trade deficit exceeded USD one billion and these countries accounted for 32.9 per cent of India's exports and 73.5 per cent of its imports. The top five countries with the highest trade deficits were China with USD 41.88 billion, Russia with USD 31.98 billion, Iraq with USD 15.07 billion, Indonesia with USD 9.89 billion, and the UAE with USD 9.47 billion.

Remaining 18 countries with trade deficit exceeding USD one billion include Saudi Arabia (USD 9.43 billion), Switzerland (USD 8.46 billion), South Korea (USD 6.93 billion), Japan (USD

Imports of goods like umbrellas, musical items from China hurting Indian MSMEs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Increasing imports of goods such as umbrellas, toys, certain fabrics, and musical instruments are severely hurting MSMEs as many of these products are also made by domestic businesses, according to think tank GTRI.

The report said that during January to June 2024, India exported goods worth only USD 8.5 billion, while imports stood at USD 50.4 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of USD 41.9 billion.

This low export and high import makes China India's largest trade deficit partner. "China accounts for 29.8 per cent of India's industrial



goods imports. India must invest in deep manufacturing to cut dependence on import of critical industrial products from China," Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) Founder Ajay Srivastava said. He said that these imports from China are "hurting" Indian MSMEs, as many of the imported products are also made by these local businesses.

6.13 billion), Qatar (USD 5.76 billion), Hong Kong (USD 5.21 billion), Taiwan (USD 4.28 billion), Australia (USD 3.34 billion), Thailand (USD 2.60 billion), Germany (USD 2.10 billion), Vietnam (USD 2.07 billion), Malaysia (USD 1.49 billion), Venezuela (USD 1.47 billion), Peru (USD 1.10 billion), and Ireland (USD 1.10 billion).

It added that India should not be concerned about the trade deficit with 11 countries that pri-

marily export crude oil, petroleum products, and coal to India such as Angola, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Australia and Nigeria.

But the country "may keep a watchful eye about the trade deficit with 4 out of the 23 countries that primarily export gold, silver, and diamonds to India as tariff cuts in gold and silver in this budget from 15 per cent to 6 per cent may lead to rise in imports," GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said.



GST collections rise 10 pc to Rs 1.75 L cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gross GST collections in August grew 10 per cent to about Rs 1.75 lakh crore, reflecting higher domestic consumption.

As per the government data released on Sunday, gross GST revenues from domestic transactions grew 9.2 per cent to about Rs 1.25 lakh crore.

Revenues from import of goods were up 12.1 per cent to Rs 49,976 crore. In July, gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) mop-up was Rs 1.82 lakh crore, while in August last year it was Rs 1.59 lakh crore.

M S Mani, Partner, Deloitte India, said a 10 per cent increase in collections on a year-to-month basis at the start of the festive season for the year indicates that consumption is robust and will only improve further in the coming festive months.

"This would give renewed confidence that the collection targets for the year would be achieved. There are some differences in the GST collection increases across major states which may need a deep dive,"

Mani said. Refunds worth Rs 24,460 crore were issued during August, 2024, which is 38 per cent more than the refunds issued in the year-ago period.

After adjusting refunds, net GST revenue increase was 6.5 per cent at Rs 1.5 lakh crore during the month under review.

EY Tax Partner Saurabh Agarwal said the continued growth in gross GST collections indicate a robust economy.

"The government's commitment to reduce working capital costs for businesses facing inverted duty structure is demonstrated by the higher domestic GST refunds. By rationalising rates, the government aims to address this issue over time," Agarwal said.

Mani further said the ability of large states like Maharashtra, Karnataka, UP, MP and Haryana to record double digit increases in collections once again indicates the robust consumption in these states accompanied by the tax authorities measures to improve compliance and crack down on evasion.

Enforce traceability, user privacy norms on apps: COAI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government should enforce traceability and user privacy rules on WhatsApp, Telegram, Google Meet as well as other calling and messaging apps along with telecom operators as such platforms provide similar services using internet network, industry body COAI said.

Telecom operators want the government and regulator to enforce message traceability and user privacy rule on these apps to curb spam and illegal activities as majority of messaging traffic has moved to data net-

works from SMS, COAI said.

In a recent direction, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) has mandated telecom operators to enhance message traceability. The regulator has mandated that the trail of all messages from senders to recipients must be traceable from November 1, 2024.

Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), which represents Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea and others, said that while the telecom service providers are working jointly with the Trai and the other stakeholders on this



aspect, the OTT (over-the-top) communication services, without the requisite security and regulatory checks, is a growing concern in this regard.

"Traceability and user privacy are two benchmarks for this sector that the TSPs are striving to provide to ensure security of the users, and the same should

be applicable to OTT communication services as well," S P Kochhar, Director General of COAI said. He said that a lot of undesirable activities happen on non-TSP networks but because of lack of application of regulation and security measures, there is hardly any accountability and closure of reported violations. "On one of the OTT platforms, 26,200 complaints were received for the period of June 1 to June 30, 2024. Out of these only 124 were resolved," Kochhar said.

He said India has 390 million users on a particular OTT app,

accounting for approximately 34.12 per cent of worldwide users and extrapolation shows that the revenue generated is approximately USD 430 million.

"As against this, the consolidated revenue from SMS is just 0.12 per cent of the total revenues of TSPs. This also gives an indication that the data usage is heavily tilted towards OTT communication services. This is also borne out by the common observation that most of the cyber frauds through texting are taking place today through OTT platforms and are increasing steadily," Kochhar said.

Biocon unit gets USFDA nod for generic drug

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Biotechnology firm Biocon said its subsidiary has received approval from the US health regulator to market a generic medication to treat chronic heart failure.

Biocon Pharma has received approval of its ANDA for Sacubitril/Valsartan Tablets, in 24 mg/26 mg, 49 mg/51 mg and 97 mg/103 mg strengths, from the US Food and Drug

Administration (USFDA), the company said in a regulatory filing. Sacubitril and valsartan combination is used to treat chronic heart failure in adults to help reduce the risk of death and hospitalisation.

The medicine is also used to treat paediatric patients over the age of one year.

The approval further adds to Biocon's portfolio of vertically integrated, complex drug products, the company said.

Global trends, economic data to drive market

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Movement in the stock market this week will largely be driven by global trends, macroeconomic data announcements and trading activity of foreign investors, analysts said.

Equity benchmark indices, which are on a dream run for the past several days, will also track trading in global oil benchmark Brent crude and movement of rupee against the US dollar.



"The next FOMC (Federal Open Market Committee) meeting is scheduled for mid-September, but before that, the market will be closely watching upcoming US economic data.

Key indicators like manufacturing PMI, non-farm payrolls, and unemployment rate will be released this week, all of which could significantly influence market sentiment.

"Institutional flows will play a critical role," said Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investment Ltd.

The primary driver behind the bullish momentum in the domestic market is the growing anticipation of a rate cut in the United States and buying sup-

port from domestic investors. Auto stocks would remain in the limelight amid sales data announcement.

"We expect the market to continue its northbound journey with stock-specific action. Global macro data which will be released during the week will continue to provide cues to domestic equities," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's 21 major listed real estate developers have together sold properties worth nearly Rs 35,000 crore during the latest June quarter with Godrej Properties reporting highest sale bookings.

Except few, all major listed real estate developers have shown annual growth in sale bookings in the April-June quarter driven by strong consumer demand for residential properties, especially of luxury homes.

According to the data compiled from regulatory filings, India's 21 major listed realty firms have reported combined sale bookings of Rs 34,927.5 crore in the first quarter of 2024-25 fiscal.

India's 21 big realty firms sell properties worth Rs 35k cr



Out of these combined sale bookings, bulk of pre-sales came from residential segment.

In terms of sale bookings, Godrej Properties emerged as the largest listed player in the June

quarter with pre-sales of Rs 8,637 crore.

DLF Ltd, the country's largest realty firm in terms of market capitalisation, reported more than three-fold jump in its sale bookings at Rs 6,404 crore in the first quarter of this fiscal.

Mumbai-based Macrotech Developers, which sells properties under 'Lodha' brand, clocked pre-sales of Rs 4,030 crore.

Gurugram-based Signature Global, which recently got listed, achieved sale bookings of Rs

3,120 crore in June quarter, more than three times from the year-ago period.

Bengaluru-based Prestige Estates Projects clocked sale bookings of Rs 3,029.5 crore in June quarter, down from the corresponding period of the previous year.

Bengaluru-based firms Sobha Ltd and Brigade Enterprises sold properties worth Rs 1,874 crore and Rs 1,086 crore, respectively, during the April-June period of this fiscal.



India's power consumption declines to 144.2 billion units

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's power consumption declined 4.7 to 144.21 billion units (BU) in August compared to the year-ago period, mainly due to the above normal rainfall across the country which reduced the use of cooling appliances like air conditioners and desert coolers.

According to the Indian Meteorological Department, the country recorded 287.1 mm of rainfall in August, which is about 16 per cent higher than the normal 248.1 mm.

In August 2023, the power consumption stood at 151.32 BU, according to official data.

The highest supply in a day (peak power demand met) also contracted to 216.68 GW in August 2024 against 236.29

GW in the year-ago month.

The peak power demand touched an all-time high of about 250GW in May this year. The previous all-time high peak power demand of 243.27 GW was recorded in September 2023.

Earlier this year, the power ministry projected a peak power demand of 235 GW during the day and 225 GW during evening hours for May and 240 GW during daytime and 235 GW in the evening hours for June.

The ministry also estimated that peak power demand may hit 260 GW this summer.

Experts said the widespread above normal rainfall in the country reduced the use of cooling appliances like air conditioners and desert coolers.

Majority of mobile users receive daily pesky calls: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Vast majority of mobile subscribers who took part in a survey have said they receive pesky calls every day with most calls coming for financial services and real estate, online survey firm LocalCircles said on Sunday.

According to the survey, 95 per cent mobile subscribers confirmed receiving pesky calls every day with 77 per cent get-



Mostly from financial, realty sectors

ting three or more such calls daily. Besides, vast majority confirmed receiving calls in the last 12 months despite being registered in the Trai's do not disturb (DND) list.

As per the survey report, "96 per cent of mobile subscribers surveyed who registered on Do not Disturb (DND) list say they have been getting pesky calls on

their number in the last 12 months. Effectiveness of Do Not Disturb (DND) services also reduced as 96 per cent confirmed receiving such calls despite being registered for DND as compared to 90 per cent who said so six months back in the survey done by LocalCircles," the survey report said.

As per the survey, 66 per cent of mobile subscribers say they get the majority of the pesky phone calls from different mobile numbers that belong to individuals while 18 per cent say they come from mobile numbers belonging to companies and brands.

The survey received 71,000 responses from citizens in 371 districts of India but the number of responses to each survey question differed.

Almost 88 per cent of 17,380 respondents said in the last 12 months, the highest number of spam phone calls they have received have been from financial services and real estate sectors.

"The percentage of mobile subscribers who have been receiving the most pesky calls from the financial services sector has risen from 54 to 66 per cent in the last 6 months," the report said.

KRYSTLE D'SOUZA STARRER VISFOT HEADS FOR OTT RELEASE

After a two-year wait, *Visfot*, starring Krystle D'Souza, Fardeen Khan and Ritesh Deshmukh, is finally set to release on OTT platforms. The film, completed two years ago, will soon be available for streaming, much to the anticipation of fans. Produced by Tseries and Sanjay Gupta, the film marks a significant moment for its cast and crew, who have eagerly awaited its digital debut. *Visfot* would be Krystle's second film, showcasing her versatility and further solidifying her transition from television to film. Krystle made her Bollywood debut in 2021 with the mystery thriller *Chehre*, which featured stars like Amitabh Bachchan and Emraan Hashmi.

Visfot was originally intended to be Fardeen Khan's comeback film; its delays led to his return being marked by Sanjay Leela Bhansali's series *Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar*. Now, with *Visfot* heading to OTT, fans will have another chance to see him in action, alongside Ritesh Deshmukh, known for his work in both comedy and drama.

The plot of *Visfot* revolves around crime, deception and the unforeseen consequences of people's actions. Its gripping narrative promises to keep viewers engaged as it explores the darker aspects of human nature and the destructive outcomes of wrong decisions.



Sanam Teri Kasam gets a sequel without Harshvardhan Rane and Mawra

Although *Sanam Teri Kasam* may not have been a blockbuster when it was first released, it has gained a special place in the hearts of viewers as time has passed, thanks to Harshvardhan Rane and Mawra Hocane. Indeed, many viewers were anticipating a follow-up to the movie. According to reports, a sequel is in the works. Nevertheless, Rane and Hocane will not be included.

As per a source, a follow-up is being developed and will be helmed by the original directors, Radhika Rao and Vinay Sapru.

"The makers want to make a sequel to *Sanam Teri Kasam*. However, it is at a very nascent stage currently. They have only started the casting process of the film, so it

is still in pre-production," the report mentioned. The upcoming movie will be called *Jaanam Teri Kasam* and will not feature Rane or Hocane in it. "It will feature a new cast; the makers didn't want to repeat the actors. The auditions are going on for the main leads currently and they will look at the supporting cast afterward," the source added.

The source further said, "*Jaanam Teri Kasam* will be a musical. The makers are looking for a female lead who can sing and has the looks and vibe of a singer, someone who is between 18 and 20 years old. The film's story will have a vibe similar to *Aashiqui 2*."

Sanam Teri Kasam came out in 2016. Although the film's songs were very popular, the film did not do well financially.



BRAD PITT IS SERIOUS ABOUT INES DE RAMON

Brad Pitt and his girlfriend, Ines de Ramon are said to be content in their relationship while enjoying a wonderful summer together. The love birds were seen together at the Venice International Film Festival on Saturday. Pitt and Ramon went to the movie festival to commemorate Pitt's upcoming film *Wolfs* with co-star George Clooney, which is set to premiere on September 1.

According to a source, the couple is more solid than ever after enjoying a fantastic summer together. Brad's been working in Europe, so they've spent a lot of time there." The source revealed to the media house that the actor is "serious about Ines." They added, "He's serious about Ines," the source adds. "He's very happy and enjoys spending time with her. She's easygoing and everyone likes her."

They first ignited speculation of a romantic involvement after being seen together at a Bono concert in November 2022, and a few weeks later, they were also seen at the premiere of Los Angeles' *Babylon*. The pair hung out at the post-screening party to celebrate Pitt's film.



Gigi Hadid and Bradley Cooper's dreamy Sardinian getaway

Speculation has been circulating about Gigi Hadid and Bradley Cooper being in a relationship after they were spotted spending time together. Multiple images of the pair, as well as Bradley's daughter and his mother, were posted on social networking sites. A sighting of them was reported while they were on vacation in Sardinia. As reported, Gigi and Bradley travelled to Sardinia, Italy, on their personal aircraft. The actor was joined by his 6-year-old daughter, Lea, and his mother, Gloria Campano. Gigi was captured helping Lea exit a black SUV in the pho-

tos. Gigi proceeded to grasp Bradley's arm while they moved ahead.

The rumoured couple was also accompanied by film producer Brian Grazer. Multiple pictures captured on the boat displayed Gigi with her arm wrapped around Bradley. The actor assisted in moving Gigi's possessions onto the boat as well.

The caption of the post read, "Gigi Hadid seen with boyfriend Bradley Cooper's daughter Lea, 7, for the FIRST time as they enjoy a family holiday in Sardinia (sic)."

Rhea Chakraborty recalls her 'deep depression & darkness' in jail

Actor-model Rhea Chakraborty, has shared insights of her time in jail following her arrest by the NCB in a drug case. During an interview on Karishma Mehta's podcast, Rhea expressed that every day in prison felt as long as a year. She also mentioned that it was a challenging period and she went through a deep depression and darkness.

Rhea said, "Jail is actually a very different world because there's no society in jail. There is a weird sense of equality. Everyone is a number; they are not a person. You are a UT number when you are under trial prison...It's a strange world; it's a very evolved crowd. Because it's just human emotion at its rawest. It's survival. You have to survive each day and each day feels like a year. It takes a long time for a day to finish because you're literally doing nothing. There it is paused."

"My time in there was actually really difficult in the first two weeks to kind of adjust to this situation because no one ever believes that they are going to jail. Once you are in there, it takes a long time to understand that this has happened. There is a deep depression and darkness that I obviously

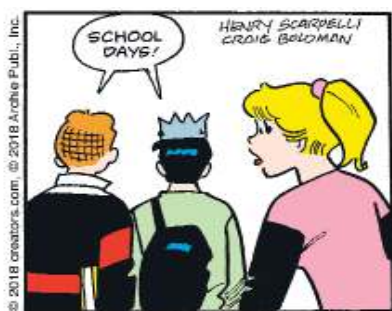
experienced...You are really thinking negative thoughts now. I've always been a very bubbly, positive person, like delusionally optimistic," she added.

She remembered the moment she discovered brightness amidst the darkness. Referring to the women she was incarcerated with, Rhea mentioned that a few of them had lost all hope in life and had surrendered. Therefore, she decided to share a part of herself by offering yoga sessions, teaching dance classes and sharing poems with kids.

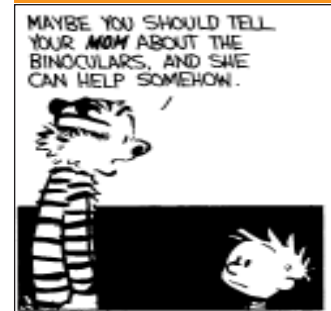


FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



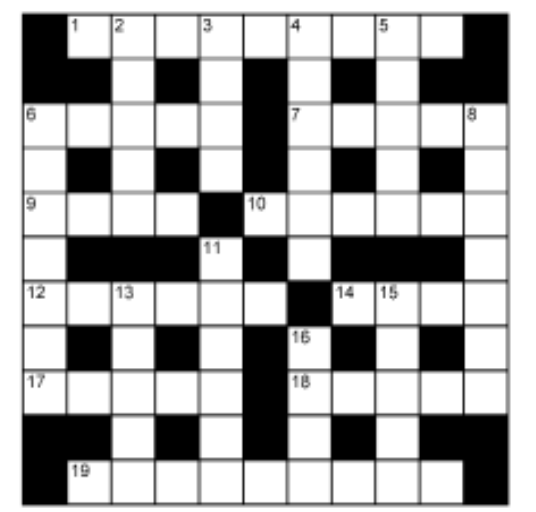
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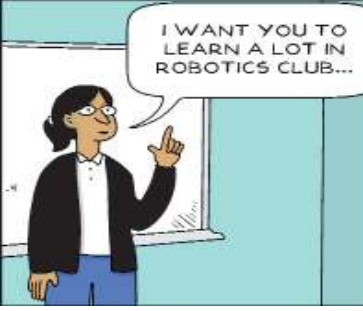
SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU

7	6		3					
9	2						6	
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Yesterday's solution

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

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

ACROSS

- An exact copy
- Someone who decides who won
- Tiny bread scrap
- Young woman
- Shout this to attract attention (3-3)
- A frozen drip
- Went quickly
- Dirt
- Tried
- Sea
- Told a fib
- This type of clock has a mechanical bird in it

DOWN

- Hard to chew
- Slow running for exercise
- Make wider
- An arm cover
- Very foolish person
- Fragment
- Use this when washing



Gautami Kapoor talks of emotional roles & her journey in *Gyaarah Gyaarah*

TEJAL SINHA

The Raghav Juyal, Kritika Kamra and Dhairya Karwa starrer *Gyaarah Gyaarah*, released on Zee5 on August 9, continues to be buzzing. While the lead stars certainly brought in a remarkable performance, among the other stars, there was this one actor who had a small screen space, yet she did make a huge impact on the audience. Well, it was none other than Gautami Kapoor, who played the character of Sanjana Tiwari, a mother of a 7-year-old kid who was mysteriously abducted and murdered. Taking a plunge into the digital space after being a well-known and much-celebrated face in the television industry, she's on cloud nine with the love that she's received and still continues to get. "An actor wants to act and do good work," begins the *Tere Sheher Mein* actress in a fun chat with *The Pioneer*.

Getting a chance to work on OTT now, she considers herself pretty lucky and blessed. And with her latest flick, *Gyaarah Gyaarah*, she describes her experience to be no less than that of a wonderful one. "The response has been overwhelming. I play a small role, it's not like the three main protagonists. However, it's a very important role. I always knew that it was a small role. But the response has gone through the roof. It is the most unexpected response one could imagine. I'm really happy that I've managed to touch the audience's

heart with my performance. I'm so grateful to them," shares Gautami with immense endearment, who was very intrigued to get on board for the project due to its concept of time travel and the concept of being in another dimension.

Basically, "Ram (Kapoor) and my son, both watch a lot of content on this, dimensions and time travel. Both of them are quite in tune with what they watch. It's always been like an intriguing part of my life and when I realised that in *Gyaarah Gyaarah*, the concept is that you can go back in time, you can move forward and maybe change something. It was so intriguing."

Then, of course, the cast and crew, who all, she says, were masters in their own crafts. "The project was so good on papers; I'd be a fool to say no to a project like this." Shooting around the pleasant year-round weather and scenic surroundings of Dehradun was no less than a challenge for her and most importantly, she says it was for Raghav and Kritika, who got drenched for almost 20 times. "Be it all the junior artists and people who were playing the journalists, were all drenched to their bones. But no one complained. Everyone continued shooting and we've shot like this for almost 4 to 5 days. So that was very tough, but everybody pulled it off and hats off to all the actors," enthuses the *Kehta Hai Dil* actress.

In the series, we certainly see a bond that she shares with Raghav, who was on a quest to bring out the truth behind the little kid's murder. Speaking of working with Raghav, with great warmth, she says, "Raghav is a phenomenal performer and the best thing about him is he's very unassuming. When you see him and when you talk to him, he's always laughing, cracking jokes and pulling my leg. It's fun to be around him. But as soon as the director says, 'Now, let's start, Action,' he simply just transforms."

In fact, "He has worked with Ram on two projects. So Ram talks very highly of Raghav because they also have a very good bond." She further goes on to hint and bring us a revelation: "I have another project coming up with him. Though I do not have scenes with him, he's also a part of that show. This show will probably be released in the first half of next year. We have finished the shooting and the project is in its post-production phase. Raghav is amazing and very comfortable to work with. He made the whole unit

comfortable, whether it was junior actors or those who just have one scene to do."

Playing the character of a mother, who is fighting for justice for her little girl could have acted upon her too. Her character was just for a few scenes in a few episodes; however, the intensity and impact the character had was immense. "It was a tough shoot for me, emotionally, because it's a very intense role. The two scenes, one where I see her body for the first time and then the climax or midway scene of episode 2, where I confront the killer, those scenes were tough. I had to really connect. I had to imagine my daughter there. I had to really tell myself that if this was happening to me, what would I do? But you know what? The director had given me the freedom to do it just as I wanted to do. I've performed these scenes from my heart."

Her character had brought in so much relatability element that, to our surprise, during our research we came across a comment where the user had shared that they could relate to her character's emotions and hardship for justice just as it was during the Nirbhaya case when her mother was fighting for justice. We enlightened her about it and she shares, "My god! I'm just getting goosebumps as I listen to it. I really want to thank you, all the fans and everyone who's watched *Gyaarah Gyaarah*. I've really put my heart into this role but thank you for being so sensitive about it." She further enthuses, "I generally don't carry my work home. I never have. I leave it back there. But of course, I do discuss it with Ram. You just want to come back home content that I've done some good work." The *Ghar Ek Mandir* fame, going ahead in this interaction, shares that the director, Umesh Bist, had suggested she not watch any other reference for her character. Her only preparation was to be alert! She also shares, "There are no real criteria that I have for me to get on board for a project. I am open to doing and experimenting in all kinds of roles. This is the best time to be an actor because there's so much available, so much content is being churned out. I hope directors and producers think of me for a different role, something that I have not done before. Like, my next three releases are completely different from *Gyaarah Gyaarah*. Though all were signed almost at the same time, it's just that they have all now turned out to be completely different."

Actress Gautami Kapoor has taken a plunge into the digital space. Her latest series, *Gyaarah Gyaarah*, has brought her, in fact, into a much newer picture. In an exclusive chit-chat with *The Pioneer*, she discusses the love and response she's been getting for her role, creating an impact with a character with less screen space and more around it



Sleep and body positivity in maintaining better lifestyle

Adolescence is undeniably a crucial period of self-discovery and in today's hyperconnected world where the internet heavily shapes perceptions, it is essential to develop healthy habits. Since these are the transformative years of an individual, addressing key aspects like prioritising sleep and fostering body positivity early on promotes a healthier lifestyle

BODY POSITIVITY: A FOUNDATIONAL LESSON

A key fact often missed is that body image concerns often take root in childhood and are influenced by societal pressures and media portrayals. Such early exposure can lead to lifelong struggles with self-worth as they tie it to external appearances and body weight. This makes it critical to help children understand early on that as we age, our bodies undergo natural changes—weight fluctuations, hormonal shifts, and other physiological changes that can affect how we look. If self-worth is tied to these variables, it can lead to ongoing dissatisfaction and self-criticism.

In fact, real health is more than just numbers on a scale. It's about how active we are, the kind of content we consume, our sleep habits, hydration, mindset and overall attitude toward life. Educating adolescents about the importance of focusing on holistic health rather than just weight is key. Additionally, emphasising on the importance of building muscle for longevity, posture and overall health is vital over focusing solely on fat loss.

GROWING ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND PARENTS

Social media also plays a significant role in shaping young minds. Today, with parents providing children with access to phones and social media, there is also a need for them to take responsibility for educating children about the types of accounts they should follow and the values they

should aspire to cultivate. If their social media feeds are filled with picture-perfect bodies, airbrushed images and flawless skin, their perception of beauty becomes skewed. This makes it harder for them to accept themselves as they are, leading to struggles with self-esteem and confidence.

Another important aspect of fostering healthy habits in adolescents is for parents to be mindful of how they perceive and talk about their bodies. If they frequently criticise their bodies or obsess over weight and appearance, children are likely to mirror these behaviors, developing similar insecurities. Parents need to model positive body image and healthy habits. By focusing on overall health rather than appearance, parents can teach their children to value their bodies for what they can do rather than how they look.

IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

In today's fast-paced world, where pulling all-nighters is often viewed as an achievement, it's crucial to stress the importance of sleep to adolescents from their formative years. This stage involves significant physiological changes, including growth, hormonal shifts and repair, making sleep essential for overall health. Unfortunately, many parents take sleep for granted, and this attitude often passes on to their children. While occasional late nights during exams or due to occasional recreation are a part of growing up, what matters is the overall pattern. Regular late nights or poor sleep habits can lead to long-term health issues. In conclusion, a collective effort from parents, educators and society is imperative to create an environment that supports healthy body image and adequate sleep, thereby laying the foundation for a happier and healthier future generation.

(The author, Taarika Dave, is the Head Of Life Coaching and Head Of Yoga at Luke Coutinho Holistic Healing Systems.)



'RATHER THAN FAMOUS CO-STAR, IT'S PUBLIC THAT MAKES OR DESTROYS YOU'

Actress Parul Yadav, who has carved a niche for herself, will next be seen in the multi-lingual *Butterfly*. She speaks to *The Pioneer* about her mistaken entry into the acting world, speaking of her role in the upcoming film and more

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Actress Parul Yadav needs no introduction. The gorgeous and captivating beauty has certainly excelled professionally over the years, carving out a distinct niche for herself. The actress, who starred in popular movies like *Shivajinagara*, *Uppi 2* and *Killing Veerappan*, is undoubtedly one of the top talents sought after in the southern states.

She had not long ago disclosed that she was cast for the upcoming Kannada film *Butterfly*. Yes, readers down South will find it interesting to learn that her next movie is a remake of the popular Hindi film *Queen*, which starred Kangana Ranaut. Parul, who plays the same character for multi-lingual viewers, is gradually preparing to retake her place as the leading lady of South Indian cinema along with her extraordinary producing skills!

The *Bachchan* fame, who also has a few Tamil and Malayalam films in her kitty, in addition to Hindi TV shows, says in an exclusive interview with us, "As I would like to candidly share with my readers, this journey into South cinema happened by mistake or possibly as a result of certain circumstances. Because I was so impressed by Steffi Graf's style of play, I always wanted to be a scientist, inventor, or tennis player. However, circumstances dictated otherwise and I ended up in front of the camera! The way Madhuri Dixit mesmerised audiences with her dance moves and the way Amitabh Bachchan mastered his art and diction both inspired me. Is that even possible to imagine?"

With the eagerly anticipated simultaneous multiple-language remakes (Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam) of *Queen*, the *Dreams* star transitioned to a producer too! She debuted as Shivarajkumar's sister-in-law in the Kannada film

Bandhu Balaga in 2011. Following that, she appeared in *Govindaya Namaha*, which was previously cited as one of the top-grossing films of the year. She portrayed the role of Mumtaz, a Muslim girl who develops feelings for Komal Kumar's Govinda. Her performance earned her a nomination for the best actor category at the Udaya Film Awards that year, the Bangalore Times Best Newcomer Award (2013), the SIIMA Best Debutant Award (2013) and more. She gained greater recognition after appearing in the song *Pyarge Aagbitaite* with Yadav.

Simultaneously, she says, "I had made my film debut in Malayalam with Privithiraj Sukumaran and Tamil with Dhanush, but *Govindaya Namaha*—which starred an unorthodox hero and a debut director—was the film that launched my so-called career. I was featured in a song that won multiple awards and is the most downloaded Kannada tune to this day. This made me realise that rather than a famous co-star, it's the public that has the power to make or destroy you!"

This was becoming a rather intriguing conversation; what more could the *Shivajinagara* fame tell? Alright, let's listen while she clears her throat. "One of my most difficult roles has to be Parvathi in *Butterfly*, the official version of the national award-winning Hindi film *Queen*. The character, a straightforward Kannadiga girl from Gokarna, appears in every frame of the two-hour film. Since this was my first time helming a film, the pressure was tremendous. During the launch day, when we were all on stage, I remember a journalist asking the director 'Why Parul, a girl from Mumbai, why not a local? Is Parul, not a misfit?' While I could appreciate the journalist's perspective, I also saw this as an opportunity to show the audience that I could locate the character and bring her to life."

She is thrilled about the different

genres of projects she is currently involved in. Apart from the movie she is currently writing, she is also working on a wild actioner in Tamil, a mythological extravaganza in Hindi and Telugu and a delightful comedy à la *Welcome* in Kannada. She holds high expectations for these films, just like the rest, yet ultimately she puts her faith in fate. In the meantime, the eccentric *Vaastu Prakaara* star says, "I've always subscribed to the theory that 80% of the training takes place at the dinner table! Nevertheless, I feel incomplete if I don't walk for 40-45 minutes every day and do weights for 60 minutes every day. For whatever reason, I will become depressed if I miss training. When alone, I enjoy learning from any source, including the internet and literature. I adore watching documentaries. Any new perspective or piece of information that surprises me is something I am happy to find."

She claims that after she passes away and if, like Anne Frank, her notes are ever published in the same way as Anne's poetry, then everyone would learn that Parul had several beliefs jotted down in notebooks and on various gadgets. If she had the means, she would like to create a lot of useful inventions for people. Not many people are aware that she also wrote the screenplay for the *Queen* remake in addition to having previously written a screenplay for a love story film. In order for people to learn my secrets and, maybe, enjoy the movie, she hopes that it will be made soon.

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Badoni: Never thought of hitting record 19 sixes; focus on timing the ball

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

South Delhi Superstar skipper Ayush Badoni, who hit a record 19 sixes, believes his ability to time the ball is the reason behind a record-smashing 55-ball 165 runs effort in the Delhi Premier League match against North Delhi Strikers. The 24-year-old right-hander's superb effort guiding his team to a 112-run win on Saturday. Ayush, who also shared a 286-run partnership with

opener Priyansh Arya for the second wicket, bettered the record for most sixes by a batter in an innings which stood in the name of West Indian great Chris Gayle and Estonia's Sahil Chauhan. They had both hit 18 maximums in T20 games. "I was just looking to time the ball well, I never thought I would end up hitting 19 sixes in an innings. I just focus on timing the ball and not trying to hit the ball hard," Badoni told PTI Videos.



Badoni, who plays for Lucknow Super Giants in the IPL, has had a decent run with the bat in the lucrative league in his short cricketing career. After his heroics in the ongoing DPL, the batter would be on the radar of several franchises. "I am not thinking about the (IPL) mega auction yet; my focus is on winning the Delhi Premier League right now as a skipper," he said. "Playing in the IPL has made life a lot easier for me as a batter here (DPL). We face

world-class bowlers there, and then coming here and playing becomes relatively easy." LSG assistant coach Jonty Rhodes compared Badoni to former Proteas hard-hitting batter Herschelle Gibbs. "Jonty and I have a great relationship. I want to thank him for his kind words and just want to say that 'see you soon, Jonty,'" Badoni has led South Delhi Superstarz from the front. He along with Priyansh Arya have amassed 1,091 runs in

the inaugural edition of the DPL. The skipper conceded that good partnerships take the pressure off batters coming down the order. "I know that Priyansh and I have done well and our batting does help take the pressure off the team. But they come and tell me after the game that they too are eager to contribute with the bat. There are a few youngsters who have impressed and now it is our turn to groom them well," he said.

Mandhana and five other Indian cricketers picked up WBBL teams

PTI ■ MELBOURNE, (PTI)

Six Indian cricketers, including vice-captain Smriti Mandhana, will be part of the upcoming Women's Big Bash League (WBBL), starting October 27, after being picked by different teams. While Mandhana was pre-signed by Adelaide Strikers, Dayalan Hemalatha will play the league for the first time after the top-order batter was drafted by the Perth Scorchers, where she will add firepower to their line-up. Wicketkeeper-batter Yastika Bhatia will also make her WBBL debut after being picked up by the Melbourne Stars, where she'll join national



teammate Deepti Sharma. India all-rounder Shikha Pandey has been picked up by Brisbane Heat, where she is expected to inject much-needed pace into the squad and add plenty as a powerful middle-to-lower-order batter. Pandey will be available

for the entire season as she is not part of India's T20 World Cup squad. She joins Jemimah Rodrigues in Brisbane Heat's squad. The WBBL will start on October 27 in Adelaide with a match between Adelaide Strikers and Brisbane Heat.

Gambhir makes an impact wherever he goes: Rhodes

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

South Africa cricket legend Jonty Rhodes believes the Indian team will only become stronger under new head coach Gautam Gambhir, and said the former opener has the ability to make an instant impact in any side. "Wherever GG (Gautam Gambhir) goes he makes an impact, we saw this when he left the Lucknow Super Giants and went to the Kolkata Knight Riders the impact that he had," Rhodes told PTI videos at the Pro Cricket League launch event on Saturday. "He is very much a hands-on guy and is certainly somebody who knows what he

wants and speaks his own mind. "Gambhir leaves no stone unturned, and now that he has taken over the reigns of the Indian team, they will go from strength to strength," he added. Rhodes, who is the fielding coach of Lucknow Super Giants, also lauded Zaheer Khan's appointment as mentor of the IPL side. He said Zaheer's calm head will help the side get through tense situations during a game. "A calm cricketing mind is what you need at the IPL level, especially in the dugout scenario. You need people with calm heads because it gets very tense. "If emotions start to get the better of you it



impacts everybody sitting in the dug-out or on the field. In such situations, it is great to have someone like Zak (Zaheer), because he brings the skills and the knowledge, and he also brings the mojo," he said. "We have worked together at Mumbai Indians and he is

technically very sound indeed." Rumours are doing rounds that Rohit Sharma is set to replace KL Rahul in LSG. "I spent a lot of time with Rohit Sharma at the Mumbai Indians and I am just so grateful that had I had an opportunity to watch him play there. The

changes, if there are, will not be my decision and I am not worried about them right now," Rhodes said. Rhodes also compared young LSG batter Ayush Badoni with former Proteas batting great Herschelle Gibbs after the latter broke the record for smashing sixes

(19) by a batter in a single innings of a T20 game in the ongoing Delhi Premier League. "He is a precocious talent that is for sure, he is short so he has got a low centre of gravity. He gets under the good length deliveries he can hit it anywhere around the ground, he has such fast hands. Justin Langer was so impressed with the sheer talent that he has," he said. "He reminds me a bit of Herschelle Gibbs. He has tremendous hitting ability and when he matches that with calmness, presence of mind, good game plan, he will become a really tough guy to bowl to because he can play both conventional and unconventional shots with ease."

Bopanna-Sutjiadi pair enters mixed doubles quarterfinals of US Open

PTI ■ NEW YORK

India's Rohan Bopanna and his Indonesian partner Aldia Sutjiadi moved into the mixed doubles quarterfinals of the US Open here. Bopanna and Sutjiadi, seeded eighth, beat the Australian duo of John Pears and Katerina Siniakova of the Czech Republic 0-6 7-6(5) 10-7 in a second-round match that lasted one hour and 13 minutes. Bopanna and Sutjiadi will next play fourth seeds Matthew Ebden and Barbora Krejickikova.



Bopanna and his partner had won 7-6(7) 7-6(5) against Germany's Tim Puetz and Dutch player Demi Schuurs in the opening round. Bopanna had also moved into the third round of men's doubles along with Ebden with a 6-2 6-4 win over Spain's Roberto Carballes Baena and Federico Coria from Argentina.



Manisha advances to semifinals; Palak, Mandeep bow out of Paris Paralympics

PTI ■ PARIS

Shuttler Manisha Ramdass kept India's medal hopes alive by progressing to the women's single semifinals in SU5 category but Mandeep Kaur and Palak Kohli were eliminated from the Paris Paralympics following contrasting defeats in their respective quarterfinals here on Sunday. The 19-year-old Manisha, who was born with Erb's palsy which affected her right arm, had no trouble in dispatching Japan's Mamiko Toyoda 21-13 21-16 in the quarterfinal. The second seed Indian left-hander needed 30 minutes to down her unseeded rival. In SU5 category, the players have impairment of the upper limbs. The impairment could be on the playing or non-playing hand. Competing in SL3 category, Mandeep hardly posed a challenge to Nigeria's third seed Bolaji Mariam Eniola, losing the contest 8-21 9-21 in

23 minutes. It was the second consecutive defeat for Mandeep against Eniola, having lost to the Nigerian in the Group stage as well. SL3 category is for players with severe lower-limb disability competing on a half-width court. In SL4 category, para world champion bronze medalist Palak went down fighting 19-21 15-21 to Indonesia's Khalimatuz Sadiyah in 28 minutes. SL4 is a class for athletes competing standing with less severe impairment than in SL3. Later in the day, Nithya Sivan Sumathy will compete in the last-eight stage in SH6 category against Poland's Oliwia Szmigiel. The men's singles semifinal in SL4 category will be an all-Indian affair with Suhay Yathiraj and Sukant Kadam clashing against each other. Nitesh Kumar will fight it out with Japan's Daisuke Fujiwara in the men's singles semifinal in SL3 category.

Odisha FC secure AFC Women's Champions League group stage berth

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Odisha FC have secured AFC Women's Champions League Group Stage berth, by topping their preliminary round in Zarqa, Jordan. Making their international debut, the Indian Women's League champions first defeated Lion City Sailors FC (Singapore) 4-1 before notching a hard-fought 2-1 win over hosts Etihad Club on Saturday to qualify for the Group Stage of Asia's elite women's club competition. A brace from 19-year-old Lynda Kom Serto and two own goals paved the way for Odisha FC's 4-1 win over the Singapore outfit. With Etihad Club winning 5-0 against Lion City Sailors in the next match, Odisha FC required nothing less than three points against the Jordanian champions to qualify from the group. Expectedly, it started as a close contest but the Juggernauts managed to take a 1-0 lead at half-time thanks to Jennifer Kankam Yeboah's 27th-minute goal after she was released in space by Neha. However, Etihad Club found the equaliser in the 57th minute via Jordan's all-time top-scorer Maysa Jbarah, who scored with a left-footed strike into the bottom corner.



But Odisha FC were not to be denied. They found their second goal in the 70th minute, with Lynda picking out Yeboah, who took advantage of an error in judgement by the Etihad goalkeeper, before slotting it into the back of an empty net. The Juggernauts defended in numbers for the remaining 20 minutes. India custodian Shreya Hooda also made a couple of remarkable saves in the dying minutes to ensure the win and cap off a historic night in Indian women's football. In the Group Stage of the AFC Women's Champions League, Odisha FC will travel to Vietnam to face Urawa Red Diamonds Ladies (Japan), Taichung Blue Whale Women's Football Team (Chinese Taipei), and hosts Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC (Vietnam). The Group Stage comprises three groups of four teams and will also be contested in a centralised league format from October 6-12. The top two finishers of each group and the two best third-placed sides will progress to the quarters to be played on March 22 and 23, 2025. A knockout stage draw will be conducted prior to the quarterfinals to determine the four pairings, which will be contested in a single-leg format, with the higher-ranked team of each tie to serve as the home side. This will be followed by a centralised finals, which will see the semi-finals and final -- all single-leg ties -- being played out from May 21-24, 2025, to determine the first ever champions of the AFC Women's Champions League.

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second goal in the 70th minute, with Lynda picking out Yeboah, who took advantage of an error in judgement by the Etihad goalkeeper, before slotting it into the back of an empty net. The Juggernauts defended in numbers for the remaining 20 minutes. India custodian Shreya Hooda also made a couple of remarkable saves in the dying minutes to ensure the win and cap off a historic night in Indian women's football. In the Group Stage of the AFC Women's Champions League, Odisha FC will travel to Vietnam to face Urawa Red Diamonds Ladies (Japan), Taichung Blue Whale Women's Football Team (Chinese Taipei), and hosts Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC (Vietnam). The Group Stage comprises three groups of four teams and will also be contested in a centralised league format from October 6-12. The top two finishers of each group and the two best third-placed sides will progress to the quarters to be played on March 22 and 23, 2025. A knockout stage draw will be conducted prior to the quarterfinals to determine the four pairings, which will be contested in a single-leg format, with the higher-ranked team of each tie to serve as the home side.

PTI ■ AL AIN (UAE)

Boxing's already uncertain Olympic future was thrown into further jeopardy after the sport's Asian governing body voted against leaving the suspended International Boxing Association (IBA) to join the rival association. The polling was held via a secret ballot with 21 countries voting in favour of continuing with IBA, while 14 cast their ballot in favour of joining World Boxing, the new body constituted to run the affairs of the sport. There was one invalid vote. Besides India, which participated as an observer, the other countries whose names figured on the roll call included, Bahrain, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Chinese Taipei, Timor Leste, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lebanon, Macau, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi

Boxing's future hangs in balance after Asian body votes in favour of IBA

Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Yemen. The IBA has been at loggerheads with the IOC, with the latter managing the Olympics qualification process for the Tokyo and Paris Games. With the Asian Boxing Confederation (ASBC) refusing to join World Boxing, which is being pushed as an alternate to IBA, the future of the sport in the 2028 Los Angeles Games hangs in a balance. Following the voting, IBA hit out at World Boxing, saying the new body lacked the wherewithal to organise major international events.

"World Boxing, to tell the truth, has no finances, expertise and support to organise any proper major events, no means to support their members and no intention to develop boxing," said IBA in a statement. "They (World Boxing) claim that they want to keep boxing at the heart of the Olympics, fair enough; that said, they do not care about the development of the sport in the countries, grassroots boxing, performance path of the athletes. They have no program, no vision -- just a standalone idea of boxing being at the Olympics," the statement added. IBA also asked the national federations to think twice before leaving as that could



mean a dead end for them. "The IBA calls (upon) National Federations to make decisions carefully, as there

will be no way for a U-turn, should a federation decide to leave. The IBA remains committed to supporting its

athletes, coaches and National Federations. "World Boxing can guarantee nothing; the IBA in turn can

show actions supporting every word said. We work hard in support of grassroots boxing, while giving elite boxers opportunities to excel as amateurs and professionals both," the statement added. Welcoming the support from the Asian body, IBA added that it was an affirmation of the good work done by it over the years. "This decision (by ASBC) reflects the years of IBA's hard work invested in boxing development worldwide and true unity of the IBA Boxing Family," the statement added. IBA also hit out at some of the national federations that had voted against it during the secret ballot.

"Politically motivated intentions to join World Boxing backed by some members are reckless. There is no rationale in joining an organization that has no intention for boxing to thrive but only pursues personal ambitions of their leadership. "A move towards World Boxing will undoubtedly damage the sport in those respective countries, the thesis confirmed by the performance of World Boxing nations in Paris 2024," it said. **Where does India stand vis-a-vis World Boxing?** The Boxing Federation of India had in May agreed to become a member of World Boxing. The membership application was approved by the BFI's General Assembly. Senior BFI office-bearers had also met with World Boxing president and secretary-general to discuss ways in which India could support the international federation in growing its membership base in Asia.

'It's not about fitting into the mother's character but Nivetha Thomas doing it well'

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Nivetha Thomas is returning to the screen after a two-year gap with a movie titled *35: Chinna Katha Kaadu* helmed by Nanda Kishore Eemani. The movie is set to premiere on September 6, with well-known actor Rana Daggubati as the presenter. Nivetha is portraying the role of a mother with two children. When asked about the gap, she says, "I wanted to do five films a year, I didn't take any breaks, but it just happened." Nivetha started her career in Telugu films with *Gentleman* alongside Nani and later appeared in movies such as *Ninnu Kori* and *Brochevaravara*. Her successful performance in Telugu demonstrated her talent as an actress. Prior to making her debut in Telugu cinema, she appeared in movies in the Malayalam and Telugu film industries. Currently, she is working on *35: Chinna Katha Kaathu*, where she portrays the character of Saraswathi. "I would like to do many films with different kinds of roles and that's why I chose Saraswathi's role," she says. In the film, she plays the character of a mother. So when asked about what if she gets typecast into similar roles and that the director would approach her for the same, she says, "In our country, when a woman turns 20 or 21, people ask her, 'When are you getting married?' So, I

don't think I am wrong if I play a mother role. With this, I would like to tell filmmakers that I can play different kinds of roles," says Nivetha. She added, "You all don't write that Nivetha is fit for a mother's character, please write that Nivetha did very well for the mother role." Her character, Saraswathi, is one year younger than her actual age. In this film, she says, you can see love in the family, relationships and many more elements. She further shares, "It is the story of a middle-class family story from Tirupathi. A few misunderstandings end up into an incident. Now, how the mother takes up the responsibility is the story," says Nivetha. In this film, the director narrates little stories that she is extremely enthusiastic about. "When there is no power, the entire family is having dinner under candlelight, the parents talk about the future in the night when kids are sleeping; these kinds of things are shown in this film in a beautiful way," she said. She mentioned how people think back to their youth when they see school memories on TV. The actress admits to feeling pressured to score a perfect 100 in mathematics during her 10th-grade exams. "My father used to score 99 marks in math and this was told to me every time I used to go for my exams. What I did was write the wrong answer for the first question and the remaining ones were all correct. So I was very happy that I scored 99 marks," she recalls. The team had prepared for a local accent. "Most

of the shooting has happened in Tirupathi; we got a tutor to get our dialect right. It took nearly a month and we practiced the dialogues before the shoot to get the accent right," she said. The actress said that she learned a lot from the senior actors like Bhagyaraja and Gautami, who are also a part of this film. "They respect everyone irrespective of their age and also their discipline on the sets. I learned a lot from them and their experience," said Nivetha. The Hema committee report has become a hot topic, particularly in the Malayalam film industry. Nivetha hails from the Malayalam film industry and when questioned about it, she discusses her experiences. "I am very closely reading it and I am a part of the AMMA (Association of Malayalam Movie Artists) body also. When I get something that disturbs me a lot, before I talk about it, I have a discussion with my family and close friends. I think about it; I want to understand what is happening and why it is happening. Extremely proud of the Malayalam industry because it started there, WCC stood strong, they had to take all the heat. It's bittersweet, but it's a happy moment. It has already begun and I am very happy and it should be implemented everywhere. Not just for women, I think we should generally have a safe working space which is a basic thing. We are spending more time at the workspace than at home, so we should all have a safe working space," she comments about the Hema report.

Nivetha Thomas' last film, *Saakini Daakini*, was released two years ago. Now, she will be seen portraying a mother in her upcoming movie *35: Chinna Katha Kaadu*, touted to be in an action genre. She discusses the long break, taking on the role of a mother, her personal life experiences and the Hema Committee findings in the Malayalam film industry.



Gireeshaaya to direct Kalyan Ram

Remember the film *Ranga Ranga Vaibhavana* starring Vaishnav Tej and Ketika Sharma in the main roles? Gireeshaaya serves as the director of the movie, which was released two years ago. This movie did not perform well in terms of the box office.

As per a source, the director is ready to direct Nandamuri Kalyan Ram.

"Gireeshaaya narrated a story to Kalyan Ram and he liked it and agreed to do the film," revealed a source.

Sateesh Botta, who worked as a manager to Sai Dharam Tej earlier, will now be turning producer in this film.

The source stated that Sateesh presented the story to Kalyan Ram and the director in a meeting. The source also mentioned that the release of this movie's announcement might happen in a couple of days.

Sateesh, a hard-core fan of Pawan Kalyan, is close to director Harish Shankar. Sateesh worked as manager to Sai Dharam Tej, but due to some differences with the actor, he came out and now wanted to start his own production house along with a few of his friends.



Nagababu supports 'HYDRAA' and appreciates Revanth Reddy

Jana Sena leader and Pawan Kalyan's brother Nagababu's comment on social media is doing rounds and a big discussion point. In his comment, he supported Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and his HYDRAA concept. The actor-turned-politician said that everyone should be appreciating the Telangana CM for his daring decisions and commendable work. Nagababu's comment indirectly implies support for the demolition of N-Convention, which is owned by actor Akkineni Nagarjuna.

Because of intense rainfall, the water has been overflowing into many houses, leading to many fatalities. This has been due to the illegal occupation of the ponds, canals and structures built on them.

"Now, everyone understands about the Telangana Chief Minister's latest Hydra concept. Let's appreciate our honorable CM Revanth Anumula. Thank you for your daring decisions and com-



mendable work. We stand with you in full support, (sic)," said Nagababu in his comment.

He added, "If we protect the environment, it will protect us; if we destroy the same environment, it will surely punish us."

Currently, there is a heated debate over whether the Jana Sena leader endorsed the tearing down of Nagarjuna's N Convention. It is interestingly being reported that Akkineni Nagarjuna met Chiranjeevi, the older brother of Nagababu, to discuss the demolition of his convention center.

Suriya postpones *Kanguva* to clear way for Rajinikanth

On October 10, two major movies were supposed to be going head to head, one of which is Rajinikanth's *Vettaian* while the other is Suriya's *Kanguva*. Both the actors are looking to benefit from the festivities of Dasara. However, actor Suriya has revealed that the release of his film will be delayed out of respect for Rajinikanth. The actor made this statement while in attendance at his brother Karthi's movie event. His announcement ensures that there won't be any major conflict during the upcoming Dasara festival.

Suriya said that Rajinikanth's *Vettaian* will be releasing on October 10 and also stated that when he was born, he (Rajinikanth) was already one of the most accomplished actors. "He has been a senior to me and the identity of Tamil cinema for over 50 years. It is best that

his film comes out first," said Suriya at the function.

Talking of his film, he shared that nearly 1000 people had worked day and night for nearly two and a half years for *Kanguva* and hard work, he says, will certainly pay off. Whenever the film is released, Suriya said that the audience definitely gives their respect and love for the film.

According to a source, Suriya is set to play dual roles in the period drama *Kanguva*. The narrative recounts events from both the past and the present, showcasing Suriya's presence in both time periods in unique ways.

Superstar Rajinikanth, speaking to the media, expressed his gratitude to Suriya for choosing to delay the release of his film to a later date. Rajini also expressed his best wishes for Suriya's film *Kanguva* to be a successful one.



RAJ TARUN'S FILM RELEASE POSTPONED

Despite the controversy surrounding his personal life, Raj Tarun's movies have been released back-to-back. His movie *Purushottamudu* was released in July, followed by the release of *Tiragabadara Saami* on August 2. His upcoming movie *Bhale Unmade* is set to release on September 7, coinciding with Vinayaka Chavithi.

But now the makers of the film wanted to postpone the release of this film. They released a statement that they are planning to release the film on September 13. "Due to unavoidable reasons, our film *Bhale Unmade* has been postponed from September 7 to September 13," the makers said in a statement. They also mentioned that they will provide complete entertainment with the film.

Kannada girl Manisha Kandukur, who will be making her debut, will be seen playing the lead role in this film directed by J Sivasai Vardhan. Raj Tarun requires a successful film as his previous movies have not performed well at the box office. Both *Purushottamudu* and *Tiragabadara Saami* have failed to meet expectations and have been labeled as flops. Currently, he is placing his hopes on this *Bhale Unmade*. Raj Tarun portrays the role of a skilled saree draper in this movie.

Jr NTR visits his mother's hometown in Karnataka

Jr NTR had visited Kundapura, located in the Udupi district of Karnataka, over the weekend. He was on a devotional trip with his wife and mother. The actor took to his social media and shared that he has fulfilled his mother Shalini's desire to take her to Kundapura, which is her hometown. Shalini has presently been residing in Hyderabad. The actor, accompanied by his wife Lakshmi Pranathi, visited the location and offered his prayers at the Sri Krishna Matha temple in Udupi. Kannada superstar Rishabh Setty, along with director Prashanth Neel had also joined Jr NTR during this visit.

"My mother's forever dream of bringing me to her hometown Kundapura and seeking darshan at Udupi Sri Krishna Matha has finally come true! To make it happen just before her birthday on September 2 is the best gift I could give her, (sic)" read the post on his social media.

