

# the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

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

**Contribution of cooperative sector in development incomparable:**  
**Murmu**

**INDIA-SINGAPORE**  
**RELATIONS POISED FOR BIGGER TAKE-OFF**

**I would like to act with Balayya for faction film:**  
**CHIRANJEEVI**

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**

**KCR, KTR and Harish Rao should donate Rs 1,000 crore or Rs 2,000 crore for flood relief from the Rs 1 lakh crore they looted. The Opposition Leader should go to the people first and then tell the government about their problems.**  
**The opposition leader of AP (Jagan) is on the ground. Why has our opposition leader gone silent? It's okay for KTR to go to the US and enjoy life, but he shouldn't throw mud at Ministers.**

— Revanth Reddy, Chief Minister Telangana

P4

**DON'T MISS...**

**Commercial crops badly damaged...**

Commercial crops were badly damaged by the Krishna flood water in Avinigadda, Vyuruu and Penamaluru constituencies in Krishna districts. The standing crops including maize, guava, papaya, and banana were seen submerged in the Krishna floodwater. The farmers raised yam, turmeric, vegetables, mirch and drumstick but all the crops were submerged in the Krishna flood water. If the crops continued to be submerged in the flood water for another two days, they would be rotten, the farmers lamented. The farmers on the...

—PAGE:4

**Accelerate safety measures to...**

The World Health Organization on Monday called on countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region to accelerate measures to reduce road traffic deaths, a leading cause of mortality among young people aged 15-29. "Vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists and two or three-wheelers constitute 66 per cent of all reported road traffic deaths in our region," said Saima Wazed, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia, in her address at the 15th World Conference on Injury Prevention and...

—PAGE: 5

**'54% of IPO shares allotted to...**

A study by markets regulator Sebi highlighted flipping behaviour among investors in the initial share-sale market with investors (excluding anchor) selling 54 per cent of IPO shares allotted to them by value within a week. The study found a strong disposition effect (tendency to prematurely sell assets that have made financial gains) with investors showing a greater propensity to sell IPO shares that posted positive listing gains, compared to those that listed at a loss. In light of the increasing...

—PAGE: 8

**Saina Nehwal reveals struggles...**

Ace Indian shuttler and former Olympic bronze-medallist Saina Nehwal has revealed that she is battling arthritis and will have to decide on her future in badminton by the end of this year as the ailment has made it impossible for her to train the usual hours. The 34-year-old former world No.1, who was the first Indian shuttler to win an Olympic medal with her bronze in London 2012, participated in three editions of the Games before being hampered by injuries. The 2010 and 2018 Commonwealth...

—SPORTS

**HIDDEN CAMS ISSUE**

**NHRC takes suo moto cognisance of case**

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India has taken suo motu cognisance of media reports alleging that over 300 photographs and videos were illicitly captured from the washroom of the girls' hostel at an engineering college in Krishna district, using a hidden camera. The incident came to light when a group of students discovered the concealed camera and raised the alarm, sparking protests. Reportedly, some male students residing in the boys' hostel purchased these videos, leading to the questioning of one student by the police. The Commission has noted that, if the media reports are accurate, the situation raises serious concerns regarding human rights violations. Such incidents suggest that the



authorities have failed to provide a safe and secure environment for women, which is deeply troubling. The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police of Andhra Pradesh, requesting a detailed report on the matter, including the status of the FIR registered by the police. The report should also outline the steps taken or proposed by the authorities to prevent such incidents from recurring. The response from the authorities is expected within two weeks.

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Nearly 4.5 lakh people were affected by the unprecedented rainfall and floods in Andhra Pradesh over the past three days, leading to the evacuation of 31,238 people to 166 relief camps.

The most affected districts included NTR, Guntur, Krishna, Eluru, Palnadu, Bapatla and Prakasam, said an official press release on Monday.

Twenty SDRF and 19 NDRF teams are engaged in relief and rescue operations.

Two more SDRF and nine NDRF teams are en route to Vijayawada, the worst affected place in the southern state where rains and overflowing rivulets wreaked havoc.

As per the request of Guntur and NTR district administrations, the Indian Navy agreed to deploy two choppers for search and rescue operations in the affected areas; one of which has already arrived in Vijayawada, said the release.

The southern state also requested six helicopters to airlift stranded people and drop food packets, along with 10 NDRF and 40 motor boats for search and rescue operations in the affected districts.

As many as 39 livestock, which includes sheep and buffaloes, lost their lives in the state while 5,300 poultry birds died in the Palnadu district. Thirty-eight fishing boats were fully damaged or lost, six partially while 61 minor irrigation tanks suffered breaches in the NTR district, four in Guntur and eight in Eluru.

Budameru, a rivulet on the outskirts of Vijayawada suffered breach at six places, one at Kavuluru and four in Santhinagar.

Continued on Page 2

**UNPRECEDENTED INFLOWS TO PRAKASAM BARRAGE**  
**Record 11,43,201 cusecs received**

- 11,42,701 cusecs of water released into the sea by opening all 70 crest gates.
- Vehicular traffic between Vijayawada and Seethanagaram stopped as a precaution.

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Prakasam Barrage in Vijayawada recorded the highest floodwater inflows in its history at 11,43,201 cusecs on Monday. In response, officials from the Water Resources Department discharged 11,42,701 cusecs into the sea by fully opening all 70 crest gates. Additionally, 500 cusecs of water was released into the canals.

This surpasses the previous record floodwater inflow observed on October 5 2009, when 11,10,404 cusecs was recorded, with 10.94 lakh cusecs being discharged. After 15 years, the flood discharge has now exceeded the previous highest recorded flow, marking a critical point in the barrage's operational history. Earlier, the Prakasam Barrage witnessed the highest flood



**15 die in rain-related incidents**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

As many as 15 people died in Andhra Pradesh due to rain-related incidents in the past three days, following unprecedented rainfall caused by a depression in the Bay of Bengal, the government said on Monday.

According to an official release, five persons died at

Mogalrajapuram in Vijayawada due to landslides and one person each at Vijayawada Rural, G Kondru mandal and Reddygudem mandal. They all belong to NTR district. "Five deaths in Guntur district. One teacher and two students travelling from Uppalapadu to Namburu were washed away in a local stream and an 80-year-old woman died when boulders fell on

her in the first ward of Mangalagiri town," the release said.

Further, it said that another person was washed away in Kondaveedu stream at Ponnekallu village in Guntur district.

Besides rain-related deaths, three children drowned in Prakasam district's Markapuram division when they went swimming, the release said.



**3 crest gates damaged**

**VIJAYAWADA:** As the Prakasam Barrage received heavy inflow of floodwaters, three sand boats unexpectedly collided with gates 67, 68, and 69, causing damage to these gates. The boats were lodged at the barrage in the early hours of Monday. The rushing waters washed away the sand boats and struck the gate pillars, resulting in slight cracks and damage to the pillars. The boats remained stuck at the Prakasam Barrage crest gates. Water Resources Department officials are assessing any potential impact on the barrage following this incident. Meanwhile, Water Resources Department officials have assured the public that there is no threat to the barrage itself. The damage was confined to the gates, and repairs will be undertaken once the floodwaters recede. Tatini Sivaji, a retired Superintending Engineer (SE) from the Irrigation Circle in Vijayawada, spoke to The Pioneer and stated that there is no danger to the Prakasam Barrage.

Continued on Page 2

**CM visits flood-hit areas**



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Deeply concerned by the damage caused by recent flash floods, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu visited the affected areas in Vijayawada on Monday to gather firsthand information. For over two hours, he toured almost every corner of Singh Nagar, engaging with residents who had been relocated to safety by boats or had evacuated voluntarily. The flood victims shared their ongoing

struggles from the relentless rains that have battered their region for the past two days.

Residents informed the Chief Minister that many of their relatives are still suffering as their areas remain completely waterlogged. They noted, however, that food and drinking water were provided in the morning and that they were able to leave the waterlogged areas with the help of boats.

Continued on Page 2

**FOOD FOR FLOOD VICTIMS**

**Naidu warns 'negligent' officials**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

After visiting the flood-hit areas in Vijayawada, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu held a review meeting with the officials on Monday and expressed displeasure over a few officials on their behaviour. The CM warned those officials that if the laziness of the previous government is not left, it will not be tolerated.

The CM said that the performance of the officers should bring a good name to the government. He said that he had swung into action and a few officials were still in their slumber. The CM expressed his displeasure over the delay in the distribution of food even though the food could be brought as per the expectation.

A minister brought to the notice of the CM that there was a delay in the distribution of food due to some senior officers on duty in the flood-hit Budameru area.

The minister said that the issue



arose in the area where a few officials who were pro-YSRCP showed negligence resulting in a delay in distributing food to flood victims.

The minister told the CM that he had found out that the officials were acting deliberately so that the distribution was not done properly and quickly. It is reported that there was a discussion in the CM's review that some officials of the DIG level have come to perform duties in the flood-affected areas who are in VR. It seemed that some officers like Kollu Raghuram Reddy, Vijaya Rao, Raghuvvera Reddy, Srikanth, Satyanand, Gopalakrishna, who are currently in VR due to allegations in various issues, are performing duties there.

Continued on Page 2

**SCORES SCRAMBLE FOR FOOD, MILK IN V'WADA: P2**

**All 6 tripped units at NTTPS restored**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Special Chief Secretary K. Vijayanand stated that six units, each of 210 MW, at Narla Thatha Rao Thermal Power Station (NTTPS), were tripped due to heavy rains on the night of August 30, as the Budameru canal levels surged. The rainwater has not been able to drain from the plant premises. Out of the six units, two have been de-watered and restored.

The Special Chief Secretary mentioned that the remaining units will be brought back into service once the de-watering of the other four units is completed. Continuous de-watering is being conducted using pumps, with 2.5 HP x 2, 10 HP x 1, and 40 HP x 1 diesel machines deployed. All units in RTTP and the three units in SDSTPS are being operated at optimal loads. Overall, 2,800 MW is being generated from



Genco thermal stations, and approximately 1,330 MW is available from Genco hydel units. Yesterday, 168 MU was supplied, and arrangements have been made to meet today's demand, according to the Special Chief Secretary. He further stated that the Chilakallu-Suryapet feeder failed due to a tower collapse at Loc No 45. The DC tower at Loc No 45 falls under Telangana State jurisdiction, where heavy waterlogging occurred.

**Nunna Power Grid Sub-station overcomes flood, ensures no disruption in 5 states**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Despite severe flooding that partially submerged the 400 KV Power Grid Substation at Nunna, the uninterrupted power supply to five states—Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Odisha—has been successfully maintained. The Gunadala 400 KV substation, however, was temporarily taken offline for repairs due to floodwater, but the operational status of the Nunna substation ensured that power distribution continued without interruption.

The Nunna 400 KV substation experienced some flooding, but the



situation was managed effectively to prevent any disruption in power supply. Recent floodwaters posed a significant risk, yet swift action was taken to address the issue. K. Naga Mohana Rao, Senior General Manager of Power Grid Andhra Pradesh, and his team implemented a robust action plan.

Continued on Page 2

**Another low pressure area looms over Bay**

PNS ■ GUNTUR

A fresh low pressure area is expected to develop over the west-central and adjoining northwest Bay of Bengal around 5 September, according to the Meteorological Centre on Monday.

The daily weather report issued today indicated that strong surface winds, with speeds ranging from 30 to 40 km/h, are likely to affect isolated areas in South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema over the next five days, and in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh over the next 48 hours.

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers are forecasted to occur at various locations, with some places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Rayalaseema experiencing rainfall over the next seven days.

Continued on Page 2



# Scores scramble for food, milk in V'wada

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Scores of people scrambled for milk and food packets in flood-ravaged Vijayawada on Monday, and also complained about alleged government apathy towards their hardships in the past three days.

Unprecedented torrential downpours over the past three days submerged multiple localities in the centrally located commercial city.

Inundated localities included Ajit Singh Nagar, Nandamuri Nagar, Andhra Prabha Colony, LBS Nagar, Vambay Colony and Ayodhya Nagar. Other submerged areas included Madhura Nagar, Ramakrishna Puram, New Rajarajeswari Peta, Old Rajarajeswari Peta, Pipula Road, Payakapuram, Shanti Nagar, Prasanthi Nagar, Jakkampudi and Pathapadu.

Similar was the situation in Nainavaram, Chittinagar, Milk Project area, Bridge Peta and others. Visuals aired on local TV news channels showed a woman lamenting to Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu that people were stranded for two days in Ajit Singh Nagar without drinking water.

She complained to him that no boat came to their rescue while another man standing in waist-deep waters begged Naidu, who was touring the flood-affected areas for the third time on a boat,



to understand their predicament.

"Please understand our situation sir (CM). We don't have water and food sir. Inundated till the first floor," the flood victim directly complained to Naidu. People were seen wading through floodwaters carrying their children on shoulders to safety while an old woman lying on a mattress was being shifted over floodwaters by two persons. Some people tried to help themselves through the

deluge using a rope.

As people waded through the floodwaters, some of them held on to some necessities in their hands and a large queue was formed at one of the flood-affected places to collect milk sachets and food packets.

"I came swimming for food packets but I did not get one," said a man to a local news channel while another complained that nobody came to help a group of stranded people whose pictures were shared with author-

ities. At a large queue formed for milk packets, a flood victim complained that they had not had milk since Sunday morning and alleged that no help came their way from the government.

"These speed boats and NDRF teams are just roaming around. We went swimming. Some people are volunteering to help in private boats. Not getting anything from the government," he alleged. Similarly, another flood victim said diabetes patients were not receiving any food supplies and

questioned what was the need for the CM to tour the inundated areas as "about 100 people are needed for his security alone".

Meanwhile, several flood-affected people from Rajiv Nagar complained that nobody is caring for their locality. One man from this locality said he came to fetch some milk for children.

"Since yesterday we have had no rice or drinking water, no buttermilk. We are not getting any supplies," said a woman passing by the line waiting for milk. There was no immediate response from state government officials. Life was completely thrown out of gear in Vijayawada following torrential downpours over the past three days and with more than 24 hours of power cuts in several parts of the city. There was severe disruption to internet and mobile telephone connectivity, and long traffic jams disrupted normal life, including connectivity to Hyderabad. Transportation within Vijayawada city and its vicinity is in a chaotic situation while there is no way to reach Hyderabad even through Khammam, except a slight possibility via the Piduguralla route.

"The floodwaters situation is the same. Water levels reduced just a little and rainfall resumed. There are fears that power connectivity will not be restored until the water level subsides," M

Sailaja, a resident of Ajit Singh Nagar told PTI on Monday.

Ajit Singh Nagar is one of the worst affected localities in Vijayawada, which bore the brunt of the Budameru floods, a rivulet on the outskirts of the city. Though many residents staying on the ground floors took refuge in the upper floor houses of neighbours, several of the flood-affected people could not sleep overnight as fans and air conditioning did not work, while children also suffered. Many overhead tanks are empty and water could be pumped unless power is restored, while drinking water supplies are also diminishing in households. "If the water level recedes, then we have to see if we can go and fetch some water. Still, there is waist-deep flood water outside," Sailaja said, adding many relatives and friends of hers were trying to call to check on their welfare.

Further, the mobile phones of scores of people were not working due to exhaustion of battery power. "Now I am sending messages one by one. A friend just called me. Though some friends offered to come and supply provisions, we told them that there is no accessibility even for that," said Sailaja, adding they were yet to cook breakfast and have to see what best can be done.



## DGP swings into action

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The State Director General of Police (DGP), Ch Dwaraka Thirumala Rao, has been actively overseeing the relief efforts to evacuate residents trapped in Ajit Singh Nagar and other areas inundated by heavy rainfall. DGP Thirumala Rao has been coordinating with the NTR Police Commissionerate, alongside NDRF and SDRF teams, to manage the Fire

Service and Law and Order Police Officers and staff working in the submerged and low-lying areas of the city.

The DGP personally intervened to rescue individuals from flooded areas and relocate them to relief camps. He has been monitoring the situation from the control room and visited the submerged areas on Monday, where he personally rescued several victims affected by the floods.



## Rahul urges Centre, AP to provide rehab packages for rain-hit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With parts of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh reeling from torrential rains, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Monday urged Congress leaders and workers to mobilise all available resources to support the ongoing relief and rescue efforts.

Gandhi asserted that the Telangana Government is working tirelessly to manage the crisis and initiate the rebuilding process. "I strongly urge both the central government and the Andhra Pradesh government to swiftly provide comprehensive rehabilitation packages for all those affected by this disaster," he said. "My thoughts are with the people of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh as they endure relentless rainfall and devastating floods," the former Congress chief said.

He extended his deepest condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones.

"I urge Congress leaders and workers to mobilise all available resources to support the ongoing relief and rescue efforts," Gandhi said.

At least 16 people lost their lives in various rain-related incidents as heavy rains lashed Telangana and the state government on Monday put the damage at Rs 5,000 crore as per preliminary estimates and sought an immediate assistance of Rs 2,000 crore from the Centre.

The incessant rainfall caused inundation of low-lying areas, damage to agricultural crops and disruption of the state's rail and road links with neighbouring Andhra Pradesh.

## 75,000 emergency medicine kits for V'wada flood-affected families

6 types of medicines in each kit with usage pamphlets: Spl CS

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Special Chief Secretary for Health, M T Krishnababu, has said that the Medical and Health Department has made all necessary arrangements for the distribution of approximately 75,000 emergency medicine kits across various parts of Vijayawada city, which have been inundated due to the cyclone and heavy rains. He mentioned that the officials have sent emergency medical kits along with food packets via helicopter from Gannavaram airport.

The Special CS noted that emergency medicine kits have been delivered to 14 medical relief camps set up in the city. Additionally, more kits were delivered by 10 Mobile Medical Vehicles, and steps have been taken to distribute 50,000 kits from APMSIDC and 25,000 kits from the Drug Control Department. He added that sufficient medicines, along with doctors and staff, are available to provide medical services around the clock in the medical relief camps.

The emergency medicine kits contain six types of medicines, accompanied by leaflets detailing their usage.



The leaflets explain which medicines should be taken for health issues such as fever, cold, vomiting, and diarrhoea, which may be caused by sanitation and water pollution. Special attention has been given to the health of children, the elderly, and the sick. A total of 75,000 emergency medicine kits are ready for distribution. Arrangements have been made to deliver 10,000 emergency medical kits to the victims via helicopters.

The remaining 65,000 kits will be transported to their destinations using APM-SIDC and Drug Control Department vehicles. Measures have also been taken to distribute food packets and emergency medicine kits to the victims via boats.

He assured that the victims need not worry about health problems, as officials from the Medical and Health Department have been directed to remain vigilant.

Krishnababu urged the victims to follow the instructions and advice issued by the Medical and Health Department from time to time.

Health Family Welfare Commissioner C. Harikiran, APMSIDC Managing Director and Drug Control Director General Dr G. Lakshminsha, and Secondary Health Director Dr A. Siri supervised the distribution of emergency medicines.

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Vijaya Dairy, located in Chittinagar, Vijayawada, which supplies milk and milk products across various regions, has been inundated with floodwaters for the past two days. As floodwaters surged into the dairy facility, vehicles and machinery were completely submerged, leading to the spoilage of milk, curd, and other dairy products.

Vijaya Dairy Chairman, Ch. Anjaneyulu reported that losses amounting to Rs 70 crore have been incurred. He mentioned that due to the flooding within the plant, it will not be possible to enter the premises for the next two days. As a contingency, the plant at Veeravalli will be fully operational to ensure that customers do not face any disruptions and to



continue collecting milk from dairy farmers.

Sources indicate that the union collects milk from over 2 lakh producers, covering 815 villages, organised through 35 milk routes. The district union operates six milk chilling centres, located at Pamarru, Hanuman Junction, Veerankillock, Gudlavalluru, Chilikalu, and Tiruvur, with a combined capacity of over 1.70

lakh litres per day. The factory is equipped to manufacture various dairy products. The Vijayawada dairy factory handles surplus milk from all coastal districts, processing approximately 2.10 lakh litres per day, with peak production reaching 3.18 lakh litres per day. The factory also conserves fat in the form of white butter, usually up to 1,000 metric tonnes per day.

## Jagan visits flood-hit areas in V'wada

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP chief and former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy visited flood-affected areas in Vijayawada on Monday.

He walked through knee-deep water in the Singh Nagar and Yanamalakuduru regions and interacted with residents facing severe difficulties due to heavy rains and floods.



## 4.5L affected by...

Continued from Page 1

Three 33 kv electric poles were damaged in Guntur district and 12 sub-stations were affected.

Further, 1,067 km long roads were damaged, floodwater overflowed at 129 places, 20 trees were uprooted and the natural calamity caused 110 traffic interruptions.

Nearly 1.50 lakh hectares of agriculture crops were damaged in 20 districts, besides 13,920 hectares of horticultural crops. Water supply was restored at Pedakakani in Guntur district after a summer storage tank was breached.

Meanwhile, the Pulichintala project in Bapatla discharged 5.43 lakh cusecs of floodwaters by 8 am on Monday.

Under the Municipal Administration and Urban Development department, 180 areas were inundated across the state, while 286 km long roads were also damaged. Likewise, 48.2 km long storm water drains and 6,901 street lights were damaged, along with five municipal school buildings and 21 km long water pipelines.

At Prakasam Barrage, 11.3

lakh cusecs of floodwaters were discharged by 8 am on Monday.

So far 15 people have died in Andhra Pradesh due to rain-related incidents in the past three days, following unprecedented rainfall caused by a depression in the Bay of Bengal, the government said on Monday. According to an official release, five people died at Mogalrajapuram in Vijayawada due to landslides and one person each at Vijayawada Rural, G Kondru mandal and Reddygudem mandal. They all belong to the NTR district.

"Five deaths in Guntur district. One teacher and two students travelling from Uppalapadu to Namburu were washed away in a local stream and an 80-year-old woman died when boulders fell on her in the first ward of Mangalagiri town," the release said.

Further, it said that another person was washed away in the Kondaveedu stream at Ponnakallu village in Guntur district. Besides rain-related deaths, three children drowned in Prakasam district's Markapuram division when they went swimming, the release said.

## CM visits...

Continued from Page 1

During his visit, the Chief Minister, who is personally overseeing the rescue efforts, immediately ordered the transfer of the elderly and infirm via ambulances. He expressed his sorrow over the difficulties faced by the elderly, children, and people with disabilities, and pledged to take urgent measures to restore normalcy. The Chief Minister also announced that medical camps would be set up to assist those suffering from various illnesses, and assured the affected residents that the State Government would support those who have lost property due to the floods.

## Naidu warns...

Continued from Page 1

Taking the information given by the minister seriously, the CM has ordered a report on the delay in food distribution in the area where the officials are on duty. However, the higher officials told the CM that those officers in VR were appointed on duty there as part of the bandobast. CM Chandrababu said on this occasion that if they don't want to work, they should leave their jobs and go home. When the people are suffering, officers acting reluctantly is not correct, said the CM and told the officials to coordinate with each other in distributing food. On this occasion, the CM advised the officials to talk to the officials of the neighbouring districts and bring another 3 lakh food packets and water bottles. A senior officer has been assigned to the work to oversee the flood relief efforts. He wanted to examine all the possibilities of providing fruits to the flood victims.

## Record 11,43,201...

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, officials from the Water Resources Department were put on alert, and vehicle traffic between Vijayawada and Seethanagar was halted. Before these measures, a large number of people had visited the Prakasam Barrage to witness the flood inflows and discharges. As a result, traffic was disrupted on the barrage, causing inconvenience to officials monitoring the flood levels upstream.

According to River Conservator and Krishna Central Division Executive Engineer (EE) K.V. Krishna Rao, the flood inflows upstream of the barrage have been decreasing. By 6 pm, the Prakasam Barrage had received a total of 11,27,801 cusecs of floodwater, and the barrage level reached 24.5 feet. Of this, 11,27,301 cusecs were discharged into the sea by lifting all 70 crest gates, with the remaining 500 cusecs released into canals, he said. Currently, the barrage crest level is at 23.7 feet, he added.

## Nunna Power Grid Sub-station...

Continued from Page 1

They responded promptly, using sandbags to block floodwaters and deploying JCB machines to dig road-side drains, diverting water to a nearby canal. Measures were also taken to pump out the rainwater that had entered the substation, thereby protecting the facility from potential tripping and damage.

Under these adverse conditions, the Nunna substation successfully supplied approximately 5,000 MW of power to the five states. This stable power supply was crucial in maintaining essential services and infrastructure during the flooding crisis. Power from Nunna is transmitted to Nellore and Kadapa, which collectively supply around 250 MW to Tamil Nadu. Additionally, the Odisha-Srikakulam-Visakhapatnam line delivers approximately 3,000 MW to Karnataka, while the Vemagiri-Chilakalurieta and Vemagiri-Nunna lines provide a further 1,500 MW.

## Another low pressure area...

Continued from Page 1

Rainfall has already been reported in many areas of Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema. The report also noted that the monsoon trough at mean sea level currently extends through Jaisalmer, Raisen, Chhindwara, the centre of a depression over East Vidarbha and adjoining Telangana, Machilipatnam, and continues southeastwards to the east-central Bay of Bengal.



# Vizag faces severe sand shortage

Govt is now relying solely on Aganampudi for sand distribution

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The district is grappling with critical sand shortage, leaving buyers frustrated due to limited stock availability. Builders are particularly hard-hit as the transport mafia inflates prices and restricts deliveries to a mere 20 tonnes for other districts.

Until recently, sand was stored at Bheemili and Aganampudi depots. However, the Bheemili centre has been shut down, and now the government is relying solely on Aganampudi for sand distribution. "The stock at Aganampudi is expected to last only about a week," said a local official. "The situation will continue to be challenging until the online system is fully operational."

The distribution network from Aganampudi is being exploited by transport operators. They are charging exorbitant fees under the guise of managing all logistical arrangements. Sand coupons are being issued at the Pinamadaka Secretariat near Aganampudi, but issues with incorrect details



Queue line for sand coupons at Pinamadaka Secretariat as sand supplies diminish at Aganampudi Depot

and misuse of Aadhaar cards have surfaced. "We are seeing significant problems with the distribution process, including fraud and inaccuracies," a source at the Secretariat commented.

Lorry owners are reportedly charging higher prices for sand to those who have pre-arranged transport, while others seeking lorries for their own sand are frequently turned away. "We are

forced to pay much higher prices due to illegal stockpiling and unregulated sales," said a buyer. Prices have surged from Rs.1,000 to Rs.2,000 per tonne.

With no sand reaches available in Visakhapatnam, the district is dependent on supplies from Srikakulam and Rajamahendravaram. "The situation is compounded by the limited amount of sand available for transportation,"

explained a local builder. "Larger lorries are delivering only 20 tonnes at a time, which drives up costs significantly."

At the Aganampudi centre, sand costs Rs 1,076 per tonne, but additional transportation expenses further burden consumers. Deliveries from Aganampudi to Gajuwaka are subject to transport fees of Rs.3,500 for a 10-tonne lorry, with lorry waiting fees ranging

between Rs.3,000 and Rs.4,000. "These extra costs are overwhelming," lamented a local resident.

Officials have assured that the sand shortage issue will be addressed in the near future. "We are working to implement an online system that will streamline distribution and ensure sand is delivered directly to applicants' homes," an official stated.



# Collector asks officials to stay alert until floodwaters recede

Prakasam Barrage experiences highest-ever flood inflows

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Krishna District Collector DK Balaji has issued urgent instructions to the officials on flood duty to remain vigilant until the floodwaters from River Krishna fully recede. Despite the recent reduction in flood inflows and rainfall, Balaji emphasised the need for ongoing caution and preparedness, during a review meeting with district-level officials at the Collectorate in Machilipatnam on Monday.

During the meeting, the Collector instructed the offi-

cial to stay alert as the Prakasam Barrage has experienced its highest-ever flood inflows of 11.43 lakh cusecs. Although flood levels are decreasing, there remains a risk of complications. So, the officials must maintain their diligence, he said.

Further, he said the drainage wing officials are particularly tasked with monitoring streams and taking precautionary measures to prevent breaches, ensuring the stability of flood management systems. Balaji urged officials to continue assisting affected pop-

ulations by collaborating with rescue teams. Those stranded in flooded areas are to be reported to the control room for prompt action, he added.

Meanwhile, he said efforts should be made to relocate people affected by the flood and ensure that all rescue operations are conducted efficiently.

Krishna district in-charge DRO G Sri Devi, ZP CEO Anand Kumar, RWS SE Siva Prasad, DEO Tahera Sultana, DSO Parvathi, DMHO Dr Geethabai, and other relevant officials attended the meeting.

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

# 275 trains cancelled, 149 diverted, 12 partially cancelled

As many as 275 trains were cancelled, 149 trains were diverted, and 12 trains were partially cancelled, said Narendra A. Patil, DRM Vijayawada, on Monday. He directed officials to assess the damage and develop a contingency plan for swift restoration, proactively inspect for potential breaches and prevent disruptions, monitor water levels at major bridges, and identify heavy inflow onto tracks. He also instructed coordination with SDRF and NDRF teams and state administration for evacuation measures and assistance.

He sought special catering arrangements to assist and contact the stranded staff residing in Singh Nagar, Bhavanipuram,

Milk Factory, Rajarajeswaripeta, and other affected areas.

He and a team of railway engineering officials inspected the Krishna Bridge in light of heavy inflow from the upper catchment area. He reviewed the water levels underneath the railway bridge and the speed restrictions currently in place. The DRM requested that engineering officials deploy staff 24/7 at the three bridges to assess the ground-level situation and to keep a continuous



check on water inflow.

Narendra A. Patil stated that dedicated teams are continuously working at the Command Control Office, Vijayawada, to monitor the situation in real-time and special help desks have been set up at major stations in the Vijayawada Division, SCR, to assist passengers with information on train cancellations and diversions. He also mentioned that a total of 275 trains were cancelled, 149 trains were diverted, and 12 trains were partially cancelled following breaches in the Kazipet-Vijayawada section due to heavy inflow of water. The DRM emphasised that railway authorities are working tirelessly to ensure passenger safety and restore operations at the earliest.

# Andhra receives power boats from Centre for flood relief operations in Vijayawada

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government on Monday received power boats which it asked from the Centre to carry out flood relief operations in Vijayawada, especially at a time when it was running short of them.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday requested Union Home Minister Amit Shah to dispatch power boats and additional NDRF teams to cope with the demanding flood emergency.

The Union Home Ministry assured Naidu that 40 power

boats and six helicopters would be sent to the southern state.

"Power boats reached Vijayawada. Following discussions with the Centre on Sunday, a large number of boats were dispatched from other states. Food is being distributed in Ajit Singh Nagar using the boats," said an official statement on Monday.

Without specifying the number of boats received, the statement added that many boats are being used to evacuate flood victims.

Meanwhile, Naidu directed officials to distribute clothes

to evacuees being sent to relief centres, while authorities are also distributing milk packets, food and water bottles to the flood-affected people.

The government is procuring food through private hotels, Durga temple and Akshaya Patra for distribution while Naidu is making another visit to the submerged localities.

Several parts of Vijayawada city have been flooded due to unprecedented rainfall, swollen rivulets and flood water inflows, disrupting normal life of over 2.7 lakh people.

# Heavy rains: Waltair Division cancels multiple trains

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The heavy rains continued to wreak havoc across the region, with the Waltair Division of the East Coast Railway (ECoR) closely monitoring the situation, especially in the South-Central Railway Zone. Divisional Railway Manager of Waltair Division highlighted the gravity of the situation, stating, "We are constantly monitoring the situation on South

Central Railway in view of the heavy rains and water flowing over the tracks."

"The water on the tracks in the Rayanapadu-Kazipet section has not yet receded; however, near Gunadala in Vijayawada, the water has subsided on two tracks, which are operational presently at restricted speed," the Divisional Railway Manager reported. In response to these challenges, the Waltair Division has had to



make tough decisions, including the cancellation of 12 trains originating from Visakhapatnam station. The disruption has also affected long-distance travellers, with 19 trains scheduled to pass through or arrive at the Waltair Division being cancelled as a precautionary measure.

"The safety of our passengers is our top priority," emphasised the Divisional Railway Manager. "We are monitoring

the situation continuously and have set up helpline numbers for passenger assistance. Public announcements and messages have been issued to inform passengers about the cancellations and the arrangements made."

The Division is not just focusing on cancellations but also on ensuring that stranded passengers receive the necessary support. Refund and cancellation facilitation centres have been swiftly established at

major stations, including Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram, Srikakulam, Naupada, and Rayagada. "For long-distance trains that are being received by the Waltair Division, we have made arrangements for food, tea, and water for the passengers," the Divisional Railway Manager assured. Passengers are advised to check the latest updates and make alternative travel arrangements as the weather situation evolves.

# 4th convocation ceremony at SRM held on a grand note

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

SRM University-AP hosted its prestigious fourth convocation ceremony on Monday, felicitating the graduates with their well-earned degrees for scholastic excellence. The event was graced by chief guest Padma Bhushan Senapathy Kris Gopalakrishnan, chairman of Axilor Ventures and co-founder of Infosys.

Kris Gopalakrishnan delivered the convocation address to the graduating class of 2024. With an analogy to the Paris Olympics 2024, Kris Gopalakrishnan ignited the graduating batch with key takeaways to ensure remarkable success in all their future endeavours. He stated, "The knowledge and skills that you have acquired from your university will equip you to face the problems that the world

poses. The strength of the university lies with the alumni. Remember to contribute to the society, your nation and moreover your alma mater."

Rohit Kapoor, chief executive officer, Food Marketplace, Swiggy, who was the guest of honour, applauded the students for their outstanding achievements and expressed his deep respect for SRM University-AP for establishing a new-age institute and preparing the students for an impactful future. "We must strive towards world-class standards in the case of academics, research, and innovation and derive nobility in becoming the superior version of yourselves," advised Kapoor.

SRM Vice Chancellor Prof Manoj K Arora, in his welcome address, said: "We are a multidisciplinary research-intensive university where education revolves around 5 I's -

Integrative curricula, Interdisciplinary Research and Learning, Innovation, Industry and International Collaborations and Inclusivity." During his briefing about the annual report, Prof Arora also highlighted the university's stellar growth and accomplishments in the past academic year.

Founder Chancellor of SRM Group of Institutions Dr TR Paarivendhar, Pro-Chancellor Dr P Sathyananarayan, Registrar Dr R Prem Kumar, Dean-Academic Affairs Dr Vinayak Kalluri other dignitaries, faculty, staff and parents of the graduating batch.

As many as 1,018 graduates, including 24 PhD scholars, were conferred their degrees on this momentous occasion, and 18 gold medalists, five silver medalists, and five bronze medalists were recognised for their outstanding achievements.



# APEPDCL intensifies efforts to restore power supply

Rains have affected 3,299 service connections and 56 agricultural connections across nine mandals and 60 villages



PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The Andhra Pradesh Eastern Power Distribution Company Limited (APEPDCL) is working relentlessly to restore the power supply disrupted by recent rains. APEPDCL Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) Prudhvi Tej Immadi has stated that restoration efforts are being carried out on a war-footing, ensuring minimal disruption to essential services.

"Under the direct instructions of Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, Energy Minister Gottipati Ravikumar, and Energy Secretary K. Vijayanand, we are in constant communication with our officials through teleconferences. Our priority is to resolve power issues with maximum efficiency and speed," said CMD Immadi.

To prevent any interruptions in vital services, special measures have been implemented. "We've issued specific directives to avoid any power cuts at government hospitals,



cell towers, and emergency service offices. Generators, pole drilling machines, poles, transformers, and all necessary equipment have been deployed across section offices to expedite the restoration process," Immadi explained.

The rains have severely affected 3,299 service connections and 56 agricultural connections across nine mandals and 60 villages in five APEPDCL circles. Thanks to the rapid response teams, 2,175 complaints were resolved within just one day. "Our call centre has received 2,583 complaints through the toll-free number 1912 and control room numbers, and our teams are working around the clock to address them," Immadi added.

He also highlighted the con-

tinuous efforts of 32 special teams, consisting of 365 personnel, who are working tirelessly across the five circles. "Our teams are on the ground, working nonstop to restore services. We urge consumers to stay vigilant, especially around damaged electric wires, fallen poles, and transformers."

For assistance with power outages, consumers can contact the toll-free number 1912 or reach out to their regional control rooms. Numbers include the Corporate Office (9440816373), Srikakulam (9490612633), Palasa (7382585630), Tekkali (7095875259), Vizianagaram (9490610102), Visakhapatnam (7382299975), Rajahmundry (7382299960), and Eluru (9440902926).

# Solar lamps given to flood-hit in V'wada

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In response to the recent heavy rains and subsequent flooding that disrupted power supplies in many parts of Vijayawada, the Energy Department has taken proactive measures to ensure that affected areas are not left in darkness. The department has commenced the distribution of solar lanterns to residents in these flood-stricken regions.

Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar, along with Special Chief Secretary of the Energy Department, K Vijayanand, demonstrated the functionality and benefits of these solar lanterns to Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu. The lanterns, designed to harness solar energy for illumination, can

also operate on conventional power sources, providing a versatile solution for areas experiencing power outages.

On Monday, the Energy Department delivered 1,000 solar lanterns to the Vijayawada Collectorate for distribution in flood-affected areas. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has directed that the lanterns be distributed through ward secretariats, which will assess the needs of residents and allocate the lanterns accordingly.

An additional 4,000 solar lanterns have been procured and will soon be distributed to further assist those impacted by the floods. Dr M Kamalakar Babu, Managing Director of AP Solar Power Corporation, was also present.

# Amaravati not affected by floods: Irrigation Minister

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Minister for Water Resources Development, Nimmala Ramanaidu, has categorically denied reports that floodwaters from the Krishna River have inundated Amaravati, the capital city of Andhra Pradesh.

"There is no floodwater in Amaravati. The capital city is intact and safe. Despite the Prakasam Barrage receiving over 11 lakh cusecs of floodwater, Amaravati remains secure, with no part of the city affected," Minister Ramanaidu clarified. The Minister urged the

public not to believe the false information being spread by YSRCP leaders regarding the safety of Amaravati. He also raised suspicions of 'foul play' in the drifting of four large boats that became stuck at the crest gates of the Prakasam Barrage.

Minister Ramanaidu attributed the severe flooding of the Budameru rivulet, which has submerged several areas, to the YSRCP's negligence in completing the necessary lining and extension works. He assured that the breaches in the Budameru rivulet would be repaired by Monday night.



# Over 6,000 people shifted to relief camps in Bapatla district

PNS ■ BAPATLA

Superintendent of Police Tushar Dudi has said that over 6,000 rain victims have been shifted to relief centres in the district.

As many as 10 villages have been marooned in the flood-water and road connectivity has been cut off to 20 island villages in Bapatla district.

The SP visited Penumudi, Donepudi and other affected villages on Monday. He directed the NDRF, SDRF and police machinery to shift the people of low-lying areas to the relief centres.

The SP said that the vulnerable areas are being monitored using drones. The NDRD, SDRF and police personnel are extending services in the flood affected villages including Chilumuru Lanka, Eepuru Lanka, Chintala Lanka, Pesarlanka, Avulu Vari Palem, Gajula Lanka, Tokalavaripalem, Thurakapalem, Tippalakatta, Kishkinda Palem, Tadikalapudi, Juvvalapalem, Srirangapuram in Kolluru mandal in the district. The victims of Chinthamotu, Pedalanka, Pesarlanka, Oleru and Pallipalem villages in



Kothagudem and Battiprolu mandals are being shifted to the relief camps.

Talking to the media, the SP said that the road connectivity to 20 villages was completely cut off as flood water overflowed on the road. Two police officers are monitoring the



## 40 boats, relief material kept ready, says Gottipati

PNS ■ BAPATLA

Minister for Energy Gottipati Ravi Kumar has said that 40 boats and other materials have been kept ready to take rescue and relief operations in the flood-affected villages of the district. The Minister reviewed the flood situation with District Collector Venkata Murali Krishna, MP Tenneti Krishna Prasad and former minister Nakka Ananda Babu here on Monday and they visited some of the affected areas. The Minister said that the Prakasam

barrage has received an unprecedented 11 lakh cusecs of water which would affect some of the areas in Bapatla district. The Minister directed the government departments to coordinate and work to carry out relief operations. "Over 40 boats have been kept ready to press into service. All arrangements have been made to distribute needed essential commodities, drinking water and food packets to the flood victims," the Minister said and appealed to the people living in vulnerable places to go to the relief centres.



## Commercial crops badly damaged by Krishna floods

PNS ■ MACHILIPATNAM

Commercial crops were badly damaged by the Krishna flood water in Avanigadda, Vyuuru and Penamaluru constituencies in Krishna districts. The standing crops including maize, guava, papaya, and banana were seen submerged in the Krishna floodwater.

The farmers raised yam, turmeric, vegetables, mirch and drumstick but all the crops were submerged in the Krishna flood water. If the crops continued to be submerged in the flood water for another two days, they would be rotten, the farmers lamented. The farmers

on the bank of the river Krishna and at island villages raised horticulture crops and they have incurred huge losses now, Venkateswara Rao, a leader of the farmers association, said. Some of the farmers have lost their cattle as they washed away in the flood water, he stated.

However, some farmers shifted their buffaloes and goats to safer places from the villages to the safer places. Minister for BC Welfare S Savitha accompanied by MLA Varla Kumar Raja visited some of the flood-affected areas in Thotavalluru village on Monday. She spoke to the flood victims and assured them

to make arrangements to send them to the relief camps.

In Nandigama constituency, villages in three mandals cut off from the outer world as they were surrounded by the Krishna flood water. The road connectivity between Nandigama and Chandrapadu was cut off as the flood water submerged in the road. The road connectivity to Veerulapadu was also disrupted as flood water overflowed on the road. Adding to the woes of flood victims, rain occurred in Nandigama on Monday. Paddy, cotton, black gram, chilli and vegetable crops were marooned in the flood water.

## GVMC launches new public grievance redressal system

People can submit their complaints and suggestions every Monday from 11 am to 1 pm

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) has officially launched its new Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS). The system aims to provide residents with a more efficient and transparent channel to voice their concerns and suggestions. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony,



transparent environment for the people of Visakhapatnam," he said.

Under the new system, people are invited to submit their grievances, complaints, and suggestions every Monday from 11 am to 1 pm. These submissions will be reviewed by senior GVMC officials during meetings at the headquarters, ensuring that each issue receives

thorough attention. To handle the anticipated volume of grievances, GVMC has introduced five dedicated counters for the PGRS. These counters will operate daily from 10.30 am to 5 pm, excluding government holidays. Each counter is specifically designated to manage different categories of complaints, ensuring issues are directed to the appropriate department.

## 15 vehicle loads of essentials sent, Collector flags off vehicles

PNS ■ RAJAHMUNDRY

District Collector P. Prashanthi flagged off 16 vehicles carrying essential commodities to the relief camps in Vijayawada on Monday.

The East Godavari government machinery, various voluntary organizations and the municipal corporation have arranged water bottles, milk packets, candles and other essentials for the flood victims of Vijayawada.

The material was sent in 16 vehicles for which the Collector flagged off here on Monday. Collector Prashanthi personally inspected the food prepared for the flood victims.

Talking to the media the Collector said that 26,000 food packets, 20,000 candles, 20,000 matchboxes, 25,000 biscuit packets, and 2 lakh water bot-



bles were sent for the flood victims. Moreover, the Rajahmundry municipal corporation also arranges 50,000 biscuit packets, 20,000 food packets and 20,000 water bottles.

The collector flagged off the vehicles at Saikrishna theatres.

Joint Collector S China Ramudu, DRO G Narasimulu and other officials were present.



## People being shifted to safety from low-lying areas: Collector

PNS ■ GUNTUR

District Collector S Nagalakshmi has said that the people living in the low-lying areas are being shifted to relief centres because of heavy floods to the River Krishna.

The Collector said that the flood water gushed into the Mahanadu colony under the MTMC limits. She said that over 3000 families are living in the localities. Since the river Krishna receives about 11.4 lakh cusecs of water, the people living in the low-lying areas are being evacuated to relief camps. Medical treatment is being provided to pregnant women and elderly people.

Later Collector Nagalakshmi, accompanied by Joint Collector A Bhargav Teja, Tenali sub-collector Sanjana Simha and other officials visited the flood victims of Hanumanpalem, Chilumurulanka, Kotturilanka, Sigganilanka and Bommavanipalem. She monitored the shifting of people to

relief centres. All the people living in island villages should be shifted to the relief centres as the flood level of Krishna River is likely to increase, she instructed the officials. In case the people in the low-lying areas refuse to go to relief centres, the revenue and police officials should explain the dangerous conditions and convince them to move to the rehabilitation centres.

"Until the flood water subsides, the special officers should monitor the situation at the flooded villages and take all necessary measures to ensure that the people in the rehabilitation centres do not suffer," she told the officials. The Collector inspected the relief centres set up on the campus of primary schools at Hanumanpalem. The Collector ordered the officials to provide food and other necessary facilities in the rehabilitation centre without any difficulty and medical officers should be available to provide medical services.

## 5,654 kg ganja, 100 g hash oil seized in 80 days

PNS ■ PADERU

The Alluri Sitharama Raju district police have seized a substantial amount of ganja and hash oil within just 80 days of the implementation of the State government's 100-day action plan. Addressing the media on Monday, District Superintendent of Police (SP) Amit Bardar announced the seizure of 5,654 kg of ganja and over 100

g of hash oil. This operation has led to the registration of 73 cases and the arrest of 183 individuals involved in the ganja trade.

"We have identified 265 individuals connected to these cases, and our relentless efforts have led to the arrest of 183 of them," SP Bardar said. The police have employed a multi-faceted approach to combat the ganja trade, including the establish-



ment of static check-posts, dynamic vehicle checks, and the strategic deployment of advanced technologies such as drones and sniffer dogs.

"We have set up five static check-posts operating 24/7, and conducted a total of 1,539 dynamic vehicle checks," SP Bardar added. "Additionally, three drones were deployed daily to identify areas where ganja is cultivated and monitor the movements of traf-

fickers. Thirty-two special NDPS teams were formed to track down and apprehend individuals who were evading the law in connection with the ganja trade," the SP said.

The police have also taken steps to educate the public about the harmful effects of ganja use. Awareness programmes have been conducted in schools and villages to raise awareness and promote a drug-free society.

## Mpox: Vizag district administration tightens vigil

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In view of the global outbreak of mpox, also known as monkeypox, the District Health Department has been directed to maintain heightened vigil, following Central guidelines.

To prevent the potential spread of mpox by international travellers, officials have established rigorous medical protocols at the airport. A team of medical staff is screening all incoming passengers, particularly those arriving from regions where the virus is prevalent. "Our top priority is to protect the health of our citizens," stated Dr P Jagadishwara Rao, District Medical and Health Officer.

Passengers from Central Africa, Africa, and other high-risk regions are being closely monitored for any signs of illness. In case of suspected cases, an isolation ward with five beds has been set up at the Chest and Infectious Diseases Hospital in Peda Walther. "This ward is equipped to handle patients exhibiting symptoms like fever and rashes," said Dr Rao.

A medical team is screening all incoming passengers at the airport



To ensure accurate diagnosis, samples from suspected cases will be collected and sent to the virology lab at KGH for testing. The serous fluid from blisters will be further analysed at a specialised lab in Pune for confirmation. In addition, a specialised ward with 20 beds has been established on the first floor of the casualty department at KGH. A committee of experienced doctors, led by Dr D Radhakrishna, Head of General Medicine, will provide medical care to individuals exhibiting suspected symptoms. "Our focus is on providing comprehensive care until recovery," said Dr Radhakrishna.

## KCR family should donate Rs 1k cr or Rs 2k cr: CM

Revnath lashes out at former KCR's inaction

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanath Reddy strongly criticised KCR and his family for their inaction amid the flood crisis in Telangana during a review meeting in Khammam.

The CM accused the Kalvakuntla family of failing to help flood-affected people despite the devastating heavy rains across the state.

"Our people have lost everything due to the floods, but the families of those who lost their lives and immediate assistance of Rs 10,000 for every house damaged by the floods. He also allocated Rs 5 crore to the Collectors as an immediate relief.

The Chief Minister said that while opposition leaders in AP (Jagan Mohan Reddy) are actively helping their people, the TG opposition has remained silent. "Opposition leaders should go to people first in such situations and report facts to the govern-



ment. If needed they should question the government. The main opposition leader of AP (Jagan) is also on the ground. Why is our opposition leader silent?" Revanath said.

He also criticised KTR, accusing him of enjoying himself in the US while the state faces a severe crisis. "It's okay for KTR to go to the US and enjoy life, but he shouldn't throw mud on Ministers Bhatti Vikramarka, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and Uttam Kumar Reddy who are on the ground," the CM said.



## Jagan pays tributes to YSR at Idupulapaya

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP president and former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy paid tributes to his late father, Dr. YS Rajasekhara Reddy, on the occasion of his 15th death anniversary at the YSR Ghat in Idupulapaya.

YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, accompanied by his wife, YS Bharathi, his mother, YS Vijayamma, and other family members, participated in special prayers held in memory of the late leader. They offered floral tributes at the YSR Ghat, honouring the legacy and contributions of Dr. YS Rajasekhara

Reddy. Several public figures also joined the family to pay their respects, adding to the solemnity of the event. After returning from Kadapa, where he paid respects to the late YSR, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy inspected the retaining wall along the Krishna River in the Krishna Lanka area of Vijayawada. During the visit, residents expressed their gratitude to YS Jagan, acknowledging that the retaining wall, constructed during his tenure as Chief Minister, had saved their lives. They shared their concerns, stating that without the wall, their lives would have been completely devastated.

## Over 300 buffaloes swept away in Krishna River

PNS ■ GUNTUR

As many as 300 buffaloes were swept away in the Krishna flood waters from island villages on Monday. The farmers at Pedalanka village in Rayapudi mandal were rearing over 300 buffaloes.

As the River Krishna flood water submerged the village the villagers were shifted to a relief centre on a boat. However the buffaloes were left at the village. As water submerged the village the buffaloes washed away in the swirling flood water.

Some of the buffaloes were seen washing away at the Prakasam barrage. The buffaloes were seen swimming but how long they could swim in the heavy flood water is now known.

When the incident to the notice of an official, he hoped that the buffaloes could swim ashore somewhere else the downstream of Prakasam barrage.



ACROSS THE STATES



Jilted lover kills college girl, ends life in Tripura

A Tripura college student died by suicide on Monday after fatally stabbing a class 9 girl who had rejected his proposal for a romantic relationship, a senior police officer said. The victim, Tania Baruah, was on her way to private tuition at Kanchanpur in North Tripura district around 8.30 am when the incident occurred, police said. According to North Tripura SP Bhanupada Chakraborty, Kartik Nath (21) blocked her path near Post Office Road and stabbed her in the neck and chest. "She fell to the ground, bleeding profusely. Shortly afterward, Nath slit his own throat," Chakraborty said. Both were taken to Kanchanpur sub-divisional hospital, where Tania Baruah was pronounced dead. Kartik Nath was referred to Dharmnagar for further treatment but also succumbed to his injuries, the SP added. Chakraborty said preliminary investigations suggest Nath, a second-year student at Kanchanpur Government Degree College, had proposed to Baruah. Her rejection may have prompted him to commit the violent act, he added.



Heavy rains in Gujarat; Bharuch gets 120 mm in two hours

Several parts of Gujarat received heavy rain on Monday, with Bharuch city getting 120 millimetres between 4pm and 6pm, officials said. The India Meteorological Department has forecast widespread rain in the state this week. Monday's rain came after a two-day pause. The state had seen extremely heavy rains last week, which caused widespread flooding. During the day, south Gujarat districts such as Bharuch, Tapi, Dangs and Navsari received heavy rain, with Songadh and Vyara talukas of Tapi district and Vaghaj in Dangs getting more than 200mm in a 12-hour period ending at 6pm, data from the State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC) showed. "Bharuch city got 120 mm between 4pm and 6pm. Purna and Ambika rivers in Navsari district were flowing above the danger mark and a high alert has been sounded. These are among 10 rivers and 132 reservoirs that are flowing above danger mark in the state," an official said.



RSS demands swift justice for women amid rising atrocities

National coordination conclave of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has condemned the incident of violence against a female doctor in West Bengal and said there was a necessity for revisiting laws and penal actions to expedite swift justice for women who suffer atrocities. Describing the incident in West Bengal as 'very unfortunate' and 'alarming', Sunil Ambekar, RSS Akhil Bharatiya Prachar Pramukh, said on Monday that self-defence skills for 'atmaraksha' (self-protection) should be imparted to girls at the school and college levels, as well as to working women, to empower them to protect themselves from such attacks. Addressing a press conference after concluding the three-day conclave called 'Samanway Baithak', he said there was a necessity for revisiting laws and penal actions to expedite swift justice for women who suffer atrocities.

AAP and corruption have become 'synonyms': Delhi BJP

Bharatiya Janata Party on Monday alleged corruption in the health department by the AAP government and claimed the Delhi Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) has taken cognisance of it. Addressing a press conference, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva alleged that AAP and corruption have become synonyms. He said the Arvind Kejriwal government runs away from all responsibilities and fulfils them by holding press conferences. Sachdeva added that our MLAs had filed a complaint with the ACB regarding scams

of the Delhi government's health department. An FIR is about to be registered, and Kejriwal's dark truths will be revealed. Meanwhile, the ACB officials said that they have received the complaint and are looking into the matter. Responding to the allegations Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said, "The officers working under the BJP LG bring files in a round-about way and I know that they are hatching various conspiracies to trap me." "I send these files back with long notes. This has made these officers upset with me. I did not issue any tender. Hang



Contribution of cooperative sector in development incomparable: Murmu

PNS ■ PUNE

The contribution of the cooperative sector in India's development is incomparable, President Droupadi Murmu said at a function in Maharashtra's Kolhapur on Monday. Addressing the golden jubilee celebrations of Shri Warna Women Cooperative Group in Warnanagar in the west Maharashtra city, the President said, "Trade and entrepreneurship have played

The President said cooperation was the best medium to make good use of the strength inherent in society

a crucial role in economic development, but the role of cooperative sector in the development of the country is incomparable." The President said cooperation was the best medium to make good use of the strength inherent in society. "Principles of cooperation follow the spirit of justice, unity, and fraternity envisaged in the Constitution. When people of different classes and ideologies unite for cooperation, they get the ben-

efit of social diversity," she said. Cooperatives have played an important role in the economic development of the country and household brands like Amul and Lijjat Papad are the examples of such cooperatives, Murmu added. She said cooperative groups have made a significant contribution in making India the world's largest milk producer, adding that such cooperatives produce and distribute milk and milk products in almost all states.

ANTI RAPE BILL

Bengal govt proposes capital punishment for convicts

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The draft of the anti-rape Bill, scheduled to be tabled by the Mamata Banerjee government in the West Bengal Assembly on Tuesday, proposes capital punishment for persons convicted of rape if their actions result in the victim's death or cause her to become vegetative.

Amendment) Bill 2024,' the legislation aims to enhance protection for women and children by amending and introducing new provisions related to rape and sexual offences. The draft Bill proposes to amend the newly passed Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 laws and the



Additionally, the draft stated that persons convicted of rape and gang-rape would receive a life sentence lasting for the rest of their natural lives. Titled 'Aparajita Woman and Child Bill, (West Bengal Criminal Laws and

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012' in their application to the state of West Bengal to enhance punishment and to constitute the framework for...expeditious investigation and trial of the heinous act of violence against women and children."

'BJP's membership drive to relaunch Bharat Vijay, Bhajapa Vijay campaign'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah asserted on Monday that the BJP's membership drive will again launch the campaign of 'Bharat Vijay' and 'Bhajapa Vijay'. Speaking at the launch of the party's membership drive, he said the programme will reinvigorate the organisation. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Prime Minister Narendra Modi ended the credibility crisis in politics and the BJP is seen as the most credible party. The party has consistently followed its ideology and works to build society, he said. Party president J P Nadda said the BJP is the only polit-

ical organisation which is run democratically and follows its constitution. Taking a swipe at the rivals, he said the BJP does not work from home in a clandestine way but follows a transparent process. With the party set to renew membership of its existing members and enrol new mem-

bers in line with its constitutional requirement, Shah echoed Nadda, saying no other party follows its membership process in a truthful and democratic manner like the BJP. The BJP is nourished by its members, Shah said, asserting that the party's lively organisation spawns its brimming enthusiasm. Both Nadda and Shah expressed confidence that the party will cross the milestone of 10 crore members in the drive as it did for the first time in 2014. During a similar membership drive in 2014 and afterwards, the BJP went on to form governments in several states, including in some for the first time.

Karnataka CM post not vacant, Siddaramaiah will continue: DK

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Monday said that the CM's post was not vacant and the incumbent Siddaramaiah will continue in it. He was reacting to senior Congress MLA and Administrative Reforms Commission Chairperson R V Deshpande's comments on Sunday expressing his wish to become the next Chief Minister. "The Chief Minister's post is not vacant. Our government is office under the leadership of Siddaramaiah. We could have spoken on this if the Chief Minister's post was vacant. The current Chief Minister will continue," Shivakumar said.

Addressing reporters here, the Karnataka Congress President said, "There is nothing wrong in him (Deshpande) desiring for the post, but such desires should not be expressed before the media. He is a senior leader, we respect him." Asked about the party's move if there is an adverse judgment in the MUDA case,

the Deputy CM said, "no adverse nothing, the Chief Minister will continue and work." Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is facing allegations of corruption in connection with the alleged Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) land allotment 'scam'. Karnataka Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot on August 16 accorded sanction under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and Section 218 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 for the commission of the alleged offences as mentioned in the petitions of Pradeep Kumar S P, T J Abraham and Snehamayi Krishna, in connection with the MUDA case.

SC grants bail to Kejriwal aide Bibhav Kumar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday granted bail to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar in the Swati Maliwal assault case noting that he has been in custody for over 100 days. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan also took into account that the prosecution has proposed to examine more than 51 witnesses and said the trial will take time to conclude. It also noted that since the charge sheet in the case has already been filed, Kumar's release will not cause any prejudice to the investigation. "Allegations are that the

petitioner, who is personal secretary to Delhi chief minister, assaulted the complainant-victim who is a Rajya Sabha MP.. Investigation in the case is complete. Charge sheet has been filed. We are not inclined to hear on the point as to where prima facie offense is made out. It's exclusive domain of trial court. "While we appreciate the concern to keep witnesses free from influence for conclusion of a fair and free trial, we are satisfied that desired protection can be afforded through other measures. Without expressing opinion on merits, we deem it appropriate to grant bail to petitioner," the bench said.

Governor's post should be abolished: Singhvi

Asserts persons of stature be appointed by consensus

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid growing instances of run-ins between governors and opposition-ruled state governments, senior Congress leader Abhishek Singhvi on Monday said the governor's post should either be abolished or a person of stature who is not into petty politics be appointed by consensus. Singhvi, who was elected to the Rajya Sabha unopposed from Telangana last week, also weighed in on the repeated standoffs between the Chair and the opposition in both Houses of Parliament and called for reforms to ensure the Chair is not partisan.

In an interview, the four-time MP said a very big failing of this government is that it "demeaned, devalued and diminished" every institution. Several governors acted as a second chief executive or a "second sword in the same scabbard". "Either the governor's post

be abolished or by consensus, a person of stature who is not into petty politics be appointed," Singhvi asserted. "Will a person like Gopalkrishna Gandhi do such a thing? I am taking his name, though our party nominated him for the vice president's post, but such people who do not cross the limit and do wrong, (either appoint them) or abolish the governor's post," the Congress Working Committee member said. If the governor becomes a challenge or threat to the chief minister then the governor has to go because elections are held for a CM, not a governor, Singhvi said.

Notice for no-confidence motion against Himachal Speaker

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Leader of Opposition in Himachal Pradesh Assembly Jai Ram Thakur on Monday gave a notice for a no-confidence motion against Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania, citing his behaviour "inside and outside" the House. The notice was submitted to the Secretary of the state Assembly by Thakur and other BJP MLAs. Later, the BJP legislators called on Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla and apprised him of the state's financial plight, saying an "emergency-like situation" had been created in Himachal Pradesh.

Accelerate safety measures to reduce road traffic deaths: WHO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The World Health Organization on Monday called on countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region to accelerate measures to reduce road traffic deaths, a leading cause of mortality among young people aged 15-29. "Vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists and two or three-wheelers constitute 66 per cent of all reported road traffic deaths in our region," said Saima Wazed, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia, in her address at the 15th World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion (Safety 2024) which began here today. She emphasised that the roads and their networks need to be designed prioritising

those most at risk -- children and adolescents, people with disabilities, pedestrians and other vulnerable groups. The WHO South-East Asia Region accounted for 330,223 of the 1.19 million estimated global road traffic deaths in 2021, representing 28 pc of the global burden, the WHO said in a statement. With 70 per cent of the global population projected to live in urban areas by 2030, demand for public transport will surge. The WHO South-East Asia Region, amid rapid urbanisation, faces shared challenges -- a high prevalence of motorised two and three-wheelers, inadequate traffic injury data, poor pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, and limited emergency services, it said.

Unlike high-income countries, where road safety measures often focus on car occupants, low and middle-income

wheelers who are disproportionately at higher risk. Strengthening trauma and emergency care systems, enhancing road safety data, strong leadership and promoting collaboration among all stakeholders are essential for improving road safety, the statement said. "I am a great believer in collaborations and partnerships -- and expanding these to non-traditional stakeholders," said the regional director. "This can be our moment to rethink and redo mobility for healthy cities. A holistic approach requires a cross-cutting, multi-sectoral approach, requiring collaboration with local governments, urban planners, traffic policing, law enforcement and others," she added.



countries need to prioritise the safety of vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists and riders of two and three-





www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

## India's special China problem

S Jaishankar has highlighted India's 'Special China problem,' one that is deeply rooted in the unresolved border disputes

India-China relations have long been fraught with challenges, but recent remarks by India's External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar have brought the depth of these issues into sharper focus. Jaishankar has said that India has a "special China problem," which he emphasized is distinct from the more general concerns that the rest of the world, including Europe and the United States, has with China. Jaishankar's comments come at a time when countries globally are grappling with what he termed the "general China problem." This problem, characterised by economic and national security debates, is not unique to India. Across Europe and the United States, policymakers are increasingly preoccupied with China's growing influence and the challenges it poses. From trade imbalances to concerns about Chinese technology in critical infrastructure, these issues have sparked widespread scrutiny of China's global role. However, India's situation is further complicated by its unique geopolitical and economic circumstances. India shares a long and contested border with China, which has been the site of several military standoffs over the years, the most recent and severe of which began in May 2020 in eastern Ladakh.



India's "special China problem" goes beyond the broader concerns of the international community. It is rooted in the unresolved border dispute between the two nations, which has led to a prolonged military standoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh. The ongoing border tensions have necessitated the deployment of approximately 50,000-60,000 troops by both sides, creating a volatile situation that has yet to see a lasting resolution. Diplomatic efforts to resolve these issues continue, with the 31st meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) taking place on August 29 in Beijing. However what is interesting is that despite tensions and border skirmishes India China trade has flourished and many importer in India make regular rounds to source stuff from China to sell in the Indian market. But Jaishankar's remark could mean a shift in the official policy vis a vis China. If Govt changes its policy, Chinese goods and investments may have to face more barriers dissuading the Chinese investors. Jaishankar also highlighted the economic dimensions of India's relationship with China, pointing out that the trade deficit and the nature of Chinese investments are areas of significant concern. Indeed security is non negotiable and must be implemented in letter and spirit. But at the same time the commerce should not be thought of as an impediment. If one thing that can improve the relations between two countries, it is trade. However, India could restrict Chinese investment in security-sensitive areas such as telecommunications and digital cyber space.

As we examine contemporary international politics, it is impossible to ignore the striking parallels between Orwell's dystopian vision and our current reality. Concepts such as "Big Brother," "doublethink," and "post-truth" have transcended Orwell's novel and become disturbingly relevant in today's world. The manipulation of truth, pervasive surveillance, and the rise of populist authoritarianism are phenomena that closely mirror the dangers Orwell warned against. The term "post-truth" has become a defining characteristic of modern political discourse, echoing Orwell's portrayal of a world where objective truth is malleable. In "1984," the Ministry of Truth constantly altered historical records to match the Party's shifting narrative, keeping the populace in a state of ignorance and making it impossible for them to challenge the Party's authority. Today, the concept of post-truth is equally relevant. In 2016, the Oxford Dictionary even named "post-truth" the Word of the Year, highlighting its prevalence in contemporary discourse. In this post-truth era, emotional appeals and personal beliefs often overshadow objective facts, making it easier for those in power to manipulate public opinion. Politicians and media outlets selectively present information, distort facts, or even fabricate narratives to support their agendas. This erosion of truth creates a divided society, much like the world Orwell depicted, where

## Orwell's vision remains as relevant as ever

In an era where "post-truth" and "Big Brother" have transcended fiction to become disturbing reality, Orwell's vision stands as relevant as ever

In his seminal work "1984", George Orwell posits that "those who control the present control the past; those who control the past control the future." This powerful assertion underscores the terrifying consequences of manipulating history and truth. In the dystopian world of "1984", the ruling Party wields absolute power by constantly rewriting history to align with its agenda, erasing inconvenient truths, and ensuring that its version of reality is the only one that exists. This manipulation of truth is key to maintaining the Party's unchallenged dominance, as it keeps the population ignorant and compliant.

As we examine contemporary international politics, it is impossible to ignore the striking parallels between Orwell's dystopian vision and our current reality. Concepts such as "Big Brother," "doublethink," and "post-truth" have transcended Orwell's novel and become disturbingly relevant in today's world. The manipulation of truth, pervasive surveillance, and the rise of populist authoritarianism are phenomena that closely mirror the dangers Orwell warned against. The term "post-truth" has become a defining characteristic of modern political discourse, echoing Orwell's portrayal of a world where objective truth is malleable. In "1984," the Ministry of Truth constantly altered historical records to match the Party's shifting narrative, keeping the populace in a state of ignorance and making it impossible for them to challenge the Party's authority. Today, the concept of post-truth is equally relevant. In 2016, the Oxford Dictionary even named "post-truth" the Word of the Year, highlighting its prevalence in contemporary discourse. In this post-truth era, emotional appeals and personal beliefs often overshadow objective facts, making it easier for those in power to manipulate public opinion. Politicians and media outlets selectively present information, distort facts, or even fabricate narratives to support their agendas. This erosion of truth creates a divided society, much like the world Orwell depicted, where



SANTHOSH MATHEW

consensus on basic facts becomes increasingly elusive. Orwell's concept of "Big Brother" — the omnipresent surveillance state that monitors every aspect of citizens' lives — is also frighteningly relevant today. In "1984", the Party uses telescreens and hidden microphones to ensure that no dissenting thought or action goes unnoticed, fostering a climate of fear and paranoia that effectively silences opposition. In our contemporary world, mass surveillance has become a reality on a global scale, with governments implementing extensive surveillance programs under the guise of national security. The revelations by Edward Snowden in 2013 exposed the extent to which governments were spying on their citizens, collecting vast amounts of data on phone calls, emails, and internet activity. The boundaries between state and corporate surveillance are increasingly blurred as tech giants like Google, Facebook, and Amazon collect vast amounts of data on users' online behavior, often with minimal transparency. Today's populist leaders have mastered the art of doublethink, often making contradictory promises or statements that their followers accept without question. They may decry the "elite" while simultaneously benefiting from elite

THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN STATE AND CORPORATE SURVEILLANCE ARE INCREASINGLY BLURRED AS TECH GIANTS LIKE GOOGLE, FACEBOOK, AND AMAZON COLLECT VAST AMOUNTS OF DATA ON USERS' ONLINE BEHAVIOR, OFTEN WITH MINIMAL TRANSPARENCY

status themselves or champion "freedom" while implementing policies that curtail personal liberties. This ability to manipulate and distort reality is a hallmark of populist rhetoric, much like it was for Orwell's Party. The rise of populism in the 21st century has also brought a resurgence of authoritarian tendencies. Leaders who once espoused democratic values increasingly resort to autocratic measures to consolidate power. Whether it's the undermining of judicial independence, the suppression of the free press, or the erosion of checks and balances, these actions mirror the totalitarian regime depicted in "1984". Orwell's "Animal Farm", while serving as an allegory for the Russian Revolution and the subsequent rise of the Soviet Union, offers themes that are universally applicable. The story of the farm animals' rebellion against their human oppressors, only to find themselves under the tyranny of their fellow animals, is a powerful commentary on the cyclical nature of power and corruption. In contemporary politics, the concept of "Snoogate" — a term used to describe politically motivated surveillance scandals — is reminiscent of the betrayal and manipulation seen in "Animal Farm". Orwell's dystopian novels were

products of their time, reflecting the anxieties and political realities of the 20th century. However, their relevance has only grown with time, as the themes they explore have become increasingly pertinent today. The rise of surveillance states, the erosion of truth, the manipulation of language, and the rise of authoritarianism are all issues that transcend national borders. In China, for example, the government's use of technology to monitor its citizens has created a digital dystopia reminiscent of Orwell's vision. The implementation of a social credit system, where citizens are scored based on their behavior and loyalty to the state, is a chilling example of how technology can be used to enforce conformity and suppress dissent. Similarly, in Russia, the government's control over the media and its use of propaganda to shape public opinion is a textbook case of Orwellian doublethink. The global reach of Orwell's ideas is a testament to the universality of his concerns. Whether in the context of a liberal democracy or an authoritarian regime, the themes of "1984" and "Animal Farm" resonate deeply with those who value freedom and truth. (The writer is an associate professor, views expressed are personal)

## PICTALK



Clouds hover over the Delhi as vehicles pass by the Vikas Minar, in New Delhi

PTI

## A journey from corporate grind to personal fulfillment

There are countless opportunities for personal growth and creative fulfillment that we often set aside in our pursuit of material success

I was having dinner with a friend on a recent visit to Mumbai. He quit a high-profile corporate job a few years back. As he settled into a new unknown routine, he started experimenting. He wrote articles on the relevance of festivals in the modern world, moderated a talk show, has started learning Sanskrit to read the scriptures in original, participates in marathons, and loves to cook.



Not surprisingly, his life mirrors mine. We got around to discussing another mutual ex-colleague, who was recently in the hospital due to a medical scare which could be attributed to a life spent on a stress-inducing work schedule. He has recently crossed the age of retirement but has accepted an extension. I told him rather bluntly that he should stop working, a sentiment that his wife reciprocated. The response was an expected line, "What will I do if I take retirement?" I immediately listed the number of things that he could do, the chief among them being to take care of his health, and

could earn. Even those limited means were better than what most had, and which helped us to dream and create a list of things that we wanted to do. We pursued a few of these with a single-minded devotion particularly the ones related to materialistic possessions, ignoring others that were mostly related to our creative side that we tried to suppress. Many of us have now reached a level of comfort that enables us to have a relook at the ones that we missed. A friend has started learning the keyboard. Another friend started taking flying lessons and was looking forward to completing the hours necessary to earn a license. Now in the reverse count of my life, I realise that I wish to travel, I want to write, I have the urge to make friends, and I want to help others to dream. Many like me wish to alleviate the drudgery of the majority so that at least the coming generations can look forward to creating their bucket list. We have seen many initiatives taken by the government over the past few

decades to create an ecosystem to help the less fortunate. Corporations also earmark part of profits in a separate fund as social responsibility. There are individuals from certain communities who donate a percentage of their annual earnings for the purpose. There are faiths actively involved in the betterment of many. I have often wondered about the miracles that we can achieve if all these agencies and individuals come together to ensure that future generations have an option. There is always an answer to the query, "What will I do?" We need to look within and then look around. There is so much to do, and so little time. Mark Twain summed it up well, "Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones that you did do."

(The writer is an author, speaker, coach, arbitrator and strategy consultant and conducts workshops on creative writing; views are personal)



SANJAY CHANDRA

## STOP THE DEMOLITION DRIVE

Madam — This refers to 'Demolition notices leave the poor along Boin Lake dazed' (Sept 1). The news of HYDRRA demolition drive operations in and around Hyderabad came like a bolt from the blue. Demolition drive operations is creating havoc all over the Telangana. The Telangana state government is hell-bent on demolishing houses, buildings in the name of illegal structures by HYDRRA. Demolition drive operations and the orders issued by the Revenue Department of Medchal-Malkajgiri district to vacate their houses in a couple of days dazed the residents is extreme tyranny and sheer inhumane. People living near Boin Lake in Hasmathpet, are panic-stricken. They are at their wit's end what to do? whom to approach? They are being displaced and being rendered homeless without prior eviction notice is quite unconstitutional, unjustified, undemocratic and unwarranted. Despite possessing and retaining the relevant registered documents their houses are being pulled down and demolished is most distressing and unfortunate. The demolition drive operations are in full swing all over Telangana. The Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy must stop this demolition drive operations on the humanitarian grounds. People have been living and residing for many years as some of their properties belong to ancestors they got their properties registered in their names. Demolition drive operations started all over Telangana. Mahabubnagar demolition drive operations is shocking and heart-rending sparked outrage and widespread condemnation where the houses belonging to the poor, physical challenged and visual impaired individuals pulled down and demolished. The government must ponder over the poignant plight of the physical challenged, visually impaired individuals and the poor and desist and refrain from demolishing their houses near nalas or lakes areas without providing alternative on the humanitarian grounds.

Zubair Khan | Hyderabad

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Prioritising security over trade



In reference to External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's statement regarding India's unique challenges with China, it is evident that security concerns in regions such as the Northeast,

Ladakh, the Indian Ocean, and neighboring countries like Pakistan and the Maldives far outweigh trade considerations. China's aggressive posturing with the U.S., Japan, Taiwan, and its dominant trade practices with European countries and Australia do little to alleviate our issues with them. The Indian Ocean has become a battleground for global superpowers, largely due to Chinese threats and aspirations for supremacy. It is clear that security and trade issues with China cannot be addressed simultaneously.

Reducing our reliance on China for semiconductors, Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients, and the operation and maintenance of Chinese-imported machinery is far more crucial than foreign direct investment from China. While the EAM is undoubtedly well-equipped to handle these multiple concerns, it is imperative to set clear priorities to effectively address them.

Vinod Johri | New Delhi

## MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Madam—This is not the first time MP Kangana Ranaut has indulged in controversy. Earlier too, a couple of months ago, after a CISF officer allegedly slapped Ranaut at Chandigarh airport, the officer was reportedly heard saying that her mother participated in the farm agitation and had defamed the women who joined the protests by alleging they were paid to do so. This time again she used the irresponsible and malicious statements like "dead bodies were hanging and rapes were taking place during the 2020-21 farmers' agitation". In a recent interview with a Hindi daily, the actress turned BJP MP described the farmers' movement as an anti-national force engaged in destabilizing India with the help of "external forces". Kangana's remarks are unacceptable as the farmers during their agitation lost more than 700 of their comrades. She needs to tender an unconditional apology from the farmers for her utterances.

S.K. Khosla | Chandigarh

## A G NOORANI IS NO MORE

Madam — In the passing of Abdul Ghafoor Noorani, the country has lost a towering legal luminary, a scholar, a political analyst, and a public intellect. His passing at the age of 93 marks the end of an era—one defined by a relentless pursuit of justice, profound intellectual rigour, and a commitment to the principles that fortified modern India's democratic framework. The prolific author made indelible contributions to legal scholarship and political discourse in India for over six decades. As a relentless defender of justice and the Constitution, Noorani will always be remembered most by the marginalised and those who seek to challenge the structures of power and exclusion. Unlike many others in his profession who would have sought high positions or rewards in the later years of life, Noorani never did.

Ganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com





## FIRST COLUMN REVITALIZING THE WORKPLACE

Yoga and meditation can light up the dull and often tense atmosphere at workplaces



SAKSHI SETHI

In today's fast-paced, high-stress work environments, organizations are increasingly seeking ways to support the well-being of their employees. Among the most effective and holistic approaches are the practices of yoga and meditation. These ancient techniques, rooted in mindfulness and physical wellness, have transcended their spiritual origins to become powerful tools for enhancing mental and physical health in modern workplaces. Incorporating yoga and meditation into the daily routine of employees not only benefits individual well-being but also significantly impacts organizational productivity and culture.

The modern workplace is often characterized by high levels of stress, tight deadlines, and the pressure to constantly perform. A study published in the Journal of Occupational Health Psychology found that employees who participated in the workplace yoga program experienced significant reductions in perceived stress levels. Participants even reported reductions in musculoskeletal pain, particularly in the lower back, neck and shoulders, areas commonly affected by prolonged sitting. The study found that employees who practised yoga reported higher levels of emotional well-being and lower levels of psychological distress. Another study published in the Journal of Managerial Psychology examined the effects of workplace yoga on organizational culture.

It found that yoga contributed to a more positive and supportive work environment by fostering better communication, teamwork and a sense of community among employees. Many office workers spend long hours sitting at desks, which can lead to a range of physical issues, includ-



ing poor posture, back pain and repetitive strain injuries. Over time, these physical ailments can decrease productivity and increase absenteeism. Yoga addresses these issues by improving flexibility, strength, and posture. The various poses and stretches in yoga help to relieve tension in the neck, shoulders and lower back, common problem areas for office workers. Additionally, the emphasis on breathing exercises improves circulation and oxygenation, leading to increased energy levels and overall vitality. This can strengthen workplace relationships, improve communication, and foster a sense of community and mutual support.

A positive work environment, where employees feel valued and connected, leads to higher morale, reduced turnover and a more cohesive and productive team. The benefits of meditation in the workplace are well-documented. Regular meditation practice has been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, lower blood pressure and improve sleep quality. Employees who meditate regularly are more likely to exhibit improved focus, emotional intelligence, and the ability to manage stress. This not only enhances individual performance but also contributes to a more harmonious and collaborative work environment. Mentally, yoga promotes relaxation and reduces stress by regulating the autonomic nervous system, which governs the body's stress response. The mindful breathing techniques and meditative aspects of yoga help calm the mind, reduce anxiety and enhance mental clarity.

For employees, this means better focus, improved decision-making and greater resilience in the face of workplace challenges. The cumulative effect of these benefits is a more productive, engaged, and satisfied workforce. The modern workplace is often characterized by high levels of stress, tight deadlines, and the pressure to constantly perform. Moreover, prolonged stress can have severe consequences on employees' mental and physical health, leading to issues such as anxiety, depression and chronic illnesses. Therefore, investing in employee well-being through practices like yoga and meditation is not just a trend but a strategic move that can yield substantial returns.

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

## E-commerce giants versus mom-and-pop stores



UTTAM GUPTA

Amazon's aggressive pricing strategies could lead to a massive e-commerce expansion, capturing half of India's retail market within the next decade



At the launch of the Pahle India Foundation's report 'Net Impact of E-Commerce on Employment and Consumer Welfare in India' on August 21, 2024, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal took pot shot at the world's biggest e-tailer Amazon, for selling products directly to consumers and indulging in "predatory pricing" that could lead to massive growth of e-commerce capturing half of Indian retail market ten years from now. This would adversely impact an estimated 100 million small retailers across the country and in turn, lead to "social disruption".

E-commerce, put simply, is the practice of buying and selling goods or services using the Internet. Predatory pricing involves setting prices for a product at an unrealistically low level to undercut the competition and gain market share. Generally practised by a new player in the market, predatory pricing violates antitrust laws even as it seeks to create a monopoly. Goyal opines that Amazon is selling products on its e-commerce platform at unrealistically low prices which results in heavy losses estimated to be about a billion dollars annually. To fund these losses, it brings the money from its parent but camouflages it as foreign direct investment (FDI). Any FDI in the country is normally welcome given its contribution to capital formation, accelerating economic growth and adding to the foreign exchange kitty. But, the dollars brought by Amazon don't serve this purpose.

In 2020 also, he had taunted the Amazon boss for the latter's claim to bring a few billion dollars into India. Then, he had charged that Jeff Bezos was bringing money to make up for the huge loss the company was incurring in its operations in the country. He also voiced concern over the harm it was causing to millions of small retailers. Amazon essentially operates the "market-place" model of e-commerce - a special dispensation carved out by the Narendra Modi Government under which 100 per cent FDI is permitted.

The "market-place" is a platform where vendors sell their products to consumers even as its owner (say, Amazon) merely

E-COMMERCE, PUT SIMPLY, IS THE PRACTICE OF BUYING AND SELLING GOODS OR SERVICES USING THE INTERNET. PREDATORY PRICING INVOLVES SETTING PRICES FOR A PRODUCT AT AN UNREALISTICALLY LOW LEVEL TO UNDERCUT THE COMPETITION AND GAIN MARKET SHARE

acts as a facilitator. The marketplace owner books orders, raises invoices, arranges deliveries, accepts payments, handles rejections, warehousing and so on but can't undertake "direct selling." Considering that the operator is only expected to provide services instead of a fee, there is no question of any loss.

Yet, Amazon is incurring huge losses. The losses incurred by Amazon are due to huge discounts on the products sold on the platform as well as expenses on promoting exclusive brands. But the discount is normally given by the seller; this is also true of money spent on promotion. The service provider can't do it unless he is also masquerading as the seller. Do the rules permit direct selling?

Under the 2016 guidelines (Press Note PN issued by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade or DPIIT in the Ministry of Commerce and Industries), the permission for 100 per cent FDI in the "market-place" is subject to two main riders viz, "The entity cannot permit more than 25 per cent of total sales on its platform from one vendor or its group companies. Further, it can't directly or indirectly influence the sale price." Sans any specification as to "who the vendor is", a firm connected with the "market-place" (either its subsidiary or a joint venture (JV) with an Indian company) is eligible. In other words, each such entity could control up to 25 per cent of sales on the platform. So, you have companies like Cloudtail - an Amazon venture in partnership with a firm owned by Narayan Murthy - operating as lead sellers on the platform. Thus, contrary to the real intent of the policy which disallowed the e-commerce platform owners from direct selling to individual consumers, the fine print permitted them to do so, albeit through a subsidiary or JV. This is precisely what the e-commerce

merchants have been doing. They were operating as direct sellers, controlling inventory, giving discounts and so on. A clarification issued by the DPIIT on December 26, 2018, said that "the owner of the marketplace or its subsidiary or its joint venture (JV) with an Indian company can't have ownership of the seller." Further, "a seller on the platform can't source more than 25 per cent of its inventory from a firm connected with the latter." Foreign investors can circumvent the first rider by having less than 50 per cent shareholding in the seller firm and arguing that they have no control (majority) over the latter. The marketplace owner can also sell his "own" product through its wholesale arm on the platform. All that the wholesale arm needs to ensure is to restrict supplies to the seller within the 25 per cent threshold. Thus, the clarification hasn't helped much in diluting their role as dominant sellers. No wonder, small traders, whom the e-commerce platform was intended to help have suffered heavily.

This is because the business that should have gone to the former was appropriated by the latter i.e. the dominant seller owned by itself. The small retailers haven't got relief from the court. In 2019, Delhi Vyapar Mahasangh (DVM) complained to the Competition Commission of India (CCI) alleging anti-competitive behaviour by Amazon Seller Services (ASS) and Flipkart Internet Private Limited (FIPL).

It argued that ASS and FIPL had entered into exclusive sales agreements with smartphone makers to sell certain phones through a small number of preferred sellers and offering to pay for part of the discount that such sellers would offer during key sales periods such as Flipkart's big bullion day and Amazon's Prime Day. Prima facie, the CCI agreed with DVM's contention and ordered a probe by the

Director General (DG) - Investigation. ASS and FIPL went up to the Supreme Court (SC) to get the order quashed. In August 2021, dismissing their appeal, the SC ordered "the CCI - DG will complete the probe. In its recent findings, the CCI-DG has charged ASS and FIPL with indulging in 'predatory pricing' and violation of antitrust laws. The latter will appeal against this starting a fresh round of never-ending litigation. In the end (if at all the result comes), Amazon et al will get away with paying some penalty. How can the government get out of this mess? It could further tighten the rules to say that platform owners can't hold even one per cent equity in the seller. Further, the former's wholesale arm must not supply even one per cent of stocks of the latter. This is an abhorrent idea. It can't be implemented. Besides, it will be a retrospective change of policy and send a wrong signal. The way forward is to make obvious and straightforward what the bureaucrats had already done in a 'subtle' way. The government should say that '100 per cent FDI is allowed in retail in all forms, single brand or multi-brand retail (MBR), online or offline (currently, while FDI in MBR online is completely barred, in MBR offline, 51 per cent foreign investment is allowed subject to riders which tantamount to completely barring it. All these distinctions should go). With this, even as Amazon et al can continue with direct selling to consumers alongside running a marketplace model, Indian retailers including the millions of mom-and-pop stores will also have 'unrestrained' access to foreign capital thereby ensuring a level playing field.

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

## Envisioning a feminist world: Building a just and inclusive future

The 4th Asia Pacific Feminist Forum seeks to challenge the patriarchal systems that dominate the world today, writes SHOBHA SHUKLA

The 4th Asia Pacific Feminist Forum (APFF) is set to take place next month in Chiang Mai, Thailand, under the theme "Feminist world-building: Creative energies, collective journeys." This theme highlights the importance of uniting people of all genders who are dedicated to defending human rights and promoting gender equality. The forum aims to collectively resist the patriarchal, militarized, and greed-driven world we currently inhabit, envisioning instead a feminist world order.

**What is a Feminist World Order?**

A feminist world order envisions a different kind of development model, one rooted in sharing and caring rather than power and violence. Unlike the

patriarchal systems that dominate today, where power is concentrated in the hands of a few through violence and exploitation, a feminist system emphasizes care, solidarity, and the equitable redistribution of power. This system aspires to be socially just and ecologically sustainable, ensuring justice and sustainability for everyone, everywhere. At its core, this vision is grounded in the principles of development justice.

Abia Akram, founder and CEO of the National Forum of Women with Disabilities in Pakistan, describes a feminist world as a place where women and all diverse genders can fully realize their strength and contribute meaningfully at the grassroots level. In her view, such a world would bring

about systematic changes through transformative laws and legal practices that are aligned with human rights. Migrant rights activist Eni Lestari, Chairperson of the International Migrants Alliance, shares her perspective on the feminist world order based on her decades of experience in feminist movements. She observes that neoliberal globalization has exacerbated structural exploitation, with each new crisis worsening poverty, displacement, and unemployment. Having migrated from Indonesia during the 1997 Asian financial crisis, Eni highlights that migration has become an integral part of the economic development strategy for many capitalist countries, with nearly 300 million people now living

as migrants worldwide. Eni envisions a feminist world as one where economic and political environments treat everyone with fairness and equality, eliminating the need for migration or displacement as a means of survival. In such a world, women would lead and ensure that justice and equality are upheld for all members of society.

**Feminist World: A Joyous and Inclusive World**

Ivy Josiah, a women's rights activist and former President and Executive Director of Malaysia's Women's Aid Organisation, describes a feminist world as a joyous and inclusive one, where no one is left behind—not just as a tagline, but in reality. She believes that if feminists lead the world, it would be a peaceful one, as



war is a choice, and so is peace.

**Feminist World: Anti-Capitalism**

A feminist world would stand in stark opposition to capitalism, which prioritizes profit maximization for a tiny elite while subjecting the majority of people and the planet to unbridled exploitation. Ivy argues that a feminist world would not serve the interests of the wealthy few but would instead be characterized by equitable resource distribu-

tion.

**Shrinking Spaces for Civil Society:** Abia Akram raises concerns about the shrinking spaces for civil society organizations under the current political systems. She argues that creating an enabling environment where everyone has equal rights and opportunities is missing from the agendas of many countries. Budgetary allocations often fail to include a gender perspective, resulting in inadequate resources and opportunities for women and girls with disabilities, transgender individuals, and LGBTQI-AP+ communities. Abia asserts that meaningful engagement and equitable representation from feminist movements are essential for ensuring justice for all.

**The Present World Order:**

The present world order, driven by patriarchy, fundamentalism, militarism, and corporate capitalism, stands as the anti-thesis of a feminist world order. This model has transferred wealth, power, and resources from the working people to the rich, and from developing countries to wealthy ones. The resulting financial, environmental, food, and energy crises have devastated the lives of women, particularly in the Global South.

**Transformative Shifts of the Development Justice Model**

The current world order urgently needs to be replaced with a development justice model that addresses the inequalities of wealth, power, and resources between countries, between rich and poor, and between men and women

and gender-diverse communities. This model is grounded in five transformative shifts: redistributive justice, economic justice, social and gender justice, environmental justice, and accountability to the people.

The Asia Pacific Feminist Forum (APFF) plays a crucial role in advancing the vision of a feminist world order. Organized by the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), this tri-annual event brings together feminists and women's rights activists of all genders from across Asia and the Pacific.

(Shobha Shukla is the founding Managing Editor and Executive Director of CNS. Views are personal)



IN BRIEF



Gold declines Rs 250; silver tumbles by Rs 1,700

Gold prices declined by Rs 250 to Rs 74,100 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday due to tepid demand from local jewellers and retailers. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 74,350 per 10 grams in the previous session on Friday. Silver also tumbled by Rs 1,700 to Rs 85,500 per kg due to reduced offtake by industrial units and coin makers, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also fell by Rs 250 to Rs 73,750 per 10 grams. Traders attributed the fall in gold prices to subdued demand from local jewellers and stockists. Globally, Comex gold was trading higher at USD 2,531.10 per ounce. "Gold prices had surged to USD 2,564 per ounce, driven by a weaker dollar and safe-haven demand amid rising geopolitical tensions in the Middle East," Kaynat Chainwala, AVP-Commodity Research, Kotak Securities, said.



ED raids Kerala man accused of duping Qatar bank

The Enforcement Directorate on Monday said it conducted searches in a case of an alleged over Rs 61 crore-fraud perpetrated against a Qatar-based bank by a Kerala man. The raids were carried out on August 28 in three locations of the state on the residential premises of individuals associated with Ismail Chakkarakath, suspected of routing illegal proceeds generated by duping United Bank Limited in Doha, Qatar, the federal agency said in a statement. The money-laundering case stems from an FIR filed by the crime branch and economic offences wing of the Kerala Police (Kannur and Kasaragod districts) on the allegations that Chakkarakath, a resident of Thuvakkunnu in Kannur, was running a firm called Grant Mart Trading in Doha. The accused Chakkarakath went to Qatar to expand his business and took a loan aggregating QAR 3,06,43,204 (equivalent to Rs 61.28 crore) from the United Bank Limited.



NHAI to track toll plazas with GIS-based software

State-owned NHAI will track around 100 toll plazas with GIS-based software for seamless movement of traffic at national highways, an official statement said on Monday. According to the statement, these toll plazas have been identified based on congestion feedback received through 1,033 national highway helpline. The live monitoring and tracking system will provide congestion alerts and lane distribution recommendations when the queue of vehicles at a toll plaza is more than the prescribed limit, it added. The monitoring service will be extended to more toll plazas in a phased manner. Apart from providing the name and location of the toll plaza, the statement said the software will share details related to the live status of queue length in meters, total waiting time and vehicle speed at toll plaza. It will also provide congestion alert and lane distribution recommendation, if the queue of vehicles at a toll plaza is more than the prescribed limit, the statement added.



'Reduce GST on flex-fuel vehicles to 12 %'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Monday said state finance ministers should consider reducing Goods and Services Tax (GST) on flex-fuel vehicles to 12 per cent in the GST Council meeting.

Addressing IFGE's India Bio-Energy & Tech Expo, Gadkari also said there is a need to reduce imports of fossil fuels and encourage the use of biofuel.

"We need support from finance ministers of different states. The (Union) finance minister assured me that we will try to convince all the finance ministers."

"Yesterday, I asked Maharashtra's FM to attend the GST Council meeting and propose the reduction of GST on flex-fuel engine cars and

scooters," he said.

Flex-fuel-compatible cars can run on more than one type of fuel and also on a mixture. Typically, a blend of petrol and ethanol or methanol is used.

The road transport and highways minister informed that he had requested Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to consider reducing taxes on flex-fuel vehicles.

In a separate meeting with the Maharashtra Finance Minister Ajit Pawar, Gadkari suggested him attend a GST meeting with Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on the issue.

At present, 28 per cent GST is levied on vehicles powered by internal combustion engines, including hybrids, and 5 per cent on electric vehicles.

Govt gets Rs 2,413 cr dividend from BPCL

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has received about Rs 2,413 crore in dividends from oil PSU BPCL, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) said on Monday. "Government has received about Rs 2,413 crore from BPCL as dividend tranche," DIPAM Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said in a post on X. In the current financial year 2024-25 so far, Rs 15,389.14 crore has been received through dividends from the CPSEs.

This includes Rs 5,091 crore from Indian Oil Corp (IOC), Rs 40 crore from Electronics Corporation of India Ltd (ECIL), Rs 554 crore from Power Finance Corp, and Rs 3,443 crore from Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd (TCIL) as special dividend.

SEMICONDUCTOR UNIT GUJRAT  
Kaynes' proposal gets Govt nod

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Monday cleared a proposal of Kaynes Semicon to set up a Rs 3,307-crore semiconductor unit in Sanand, Gujarat, that will have the capacity to churn out 6.3 million chips a day.

Addressing reporters after the Union Cabinet meeting, IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw noted that a complete semiconductor ecosystem is coming up in India under the India Semiconductor Mission, and promised that the country will take a long-term view of this "foundational" sector and increase the outlay, as needed.

He likened the semiconductor industry to steel and chemicals industries which feed into many other allied sectors, and said the sector will be

"crucial" for India's growth and the industrial production blueprint of the country.

The minister said that the progress of Tata's fab, a complex project, has been "very good", and added that land has been allocated, and geo-technical investigations are done.

"Today, the Cabinet has approved Kaynes' plant, with a capacity of 6.3 million chips per day. The plant will come up in 46 acres, it is a big plant and large portion of the production will go for Kaynes Industries, it has already been booked," the minister said.

The plant will also cater to chips related to the power sector. The company has already acquired land in Sanand, Gujarat for the project, and construction will start soon.

MEA AHEAD OF PM MODI'S VISIT

India-Singapore relations poised for bigger take-off

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Building on "new anchors" of partnership identified under the India-Singapore ministerial roundtable framework, the relation between the two countries is poised for an even bigger take-off, the MEA said Monday ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the island nation.

Prime Minister Modi is slated to visit Singapore on September 4-5 at the invitation of his Singaporean counterpart Lawrence Wong.

Before that, he is scheduled to visit Brunei on September 3-4 at the invitation of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in all existing sectors.

Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, Jaideep Mazumdar, at a media briefing here, said India and Brunei are working towards setting up a "joint working group in defence".

Prime Minister Modi is vis-



iting Singapore after nearly six years, he said.

His last visit to Singapore was in his first term. And an early visit on his third term is something that has been "welcomed by the Singaporean side".

"Also, this comes at a time when a new leader is in Singapore and this is an opportunity to set the stage for the next stage of our vibrant

bilateral relations," Mazumdar said.

The Secretary (East) said India-Singapore ties have "evolved" and there is a "dynamic strategic partnership" encompassing various areas from shared history and people-to-people ties that form an important link between the two countries.

"Our trade and investment flows have shown a steady

growth, we have a robust defence cooperation and growing exchanges in culture and education. We have identified new anchors of our partnership under the India-Singapore ministerial roundtable framework," he said.

Four Indian ministers participated in the recently held second India-Singapore ministerial roundtable.

During the roundtable, the ministers from both sides discussed "new thrust areas that we can identify in futuristic areas of cooperation", Mazumdar said.

"A number of new, forward-looking futuristic areas of cooperation were identified in digitisation, sustainability skill, health, advance manufacturing and connectivity, and we are likely to exchange a number of MoUs during the forthcoming visit of the prime minister," he added. Singapore is India's largest trade partner in the ASEAN bloc and the country is a leading source of foreign direct investment.

Sebi places JSW Cement's Rs 4,000-cr IPO on hold

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi has put on hold the proposed Rs 4,000-crore initial public offering (IPO) of JSW Cement.

Without specifying reasons, Sebi stated that the "issuance of observations (has been) kept in abeyance," according to an update on its website on Monday.

JSW Cement, part of the diversified JSW Group, filed the preliminary IPO papers with Sebi on August 16.

The proposed issue involves a new issue of equity shares worth Rs 2,000 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of Rs 2,000 crore by investor shareholders, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) filed with the regulator.

Under the OFS, AP Asia Opportunistic Holdings Pte. Ltd and Synergy Metals Investments Holding Ltd will



offload shares worth Rs 937.5 crore each and State Bank of India (SBI) will divest shares valued at Rs 125 crore.

Proceeds from the fresh issue to the tune of Rs 800 crore will be used for partially financing the establishment of a new integrated cement unit in Nagaur, Rajasthan, while Rs 720 crore will be allocated for payment of debt and the remaining funds will be allocated for general corporate purposes.

JSW Cement, which has a manufacturing capacity of 19

MT annually, aims to achieve the capacity of 60 MTPA. It currently has manufacturing units at Vijayanagar in Karnataka, Nandyal in Andhra Pradesh, Salboni in West Bengal, Jajpur in Odisha and Dolvi in Maharashtra.

Besides, JSW Cement through its subsidiary Shiva Cement operates a clinker unit in Odisha.

JSW Group has business interests in sectors such as steel, energy, maritime infrastructure, defence, B2B e-commerce, realty, paints, sports and venture capital.

JM Financial Ltd, Axis Capital Ltd, Citigroup Global Markets India Private Ltd, DAM Capital Advisors Ltd, Goldman Sachs (India) Securities Private Ltd, Jefferies India Private Ltd, Kotak Mahindra Capital Company Ltd and SBI Capital Markets Ltd are responsible for managing the company's IPO process.

Sensex rises 194 pts to close at record high on rate cut hopes

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Logging its longest winning run in nearly a year, benchmark BSE Sensex rose for the 10th straight day to close at a fresh lifetime high on Monday, tracking foreign fund inflows and a rally in the US markets.

The 30-share Sensex rose by 194.07 points or 0.24 per cent to settle at a record high of 82,559.84. During the day, it surged 359.51 points or 0.43 per cent to reach a new intraday record peak of 82,725.28.

The index surged for the 10th straight session, which is its longest gaining streak since September 2023 when it rose for nine straight days in the first half of the month. The NSE Nifty rose for the 13th straight day, which experts said, was its longest winning run in decades.

The 50-share index climbed



42.80 points or 0.17 per cent to settle at a lifetime high of 25,278.70. During the day, it soared 97.75 points or 0.38 per cent to hit a fresh intra-day peak of 25,333.65.

In a 13-day gaining streak since August 14, the Nifty has rallied 4.72 per cent or nearly 1,140 points. Sensex has risen by 2.65 per cent or 2,135.16 points in its 10 straight days of

gains. Expectations of an interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve this month and renewed foreign fund inflows have fuelled the recent rally in domestic equities, traders said.

FMCG, IT and financial sector shares supported the record run in indices while metal and pharma sector shares ended in the red.

Tata Motors eyes gains in SUV space

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Motors is looking to consolidate its position in the SUV segment as it marks its entry into the highly competitive mid-size space which is currently dominated by South Korean and Japanese carmakers.

The Mumbai-based auto major on Monday launched midsize SUV coupe Curvv with petrol and diesel powertrains with a price starting at Rs 9.99 lakh.

The company has already unveiled the electric version of the model in August.

The model would be competing with the likes of Hyundai Creta, Kia Seltos, Maruti Suzuki Grand Vitara, Toyota Urban Cruiser Hyryder, and Honda Elevate, among others.

Single filing with exchange to be reality very soon: Sebi chief

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Capital markets regulator Sebi Chief Madhabi Puri Buch on Monday said a single disclosure by listed companies on one stock exchange will soon be automatically uploaded on the other bourse.

This comes after the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) recently proposed sweeping changes to disclosure as well as listing requirements by listed companies based on recommendations from a committee led by S K Mohanty, former whole-time member of Sebi.

Speaking at the Special Plenary Session with Sebi on "Regulatory Landscape: What is needed for Viksit Bharat?" at the Financing 3.0 Summit organised by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) here.

Buch said, "a single filing with the exchange will be a reality very soon".

As part of the proposed changes, a filing made on one exchange will automatically collate on the other exchange, she said.

A filing made on one exchange will automatically collate on the other exchange.

Additionally, Buch said soon investors will be able to start SIP (Systematic Investment Plan) with as low as Rs 250 per month.

"We are on the way of Rs 250 SIP becoming a reality," she said. Buch avoided commenting on Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), but said there are regulations simplifying such entities.

"If I utter a word on REITs, I will be accused of conflict of interest," she added.

The remarks came as US short-seller Hindenburg Research raised questions about a potential conflict of interest involving Buch and private equity major Blackstone.

Her husband Dhaval Buch is a senior advisor with Blackstone, a major player in the REIT space. However, the couple refuted the allegations.

Also, Hindenburg alleged that Sebi's recent amendments to REIT regulations 2014 favoured a specific financial conglomerate, which Sebi denied.

The Sebi chief highlighted plans to make IPO documents available in multiple languages to remove language barriers and increase investor awareness.



'54% of IPO shares allotted to investors sold within a week'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A study by markets regulator Sebi highlighted flipping behaviour among investors in the initial share-sale market with investors (excluding anchor) selling 54 per cent of IPO shares allotted to them by value within a week.

The study found a strong disposition effect (tendency to prematurely sell assets that have made financial gains) with investors showing a greater propensity to sell IPO shares that posted positive listing gains, compared to those that listed at a loss.

In light of the increasing participation of retail investors and the heightened oversubscription in recent IPOs, the Securities and Exchange Board

of India (Sebi) conducted an in-depth study to analyze investor behaviour in main-board IPOs. The study encompasses data from 144 IPOs listed between April 2021 and December 2023.

During the study period, 144 IPOs collectively raised a total of Rs 2.13 lakh crore. Notably, 65 per cent of the total issue size was Offer for Sale (OFS), through which the pre-existing shareholder sold their shares, instead of the company raising the money.

According to the study, "About 54 per cent of IPO shares (in value terms) allotted to investors (excluding anchor investors) were sold within a week from listing".

Individual investors sold 50.2 per cent shares (in value terms) allotted to them within a week

from listing, non-institutional investors (NIIs) offloaded 63.3 per cent shares and retail investors sold 42.7 per cent shares.

Interestingly, individual investors sold 70 per cent of shares by value within a year.

On the other hand, mutual funds tend to invest for a longer period in IPO shares, whereas banks tend to sell swiftly. Mutual funds sold about 3.3 per cent of allotted value within a week, as compared to 79.8 per cent for banks.

The study highlighted that returns influenced the selling behaviour as individual investors sold 67.6 per cent of the shares by value within a week when IPO returns exceeded 20 per cent within a week. In contrast, only 23.3 per cent



of shares by value were sold when returns were negative.

In terms of geography, retail investors from Gujarat received 39.3 per cent of the allotment in the category, followed by Maharashtra (13.5 per cent), and Rajasthan (10.5 per cent). The increase in IPO participation could be derived from

growth in demat accounts. Notably, nearly half of the demat accounts that applied for IPOs between April 2021 and December 2023 were opened during the post-COVID period -- 2021-2023.

Following Sebi's policy interventions regarding NII share allotment process and RBI's

guidelines on IPO financing by NBFCs in April 2022, the study observed a reduction in the over-subscription under NII category from 38 times to 17 times.

Also, it noted a decline in the number of IPO applications by 'big ticket NII Investors' -- applying for more than Rs 1 crore in IPOs -- to 20 applications per IPO in the post-policy period (April 2022-December 2023) from around 626 applications per IPO in pre-policy period (April 2021-March 2022).

Additionally, it found a reduction in the exit of big-ticket NII Investors to about 25 per cent within a week during April 22-December 23 from about 70 per cent within a week during April 21-March 22.



what's brewing?



**ANUSHKA RANJAN VENTURES INTO FILM PRODUCTION**

Actress and humanitarian Anushka Ranjan is set to embark on an exciting new journey as she gears up to independently produce her first feature film. Drawing from her rich family legacy in the entertainment industry, Anushka is ready to add another feather to her cap.

As the daughter of producers Anu and Shashi Ranjan, also founders of the Indian Television Awards, Anushka has grown up surrounded by the magic of cinema and television. Now, she is ready to carve her path in the industry by stepping into the role of producer. While the details of the project remain under wraps, pre-production has already commenced in full swing and shooting is slated to begin early next year.

Anushka shared her excitement about this new venture, stating, "Producing a feature film has been a dream of mine for as long as I can remember. Growing up in a family that lives and breathes cinema has inspired me to tell stories that matter. This project is very close to my heart and I am thrilled to bring it to life. We are currently in the preproduction phase and the energy and creativity surrounding this project are truly invigorating. As for whether my husband, Aditya Seal, or I, will be involved in front of the camera, that's something we'll reveal in due time. For now, my focus is on assembling a talented team that shares my vision and passion for storytelling." In addition to her production endeavours, Anushka will soon be seen in the upcoming web series *Mixture*, where she will take on a negative role for the first time, showcasing her versatility as an actress alongside co-star Ahana Kumra.



**Akshay Kumar partners yet again with Priyadarshan**

Actor Akshay Kumar has returned to working on a horror comedy with his usual partner, Priyadarshan.

The actor's 57th birthday on September 9 is when the announcement for the new film is anticipated. According to a report, the new film will have its motion poster and title released on the special day.

The report indicated that Priyadarshan, who collaborated with Akshay on hit movies like *Hera Pheri*, *Bhool Bhulaiyaa*, *Bhagam Bhag*, *De Dana Dan* and *Garam Masala*, travelled to Mumbai in July to edit the film's initial motion poster. It was also noted that filming for the horror comedy will commence by the year's end and extend until the first six months of 2025. Key parts of the movie will be filmed in Hyderabad, a Kerala forest, and Sri Lanka before finishing up in Gujarat

next year. Even though Akshay's character information may be revealed in the motion poster, the team is still in the process of confirming the remaining cast members. As per the report, Akshay will be seen romancing with his three co-stars in the movie, similar to *Garam Masala*. Yet, the surprising element in the movie is the concept of dark sorcery. It is thought that the idea for the story originated from Ekta Kapoor, who is also the movie's producer.

There are rumours that Kiara Advani, Keerthy Suresh and Alia Bhatt will be acting together in the movie. In the meantime, this will mark Akshay's third venture into horror comedy. The actor previously appeared in *Bhool Bhulaiyaa*, a movie also classified as a psychological thriller. He also had a guest appearance in the newly released *Stree 2* with Shraddha Kapoor and Rajkummar Rao. The actor is working on several exciting upcoming projects, such as *Jolly LLB 3*, *Sky Force* and *Singham Again*.

**George Clooney on working with Brad Pitt**

George Clooney joined his close friend and co-star Brad Pitt at the *Venice International Film Festival* on Sunday, September 1. Clooney pondered over his previous collaborations with Pitt at the film festival and their long-standing friendship. After years of working and taking vacations together, he reveals the greatest part of collaborating with Pitt. In talks, Clooney first joked about the best thing about working with Pitt: "There's nothing good about it. It's all a disaster." He then answered sincerely, "It's fun to work with people you know really well."

Since their first collaboration in 2001 with *Ocean's 11*, they have stayed good friends. Ever since then, the pair has appeared in a number of films together, including *Ocean's Trilogy*, *Burn After Reading* and *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind* and are currently featured in their newest movie, *Wolfs*. In a recent interview, Clooney and Pitt discussed their friendship and how they are there for each other during tough times.

Clooney told, "We've been friends for a long time. And it's fun because we also check in on each other every once in a while, which is an important part of this. Things get complicated in life and you always have to make sure everybody's okay." To this statement, the *Fight Club* star added that his co-star is "probably the best at understanding, seeing the chessboard and the potential moves. I'll call George on numerous occasions when things get bumpy."



**Adele announces musical break**

Musician Adele announced a break from music at her Munich concert, citing the need for some rest and expressing gratitude for her past three years of shows.

The British vocalist held 10 concerts in Germany from August 2 to August 31 and during her performance, she became emotional when informing the crowd about her upcoming extended break.

Entertainment news outlets reported that her Munich residency concluded last night with the final performance. "I'm not the most comfortable performer, I know that, but I am very f\*\*\*ing good at it. And I have really enjoyed performing for nearly three years now, which is the longest I've ever done and probably the longest I'll ever do," she told the audience.

The highly acclaimed artist, winner of multiple awards, announced that she will not be seeing the audience for a "very long time" after finishing her remaining 10 shows in her Las Vegas residency. "I will hold you dear in my heart for that whole length of my break, and I will fantasise about these shows and any shows that I've done over the last three years. It has been amazing; I just need a rest. I have spent the last seven years building a new life for myself and I want to live it now. I will remember these shows for eternity, they have been spectacular," said Adele, known for chartbusters such as *Rollin' in the Deep*, *Someone Like You* and *Set Fire to the Rain*.

Adele has been honored with numerous awards, which include 16 Grammy Awards, an Academy Award, a Primetime Emmy Award, a Golden Globe Award, 18 Billboard Music Awards, and twelve Brit Awards.



**Kangana Ranaut's Emergency postponed!**

Kangana Ranaut's film *Emergency*, scheduled for release on September 6, has been postponed due to several surrounding problems. The performer, who also directs and produces and is now a politician, stated that her movie has yet to be certified due to threats received by the CBFC.

"There are rumours doing the rounds that our film, *Emergency*, has been granted a censor certificate. This is not true. In fact, our film had been cleared, but certification has been stopped because many threats were coming in. Death threats. The Censor Board members are getting threats. We are under pressure not to show the assassination of Indira Gandhi, not to show

Bhindranwale, not to show the Punjab riots. I don't know what will be left to show then... This is unbelievable for me and I am very sorry for the state of things in this country," Kangana said as she shared a video on X (previously known as Twitter). In an interview, she said, "It's getting too late. I hope the film comes on time. Otherwise, I am determined to fight for it. I am determined to even go to court to protect my film. To save my rights as an individual. You can't change history and scare us by threats," she said.

"We have to show the history. An almost 70-year-old woman was shot 30-35 times in her house... Someone must have killed her. Now you want to show it... Because apparently, you think you can hurt someone. But you have to show the history. So how did she die?" the actress added.

**FUN**

**ARCHIE**



**CALVIN AND HOBBS**



**GARFIELD**



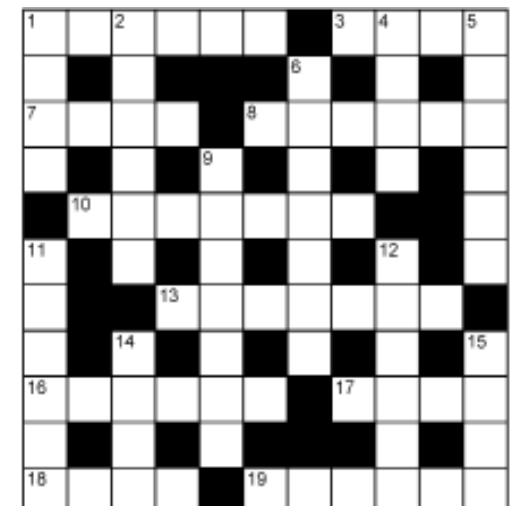
**REALITY CHECK**



**SPEED BUMP**



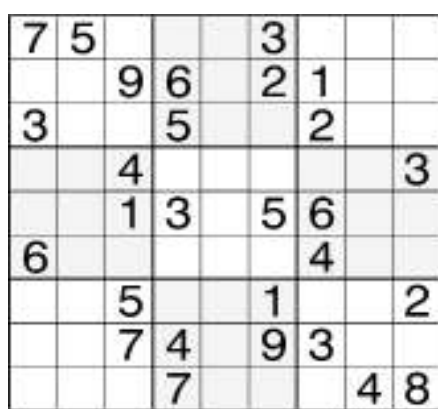
**CROSSWORD**



**NANCY**



**SUDOKU**



**Yesterday's solution**  
 7 1 6 4 2 3 9 5 8  
 9 2 3 5 8 1 4 6 7  
 4 8 5 9 7 6 3 1 2  
 1 7 8 6 9 4 2 3 5  
 6 9 2 3 5 8 7 4 1  
 3 5 4 2 1 7 8 9 6  
 2 3 1 7 4 5 6 8 9  
 5 6 9 8 3 2 1 7 4  
 8 4 7 1 6 9 5 2 3

**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**

- 1 Tired and yawning
- 3 Opposite of fast
- 7 Imitate
- 8 A team game with stick and ball
- 10 Very old
- 13 A bird with a huge fan tail
- 16 Queen's residence
- 17 Let fall
- 18 Italy's largest city
- 19 Picked
- 5 Exit door (3,3)
- 6 Join together
- 9 Complete quiet
- 11 Assistant
- 12 Frightens
- 14 A fruit with a stone
- 15 Unlock

**DOWN**

- 1 Unwell
- 2 Stretch outwards
- 4 A large area of water surrounded by land



**GINGER MEGGS**





## Shruti Seth: Being an actor carries extra burden of beauty

Actress Shruti Seth, who to date has been remembered for the show that's created a legacy, *Shararat*, speaks to *The Pioneer* in an exclusive telephonic chat as she discusses her latest project, *36 Days*, age-shaming and also about *Shararat* making a comeback

TEJAL SINHA

As magical as her show *Shararat* was for years, so has been Shruti Seth's journey. Well, every 90s kid would remember binge-watching this fantasy sitcom on television. She has since then undoubtedly created a niche in the world of comedy by being the anchor of shows like *Comedy Circus*, *Comedy Circus 20-20*, *Kahani Comedy Circus Ki*, *The Suite Life of Karan and Kabir*, *Comedy Circus Ke Ajoobe* and many more. "Laughter has been something that I enjoy the most about comedy," begins the talented actress in an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*.

For her, life is just not about taking life too seriously but rather finding humour in every little thing, which makes life more enjoyable. "There's no greater gift than being able to make people laugh because we all know that life can get very hard. It's probably one of the best things that an artist can offer to the world."

Going quite in the opposite direction this time, her latest project, *36 Days*, has seen her in a different picture and has also received a tremendous response from the audience. Much in talks for the project, the *Fanaa* actress enthuses, "I was put together as a part of such a fantastic ensemble cast. Every single performer in the show has just been stupendous. Then, of course, the director, Vishal, is very good in this genre. BBC and Applause kind of envisioned something very interesting while designing the world of *36 Days*. They sort of contextualise it to the culture really well. It's an official remake of one of BBC's original formats called *35 Days*. They took the theme from the show and turned it for the Indian context really well. Also setting it in Goa, I think, made it an interesting backdrop."

It was a no-brainer for her to get on board for this project, having worked with BBC and Applause previously in *Bloody Brothers*. But again, the story always is front and center of all decisions.

Glad to have been playing the character of Radhika Jaykar in *36 Days*, she further speaks of the thriller genre, which is very different from that of the comedy genre. "*Bloody Brothers* was somewhere in the same space; this was obviously a lot more interesting for me. My character does something that I had never done. Without revealing spoilers, I think for me to play a layered character like Radhika Jaykar was just something I've never had an opportunity to sort of see myself doing."

But guess what? Shruti was initially much keen to play the character of Lalita Shinde, which has been essayed by the extremely talented Amrita Khanvilkar. Telling us more, she shares, "I remember when I read the script, I had really liked her character. But Amrita did a remarkable job. However, I was very excited when I read her character. BBC was very keen that I played Radhika, who was also an interesting character too. There were just too many boxes being ticked for me to say no."

Over the years, just like many more actors from the industry, Shruti has also been vocal about what's been termed 'age shaming'. "All the time," she says as we speak of whether she's been one of those targets. "I have people who watched me in *Shararat* 20 years ago telling me, 'Oh my god. You're aging.' I'm like what were you expecting to happen in 20 years? But you know, I'm the least affected, to be honest. Ageism has gone into every single aspect of every kind of woman's life. It doesn't matter what you do. Being an actor carries that additional burden of beauty because you're supposed to look a certain way for your entire life, which I don't understand. When women feel compelled to go out there and sadly do things to their faces to preserve their youth or delay they get flaked for that as well. So there's no winning this argument. The fact that you're a woman means you've already lost the battle."

Well, as we shift towards a much-buzz-around talk, '*Shararat* is making a comeback', while the fans are awaiting for it, so is she because, "I won't say it's a rumour; I would just say it's a dream. We're all dreaming it together. I'm not saying yes or no. I'm just saying it's a dream. No matter what I do, no matter what heights I reach or lows I go, *Shararat* is like my armour. I'm just grateful. I cannot thank my lucky stars enough for putting me in that place at that time. It's timeless and not many people get an opportunity to be a part of such a legacy. I'm just glad that we all got thrown in together by Zarina Mehta, who is really the mother of it because she's the one who made it happen."

But why not a movie just like *Khichdi*? "We've been sort of over the years; all of us realised this way before the last 5-7 years, when the noise has been a lot more. But we did try to see the thing is that, you know, because it's owned by Disney. We need sign-off from them. They need to see it as something worth building on. We did think it would have made a really fun film, to be honest. I don't know how well *Khichdi* did. I don't know how well *Sarabhai versus Sarabhai* did. Because clearly, they were used as the options to check if there is still some steam. I don't know if they gave promising results, which is why till now we've all been waiting for our turn. I'm sure if all fans were to get together and pressurise them, I wish they would do something. We manage the best we can do. I feel even if it's in this original form, I feel it'll still work like magic because there's just so much nostalgia attached to the show."

As an actor in India, she feels that one always has their fingers crossed for the right kind of project landing their way. "I don't think you can really exercise any control over it unless you decide to become a producer or a director. Actors are always at the mercy of casting directors. So if I say, Oh, I would love to be a part of so and so show, unless I'm producing it, there is no way for me to influence that decision."

## Amit Agarwal weaves tomorrow, blending myth & modernity

PNS|HYDERABAD

At the India Couture Week, designer Amit Agarwal launched his latest collection, *Antevorta*, a name inspired by the Roman goddess of the future. He describes the line as a narrative woven with threads of time, where mythology meets modernity in a way that is both unique and profound. The collection, he explains, delves deep into the concept of time itself, intertwining ancient tales with contemporary design.

"We've used intricate craftsmanship alongside avant-garde techniques to create pieces that are both contemporary and timeless," he says, his passion evident. "Every garment tells its own story, capturing moments that are both fleeting and eternal, making this collection a true celebration of the past, present and future."

When asked about the revival of traditional weaves, Amit's response is both thoughtful and fervent. He sees it not as a trend but as a cultural and artistic renaissance. By infusing these ancient techniques into modern fashion, he believes they are not only honouring heritage but also the artisans who have kept these crafts alive through generations. "This isn't just about preservation; it's about introducing these traditional skills to a global audience, creating a dialogue between what is old and what is new," explains the celebrated designer.

He has observed a significant shift towards localisation in fashion, a movement he embraces wholeheartedly. He notes how fashion is becoming deeply rooted in indigenous craftsmanship and materials, with designers now delving into regional techniques and histories to craft pieces that are not only authentic but also globally appealing. "This movement supports our local artisans while also reducing the environmental impact of production. It's a beautiful blend of local heritage and global vision, ensuring that every creation carries with it a piece of our cultural history," he reflects.

Reflecting on how the fashion industry has evolved in recent years, particularly after the pandemic, he acknowledges a profound transformation. He points out the shift towards sustainability and conscious consumerism, noting how today's shoppers are more discerning, valuing quality and authenticity over mere quantity. He observes, "This change has been beneficial for brands that prioritise ethical practices and craftsmanship. Moreover, the digital revolution has accelerated, making online platforms indispensable for reaching a wider audience. The future of fashion is steering towards sustainability and innovation, where creativity meets commercial success in a balanced way."

In the ever-present debate of fashion versus style, his preference is clear. "Style is paramount," he states with conviction. While fashion is constantly evolving, style, for him, is personal and enduring. "Fashion reflects trends, but style is about individual expression and authenticity. Our designs aim to blend these concepts, offering pieces that are trend-forward yet timeless, allowing wearers to showcase their unique style while staying fashionable."

Amit Agarwal's couture narrative is one of blending time-honoured traditions with the cutting edge of modern fashion, creating a collection that is as thoughtful as it is innovative. As he continues to champion local craftsmanship while embracing a global vision, his work not only honours the past but also looks confidently toward the future.



Amit Agarwal, who has launched his latest collection *Antevorta*, speaks to *The Pioneer* about behind the making of the collection and more insights around it



## Transform your thighs with smoother, sleeker contours

Are you tired of feeling self-conscious about your thighs? Do you struggle with stubborn fat and loose skin that refuses to budge, despite your best efforts with diet and exercise? In this article, we will share expert insights on the most effective ways to transform your thighs and unlock a more confident you.

### Anatomy of thigh fat

Thigh fat is a complex issue, influenced by genetics, hormones, and lifestyle factors. Understanding the different types of thigh fat – including excess fat, loose skin, and cellulite – is

crucial to developing an effective treatment plan.

### Non-surgical solutions

Before considering surgery, explore these non-invasive options:

1. **Radiofrequency treatments:** Stimulate collagen production and tighten skin with advanced RF technologies.

2. **Fat-reducing injections:** Dissolve excess fat with targeted injectables.



3. **Customised exercise programs:** Tone and strengthen your thigh muscles with personalized workouts.

### Surgical solutions

For more pronounced thigh fat and loose skin, consider these surgical options:

1. **Thigh lift:** Tighten and contour your thighs with a surgical lift.

2. **Liposuction:** Remove excess fat and sculpt your

thighs with precision.

3. **Cellulite reduction:** Minimize the appearance of cellulite with advanced surgical techniques.

### Maintenance and aftercare

To ensure long-lasting results, prioritize:

1. **Healthy lifestyle habits:** Maintain a balanced diet and regular exercise routine.

2. **Sun protection:** Shield your skin from harmful UV rays.

3. **Follow-up appointments:** Schedule

regular check-ins with your plastic surgeon.

By combining these expert-recommended solutions, you can achieve the smoother, sleeker thighs you deserve. You should always consult with a board-certified plastic surgeon to create a personalised treatment plan tailored to your unique needs and goals.

(The author, Dr. Anmol Chugh, is a Consultant, Plastics and Aesthetics Centre at CK Birla Hospital and Director of Imperio Clinics.)



# Saina Nehwal reveals struggles with arthritis, to decide on retirement by end of year

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Acce Indian shuttler and former Olympic bronze-medallist Saina Nehwal has revealed that she is battling arthritis and will have to decide on her future in badminton by the end of this year as the ailment has made it impossible for her to train the usual hours. The 34-year-old former world No.1, who was the first Indian shuttler to win an Olympic medal with her bronze in London 2012, participated in three editions of the Games before being hampered by injuries.

The 2010 and 2018 Commonwealth Games gold-medallist said she can no longer overlook the fact that her career is in its final leg. "The knee is not very good. I have arthritis. My cartilage has gone to a bad state. It is very difficult to push for eight-nine hours," Nehwal said on the House of Glory podcast hosted by shooting great Gagan Narang, who was India's chef-de-mission in the recent Paris Olympics.

"How will you challenge the best players in the world in such a state? I think I will have to accept it somewhere. Because two hours of training is not good enough to play with the highest level of players and get the desired results," she added.

Nehwal said she is still considering the impact retirement will have on her but admitted that she would eventually have to take a call. The trailblazing star, who is also a BJP member now, was last seen in action more than a year ago in the Singapore Open where she lost in the opening round.

"I am also thinking about it (retirement). It will be sad



because it is like a job that a normal person does. Obviously, a sports person's career is always a short one. I started at the age of 9. I will be 35 next year," she said. "I have also had a long career and I am very proud of that. I have broken my body to a great extent. I am happy with what I have done and given it all. (I) will assess how I feel by the end of this year," she added. The Padma Shri awardee said competing at the Olympics was

her childhood dream and missing the showpiece for two consecutive editions has been hurtful. "Competing at the Olympics is a childhood dream for all. You prepare to reach that level for years. Hence, at times, when you realise you will not be able to make it, it hurts a lot," she expressed. "Because it is not like you do not want to play, but your body is telling that you are not doing well and you have injuries."

Nehwal, however, said she would look back at her run in the Games with pride. "But I have done a lot of hard work. I competed in three Olympics. I gave my 100 per cent in all of them. I can take pride in that and be happy about it," she said. Nehwal also spoke about the pressure of expectations and said as a top athlete, she has faced it not just from observers of the game but also from near and dear ones.

"When you become a big player, your friends, family, coaches, sponsors, everyone wants you to perform. There are a lot of stakeholders involved," she said. "With already a short career span, athletes cannot afford to take a four-year break and have to keep performing continuously. If you wish to become an international champion, you have to be strong to make tough decisions," she added.

# Nagal pulls out of Davis Cup tie against Sweden due to back injury

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's top singles player Sumit Nagal on Monday pulled out of the upcoming Davis Cup tie against Sweden due to a back injury.

Nagal recently lost his first round singles contest to Tallon Griekspoor at the US Open. The indoor hard-court contest in Stockholm will be played on September 14-15. Reserve player Aryan Shah has been drafted into the main team after Nagal's withdrawal while Manas Dhame has been put on standby.

"I was really looking forward to representing in the upcoming Davis Cup tie against Sweden," Nagal wrote on social media.

"However, due to a back issue that's been bothering me for the past few weeks, doctors have advised me to rest for the next two weeks, leaving me without enough time to



prepare and compete in Sweden. This same issue also led to my withdrawal from the US Open doubles. "I'm deeply disappointed to be missing this tie, but I have to listen to my body to prevent the back from worsening, so that I can finish the season strong and healthy. Good luck to the Indian team - I'll be cheering for you all from

home!" he added. Nagal reached a career-high ranking of 68 in July but has dropped to 82 in the latest rankings. India's highest-ranked singles player not being part of the Davis Cup tie is a big blow to the team. Former national champion Ashutosh Singh has been named as new coach of the national team.

# Bopanna-Ebden ousted from US Open

PTI ■ NEW YORK

India's challenge in the mens doubles event of the US Open ended with the defeat of Rohan Bopanna and his Australian partner Matthew Ebden in the third round, here.

The second seeded Bopanna-Ebden pair lost 1-6 5-7 to the 16th seed Argentine combo of Maximo Gonzalez and Andres Molteni in 66 minutes on Sunday night.

Bopanna and Ebden had won the Australian Open early this year.

The 44-year-old Bopanna has already announced retirement from Davis Cup and it will be interesting to see if he will return to defend his Australian Open crown in January 2025.

Sumit Nagal had exited the mens singles with an opening round defeat while Yuki Bhambri and N Sriram Balaji earlier lost in mens doubles at different stages of the tournament.



Bopanna's challenge is still alive in the mixed doubles event with Indonesian partner Aldila Sutjiadi and interestingly, he and Ebden will now be up against each other. Ebden and Czech Republics Barbora Krejckova are seeded fourth in the mixed doubles.

# Juventus remains unbeaten following a 0-0 draw with visiting Roma in Serie A

AP ■ ROME

For Thiago Motta's Juventus, it was a well-earned point that kept the Bianconeri unbeaten.

For Daniele De Rossi's Roma, it was a step in the right direction after a difficult start to the season. Juventus was held to a 0-0

draw at home by Roma in Serie A on Sunday with each side producing only one shot on goal. Roma dominated the possession early on before Juventus grew more dangerous through Dusan Vlahovic.

De Rossi kept former Juventus forward Paulo Dybala on the bench at the start then sent the Argentina international, who recently turned down an offer from Saudi Arabia, on midway through the second half.

But Dybala produced little with both sides slowing down by then on a warm evening in Turin.

Juventus moved level on seven points with defending champion Inter Milan, Torino and Udinese in Motta's first season since coming over from Bologna.

Winless Roma, which was coming off a dispiriting defeat at home to Empoli, has two points in De Rossi's second campaign after replacing Jose Mourinho in January.

Having grown more offensive under De Rossi last season, Roma has produced only one goal in three matches this season.



Udinese beat promoted Como 1-0 with a first-half volley from Brenner. Como forward Patrick Cutrone missed a late penalty.

**MALDINI FROM DISTANCE:** Robin Gosens scored a late equalizer on debut for Fiorentina, which came back from two goals down for a 2-2 draw with

Alessandro Nesta's Monza. Gosens, who was signed on loan from Union Berlin on deadline day, redirected in a corner with a looping header in stoppage time. Monza went ahead with early goals from Milan Djuric and Daniel Maldini before Moise Kean pulled one back for Fiorentina before the break.

It was a third consecutive draw in Serie A for Fiorentina under new manager Raffaele Palladino, who previously coached Monza. Fiorentina was coming off a penalty-shootout win over Puskas Akademia in the Conference League. Fiorentina also drew the first leg with Puskas, and the second leg was locked at 1-1 before the shootout.

Maldini's long-distance effort was his third goal from outside the box in 2024, tied for the joint lead in Serie A over that span with Dusan Vlahovic, Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, Alexis Saelemaekers and Michael Folornsho.

Hellas Verona beat Genoa 2-0 with goals from Jackson Tchatchoua and Casper Tengstedt for its second win in three matches after defeating Napoli 3-0 in its opener.

# Kylian Mbappé ends scoring drought in Spanish league and scores 2 in Real Madrids win over Betis

AP ■ MADRID

With two goals in less than 10 minutes, Kylian Mbappé ended his scoring drought in the Spanish league, leading Real Madrid to a 2-0 win over Real Betis.

Madrid's biggest signing in years, Mbappé had scored once in the teams win over Atalanta in the UEFA Super Cup final last month, but he had yet to find the net in his previous three Spanish league matches.

"I was looking forward to scoring in this legendary stadium, the best in the world," Mbappé said. "But the most important thing was the victory."

He opened the scoring at the Santiago Bernabeu with a low left-footed shot from inside the area after a neat backheel pass by Federico Valverde in the 67th minute. Mbappé then added to the lead by converting a 75th-minute penalty kick after a foul on Vinicius Junior.

Madrid had drawn two of its first three games, with its lone victory coming against

Valladolid two rounds ago, also at the Bernabeu. This win moved the defending champion four points behind leader Barcelona, the only team to win all four matches to start the season.

"After the game against Las Palmas we knew that we had to win and we did it," Mbappé said. "It was a tough match, but we are Real Madrid and in the end we won it."

Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said there was never any pressure on Mbappé to end his drought in the league.

"For him it was important to score, but we evaluate the work of the team as a whole, which was better than in the previous match. It was a step forward."

The result kept Betis winless after three matches. Manuel Pellegrini's team had drawn its first two games.

Vitor Roque, a young Brazilian forward, was a second-half substitute for the Sevilla club where he is playing on loan from Madrid rival Barcelona.

Madrid has not conceded in its last five league games at



Bernabeu, going back to last season, a first for the club in the competition since 1996. Madrid is unbeaten in 26 home games in the league, with 22 wins and four draws, the best run under Ancelotti.

The five points from three matches until now had meant Madrid's worst start in the league since 2019-20, when it won the competition.

**SEVILLA CONTINUES TO STRUGGLE:** Sevilla lost 2-0 at home to Girona to remain winless after four matches.

Iván Martin and Abel Ruiz scored a goal in each half for Girona, which has now won two in a row. It will play the Catalan derby against Barcelona in the next round.

Sevilla had drawn two of its first three matches, both on the road, with a loss to Villarreal at home.

**OTHER RESULTS:** Getafe, another team without a victory, drew 0-0 with Real Sociedad at home, while Las Palmas - also winless - lost 2-0 at Alaves. Osasuna won 3-2 against Celta Vigo, which had opened with two straight wins but now has lost two in a row.

# Coco Gauff loses at the US Open to Emma Navarro

AP ■ NEW YORK

This is pretty much all anyone needs to know about defending champion Coco Gauff's 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 loss to Emma Navarro in the U.S. Opens fourth round: Gauff wound up with more double-faults, 19, than winners, 14.

It was the latest in a series of early-for-her exits in recent weeks, including bowing out in the third round at the Paris Olympics, then going 1-2 at hard-court tuneup events before arriving in New York. "I feel like there's 70 other players in the draw that would love to have the summer that I had, even though its (the) least, probably, (I've) done well during this time of the year," said the No. 3-seeded Gauff, who went 18-1 during the North American swing on hard courts 12 months ago, including the run to her first Grand Slam title. "So many people want to be in the fourth round. So many people want to make the Olympics. So many people want to be flag bearer. Its perspective."

The 20-year-old from Florida did fight her way back into the match with a four-game run in which she

claimed 14 of 17 points and grabbed the second set. "Had a little bit of a lull there," said the 13th-seeded Navarro, an American who was 0-2 at the U.S. Open until this year, "but I was able to regroup."

After each of her past two contests in New York, Gauff headed back out onto the practice courts to work on her serve. That didn't help much on Sunday, when she tied her career high for double-faults: She also had 19 in a loss at the 2020 French Open. Against Navarro, Gauff delivered a trio of double-faults in four different games. Eleven of the double-faults came in the final set alone.

Gauff attributed her problems to a mix of issues with her mechanics - "I go down on my left side a lot on my serve, and its something Im aware of, but its tough in the moment to, I guess, try not to do it," she explained - and in her mind.

"Its sometimes more of an emotional, mental thing, because if I go out on the practice court right now, I would make, like, 30 serves in a row. Ive done it before," Gauff said. "I think its also just kind of a mental hurdle that I have to get over

## Ending her title defense with 19 double faults



when it comes. ... But I definitely want to look at other things, because I dont want to lose matches like this anymore."

She finished with a total of 60 unforced errors - a whopping 29 on her forehand side.

The 23-year-old Navarro, who also eliminated Gauff in the fourth round at Wimbledon in July, was far steadier on Sunday, although she still did have 35 unforced errors. "It was a little bit of a battle of will there for a bit. But proud of just my effort today," said Navarro, a U.S. Teammate of Gauff's at the Paris Games. "I was able to stick in there through some tough moments."

This result follows a third-round loss by defending mens champion Novak Djokovic on Friday, meaning the lengthy droughts without anyone winning consecutive titles in New York will continue. The last woman to win at least two in a row was Serena Williams with three from 2012-14; the last man to do so was Roger Federer with five from 2004-08.

Frances Tiafoe eliminated No. 28 seed Alexei Popyrin, the player who

stunned Djokovic, with a 6-4, 7-6 (3), 2-6, 6-3 victory on Sunday night. The No. 20 seed advanced to his third straight U.S. Open quarterfinal and will play No. 9 Grigor Dimitrov, who held off Andrey Rublev 6-3, 7-6 (3), 1-6, 3-6, 6-3 with 23-time Grand Slam champion Williams watching and offering a thumbs-up at matches end.

Also moving on Sunday was No. 12 Taylor Fritz, who beat three-time Grand Slam finalist Casper Ruud 3-6, 6-4, 6-3, 6-2. Fritz's quarterfinal opponent will be 2020 U.S. Open runner-up Alexander Zverev, who got past Brandon Nakashima 3-6, 6-1, 6-2, 6-2.

"Im at the point now where Im still happy to make quarterfinals, but I wouldnt be happy with it ending here," said Fritz, who has yet to reach a Grand Slam semifinal. "I definitely am at the point where I really want more than that."

The Wimbledon win over Gauff earned Navarro, the 2021 NCAA singles champion for the University of Virginia, her first appearance in a major quarterfinal. Her second will come Tuesday in New York against

No. 26 Paula Badosa, a 6-1, 6-2 winner against Wang Yafan. The other womens match that day will be between No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka - she was last years runner-up - Gauff and beat Elise Mertens 6-2, 6-4 on Sunday - and either No. 7 Zheng Qinwen or No. 24 Donna Vekic.

The quarterfinals will give Navarro another chance to play at Arthur Ashe Stadium in front of a big crowd. Shed never hit a ball in the place until Sunday - and felt rather at ease, anyway.

"Ive been out on big courts before, where I just felt totally overwhelmed and almost like its an out-of-body experience. But I didnt feel like that today," Navarro said. "I felt comfortable from the time I stepped out onto the court, which I was a little bit surprised about. I kind of had prepared myself for the worst, just in terms of feeling overwhelmed and nervous."

Sure didnt perform that way. Gauff was the one who was unable to bring her best.

"I expect better, but at the end of the day it happened," Gauff said, and I know I can turn it around.





**SURESH KAVIRAYANI**  
sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

**N**andamuri Balakrishna completed 50 years and the Telugu Film Industry organised an event in Hyderabad on Sunday evening. Many celebrities from all the film industries, political and other had attended the event. During the event, Chiranjeevi's speech was the major highlight!

The Telugu Film Industry (TFI) had honoured actor Nandamuri Balakrishna's 50-year acting career. The golden jubilee celebration, which was held in Hyderabad, was organised by TFI. Balakrishna's wife, daughter, younger son-in-law, and sisters had also attended the event.

On this occasion, Mega Star Chiranjeevi shared his message to all the fans saying, "It's not just the celebration of Balakrishna, but of the entire Telugu cinema. Balakrishna achieved a rare record and just like his father,

Balakrishna has also played diverse roles and has enthralled the audience with his performance," said Mega Star.

He went on to highlight that this kind of function needs to be held regularly to show the audience that the actors are united. "Sometimes fans get into heated arguments and these functions would make them understand that we all share a good relationship," further explained Mega Star, adding that thus the fans also need to be united.

As he went ahead to speak at the event, he further spoke about his relationship with Balayya. "For any of our functions, Balakrishna is the first person to attend it and all of us enjoy it together. We are all like a family and fans should understand this and stay together," he said.

Going ahead, Mega Star expressed his desire to do a film with Balakrishna. "I took inspiration from Balakrishna's *Samarasimha Reddy* for my *Indra* film. Now, I wanted to do a faction film with Balayya and now I challenge both

Boyapati Srinu and YVS Chaudhary to make a film with us," said Chiranjeevi. He went on to wish Balakrishna a long life and also lauded his service to the people as a politician and also through his cancer hospital. "Love Live Balayya," said Mega Star.

Speaking at the event, Nandamuri Balakrishna thanked everyone who had worked with him throughout his journey. The actor said that not only did he learn acting but also a lot of things from his father. "It's not just acting I learned from my father; I learned discipline, punctuality and culture. I learned all the above qualities from Akkineni Nageswara Rao," said Balakrishna. The actor said that they are all competing in the film industry, but all of it is healthy competition. "I have been in multiple fields, including cinema, politics and medical services, so I am indebted to everyone who is supporting me throughout. My special thanks to my wife Vasundhara, who has supported me in everything I do," said Balakrishna.

# I WOULD LIKE TO ACT WITH BALAYYA FOR FACTION FILM: CHIRANJEEVI

## SIDELIGHTS

- Many of the young actors including Rana Daggubati, Nani, Adivi Sesh, Siddhu Jonnalagadda, Manchu Manoj, Allari Naresh and others clicked selfies with Balakrishna.
- Late Krishnam Raju's wife Shyamala Devi felicitated Balakrishna with a shawl.
- Actor Venkatesh surprised everyone with a popular dialogue from Balakrishna's film *Legend*.
- Senior director Raghavendra Rao danced for Balakrishna's song *Jai Balayya* from the film *Veera Simha Reddy* and entertained all. Generally, a calm person like Raghavendra Rao first time does this kind of entertainment.
- Mega Star Chiranjeevi fondly called MLA Raghurama Krishnaraju as *RRR* in his own style.
- The entire auditorium was under tight security due to the news of the Chief Ministers attending the event. They refused entry, causing many celebrities to be stuck outside. Most media personnel were also prohibited from covering the event, leading many to leave.
- Many criticised the Shreyas Media for not organising this event properly. They should be more organised when many celebrities from film and politics attend.
- Due to heavy rains and floods, the AP Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu couldn't attend. However, on behalf of him, AP Cinematography Minister Kandula Durgesh attended.
- Shiv Raj Kumar and Sumalatha from the Kannada film industry attended and both have worked with Balakrishna.
- Though many celebrities attended this event, everyone wondered why Nagarjuna gave a miss. There are reports that there are some differences between Balayya and Nagarjuna; that's why Nagarjuna missed.
- Another person who missed this event was Allu Arjun. Though the TFI specially invited Allu Arjun and he is close to Balakrishna, he still didn't come for the event. There are rumours that Allu Arjun did not wish to encounter Chiranjeevi at this event.
- Kamal Haasan sent his wishes through a video.
- There was a lot of confusion regarding the live video of this function. Some people were going through Gemini TV and suddenly ETV telecast this event live. There are reports that both the Telugu CMs were attending, so I&PR has given a live video link. Even the organisers had no clue about it and later they found and stopped the live link. Producers, directors, actors, writers and many other people from Tollywood attended this function.



## Eighth season of *Bigg Boss* kicks off with new rules

The *Telugu Bigg Boss* season 8 kicked off on Sunday evening with host Nagarjuna introducing all the housemates. This time, he has announced new rules and this time, the housemates were sent as pairs. The *Bigg Boss* show is known for its entertainment, drama, and, of course, a lot of twists.

Nagarjuna also stated that there will be no distribution of rations or prize money this time. "You have to earn them through tasks only," said Nagarjuna while hosting the show on a private television channel. He also mentioned that there will be no captain this season. This prevents one from witnessing the well-known and ridiculous debates

during nominations and also provides immunity from them.

In contrast to previous seasons, the current season lacks major celebrity figures, with the majority of housemates being well-known YouTubers, influencers, small-scale actors and radio jockeys.

Nagarjuna paired up all 14 contestants and escorted them inside the house. Yashmi Gowda and Nikhil (TV Artists), Abhay (Film Actor) and Prerna Kambham (TV Artist), Aditya Om and Soniya Akula, Bejawada Bebakka and Sekhar Basha, Kirrak Seetha and Naga Manikanta, Prithviraj and Vishnu Priya, Nainanika and Nabeel Afridi are the pairs.

## 'Sentiment of mother is biggest commercial element to bank on'

The movie *35 Chinna Katha Kaadu* will be releasing in cinemas on September 6 and has been produced by Srujan Yarabolu. Despite being a seasoned producer, he never openly discusses his films.

"This is my tenth film as producer," said Srujan. He mentioned that he began his professional journey as a movie distribu-

tor abroad with the movie *Kanche* in 2015 and has continued to distribute nearly 70 films since then. "The first film I produced was *Manu*, followed by *Suryakantham*, *Thimmarusu* and *Panchatantram*. I also produced Kannada, Malayalam and Hindi films," said Srujan.

Discussing the *35-Chinna Katha Kadu*, he mentioned encountering director Nanda Kishore Emani in a peculiar manner. "I had waited at a production house to meet the producer, while director Nanda Kishore and Vishwadev were also waiting to see the same producer. We were waiting in the same room and Nanda Kishore narrated the story. Later, he accompanied me to my office, where he shared the entire story, which I found very appealing,

leading me to decide to produce the film. I became curious and briefly asked Kishore about the movie," he said about how he started this film.

Srujan mentioned that the majority of his movies are centered on concepts. "I have nearly heard 400 stories and I liked only five of them. I wanted to make a classic like *Mahanti*, *Sita Ramam*, *Journey*, and then I got this story. I am confident that people will talk about this one," said Srujan. He added that with this film, people will be able to relate to a few characters. "I feel that the sentiment of a mother is the biggest commercial element. Apart from this, you will also be able to see many relationships, sentiments and a lot of drama," he said. The film has a Tirupathi backdrop. "The story needed a devotional backdrop, thus we choose Tirupathi. Coming to the accent, all the actors had learned the Chittoor accent for this film," said Srujan. "After watching my film, definitely you put this film too on the lines of K Viswanath and Babu films," he said.



## Anushka Shetty wants the committee report to be published!



Actress Samantha had a while back expressed her support for the Hema Committee report released by the Kerala Government. She commends the women in the movie business and bravely speaks out about the exploitation of women in the industry. Samantha implored the Telangana government to establish a replica in Tollywood and asked for its publication similar to the Hema Committee Report.

Now, yet another top actress, Anushka Shetty, has also openly requested the government to release the subcommittee report established in 2019. She commends the Kerala women who paved the way to this point.

"We, the women of the Telugu film industry, welcome the Hema Committee report and applaud the persistent efforts of the WCC in Kerala, which has laid the path to this moment," posted Anushka on her Instagram.

She added that taking cue from the WCC, The Voice of Women, a women's support group in the TFI, was established in 2019. She desired for the subcommittee report on sexual harassment to be made public so that the government and TFI could establish guidelines for a safe work environment for women. "We hereby urge the Telangana government to publish the submitted sub-committee report on sexual harassment, which can help frame the government and industry policies to establish a safe working environment for women in the TFI," (sic), said Anushka in her social media page. With growing demand from Tollywood actresses, now it's on the government to publish the subcommittee report.

## PARUCHURI'S GRANDSON SUDARSHAN DEBUTS AS AN ACTOR

The Paruchuri Brothers are famous for their successful scripts and have collaborated on numerous films featuring major celebrities. Their grandson, Paruchuri Sudarshan, is ready to start his acting career with the movie *Mr. Celebrity*. Chandina Ravi Kishore is in charge of directing it.

Talking about the film, Sudarshan said that he initially worked as a junior artiste to get experience. "People don't know that I was Paruchuri's grandson when I worked as a junior artiste, so I got to know the work experience on the sets. I also did many theater plays before I decided to enter as an actor," said Sudarshan. "When I worked as a junior



artiste, people were unaware that I was Paruchuri's grandson, which allowed me to learn about the work experience on sets. I had participated in numerous theater plays before choosing to pursue a career as an actor," said Sudarshan.

The shooting of the movie has finished as well, and the teaser of the film was released on Sudarshan's birthday. The teaser was officially launched by Sudarshan's grandfather, Paruchuri Venkateswara Rao. In this teaser, they gave a

glimpse of the plot. "Since the time of *Ramayan* until today, numerous individuals have been affected by rumours and false information. Many Tollywood actors, including celebrities, have also experienced significant difficulties as a result of rumours and gossip. The film's title includes all the celebrity names for that very reason," said director Ravi Kishore.

The teaser also reveals that *Mr. Celebrity* will be a gripping crime thriller with captivating elements in the story. The story appears to have unexpected developments with a fierce clash between the main character and the enemy. Varalaxmi Sarathkumar has a crucial part in the movie.

## STANDALONE

Keerthy Suresh becomes the co-owner of the Adani Trivandrum Royals cricket team, which is a prominent team in the Kerala Cricket League run by the Kerala Cricket Association (KCA).



## AAY team's noble gesture through JSP win hearts

NTR's brother-in-law, Narne Nithin, who captivated the Telugu audience with the film *Mad*, has recently brought the fun entertainer *AAY* to the audience. With good occupancy and decent collections, the film is performing well. Now, the team's noble gesture has become the talk of the town! Producer Bunny Vas and Geetha Arts has announced that 25% of producer's share from *AAY* collections from today till weekend will be donated to flood victims through Janasena Party. It is known that heavy rains in Andhra Pradesh have led to widespread flooding, creating challenging conditions across the region. In light of this, the team has announced this decision. By supporting the flood victims, Bunny Vas and team *AAY* emphasise their solidarity with the affected communities.

