www.dailypioneer.com

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





After Majaka, filmmakers know where I can fit: **ANSHU SAGAR**

RNI No. TELENG/2018/76469

*LATE CITY VOL. 7 ISSUE 113

the pioneer It is surprising that KTR did not participate in the caste census. However, he and his family are now speaking about a re-survey. It is ridiculous on the part of KTR to speak about weaker sections. BCs were subjected to immense injustice during BRS's 10-year rule. The BRS and the BJP have compromised in MLC elections. The BRS does not have candidates to field in MLC elections. So it is indirectly supporting the BJP as it did during the 2024 Parliament

QUOTE OF THE DAY

- B Mahesh Kumar Goud, TPCC Chief and MLC

Projects under H-CITI must be people-first

In a significant move to address Hyderabad's urban challenges, Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MAUD) Principal Secretary M Dana Kishore chaired a teleconference with GHMC officials, engineers and city planners to review the progress of the Hyderabad City Innovative and Transformative Initiative (H-CITI). The meeting emphasised accelerating infrastructure projects to alleviate traffic congestion and enhance public welfare across Greater Hyderabad. Officials, including

How Yamuna issue sank AAP

The Yamuna factor seemingly played a significant role in the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections, reshaping voter sentiment and helping the BJP script history by defeating AAP. A key driver of this shift was the backlash from Haryanvi-origin voters who viewed AAP's narrative on Yamuna pollution as an attack on their home state. The BJP, which bagged 48 out of 70 sets, fielded 14 candidates of Haryanvi descent and 12 of them won. The Aam Aadmi Party had 10 such candidates but..

Dry spell in Shimla

A prolonged dry spell has got Shimla farmers worrying about the apple crop, which is now threatened by a hampered production Desired cooling hours (1,200 to 1,600 below 7 degrees 600 hours for early varieties have not come by this season. Farmers were also restricted from new plantations due to unfavourable weather conditions, Fruit Vegetable Flower Growers Association President Harish Chauhan said on Sunday. About 90 per cent of

Spin great R Ashwin has called India and New Zealand the strongest sides heading into the Champions Trophy but warned teams against taking Australia lightly despite the loss of key players to injuries as they "bring their A-game" into marquee tournaments. The ICC event starts in Pakistan on February 19 with India playing all their matches in Dubai under a hybrid model agreement, "India has the home advantage in Dubai, and it almost like every other team is playing an away match against...

31 Naxals gunned down

Fierce encounter ensued between 650 cops and Maoists in Bijapur dist of Chhattisgarh

PNS ■ BIJAPUR (CHHATTISGARH)

In one of the deadliest blows to Naxalites in Chhattisgarh, security forces on Sunday gunned down 31 rebels, including 11 women, in a fierce encounter in the state's Bijapur district, police said.

Two security personnel were also killed and as many injured in the face-off, they said. More than 650 security personnel

entered the Indravati National Park area from different sides and eliminated 31 Naxalites in their den, Chhattisgarh's Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma said.

With this success, 81 Naxalites have been neutralised by security forces in separate encounters in Chhattisgarh so far this year, compared to 219 in 2024. CM Vishnu Deo Sai said the end of

Naxalism in Chhattisgarh and the country is certain. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the state will get rid of

Manipur CM Biren

resigns ahead of

no-trust motion

Amidst rumblings within the state BJP

seeking a change of leadership, Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Sunday

tendered his resignation to Governor Ajay

Kumar Bhalla at the Raj Bhavan in

The Governor accepted Singh's resig-

nation, along with that of his council of

ministers, and requested that he contin-

ue in office until alternative arrangements

are made. The development comes hours

Earlier this week, a new controversy

erupted after the Supreme Court sought a sealed-cover forensic report on the

authenticity of leaked audio clips alleging

the role of Singh in the ethnic violence.

sations where Singh allegedly suggested

that Meitei groups were allowed to loot

arms and ammunition from the state gov-

ernment during the unrest, which has so

Singh in his resignation letter also

requested the Centre to continue the

"crackdown on border infiltration and to

formulate policy for the deportation of the

illegal immigrants and the fight against

On Saturday, Singh convened a meet-

ing with BJP-led ruling alliance MLAs at

The tapes reportedly included conver-

after he returned from Delhi.

Imphal, officials said.

far claimed 250 lives.

the CM Secretariat.

drugs and narco terrorism.



Naxalism by March 2026, he asserted. The latest gunbattle took place on a forested hill along the border of Madded and Farsegarh police station areas when personnel from different security forces during an anti-Naxal operation, Inspector General of Police,

Bastar Range, Sundarraj P said. Acting on inputs about the presence of Maoists belonging to their national park area committee, personnel from state police units District Reserve Guard (DRG),

'Naxals will be eradicated by March 31, 2026'

CM Vishnu Deo Sai said the end of Naxalism in Chhattisgarh and the country is certain. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the state will get rid of Naxalism by March 2026, he asserted

Fighters had launched the operation on February 7, he said.

At around 8 am on Sunday, an intense exchange of fire broke out on the hill, a part of the Indravati National Park. The intermittent gunfight lasted till around 4 pm, he said. "So far, bodies of 31 Naxalites,

including 11 women, clad in 'uniform' have been recovered from the

'Ready to take the initiative'

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP have brought everything under their control. This is a 'big threat' to democracy. It is high time the people of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Puducherry joined hands, he said.

'The role of political parties is limited here. If political leaders are asked



Southern states must unite to protect their rights: Revanth

'One country, one

PNS HYDERABAD

"One country, one election' is actually a policy of 'One Person, One Party' and it is the 'secret' agenda of Prime Minister Narendra Modi,' said Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

The CM was addressing the media while attending the 'Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters' organised by Malayalam daily 'Mathrubhumi' at Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday.

He said the delimitation of

Assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies is a contentious issue as southern states implemented family planning successfully. It looks like southern states are being punished



Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters program at Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday

for the development they have achieved, the CM said. The CM hoped that southern states would join hands to safeguard the guarantees provided by the Constitution.

Declaring that "Telangana Rising is not just a slogan and that it is the dream of Telangana's four crore people," the CM spoke in detail on Telangana Rising Vision–2050.' Telangana's GDP is around USD

200 billion and it will be USD one trillion by 2035, he said.

He said Telangana has been divided into three zones: Hyderabad Core Urban, Semi-Urban and Rural Telangana. The core urban area is located within the 160 km long Outer Ring Road (ORR) which is home to 1.2 crore people.

Continued on Page 2

worries farmers

apple orchardists.. -PAGE: 8

New Zealand is one of strongest team

BRS-Congress deal to defeat BJP in MLC polls: Sanjay

Special Task Force (STF) and Bastar

'How can Muslims be included in BCs' list'

PNS HYDERABAD

The BRS has joined hands with the Congress to defeat the BJP in MLC elections, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar said. There is a quid-pro-quo deal between the BRS and the Congress, he added. Sanjay said that the BRS

has a tacit understanding the victory of Congress candidates in the MLC elections as the Congress government did not arrest BRS

leaders although they were stuck directions to BJP workers. in scams and facing investigations. He called upon MLC election voters to expose the secret deal between the Congress and the BRS.

Election Workshop in Nalgonda district on Sunday, Sanjay gave sacred threads. That is our silent.



Sanjay Kumar addressing the media at Nalgonda

"How can Muslims be included in the BCs' (Backward Classes) list? What is your caste? Do you think this is your ancestral property? We wear bindis, Attending Teachers' MLC we have birth stars, gotra (lineage) names, and we wear

identity. The Congress is a foolish party that cannot distinguish between different communities. What is common between Hindus and Muslims? Should Hindus beg? Do you want to turn them into beggars?" Sanjay said at the Teachers' MLC Election Workshop on Saturday.

He criticised BC organiaccused them of supporting those in power. He warned that if this situation continues, Muslims will start con-

testing even in BC-reserved seats in remote areas of the state. He said that when Muslims contested in BC-reserved seats during GHMC elections and committed injustice against Hindus, Hindutva supporters and BC organisations remained Continued on Page 2

Prepared to face by-poll, says Kadiam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Station Ghannur MLA Kadiam Srihari who joined the Congress after lation percentage, Kadiam said the winning on a BRS ticket declared that he is ready to face a by-poll.

Speaking to the media on Sunday, Kadiam said the disqualification petition is in Supreme Court and the verdict will come on February 10.

"I will follow the SC verdict. I will not run away if by-polls come. I will stand and fight. The BRS has no right to speak on defections. The BRS is the party which destroyed democracy in Telangana," he said. tested alone.

Declaring that the government should give 18 per cent reservations BRS government did not develop anything in the last 10 years.

He said the BRS Working President is enjoying the victory of the BJP in Delhi and that the AAP faced defeat due to its friendship with the BRS. The Congress and AAP would have come to the power in Delhi if they had an alliance, Kadiam said. He said the AAP lost due to the liquor scam and as it con-

CM must give Deputy CM post to BCs: Harish

PNS HYDERABAD

BRS MLA T. Harish Rao demanded that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy should give the Deputy Chief Minister post to BCs. He also demanded that the Congress should implement its 'Kamareddy BC Declaration' as per the word given to BCs.

Attending a function at the Sri Krishna Yadava Function Hall in Siddipet on Sunday, Harish said the Congress government had conducted a fake caste survey and



Alleges Revanth is responsible for suicides of realtors reduced the number of BCs. He Telangana and that the CM could also asked the government to provide 42 per cent reservations to

BCs in the local body elections. He said that the CM did not do justice to even a single community. The government should hold local body elections only after providing 42 per cent reservations to BCs, he added.

Harish said that Revanth was sending money looted from kickbacks, he said.

not even get an appointment to meet Rahul Gandhi. Revanth has mortgaged the honour of Telangana to his bosses, he added.

He said that Ministers are taking 30 per cent commissions if anyone goes with land disputes to them and that Bhumatha has become a Bhumetha. There is a fight between Ministers and Congress MLAs for

ble for suicides by realtors and that a few days ago, a realtor named Venugopal Reddy committed sui-cide and another realtor named Narsimha Goud committed suicide on Sunday.

'It is unfortunate that the suicide culture has hit the real estate business. The CM must help the Narsimha Goud family," he said.

'Our population underestimated'

Munnur Kapus demand resurvey, plan public meeting

PNS HYDERABAD

The Munnur Kapu community has strongly condemned the underestimation of their population in the government's caste census. Munnur Kapu leaders said the government humiliated them by undercounting their numbers even though they constituted the majority.

The Munnur Kapu leaders decided to organise a huge public meeting with 10 lakh people in Hyderabad to protest against the survey conducted by the government.

Responding to the call of the Munnur Kapu Apex Council, prominent Munnur Kapu members held an emergency meeting on Sunday at the VHR Banquet Hall at the Sikh Dr Kova Laxman, Karimnagar MLA by Apex Council Convener Sardar



Mistakes Made. Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Rajya Sabha Members Vaddiraju Ravichandra,

Mallanna and others demanded that Chief Minister Revanth should order a resurvey immediately and said that they oppose the caste cen-Speaking at the meeting chaired

Putam Purushottam Rao, Union Minister Sanjay said that as the Munnur Kapu community has a majority in the state, the BJP and the Congress have appointed Munnur Kapu leaders as state party presidents several times Continued on Page 2



BRS working president KTR addressing the media along with BC leaders on Sunday at Telangana Bhavan

BRS plans public meeting of BCs

Govt must conduct caste census again, demands KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

President KT Rama Rao said. BRS supremo K. Chandrasekhar Rao will also attend the meeting.

KTR made it clear that they will organise the public meeting at the Reddy to apologise for reducing the same spot in Kamareddy where the Congress announced its BC

Declaration. He said the caste census report is a collection of mistakes The BRS will organise a public and demanded that the Congress meeting of BCs, BRS Working government conduct a re-survey. He government conduct a re-survey. He said that KCR and his family would participate in the caste survey if it is conducted again. KTR asked Chief Minister Revanth

population of BCs in the caste survey report. The Congress deceived peo-

ple during the 2023 Assembly election campaign and also after coming to power, he said. KTR warned that the BRS will not let go the Congress till it delivers justice to BCs and that the BRS will take the injustice meted out to BCs to the people.

Addressing the media after meeting BC leaders on Sunday, KTR said the Congress deceived the BCs by Continued on Page 2

Monday Mirchi

An RTI query with the Embassy of India in Switzerland has set off a storm, revealing that 18 members travelled as part of Telangana's delegation to the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos. While the opposition had a field day pointing out a string of unknown names with no official positions, a little bird tells us the real story is far more interesting. The list disclosed through RTI pertains to those who received official WEF ID cards, allowing them access to the event. But here's the twist - the government-approved list, sanctioned by the Chief Secretary for state-sponsored travel, is a different document altogether. And guess what? Several political names don't even figure in it. So, while critics are questioning how certain individuals ended up as part of the official delegation, the bigger meetry is who official delegation, the bigger mystery is who got a fully funded Swiss vacation under the radar. Looks like Telangana's Davos diaries are far from over - expect more fireworks as the real list surfaces.

DON'T OVERACT: HYDRAA CHIEF TO LAWYER HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath

met with members of the Ailapur Rajagopal Nagar Association in Aminpur Municipality, Sangareddy district, where discussions centred around concerns raised by residents who had purchased plots in the area. Among those present was Mukhim, a Supreme Court lawyer and a resident of Ailapur village, who engaged in a pointed exchange with the commissioner. During the meeting, Mukhim questioned Ranganath about his background, asking if he knew Telugu. The remark did not sit well with the commissioner, who firmly responded, "Say what you want, don't overact" The brief but intense interaction drew attention, with some seeing it as a momentary lapse in decorum. Whispers noted that while such discussions are crucial for addressing grievances, maintaining a respectful tone remains essential. Critics argue that adherence to decorum is not just for officials but applies to every lawabiding citizen, including politicians.

NO ROOM FOR BUREAUCRATS AS CONGRESS LEADERS TAKE OVER EVENTS

It's a familiar scene these days—press meets and inaugurals in the Congress regime have turned into a crowd fest, leaving bureaucrats struggling to even find a place to sit. With almost every Congress leader making it a point to show up, there's barely any space left for top officials, let alone a dignified seating arrangement. Chief Secretary Santhi Kumar has already had her share of awkward moments. More than once, a chair had to be hurriedly arranged for her during press meets, sometimes so close to the stairs that it seemed like he was on the verge of exiting rather than presiding. The including secretaries, being subtly moved aside. But here's the real kicker—they aren't making a fuss. No pushing, no complaining, just silently stepping back as the political crowd swells. The question is, how long before the administration decides enough is enough? Or will they just keep adjusting, one

GHMC CHIEF MISSING IN ACTION? **ACTIVISTS COMPLAIN, CM KNOWS**

The buzz around the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) corridors is that activists are having a tough time meeting Commissioner Ilambarithi. They claim he is unavailable even during visiting hours, raising questions about accessibility. But here's the twist—what if the visiting hours coincide with meetings called by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy himself? Activists, in their fruntation that the control of the c in their frustration, tagged their complaint straight to the CM, pointing out that GHMC's top boss is nowhere to be found when they try to meet him. The irony? The CM already knows, because if Ilambarithi is in a closed-door meeting with him, how is he supposed to be outside meeting activists at the same time? Now, while the CM is aware, the real question is—who's going to tell the activists that their timing might just be off? With civic issues piling up and GHMC under scrutiny, it remains to be seen whether Ilambarithi will tweak his schedule or if activists will have to rethink their strat-

NTR DISTRICT TOP COP 'SITS' ON 'TOP SHELF'

Senior IPS officer and NTR District Police Commissioner SV Rajasekhar Babu has landed himself quite a 'spirited' assignment — overseeing the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing irregularities in the Andhra Pradesh State Beverages Corporation Limited (APSBCL). If handling law and order wasn't enough, now he has the added task of untangling a financial mess that allegedly brewed between October 2019 and March 2024. Leading a crack team of cive conjury of fivers from enforcement and of six senior officers from enforcement and vigilance departments, Rajasekhar Babu has been handed sweeping powers under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023. From search and seizure to grilling witnesses and making arrests, this SIT means business. And with the Director General of Police (CID) watching over their shoulders, there's no room for 'on the rocks' investigations. The government, in a rare show of urgency, has directed all departments to extend their full support—technical, legal, and presumably, moral—to the SIT. The team will submit progress reports every fortnight, ensuring that this probe doesn't just fizzle out. With a case involving APSBCL, financial loopholes, and a senior IPS officer in charge, one thing is certain—this investigation won't be short of twists, turns, and

--Yours truly

Caste survey was held transparently: Mahesh

The caste survey was held transparently in Telangana, TPCC chief B. Mahesh Kumar

Countering the criticism of BRS Working President KT Rama Rao, he said that KTR has been stating that the caste census was not held properly without any evidence. He said the government held the caste census scientifically by using lakhs of government employees.

KTR is criticising the government as it is getting a

caste census, he said.

Declaring that the Congress government conducted the caste census as per the directions of Rahul Gandhi, he warned KTR that BCs will not forgive KTR's comments on

> caste census was held after 1931 and it will help BCs greatly. Mahesh said the Congress government completed

caste census. He said the

the caste census perfectly for the first time in the

that BCs are going to get justice after the caste census, he added.

"It is surprising that KTR did not participate in the caste census. However, he and his family are speaking about resurvey. It is ridiculous on the part of KTR to speak about weaker sections. The BCs were subjected to injustice during the BRS rule. The BRS and the BJP have compromised in MLC elections. The BRS have no candidates to field in MLC elections. So the BRS is giving indirect support to the BJP as it happened during the 2024 LS elections," he said.

Telangana BJP president and Union Minister G Kishan Reddy participated in celebrations marking party's Delhi victory on Sunday 'Delhi people endorsed Modi's righteous rule'

PNS HYDERABAD

The BJP's victory in Delhi is proof of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's righteous governance, Telangana BJP President G. Kishan Reddy said. The Delhi victory is a morale booster for the BJP in the ongoing MLC elections in

Telangana, he added. Attending celebrations marking the Delhi victory on Sunday, Kishan said that a double-engine sarkar has come to Delhi to implement welfare programs for all sections of people under the leadership of Modi.

He said that all states with double-engine sarkars are developing. Development is taking place in Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Bihar as they have double-engine sarkars. The BJP will develop Delhi. There is a need to bring a double-engine sarkar in Telangana

Govt must pay bonus to Siddipet farmers, says Harish

PNS HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy should immediately release bonus to the farmers of Siddipet, BRS MLA T. Harish Rao said. Harish wrote an open letter to the CM regard-

ing this.

After releasing the letter, he told reporters that the government is cheating farmers on

the issue of bonuses.

He said that Civil Supplies

Sachin Pilot coming

Former Rajasthan Deputy

Chief Minister Sachin Pilot

is coming to Telangana on Monday, said AICC Secretary and Chhattisgarh

in-charge Secretary SA

Sachin will arrive in

Hyderabad at 12 noon and

of Bhagwan Shri Dev Narayan

Sampath Kumar.

Temple.

to TG today
PNS HYDERABAD

Minister N. Uttam Kumar frauds. Reddy's words are great, but his

He lashed out at the actions are not up to the mark. Is Uttam a man who sticks to his words, or a fraud, said Harish.

Readywire's first Al-integrated cloud

system for automotive dealerships

operations.

(DPDPA),

He expressed concern at farmers going around Collectorates and officials for their bonus. He said that the government's schemes like Rythu Bharosa, waiver of loans up to Rs 2 lakh, and bonus for fine variety paddy are all

PNS HYDERABAD

Transforming Indian auto-

Readywire introduced the

first AI-integrated cloud-based ERP solution. This

system simplifies paperwork,

removes the need for middle-

men and lowers the risk of

data breaches. By ensuring

compliance with the Digital

Personal Data Protection Act

2023 (DPDPA), Readywire

enhanced data security while

dealerships,

Congress government for completely ignoring the Warangal Farmers' Declaration. Harish expressed concern at

farmers facing problems due to lack of investment for the second crop and reminded that bonus arrears now amount to Rs 432 crore.

He sarcastically said that Uttam's words have turned into mere boasts.

When asked about the

Digital Personal Data

Protection Act 2023

Founder and CEO Viren

Choudary emphasized the

need for greater public aware-

ness. He explained that

DPDPA requires explicit con-

sent for data processing and

noted that the 18 to 24

months given for compliance

is a short period for such a

large-scale transformation in

'42% quota for BCs in local polls possible if govt is committed'



PNS HYDERABAD

At the BC Intellectuals Conference, Rajya Sabha MP and National BC Welfare Association president R Krishnaiah, former minister V Srinivas Goud, former Telangana BC Commission chairman Dr Vakulabharanam Krishna Mohan Rao and retired IAS officer Chiranjeevulu urged the Telangana government to implement 42% reservations

for BCs in local body elections. The members warned that if the Congress government holds elections without fulfilling its promises, they will oppose its

candidates. The members accused the government of underreporting the BC population and using flawed data to justify lower reservations.

Speaking at a forum at Hotel Ashoka, Krishnaiah criticised the government's caste survey and called for a re-survey. Dr Vakulabharanam argued that a proper caste study could justify increased reservations. Goud Srinivas Chiranjeevulu accused the government of misleading the BCs.

The event was attended by activists, professionals and BC organisation representatives, with folk singer Ramalingam singing revolutionary songs.

situation isn't any better at inaugurations, where the sheer number of political attenperhaps a few sobering revelations! dees, combined with heightened security and jostling, has resulted in top bureaucrats, Delhi assembly poll outcome a

turning point for people: Goyal PNS MUMBAI

Union minister Piyush Goyal on Sunday said the Delhi assembly poll results would be remembered as a turning point for the people who unmasked AAP and its supremo Arvind Kejriwal. Speaking to reporters in Gondia in Maharashtra, Goyal alleged that the Aam Aadmi Party deprived Delhi of development and promoted

corruption. The BJP ended the Aam Aadmi Party's reign in Delhi by winning 48 seats in the 70member assembly. Among the prominent losers was Kejriwal from the New Delhi constituency. When asked who would be the next chief minister of Delhi, Goyal said it is

"The MLAs will sit together

"The MLAs will sit together and decide on one name. The CM will decide the date for the swearingin ceremony," he said

and decide on one name. The CM will decide the date for the swearing-in ceremony," he said. Goyal said the day

(February 8) would be written in golden letters for Delhi

"The assembly poll results would be remembered as a turning point for people because, for many years, Delhi was deprived of development. Arvind Kejriwal and his party cheated people and corruption continued. No development work ever took place," the North Mumbai BJP MP said.

In a jibe at Kejriwal, he said one can learn from the AAP chief how to play politics through fake narratives.

Kejriwal created calamity, an AAP-da. Delhi people unmasked them (AAP and Kejriwal). The people are now free of its (AAP) politics.

meet Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. He will go to Kavadipally at 2 pm and attend the Pranaprathishta Mahotsav

31 Naxals ...

Continued from page 1
Besides, a huge cache of weapons, including AK-47, INSAS, SLR and 303 rifles and Barrel Grenade Bastar region comprising seven districts including Bijapur, he said. Launchers (BGL), and explosives have also been seized from the scene," the official said.

DRG Head Constable Naresh Dhruv and Constable Vasit Ravte from the STF were killed in the gunfight and their mortal remains have been brought to Bijapur district headquarters, he said.

While Dhruv was a resident of Balodabazar-Bhatapara district, Ravte hailed from the Baldo district in the state. Constables Jaggu Kalmu (DRG) and Gulab Mandavi (STF) suffered injuries during the encounter. They were airlifted to Raipur and admitted at a hospital there, Sundarraj said, adding that their condition was stated to be out of danger.

Reinforcement of DRG, STF, Bastar Fighter and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has been rushed to the spot and a search operation is underway in the area, he added.

Maintaining the success achieved in the anti-Naxal offensive last year, bodies of 65 Naxalites have been recovered in the first 40 days of this year following separate encounters in the densely forested

modernising dealership the automotive industry.

As per the intention of the government and people's wishes, different units of state police and paramilitary forces deployed in Bastar have been dedicatedly working towards establishing peace, security and development with strong morale and clear goals, said the official. "The sacrifice of the martyred soldiers will be an inspiration to fulfil our resolve," he added.

CM Sai said that under the leadership of PM Modi and Union minister Amit Shah, the state will get rid of Naxalism by March 2026.

"So far, 31 Naxalites have been killed in an encounter in the national park area of Bijapur. The security forces are entering the den of Naxalites and eliminating them. This success achieved by the soldiers is commendable, I salute their bravery," he said.

'Our population

Continued from page 1

He said that there is a need to organise programmes to make Munnur Kapus

Raiya Sabha Member Dr Laxman said that whenever the occasion arises, we need to move forward with unity and increase the pressure on rulers.

He said that there is no point in accepting this caste census that underestimated their population, and we should immediately demand a re-survey.

MLA Gangula Kamalakar said that we should all be proud of our Munnuru Kapu

Speaking at the meeting, Rajya Sabha Member and Munnurukapu Sangam State Honorary President Vaddiraju Ravichandra said that it is a joy to see everyone on the same platform.

He said that if Revanth conspires to harm us, we are ready to show our unity. He said that caste is our priority, and its benefits and interests are important to all

MP Vaddiraju explained that he and Dr Laxman got their posts due to the unity, discipline, and initiative among us.

Speaking at the meeting, former PSC member C. Vitthal said that underestimating our population was an intolerable mistake. He said that there is a need to take direct action to make the governmen its eyes.

Bandi Sanjeev, the youth president of Munnurukapu Sangam, said that the survey report that cut our population is like

Strongly opposing the caste census report Bandi Padmakka, the President of the Munnur Kapu women's wing, said that we should burn the effigies of Revanth Reddy in district and mandal centres and prove our strength.

MLC Teenmar Mallanna said that there is a need to build a movement to achieve a fair share of government schemes.

After the meeting, Munnuru Kapu Sangam State President Konda Devaiah spoke to reporters and announced the next course of action.

He said that they would hold protests at district and Mandal centres protesting against the bogus caste census survey and submit petitions to collectors and tehsil-

TODAY **ALMANAC** Month & Pakshar Sukla Paksha Trayodashi: Feb 09 07:25 PM to Feb 10 06:57 PM Chaturdashi to Feb 11 06:55 PM Nakshatram: Punarvasu: to Feb 10 06:00 PM Pushya: Feb 10 06:00 PM

Varjyam: 02:11 AM to 03:50 AM 1:55 PM to 3:21 PM 03:36 PM to 05:12 PM Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:07 PM to 12:53 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Sunny **Temp:** 32[∞] **Humidity:** 58% Sunrise: 6:45 AM Sunset: 6:16 PM

Rahukalam

Yamaqandam:



to Feb 11 06:34 PM

8:14 AM to 9:39 AM

11:05 AM to 12:30 PM

Updated: February 9, 2025 5:00 PM

'One country, one ...

tries, he said.

He said the government is planning to transform the core urban area inside ORR into 100 per cent net zero with service sectors.

"We are building Future City on 30,000 acres. Future City will be the greenest, cleanest and best city in India. The city will be the first net zero city. The AI City will be inside Future City. Young India Skill University and Young India Sports University are being devel-

oped for youth," he said. The CM said that he had attended the World Economic Forum held in Davos and that Telangana attracted investments worth Rs 182,000 crore. Last year, Telangana bagged invest-

Continued from page 1
The BRS government coals not manage even investments worth Rs 25,000 crore, He said the government

launched the Musi rejuvenation project for the environmental sustainability of Hyderabad.

He said that Telangana is the only state which does not have a coast in south India. "We have prepared plans to develop a Dry Port and connect it to a port in Andhra Pradesh," Revanth said. He said the admin is plan-

ning to promote FMCG, defence, rockets, space, electric vehicles and green energy. Telangana will become a data centre hub and a pump storage hub for India. "We hope to make TG a logistics centre," he added.

He said that Telangana is the first state to conduct a ments worth Rs 40,000 crore. comprehensive caste survey.

'I am ready ...

Continued from page 1

about this, they will use this platform to calculate their gains. That is the reason the south should unite and fight. I am ready to take the initiative, if necessary in this matter," Revanth said

Responding to the questions of the audience at the Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters on Sunday at Thiruvananthapuram, the CM said the Congress welded together INDIA. "But everyone wanted everything. Let us analyse the Delhi and Haryana elections. Kejriwal created trouble for the Congress in Haryana. In Delhi, the Congress fought against Kejriwal. Ultimately, the BJP gained,"

"We should think about this. This is the right time for us to unite on the issue of 'One Nation, One Election' and the delimitation of Assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies. We implemented family planning programmes as per the policies of the Indian government. If the delimitation of constituencies is done based on population, we (southern states) will not get additional constituencies and instead will lose existing constituencies. I have already suggested to Prime Minister Modi to increase the number of LS constituencies in the south by 50 per cent," the CM said.

BRS-Congress ...

Continued from page 1 He said that due to this silence, the gangs of Owaisi and Revanth are now conspiring to include Muslims in BCs' list to weaken BC communities.

Sanjay called on BCs and Hindus to unite and teach the Congress a lesson. He asked why people should vote for the Congress in the MLC elections when the party had failed to fulfil its promises.

He urged graduates and teachers to confront Congress leaders who come asking for votes and demand answers for unfulfilled promises.

During his visit to Nalgonda district for MLC elections, Sanjay attended the BJP district office workshop. Later, addressing the media, he launched a scathing attack on the Congress and BČ organisations.

He said that the Congress MLC elections, which is an added.

unusual situation for a ruling party. He claimed that the Congress and the BRS have entered into a secret deal to protect corrupt BRS leaders from arrest in scams like Kaleshwaram, drugs, and

Formula-E racing.
In return, the BRS is ensuring that Congress wins the MLC elections by not fielding its candidate. He challenged BRS to explain why they did not contest if there was no secret agreement.

Sanjay also questioned Congress' promises, such as unemployment allowance of Rs 4,000 per month, which has not been given for 14 months, amounting to Rs 56,000 per unemployed person. He urged people to confront Congress leaders and demand their dues.

He also criticised the party for failing to fulfil its promise of providing two lakh jobs. The admin provided only 50,000 jobs but is falsely claiming that 25,000 jobs have been provided through lacked proper candidates for misleading notifications, Sanjay

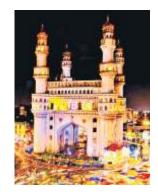
BRS plans ...

Continued from page 1 the population of BCs five and a half per cent less. He said the Revanth Reddy government had set aside the 42 per cent reservation for BCs issue. He said the BRS will lodge its protest in the Assembly as well as in the Council regarding this.

"The caste census report is a collection of mistakes. It is nothing but wasting paper. The Congress cut the throats of weaker sections using this survey. No BC group will accept it. The BRS argued in the Assembly and Council through Talasani Srinivas Yadav and Madhusudhana Chary. The government should conduct a survey scientifically. The BCs and MBCs fear that they may lose their share in government welfare schemes, ration cards, Indiramma houses and six guarantees," he said.

He recalled that the Congress had assured people through its BC Declaration at the Kamareddy public meeting that it would provide 42 per cent reservations in local body

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of laim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements



Annual Day Celebrations

By Euro Kids School Ravindra Bharati

February 10, 9 am to 1 pm

Annual Day Celebrations

By Deepanjali

Venue Ravindra Bharati February 10, 6 pm to 10 pm

IRO Lit Festival By Navatarangam Organisation

Ravindra Bharathi February 7, (6 pm)

Abhinaya Arangam 6th India Reading Olympiad

Venue Birla Planetarium and Museum February 10, 9 am to 7 pm

Telugu and Hindi film songs concert

By Pushpanjali Rhythms

Sri Tyagaraja Gana Sabha February 10, 12noon

City Pioneer

the pioneer Hyderabad | Monday | February 10, 2025

Every project under H-CITI must be people-first: Principal Secy

Stress on infrastructure upgrades not only resolving traffic bottlenecks but also integrating flood mitigation measures to prevent water-logging during monsoons



MAUD Principal Secretary M Dana Kishore, along with GHMC Commissioner llambarthi reviewing the progress of H-CITI project

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a significant move to address Hyderabad's urban challenges, Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MAUD) Principal Secretary M Dana Kishore chaired a teleconference with GHMC officials, engineers and city planners to review the progress of the Hyderabad City Innovative and Transformative Initiative

The meeting emphasised accelerating infrastructure projects to alleviate traf-fic congestion and enhance public welfare across Greater Hyderabad. Officials, including GHMC Commissioner, Additional Commissioners, Zonal Commissioners, Superintending Engineers, Executive Engineers and City Planners were instructed to form

dedicated teams and conduct field visits to all H-CITI project sites.

Principal secretary Dana Kishore mandated a thorough review of ongoing works, including flyovers, road expansions, underpasses, Rail Under Bridges (RUBs), Retaining Walls

(ROWs), and ROW Beautification Initiatives (RoWBs), to ensure the project's success with Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's vision for a congestion-free, flood-resilient Hyderabad.

Every H-CITI project must prioritise maximum public benefit and long-term convenience. Dana Kishore stressed that infrastructure upgrades should not only resolve traffic bottlenecks but also integrate flood mitigation measures to prevent water-logging during mon-

Officials were directed to submit written suggestions for improvements, modifications, or additions to existing projects. The focus is on innovative solutions to eliminate traffic disruptions during construction and ensure minimal public inconvenience.

The Principal Secretary highlighted the need for coordinated efforts between departments to expedite work while maintaining quality. Projects like flyovers and road widening must align with Hyderabad's long-term urban development goals, ensuring seamless connectivity and sustainability.



Illegal farmhouse, boundary walls demolished in Koheda

PNS HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency (HYDRAA) carried out demolition operations in Koheda village, Abdullapurmet mandal, Ranga Reddy district on Sunday. The teams under police security, carried out the demolition of the farmhouse, boundary walls and a fencing. The action was taken following complaints from members of the Radhe Dhamam Layout Plot Owners Welfare Association and other plot owners, who alleged that Sammireddy Balreddy had encroached on their plots in Survey Numbers 951 and 952 of the village panchayat layout and blocked internal roads with unauthorised walls. After the verification land records, officials confirmed that the land in Survey Numbers 951 and 952 was part of a village panchayat layout established in 1986 by landowners K Ramulu,

Peddayya and Esayya. However, it was found that Sammireddy Balreddy had taken control of the land, constructed a farmhouse, claimed several plots as his own and obstructed internal roads. HYDRAA issued notices to both parties, requiring them to present all relevant documents. On February 8, both parties, along with revenue and municipal officials, submitted their documents for review. Tukkuguda municipal officials confirmed that the farmhouse, sheds, compound wall and fencing built by Balreddy had no legal permissions. The Plot owners alleged that after selling plots as part of the layout, Balreddy fraudulently created records to claim ownership of the land. Following an inquiry with both parties and officials, HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath ordered the demolition of Balreddy's unauthorised structures.

TGMC crack down on unauthorised medical practices

PNS HYDERABAD

Telangana Medical Council (TGMC) conducted inspections in Sangareddy district on Saturday, uncovering three unauthorised clinics, an illegal diagnostic centre and an Ayurvedic practitioner illegally prescribing allopathic medicines. The council has announced that cases will be filed against the fake doctors and notices will be issued

to those violating medical regulations.

The inspection team, led by TGMC Vice-Chairman Dr G Srinivas, Public Relations Committee Chairman Dr V Naresh Kumar, and Member Dr Kadali Vishnu, identified three clinics Gemini Clinic in Fasalwadi, Manikanta First Aid Centre in Ahmed Nagar (Rajampet Road), and Srinivasa Clinic near the old bus stand



Telangana Medical Council (TGMC) officials conducting inspections in Sangareddy

operating without government approval. The individuals running these clinics were found practicing allopathic medicine without any recognised qualifications, administering antibiotics, painkillers and steroid injections to patients without proper authorisation. Legal proceedings are being initiated against the owners of these clinics, D Gopal, D Malka Goud,and Kishan Rao, for violations under the National Medical Commission (NMC) Act and the Telangana State Medical Practitioners Registration (TSMPR) Act, confirmed TGMC Vice-Chairman Dr G Srinivas.

During the inspection, a large stock of allopathic medicines was discovered at Gemini Clinic, stored without approval from the Drugs Control Authority. TGMC member Dr Kadali Vishnu stated that a formal complaint will be lodged with the Sangareddy District Drug Inspector regarding this violation. The officials also found that an Ayurvedic doctor S Ravinder Patil, who runs Venkateshwara Clinic near the old bus stand, was illegally practicing allopathic medicine and administering antibiotics and steroid injections.



EXPERTS AT BRONCHUS-2025

Early detection of lung cancer crucial

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

After COVID-19 respiratory illnesses have risen, making early detection of lung cancer crucial said health experts at an International Interventional

Pulmonology Conference held by Yashoda Hospitals on Sunday. BRONCHUS-2025 was the 4th edition of BRONCHUS series, World Association on Interventional Pulmonology with more than 60 international faculty, more than 150

3,000 pulmonology doctors in ical science. Pulmonology Conference and live workshop.

Speaking on this occasion, Yashoda Group Hospitals Managing Director, Dr GS Rao, said that the lung medicine department, which is modernising and expanding its scope, has become a platform for sharing medical knowledge among medical experts from different countries to focus on

deepikapasham2015@gmail.com

■ HYDERABAD

national faculty and more than the latest innovations in med-Pulmonologist Dr Harikishan.

people than any other cancer type, with an estimated 1.8 million deaths worldwide. Lung cancer is diagnosed very late, mostly in stage 3 and 4 due to lack of early diagnostic advances. In India, lung cancer accounts for nearly 8.5 per cent of cancer cases and is one of the top three leading cancers, said the Yashoda Hospitals Senior Interventional

FOR UNDER-PRIVILEGED CHILDREN

Drive launched to provide free

During Covid-19 and after dropping patients with lung ill-

ness and awareness of early

prediction can reduce it. Leading physicians around the world are Prof Felix Herth Thorax clinic (Germany), Prof Kyle Hogarth - University of Chicago (USA), Dr Michael Pritchett (USA), Dr Pallav Shah (UK) and other foreign physicians who participated in

the programme.

THROUGH HER ORGAN DONATION

Bhumika Reddy's tragic accident gave new hope to five people

PNS HYDERABAD

Dr Bhumika Reddy, a 24year-old house surgeon from LB Nagar, tragically lost her life in a road accident. Despite her untimely passing, she gave hope to five people through organ donation. She succumbed to her injuries at Continental Hospitals in Gachibowli, after a severe crash on the Outer Ring Road (ORR). In a final act of generosity, her heart, liver, lungs and kidneys were donated to save lives. The only child of Nangi

Nandakumar Reddy and Lohitha, Dr Bhumika was a promising young doctor training to become a surgeon. She completed her MBBS from a prestigious medical college and excelled in her studies. She later interned at Kamineni Hospital in LB Nagar, gaining valuable experience.



Continental Hospitals staff paid their respects as her body was taken for organ donation. The Chairman of Continental Hospitals, Dr Guru N Reddy expressed deep sorrow at her loss and appreciated her family's selfless deci-sion to donate her organs.

Dr Bhumika's lungs were donated to KIMS Hospital, her heart to Apollo Jubilee Hills, her liver to Continental Hospitals, one kidney to NIMS Hospital, and the other to Continental Hospitals. Her legacy of kindness and service will continue to inspire many.



75TH INDIAN DENTAL CONFERENCE

IDA Deccan Branch wins 8 National Awards

PNS HYDERABAD

The Indian Dental Association (IDA) head office won eight national awards at the 75th Indian Dental Conference. IDA values its local branches as its backbone, supporting its initiatives and running independent programmes to promote oral health. These awards recognise excellence, encouraging branches and members to enhance IDA's visibility and

improve access to dental care. The awards were presented at a ceremony following the annual general meeting at the Chennai Trade Centre. Dr M Raveendranath, President of IDA head office, and Dr Ashok Dhoble, Secretary of IDA head office, presented the awards to Dr S Niranjan Reddy, Dr Aditya Sandeep and Dr S Anuraga from the IDA Deccan branch. Dr A Srikanth, Secretary of

IDA Deccan, congratulated all awardees. IDA Deccan Branch Awards: All-Round Activity Local Branch: Dr VM Veerabahu Runners-Up Trophy. Best Local Branch President: Dr K V Ramana Reddy. Best Local Branch Secretary: Dr Ala Srikanth. Scientific Activity: Dr Keki Mistry Trophy. Best Council of Dental Health Activity: IDA Runners-Up Trophy. Student Activity: Dr Ramakanth Venson Award. School Dental Health: Dr Achyut Deodhar Trophy. 3rd Best Young Member: Dr S Anuraga (Dr Ratan H Doctor

Chilkur priest mangandled by lkshwaku clan

Chilkur priest CS Rangarajan was allegedly manhandled by individuals claiming to be descendants of the Ikshwaku clan. A police complaint was filed and the case being investigated.

According to Dr MV Soundararajan, convenor of the Temples Protection Movement and father of Rangarajan, these individuals sought to establish their version of Rama Rajya using private armies to punish those who did not support

'descendants' of

PNS HYDERABAD

In a collaborative effort to support children born with cleft lip and palate, Himalaya Wellness, in association with Smile Train NGO, have launched a 45day campaign to provide free surgical interventions. The surgeries will be conducted by expert surgeons from Basavatarakam Indo-American Cancer Hospital

and Research Institute, Hyderabad. This initiative aims to assist children from economically disadvantaged families with an annual income of less than Rs 8 lakh, offering them access to these life-changing surgeries which are typically expensive in corporate hospitals. The programme also includes transportation assistance from various districts to the hospital.

Dr Rambabu, Plastic Surgeon at Basavatarakam Indo-American Cancer Hospital, told The Pioneer, "Cleft lip and palate affect approximately one in every 700 live births. While earlier efforts focused on raising



The officials of Himalava Wellness, in association with Smile Train NGO launching the drive at Basavatarakam Indo-American Cancer Hospital and Research Institute, Hyderabad

awareness, the emphasis has now shifted to ensuring timely treatment. Our hospital has successfully performed nearly 5,000 cleft lip and palate surgeries free of cost." Cleft lip and palate can result from multiple factors, including nutritional deficiencies, genetic predispositions - such as consanguineous marriages - and inappropriate medication use during pregnancy. In some cases, the condition can be detected prenatally

through ultrasound imaging. Under its Muskaan 2025 initiative, Himalaya Wellness aims to transform the lives of children affected by cleft conditions. The company's outreach vehicles will raise awareness across

Telangana, while Smile Train NGO offers a toll-free helpline to guide families through the process. Following initial assessments, eligible children will be directed to Basavatarakam Indo-American Cancer Hospital for appropriate surgical intervention, adhering to the recommended age guidelines for cleft surgeries.

Rajesh Krishnamurthy, Business Director of the Products Consumer Division at Himalaya Wellness, and Mamta Carroll, Smile Train's Senior Vice-President and Regional Director for Asia, confirmed that all districts in Telangana would be covered during the 45-day campaign.

Collector's initiative brings cinema to residential schools

PNS HYDERABAD

In an effort to engage students and broaden their perspectives, Vikarabad District Collector Pratheek Jain has launched a unique initiative Movie Clubs in residential schools. At a time when children often feel homesick and have limited recreational activities, this programme offers them not just entertainment but also valuable life lessons through cinema. What began with one school has now expanded to 16, with educational and inspirational films which are available on OTT platforms such as October Sky, Hidden Figures and Dangal being screened. Students have expressed their excitement, prompting the district administration to explore more films that can have a positive impact.



Children in various residential schools watching the movies

The goal is to show children movies that can shape their thinking and instill a sense of responsibility," said Collector Pratheek Jain. "We were initially conchildren cannot grasp the meaning. So, we will try and intervene to assist and explain the scenario of it," added Pratheek Jain. The district administration has invested Rs 60,000 to Rs 65,000 on each movie set, consisting of a laptop, screen and necessary cables. With 16 sets in place, each set is shared among five residential schools, rotating weekly. Films are screened during free periods, ensuring that academic schedules, especially for Class 10 students,

remain undisturbed

cerned about parental reactions and whether students

would grasp the deeper messages. So, we carefully

researched and selected each film. There will be sit-

uations in films and sometimes we may know that





'Cong govt committed to providing basic amenities in villages'

PNS WANAPARTHY

The state government is working towards providing basic amenities in villages, along with the implemen tation of welfare schemes, said Minister for Excise, Tourism, and Culture Jupalli Krishna Rao. The Minister, along with local MLA T Megha Reddy,

laid the foundation stone for various developmental works worth Rs18.71 crore, including roads and drainage systems, in several villages of the Peddamandadi mandal under Wanaparthy constituency.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister emphasised that the development of villages is essential for the progress of the country. He mentioned that the state government is particularly focusing on providing basic infrastructure in rural areas. He highlighted that improving sanitation and road transportation in rural

regions would lead to a higher standard of living.

MLA Megha Reddy, speaking in Veerayapally village, assured the people that all pending works would

be completed by December this year. He also promised to grant Indiramma houses and ration cards to every family without a home.

In the Chilatoni Palli village of Peddamandadi mandal, MLA Megha Reddy laid the foundation for a side drainage system, with an expenditure of Rs 9.5 lakh. Subsequently, the foundation stone for drainage works worth Rs 15 lakh was laid in Veltoor village panchayat. In Gatla Khanapur, works for constructing the Alwal Mangampalli BT road at an estimated cost of Rs 3.20 crore, as well as drainage works worth Rs 10 lakh, were also inaugurated.

Along with local legislators, the Minister Krishna Rao, also laid the foundation for BT road works from Ampalli to Peddamandadi via Solar Plant.

The event was attended by Revenue Divisional Officer Subrahmanyam, Peddamandadi MRDO Saraswati, MPDO Sadguna, Single Window Director Sai Charan Reddy, and Panchayati Raj DE



Minister for Excise Jupally Krishna Rao laying the foundation stone for developmental works in Wanaparthy constituency on Sunday

'Drunk man' kills son in Yadadri Bhuvangiri dist

PNS BHUVANGIRI

A 14-year-old boy died allegedly after his father kicked in the chest on Saturday night. A small issue led to such a brutal act by father against his son, according to police.

The incident took place at Aregudem under Choutuppal manda in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. Katta Saidulu and his wife, who belong to the village, are farmwokers. They have three children. They want their children to be successful and so they work hard and provide them with quality education in private schools. They are raising their children with discipline to ensure they do not go astray. Until now,

everything was going well.

However, in recent times, Saidulu allegedly became addicted to alcohol. He started coming home daily after drinking, disturbing his family. This had been going on for some time. Meanwhile, his youngest son Bhanu (14) was studying in 9th grade at Anna Memorial School in Choutuppal. On Saturday, the school organised a farewell party for the 10th-grade students, and Bhanu participated in it. The party caused a slight delay, so when Bhanu arrived home, it was already night, the

By then, Saidulu, who was already intoxicated, became furious and started beating his son, asking why he was late. In his drunken state, he



struck Bhanu hard in the chest. As a result, Bhanu lost consciousness. The family immediately took him to the government hospital in Choutuppal. The doctors confirmed that Bhanu had already died by the time they examined him.

However, Saidulu told his wife not to reveal that he was the reason for their son's death. The family decided to take Bhanu's body from the government hospital in Choutuppal and bring it home without informing anyone, as they thought there was no need for a post-mortem. The hospital staff also did not inform the

The next morning, the family tried to bury Bhanu's body secretly, but the villagers found out and immediately informed the police. The police arrived and stopped the burial process, leading to a verbal confrontation between the police

Cong celebrates caste census, sub-categorisation of SCs

PNS RANGAREDDY

Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar and Congress leader from Medak Neelam Madhu Mudiraj participated in celebrations held at Nandigam mandal Centre on Sunday, marking the approval of Scheduled Castes classification and Backward Classes caste enumeration in the Telangana Assembly. The event witnessed the presence of several local leaders and community representatives, highlighting the significance of the decision for marginalised communities.

Addressing the gathering, Shankar expressed his satisfaction over the Congress government's move to introduce and pass the Scheduled Castes classification bill in the Assembly, fulfilling a longpending demand of the BC communities after decades of struggle. He commended the Telangana government for honouring the promise made by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi regarding caste enumeration before the Assembly elections. Shankar emphasised that the Congress people's government, under the leadership of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, was taking a historic step by conducting a Backward Classes caste census.



Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar and parrty leader Neelam Madhu Mudiraj participating in celebrations at Nandigam in Rangareddy district on Sunday

Neelam Madhu Mudiraj criticised certain political figures, including former Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao and his family, for not participating in the caste census survey.

Several prominent leaders participated in the event, including former ZPTC member Shyam Sundar Reddy, former MPP Shiva Shankar Goud, President Narasimhulu, former MPTCs Kommu Krishna, Kumaraswamy Chandrapal Reddy, Ram Reddy, Youth Congress State General Secretary Ande Mohan, Harinath Reddy, Krishna Reddy, Shekhar, Srikanth Goud, Yadaiah, Ramulu, Chennaiyya, and Jagan.

Three ministers participate in Maha Kumbhabhishekam

PNS JAYASHANKAR **BHUPALPALLY**

In the Kaleshwaram Trilinga Temple, three Ministers offered special prayers. The Ministers visited Kaleshwaram for the Maha Kumbhabhishekam ceremony. Ministers D Sridhar Babu, Konda Surekha and Ponnam Prabhakar performed pujas. Under the leadership of Šri Sri Sri Satchidananda Saraswati Swami, the significant event concluded on Sunday.

The three-day event was conducted with grandeur, accompanied by the chanting of Vedic mantras. The Kumbhabhishekam Mahotsavam was organised by the Department Endowments. On the final day, Kumbhabhishekam was conducted at the temple's

Rajagopuram. The grand Maha Kumbhabhishekam ceremony, held over three days, concluded on Sunday at 10:42 AM, with



Ministers D Sridhar Babu, Ponnam Prabhakar and Konda Surekha at Maha Kumbhabhishekam in Kaleshwaram on Sunday

Amma.

the Purnahuti ceremony marking its completion, as reported

by the temple authorities.

Devotees had the opportu-

Swami and Shubhananda Devi

nity to visit and offer prayers to Sri Kaleshwar Mukteeswar

Kumbhabhishekam was organised under the guidance of the head of Tuni Tapovan, Sri Sri Satchidananda Saraswati Swami.

The temple echoed with

The

Maha

the sound of Vedic mantras, and the authorities took necessary measures to ensure that there were no inconveniences for the large number of devotees who participated in the event.

Bag carrying Rs 23 lakh stolen from private bus

PNS NALGONDA

A man travelling by a private bus from Vijayawada to Hyderabad lost Rs 23 lakh under suspicious circumstances. According to reports

reaching here, a bag containing Rs 23 lakh was stolen by miscreants while the passenger had gone for breakfast after getting off the bus.

The incident took place near a hotel on the national highway, near Narketpally in Nalgonda district.

The victim filed a complaint with the police, who have initiated an investigation.

According to the police, a young man named Venkatesh from Bapatla was travelling from Vijayawada to Hyderabad by a private travel bus with Rs 23

lakh in his bag. At around 9 am, the bus stopped at a hotel near Narketpally for breakfast, and Venkatesh got off along with other passengers.

However, he left the bag containing money on the bus and went inside the hotel for breakfast.

When he returned to the bus, he found that the bag with the money was missing and filed a complaint with the

police. The police registered a case and are investigating the matter.

Auto driver thrashed for attempted rape

PNS BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

In Bhadradri Kothagudem district, an auto-rickshaw driver attempted to assault a young woman. He took the woman to a secluded area after she boarded his auto-rickshaw and tried to sexually assault he. Along with another person, he engaged in this dreadful act.

The woman managed to escape from their clutches and told her relatives about the incident. The relatives then caught the accused and handed him over to

the police. According to police, a young woman from a village in Bhadradri Kothagudem district came to Kothagudem bus station on Saturday to visit her relatives. She had trouble speaking properly, so the address she mentioned was not clear to auto-rickshaw driver Guguloth Kumar. Another nearby driver called the woman's mobile about the incident.

number, figured out the address, and informed

When the woman got into the auto-Rickshaw, another person was already inside. However, instead of taking her to the address she gave, Kumar took her to a secluded place area near the railway gate on Hemachandrapuram

Road.

Noticing this, the woman questioned the driver about where he was taking her. In that moment, driver Kumar and the other person tried to assault her. The woman managed to escape from their clutches and ran towards the railway gate. She informed a railway employee about the incident. The railway employee then called the woman's number and informed her relatives about what had happened. The woman's relatives arrived at the scene and inquired further

Tummala underlines importance of winning local body polls

PNS KHAMMAM

Agriculture Minister Tummala Nagaswaro Rao here on Sunday emphasised the need to ensure the victory of the Congress party in the forthcoming local body elections.

He was participating in a preparatory meeting held to discuss strategy for local body elections.

During the meeting, he mentioned that the local body elections should be taken as a challenge and urged the party cadre to work for the success of the party in the elections. He assured all help to the cadr.

He said that the local body

elections should be taken as a challenge, and efforts should be made for victory. Those who work towards the success of Congress would be honoured, he said. Leaders should work with dedication, he said and added that strict action would be taken against those who violate party discipline.

The government under the leadership of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy implemented The goal is to make lectively according to the Khammam.



Agriculture Minister Tummala Nagaswaro Rao participating in the preparatory meeting for the local body elections, in Khammam on Sunday

several welfare programmes. Despite the lack of Central assistance, the Chief Minister continued to implement the welfare schemes with courage.

Khammam district a progressive one. A permanent solution to the Munneru flood issue would be found. Election committees should work colparty's decisions.

Nageswara Rao made it clear that the local body elections were crucial for strengthening the Congress party in

Illegal car racing on ORR causing nightmares

A CCTV video showing two cars performing dangerous stunts on the Outer Ring Road (OR) near Shamshabad has gone viral, raising concerns about road safety and reckless driving. The footage captures high-speed manoeuvres which may put not only the drivers but also other road users at serious

Authorities are now under pressure to take stricter actions to prevent such dangerous and reckless driving and ensure the safety of commuters. The incident highlighted the need for enhanced traffic monitoring and more rigorous enforce-

ment of road safety laws, it is felt. On Sunday morning, youths engaged in high-speed racing, performing dangerous stunts by suddenly stopping their cars and making sharp turns. The reckless driving created



A CCTV video showing two cars performing dangerous stunts on the outer ring road in Hyderabad on Sunday

chaos on the ORR, posing a threat to other road

The entire incident was captured on CCTV cameras installed along the ORR. The footage, which has now gone viral on social media, showed the youths spinning their cars in circles, further endangering traffic.
Shamshabad RGIA Circle Inspector Balaraju

stated that efforts are underway to identify and apprehend those involved in the incident.

Meanwhile, concerns have been raised over inadequate police patrolling on the ORR, which may have contributed to the rise in illegal activities like car racing. Authorities are now under pressure to take stricter measures to curb such incidents and ensure road safety.

POCSO Act invoked against teacher for 'raping' two girls

PNS ■ SURYAPET

A government teacher, who was in live-in-relationship with a woman, has been accused of sexually assaulting his partner's daughters. According to the

Police, the young girls confided in their mother about the horrific acts committed against them after the teacher was diagnosed with HIV. Iatoth Sunil Kumar, a teacher at a local high school in Survapet district, had been living with another woman since the death of his wife in 2018. The woman has two daughters, aged 19 and 15, who also live with her.

During the mother's absence, the teacher, who assumed a fatherly role, allegedly raped the minors.

He reportedly threatened to kill them if they disclosed the abuse, subjecting them to repeated

Following his recent medical examination, which revealed his HIV status, the girls became alarmed and informed their mother. Subsequently, both the mother and daughters reported the incidents to the police, leading

to the registration of a case against him under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, with an investigation now underway, according to Inspector of Police B Raghava Teliparu.

HYDERABAD | MONDAY | FEBRUARY 10, 2025

ACROSS THE STATES



Murmu to visit Maha Kumbh Mela today

President Droupadi Murmu will visit the Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj on Monday and take a holy dip at the Sangam, her office said. Maha Kumbh, which began on Paush Purnima (January 13), is the world's largest spiritual and cultural gathering, attracting devotees from across the globe. It will continue until Mahashivratri on February 26. "During her day-long visit to Prayagraj, the President will take holy dip and perform Pooja at Sangam, perform Pooja and Darshan at Akshayvat and Hanuman Mandir, and also visit the Digital Kumbh Anubhav Centre," the Rashtrapati Bhavan said in a statement issued on Sunday. Sangam is the confluence of the Ganga, the Yamuna and the mystical Saraswati rivers. According to a Uttar Pradesh government release, Murmu will also offer prayers at the Akshayavat and Bade Hanuman Temple, with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath accompanying her. The country's first President, Dr Rajendra Prasad, had also taken a holy dip during the Maha Kumbh.



Cook beaten to death inside Delhi bus over spilled food

cook was beaten to death inside a bus in the northwest Delhi's Bawana area for allegedly spilling food on a seat, Apolice said on Sunday. The man, Manoj alias Babu, was beaten by three people, the driver of the RTV bus and his two helpers, one of whom shoved an iron rod in his private part, they said. When Manoj became unconscious, the three dumped him near Bawana flyover and fled. Police said they have arrested one of the assailants, while two others remain at large. Manoj, a native of Narela, worked as a wedding cook. On the night of February 1, he and a colleague of his, Dinesh, attended a wedding in Sultanpur Dabas. "After wrapping up work, they packed some leftover food and boarded a bus. During the journey, some food accidentally spilled onto a seat, enraging the driver and his associates." a police officer said. While Dinesh was allowed to get off at Bawana Chowk, the three held Manoj hostage and forced him to clean the seat with his shirt, the officer said.



Tripura to get five-star heritage hotel: CM

ripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Sunday said the state is all set to get a heritage five-star hotel. Addressing a programme of the State Engineers' Association (SEA) here, the CM said, "We have had discussions with the Tata group for setting up a heritage five-star hotel. This will be a gamechanger for the state as it proposes to have four to five exclusive rooms apart from hundreds of royal rooms", he said. Saha added, "Tata has a worldwide hotel chain and tourists can come from foreign nations by chartered flights and stay in the exclusive rooms." "The foreign tourists will not confine themselves to the hotel. They will visit tourist destinations like Rudrasagar. Unakoti archaeological site, Chhabimura and Dumber lake. There will be 200 direct employments," he said. The CM, however, did not specify where the hotel will be set up. In December, the CPI(M) and Tipra Motha had strongly opposed the government's plan for converting the Pushbant Palace, a royal property, into a five-star hotel. Built in 1917 by Maharaja Birendra Kishore Manikya, the palace was used as the Raj Bhavan until 2018.

Silent rally in Kolkata demanding justice for RG Kar victim

PNS KOLKATA

Doctors and people from all walks of life on Sunday took part in a silent rally to mark the first birthday of the RG Kar hospital medic since her death last year, and demanded justice for her.

The rally, which started from College Square near the Calcutta University campus, was halted at the gate of the state-run medical facility in north Kolkata by security personnel. A large contingent of Kolkata Police personnel outside the hospital and CISF jawans inside its premises

were deployed. Officials spoke to the participants, who had wanted to walk to a point inside the premises, where a plaque was put up in memory of the medic by her col-

The CISF has been guarding the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital on an order of the Supreme Court, following the post-graduate trainee's rape and murder that had sparked a nationwide out-

rage and protests. The day also marks completion of six months of the crime that took place on August 9, 2023.

US TREATMENT OF INDIAN DEPORTEES

Govt has taken note of 'objections', says Khattar

PNS BHOPAL

Union minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Sunday said the government has taken note of the "objections raised by everyone" over the manner in which illegal Indian immigrants were recently deported from the US.

There has been an uproar over the deportation of illegal Indian immigrants by the US in handcuffs during their 40-hour flight onboard a military aircraft.

The US military aircraft carrying 104 illegal Indian immigrants landed in Amritsar on February 5.

India on Friday said it has registered concerns with the US over the deportation of illegal immigrants in shackles and conveyed that this kind of treatment could have been

Khattar said, "America has deported people (to India) earlier also. This time, everyone had objections to the method, it (objection) has been registered and the issue will be resolved by talks. This issue is not good for any country and the govern-ment will discuss it further after giving due thought.



"Whether our people go or people from other countries come here, when such things happen, all countries engage in deportation. We have also deported many people from Assam."

There has been a constant demand that deportation (of illegal immigrants) be carried out, the Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs said. "There is a formality for it

(deportation), it also has its own sensitivity as to when to do it, how to do it and in what manner," he said.

During the press conference here, the minister was asked that when the US can deport people, why illegal migrants from neigh-bouring Bangladesh, who are an economic burden on India, are not being sent back.

Khattar said this is a serious problem and the people should not go to any country illegally. Whether our people go or people from other countries come here, when such things happen, all countries engage in deportation. We have also deported many people from Assam," he



'Naxals will be eradicated by March 31, 2026'

PNS NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Sunday that Naxals will be eradicated by March 31, 2026 and no citizen of the country has to lose his life due to it.

Shah said this after the

security forces killed 31 Naxals in Chhattisgarh.

"I also reiterate my resolve that before 31 March, 2026, we will completely eradicate Naxalism from the country so that no citizen of the country has to lose his life due to it, he wrote on 'X' in Hindi. The home minister said in the direction of making India Naxal-free, the security forces have achieved a big success in Bijapur, Chhattisgarh.

He said that 31 Naxalites were killed in this operation and a huge amount of arms and explosives were also

SC urged to expedite disposal of cases against lawmakers

Nation 05

PNS NEW DELHI

With nearly 5,000 cases pending against sitting and former members of Parliament and members of legislative assemblies, the Supreme Court has been urged to issue directions to ensure expeditious disposal of cases against the lawmakers.

The latest affidavit filed by senior advocate Vijay Hansaria, who has been appointed amicus curiae by the apex court in a PIL seeking expeditious disposal of criminal cases against MPs/MLAs, said that legislators have great influence on the investigation and/or trial of cases against them, and trials are not allowed to be concluded.

"It is submitted that despite orders by this court from time to time and monitoring by the high court, a large number of cases are pending against the MPs and MLAs, which is a scar on the democratic setup of our country. The pendency of a large number

them for decades, shows that the legislators have great influence on the investigation and/or trial of cases against them, and the trial is not allowed to be concluded," Hansaria's affidavit

A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Manmohan will take up the PIL filed by Ashwini Upadhyay in 2016 seeking life ban of convicted politicians for hearing on Monday.

Hansari, in his affidavit filed

through advocate Senha Kalita, said a total of 4,732 criminal cases are pending against the lawmakers, including 892 cases registered in 2024 as of January

Referring to a report by the Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR), a poll rights body, Hansari said that out of the 543 members in the present Lok Sabha,

251 have criminal cases against them, of which 170 are serious criminal cases (punishable with five years imprisonment

How Yamuna controversy sank AAP in Delhi

PNS NEW DELHI

The Yamuna factor seemingly played a significant role in the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections, reshaping voter sentiment and helping the BJP script history by defeating AAP.

A key driver of this shift was the

backlash from Haryanvi-origin voters who viewed AAP's narrative on Yamuna pollution as an attack on their home state.

The BJP, which bagged 48 out of 70 sets, fielded 14 candidates of Haryanvi descent and 12 of them



won. The Aam Aadmi Party had 10 such candidates but only four won. In 13 constituencies with over 10 per cent Jat voters, the BJP secured 11 seats, a major reversal from seats, a major reversal from 2020. The saffron party also dominated 12 out of 13 seats where Haryanvi-origin voters account for over five per cent of the electorate and won nine out of 11 seats bordering Harvana. ing Haryana.

Flowing 52 kilometres through Delhi and passing through 15 constituencies, Yamuna has long been a symbol of environmental neglect.

Kejriwal had promised ahead of the Delhi elections in 2020 that he would clean Yamuna. Every year, as a thick layer of froth enveloped the river, especially around the Chhath all Indians".

cases, some of

lution during the election campaign, Kejriwal alleged that BJPruled Haryana had "poisoned" the river water to harm the people of Delhi. His remarks triggered a massive controversy as the BJP swiftly turned it into an emotional issue, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi calling it an "insult to Haryana and

Lankan Navy arrests 14 Indian fishermen



PNS ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan authorities have arrested 14 Indian fishermen and seized their trawlers for allegedly venturing into the territorial waters of the island nation, the Navy said

on Sunday. The arrests took place during a special operation conducted in the sea area north of Mannar on Saturday, the Sri Lankan Navy said in a statement.

"The Sri Lanka Navy seized 2 Indian fishing boats and apprehended 14 Indian fishermen while they were poaching in Sri Lankan

waters," it said. conduct regular patrols and operations in Sri Lankan waters to curb illegal fishing practices of foreign fishing boats, taking into account the impact of those practices on

the livelihood of local fisher-

men, the statement said. The arrested fishermen were brought to the Iranativu Island, where they will be handed over to the Assistant Directorate of Fisheries, Kilinochchi, for further legal action, the Navy said.

Kejriwal meets new MLAs, asks them to work for people

PNS NEW DELHI

A day after the AAP was ousted from power in Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday met its 22 newly elected MLAs at his Ferozshah Road residence here and asked them to work for the Addressing reporters

after the meeting, outgoing chief minister Atishi, who is among the 22 AAP leaders who weathered the BJP storm, said the party will play the role of a constructive opposition and ensure

NEW DELHI: The eighth Delhi

women members but a higher

uate degrees, according to a

report. The report by PRS

the assembly, the results of

Saturday, representing 7 per

cent of the House. Four women

MLAs are from the BJP while

member in the House. In 2020

eight women were elected. The

Atishi is AAP's only woman

BJP swept to power in Delhi

ning 48 of the 70 assembly

after more than 26 years, win-

which were announced on

number of lawmakers with grad-

Legislative Research found that

five women had been elected to

Assembly will have fewer



that the saffron party delivers on its promises.

seats. AAP won 22 seats while

polls held on February 5. The

percentage of MLAs with gradu-

ate degrees has risen to 38 per

34 per cent in the seventh.

cent in the eighth assembly from

MLAs with postgraduate degrees

and above remain unchanged at

of the newly-elected MLAs listed

26 per cent. About 61 per cent

politics or social work as their

profession, compared to 67 per

The number of MLAs who listed

their profession as business also

per cent in the seventh assembly

registered an increase from 29

to 49 per cent in the eighth.

cent in the previous assembly.

the Congress drew a blank in the

More graduates in the Delhi Assembly

Kejriwal directed the

newly elected MLAs to

serve the people and solve their problems, she said. "The AAP will play the

role of a constructive opposition and ensure that the BJP pays Rs 2,500 per month to women by March 8 as was promised by it, provides 300 units of free electricity and continues other facilities for the people," she said.

The MLAs will ensure

that the BJP does not discontinue the free services and facilities that the AAP government provided in the last 10 years, she added.

Atishi said the leader of opposition will be nominated during the legislative party meeting of the AAP in the coming days.

The BJP won 48 of the 70 assembly seats, returning to power in Delhi after more than 26 years and dislodging the AAP after a decade.

BJP will come to power in Bengal in 2026 polls: Pradhan

Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Sunday asserted that the BJP will come to power in West Bengal in the

The Union Education Minister also accused the Mamata Banerjee government of putting roadblocks to the implementation of central projects in West Bengal, while falsely accusing the Centre of ignoring the state.

'BJP's vote share in West Bengal has been around 30-40 per cent since 2019 and if the party gets another 10 per cent of votes, it will dislodge the Mamata Banerjee government from power," Pradhan said



while addressing a press meet here on the salient features of Union budget

Stating that the rout of Aam Admi Party (AAP) in Delhi assembly elections showed eople's overwhelming faith in the BJP and the rejection of the "corrupt" Arvind Kejriwal government, Pradhan said in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, BJP made its mark in West Bengal by bagging 18 of the 42 seats

BJP govt working to weaken Constitution: Priyanka

PNS ■ WAYANAD (KERALA)

Continuing her criticism of the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday alleged that, for the first time in history, a government is working to weaken both the Constitution and democracy of the country.

Addressing the party's booth-level leaders in Eranad Assembly constituency, the Wayanad MP said, "It's probably for the first time in our country's history, we have a government that is working to



weaken the Constitution and the democracy.

You must understand that today the fight we are fighting is not just a fight for our own politics and ideology but a fight for protecting the essence of India, everything that makes our nation what it is today," she added. On the second day of her

three-day visit to Wayanad, Priyanka addressed the issue of human-animal conflicts, stating that she would write to both the Centre and state governments to allocate more funds, as adequate funding is essential for effective protection measures.

Later, speaking to reporters after the meeting on the human-animal conflict issue, she said she has already raised it once and will continue to

Aero India 2025: IAF, Army chiefs take sortie in Tejas

PNS BENGALURU

Air Chief Marshal A P Singh and Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi on Sunday set the tone for the grand Aero India-2025 by flying in the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas here at Yelahanka based Air Force

The performance by the top brasses was the prelude to the biannual event, which com-mences on Monday and will continue till February 14.

All eyes were glued to the sky as the Air Chief Marshal flew the metal bird with the Army

Chief. After the successful sortie, General Dwivedi termed the experience as the best moment in his life.

For the Army Chief, the experience was such that he called the Air Chief Marshal his guru and even regretted why he

did not opt for the Indian Air

"It was the best moment in my life and as you are aware

"I am very much grateful to the IAF and I must admire the kind of a challenge the pilots of the IAF take and it takes a great synergetic approach from all of us and I am sure that it is a good start for the Aero India-2025."

that the Air Chief Marshal is my course mate. We have been together from the NDA (National Defence Academy) days. I wish he had met me earlier and I would definitely have changed my option to the Air Force. As I have said earlier, also if I had gone to the Air Force, I would have been fighter pilot," General Dwivedi told reporters.

"And I must say that from today onwards, the Air Chief Marshal AP Singh is my guru because he made me do lot of roles and other activities while

sortie as it carried a great challenge, the Army Chief said, "I am very much grateful to the IAF and I must admire the kind of a challenge the pilots of the IAF take and it takes a great synergetic approach from all of us and I am sure that it is a good start for the Aero India-2025. LCA Tejas is an Indian

combat aircraft designed by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the Indian Air Force (IAF) and Indian

in the sky," he added. Stating that he enjoyed the

www.dailypioneer.com

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

-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Delhi dislodges AAP

In a landmark political shift, the BJP has stormed to power in the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections, marking its return after 27 years

am Aadmi Party (AAP) that ruled for ten years has been ousted by the BJP. It is one of the major setbacks that AAP has suffered since its inception. Despite its Imisadventures it always remained voters favourite in Delhi. Now with the BJP making a comeback it has suffered not only a big jolt to the party morale but also to the brand Kejriwal. In a historic political shift, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has secured a decisive victory in the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections, ending the AAP's decade-long governance in the national capital. This marks the BJP's return to power in Delhi after 27 years. The BJP won 48 out of the 70 Assembly seats, surpassing the majority mark of 36 seats. In contrast, AAP managed to secure only 22 seats, a significant decline from its previous tally of 62 seats in the 2020 elections. The Congress party failed to open account, continuing its decline in the region. Notably, AAP's prominent leaders faced unexpected defeats. Aam Aadmi Party chief



Arvind Kejriwal lost the New Delhi seat to BJP's Parvesh Verma by a margin of 4,089 votes. Similarly, former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia was defeated in the Jangpura constituency. Senior AAP leaders, including Saurabh Bharadwaj in Greater Kailash and Somnath Bharti in Malviya Nagar, also lost their seats. After ten years in power, AAP encountered strong antiincumbency sentiments, with voters expressing a desire

Legal troubles and corruption allegations against key leaders, including Kejriwal and Sisodia, further diminished public trust in the party. Meanwhile, the BJP successfully leveraged AAP's shortcomings, presenting

a development-driven governance model that resonated with the electorate. This electoral outcome serves as a critical juncture for AAP. The party must undertake a comprehensive introspection. Perhaps it is time it realised that it would be a good idea to remain with the INDIA bloc and playing solo is not always a good idea. One of the major reason for its defeat might have been the division of votes. Congress though did not gain but pulled it down. Addressing the corruption allegations transparently and implementing internal reforms will be essential to rebuild credibility. Reassessing policy positions and strengthening grassroots connections can help the party reconnect with its core voter base. In his concession speech, Arvind Kejriwal acknowledged the defeat and extended his congratulations to the BJP, expressing hope that the new government will fulfill its promises to the people of Delhi. The results of the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections send a strong and clear message to all political parties—governance, credibility and adaptability matter more than rhetoric. The political parties cannot rely solely on past achievements; they must continuously evolve and deliver on public expectations. Ultimately, there are no shortcuts to winning voters' trust— even freebies have



Tourists take a ride on a hot air balloon in Manali

The new geopolitical communication era



With emerging technologies, evolving geopolitical alliances and the dominance of visual storytelling, the way messages are crafted and delivered is being redefined

ne of the critical areas where visible changes will be witnessed post-January 2025 is the communication landscape geopolitically. This era is positioned to redefine the very speedways of global communication, with a pivotal question arising: Are we on the verge of a 360-degree transformation in communication delivery content orientation, outreach mechanisms, and the tools we deploy? Geopolitically, the communication ecosystem will embrace a new language-a language of immediacy, focused messaging, results-driven delivery, and the prioritisation of measurable outcomes to identify realistic patterns and global

As the world steps into this new chapter of geopolitical shifts, communication strategies are becoming more sophisticated, dynamic and multidimensional. The need of the hour is to analyse the new alliances afoot in the shifting political landscape and the major geopolitical developments. The evolving political climate is challenging traditional paradigms, compelling communication specialists, diplomats, and policymakers to rethink how messages are crafted, delivered, and received on a global stage. The era demands a communication framework that not only transcends borders but also bridges divides with precision, creativity, and authenticity. In 2025, the phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words" takes on greater resonance. Visual communication has become the most impactful way to deliver messages. A single, well-composed image has the power to convey emotions, ideas, and narratives that words may struggle to encapsulate. Building on this, the explosion of short-form videos, and 30second reels, for instance, has

Their brevity and emotional decision-making. For comdepth make them tools of unpar- munication to be effective in alleled influence in shaping public opinion, mobilising support, and even defusing tensions. This evolution places immense responsibility on communicators in the geopolitical arena. Diplomacy, once conducted primarily behind

transformed the landscape fur-



sensitivity. As social media continues its rapid rise, many ask whether traditional media can still hold its ground in the face of this digital juggernaut. Social media has undeniably globalised and democratised communication, giving individuals, governments, and organisations a direct channel to their audiences.

It thrives on immediacy, engagement, and the power to go viral, making it an essential tool in geopolitical communication. However, traditional media is far from obsolete. In an era of information overload, its role as a trusted gatekeeper remains critical. While social media is the messenger of the moment, traditional media provides depth, analysis, and context-elements that are crucial for informed this new geopolitical era, the two mediums must complement each other, creating a **AUDIENCES** holistic narrative that is both immediate and enduring. The rise of artificial intelligence



SOCIAL MEDIA

HAS UNDENIABLY GLOBALISED **DEMOCRATISED** COMMUNICATION, GIVING INDIVIDUALS, **GOVERNMENTS ORGANISATIONS** A DIRECT THEIR

nication. AI-driven analytics enable unprecedented insights into audience behaviour, preferences, and sentiments, allowing for hyper-personalised messaging. These tools are invaluable for diplomats and foreign policy experts, who can now craft messages with immense precision and predict their impact with greater accuracy. However, with these advancements come ethical dilemmas. The line between strategic communication and manipulation can easily blur, necessitating robust frameworks to ensure accountability and fairness. As the communication landscape becomes more intricate, the demand for skilled specialists is growing. These professionals are not just channels for information, they are strategists, analysts, and creators who understand the nuances of messaging in a diverse and rapidly changing

complexity to global commu-

Traditional media must evolve to remain relevant, embracing digital innovations and audience-centric approaches. Meanwhile, social media must a platform that unites rather than divides.

In this era, communication is no longer just about delivering a message; it is about shaping perceptions, building relationships, and driving action. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the ability to communicate effectively will be one of the most powerful tools in navigating the complexities of a neo-geopolitical era. In an era marked by shifting alliances and evolving global priorities, multilateral institutions face both challenges and opportunities.

The reworking of commitments by key nations to international frameworks has drawn notice to the fragility of global consensus, raising questions about the role and relevance of these institutions in addressing shared challenges like public health, climate change, and economic inequality. This shifting landscape calls for a more nuanced approach to diplomacy within multilateral spaces, with a renewed focus on collective responsibility. For these institutions to thrive in a complex geopolitical climate, they must everage communication technologies to foster transparency, engage diverse stakeholders, and amplify their ability to drive action. Whether through the lens of a camera, the reach grapple with issues of misinfor- of a tweet, or the depth of an mation, polarisation, and echo investigative report, the stories chambers, striving to become we tell and how we tell them will shape the world in ways we are only beginning to understand.

(The writer is a former civil servant. Views are personal. Inputs by Vaishnavie Srinivasan and Zoya Ahmad)

Flying faster-than-sound travel closer to reality



RAJNEESH BHANDARI

Boom Supersonic successfully tested its prototype supersonic aircraft, proving that supersonic commercial travel is not just a dream but an imminent reality

significant milestone in commercial aviation history has been achieved. Boom Supersonic, a Colorado-based startup, completed a successful test flight of its prototype supersonic aircraft XB-1, demonstrating that commercial air travel at faster-than-sound speeds is not only feasible but may soon be available for frequent flyers, cutting average intercontinental flight times in half.

When we think of supersonic commercial aviation, Concorde often springs to mind. Concorde was an iconic aircraft that flew passengers across the Atlantic in just three hours. It was the first commercial supersonic aircraft, and it flew twice the speed of sound for Air France and British Airways from 1976 to 2003. Concordes were retired in 2003 due to excessive costs, high fares and loud noise. Since then, aerospace giants like Airbus and Boeing have never delivered a commercial-scale replacement. So, what makes Boom differ-

ent? Boom's team didn't view past failures as insurmountable obstacles. Instead, they



tional companies that would try to upgrade a subsonic plane to go faster, Boom's team designed every component, from the aerodynamic shape and propulsion system to the fuel system, specifically for supersonic travel.

The company exemplifies how ignoring legacy assumptions and knowledge can unlock groundbreaking solu-

Boom's engineers embraced the concept of "unlearning," jettisoning assumptions that certain design elements were necessary or that certain hurdles were insurmountable. Unlearning allowed Boom to innovate with advanced composite materials, wing design and a new noisereduction strategy.

game, overcame longstanding technical barriers and ignited fresh interest in supersonic flight. Established players like away from radical changes for fear of failing or canalising profitable products. Boom took calculated risks, embraced uncertainty, and refined each step through rapid data-driven iteration. Historically, supersonic jets are fuel guzzlers. Boom's approach combines aerodynamic optimisation with advanced high-performance materials and a propulsion system designed ground-up to minimise fuel consumption. The propulsion system (Symphony) will run on zero aromatic 100 per cent sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) for sustainable commercial supersonic flights. As a startup, Boom operates with lean teams. This contrasts sharply with the massive bureaucratic hierarchy within aerospace giants. Swift prototyping, quick feedback loops, and a willingness to pivot ensure that new technology is tested and integrated faster than what Boeing or Airbus might

They rewrote the rules of the The prototype aircraft smoothly transitioned through Mach 1 (the speed of sound) and touched Mach1.1. This technology demonstra-Boeing and Airbus often shy tion will help refine the design ahead of the company's next goal: launching a full-scale 60 to 75-seater supersonic jet called Overture. The founders' vision is that passengers can fly supersonically at tickets comparable to business class fares. Imagine cutting a 7-hour transatlantic flight to 3.5 hours. Suddenly, a business meeting in Delhi and a dinner date in London are feasible on the same day. Overture is being designed to fly 7800 km. It can fly nonstop on routes like Delhi to Frankfurt or New York to London. Faster travel time can be a game-changer for business travellers and highpriority cargo. While Airbus, Boeing, and other established players have the resources and legacy to make big moves, it often takes a nimble newcomer with a fresh perspective and first-principles thinking to challenge what's possible.

(The writer is an author, innovator and founder of NeuroEquilibrium; views are personal)

WTO NEEDS REFORM Madam — It is with reference to the edi-

has added another layer of

torial page article "WTO is at a crossroads; Reform or perish"-February 8. WTO is the world's largest international economic organisation, established in 1995 with 166 members representing over 98 per cent of the global trade and global GDP. Before the WTO, there was the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), a global trade organisation with 23 countries. Every member country is obligated to follow the laws and policies framed by WTO rules. India is a significant member of the WTO. Trade disputes are addressed by the WTO's dispute settlement process. It is the WTO that makes efforts to promote transparency in decision-making by encouraging participation and, in particular, the use of the consensus rule.

As an international platform, the WTO regulates and negotiates additional trade liberalisation. In recent days, the WTO has been facing many challenges related to changes in the global economy and geopolitical context. Its members have not been able to agree on new rules on agricultural goals, highlighting the conflicting interests between developed and developing countries. Difficult trade relations between the two largest world economies and WTO members-the US and China-also put a strain on the WTO. Unilateral trade measures such as raising tariffs on iron and steel threaten the multilateral trading system. This highlights the WTO might need to be reformed to meet current concerns such as national security, environmental standards, and the impact of technology on trade. If urgent reforms are not undertaken, the global trading system may soon witness the demise of the institution once

deemed indispensable. P Victor Selvaraj | Tirunelveli

ZERO SEATS FOR CONGRESS IN DELHI

Madam — It will be painful for the Congress for the massive loss in the Delhi elections when people voted against them consistently for the last 3 terms 0-0-0. The most pathetic observation is that they

BJP returns to power in Delhi



The BJP's long wait of 26 years to return to power in Delhi has ultimately come to an end after it registered an emphatic victory in Delhi Assembly polls. In fact, Delhi was the only erstwhile BJP-ruled state where victory remained elusive for the BJP even under the strong Modi wave since 2014. Hence, this victory has come as a big relief for the saffron party, which faced unceremo-

couldn't manage even a single seat in the last 3 assembly elections. Capital is Congress's home ground under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi.

The greed for power and dynastic politics made Priyanka Gandhi run all the way from Delhi to Wayanad to come back victorious in the by-election. There's a saying in the villages that 'If one has to assess the quality and power of a person in the village, ask the locals. The same yardstick proved right when there were no takers for Congress locally in Delhi and scoring 0-0-0 in their report card reflects that the quality of the Congress party is under a scanner. For the Congress to survive, the realistic approach must be to keep Rahul and Priyanka from the main limelight and keep them in a low profile so that the party can rebuild the faith for a better future of the party.

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

RBI CUTS INTEREST RATES Madam —It is a first-rate cut in nearly five years by RBI and it signifies a shift in monetary strategy. With this cut, RBI has clearnious defeat at the hands of the AAP in two consecutive elections. On the other hand, the way the almost top leadership of the AAP, including former CM and party face Arvind Kejriwal and former Dy CM Manish Sisodia, licked the dust in the election reflects the deep anguish of the

voters against the party. No doubt that the anti-incumbency of 11 years and the corruption charges have led to the defeat of the AAP. The arrest of Kejriwal and Sisodia in the liquor scam and the Sheesh Mahal controversy dented the party's image deeply. Interestingly, 'theatrics,' the biggest tool of the AAP, also failed to impress the voters this time. But the BJP needs to be cautious, as the AAP, which was born out of the agitations, will prove to be a strong opposition.

Manoj Parashar | Ghaziabad

ly sent a signal that it wants to boost lending, stimulate consumer demand and nurture investment. In the recent months, core inflation has shown easing out, providing much-needed headroom to the RBI to implement this rate cut. And a slowdown in the economic growth forced the RBI to take the plunge now.

By lowering the borrowing cost, RBI wants to encourage businesses to expand, boost consumption, and help economic growth. Now banks will be happy to extend credit more freely, but they need to be wary of what they have witnessed with their microfinance and unsecured loan portfolios in recent months. In the real estate sector, SMEs will take a sigh of relief, and individual borrowers will see a reduction in their EMIs and, in turn, more money in their pockets, coupled with recent income tax cuts, which will create a positive environment for the consumption boom to take place.

Bal Govind | Noida

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

www.dailypioneerloneer.com facebook.com/dailypioneerl@TheDailyPioneerlinstagram.com/dailypioneer/

FIRST COLUMN

LIFE IS A MOUNTAIN: CLIMB YOUR PEAK, YOUR WAY

Just like climbing a mountain, life's true joy comes from the ascent, not just the summit



OPSINGH

have come to believe life is a lot like climbing a mountain. It's not a race or a competition, and it's not about finding a shortcut. The absolute joy of life isn't standing at the summit—it's in the climb. It's in slipping on loose gravel, feeling the burn in your legs, and wondering halfway through if you should turn around. But when you catch your breath at a ridge or find your footing after a stumble, you realise something powerful: the climb isn't about the mountain—it's about who you become

Each of us has a mountain to climb. It doesn't need to be Everest or Kilimanjaro. It doesn't have to impress anyone else. What matters is that your mountain challenges you, excites you and pushes you to grow. And yes, the climb will be messy. The trail will disappear just when you think you're getting somewhere. The air will get thin. You might even feel like quitting. But that's the beauty of it—the mountain shapes you with every step. Every great climb starts with a dream—one so audacious it gives you butterflies. Don't let its enormity overwhelm you. Focus on taking the next step, then the one after that. Progress isn't about giant leaps but small, consistent efforts.

Moving forward, even a little each day, builds the path to big dreams. Mountains don't reward the fastest or most competent climber—they reward perseverance. Talent may get you started, but resilience carries you through fatigue, failure, and seemingly impossible moments. You don't need to be perfect; you need to keep climbing. Your journey is unique; not everyone will understand or agree with it. That's okay. When the trail disappears, create your path, even if it's



The best routes are discovered through improvisation and authenticity, not by meeting others' expectations. Slips and falls are inevitable, and they hurt. Yet, each stumble teaches something valuable about the terrain, limits, and strength. Mountains don't demand perfection—they demand persistence. Learn from every fall, and rise stronger. The mountain doesn't care who reaches the summit first. It isn't about trophies or comparisons. The climb is about pushing yourself, growing beyond your comfort zone, and becoming someone who belongs at the sum-

True success is transformation, not competition. The best climbers don't focus solely on themselves. They lend a hand, share tools, and cheer others on. Life's peaks are more meaningful when shared. Those you help will often support you, making the climb richer for everyone. When you reach your summit, pause and reflect. Did your climb inspire others? Did you leave the path better for those who follow? Success isn't standing alone at the top; it's in the legacy you leave-the encouragement, improvements, and hope for others to climb higher. Ultimately, the climb makes life beautiful.

The summit is fleeting, but the slips, breakthroughs, lessons, and growth endure. These moments shape you into someone worthy of the top.If your mountain feels daunting, don't let the height scare you. Start small. Take one step at a time. You don't need to move fast or know the whole path. Just keep climbing. One day, standing at your summit, you'll look back and realise it wasn't about the peak. It was about the person you became along the way. That's the valuable reward of the climb-knowing every inch of it was unapologetically yours.

(The author is DGP & Head of Haryana State Narcotics Control Bureau, with three books to his credit; views are personal)

Trump's vision for Gaza: Paradise or purgatory?



President Donald Trump's proposal for Gaza is more than just another audacious policy move—it is a collision of commerce, geopolitics and power

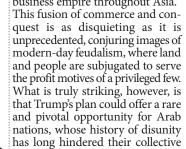


veryone saw it unfold. This is the harsh reality of life in the Devil's paradise, where desires are transformed into laws, ambitions become twisted ethics, and behaviour is coerced into the very fabric of the system. The truth? To survive here, one must bow to the powers that be, no matter the cost. Conscience and integrity are irrelevant—praise those in power or face annihilation.
President Donald Trump welcomed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—an alleged war criminal wanted by the International Criminal Court—as the first foreign leader in his second term, declaring his grand vision to take control of Gaza, turning it into a "brave new Levantine Riviera" by cleansing over 2 million Palestinians.

Nevertheless, the proposal has sparked strong opposition. Saudi Arabia, a key ally of Trump, swiftly condemned it, insisting ARAB UNITY, HAS that no nation would recognise Israel without the creation of an independent Palestinian state. Jordan and Egypt also rejected the idea of accepting millions of displaced Palestinians. The mere announcement of this plan starkly illustrates the chaotic grandeur of Trump's vision. Yet, his proposal, howevof Trump's vision. Yet, his proposal, however audacious, was no accident of rhetoric. It was a calculated, methodical blueprint, crafted long before Trump's second term in office. With Netanyahu-a willing ally in these manoeuvres—Trump painted a picture of Gaza not as a refuge for the Palestinian people, but as a commercialised "paradise" defined not by its displaced residents, but by foreign investments and a transformation

into a luxury resort. Trump's proposition, laden with both visionary ambition and horrific repercussions, challenges the entrenched paradigm. This proposal, as reported, was not born of sudden whim, but the culmination of years of deliberation within Trump's inner circle—an enterprise in which his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, played a pivotal role in positioning the geopolitical and commercial components across Asia.

Kushner's claim, in a recent interview with the Financial Times, that his "ability to see trends before others" uniquely positions him to capitalise on opportunities others find unpalatable, resonates with the underlying logic of Trump's plan. It's a logic that blurs the line between statecraft and property development, where geopolitical ambitions are pursued not merely for strategic suprema-



THE ARAB potential. WORLD, ONCE INTOXICATED BY consequence.

These rivalries, cultivated over REPEATEDLY SUCCUMBED TO decades of political expediency, have reduced Palestinians from ITS INTERNAL champions of an independent cause to mere pawns in a game that has ABLE TO

> The Arab world, once intoxicated by the idea of pan-Arab unity, has repeatedly succumbed to its internal fissures, never able to overcome the corrosive forces of realpolitik and self-interest. Behind the veneer of solidarity and proclamations of support for Palestinian self-determination, there lies a catalogue of secretive agreements, covert operations, and Machiavellian plots that have long entangled the region.

cy but also as a means to expand a business empire throughout Asia. This fusion of commerce and conquest is as disquieting as it is unprecedented, conjuring images of modern-day feudalism, where land and people are subjugated to serve

Regional players—Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, Qatar, Jordan, and others—have long danced to contradictory rhythms, using Palestine as a symbol to justify their betrayals, while failing to act with sincerity or

OVERCOME THE For far too long, the Arab states have abandoned Palestine's plight in CORROSIVE favour of personal ambition and strategic alliances, turning the FORCES OF Palestinian cause into a commodity-moulded and shaped according to the whims of foreign powers. This latest manoeuvre must be understood within the context of the convoluted history of Arab disunityan entangled web of colonial subterfuge, sectarian fragmentation, and a legacy of betrayal that has persistently eroded Palestinian sovereignty and reduced their cause to a tragic geopolitical instrument.

While the Sykes-Picot Agreement remains the most infamous symbol of colonial partition, it is far from the only clandestine accord that has shaped the fate of Palestine.

Lesser-known pacts, such as the Husayn-McMahon Correspondence, which promised Arab independence in exchange for rebellion against the Ottoman Empire, were later betrayed in favour of European imperial ambi-

Similarly, the post-World War II period saw Arab states engage in secret dealings with both Western and Soviet powers, each prioritising their strategic interests over Palestinian rights. Agreements such as the Baghdad Pact and the Eisenhower Doctrine—purportedly aimed at regional stability—left the Palestinian cause sidelined in favour of Cold War allegiances, perpetuating cycles of betrayal. And perhaps most insidious of all

were the secret negotiations between Arab leaders and Israel, at times tacit and other times more explicit, often involving quiet exchanges of territory, economic support, or even military cooperation, all under the guise of broader diplomatic manoeuvres. These acts of realpolitik—often driven by the selfish interests of a few at the expense of the many—have left Palestine isolated, its sovereignty forfeited in a game of geopolitical chess. The fractured nature of Arab leadership, perpetuated by sectarianism and divergent national ambitions, only serves to deepen the wound. While leaders such as Egypt's Nasser sought to rally the Arab world under a banner of unity, his efforts were consistently thwarted by rivalries and internal conflicts.

Today, these past betrayals reverberate in the region's collective psyche, leaving Palestinian aspirations still choked by the suffocating embrace of powers both external and internal, with the dream of a unified Arab world and a free Palestine rendered ever more elusive by the cynical. Yet, it is precisely this history that

makes Trump's audacious proposal so paradoxically compelling. Here lies an opportunity for the perennial exiles—the Palestinians not as pawns in a geopolitical chess game, but as potential agents for the reawakening of Arab unity.

For decades, Palestinian suffering has been wielded as a symbol of resistance, a poignant reminder of an exodus that began with the Nakba in 1948. However, the continued instrumentalisation of Palestinian tragedy by neighbouring Arab regimes—who have long used the plight of these people as a rhetorical tool without offering substantial solutions.

It is within this environment of ambivalence and simmering tension that Trump's proposal must be viewed as a paradigm-shifting moment. The convergence of state-craft and property development, epitomised by Trump and Kushner's ambitions, signals a departure from conventional geopolitical paradigms. We are stepping into an era where the shifting power of oligarchies is increasingly driven by the convergence of economic gain and political opportunism—a transformation with far-reaching consequences for the future of West

Whether this radical reimagining of Gaza could catalyse Arab unity remains uncertain, inherently tied to the unresolved contradictions within the region's historical legacy. Trump's Riviera dream for Gaza is as much a test of American resolve as it is a crucible for Arab unity—a proposition that, if realised, could compel the Arab states to transcend their long-standing acrimony and

However, the likelihood remains that this bold gambit, with all its extravagant rhetoric and ambitious visions, will only serve to deepen existing rifts, leaving Palestinians once again at the mercy of external schemes.

(The writer is a journalist and a policy analyst. Views expressed are

Uttarakhand leads the way: The first state to implement Uniform Civil Code

REALPOLITIK AND

SELF-INTEREST

Uniform laws that empower women will be the common thread binding the nation in oneness and uphold the constitutional spirit

ttarakhand has led the way in formalising laws for women of different faith as equal, upholding the spirit of the constitution. Babasaheb Ambedkar would have been a contented man knowing that Uttarakhand has become the first state in India to have put an end to the disparity in legal protection provided to women, as till now, they were governed by their respective personal laws based on religion and customary state practices.

January 26, 2025, with less than 2 per cent of total land area and less than 1 per cent of total population, Uttarakhand has taken the lead in reinstating the ethos of social equality, part of our syncretic cul-



ture/constitution. The courageous step taken by this young state will pave the By implementing the Uniform way as a paradigm for others Civil Code (UCC) from to follow similar footsteps. way as a paradigm for others For the first time post-independence, a legislative body has drafted rules for marriage, divorce, inheritance of property, and live-in relationships. UCC has been used as

tabled for discussion in the Constituent Assembly when Babasaheb, as Chairman of Drafting Committee, had expressed need for uniformity-in fundamental laws, both civil and criminal. UCC was placed under a sub-committee which proposed to list it as a non-justiciable right hence, making it non-disputable in the courts.

Majority of the members of this sub-committee were in agreement with the proposal except Minoo Masani, Hansa Mehta and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur who wrote to Patel stating, "One of the factors that have kept India back from advancing to nationhood has been the existence of personal laws based on religion". The dissent observed by the a political tool ever since it was women members of the con-

stituent assembly got support from Dr BR Ambedkar, KM Munshi and Alladi K Aiyyar. The opposition from the Muslim members ensued the UCC under Directive Principles Article 44, where the Constituent Assembly was not obliged to enforce the provision and at the same time, the provision could be implemented by the legislatures in the future. A compromise made between

those in support and those in disagreement of the UCC. The changing social milieu has seen a trend in rigorous churning to shed away repressive, orthodox practices so as to evolve a social structure which believes in equal rights. This led to the codification of matrimonial, inheritance, succession and adoption laws for the the



Hindus from 1955-56. The women's rights under Muslim Personal law were challenged by Shah Bano in 1985 demanding maintenance from her husband.

The landmark Supreme Court judgement in favour of Shah Bano was later overturned when the incumbent Rajiv Gandhi-led Congress government, under pressure, enacted the Muslim Women ment has asserted equal rights and status to Muslim women

(Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986. The linger-miles to go as social customs ing wait for gender rights saw a ray of hope after 30 years when on the plea filed by Shayara Bano and others, who were victims of matrimonial dispute, the Supreme Court declared "talaq-e-biddat," or instantaneous triple talaq as unconstitutional in 2017.

This time the government of the day stood by the rights of Muslim women and vindicated the crusade undertaken by Shah Bano by legally prohibiting triple talaq and protecting the rights of married Muslim women by bringing
The Muslim Women

Muslim (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act in 2019. Though the present government has asserted equal rights

of polygamy and Halala still looms large.

The judiciary has reminded the legislators to fulfil their obligation towards the Constitution and promote equal rights for women. A fivemember panel constituted in the chairmanship of retired justice Ranjana Prakash Desai diligently worked on the draft for two years besides holding public interactions, taking suggestions from people of the state and internal meetings of the panel to discuss the points to be taken under the draft. The bill in its four parts covers marriage and divorce, succession, live-in relationships. The section 4 of the bill outlines that "neither party has a

spouse living at the time of the

marriage" with marriage age of 21 and 18 for man and women respectively, making polygamy and child marriage illegal.

The bill also requires compulsory registration of marriages within 60 days where the couple has equal right to dissolve the marriage through a decree of divorce only through court

proceedings. The Bill says that marriages can be dissolved only through the provisions of the law "notwithstanding any usage, custom, tradition, [or] personal law of any party to the marriage." This bill provides legal safeguards to protect women who cohabit in a live-in relationship.

(The writer is Director, Non Collegiate Women's Education Board, University of Delhi; views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS



ESC unveils 'Ignite Tech Startups' programme

he Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESC) has announced the 'Ignite Startups' mentoring programme that aims to catalyse the Indian tech startup ecosystem. ESC, in partnership with startup accelerator Marwari Catalysts (MCats), has unveiled a package of funding, global exposure, and mentoring support for innovative tech startups. "This programme is packed with transformative elements that can elevate the startup ecosystem to new heights," Veer Sagar, Chairman of ESC, said. Marwari Catalysts Founder and CEO Sushil Sharma will serve as the Chief Mentor for the startup programme of ESC and for the startup Pavilion at INDIASOFT 2025 -International IT Exhibition and Conference, scheduled to be held in March 2025. Through this partnership, Marwari Catalysts has earmarked a funding budget of Rs 35 million (Rs 3.5 crore) to nurture 10 to 12 selected tech startups. This financial lifeline will catapult startups into the fast lane, helping them bring innovative solutions to market," Sushil Sharma, MCats' Founder and CEO, said. Gurmeet Singh, Executive Director, ESC, pointed out that chosen startups will enjoy complimentary exhibit space at the MCats Pavilion during INDIASOFT 2025 scheduled in New Delhi from



Mcap of 6 of top-10 firms surges Rs 1.18 lakh cr

he combined market valuation of six of the top-10 most valu`ed firms surged Rs 1,18,151.75 crore last week, with HDFC Bank and Bharti Airtel emerging as the biggest gainers, in-line with firm trend in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark climbed 354.23 points, or 0.45 per cent, and the Nifty went up 77.8 points, or 0.33 per cent. While Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, Infosys and Bajaj Finance were the gainers from the top-10 pack, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), State Bank of India, Hindustan Unilever, and ITC faced erosion from their valuation. Together these four firms lost Rs 1.15 lakh crore from their valuation. The market valuation of HDFC Bank jumped Rs 32,639.98 crore to Rs 13,25,090.58 crore. Bharti Airtel added Rs 31,003.44 crore taking its valuation to Rs 9,56,205.34 crore. The market capitalisation (mcap) of Bajaj Finance surged Rs 29,032.08 crore to Rs 5,24,312.82 crore and that of Infosys rallied Rs 21,114.32 crore to Rs 7,90,074.08 crore. The mcap of Reliance Industries climbed Rs 2,977.12 crore to Rs 17,14,348.66 crore and that of ICICI Bank went up Rs 1,384.81 crore to Rs 8,87,632.56 crore



Standoff continues at Samsung India TN plant

he fresh standoff between a section of employees at the Samsung factory near here and the management continues with the CITU (Centre of Indian Trade Unions) spearheading the strike is planning to further intensify the protest, union officials said. Employees under the Samsung India Workers Union have been on a sit-in strike since February 5 demanding reinstatement of three of their colleagues who were suspended by the management. Samsung India spokesperson said Samsung does not condone any unlawful actions by employees that disrupt the industrial peace at the workplace. On Saturday evening at Sunguvarchatram about 2 km away from the factory in the Sriperumbudur district, CITU office-bearers led by its secretary E Muthu Kumar and supporters staged a demonstration demanding that the suspended employees who are office-bearers of CITU be reinstated and threatened to intensify the protest if their suspension was not revoked immediately. Leading the agitation, Kumar said Samsung India workers were observing a sit-in strike inside the factory since February 5, while CITU along with its supporters were staging the demonstration as part of expressing their solidarity to the striking employees.

'Govt looking at procedural easing to further promote FDI'

The government is looking at further easing of procedures in certain sectors to attract more foreign direct investments (FDI) into the country, a government official said.

The department for promotion of industry and internal trade (DPIIT) has held stakeholder consultations with differ-ent government departments, regulators, industry associations, advisory and law firms, pension funds, private equity and venture capitals.

The department sought their views on ways to further attract foreign direct investments into the country.

"We have completed the consultations. The department has received suggestions on different issues. Things have not yet been finalised...Looking at easing of norms at the procedural front," the official said

However, the official did not disclose the sectors where the government is considering the procedural easing.

In the consultations, issues which were raised included per-



mitting e-commerce players to receive FDI in inventory-based models of online trade for export purposes only; easing press note 3 by defining beneficial ownership; and some tweaking of the policy for single-brand retail trading.
Under this press note, govern-

ment approval is mandatory for investors from countries sharing land borders with India in any

Foreign direct investment inflows into India have crossed the USD 1 trillion milestone in the April 2000-September 2024

The key sectors attracting the maximum of these inflows include the services segment, computer software and hardware, telecommunications, trading, construction development, automobile, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals.

'Climate finance Taxonomy should be ready in 6 months'

Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth has said work with respect to developing a taxonomy for climate finance is going on and it should be ready in the next six months or

"Work is happening, and in fact, the steel ministry has completed their work. They have issued their taxonomy for the steel sector," said in an interview.

However, he said, a much more comprehensive exercise covering all sectors of the economy is going on and a concept paper has already been shared with stakeholders concerned and their views have been obtained.

"Various committees have been formed, one for each sector, and we expect that over the next six months that exercise can be completed," he added.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sithraman in her Budget 2024-25 had announced a proposal for developing a taxonomy for climate finance.

"We will develop a taxonomy for climate finance for enhanc-



ing the availability of capital for climate adaptation and mitigation. This will support achievement of the country's climate commitments and green transition," she had said

Seth further said the government's prudent fiscal management may soften government securities yields and leave more funds for corporates to invest in the economy.

In absolute terms, he said, "We will be borrowing (for FY26) less than what we intend to borrow in the current year. Even the gross borrowings are also marginally more than what it was, signalling that the government will leave enough into the market for the private sector to pick up".

Money 08

The government has reduced its borrowings estimate for the next financial year to Rs 11.54 lakh crore on a net basis as it expects an improvement in tax collection. However, gross market borrowings have now been revised upward to Rs 14.82 lakh crore from Rs 14.01 lakh crore estimated for the current finan-

cial year. The government has to borrow by issuing dated securities to meet its fiscal deficit target. "So, I see that the fiscal consolidation this year and fiscal consolidation road map next

year should rather soften the

yield... there are other factors ilso in place," he said.

It is to be noted that softening of yield on G-secs would bring the burden of interest payment on the government.

The yield on 10-year government bonds is hovering around 6.7 per cent.

As per the government data, the weighted average yield softened to 6.94 per cent in the second quarter, relative to 7.14 per cent in the first quarter of

The government has lowered its fiscal deficit target to 4.8 per cent of GDP for the current financial year against 4.9 per cent estimated earlier.

K'taka expecting Rs 10 lakh cr investment commitments: Minister

PNS BENGALURU

Karnataka is expecting to sign investment commitments of about Rs 10 lakh crore with an array of industries at its biennial investor meet this week, aimed at showcasing the state's industrial potential, M B Patil, Minister of Large and Medium Scale Industries, said.

The Invest Karnataka 2025 --Global Investors Meet (GIM 2025), scheduled from February 11-14 in Bengaluru, aims to position Karnataka as a premier global investment hub.

"We are expecting around Rs 10

lakh crore in investments, with at least 70 per cent converting into reality (and) not just (remaining) on paper," he told PTI Videos.

On the theme of the summit 'Re-Imagining Growth', Patil said this "because today we are in a stage where our world is moving towards tech-driven, green, inclusive, and more importantly, resilient growth. Because we are in a situation... (these are) challenging times. There is a war in Ukraine and Russia, then the Israel-Gaza conflict, (US President) Trump's policies, China plus one, two years (post recovery from) Covid-19,



and more importantly, artificial intelligence, clean mobility coming

"EVs and green hydrogen will

take centrestage. Diesel, petrol, and all fossil fuels will be phased out. So these are challenging times, how do you adapt to that? We have a very strong system, which has to be resilient to all these changes. So we have this investors meet in

these challenging times," he said.
The inaugural session will be on February 10 at 4 pm.

"The governor will be there with his auspicious presence. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will be presiding, and Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will be inaugurating. Many central ministers are going to participate, some

on 12th, some on 13th, and some on 14th. State ministers, industrialists, and big names will all be participating in this meet," he said.

February 12 and 13 will feature business sessions, including a semiconductor summit. On February 12 evening, there will be an award function recognising industries that have contributed to Karnataka's growth.

On February 13, there will be multiple sessions and roundtables, including the Queen's City roundtable. The event will conclude on February 14 with awards for ventures and key contributors.

Bajaj Auto to ride into e-rickshaw segment

PNS NEW DELHI

Bajaj Auto is gearing up to segment by the end of this fiscal to tap a 'sizable opportunity' in a fast-growing but highly unorganised market, according to a top company official. The company expects to get regulatory clearances towards the end of the ongoing quarter for its e-rickshaw that will enable it to enter the segment which is about 45,000 units a month, Bajaj Auto Executive Director Rakesh Sharma told analysts. "By the end of this financial year, we also intend to launch a modern 'e-rick', which will set an absolutely new standard in the segment and bring a very high level of satisfaction to both owners and passengers.

'Right step to boost biogas industry' IBA on increase in MSME financing

PNS NEW DELHI

Indian Biogas Association (IBA) on Sunday said the proposed increase in MSME financing in the General Budget 2025 is a right step to boost biogas industry. With a strong push for and digital transformation, this Budget sets the stage for Aatmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat, an IBA statement said.

From the standpoint of the fledgling biogas/CBG (compressed biogas) industry, the announced increase to the MSME Credit Guarantee Scheme will significantly benefit the biogas industry, which often faces challenge in securing credit with reasonable terms, it noted. By expanding the credit guarantee cover from Rs 5-10 crore, the scheme ensures easier access to collateral-free loans, thus reducing financial barriers for the CBG developers, it pointed out.

Additionally, the revised MSME classification criteria

Indian LO CE Biogas Association

allow for almost 2-2.5 times higher investment and turnover limits as compared to earlier ensures that now even the larger-capacity CBG projects are eligible for these incentives, it noted.

While the recent Budget takes adequate steps in supporting the MSME sector, inclusion of specific policy measures for the CBG industry would have made it even more conducive for the sector, it suggested.

So, to foster the growth of the biogas and CBG producers, the IBA has already requested the Indian government for development of a framework that allows the biogas plant promoters to sell carbon credits in both international and domestic platforms, enhancing financial viability and aiding climate targets, it stated.

Saudi's project Diriyah sees keen interest from Indian investors

PNS NEW DELHI

Several Indian firms have shown a keen interest in investing in Diriyah, a USD 63-bilject, while some big names like Tatas and Oberois having already signed up, its CEO Jerry Inzerillo said

Diriyah, being billed as the City of Earth, is being built on the outskirts of Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh and it will have homes for 100,000 people and office space for a further

100,000 plus. This new city will include over 40 luxury hotels, more than 1,000 shops, over 150 restaurants and cafes, a university, arts and cultural assets, museums, an opera house, a 20,000-seater multipurpose event arena, a golf course and an international equestrian and polo centre, among other facilities.



The USD 63.2 billion real estate development and tourism project aims to restore the historic birthplace of the modern Saudi kingdom and the site includes the UNESCO World Heritage Site of At-Turaif.

"At Diriyah we are keen to enhance the impact of India as one of Saudi Arabia's biggest trading partners, ranking among the top in bilateral trade, with a trade volume of approximately USD 52.8 bilon in 2022-23," Inzerillo said. He was in Davos for the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2025.

Inzerillo said over 3,000 Indian companies are already operating in the Kingdom, contributing to sectors such as construction, IT, energy, and telecommunications, strengthening the economic partnership between the two nations.

CBG offers a sustainable solution to Delhi's pollution crisis: Report

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The pollution crisis in Delhi calls for a large-scale shift in agricultural waste management and compressed biogas (CBG) offers a sustainable solution by tackling both stubble burning and vehicular emission, according to a report.

While vehicles contribute 20 per cent to Delhi's pollution in 16 per cent, these numbers rise to 30 per cent and 23 per cent in winters respectively, as per the report by Nomura Research Institute Consulting & Solutions

"Worse, during peak stubbleburning season, biomass-burning emissions frequently exceed 30 per cent," it said, adding that although the city's toxic air

summers and stubble burning comes from multiple sources' vehicle emissions, construction dust, biomass burning, including paddy straw stubble burning, and industrial emis-

Stressing that CBG can play a key role in tackling Delhi's air pollution, the report said, "A CBG plant producing 10 tons of CBG per day requires about 90 tons of paddy straw. By repur-

posing this biomass instead of burning it, we can prevent about 270 kilograms of PM (particulate matter) emissions every single day."

Citing several sources, the report said, "A staggering 67 per cent of the PM from stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana drifts into Delhi NCR, turning the region into a gas chamber



Markets to track inflation data, FIIs trading activity

PNS NEW DELHI

Investors would track a host of macroeconomic data announcements scheduled this week, including inflation numbers, and also monitor global market trends, and trading activity of foreign institutional investors, analysts said.

The ongoing quarterly earnings announcements and the rupee-dollar trend would also influence the markets.

This week is set to be dynamic for global and Indian markets, driven by key macroeconomic data releases and corporate earnings." Master Trust Group Director Puneet Singhania said.

"For India, inflation and industrial production data will be released on February 12," he Corporate earnings will also

drive market sentiment. Major companies reporting earnings include Eicher Motors, Grasim Industries, Vodafone Idea, Steel Authority of India, he added. "The sentiments in the Indian market are slowly improving in

response to an excellent Budget and the rate cut by the MPC. The victory of the BJP in the Delhi elections is a major achievement for the ruling dispensation. This is likely to positively impact the market in the short run.

ry spell in Shimla worries apple farmers state receiving 16.2 mm of pre-

PNS SHIMLA

A prolonged dry spell has got Shimla farmers worrying about the apple crop, which is now threatened by a hampered production.

Desired cooling hours (1,200 to 1,600 below 7 degrees Celsius) for traditional varieties and 600 hours for early varieties have not

come by this season. Farmers were also restricted from new plantations due to

unfavourable weather conditions, Fruit Vegetable Flower Growers Association President Harish Chauhan told PTI on Sunday. About 90 per cent of apple orchardists in the state are still on traditional varieties, while the remaining have adopted high density plantations.

"Snow during winter months also kills insects and diseases but we are witnessing a one-month shift in weather for the past three years which has affected apple



production," Chauhan said. The state saw a rain deficit of 97 per cent in October last year, 99 per cent in November, and 84 per cent this January, the ninth lowest since 1901, Meteorological expert Sandeep Sharma said.

In all, the rain deficit was 41 per cent in the post-monsoon season (October to December), with December the only exception with 21 per cent of excess rain. Rain deficit from February 1 to 9 was 38 per cent, with the

Sufficient chilling hours and moisture during winters is essential for a good apple crop, while hailstorms at flowering stage prove harmful. The temperature has to remain below 7 degrees for appropriate chilling, which varies with latitude as the apple growing area falls mainly in the temperate zone, according to scien-

cipitation against a normal of 26.3

mm, the Met said.

derabad ad

Follow us on

@TheDailyPioneer

facebook.com/ dailypioneer

Monday February 10, 2025

'My character in *Mission Grey House* is fearless and driven, just like me in real life'



IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE PIONEER, **ACTRESS PUJA SHARMA OPENS UP** ABOUT HER **INSPIRING JOURNEY** FROM CUTTACK TO **THE SILVER SCREEN, MAKING HER BIG-SCREEN DEBUT WITH MISSION GREY** HOUSE

I joined the gym to get physically fit and took action classes where I learnt kickboxing. Though my character doesn't have a lot of action sequences, I worked hard to perfect the ones I had

TEJAL SINHA tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

aking her big-screen debut with Mission Grey House, actress Puja Sharma is ready to captivate audiences with her compelling portrayal of a fearless cop. Having already made a mark in the entertain-ment industry through ad films felicitated by my school," she recalls. That moment made her and popular television shows like Choti Sardarni and Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah, as well as web series such as Johri and Dus June Ki Raat, Puja's she actively sought opportunities journey from Cuttack, Odisha, to the silver screen is nothing she actively sought opportunities in acting and modeling. "I got my first break in an ad film, and short of inspiring.

Initially, a career in entertainment was never part of her plans. Moving to Mumbai for her studies, Puja aspired to enter the corporate world. However, Sardarni is widely known as her her adventurous spirit and eagerness to explore new opportunities led her down an unexpected yet rewarding path in acting and modeling.
"Since childhood, I always

wanted to learn horse riding, kickboxing, and be aware of everything around me, which wouldn't have been possible in my hometown," she shares in this exclusive chat with The Pioneer.

director approached me, and that's when I got to know how things work in acting and modeling," says Puja. Initially hesitant about how her family

would react, she found unwavering support in her sister-in-law. Encouraged, she participated in a beauty pageant - just for fun - only to emerge as the

The victory brought unexpected recognition. "My story was published in newspapers, including my hometown's local press, and people started congratulating my parents. When I went back home, I was even realise she wanted to pursue a career in entertainment rather

that's how things started out for

television debut, she reveals, "I haven't told this in any of my previous interviews, but before Choti Sardarni, I had worked on a web show in Goa. It never got released, and honestly, now I don't want it to," she laughs. "Back then, I was a fresh actor with no knowledge of anything."

very 'bechari' type role, full of rona-dhona, and I learned a lot Her entry into acting was about performing emotional purely accidental. "A casting scenes there," she explains.

Switching gears, she played a humorous role in Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah as

don't realize how they work, but on set, you observe everything. Watching Popatlal, I noticed how his expressions would instantly change when the director said 'action' and then go back to normal once the shot was over. In real life, he is an introverted person, which is so different from what we see on TV," she

Her versatility continued with Dus June Ki Raat, where she played a drug addict, and Johri, where she portrayed a love interest. "Both were fun and enriching experiences," says Puja. Now, than the corporate world.

Upon returning to Mumbai,

Upon returning to Mumbai,

> For her, Mission Grey House is a dream come true. "Every actor dreams of seeing themselves on the big screen, and I feel so lucky to get this opportunity so soon in my career," she says excitedly.

> Playing a cop was particularly thrilling for her. "I used to watch Chandramukhi Chautala as a kid, and I always felt that, given my height, I should play a cop at least once," she shares. However, her height initially posed challenges. "In television, most lead actresses are of short height, and I was often told that my height was too much-more than the lead actor's. I always thought I'd only get to play an inspector's role, and I didn't realize it was something I had manifested until I got this role in

Mission Grey House," she says. Her character in the film is a determined and confident offi-Popatlal's love interest. "When cer who will stop at nothing to you see actors on-screen, you complete her mission. "She's reveals.

fearless and driven, which I relate to in real life as well," says Puja. In the film, veteran actor Rajesh Sharma plays her father, who assigns her and the lead actor to investigate a mysterious house where multiple murders have occurred.

To prepare for the physical and emotional demands of the role, Puja underwent rigorous training. "I joined the gym to get physically fit and took action classes where I learned kickboxing. Though my character doesn't have a lot of action sequences, I worked hard to perfect the ones

I had," she explains.

One of the most cherished experiences from the shoot was working with Rajesh Sharma. "One day, I was exhausted from the heat and was sitting in my makeup room. He walked in, recited some shayari, and asked his spot boy to bring me buttermilk and nimbu paani. His positivity as a co-actor and a senior actor made a big impact on me," she recalls fondly.

While many cop dramas focus solely on the professional aspects of the role, she emphasizes that her character in Mission Grey House has multiple layers. "She's not just a cop - there are so many different aspects to her personality, which makes this role special," she explains.

Looking ahead, Puja is eager to explore more genres - espe-cially horror. "I haven't done horror yet, but it excites me the most. I've actually completed a web series based on paranormal activities, which is currently in post-production," she

Empowering women, sustainably

PNS|HYDERABAD

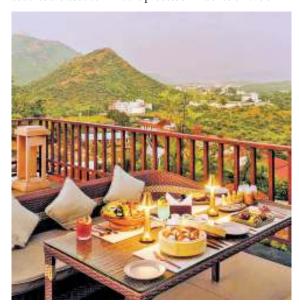
eing a hotelier gave Mohit the opportunity to interact Build a note for gave work the opportunity to interact with people from diverse backgrounds, each of whom has a distinct story and set of challenges. The tenacity, inventiveness and generosity of women who manage the responsibilities of the home, family and community, however, have continuously impressed him! These extraordinary people, in his opinion, should be given the chance to flourish, develop and follow their aspirations in addition to recognition. He is committed to establishing a workplace that embraces, encourages and inspires women and homemakers to thrive in their jobs and beyond, which is why he gave an exclusive interview to THE PIONEER. Notably, the director of Ananta Hotels & Resorts has also spearheaded two noteworthy projects in Udaipur: an inventive lavender laundry project and a state-of-the-art bottling plant.

The effort to hire housewives and women is impressive. What prompted this choice?

Beyond providing luxury, my idea also aims to promote empowerment and inclusivity. In order to reshape opportunities in the hospitality business and provide doors for individuals who have historically been underrepresented, the campaign to hire women and stay-at-home moms was born. In 2005, women accounted for just 8% of our workforce. They make up 15% now and by 2026, they want to make up 25%. This change has improved our workplace culture in addition to giving women greater financial independence and opportunities for professional advancement. Our conviction that diversity is crucial to creating a better future for hos-pitality has been strengthened by their distinct viewpoints and commitment, which have enhanced our guests' experiences with warmth, empathy and creativity.

You're combining sustainable practices with powerful work with your lavender laundry initiative. Could you explain the project's underlying concept?

The Lavender Laundry initiative is an example of the dedication to a considerate experience that blends sustainability with significant influence. In addition to its aesthetic appeal, the project gives local women and stay-at-home moms jobs that allow them to become financially independent and advance in their careers. Because sustainable procedures are used to limit the process's influence on the envi-



ronment, it also fits with an eco-conscious worldview!

The hospitality business has historically been controlled by men. How have you managed to assure women's representation at all levels?

I'm determined to dispel myths and redefine the hospitality sector as a welcoming one. Since the beginning, the ownership has placed a high priority on giving women chances since they understand how their involvement improves the teams and visitor experiences. My resolve to change the narrative is evidenced by my target of 25% female representation by 2026. We aggressively fund mentorship and training initiatives, empower women in leadership positions and maintain a positive work environment. I have personally seen improved teamwork, inventiveness and resilience as a result of promoting diversity—elements crucial for success in the cutthroat hospitality industry. The goal is very clear: empower women to empower hospitality's

What difficulties do stav-at-home moms encounter when they decide to enter the workforce, in your expe-

Homemakers frequently encounter major obstacles when they return to the market, such as a lack of recent work experience, self-assurance and the ability to manage family obligations. The hotel wants to close this gap by fostering an atmosphere that supports their special abilities, such as empathy, organisation and multitasking.

The resort's natural attractiveness is enhanced by the Aravalli Hills, which provide a picturesque backdrop for The Ananta Udaipur. How does your approach to sustainability change as a result of your connection to

Arayalli Hills serve as a constant source of inspiration and a reminder of the value of living in harmony with the natural world. The sustainability efforts, which range from installing solar energy and gravity-fed water systems to employing eco-friendly building materials, are motivated by this relationship. In order to improve biodiversity and reduce our carbon footprint,

we are also committing to planting 50,000 trees in Rajasthan each year. We make sure that our visitors can enjoy the natural beauty while understanding that their stay helps to preserve it for future generations by building our resort to blend in with the hills.

> While your family has a long history of hospitality, what personal legacy do you hope to leave behind?

I want to leave a legacy based on sustainability and empowerment, even though the heritage of exceptional hospitality is a source of pride. This vision is embodied in the activities, such as the aim to eliminate plastic and our goal of having 25% of women in the workforce by 2026. The ultimate test of suc-

cess, in my opinion, is building a company that not only provides top-notch hospitality but also improves communities, safeguards the environment and establishes new benchmarks for social responsibility and diversity. I want my ventures to be remembered by future generations as a trailblazer of significant industry transformation.





DEWORMING IN CHILDREN:

A crucial step towards healthy growth

s parents, ensuring that our $% \left\{ 1\right\} =\left\{ 1\right$ children grow up healthy and strong is a top priority. One often overlooked but essential aspect of a child's health is deworming. Intestinal worms are common among children, especially in regions with poor sanitation. These parasites can cause a range of health issues, including malnutrition, poor growth, and developmental delays. Regular deworming plays a critical role in maintaining your child's overall well-

What Are Intestinal Worms?

Intestinal worms are parasitic organisms that live in the intestines. The most common types of worms affecting children include roundworms. hookworms, tapeworms, and whipworms. These worms can enter the body through contaminated food, water, soil, or contact with infected animals. In children, the risk of infection is higher due to their natural curiosity and tendency to

play in unsanitary environments. Why is Deworming Important?

Deworming is essential because intestinal worms can seriously affect your child's health. Some of the kev consequences of worm infestations

1. Malnutrition: Worms compete with the host for essential nutrients, which can lead to nutrient deficiencies.

2. Abdominal Pain and Discomfort: Worms cause irritation and damage to the intestines, leading to stomach pain and

discomfort. 3. Fatigue and Weakness: As a result of nutrient deficiencies, children may appear lethargic and tired.

4. Diarrhea or Vomiting: Some worms can cause gastrointestinal symptoms, leading to dehydration and loss of

Signs Your Child Might Have Worms

It is not always easy to spot an infection, as some children may not

show obvious symptoms. However, some common signs to look out for

• Itchy Bottom: This is particularly common with pinworms, which cause intense itching around the anus, especially at night. Abdominal Pain: Complaints of stomach aches or cramps may indicate a

worm infestation. • Changes in Appetite: A sudden increase or decrease in hunger could be a sign. • Weight Loss: If your child is losing

weight despite a normal appetite, it may

indicate the presence of worms. **How Often Should You Deworm You**

The frequency of deworming depends on where you live, the local sanitation conditions, and your child's age. In many countries, health authorities recommend deworming children between the ages of 1 and 5 every six months. In areas with higher rates of worm infestations, children may need to be dewormed more frequently. Your doctor or pediatrician will provide guidance based on your child's specific needs.

Deworming treatment typically involves the use of anti-parasitic medications. These medications are safe and effective and they usually come in the form of a single dose or a short course of treatment. Over-the-counter deworming medications are also available, but it's essential to seek professional advice before administering them to ensure proper dosage and safety. In addition to deworming, practicing good hygiene is crucial to preventing reinfection. Teach your children the importance of washing their hands with soap and water, especially before meals and after playing outside. Avoiding contaminated food and water and ensuring that your child avoids playing in dirty or contaminated environments can further reduce the risk of worm infections.

(The author, Dr. Parimala V Thirumalesh, is a Sr. Consultant - Neonatology & Pediatrics, at Aster CMI Hospital.)













The Glam Squad Ladies Club, by Shazia Bakal, had a dazzling pre-Valentine's Day Kitty Party with a stunning

evening was filled with amazing food, refreshing mocktails, and fabulous fashion. Hosts Geeta, Humera, Fatima and Firozen ensured a memorable evening of fun, laughter, dance, gifts and

red theme. Held at a

popular venue, the





what's brewing?





EducationWorld successfully concluded its 12th Early Childhood Education National Conference 2025 and the EducationWorld India Preschool Rankings Awards 2024-25 at the Marriott Hotel and Convention Centre in Hyderabad. The event served as a platform for educators, policymakers and leaders in early childhood education to engage in discussions aimed at transforming early childhood care and education to prepare future generations







Prathima Reddy





ARCHIE







HEY, DON'T FIX OH, I'D BETTER TWAT FOR DINNER! DIDN'T MOM TELL YOU HOBBES AND I ARE ON A STRICT BIG MAC DIET? IT'S









GARFIELD



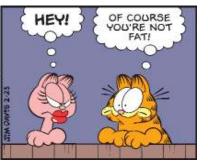
HIII-



YOU KNOW WHAT,

CRAZY!









REALITY CHECK









SLUGGO KICKEP HIS OLD SUITCASES ALL OVER, AND WAY-ING HIS FISTS AND YELL-ING AS LOUD. LY AS HE COULD... IT MUST VE SHOOK UP THE BULLIES...







SUDOKU

	11()	4	1	7	8		
						1	6
	1		8	2	4	7.5	
3					9	2	
7	6					4	5
	9	8					7
		3	4	8		9	
8	5	2					
		1	7	6	5		

1	1	7	Q		7 - 1	Yesterday's solution			
-1			0	1	6	2 1 6 8 7 3 4 9 5 8 4 9 5 6 2 7 1 3			
	8	2	4	7.5	1-3	5 3 7 9 1 4 6 2 8 9 6 4 2 8 5 3 7 1			
			9	2		153746289			
				4	5	375128964			
8					7	6 9 1 4 3 7 8 5 2 4 2 8 6 5 9 1 3 7			
3	4	8		9		Rules			
	_		_			 Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once. 			

DIFFICULTY RATING: **

- and column can ch number (1 to 9)
- The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

ACROSS

- 1 A spring flower
- 6 You might hear this on the radio every hour 7 Actors with small parts
- to play in a film 9 The planet we live on
- 11 Sweeten food with this
- 12 A large sea 13 A snake's poison
- 16 A light, soft type of cake
- 18 A small round piece of medicine
- 19 Freed from captivity
- 1 Very unsafe 2 Not as many 3 A sword fight



4 A green salad vegetable

8 A way to cook eggs

prepares a sports

team for a match

14 These grow on fingers 15 Part of the foot

5 A hot drink

10 Someone who

17 A tame animal



tollywood

After *Majaka*, filmmakers know where I can fit: Anshu Sagar

MANMADHUDU FEMALE LEAD ANSHU IS BACK TO TELUGU CINEMA AFTER MANY YEARS AND SHE TALKS ABOUT HER SUDDEN **DISAPPEARANCE, HER STUDIES, MARRIAGE** AND WHAT MAKES HER COMEBACK...

SURESH KAVIRAYANI sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

emember the classic film 'Manmadhudu' that stars Nagarjuna and Sonali Bendre, directed by Vijay Bhaskar and written by Trivikram Srinivas. The film was released in 2002 and another actress Anshu also played a female lead along with Sonali and she made her mark with it. Anshu acted then in 'Raghavendra' opposite Prabhas. Later, she acted in a Tamil film and then she

disappeared from the film industry.

After more than 20 years, Anshu is back to Telugu cinema and this time she is acting in a film titled 'Majaka'. She paired opposite Rao Ramesh in his entertainment film. When asked why people called her Anshu Anshu Tiwari or with some other surnames, the actress clarified about it. "The surname Ambani is a very popular one as well as known, but I have never been an Ambani. I have no idea how they added it to my name. I am Anshu, I married Sachin Sagar and if you want to add my surname you can call me Anshu Sagar, but I would be happy if everyone called me Anshu," said the actress.

one called me Anshu," said the actress.

Anshu acted in only three films and she disappeared suddenly from the industry, though she was successful. "Yes, because I was very young when I did 'Manmadhudu' and I was not mature enough to think at that time. If I was 24, I may have taken my career seriously, but I was hardly 14 or 15 at that time. So, I concentrated on my studies. I married Sachin Sagar at 24. I have two lovely children and I did my masters and now I am a qualified psychologist. I have my own clinic. I don't have any regrets," said Anshu about her disappearance.

ified psychologist. I have my own clinic. I don't have any regrets," said Anshu about her disappearance.

When asked what made her come back to films, Anshu said that it was after the rerelease of her film 'Manmadhudu'. "Actually, Annapurna Studios asked her to give a byte about 'Manmadhudu' and that's when Anshu changed. She came to India last February and did a couple of podcast interviews which went viral and people came to know that she was here. Actually it also opened up some doors and a few people contacted me for roles," said Anshu. That's how writer Prasanna Kumar contacted her and narrated this 'Maiska' in a zoom call and narrated this 'Majaka' in a zoom call.

When they saw Anshu's photos and also videos, they thought that she may fit in as the lead actress, sister or mother wherever she can fit. "When they asked me, I couldn't give them an answer, because I don't know where I stand, I am not like Madhuri or Kajol. I am younger than Deepika Padukone. But after 'Majaka', filmmakers have an idea where they can fit me, which I feel helps me to take the right decision also," said Anshu.

To accept 'Majaka', Anshu said that she liked the story. "When Prasanna Kumar narrated me on Zoom, I was laughing continuously. There is a lot of scope to perform and it's a heavy role. People might say that 'she is back' and I tried my best," she said. She added that the first day of the shoot where she faced the camera, she was nervous. "I haven't worked in a movie in the last 23 years, so I was very nervous and like a newcomer. But every-23 years, so I was very nervous and like a newcomer. But everyone was really nice on the sets, I know about the makers of the
film, because they are doing some good films. After day two and
three, I was fine and continued shooting without any trouble,"
said Anshu. She said that the biggest challenge she faced while
shooting this film was 'language'. "I am taking Telugu lessons
now. My teacher Surekha teaches me Telugu and I want to work

now. My teacher Surekha teaches me Telugu and I want to work for a long time, I want to connect with the Telugu audience fully. I am a British Indian, but now I am learning Telugu, and will keep doing my best," she said.

Talking about her role in this film, she said she played the role of Yashoda. "She is headstrong and stubborn, arrogant woman and at the same time she is emotional also. I just got into the character of Yashoda and tried my best to play the role," said Anshu. She paired opposite Rao Ramesh in the film "He is such a gentleman he is very sweet. He in the film. "He is such a gentleman, he is very sweet. He has completed his dubbing. He saw my performance and told me that I did very well, which I feel very happy about," said Anshu.

told me that I did very well, which I feel very happy about," said Anshu.

The actress said that a lot changed from then to now in these 23 years. "When I came back to London I was doing my studies and I wanted to sign up for an agency for any roles in British or American films. They would decline my applications, what films you did, we never heard about them, no value of South Cinema. But now, things have changed so much, it has become more united," she said. She added that her husband is now watching Telugu and Tamil films even though he doesn't know the language. "He is enjoying watching South films," said Anshu. Her family members are coming next week to watch her film here in Hyderabad.

"Whether I am playing a mother, lead actress or sister, if the role has some substance, then I just want to act again," she said the kind of roles she is looking for. Talking about the food, "Once or twice in a month, I had Hyderabad biryani and it's very good," she said. "I love doing the gym," she added. She did 'Raghavendra' with Prabhas and asked about him, Anshu recalls and that Prabhas has changed, but he didn't change much as a person. "He came in his second films for "Egypar" Lagrage of the came in his

but he didn't change much as a person. "He came in his second film after 'Eswar', I came after 'Manmadhudu'. At that time he was so sweet, shy, kind and calm. He is so good," said Anshu. She added that he is definitely a humble star.

Allu Arjun is still feeling nervous

The film 'Pushpa 2' is still feeling nervous.

Speaking about the success, Allu Arjun thanked the 5, 2024 was a successful one. Allu Arjun played the lead, while Sukumar is the director. Mythri Movie Makers is the producer. Though the film released more than two months back, the team didn't celebrate its successful now Because there success till now. Because, there are few incidents that happened after its release. A woman passed away at the woman passed away at the Sandhya theatre stampede, after a few days Allu Arjun was arrested and he spent one day in Chanchalguda jail, making the makers not to hold any event of the film.

On Saturday, the makers held a success meet in a hotel, but it went quiet Generally.

but it went quiet. Generally Allu Arjun event means, it's more like loud noise from his fans, a lot of activity and so on. But this success meet went without any big noise as many of the actors and other unit members attended and spoke about the film's success.

Though the venue was

decided a couple of days back, the actor or the film PR didn't reveal about the venue even to the media. They revealed the venue at the last minute and requested not to forward the venue details to anyone as the fans may come in large numbers. So, they have taken every precaution for this success meet and it went smoothly. But if you look at Allu

Arjun's body language, he

this film. "He always credits the team for success, but he himself is the reason behind it. My performance has received a lot of appreciation, and the credit

goes to Sukumar. I am his biggest fan - I get excited whenever he narrates a scene. He is a genius director," said Allu Arjun about Sukumar. "Pushpa is not just a film, it is an emotion. The five years we spent on this film will be remembered for a lifetime," said the actor. He talks about 'Pushpa 3' and he said he doesn't know what is in store

producers for backing this film for five years. "The producers Ravi and Naveen made

this film possible - without them, 'Pushpa' wouldn't have happened. They have taken care of us for five years," said

Allu Arjun. He added that music director Devi Sri Prasad

made his songs reach billions. The actor thanked

director Sukumar and he is the man behind the success of

for it, but it is going to be extraordinary.

"I cannot make films without music director Devi Sri Prasad, and I never will," said Sukumar about DSP. Talking about Allu Arjun, he said, he believed in him even when he didn't have a proper story. "This entire success belongs to Allu Arjun," said the director.



SWASIKA'S LOOK UNVEILED FROM

pooja Vijay, better known as Swasika, is very popular in Tamil and Malayalam where she acted in many films. Now, she is doing this Telugu film, a horror thriller 'Shambhala', in which her look from the film is unveiled. Her recent Tamil film 'Lubber Pandhu' is very successful and even on OTT too it is a super hit. She is playing a very important role in the much-awaited supernatural horror thriller Shambhala: A Mystical World. The makers introduced Swasika's character, Vasantha, with a striking first-look poster that showcases her in an intense, gripping avatar. Swasika is also set to feature in Suriya's upcoming film directed by RJ Balaji and another Telugu film, Nithin's 'Thammudu' adding to her growing list of exciting projects. Talented actor Aadi Saikumar, known for his lively performances, is playing the lead in this project which has already generated excitement with its title and first look posters. The movie will see the actor in the challenging role of a geo-scientist. Directed by Ugandhar Muni, this film is produced by Rajasekhar Annabhimoju and Mahidhar Reddy under the Shining Pictures banner.



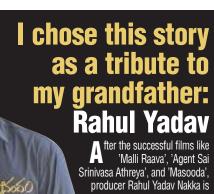
Sid Sriram's magic once again worked for Neevalle Neevalle song



id Sriram has a special place when it comes to Telugu songs as he always creates magic with his voice. Whether it's 'Samajavaragamana' from 'Ala Vaikuntapuram Lo', or 'Srivalli' from 'Pushpa' or 'Leharayi' from 'Most Eligible Bacherlor', not just one song there are many popular songs sung by Sriram. Now, the singer has come up with another one 'Neevalle Neevalle' from the upcoming film 'Tribanadhari Barbarik'. Directed by Mohan Srivatsa and produced by Vijaypal Reddy Adidhala, this film has an interesting cast by

Sathyaraj, Satyam Rajesh, Vasishta N Simha, Sanchi Rai, Udaya Bhanu, and Kranthi Kiran. The film has music composed by the Infusion

Band. The makers started the musical promotions by releasing the lyrical video for the first single, 'Neevalle Neevalle'. Lose yourself in the magic of the song, as the ever-magical Sid Sriram elevated it to extraordinary heights with his evocative and charismatic vocals. His voice lends the track an irresistible quality, making it an instant earworm. It's no surprise that this enchanting track is expected to top music charts in no time.



coming up with 'Brahma Anandam', which is set to release on February 14. The film stars Brahmanandam and his son Raja Goutham are in lead roles, with Priya Vadlamani and Aishwarya Holakkal playing key roles. It is directed by debutant RVS Nikhil. "We struggled to find a perfect title, finally decided as 'Brahma Anandam.' The co-directors in our team helped design the title. I've produced every film of mine on my own, and this is no different," said Rahul. He added that he liked the grandfather-grandson relationship in the story. "My own grandfather also wanted to see me succeed, but he passed away just before I could return. I chose this story as a tribute to him," he said. "We approached several actors for the lead

actor, but Brahmanandam recommended Vennela Kishore's name. We sent him the script, and after reading it, Vennela Kishore suggested that the character of Giri, a

friend, would suit him better than the lead actor. That's when Raja Goutham's name came up. Initially, I had doubts, but after meeting him, my opinion changed," said Kishore about how Raja landed in this film. "As for Brahma Anandam, I won't talk about hits and flops. Everyone will come for Brahmanandam, but they will leave talking about Raja Goutham. They'll talk about his performance and acting. I'm sure of it," said Rahul about Raja. Rahul Yadav revealed that he is also working on a film titled 'Vibe' with Raja Goutham. The director who directed 'Agent Sai Srinivasa Athreya', is going to direct this film.

Madham is a raw and rustic film

hese days many directors are giving importance to realistic stories and director Vamsi Krishna Malla is coming up with a film titled 'Madham'. Surva Devara Ravindranath (Chinna Babu) and Ramesh Babu Koya are the producers, while Harsha Gangavarapu, Latha Vishwanath, and Inava Sultana are the lead actors. The film is set to release on March 14. "This is a raw and rustic film and is rare in Telugu cinema. Such content is more common in Tamil and Malayalam films. I truly connected with the story of 'Madham', and the climax is something that has never been seen in Indian cinema before," said the director. He added that to experience this film, one needs a lot of heart and courage. Inaya Sultana played a negative role in this film. "I love playing negative roles, and in this one, I had the privilege of portraying a significant character," said Inaya about her role. Another actress Latha Vishwanath said that she played a character very close to her real-life personality, so it was an easy and enjoyable experience. "I am thankful to the director and producer for giving me such a wonderful role", said Latha.



Real Madrid vs Atletico Madrid ends in 1-1 draw

ylian Mbappé scored in his first capital derby against Atletico Madrid as Real Madrid fought back for a 1-1 draw and kept its slim lead of the

Spanish league on Saturday. Next up for Mbappé and Madrid is a trip to Manchester City on Tuesday for the first leg of their Champions League knockout

round playoff.
Julián Álvarez put Atletico ahead from the penalty spot in the 35th minute. Mbappé equalised in the 50th for the hosts, which stayed one point ahead of Atletico in the

standings.
Jude Bellingham hit the crossbar with a header as Madrid searched for a second goal. Atletico goalkeeper Jan Olbak made saves to deny Rodrygo, Vinícius Júnior and Mbappé to split the points at the Santiago Bernabeu.

"We knew how to hang in there and had our chances," Álvarez said. "We are in the fight and will stay in it right to the end."

Atletico, which spent big last summer to acquire Álvarez and other reinforcements, is trying to add to league titles in 2021 and 2014 under coach Diego Simeone.

Barcelona, in third place, is five points behind Madrid before visiting Sevilla on Sunday. Mbappé had missed the first

Atletico derby of the season, a 1-1 draw in September, because of

injury.
First half to Atletico

A spate of injuries left Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti relying on a makeshift backline of Lucas Vázquez, regular midfielder Aurélien Tchouaméni, youth player Raul Asencio, and Fran

A reckless stretch of his boot by Tchouaméni that ended up tripping Samuel Lino was spotted by a video review referee and sent Álvarez to the penalty spot. The former Man City striker

gently stroked his penalty down the middle as Thibaut Courtois dived to his left.

Antoine Griezmann showed again his great value to Atletico with precision passing even under duress. The French midfielder twice placed perfectly weighted balls that left Álvarez and Lino in good position to get off shots inside the area, but clumsy touches by both ruined the opportunities.

"It is a draw that leaves both teams thinking they could have



said. "We had some situations that we lacked the clarity we needed to resolve better."

Second half to Real Rodrygo sparked the Madrid comeback just after halftime

gotten a better result," Simeone when he dribbled past Javi Galan and Lino on the right side and slipped a ball to Bellingham in the heart of the box. Bellingham's scuffed shot hit a defender and fell to Mbappé to rifle home for his first goal against Atletico.

Mbappé had missed the first Atletico derby of the season, a 1-1 draw in September, because of

injury. Madrid poured forward searching for a second goal with Atletico rattled. Vinícius dribbled

down the left side and scooped 14 consecutive rounds, dating the ball for Bellingham, who back to a defeat at Girona on smashed a header off the October 6. woodwork.

Simeone changed both his full backs with Reinildo and Nahuel Molina in the 63rd, but Oblak still had to come to Atletico's rescue on three occasions.

"It is going to be a tightly contested league until the very end," Ancelotti said. **Changes for Man City**

Ancelotti hinted that he will make changes to his starting 11 for City, most likely in midfield since he has few options in defense other than including Ferland Mendy, and will find it hard to touch his attack. That means that Dani Ceballos could likely make way for Eduardo Camavinga or Luka Modric. Former Madrid defender Marcelo was honored before kickoff after he announced his retirement this week.

Sancet hat trick

Oihan Sancet scored a hat trick to lead fourth-placed Athletic Bilbao's 3-0 rout of Girona as the Basque club moved to within one point of Barcelona.

Ernesto Valverde's Athletic, which only fields players from or near the Basque Country region of northern Spain, hasn't lost in

Antony scores but Celta wins Antony scored his first goal since joining Real Betis on loan from

Manchester United, but Celta Vigo rallied from two goals down to earn a thrilling 3-2 comeback victory. Antony deftly curled in a shot

from inside the box to put Betis ahead before Diego Llorente headed in a second goal in the 22nd. Betis twice hit the woodwork

before Fran Beltran started Celta's fightback with a powerful strike from outside the area in the 63rd. Javi Rodríguez scrambled in the equalizer before Williot Swedberg got the 87th-minute winner. **Support for Kirian**

Alejandro Baena and Ayoze Pérez scored in Villarreal's 2-1 win at Las Palmas.

The teams stopped playing momentarily in the 20th minute to join the fans in applauding Kirian Rodríguez, who wears No. 20, in a show of support for the Las Palmas midfielder. Rodríguez announced this week that he will be stepping away from soccer for a second time to treat recurring

SRI LANKA CHAMPIONS

Australia secures first test series win in Sri Lanka in 14 years

PTI ■ GALLE

Australia wrapped up a comprehensive 2-0 series victory over Sri Lanka, sealing the second test with a commanding nine-wicket win in Galle on Sunday.

Top order batter Marnus Labuschagne flicked a delivery from retiring Sri Lankan player Dimuth Karunaratne to discipline and variety, putting mid-wicket to complete the relentless pressure on Sri triumph, just 15 minutes Lanka and paved the way for a before lunch on the fourth day.

Lanka and paved the way for a unbroken 37-run stand.

Alex Carev was named Mit and the standard of the way for a unbroken 37-run stand. It's Australia's first test series win on Sri Lankan soil since

Their last success here came under Ricky Ponting's captaincy, a 1-0 victory in 2011. However, they suffered a 3-0 whitewash in 2016 under Steve Smith's leadership, and the 2022 series ended in a 1-1 draw. This time, with Smith standing in as captain for Pat Cummins, the victory was a welcome redemption.

"I thought it was a real good series and we played well from the outset," said Australia captain Steve Smith, who was named Player of the Series after his consecutive hundreds. "Everyone had their methods and stuck to it over a long period of time and to score that many runs was great.

"All our spinners and lone quick Mitchell Starc did quite well. Been a great series win." Australia approached the

planning — including a training camp in Dubai — and executed their strategies with

precision.

Their batters laid the foundation with big hundreds, allowing the bowlers to dictate terms with attacking fields. displayed

The tourists had set the tone early, winning the first test by an innings and 242 runs - Sri Lanka's heaviest ever test defeat. They remained clinical in the second match, ensuring there was no way back for the

hosts. Hosts unable to set a testing target

Sri Lanka resumed Sunday on 211-8, holding a slender lead of just 54 runs, with much riding on vice-captain Kusal Mendis, who had remained unbeaten overnight.

Mendis brought up his second half-century in the game by guiding Nathan Lyon to deep cover but perished in the same over, caught at short square leg by Steve Smith.

The dismissal was a milestone moment - Smith's 200th Test catch, a feat previously achieved by only four players: Kallis, Jacques Jayawardene, Rahul Dravid,

meticulous and Joe Root.

Beau Webster wrapped up the innings soon after, leaving Australia with a modest target of 75 runs.

Sri Lanka briefly found hope when Prabath Jayasuriya removed Travis Head (20) early, caught behind. However, Meanwhile, the spinners Usman Khawaja (27 not out) displayed remarkable and Marnus Labuschagne (26 not out) calmly guided the visitors home with an

Alex Carey was named M the Match for his outstanding 156 and four dismissals behind the stumps. His innings stands as the highest score by an Australian wicketkeeper in

This victory marks Australia's fourth consecutive test win. having also won the final two matches of its recent 3-1 home series against India. It plays South Africa in the final of the World Test Championship at Lords in June.

Karunaratne farewell Sri Lanka slumped to its fourth straight defeat and marked a disappointing end for 36-yearold opener Karunaratne in his

100th and final test. Very emotional day for me. It has been a long career," said Karunratne who scored 7,222 runs at 39.25 with 16 centuries. When I started my cricket, I Just wanted to play one test match. To go onto play 100 Tests was amazing.

MI Cape Town wins maiden SA20 title

PTI ■ JOHANNESBURG

Pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada produced an inspired bowling performance to lead MI Cape Town to their maiden SA20 title with a comfortable 76 runs win over two-time champions Sunrisers Eastern Cape in the final at the Wanderers here.

After finishing last in the previous two seasons, the Rashid Khan-led MI Cape Town hardly put any foot wrong in the third season. Rabada on Saturday night claimed 4/25 in 3.4 overs to dismiss Sunrisers Eastern

Cape for just 105 in response

to MI Cape Town's 181 for 8 – the second-highest score in a SA20 final. Rabada was ably supported by player-of-the-match Trent Boult, who took two wickets for just nine runs from his four overs, spin twins George Linde

(2/20) and skipper Rashid Chasing 182, the Aiden Markram-led Sunrisers, which

had registered consecutive



wins over Joburg Super Kings and Paarl Royals in the last two matches, could not maintain the momentum and except Tom Abell and Tony de Zorzi, no other batter could live upto the expectations.
Leg-spinner Rashid, who had

surprised the cricket world by leading Afghanistan to the semifinals of the T20 World Cup last year, has added another feather in his already illustrious career. Earlier, in the

tournament, he became the highest wicket-taker in the

High on confidence after five wins on the trot before the final, MI Cape Town won the toss and chose to bat.

In-form Ryan Rickelton (33 off 15; 1x4, 4x6s) and Rassie van der Dussen (23 off 25; 2x6s) showed their intent from the onset, giving an aggressive start to MI Cape Town's innings.

Craig Overton bowled an economical first over in which only three runs came but in the second over Rickelton smashed sixes over deep third man and fine-leg besides a straight four over Marco Jansen's head.

Overton too was not spared as Van der Dussen hit a six over square leg while Rickelton continued his attacking game against Jansen by hitting two brilliant sixes in the fourth

But MI Cape Town suffered consecutive blows which gave Sunrisers a chance to make a comeback in the game.

Rickelton was the first to depart, deceived by a slower ball from Overton and Liam Gleeson took a fine catch. In the very next over, Liam Dawson dismissed Reeza

Hendricks, who failed to open his account. MI scored 52 runs for the loss

of two wickets in the Powerplay. The wickets stemmed the flow

of runs as left-arm wrist spinner Dawson gave only four runs in the seventh over. Van der Dussen looked uncomfortable from the beginning and was the next to depart stumped by Tristan Stubbs off Dawson in the

Shuttler Sindhu pulls out of **BAMTC 2025**

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

shuttler PV Sindhu has pulled out of the Badminton Mixed Asia Championships in China due to a hamstring issue, dealing a huge blow to the country's chances of improving the colour of their medal in the prestigious edition.

¬wo-time Olympic medallist

The tournament is set to be played in Qingdao from February 11-16 with the Indian shuttlers currently undergoing training at a camp in Guwahati. Besides Sindhu, the other leading players in the camp are Lakshya Sen, and HS Prannoy, along with the formidable doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty. Sindhu was a part of the squad that won bronze in the previous edition of the tournament.

"It is with a heavy heart that I share I won't be travelling with the team for BAMTC 2025. While training on the 4th (February) in Guwahati, I felt a twinge in my hamstring. Despite my efforts to pu through with heavy taping for our country, an MRI has revealed that my recovery will take slightly longer than I initially expected," said the 29-year-old Sindhu in a post on 'X'. Sindhu has grappled with injuries since winning her maiden women's singles gold medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

However, the star shuttler sustained a left foot stress fracture injury during the Games, which kept her out of all remaining tournaments in 2022, including the World Championships and the World Tour Finals.

India are placed in a tough Group D alongside runners-up South Korea and Macau. They will begin their campaign against Macau on February 12, which will be followed by a tough outing against South Korea on February 13.

New Zealand beat Pakistan ahead of Champions Trophy Khushdil Shah in the outfield

PTI LAHORE

Glenn Phillips warmed up for the Champions Trophy with his first one-day international century as New Zealand beat Pakistan by 78 runs in the opening game of the tri-nation cricket series on Saturday.

Phillips smashed an unbeaten 106 off 74 balls, including six boundaries and seven sixes, at a newly renovated Gaddafi Stadium. The No. 6 batter propelled New Zealand to 330-6 in its 50 overs on a flat wicket with Daryl Mitchell (81) and Kane Williamson (58) also getting the feel of the wickets for the upcoming Champions Trophy with half centuries.

In reply, Fakhar Zaman, playing his first international in more than seven months because of illness, made a belligerent 84 off 69 but the



rest of the top-order batters struggled against spin. Pakistan was bowled out for 252 in 47.5 overs. Perfect day

Phillips capped a perfect day by trapping Zaman leg before wicket with his off-spin and also took a brilliant diving catch to dismiss Babar Azam early in Pakistan's run chase. Babar struggled in his new role as opener in ODIs for the first

time since 2015 and scored a painstaking 10 runs off 23

New Zealand captain Mitchell

Santner (3-41) clipped the top-order with his left-arm spin while Bracewell took 2-41.

New Zealand, which is already sweating on the fitness of fast bowler Lockie Ferguson, had another injury scare when the ball hit Rachin Ravindra in the face as he misjudged a catch of

Phillips unleashed his powerhitting against Pakistan's two premier fast bowlers – Shaheen Shah Afridi and Naseem Shah -- in the last five overs that cost the home team 84 runs. Pakistan, which lost the toss, had kept New Zealand in check at 246-5

off Henry

Phillips power

and had to leave the field.

Fast bowler Matt Henry chipped in with 3-55.

No. 10 batter Abrar Ahmed hit

an unbeaten 25 that included

three successive boundaries

against the two pacers. Williamson, playing his first ODI since November 2023, took his time to settle down. He reached the slowest ODI half century of his career in 82 balls before he edged Afridi after sharing a 95-run stand with Mitchell.

before Phillips cut loose

After India, New Zealand is one of strongest teams in CT: Ashwin

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Spin great R Ashwin has called India and New Zealand the strongest sides heading into the Champions Trophy but warned teams against taking Australia lightly despite the loss of key players to injuries as they "bring their A-game" into marquee tournaments.

The ICC event starts in Pakistan on February 19 with India playing all their matches in Dubai under a hybrid model agreement.

"India has the home advantage in Dubai, and it almost like every other team is playing an away match against India. This is a problem for the other teams, for sure," Ashwin said on his Youtube channel.

With the long-forgotten triseries making a return after a gap of many years, Ashwin wondered if India should also have played in a tournament triangular

against England for better preparation before Champions Trophy. "Is this preparation with

England enough for the Indian team ahead of CT in Dubai? Should we have played a tri-series too? Pakistan, New Zealand and South Africa are playing in Pakistan conditions, which would help them in the CT. "India only played against England in India, and moreover, we don't have a lot of pleasant memories of playing T20s in Dubai. The toss becomes really crucial in Dubai. I think winning the toss becomes crucial." Ashwin said New Zealand,

despite the absence of the

long-serving pace duo of Trent Boult and Tim Southee, who have quit

playing the 50-over format,

a question mark about their bowling attack. Who will accompany Matt Henry? Will it be Will O-Rourke, who has the potential to be a runaway champion of next generation. Will it be Ben Sears?

will pose a challenge to India. "After India, New Zealand is one of the strongest teams in 'They have an experienced the Champions Trophy. Since spin attack with Michael Bracewell and Glenn Phillips. the likes of Southee and instead of a bilateral series Boult are not playing, there is Mitchell Santner is the

captain, how is he planning to marshall his resources. New Zealand is definitely a strong team. They are one of the challengers to India."

As far as Australia are concerned, Ashwin observed that they transform into a formidable outfit when the stakes are high in ICC events. "Steven Smith as captain is a

marriage made in heaven. Smith is going to captain the team in the Champions Trophy. Will Smith, Head, Maxwell and Labuschagne pull through the team to the semis. I always believe that Australia is a champion team

that always brings its A-game

in marquee tournaments.
"Considering Australia have

a few issues in their bowling department, a lot will depend on Smith's form and captaincy." Skipper Pat Cummins and

Josh Hazlewood were on Thursday ruled out of the Champions Trophy due to injuries.

They are also without Mitchell Marsh, who is grappling with a back injury and was ruled out of the tournament on January 31, and Marcus Stoinis, who announced on Thursday that he would be retiring from ODI cricket, removing himself from the squad.

Ashwin also expressed his excitement at the return of tri-series tournaments after a gap of many years. "Another moment

happiness is the return of the tri-series. Yeah, there are bilateral series happening, including the India-England one. But it feels like England isn't playing serious enough cricket. "In the recent series against such pitches. It will be far from easy for bowlers, and probably, England's firepower would be back to shooting blanks in the tournament.

Pakistan, England's template worked, and the absolutely

trampled them. Brooke and

"I don't think the Champions

Trophy in Pakistan will have

Duckett scored heavily.

The great off-spinner, who announced his retirement from international cricket during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia, added, "90s kids would definitely understand this fascination for tri-series.

"Now, South Africa, New Zealand, and Pakistan have decided to reignite the interest in the tri-series and organise a tournament. The revival of tri-series tournaments would breathe life into the ODI format that is gradually overlooked. getting

'The tri-series might be a perfect curtain raiser for what's in store for these teams at the Champions Trophy. He called South African

captain Temba Bavuma one of the "luckiest" cricketers. "South Africa also have an all-rounder conundrum. Will they play Wiaan Mulder, and can Rabada be the spearhead throughout the tournament? Will Marco Jansen leave an impact in Pakistan?

of death with England, Afghanistan and Australia. Will England play like how they did in India, or transform into something else entirely in CT 2025? "South Africa is going to be led by (Temba) Bavuma, who

"South Africa is in the group

I think is one of the luckiest cricketers. They have qualified for the WTC finals, and have played quite good cricket. "Will Tristan Stubbs be

benched? Will Mulder and Jansen play together along with one of Keshav Maharaj and Shamsi?'