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Railway minister lists steps to prevent

BOOKING LEADING FIIS TO SELL INDIAN EQUITIES: FM



the pioneer Revanth is saying he is playing 20-20 match inside but he is playing Tondi (shady) matches, collecting money while breaking promises. KCR, on the other hand, has played Test, One-Day, and T20 - excelling in all formats of governance. No matter where you go in Telangana, people want KCR back. Farmers, daily wage workers, students and employees everyone is fed up with the Congress's failures - Harish Rao, BRS MLA

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Illegal farm plot sales to be curbed in Hyd

The Hyderabad Disaster Response and Management Authority (HYDRAA) has cautioned citizens against purchasing plots in unauthorised layouts being sold under the guise of 'farm plots' on the city outskirts. Despite a ban on farm plot registrations, complaints indicate that sales continue in certain areas, potentially leading to legal and financial troubles for unsuspecting buyers. A series of complaints received through the Prajavani grievance platform on Monday highlighted unauthorised sales in Rajendranagar mandal's Lakshmiguda ...

SC reinstates Solan's mayor

The Supreme Court on Monday reinstated Solan Mayor Usha Sharma in her post for the remainder of her tenure while terming her disqualification a case of "political goondaism". A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh made its August 20, 2024 order absolute by which it had stayed her disqualification while terming her removal "a case of male bias". "The interim order of August 20, 2024 is made absolute. Any interference with the order will invite consequences," the bench said, as it adjourned...

Adani pledges Rs 2K cr for setting up schools

Adani group on Monday announced Rs 2,000 crore donation for building at least 20 schools across the country as it continued to reveal details of the Rs 10,000 crore charity committed Adani's younger son. The conglomerate had previously announced Rs 6 000 crore for constructing hospitals and another Rs 2,000 crore for skill development The Adani Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Gautam Adani-led group, "has collaborated with.

-PAGE: 8

India look to continue winning momentum

Their campaign back on track after a jittery start, India will look to continue the winning momentum when they take on Paris Olympics silver medallist Germany in their next men's FIH Pro League match on Tuesday. India had a woeful start to their home leg matches of the Pro League losing 1-3 to Snain in their opener, But the hosts hounced back strongly to tame Spain 2-0 in the return match on Sunday. With three points from two games, India are currently sitting in eighth place in the standings and will..

CM Revanth seeks Central intervention on water usage

TG to fund telemetry system to stop AP from drawing excess water

PNS HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy expressed concern over the excess use of Krishna waters by Andhra Pradesh and directed irrigation officials to be more vigilant in monitoring the withdrawals from Srisailam and Nagarjuna Sagar.

He asserted that installing a telemetry system is the only way to prevent Andhra Pradesh from taking more than its allocated share.

Officials informed the CM that the AP government had not contributed its share of funds for the system. In response, Revanth ordered Principal Secretary (Irrigation) Rahul Bojja to write to the Krishna River Management Board (KRMB), confirming that Telangana would pay the entire amount upfront to ensure the and monitoring of water usage



immediate installation of the telemetry system.

Reiterating that the allocation

KCR played in all formats while Revanth is still playing matches: Harish

chief K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) turned into a political storm, with senior leaders Harish Rao and KTR launching scathing attacks on the Congress Government while rallying support for the former CM's comeback.

whelming turnout of BRS cadres,

The birthday celebrations of BRS with leaders proclaiming KCR as the unquestionable architect of Telangana and slamming the current administration under Revanth Reddy.

Addressing the gathering, Harish hailed KCR as more than just a leader, calling him the soul The event, held at the of four crore Telangana people. He Telangana Bhavan, saw an over- traced KCR's journey from the 1969 Telangana Continued on Page 2



CM warns of strict action against illegal sand transport

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has of sand reaches to ensure compliissued directives to curb illegal sand transportation across the

In a high-level review meeting, the Chief Minister emphasized the need for stringent enforcement to protect government revenue and prevent unlawful activities in the

As part of these measures, collectors and superintendents of police (SPs) have been instructed to conduct thorough inspections

between the two states is the responsibility of the Central Water Commission, Revanth asked officials to complain to the Centre regarding AP's unilateral shifting of water. He urged the Centre to intervene and prevent Andhra Pradesh from exceeding its allocated water share.

approaching, the Telangana government is preparing to handle the increased demand for irrigation, drinking and power generation, ensuring that farmers and residents do not face shortages.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy asked irrigation officials to ensure the judicious use of water from all proj-

ance with regulations. The Chief Minister has directed vigilance teams to carry out raids on overloaded and illegally transported sand to curb malpractices.

The government remains committed to taking decisive action against those involved in illegal sand mining and transportation. The Chief Minister has urged officials to implement effective strategies to prevent revenue loss and safeguard natural resources.

ects in Telangana to the irrigation and drinking water needs during summer. Reviewing the situation at the Command Control Center on Monday, he emphasised the need for meticulous planning over the next three months to avoid a water crisis.

Along with Irrigation Minister ttam Kumar Reddy, the Chief Minister held a high-level meeting with top irrigation officials to assess water availability in major reservoirs, including Srisailam, Nagarjuna Sagar and SRSP. Officials were told to conduct regular field visits, monitor ground conditions and take immediate action to protect standing crops.

Major bureaucratic reshuffle likely

CMO may be overhauled

NAVEENA GHANATE naveena.ghanate@gmail.com HYDFŘABAD

A massive bureaucratic reshuffle is on the cards in Telangana, with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy all set to reorganise the state's IAS cadre after March. The reshuffle is likely to happen after MLC elections and the post-budget assembly session.

Sources indicate that the reshuffle will not only impact key administrative departments but will also bring about changes in the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), as the government seeks to inject greater efficiency and accountability.

This move comes amid growing dissatisfaction within the government over "bureaucratic complacen-The Chief Minister on Sunday did not mince words in expressing his displeasure about some officers

who, he believes, have failed to rise to the occasion or correct their course when needed.

He has publicly voiced his concerns, suggesting that officials are operating only in their comfort zone, avoiding reality checks and contributing to the negative perception about the government.

The reshuffle is expected to be extensive, touching critical sectors like revenue, mining and agriculture. Despite waiving farm loans valued at nearly Rs 20,000 crore and increasing Rythu Bharosa by Rs 12,000, the CM is learnt to have pointed to lapses and how the schemes have created a negative environment.

The administration has identified bottlenecks in these departments, with reports suggesting that certain officials have been slow to act or unwilling to Continued on Page 2

State unstable, govt's survival in doubt: Sanjay



Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar addressing the MLC election campaign meeting at Karimnagar on Monday

PNS HYDERABAD

The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, criticised Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's rule, stating that the situation in the state is unstable and that it is not clear whether the government will survive or co

Sanjay condemned Revanth's statement that if the Chief Minister makes one mistake, IAS officers will make three mistakes, calling it shameful.

He asked how a Chief Minister could talk about making mistakes instead of preventing corruption and irregularities, implying that

the CM himself acknowledges cor-

ruption in his government.

He claimed that the gulf between Ministers and Congress MLAs is

widening and that some Ministers have opened their own 'shops,' collecting 15% kickbacks on all projects. He criticised the Congress promises like providing Rs 56,000

as unemployment allowance to all jobless individuals, scooters and gold for women, PRC and DA for employees, and the waiving of farmers' loans.

He called the Congress Government a "debt-ridden administration" and Continued on Page 2

Is Congress getting ready for Backward Class CM?

KOLISHETTY VENKATESHWARLU venkat.k.warlu@gmail.com HYDERABAD

It seems that the Congress is getting ready for a Backward Classes CM and is moving in the direction of its MLC Theenmar Mallanna's statement that "Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is the last Reddy CM of the state. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy,

Nagarkurnool MP Mallu Ravi and TPCC Chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud have started discussions regarding a BC CM.

However, Congress leaders are

discussing whether the party's top leaders kickstarted the BC CM idea as per the directions of the high command or just to test the waters in the context of the caste survey and reservations for BCs.

A few days ago, without mentioning the name of Theenmar Mallanna, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy himself said that he doesn't mind if he is the last Reddy Chief Minister of Telangana so that Rahul Gandhi's ideology can be implemented.

Mallu Ravi said the Congress would make

Despite snubbing Cong, GHMC tops guarantee beneficiary list

The Telangana Government's Mahalakshmi Free Bus Travel, LPG Cylinder for Rs 500, and Gruha Jyothi schemes have witnessed an overwhelming response across the state, with Hyderabad leading in beneficiary numbers

Official data from the Telangana State Statistical Abstract 2024



lighted stark differences in the dis-

The Mahalakshmi LPG Cylinder Scheme, which provides cooking gas at Rs 500, has seen similar trends. Continued on Page 2

Shallow earthquake jolts NCR

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Strong tremors were felt in the national capital and adjoining regions as an earthquake of 4.0 magnitude struck the region early on Monday.

There were no immediate reports of any damage or injuries. Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged people in the region to stay calm and follow safety precautions while keeping alert for possible aftershocks

Modi said in a post on X, "Tremors were felt in Delhi and nearby areas. Urging everyone to stay calm and follow safety precautions, staying alert for possible aftershocks. Authorities are keeping a close watch on the situation.'

The epicentre of the quake was in the Jĥeel Park area of Dhaula Kuan and there were some reports of people hearing a loud sound as the ground shook

The National Center for Seismology said the earthquake struck at a focal depth of five kilo-

metres at 5:36 am. Shallow earthquakes, originating five or 10 kilometres below the surface, tend to cause more damage than those originating deep below

the surface. The Jheel Park region has been experiencing smaller, low-magnitude quakes once every two to three years



On Sunday, Nagarkurnool MP released by Dy CM Bhatti tribution of benefits, with urban Vikramarka and Special CS centres seeing maximum utilization Continued on Page 2 Ramakrishna Rao on Monday high- while smaller districts lag behind.

BJP tops income list with Rs 4,340.47 cr: ADR

Does Sanjay have guts to include BC quota Bill in 9th Schedule?

Mahesh says Cong govt will pass 42% BC quota Bill

PNS HYDERABAD

TPCC Chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud asked the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, to reveal whether he has the guts to include the 42 per cent BC Reservations Bill in the 9th Schedule of the constitution. He said the Congress Government will pass the 42 per cent BC Reservations Bill in the Assembly and will send it to the Centre.

Addressing the media at the Gandhi Bhavan on Monday, Mahesh asked Sanjay to reveal whether he has the guts to convince Prime Minister Modi about the 42 per cent BC Reservations Bill.



TPCC Chief B Mahesh Kumar Goud addressing the media at Gandhi Bhavan

Does Sanjay have the strength to ask Modi to conduct a caste census across the nation? The future is BCs in the state and nation. Will the BJP and the Continued on Page 2

PNS ■ NEW DELHI The BJP reported the highest income

among national parties in the financial year 2023-24, declaring total earnings of Rs 4,340.47 crore, according to poll rights body ADR. The amount accounted for 74.57

per cent of the total income of six national parties during the period under review, the report by Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR) said.

"The BJP declared a total income of Rs 4,340.473 crore during FY 2023-24 but spent only 50.96 per cent of it, amounting to Rs 2,211.69 crore. The total income of Congress was Rs 1,225.12 crore, while its expenditure for the year was Rs 1,025.25 crore or 83.69 per cent of its total income," the report said. A large portion of the income for

national parties came from dona-

tions through electoral bonds.

Parties for FY 2023-24

Analysis of Income & Expenditure of National Political Comparison of total income of National Political Parties between FY 2022-23 & FY 2023-24 (in Rs cr) 4340.473 2360.844

est amount, securing Rs 1,685.63 crore, the Congress received Rs 828.36 crore, and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rs 10.15 crore. Collectively, these three parties raised Rs 2,524.1361 crore -- "43.36" per cent of their total income -through the electoral bond scheme, which the Supreme Court struck down as "unconstitutional and manifestly arbitrary" in May last year.

As per the data shared by the State Bank of India in response to an RTI application filed by the ADR, Rs 4,507.56 crore worth of electoral bonds were redeemed by various political parties in the 2023-24 fiscal. The national parties accounted for 55.99 per cent -- Rs 2,524.1361 crore -- of this amount.

The report said the maximum expenditure by the Congress was made towards election-related Continued on Page 2

Issue ration cards immediately in non-poll districts: CM



PNS HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy ordered officials to speed up the issuing of new ration cards in districts where the election code is not in effect so that all eligible families can receive them without any delay.

He directed officials to swiftly complete the verification of

applications received through Gram Sabhas, the caste survey and Mee Seva centres. Reviewing the situation, the Chief Minister questioned officials about the persistent rush at Mee Seva centres despite multiple rounds of application collection. Officials said that some families were submitting applications repeatedly, leading to a surge in crowds.

Revanth emphasised that this situation could have been avoided if the cards had been issued promptly and asked officials to take immediate steps to distribute them. He also appealed to families who had already applied to stop visiting the centres, assuring them that their requests would be processed without delay.

With the election code in force in many districts, the Chief Minister said that new ration cards should be issued in areas where the code is not in force. He assured that distribution would begin in all districts once the curbs were lifted.

During the review meeting, the CM also examined various design proposals for the new ration cards presented by the Civil Supplies Department.



Mumbai devotee donates Rs 11 cr to TTD's free food scheme

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

A Mumbai-based devotee donated Rs 11 crore to Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams' Sri Venkateswara Annaprasadam

Tushar Kumar from the Prasid Uno Family Trust donated the amount to TTD's addi-

tional executive officer Venkaiah Chowdary in Tirumala.

A devotee, Tushar Kumar of the Mumbai-based Prasid Uno Family Trust has made a generous donation of Rs 11 crore to the Sri Venkateswara Annaprasadam Trust on Monday," said a press release from the temple body.

Fans throng Erravalli residence on KCR's birthday PNS HYDERABAD

The birthday celebrations of BRS Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao were marked by grand festivities at his Erravalli farmhouse, with thousands of BRS workers and supporters gathering to extend their wishes.

Enthusiastic chants of 'Jai KCR, Jai Telangana' echoed through the premises as fans from across the state flocked in to meet their leader. CMs Revanth Reddy, Chandrababu Naidu, Minister of State Bandi Sanjay Kumar, other Ministers conveyed wishes to KCR.

The roads leading to Erravalli were packed with hundreds of vehicles as party members and well-wishers lined up to greet KCR. Braving the crowd, KCR stood for over

suspended and fines of Rs

announced that IT solutions

for sand booking and monitor-

next 30 days. This includes the

The government has

14.28 lakh were collected.



acknowledging each visitor and posing for photographs. Supporters showered him with bouquets, shawls, books, and creative gifts as a token of their admiration. Some even presented artistic tributes spe-

Adding to the celebratory fervor, BRS Working President KTR, along with several former ministers, ex-MLAs, MLCs and senior party leaders, called on KCR to extend their cially crafted for the occasion, birthday wishes.



VRAs along with BC Welfare Union founder president R Krishnaiah staging a dharna demanding the government to give jobs

'Govt must give jobs to VRAs' descendants aged above 61'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Village Revenue Assistants have demanded that the TG government should give jobs to the descendants of VRAs aged above 61 years as per GO No: 81. Thousands of VRAs staged a dharna at Indira Park on Monday in this regard.

BC Welfare Union Founder President R Krishnaiah said that on September 9, 2020, the BRS government announced in the Assembly that it would provide pay scales to VRAs

As a result of the 80-day long strike struggle by VRAs across the State to implement those promises, the previous chief minister held discussions with the VRA JAC in the presence of revenue officials and had released GO Nos. 81 and 85.

Among the 20,555 VROs across the State, those with degrees were appointed as junior assistants, those with intermediate pass as record

assistants, and those with less and jobs to their heirs. than 10th standard as office subordinates.

> In addition to the revenue department, the government has adjusted 16,758 VRAs in vacancies in municipal, irrigation, Mission Bhagiratha, education, medical and other departments, he said. Krishnaiah warned the government that it has been delaying for the last 15 months without giving job orders to the remaining

3,797 heirs of VRAs.

Door delivery, 24X7 sale of sand: Sridhar

PNS HYDERABAD

The Telangana Government has intensified its crackdown numbers – 9848094373 and 7093914343 – for the

public to file complaints.

The move comes after a series of high-level reviews by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and the Mines Geology Department, which identified the rampant unauthorized excavation and transportation of sand as a problem.

Mines and Geology Secretary N. Sridhar urged the public to report illegal sand mining or overloading of trucks

through these helplines. Vehicles will be seized, penalties imposed, and criminal cases will be registered against violators.

In a bid to strengthen surbooked, and 111 vehicles were veillance, the government has seized. 21 driving licenses were

granted collectors and SPs direct access to sand reaches and stockyards via a monitoring system. Officials have been on illegal sand transportation asked to deploy teams for and has provided helpline round-the-clock vigilance, ing will be implemented in the ensuring that only permitted

expansion of online sand booking, 24/7 availability of bulk sand bookings, and a digitized tracking system to prevent unauthorized mining and transport. Sand trucks coming to Hyderabad will be tracked. Free sand would be available for building Indiramma houses and they are also planning door delivery of sand, he said

The government is also expanding sand supply operations in districts ike Karimnagar and Peddapalli ensuring faster and

cost-effective delivery. Sridhar emphasized that public participation is crucial in curbing illegal sand transportation and urged citizens to be vigilant and to report violations immediately.

Why do we need info about the caste of Modi or Rahul: Kavitha

PNS HYDERABAD

BRS MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha lashed out at the Congress and the BJP, accusing them of conspiring to divert public attention from the crucial issues of the caste survey and increasing reservations for Backward Classes (BCs). She said that both national parties have resorted to political theatrics while completely ignoring the concerns of BCs.

Speaking to reporters at Yerravalli in Siddipet district, Kavitha criticised Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for initiating a debate on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's

caste, and Union Minister Sanjay for questioning Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's religion.

She argued that such discussions were meaningless and designed to shift focus away from the demand for BC reservations.

"What difference does it make whether Modi is a BC or not? Why should people care about Rahul Gandhi's religion? If Congress is serious about BC welfare, it should introduce a bill in the Assembly to increase reservations, and BJP should approve it at the Centre. Instead, both parties are busy trading political barbs," she remarked

'LB Nagar DCP busy settling land disputes'

PNS HYDERABAD

Senior Telangana Congress leader Madhu Yashki Goud said that the LB Nagar DCP is busy dealing with land disputes. He said the DCP is busy settling land disputes and considers maintaining law and order as a part time job.

On Monday, Yashki said that

he brought the LB Nagar DCP issue to the notice of the CM. Yashki warned the LB Nagar DCP to change his attitude or else the CM will take action against him. It may be recalled that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said on Sunday that officials are not doing their jobs properly and that police officials are trying to settle civil disputes.

Major bureaucratic ...

Continued from page 1

align with the government's priorities. Officials in mines and geology, a sector that has seen challenges and governance issues, are expected to be replaced to sand mining and mineral regulations are effectively implemented.

Revanth has reportedly made it clear that he will prioritise performance over political leanings, signalling that even officers who served under the BRS admin will be given important posts if they prove to be competent. This approach marks a significant departure from traditional reshuffles that often factor in political affiliations.

With the Chief Minister determined to streamline decision-making and improve governance, many officials in the Chief Minister's Office are expected to be

Sources indicate that Revanth is keen on bringing in officers who can act execute policies effectively and bridge the gap between governance and public expectations. Sources indicated that half the CMO may

and experienced hands who will be part of his core ment's governance machinery runs smoothly. administrative team. This move is aimed at removing inefficiencies and ensuring that the government's vision is translated into action without bureaucratic shapes the state's governance.

Unlike previous reshuffles, where social justice and political affiliations played a major role, this time around, the government is focusing purely on efficiency and results. Revanth is reportedly said to be closely monitoring the performance of collectors, secretaries and department heads, ensuring that those who have ed on vital projects are given sibilities.

One of the Chief Minister's main concerns has been the reluctance of bureaucrats to take strong action. Officials, sources say, have been operating with a 'touch-me-not' attitude, hesitant to engage in a reality check and make necessary interventions. This lack of initiative, according to the Chief Minister, has damaged the government's reputation and slowed down

With the new reshuffle, the message is clear - there is no room for inefficiency. The government is looking for hands-on administrators who are willing to engage, take ownership of their departments and deliver results. Sources said that the scale of this reshuffle is expected to have political ramifications as well. For the bureaucrats, this is a clear signal that complacency will not be tolerated.

Sources said that the reshuffle will separate perform-The CMO is expected to see a blend of fresh faces ers from non-performers, ensuring that the govern-

As Telangana prepares for this major administrative overhaul, all eyes will be on how the new team

State unstable ...

Continued from page 1

urged people to hold them accountable during the upcoming MLC elections. Ahead of the Teacher and Graduate MLC elections, a meeting at Konda Satva Lakshmi Karimnagar, attended by BJP district presidents from Karimnagar, Adilabad, Nizamabad, and Medak. Several BJP leaders, including MPs Raghunandan Rao, G. Nagesh, MLAs Katepalli Venkat Ramana Reddy attended the meeting.

trucks operate.

A recent transport depart-

ment report revealed that

between February 1 and 12, a

total of 1,222 vehicles were

checked, 136 cases were

In his speech, Sanjay challenged the newly appointed BJP mandal presidents to prove their strength in MLC elections. He said that many election survey agencies like People's Pulse have predicted a BJP victory in the elections.

He mocked the Congress for failing to find candidates, bringing in outsiders and dismissed the BRS

He said that he is confident that the BJP would win all three MLC seats and emerge as the main opposition in Telangana.

Sanjay asserted that only the BJP has the right to ask for votes in MLC elections, as it has consistently fought for the unemployed, teachers and government employees.

He recalled how the BJP had protested against GO 317, leading to a raid on his office using gas cutters, lathi-charges and arrests.

KCR played ...

Continued from page 1

Movement, where at the age of 16, KCR joined protests, to his bold resignation from three political posts to instil confidence in the statehood

"Many before him raised slogans of Jai Telangana, only to abandon the fight once they got power. But KCR rejected power, resigned his Deputy Speaker post, MLA post and party secretary posts and won public trust," Harish said, adding that Prof. Jayashankar and many intellectuals saw KCR as the only leader who could bring Telangana to reality.

Taking a swipe at Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Harish mocked his 2020 cricket match analogy, stating, "Revanth is playing Tondi (shady) matches, collecting money while breaking promises. KCR, on the other hand, has played Test, One-Day, and T20 - excelling in all formats of gover-

Harish recalled KCR's hunger strike in 2009, which forced the Centre's hand in announcing Telangana statehood.

"Had KCR not gone on a fast-unto-death there would have been no separate Telangana. It is either Telangana or my funeral. That was his resolve and his struggle shook Delhi," he said, referring to P. Chidambaram's announcement on December 9, 2009, which was drafted by Prof. Jayashankar himself.

Does Sanjay ...

Continued from page 1
BRS make a BC leader the CM? Only the

Congress has the guts to make a BC leader the CM, Mahesh said. He said that the BIP they did not conduct a caste census. However, the Congress has sincerity towards BCs and so it did the caste census, he said and added that the Congress Government will make 42 per cent BC Reservations a law in the state.

Mahesh asked Sanjay to prove his sincerity by making the Centre to include the 42 per cent Reservations Bill in the 9th Schedule. "No matter what, we will ensure that this Bill gets the seal of approval in Parliament," Mahesh said.

He said that BJP leaders have been speaking about Rahul Gandhi's caste and religion to divert attention from the issue of a 'nation-wide' caste census issue. He said there is no unity among BCs and called upon BCs to unite on the BC Reservations Bill. "BCs will certainly become the CM in Telangana in future and it is possible only through the Congress. However, the current CM, Revanth Reddy, would continue as the CM of Telangana for five years," Harish said.

TODAY **ALMANAC** Krishna Paksha Tithi: Feb 18 04:53 AM Shashthi to Feb 19 07:32 AM Nakshatram: Chitra: Feb 17 04:31 AM to Feb 18 07:35 AM Feb 18 07:35 AM to Feb 19 10:39 AM Rahukalam 3:22 PM to 4:49 PM 9:37 AM to 11:03 AM 01:54 PM to 03:42 PM Varjyam 12:30 PM to 1:56 PM Gulika: 12:44 AM to 02:32 AM Amritakalam: Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:06 PM to 12:52 PM HYDERABAD WEATHER Forecast: Sunny **Temp:** 34°° **Humidity: 45%** Sunrise: 6:41 AM Sunset: 6:19 PM **Updated:** February 17, 2025 5:00 PM

Despite snubbing ...

Continued from page 1

The GHMC region has the highest number of beneficiaries at 38.45 lakh, followed by Nalgonda (12.03 lakh), Nizamabad (10.28 lakh), Rangareddy (9.65 lakh), and Siddipet (9.41 lakh). However, tribal and rural districts like Mulugu (45,146), Jayashankar Bhupalpally (73,460), Kumuram Bheem Asifabad (61,619), Jogulamba Gadwal (73,460), and Narayanpet (76,230) have recorded the least beneficiaries, indicating either a lower penetration of LPG usage or accessibility issues in remote areas.

The Gruha Jyothi Scheme, which provides free electricity up to 200 units, has been most beneficial to residents of Hyderabad, where benefit. Other top districts include Nagarkurnool (15.40 lakh), Nizamabad (12.68 lakh), Medchal-Malkajgiri (11.75 lakh), and Warangal (9.87 lakh).

19.94 lakh households have availed of the On the other hand, districts with the lowest number of beneficiaries are Mulugu

(45,146), Jayashankar Bhupalpally (73,460),

Kumuram Bheem Asifabad (61,619),

Iogulamba Gadwal (73,460), and Narayanpet

(76,230), which reflects either a lower aware-

ness of the scheme in rural areas.

Under the Mahalakshmi Free Bus Travel Scheme, Hyderabad recorded the highest number of beneficiaries, with 149.28 lakh women availing free bus travel, followed by Karimnagar (77.37 lakh), Warangal (73.10 lakh), Nizamabad (39.65 lakh), and Medak (29.74 lakh).

These figures indicate that urban and semiurban areas, where public transport is widely used are reaping the most. In contrast, the lowest number of beneficiaries was recorded in Mulugu (41,186), Jayashankar Bhupalpally (73,460), Kumuram Bheem Asifabad (61,619), Jogulamba Gadwal (73,460), and Narayanpet (76,230). These districts, being more rural and less connected by public transport networks, have seen lower

The data highlights a clear urban-rural divide in the distribution of welfare benefits. While Hyderabad, Warangal, and Karimnagar continue to dominate in terms of beneficiaries, remote districts have not been able to fully leverage the schemes. The Telangana government is expected to reassess the outreach and implementation of these schemes to ensure that rural and tribal communities receive equal benefits. Officials may need to undertake awareness campaigns and streamline accessibility to bridge the gap between urban and rural Telangana.

Is Congress getting ...

Continued from page 1
a BC candidate the Chief Minister in future. On Monday, TPCC Chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud said that a BC candidate will become the Chief Minister of Telangana. He said making a BC individual the Chief Minister is possible only through the Congress. However, Mahesh said that the current Chief Minister Revanth Reddy would remain the CM for five years. He also

said that BCs would be given priority

while expanding the Cabinet. It may be recalled that it was the BJP which first aired the BC CM idea before the 2023 Assembly elections stating that 'it would make a BC candidate the CM of Telangana if the people voted the BJP to power. But the BJP didn't win the elections. Moreover, the BJP has been drawing heavy flak for removing BC leader Bandi Sanjay Kumar from the Telangana BJP president

The BC Chief Minister discussion started in the Congress with its MLC Theenmar Mallanna. He had been heavily criticising some Reddy leaders of the Congress by openly saying that Revanth Reddy would be the last Reddy CM of TG. He also declared clear

that the next CM of Telangana must be a BC. Meanwhile, the CM, MP and the TPCC Chief said that a BC candidate will become

the CM of the state in future. However, the TPCC Chief clarified that Revanth Reddy would remain in office for five years. It means that the next CM of Telangana should be a BC as per the Congress leaders' argu-

One Telangana Congress leader said that the party may start its experiment from the state by giving a chance to a BC candidate to defend its caste census. However, the party may start this experiment only from the next elections, he said.

It may be recalled that the Chief Ministers of United Andhra Pradesh and Telangana were from the Congress, the TDP and the BRS. However, neither Congress nor the TDP or the BRS did not make a BC candidate the Chief Minister of both Andhra Pradesh or Telangana.

The Congress made Damodaram Sanjeevaiah, a Dalit, the Chief Minister of United Andhra Pradesh for 2 years 60 days (from January 11, 1960 to March 12, 1962). T. Anjaiah, whose legal heirs are claiming that he is a Reddy, was the Chief Minister of AP from October 11, 1980 to February

BJP tops ...

Continued from page 1

amounting to Rs 619.67 crore, followed by Rs 340.702 crore spent on administrative and general expenses.

In comparison, the Communist

Party of India (Marxist) spent Rs

56.29 crore on administrative and

general expenses and Rs 47.57 crore on employee costs. Among the national parties, six declared receiving a total of Rs

2,669.87 crore from donations and contributions. The report also noted that out of

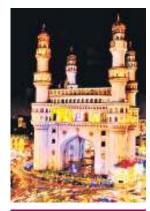
these six parties, only Congress (Rs 58.56 crore) and CPI(M) (Rs 11.32 crore) declared receiving a total income of Rs 69.88 crore from the sale of coupons. The audit reports of CPI(M),

Congress and BJP were submitted with delays ranging from 12 to 66 The most common expendi-

ture among national parties was on elections and administrative expenses, the report said.

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Annual Day Celebrations By Global Edge School

Venue Ravindra Bharathi February 18, (1:30 pm)

Musical Event

By Sruthilaya FoundationBy Sruthilaya Foundation

Ravindra Bharathi February 18, (6 pm)

Live Musical Orchestra By Vamsi Arts Theatres

Sri Thyagaraja Gana Sabha February 18, (4:30 pm)

Global University Education Fair

Venue

Taj Krishna February18, (11 am)

Live Performance By Goonj (Band)

Venue Stone Waters - Kitchen &

Lounge February 18, (8 pm)

Workshop On Pottery

Studio Myraa February 18, (5:15 pm)

Workshop On Crafting Terracotta Jewellery

FTCCI February17 to 19, (10:30 am)

Samatha Kumbh 2025 The Third Brahmotsavam Of The 108 Divya Countries

Statue Of Equality February 9 to 19 (8 am)

Silk Expo **Exhibition Cum Sale**

Venue Sri Satya Sai Nigamagamam February 15 to 21, (10 am)

City Pioneer



HYDRAA warns against unauthorised farm plot sales on city outskirts

PNS HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad Disaster Response and Management Authority (HYDRAA) has cautioned citizens against purchasing plots in unauthorised layouts being sold under the guise of 'farm plots' on the city outskirts. Despite a ban on farm plot registrations, complaints indicate that sales continue in certain areas, potentially leading to legal and financial troubles for unsus-

A series of complaints received through the Prajavani grievance platform on Monday highlighted unauthorised sales in Rajendranagar mandal's Lakshmiguda village, specifically in survey number 50, where 1.02 acres have allegedly been converted into a layout and sold as farm plots.

HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath has urged the public to remain vigilant and avoid purchasing plots in such unapproved layouts. He cited the Telangana Municipal Act 2019 and the Telangana Panchayat Raj Act 2018, both of which do not recognise the sale of farm plots. The government has already defined farm land as a minimum of 2,000 square meters or 20 guntas, and it has directed the stamps and registration department not to permit farm plot registrations.

Ranganath also pointed out that, as per GO No. 131, the government has prohibited approvals for house construction in unauthorised layouts developed after August 31, 2020. He urged citizens to be aware of this regulation before making property investments.

Complainants informed HYDRAA that many such layouts fail to adhere to the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) guidelines, which mandate that 10% of land be allocated for parks and 30% for roads. The authority has warned that such violations not only affect urban planning but could also lead to legal consequences for buyers.

64 complaints on encroachments

The Hyderabad Disaster Response and Management Authority (HYDRAA) received 64 complaints during its Prajavani grievance redressal programme on Monday, with a majority of grievances related to encroachments, illegal compound walls and road obstructions affecting pub-

HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath directed officials to take immediate action against illegal constructions that block access to residential colonies and obstruct drainage channels, preventing floodwater from flowing properly. He emphasised that no unauthorised structure should disrupt public roads, and if necessary, they should be removed without delay.

The Commissioner instructed officials to: To verify if approvals exist for compound walls and demolish unauthorised ones. Ensure roads remain accessible to all and prevent encroach-

Use Google maps and interact with complainants online to assess violations. Assign officials for direct followups with complainants to ensure action

Complaints received: Residents of Kachavani Singaram village (Survey No. 54) in Medchal-Malkajgiri district alleged that a park area in their layout had been illegally occupied. Originally



developed as a 340-plot layout in 1977, it was revised in 2007 to 110 plots by the gram panchayat. However, in 2010, unauthorised persons applied for HMDA approval, despite lacking official sanction. Residents claimed that the Divya Nagar Plot Owners' Welfare Society had sold plots, including park

Road blockage in Devarayamjal, Shameerpet : Residents of Devarayamjal village (Survey Nos. 452, 453) reported that a 3.39-acre layout was illegally fenced, blocking their access to main roads.

Film Nagar Club misuse in Jubilee Hills: A complaint was filed regarding the Film Nagar Cultural Club, which was allegedly operating commercially on land originally designated as a residential layout under the Rock Gardens

Illegal sale of park land in Kapra, Kushaiguda: Residents of Kushaiguda (Survey No. 177) in Kapra Municipality alleged that park land had been converted into plots and sold illegally. They also claimed that a liquor shop compound was set up on the encroached

Strict action against illegal constructions: GHMC chief

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Commissioner K Ilambarithi has issued stern warning to officials, directing them to take immediate action against unauthorised constructions. Addressing grievances during the Prajavani programme at the GHMC headquarters on Monday, he instructed officials to act swiftly on complaints and ensure strict adherence to urban

planning regulations.

Expressing displeasure over delays in resolving complaints related to illegal structure of the complaints related to the complaints related to the complaints remains the complaints of the tures, the Commissioner emphasised that officials must take responsibility and execute their duties diligently. "There should be no hesitation in enforcing rules and clearing illegal structures," he asserted.

During the Prajavani programme, a total of 57 grievances were received at the GHMC headquarters, including 25 related to the town planning department, 12 concerning tax issues, three each for engineering maintenance and finance, two each for land acquisition under UBD, and one complaint each in sanitation, UCD, electrical, and administration departments. Additionally, six complaints were received via phone calls.

Across GHMC's six zones, a total of 82 grievances were registered. Kukatpally zone accounted for 29 complaints, LB Nagar and Secunderabad zones received 19 each, Serilingampally recorded 10, Charminar had four and Khairatabad received a single complaint.

The meeting was attended by Additional Commissioners Shiva Kumar Naidu, CPP Srinivas, Geetha Radhika, Pankaj, Subhadra Devi, Venugopal Reddy, Chandrakant Reddy, Yadagiri Rao, CM & HO Dr Padmaja, UBD Director Venkateshwar Rao, Additional CCP Gangadhar, Estate Officer Uma Prakash, Deputy CE Panasa Reddy, Housing EEs PV Ramana and Rajeshwar Rao, and Water Works official Sai Ramana.

82nd All India Railway Hockey Men's Championship begins

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The 82nd All India Railway Hockey Men's Championship (League Phase) 2024-25 was inaugurated by Arun Kumar Jain, General Manager of South Central Railway (SCR) and Chief Patron of SCR Sports Association (SCRSA), at the Railway Sports Complex on Monday.

On this occasion, Arun Kumar Jain highlighted that the tournament, organised by the Railway Sports Promotion Board and hosted by SCRSA, reflects Indian Railways' strong sports culture and dedication to hockey.

He encouraged players to showcase sportsmanship and talent, emphasising that sincerity and hard work lead to success.

The tournament runs from February 17 to 22, at the Railway Sports Complex, Secunderabad, with 10 teams competing.

Another league phase is happ Hatia, Ranchi. This event is crucial for selecting players for the Indian Railways team for the Senior National Hockey Championship.

In the opening matches, Banaras Locomotive Works defeated North Eastern Railway (6-0); Western Railway beat South Central Railway (3-2); Southern Railway vs. West Central Railway ended in a 1-1 tie,

Senior SCR officials, including C

while South Western Railway vs. South East Central Railway ended 2-2. Madhusudhana Rao, PBS Rathore and Abhilash Yedla attended the event.

Magellanic Cloud leads Al-driven transformation

PNS HYDERABAD

Hyderabad-based Magellanic Cloud, a leading technology innovator, is driving AI-powered transformation in e-surveillance, video analytics, IT/ITES, and drone technology. It secured \$10 billion for its GenAI products and was listed on the National Stock

At a press conference on Monday, Managing Director and Global CEO Joseph Sudheer Thumma shared the company's journey since 2007, including the 2020 acquisition of Motivity Labs with 450 employees.

Magellanic Cloud now operates three divisions: IT/ITES, e-surveillance, and drone manufacturing, with the product Scanalitix. It employs over 1,600 people,



Magellanic Cloud Limited Managing Director and Global CEO Joseph Sudheer Thumma addressing Altransformation on Monday

750 in e-surveillance, 800 in IT and 100 in Scandron Technologies. The company

aims to expand to 5,000 employees by 2027 and currently occupies 2.5 floors at Dallas Centre, Hyderabad, with 3,500 employees based

Sudheer highlighted iVIS, which developed an AI-powered edge device for e-surveillance. It analyzes suspicious activities using Scanalitix organisations like ATMs, jewellery stores and companies about potential threats. He said iVÎS is adding 5,000 new sites in the coming months, making it the largest e-surveillance company in India.

He also introduced Scandron, a drone technology startup tackling logistics challenges in the defence sector, making it the only company licenced for commercial drone flights in India.

Fake job racket busted in Hyd; One arrested

PNS HYDERABAD

The Commissioner's Task Force, Central Zone, has busted a fake IT job racket and arrested the prime accused, Kaluva Bharghav, who had allegedly established a bogus software compa-ny named Neogen Soft Tech Solutions in Madhapur.

The accused lured job aspirants with false promises of employment as Developers and Software Engineers, collected large sums of money, and issued fake appointment letters before shutting down the company and disappearing.

Bharghay, a 34-year-old resident of Chintal, had previously worked as an HR manager in various IT companies, gaining knowledge about hiring processes and corporate operations. Using this expertise, he set up a corporate-style office in Madhapur and created an online presence for his company, making it appear legitimate. He sourced job seekers' resumes from

coaching consultancies, conducted online interviews posing as an HR manager, and demanded amounts ranging from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakh from victims. After issuing fake offer letters and company ID cards, he abruptly shut down the office and switched off his mobile numbers.

Authorities revealed that Bharghav is wanted in four cases registered at Lallaguda, Jeedimetla, Madhapur, and various sections. Based on credible information, the Task Force Central Zone team apprehended the accused on February 16 and recovered Rs 1 lakh in cash, five fake appointment letters, two fake ID cards, and two mobile phones.

The arrest was carried out by the Task Force Central Zone Inspector, Sub-Inspector, and staff, in coordination with Lallaguda Police. Bharghav and the seized material were handed over to the Lallaguda Police Station for further investigation.

Cyient DLM bags Avionics Manufacturing hostel owners told **Award**

PNS HYDERABAD

In a bid to enhance the safety and security of women residing in hostels, a high-level meeting was conducted under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), West Zone, SM Vijay Kumar. The meeting, held in the presence of ACP SR Nagar Division P Venkatraman, SHO SR Nagar T Srinath Reddy, DI SR Nagar Gopal, and DSI SR Nagar Suraj, saw the participation of 127 women's hostel

During the meeting, hostel managements were instructed to implement strict security protocols, including CCTV Surveillance i.e. Installation of cameras across the premises and surrounding areas with a mandatory three-month backup. Adequate lighting throughout the hostel premises to deter criminal activities.

Deployment of a watchman or security guard round the clock. Maintenance of a detailed log of visitors, including parents, friends, and others. Background checks for all hostel staff, including maids, security personnel, cooks, and sweepers. Immediate reporting of any suspicious movements or individuals to the authorities.

Hostel owners were warned that failure to adhere to these measures would result in legal action under the Negligent Act. Officials reiterated that these guidelines were crucial in ensuring the well-being and protection of hostel residents.



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad's Cyient DLM, a design-led manufacturing partner, has won a key avionics manufacturing contract from Thales, a global technology leader.

As part of this collaboration, Cyient DLM will produce high-reliability Printed Circuit Board Assemblies (PCBAs) for Thales's nextgeneration flight avionics systems. These critical components will be used in leading commercial aircraft, reinforcing Cyient DLM's exper-

tise in aerospace electronics. Vice-President of Group Procurement - Engineering, India, Middle East, and Africa at Thales, Deepak Talwar said, "At Thales, we support the 'Make in India' vision and value our local partners. Cyient DLM has consistently shown strong technical capabilities and competitiveness in Thales's solutions'

Meanwhile, CEO of Cyient DLM, Anthony Montalbano added, "This collaboration highlights our expertise in aerospace electronics, and we look forward to delivering world-class manufacturing solutions.

GHIAL upgrades its runway for improved operational efficiency

PNS HYDERABAD

Hyderabad GMR International Airport Limited (GHIAL) announced the successful installation and commissioning of advanced navigational infrastructure at the airport, improving its operational capabilities and safety proto-

The airport has completed the installation of a Category II Instrument Landing System (ILS) and associated runway lighting system on its primary runway. This system ĥelps aircraft land safely in low visibility conditions, such as fog, with a minimum visibility of 300 meters (RVR). The Category II ILS offers more precise guidance than the Category I system, using accurate radio signals and advanced lighting. This is particularly important during adverse weather, ensuring safer landings when visual

references are limited. GHIAL has also received approval from the DGCA to upgrade the secondary runway to Category I status, allowing operations with a minimum visibility of 550 meters during emergencies

on the main runway.
The CEO of GHIAL, Pradeep Panicker said that these upgrades mark a significant milestone in our technological development, improving operations and safety standards. The new systems reduce disruptions during low visibility, enhancing passenger experience and operational safety.





Patricia Scotland, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Nations, at the Heartfulness International School in Kanha Shanti

Commonwealth chief: Students should learn about environment

PNS HYDERABAD

Students should learn about environmental awareness early, said Patricia Scotland, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Nations. She Heartfulness International School at Kanha Shanti Vanam during the two-'Sustainability in Classroom' programme by Heartfulness Institute.

Principal Heartfulness International School, Anna Rajkumar accompanied Patricia on a guided tour of the sustainability-focused campus. The

Secretary-General appreciated the school's approach to teaching students about environmental responsibility alongside academics. She interacted with students, who welcomed her with Sanskrit shlokas. Younger students also performed Gujarati and Kenyan dances, showcasing cultural diversity.

Patricia emphasised the importance of teaching sustainability from a young age, saying it helps shape future leaders who can protect the planet. She also appreciated the school's hands-on approach to sustainability education. Meanwhile, Rajkumar highlighted the role of Sanskrit in modern education, saying it helps students develop clarity of thought. The school integrates sustainability in its curriculum through AgriTecture, Hydroponics, Nature Farming and Microgreen Labs, encouraging students to observe and report on environmental experiments.

The school aims to create future environmental leaders while keeping them connected to their roots. It collaborates with partners like the Ministry of Education (India), the United Nations, ICRISAT, AICTE, and ICAR.

Strengthen security measures, women's





HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | FEBRUARY 18, 2025

Officials urged to open first aid centre

PNS VEMULAWADA

Devotees visiting the famous pilgrimage site, Rajarajeswara Swamy Temple in Vemulawada, are facing diffi-culties in receiving first aid treatment in case of acci-

Despite orders from Government Whip Aadi Srinivas and District Collector Sandeep Kumar Jha during a recent Maha Shivaratri coordination review meeting to establish a health centre on the temple premises, the Medical and Health Department officials are yet to take action.

Just four days ago, an elderly woman was injured in a bullock cart accident and was rushed to the Vemulawada Area Hospital. On Monday, a devotee fainted on the temple premises. With no medical staff or health centre available to provide first aid, the devotee was hurriedly shifted to the Vemulawada Área Hospital.

The District Collector has directed the officials to allot two rooms next to the VRVO office for the health centre one for the medical officer and another for the staff, with appropriate furniture for storing medicines. Due to the absence of the primary health centre, devotees who suffer accidents on the temple premises are not receiving timely medical services.

BOLD INITIATIVE

Child protection officers appointed to address sexual harassment

PNS ■ KAMAREDDY

In a move aimed at preventing sexual harassment and assault of girl students, the district administration has appointed child protection officers at both government and private schools across the district.

As part of this initiative, the administration has been organising training sessions for headmasters, teachers, and in-charges of residential schools. At a recent event, District Collector Ashish Sangwan distributed badges to the newly appointed child protection officers. Parents appreciated the initiative taken by the Collector.

This decision follows the reported cases of at least 15 incidents of sexual harassment in schools this year. The Collector expressed hope that these mea-sures would help prevent such occurrences in the future. Students who experience any form of harassment are encouraged to report it to the child protection officer, who will then escalate the matter to the

Collector. The district is home to 1,196 schools, including 129 residential schools, 637 primary schools, 123 upper primary schools, 182 high



Kamareddy Collector Ashish Sangwan interacting with a student in a school recently (file photo)

schools, and 175 private schools. Several cases have been filed under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act against school teachers accused of inappropriate behaviour, including touching students

inappropriately and making lewd

comments. This has sparked con-

cern, as teachers, who are supposed to instil good values in students, have been accused of inappropriate behaviour.

These POCSO cases raised concerns, especially since teachers, who are expected to instil good manners in students, were accused of such behaviour. Some

of these harassment cases came to light through the girls' parents, while others were uncovered when SHE teams educated students about the difference between good and bad touch, as

well as other relevant topics.
In collaboration with ICDS, the girls' protection wing, and district administration, an important initiative is underway. A female teacher, or any teacher, has been appointed as the child protection officer in schools. These designated teachers have undergone training to understand their roles and responsibilities, with a focus on the POCSO Act. They have been sensitised to identify what constitutes good touch and bad touch, sexual harassment, girls' rights, and other legal matters.
Initially, UNICEF officials are

conducting the training sessions. In the subsequent phases, representatives from the police, legal departments, and women's associations will continue the training. The appointed child protection officers will engage regularly with the schoolgirls, building trust and helping them understand how to navigate challenging situations. These officers also keep a vigilant eye on potential miscreants in areas like computer labs and classrooms.

devotees, and protocol management

without any lapses. He stressed the

importance of maintaining cleanliness

on the temple premises, properly

managing queue lines, ensuring san-

itation, drinking water facilities, and

Man set afire by parents-in-law in Bhadradri Kothgudem dist

PNS BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

A married man, Ballem Gautham (24), who was allegedly set on fire by his parents-in-law after being doused with petrol in Ramachandrunipeta, Tekulapally mandal, tragically passed away after battling for life for nearly

Gautham, from Dantalaboru village under Paloncha mandal, married Ejju Kavya from Ramachandrunipeta three years ago after they fell in love. The couple lived in Sujatha Nagar, where Gautham worked as an electri-

According to family members, Kavya stayed at her maternal home for the past five months following a dispute with her husband.

On the night of February 2, around midnight, Gautham visited his inlaws' house to see his wife and chil-

Family members said that a confrontation broke out between Gautham and his parents-in-law, during which they, in a fit of rage, doused him with petrol and set him on fire outside the house, then locked the doors. In excruciating pain,

Gautham screamed for help.

His cries alerted the neighbours, who quickly informed his family members. They rushed to the village and shifted him to a hospital in Khammam.

As his condition worsened, he was transferred to MGM Hospital in Warangal, where he succumbed to his injuries late Sunday night while still undergoing treatment.

It is yet to be ascertained whether the police registered a case and arrested those who allegedly set the youth

NON-PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION FOR LANDS

Farmers block Nagapur-Amaravati highway works

PNS KHAMMAM

Farmers in Khajipuram village under Madhira mandal, local farmers blocked the construction work of the Nagpur-Amaravati National Highway. As many as 70 farmers from the Maturu revenue division accused the authorities of failing to pay compensation though their lands were acquired

for the highway.
According to the farmers, the highway construction companies have been continuing their work compensation and it violated their rightful entitlements. They lamented that their families are entirely dependent on farming, and they were deprived of their liveli-

hood. Farmers demanded that highway works should continue only after compensation is paid to them. They stated that it is the government's and the concerned NHAI (National Highways



Authority of India) officials' responsibility to proauthorities to take imme-

TENDER NOTICE
Quotation Notice No.04/EE (PD-NZ)/GHWC/2024-25/

if the authorities did not

the authorities concerned regarding compensation led to farmers protesting. They warned that they would intensify agitation

🔞 GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Name of the work: Sealed Quotations for it Supplying, fitting and fixing in position true to line and level elastomeric bearing, it) Manufacture and supply of Structural Decking Pane

Salvanized steel (as per IS: 277) for metal decking for 1.2 / 1.25mm thick Galvanised shee

(iii) Labour charges for erecting & fixing of metal decking sheets, (vi) Providing and laying of compression seal expansion joint as per IRC SP-69. Start Date & Time for Receipts of Bids 18.02.2025, 11.00 AM., Last Date & Time for Receipts of Bids: 25.02.2025, 05.00 PM.

respond.

vide fair compensation to landowners before starting the highway construction. They urged the diate action and ensure the compensation is pro-

The lack of clarity from

Farmers appealed to t the government to consider their demands sympathetically and take immediate action. They also

urged the government to make necessary arrangements for compensating the farmers who lost their lands. There is also a need for the government to discuss alternatives for land or provide employment opportunities.

INDIRAMMA HOUSES

Beneficiaries to get first instalment of financial assistance by March-end

PNS WANAPARTHY

Beneficiaries who have been allotted Indiramma houses are asked to immediately begin construction work. The financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh will be transferred directly to their accounts in instalments. They have been advised not to Gautam, Managing Director of the State Housing Corporation. Beneficiaries, who have received approval for Indiramma houses through Gram Sabhas, should start construction work in accordance with the guidelines. Gautum, accompanied by

District Collector Adarsh Surabhi and Additional Collector Sanchit Gangwar, visited the villages of Ramnathapuram in Kothakota Mandal and Appayapalli village in Wanaparthy mandal and interacted with beneficiaries. They visited the houses of beneficiaries Suvarna and Varalakshmi in Appayapalli village to understand their financial status.

They also inspected the double-bedroom houses built by the government in Appayapalli and Rajapet villages. The beneficiaries appealed to the official to ensure that basic facilities are provided in the area where doubled bedroom houses were



Collector Adarsh Surabi, visiting Indiramma Housing colonies in Wanaparthy on

Subsequently, they visited a model house of the Indiramma scheme under construction on the premises of the Zilla Parishad in Wanaparthy. Later, a meeting was held with Housing Corporation officials and MPDOs at the conference hall of the Wanaparthy District IDOS office.

During the meeting, MD Gautam emphasided the need for MPDOs to ensure the speedy commencement of construction for beneficiaries selected under the Indiramma housing scheme.

He stated that the government had decided to release the first instalment of financial assistance by March 31 if the

beneficiaries started construc-

District collector Adarsh Surabhi mentioned that a meeting with beneficiaries would be arranged soon to ensure that house construction begins and the first phase is completed by March 31.

Indiramma house beneficiaries need not worry about sand for construction, as it can be obtained for free from nearby reaches, officials said.

The meeting was attended by Additional Collector for Revenue, G. Venkateshwarlu, ZP CEO Yadayya, RDO Subrahmanyam, Housing officials Vithoba, Parvathalu, Panchayat Raj EE Mallayya, MRVOs Ramesh Reddy, Kishan, MPDOs, and other

Maha Kumbha Samprokshana fest at Yadadri from Feb 19 to 23

PNS YADADRI BHUVANAGIRI

Commissioner of Endowments Sridhar has directed the officials concerned to make elaborate Maha Kumbha Samprokshana from February 19 to 23of Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy at Yadagirigutta, scheduled to be held from February 19 to 23.

On Monday, a coordination meeting was held at the Yadagirigutta Devasthanam office under the leadership of

Commissioner Sridhar, District Collector M Hanumantha Rao, Additional camps, and stock essential medicines.

Collector Veerareddy, and Temple Executive Officer Bhaskar Rao, along with other officials concerned. During the meeting, the Commissioner emphasised that the

Maha Kumbhabhishekam should be conducted in a grand manner, and the assigned works must be completed promptly. He directed the officials to make special arrangements for VIPs and that the devotees visiting the temple daily. He instructed officials to ensure security, essential facilities for

The police department was advised to make strict security arrangements, continuously monitor the situation, prevent unto-ward incidents, manage traffic flow, and provide proper parking facilities. The Health Department

restrooms.

gency medical services available, set up medical To avoid inconvenience to devotees travelling from distant places,

TGSRTC officials were instructed to run additional buses and prevent unauthorised roadside parking. Barricading should be arranged for devotees. The meeting was attended by ZP Chairperson Sobharani, Bhongir and Choutuppal RDOs Krishna Reddy and Shekar Reddy, ACP Ramesh, Mandal Tahsildars, MPDOs, municipal commissioners,

Burglars run amok in Bhadradri Kothagudem dist

PNS BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

In the Cherla mandal of Bhadradri Kothagudem district, burglars ran amok, breaking into shops and houses here.

The thieves had gone burglary spree despite presence of CCTV cameras and police patrolling. Recently in the Bhadradri Ram Jewelry shop in Cherla Mandal, thieves broke in and stole more than Rs 6 lakh worth of gold ornaments. They also attempted to steal gold ornaments from one more shops too. However, the shop owner was vigilant and the

The police have been making all efforts to nab the burglars.

Name & Address of the Officer Cell No.: EE, PD-NZ, GHMC, Cell No.9959442013 Note: Detailed specifications and Conditions for Submission of Quotations can be downloaded from the website www.ghmc.gov.in. For further information contact

NEW NALLAKUNTA BRANCH SHIVAM ROAD NEW NALLAKUNTA NALLAKUNTA, HYDERABAD

(Rule-8(1)) POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable property) he undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Indian Bank, New Nallakunta under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Au 502 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated **06.11.2024** Callin ipon the borrower Mr.Gunda Balaraju Slo G Nooka Raju (Borrower, Mortgagor)H.N 2-0 130/1915/A Shivem Road New Nallakunts, Hyderabad-500044 With our New Nallakunt Branch to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 16,26,193.00 (Rupees Sixteen Lak

Twenty Six Thousand One Hundred Ninty Three Only) together with interest, cost & charges fro 07:11:2024 till date of payment within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein belo exercise of powers conferred on him / her under Section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule (

nd 9 of the said rules on this 15th day of February of the year 2025. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the proper and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Indian Bank for an amount (Rs. 1672992/- (Pupees Sodeen Lakh Seventy Two Thousand Nine Hundred Ninty Two Only) or 14.02.2025 and interest thereon from 15.02.2025 onwards "We chav attention to the provisions or Section 13(B) of the SARFAESI Act and the Rules framed there under which deals with your right

frederaption over the securities" DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All that the north - west side flat No. M 2, in Meaznine floor in the building known as "SR RANGA COMPLEX* having plinth area admeasuring 1000 Sq. Ft., Excluding common area of 20% together with undivided share of land admeasuring 15 Sq. yards constructed on premises bearing Municipal No. 1-6-311, admeasuring 247,60 Sq. Yards, equivalent to 206.99 sq. mirs nd Premises bearing no 1-6-320 admeasuring 192.60 sq. yards equivalent to 160.53 sq. mtrs Thus total land admeasuring 439 sq. yards "situaled at kandoji bazar,Park lane, Secunderabad, which is bounded by : Boundary: North: Open to sky, South: Staircase and Common area, East Neighbour's flat No. M.1, West: Open to Sky & Uma Millinium Complex.

Cong govt lends support to cultural, religious events: Uttam

PNS SURYAPET

Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy participated in the Peddagattu Jatara at Durajpally in Suryapet district on Monday, offering prayers at the Lingamantula Śwamy temple and taking part in the religious rituals. Later, he reviewed the extensive arrangements made for the smooth conduct of the grand festival and assured devotees that all necessary facilities were in place.

The Peddagattu Jatara, also known as Gollagattu Jatara, is Telangana's second-largest religious congregation after the Medaram Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara. Held once every two years, this five-day festival is of great spiritual significance, particularly for the Yadava community, which worships Lingamantula Swamy



Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy at Peddagattu Jatara at Durajpally in Suryapet district on Monday

as their deity. This year, the Jatara began on February 16 and will conclude on February

During his visit, Uttam Kumar Reddy was welcomed by the temple committee members, who honored him with

traditional offerings. As part of the rituals, the Minister participated in the Bhairi (Bhery) drumming ceremony along with devotees in the temple premises. He later performed special prayers. He thanked Chief Minister A Revanth

Reddy for sanctioning Rs 5 crore for the successful conduct Peddagattu the Lingamantula Swamy Jatara. He instructed officials to take special measures to ensure devotees do not face any incon-

Uttam Kumar Reddy said, This Jatara, being celebrated since the 16th century, reflects our deep-rooted traditions and unites people in devotion. The Telangana government is ensuring that such grand religious festivals are celebrated with all necessary facilities," he stated. He directed officials to closely monitor the influx of devotees and ensure the smooth functioning of amenities such as temporary shelters, medical camps, and queue management systems. Traffic management was a

Speaking to media persons,

key focus during his review. With an estimated 20 lakh devotees expected, authorities have implemented traffic diversions on the Hyderabad-Vijayawada National Highway prevent congestion. Additional police personnel and surveillance cameras have been deployed for crowd con-The Peddagattu Jatara wit-

nessed an overwhelming response from devotees, with thousands offering prayers at the temple. One of the key events, the arrival of the 'Devara Petta', took place amid religious fervor. The 'Devara Petta' procession, carrying the idols of Lingamantula Swamy, Choudamma, and other deities, was accompanied by chanting, drum beats, and traditional dances, adding to the festival's spiritual grandeur.

Uttam Kumar Reddy said, This latara is not just a festival; it is an emotion for the people of Telangana." He reiterated the government's unwavering support for Telangana's cultural and religious events. "Festivals like Peddagattu Jatara are an integral part of our iden-



ACROSS THE STATES



Ex-CJI Lalit to appear before **ONOE** committee

ormer chief justice of India U U Lalit will appear before the parliamentary committee, which is scrutinising two bills advocating simultaneous elections, on February 25 as the panel begins consulting experts and various stake-holders as part of its mandate, sources said on Monday. They said former Law Commission of India chairperson Ritu Raj Awasthi, a judicial member of Lokpal, E M Sudarsana Natchiappan, a senior advocate and former Congress MP who had headed in 2015 a parliamentary committee that favoured simultaneous polls, and IAS officer Niten Chandra, the secretary of the highlevel Kovind committee, are also likely to share their views with the panel. The parliamentary committee's agenda for the February 25 meeting is briefly listed as "interaction with legal experts". The high-level committee headed by former president Ram Nath Kovind was constituted by the Modi government on 'one nation one election' (ONOE) and it had in its voluminous report strongly batted for the concept.



Family of four found dead in apartment in Mysuru

family of four members were found dead at an apartment here on Monday, police said. The incident took place in Avishweshwaraiah Nagar in the city. The deceased have been identified as Chetan (45), his wife Rupali (43), and their son Kushal (15) and Chetan's mother Priyamvada (62) they said. According to the police, in a death note recovered from the spot, it was stated that no one should be held responsible for the deaths and requested authorities to not trouble any of their family members for it. Chetan claimed that he was under financial distress since they had recently purchased two flats at Sankalp apartment and had taken loan for it. He further mentioned that he did not have the money to repay the loan which police suspect could be the reason for taking such an extreme step. Citing preliminary investigation, a senior police officer said that Chetan may have fed his family members with poison and killed them before hanging himself. "We suspect that he might have fed them poison and then smothered them. But this is only our suspicion and there is not clarity yet on the exact cause of death. We are awaiting autopsy and Forensic Science Laboratory reports to ascertain the exact cause of death," he said.



Sapkal to take charge as **Maha Congress chief today**

arshvardhan Sapkal will take charge as Maharashtra Congress president on Tuesday in the presence of senior leaders, a party functionary said. He will take charge at an event organised at Birla Matoshri Auditorium, a party statement issued here on Monday said. Sapkal, who hails from Buldhana district, was appointed chief of the party's state unit last week after Nana Patole completed his four-year tenure. Sapkal takes over at a time when the Congress is on a low following its disastrous performance in the November assembly polls, in which it would win just 16 seats in the 288-member assembly. It had contested 101 seats in alliance with the Shiv Sena (UBT) and NCP (SP). His immediate focus would be the civic polls, which are due in several cities of Maharashtra since early 2022. Local body polls are likely to be held this year.

STATION HOLDING AREA, CROWD CONTROL MANUAL

Railway minister lists steps to prevent incidents

Creating holding area at 60 stations experiencing high footfalls, a separate crowd management manual and raising awareness among passengers to not sit at stairs are among the measures being taken to prevent untoward incidents, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Monday.

These initiatives are being taken in the wake of a stampede at the New Delhi Railway Station Saturday evening which killed 18 passengers, according to official figures, and left several injured.

Interacting with mediapersons at the Rail Bhawan here, Vashnaw said the Railways has identified 60 stations which normally receive a high footfall and decided to make permanent or temporary holding areas outside the platforms to regulate the flow of passengers to the stations. "Sixty stations such as New Delhi, Patna, Surat, Bengaluru, Coimbatore have been identified for creating a holding area to manage the

flow of passengers inside the station. They will be allowed to enter the platform according to departure of their trains so that the station areas don't get overcrowded," Vaishnaw said.

He cited the example of stations in Prayagraj -- where the Maha Kumbh is taking place where such holding areas have been created and flow of passengers regulated successfulso far.

Vaishnaw also said a separate crowd management manual will be created by merging all

existing provisions, and a Standard Operating Procedure will be developed to handle passenger rush during festivals and special occasions.

"We will have to make a comprehensive manual for crowd management," the railway minister said. Officials say the current crowd management norms are robust and efficient, but they are scattered in various circulars and communications of the Railways, bringing them at one place in a form of manual will help a lot.

According to the minister, raising awareness among passengers not to sit at stairs or at any place that can block the free movement of other travellers can also help in a big way to prevent incidents like the one

which occurred at the New

"Sixty stations such as

New Delhi, Patna, Surat,

Bengaluru, Coimbatore

have been identified for

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station. They will be

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so that the station areas

don't get overcrowded."

Delhi Railway Station. "We cannot fine the passengers for sitting on the stairs. The only way is to create awareness is through the media that it can congest the necessary movement of other travellers," Vaishnaw said.

'Cong high command will take decision'

K'taka CM on leadership change

PNS BENGALURU

Amid speculations about leadership change in Karnataka, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said it is for the Congress high command to decide.

There have been talks in the state's political circles, especially in the ruling Congress party, about a chief minister change later this year, under a "rotational chief minister" or "power-sharing" formula.

"It is for the high command to decide," Siddaramaiah told reporters in response to a question on discussions about leadership change.

Deputy Chief Minister Shivakumar, who is also the state Congress president, is a strong chief ministerial aspirant and has made no secret of his ambition to become the CM. There have been time and again attempts by a section of party leaders and workers to project Shivakumar as the next chief

minister. There was stiff competition between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar for the chief minister's post after the declaration of Assembly election results in May 2023, and the Congress had managed to convince the latter

and made him the Deputy Chief Minister.

There were some reports at the time that a compromise had been reached based on a "rotational chief minister formula," according to which Shivakumar will become CM after two-andhalf years, but they have not been officially confirmed by the party.

A section of party leaders especially ministers considered close to Siddaramaiah, have been pitching for him to complete the full term as chief minister, stating that he was indispensable to the party if it wanted to retain power in the next election.

These activities are notwithstanding Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's warning last month asking his party colleagues to 'shut up' and focus on governance, amid public statements from them on the leadership change issue.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday reinstated Solan Mayor Usha Sharma in her post for the remainder of her tenure while terming her disqualification a case of "political goondaism".

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh made its August 20, 2024 order absolute by which it had stayed her disqualification while terming her removal "a case of

"The interim order of August 20, 2024 is made absolute. Any interference with the order will invite consequences," the

bench said, as it adjourned the matter after a year. When senior advocate Devadatt Kamat, appearing for the respondents, tried to interject, the bench said it does not want to pass any strictures in the order at present, as it is a case of "political goondaism".

Sharma's counsel submitted that her tenure will get completed next year and urged the court to make its interim order of last year absolute.

On August 20, last year, the top court while issuing notice

SC reinstates Solan's mayor

Terms her disqualification 'political goondaism' "Meanwhile, the operation of on the plea of Sharma and former mayor Poonam Grover the order dated June 10, 2024 against the June, 2024 order disqualifying the petitioners of the high court as councilors of ward upholding their disno.12 and ward no.8 of qualification kept in Municipal Corporation, Solan, in abeyance the fresh election for Himachal Pradesh as well as operathe post of the mayor of Solan tion of in Himachal impugned judgment of the high Pradesh, till further court dated June 25, 2024 shall

remain stayed. Resultantly, the first petitioner shall be allowed to continue and perform her duties as mayor of municipal corporation, Solan, Himachal Pradesh till further orders," it had said.

The top court was also critical of the reasoning given by the high court while upholding the notification of June 10, 2024 disqualifying Sharma and Grover, who were councillors of ward nos. 12 and 8 of the civic body, respectively. Both Sharma and Grover

were disqualified by the government under the provisions of the Himachal Pradesh Municipal Corporation Act, 1994 for defying party directions during the election of mayor and deputy mayor held on December 7, 2023.

Elections to the Solan Municipal Corporation established in 2020 are held on party lines.

The civic body has 17 wards and the first election for these wards was held in April 2021. After the election, the mayor and deputy mayor were elected for a period of two and half years as per the provisions of the Act.

36,420 women, 8,403 children went missing in Odisha in 5 years: Majhi

PNS BHUBANESWAR

A total of 36,420 women and 8,403 children went missing in Odisha over the past five years, Majhi informed the assembly on Monday.

Majhi said 421 women were trafficked to other states through middlemen, leading to the arrest of 453 people.

The police have been immediately registering cases on the basis of complaints and it has taken action to trace the trafficked women, he said in a written reply to

During 2020-2024, a total of 1,417 women and 1,857 children who had gone missing were traced, the CM said.

Outgoing Chief Election

Commissioner Rajiv Kumar on

Monday stressed the need to

have a totaliser system to ensure

confidentiality in polling sta-

tion-wise voting patterns and

said it is high time that NRIs are

empowered to vote from their

of his retirement on attaining

the age of 65 years, he also said

consensus for remote voting

mechanisms is must to facilitate

In his farewell address ahead

PNS NEW DELHI

locations.



Besides, the state government has also rescued 784 child labourers.

Elaborating on the steps taken to prevent women and child trafficking in Odisha, Majhi said 36 Integrated Anti Human Trafficking Units (IAHTUs) have been created.

IAHTUs have been made contact points to deal with such cases in Bolangir, Nuapada, Bargarh, Kalahandi,

crores of migrant voters.
Biometric authentication at

polling booths should be tried

to efficiently tackle imperson-

transparency and analytics.

On political promises, he

said these must be backed by

financial disclosures and courts

need to facilitate early decision.

Sambalpur and Jharsuguda, he said. Awareness campaigns to prevent trafficking cases are being organised at the police-station level. Police trolling has also been strengthened in vulnerable areas like bus stands and railway stations, Majhi said.

Special training is also being provided to police personnel to identify, conduct investigation and avoid the recurrence of such incidents.

In another written reply, the chief minister informed that 6,437 cases of kidnapping/abduction of women were registered in different police stations of Odisha during 2024, and 413 people have been arrested in connection with these cases.

Chidambaram dubs Pradhan's NEP pitch as arrogance

PNS CHENNAI

Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Monday termed as "peak of arrogance," Union Education Minister on Tamil Nadu implementing the three-language policy for release of education funds to the state. Chidambaram

Pradhan's arrogant comment that unless the state government adopts the three-language policy and teaches Hindi, it would not be released funds, showed that he neither knew Tamil Nadu's history nor understood its people's sentiments. Also, the union minister was not aware of the nation's Constitutional history and Tamil Nadu people, by showing unity, should oppose this arrogance, he said.

underlined and asserted that

election management bodies

need to develop capacity to

counter mischievous, baseless

'Not a flighty idea at all'



PNS PUNE

A 20-year-old student's ingenuity to reach his college in time for an exam by paragliding over a 'ghat' in Maharashtra's Satara district came to the fore after a video of his feat went viral on social media on Monday.

First Year B.Com student Samarth Mahangde said the incident took place on December 15 and was necessitated after he realised late that he had his first-semester exam on Natural Disaster Management in a few minutes time. It helped that he knew paragliding operators in the area, said Mahangde, a resident of Pasarani village. A video showed Mahangde

taking a pilot-operated paragliding ride from Harrison's Folly, a flat plateau located about 5 kilometres before Panchgani on Wai-Panchgani road in Satara, to Kisan Veer College.

"I work at a sugarcane juice centre near Harrison's Folly.

That day, at 2pm I realised I had a paper at 2:15pm. I forgot about it since the exam timings and date had been rescheduled a few times earlier. I knew road was not an option due to Sunday traffic and ongoing work in the ghat section and my college is 12 kilometres away," he said.

"I knew paragliding operators in the area. One of them, Govind Yevale, asked a pilot to fly me to the college," the collegian said.

After wearing all the mandatory safety equipment, he and our pilot managed to land at an open ground near the college in exactly five minutes," Yevale said.

Mahangde said he could answer his exam in time also because his friends had got his hall ticket, identity card and uniform.Kisan Veer College authorities confirmed about the exam and that Mahangde did appear for it.

"But, we cannot confirm if he paraglided here," a college official said.

'NOT PARTY'S VIEWS'

Cong distances itself from Pitroda's remarks on China

PNS NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday distanced itself from its leader Sam Pitroda's remarks on China, saying they are not the views of the party and that China remains India's foremost external security and economic challenge.

Pitroda, chairman of Indian Overseas Congress, was reported to have said that he does not understand the threat India faces from China, claiming that it is often blown out of proportion. The views reportedly expressed by Mr. Sam Pitroda on China are most def-



initely NOT the views of the Indian National Congress," AICC general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X.

"China remains our foremost foreign policy, external security, as well as economic challenge. The INC has repeatedly raised questions on the Modi Govt's approach to China, including the PM's public clean chit to it on June 19, 2020. Our most recent statement on China was on 28th January, 2025," he said.
"It is also extremely regret-

table that Parliament is being denied an opportunity to discuss the situation and express a collective resolve to meet these challenges effectively," Ramesh said.



High-time NRIs empowered to vote from their locations: CEC

Unregulated social media algorithms pose a serious risk to elections worldwide and must be addressed urgently, Kumar

and strategically timed criticism. Casting doubt on outcomes after active and full participation in the process is undesirable, the outgoing head of the poll authority lamented. "Technology has been a powerful enabler in our electoral

processes, helping refine voter rolls, streamline operations, and engage citizens more effective-

Disposal of waste comes under SC scanner

PNS NEW DELHI

The disposal of hazardous waste of 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy, which claimed 5,479 lives, near Indore came under the Supreme Court's scanner on Monday which sought responses from the Centre, Madhya Pradesh and its pollution control board.

The hazardous waste of around 377 tonnes of the now defunct Union Carbide factory was shifted to Pithampur industrial area in Dhar district, 250 km away from Bhopal and around 30 km from Indore. The top court took note of a plea raising the

seminal issue of right to health and the risk to the inhabitants of nearby areas, including the city of Indore. Highly toxic gas methyl isocyanate (MIC) leaked from the Union Carbide factory during the intervening night of December 2-3, 1984, eventually killing 5,479 people and maiming more than five lakh others. It is considered to be among the worst industrial disasters in the world.

A bench of Justices B R Gavai and Augustine George Masih agreed to hear a plea challenging the December 3, 2024 and January 6 this year orders of the



Madhya Pradesh High Court. December last year order rebuked the authorities for not clearing the Union Carbide site

in Bhopal despite directions The high court in its from even the Supreme Court and set a four-week deadline to shift the waste, observing that even 40 years after the gas

It had warned the government of contempt proceedings if its directive was not followed.

"state of inertia"

On the night of January 1, the shifting of toxic waste began in

tragedy, authorities were in a

12 sealed container trucks for its disposal, an official had said. Initially, some of the waste will be burnt at the waste disposal

unit in Pithampur and the residue (ash) will be examined to find whether any harmful elements were left, Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation Department Director Swatantra Kumar Singh had said.

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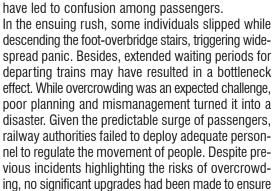
-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Heart-wrenching

The New Delhi Railway Station stampede exposes administrative lapses and highlights the need for better crowd control

t is as heart-wrenching as it is unfortunate. The stampede at New Delhi Railway station has shocked the capital. At least 18 people, including five children, lost their lives, and over a dozen sustained injuries in a horrific stampede at the Station on Saturday night. The tragedy unfolded on the foot-overbridges connecting platforms 14 and 15, as a sudden surge of passengers waiting to board trains for Prayagraj resulted in a deadly crush. The incident raises critical questions about mismanagement, infrastructural inadequacies and lapses in crowd control that led to the catastrophe. The primary trigger of the incident appears to be a confluence of factors, including excessive passenger load, misleading announcements and poor crowd management. The surge of pilgrims traveling to Prayagraj for the ongoing Maha Kumbh Mela significantly increased the footfall at the station. Reports indicate that around 1,500 general tickets were being sold every hour. Sources suggest that a wrong

announcement regarding a change of platforms may



smoother pedestrian movement. Moreover, the response from railway officials and security personnel was reportedly delayed. A more robust system to alert and manage surging crowds could have prevented the incident from escalating into a full-fledged disaster. Could this have been prevented? Surely. Deployment of additional railway police and personnel during peak travel periods could have averted the disaster. Besides, real-time monitoring of passenger density using surveillance cameras and Al-based crowd control systems could have definintely help in such a situations. This stampede must jolt the authorities from their deep slumber as this is not for the first time such a tragedy has happened. Expansion and widening of foot-overbridges to accommodate high passenger traffic must be done on priority. Clear and accurate digital signage to minimise confusion is also very important. Besides, there must be a system to cap the number of the general tickets issued per hour, especially during mega events, While accountability is being fixed, the focus must remain on implementing long-term solutions to prevent such tragedies in the future. The railway authorities must ensure that infrastructure, security and operational protocols are robust enough to handle high footfall scenarios safely.

PICTALK



A flock of ibis flying over a paddy field, in Nagaon

Delhi High Court reinstates

fraud claims against Reliance



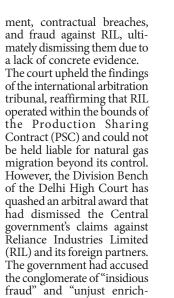
The Delhi High Court quashes an international arbitration award that had dismissed government claims of 'insidious fraud' and 'unjust enrichment' against Reliance Industries

he resounding victory of the Central Government's legal team, led by the Attorney General of India A.R. Venkatramani reinforced by the active participation of the eminent jurist and the former Attorney General of India K.K. Venugopal, under the astute administrative guidance of Union Petroleum & Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, in the Delhi High Court verdict against Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL), has decisively dismantled allegations of favouritism levelled against the Modi government.

This landmark ruling categorically refutes opposition claims that the government promotes select business houses, reaffirming its commitment to transparency, fairness, and the rule of law in corporate governance and policy-making. In a landmark judgment dated February 14, 2025, the Delhi High Court delivered a decisive verdict in the case of Union of India vs. Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL), addressing long-standing allegations of crony capitalism and favouritism towards major industrialists by the current government.

This 79-page judgment not only exonerates the government from accusations of bias but also underscores the integrity of India's judicial system and the competence of its political and legal leadership.Background of the CaseThe dispute centres around the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) executed between the Union of India and Reliance Industries Ltd. in 2000, about the exploration and extraction of natural gas in the Krishna-Godavari basin.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas alleged that RIL had engaged in "unjust enrichment" by extracting and selling gas that had purportedly migrated from fields operated by the state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) to RIL's adjacent block. The government sought compenation, contending that RIL's actions resulted in significant financial losses to the state exchequer.Details of JudgementThe Delhi High Court's single judge judgment in Union of India vs. Reliance Industries Ltd. examined the allegations of unjust enrich-



ment" amounting to over \$1.729 billion by allegedly extracting natural gas from deposits beyond its entitle-HAD PURPORTEDLY The Bench, comprising Justices Rekha Palli and Saurabh Banerjee, overturned the ruling of a single judge, who had, in May 2022, set aside the Petroleum Ministry's allegations. The court determined that the international arbitration award dated July 24,



THE MINISTRY OF

PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS ALLEGED THAT RIL HAD ENGAGED IN **'UNJUST** ENRICHMENT' BY EXTRACTING AND SELLING GAS THAT

MIGRATED FROM FIELDS OPERATED BY THE STATE-OWNED OIL AND NATURAL GAS CORPORATION (ONGC) TO RIL'S ADJACENT BLOCK

unauthorized gas extraction. The ruling also strengthens the government's position in regulatory disputes within the oil and gas sector. With the arbitral award nullified, the matter may now proceed further in Indian courts, potentially leading to fresh legal battles over financial liabilities and resource allocation in the country's hydrocarbon sector. Beyond the legal nuances, the judgment serves as a crucial precedent for future contracts, emphasizing the importance of precision in drafting and adherence to arbitration mechanisms for dispute resolution. It underscores the independence of the judiciary in adjudicating disputes involving powerful corporate entities and government

ment's claims concerning

crony capitalism. The case also highlights the competence of the central government's legal representation, particularly the diligence of Attorney General A.R. Petroleum & Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri in defending the government's stance. It further reflects the abysmally woeful performance of the RIL legal team in defending the case. Furthermore, the ruling reassures investors about India's

bodies, dispelling claims of

commitment to the rule of law, ensuring that legal processes remain transparent and evi-

dence-driven. By challenging the political narrative of undue favouritism towards industrialists, the judgment reinforces the integrity of India's governance, corporate regulations, and media responsibility in shaping public discourse.

Conclusion

The Delhi High Court's latest judgment in Union of India vs. Reliance Industries Ltd. is a testament to the robustness of India's legal system and its capacity to adjudicate highstakes disputes impartially. It dispels allegations of governmental bias towards prominent industrialists, affirming that decisions are grounded in evidence and legal merit. The ruling also underscores the importance of adhering to contractual obligations and the role of arbitration in resolving intricate commercial conflicts. As India continues to navigate its path towards eco-Venkatramani and Union nomic growth, this judgment reinforces the principles of fairness, transparency, and the rule of law as cornerstones of

its democratic ethos. (The writer is a prominent columnist and Public Policy Expert; the views expressed are personal)

India advances carbon market reforms following COP 29



ATUL AGRAWAL

India, already a leader in renewable energy, reinforced its commitment to climate action by proposing a unified carbon market

The 29th Conference of the Parties (COP 29) under the United Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) concluded in Baku, Azerbaijan, on November 24, 2024. While key expectations regarding climate finance remained unmet, significant progress was achieved in carbon market regulations. A landmark agreement on carbon trading rules was reached, aiming to accelerate climate action by enabling countries to meet their emission reduction goals efficiently and cost-effectively. Under its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), the country initially aimed to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emission intensity by 33-35% from 2005 levels by 2030, later revising this target to 45% in 2022. India has launched multiple initiatives to combat climate change. On the supply side, renewable energy generation helps mitigate carbon footprints, while demand-side initiatives like Perform-Achieve-Trade (PAT), star labeling, energy conservation building codes, and improved lighting solu-



tions further reinforce India's climate commitments. Existing frameworks, including Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) and Energy Saving Certificates (ESCerts), serve as a foundation. These were introduced under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) in 2008 and have been successfully traded on Indian power exchanges.

RECs drive renewable energy adoption by allowing obligated entities to purchase either renewable energy or its certificates. One REC equates to 1 MWh of renewable energy generated from sources like solar, wind, hydro, and biogas. This system benefits both electricity generators and buyers, ensuring environmental compliance.

Similarly, ESCerts promote energy efficiency by enabling regulator and power designated energy-intensive exchanges as trading plat-

industries to either enhance forms, while the Bureau of energy savings or buy corresponding certificates. One ESCert represents a reduction of 1 million tonnes of oil equivalent energy. Currently, compliance market and an 13 key industrial sectors, including aluminum, cement, power distribution, and railways, participate in this program, covering nearly 50% of India's primary energy consumption.Since their inception, RECs and ESCerts have driven significant emissions reductions, saving over 73 million tonnes of CO2 through REC trading and preventing 106 million tonnes of CO2 emissions via ESCerts.Recognizing the need for a unified carbon market, India proposed a comprehensive system merging RECs and ESCerts into a single, internationally aligned framework. The regulatory foundation was set with the amendment of the Energy Conservation Act in January 2023, followed by the notification of the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme, 2023. The scheme designates the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission as the market

Energy Efficiency oversees compliance mechanisms. India's carbon market will consist of two segments: a offset market. The compliance market will impose emission caps on obligated entities, allowing overachievers to sell surplus carbon credits to underachievers. The offset market will enable voluntary participation by non-obligated entities aiming to reduce their carbon footprints.

Carbon credit certificates will be traded through a regulated bidding process. The transition from existing REC and ESCert markets to a unified carbon trading system is expected to be seamless, given India's well-established power exchanges and transaction mechanisms. With this development, India moves closer to integrating its climate action efforts into global carbon markets, reinforcing its commitment to reducing emissions and achieving longterm sustainability goals.

(The writer works with Indian Institute of Management, Sirmaur; views are personal)

Madam — At the 61st Munich Security

US CRITICISES EUROPEAN LEADERS

2018, which had favoured the

RIL-led consortium, was "con-

trary to public policy" in

India. This decision marks a

significant legal setback for RIL, as it reinstates the govern-

Conference, American Vice President JD Vance left no stone unturned in reprimanding and threatening the European leaders. He has launched a monstrous attack on Europe, in which he has accused its leaders of failing to give free speech, restricting illegal migration, and living in fear of religious ideology. He has put the biggest threat to Europe's security on the European countries themselves. Along with this, he also said that the European countries do not pay the full price for their security. America will no longer provide security to Europe with closed eyes. This simply means that Donald Trump has indicated that if the NATO organisation has to be run, then it will have to be run on Trump's terms, or else America will

leave that organisation. America has also indicated that it wants to see Russia back in the G-7 countries' organisation. The White House has already announced that it will impose additional tariffs on goods imported from countries around the world. Now the rest of the world, especially the European Union, will have to decide without any delay how they will learn to live without America. Before America leaves NATO, the campaign to expel it will have to be intensified. Also, every possible help will have to be given to Ukraine to save it from the clutches of Russian terrorism. Because Trump is completely determined to hand over the reins of Ukraine to the Kremlin.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

HOPES HIGH FOR TROPHY

Madam— This refers to your caption in Sunday Pioneer, "Rohit, Kohli lead Team India for Champions Trophy'. Indeed, it was a brilliant century from skipper Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli against Bangladesh in the ICC Champions Trophy opener while I occupied the studio box as a special guest from which I was witnessing the

Stampede at New Delhi Railway Station



the stampede incident at New Delhi Railway Station claimed 15 innocent lives, but it also serves as a warning that the time for change has arrived. Chaos, lack of crowd control and failure of security measures led to this tragedy. It is now essential that we learn ing traffic management, deploying adefrom this incident and take steps to prevent such occurrences in the future. This disaster has made it clear that the railway must adopt modern strategies for

by the players' family, and I can see all the cheers in Anushka Sharma and Rohit's wife.

The recent rule of restrictions has not permitted the player's family to join them for this tour. When my opinion about Rohit and Virat has been changing while watching them play, there came a strong pat behind my back, which brought me to reality. Oh, it all happened in my dreams that I woke up to my wife's call and went for a quick shower and to get ready to start at my office. Hitman and Kohli thus became the dream object in fans lives, and I am also one among those impacted much by their failures. One hopes that both will come good in the upcoming

Champions Trophy.

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

MSMES MUST REINVENT TO SHINE

Madam — The US's push for reciprocal tariffs, framed as a 'fair trade' corrective, has sent shockwaves through global markets-but for India's MSMEs

crowd management and passenger safety. The railway administration should anticipate potential crowds during major events and pilgrimages and make appropriate arrangements in advance. By utilising new technologies, entry and exit points should be better organised to ensure smooth passenger movement. The government has expressed condolences over the incident, and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav has ordered a high-level inquiry. However, beyond this, we must take proactive steps with a positive mindset to prioritise passenger safety. By improvquate police forces and making the information system more effective, we can prevent such incidents. R K Jain | Barwani

match. The entire box was surrounded industry, this moment could be less about survival and more about reinvention. Critics argue that this move will spark a trade war, hobbling economic growth and benefiting no one. However, for India's MSME sector, this moment could be a catalyst for transformation. By upgrading to world-class standards at affordable costs, Indian MSMEs can tap into vast export markets and become more competitive, resilient and export-

This would require a multi-pronged approach, involving government incentives, technology transfers, and skill development programmes. By doing so, India can turn a potential trade threat into a transformative opportunity, ultimately boosting its economic growth and global trade prospects and proving that even in the midst of tariff wars, MSMEs can shine as stars of innovation and growth.

Shruti Saggar | Pune

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

FIRST COLUMN

RAISING GEN ALPHA AND GEN BETA

To ensure their well-being, parents must strike a balance between traditional values and modern approaches



SHAINY SHARMA

he 21st century has introduced new challenges and opportunities in parenting. As we raise Generation Alpha (born 2012-2024) and Generation Beta (born 2025-2039), it is crucial to adapt parenting strategies to their digital upbringing, rapid technological advancements and changing societal norms.

Ensuring these children grow up healthy, happy, and disciplined requires a balance of traditional values and modern approaches. There is no denying that, unlike previous generations, Generation Alpha and Generation Beta are growing up with easy access to technology, which affects their lifestyle habits.

It is of utmost importance that parents/guardians take proactive steps to ensure their children's well-being such as providing balanced nutrition such as a diet rich in proteins, vitamins, and fibres while limiting processed foods and sugary snacks; reducing screen time and promoting physical activities such as cycling, swimming, and team sports to improve fitness and social skills; setting screenfree bedtime routines to ensure quality sleep, which is crucial for the cognitive and emotional development and encouraging children to spend time offline by engaging in hands-on activities like painting, gardening and DIY projects.

Not only these, but in an era of social media influence and fastpaced lifestyles, parents/guardians need to support their children by creating a strong emotional connection; encouraging resilience and a growth mindset; guiding them in reducing digital overload, and engaging them in mindful activities such as yoga, meditation, journaling, or simple relaxation exercises to help them cope with stress. Above all, what matters the most is the art of discipline. With instant gratification becoming a norm in the digital age,



parents/guardians must realise that these generations will grow up in an Al-driven world, requiring skills beyond academics. Parents/Guardians can help prepare them by encouraging critical thinking and creativity and providing problem-solving challenges, STEM activities, and artistic outlets along with proper guidance on responsible internet usage, cybersecurity, and online ethics followed by developing social skills in a hybrid world. Raising healthy, happy, and disciplined Gen Alpha and Gen Beta children requires a thoughtful blend of love, guidance, and adaptability.

Parents/Guardians must embrace new-age parenting by integrating digital awareness with traditional values while fostering emotional resilience and self-discipline. By prioritising wellbeing, education and strong moral foundations, one can ensure these generations grow into responsible, fulfilled, and future-ready individ-

Also, by providing proper nutrition, encouraging physical and mental well-being, fostering social skills, and setting positive examples, parents/guardians can create an environment where children thrive for it is aptly said that a happy and healthy child is not just the result of luck but of consistent efforts, care, and understanding from those who nurture them. By promoting healthy habits, setting strong moral foundations, and nurturing adaptability, parents can equip their children for a fast-evolving world. Ultimately, a happy and well-rounded child is shaped not by chance, but by consistent love, guidance, and understanding.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

Unlocking nature's secrets: A journey through India's forests

Nature is an open book, rich with stories waiting to be uncovered. There are intricate connections between land, life, and time, write BKP Sinha & Arvind Jha

ature, in its boundless complexity, holds countless wonders and mysteries. A walk through the forest offers a unique opportunity to engage deeply with the natural world, observing its intricate details and uncovering its hidden stories. Every tree, rock, and animal track contributes to the landscape's rich history, revealing the dynamic processes that have shaped it over time. The towering trees, with their rings cataloguing centuries of climatic shifts and environmental changes, stand as silent witnesses to the passage of time. A notice-able absence of middle-aged trees, for example, often points to a past forest fire. These fires, while natural and sometimes devastating, selectively eliminate younger trees while leaving behind older, more resilient ones. India, with its diverse ecosystems ranging from coastal regions to mountain valleys, offers a unique opportunity to observe the intricate relationships between flora, fauna, and their environment. Even the soil beneath our feet, a mosaic of organic matter, testifies to the endless cycle of life and decay that sustains the ecosystem. The contours of the land, the steepness of slopes, the presence of valleys and ridges - these are not mere accidents of geography. They are the fingerprints of geological forces, millennia in the making. The Himalayas, Western Ghats, and Vindhya ranges are iconic examples of such geological artistry, showcasing the dynamic processes that have shaped the nation's landscape and influenced its biodiversity. The forest is a timeless classroom, where nature's lessons unfold with every step. But to truly unlock these secrets, requires more than a casual glance; it demands a mindful approach and willingness to slow down and truly engage with our surroundings. As you walk through the forest, you'll notice the forest floor is covered with a thick layer of leaves, twigs, and decomposing organic matter.

This layer, known as the leaf litter, plays a crucial role in nutrient cycling and provides a habitat for many small creatures. The type and distribution of vegetation provide insights into the region's climate, soil conditions, and water availability. Lush rainforests, like those in the Western Ghats and Northeast India, thrive in areas with abundant rainfall. These verdant ecosystems boast a rich variety of plant species, from towering trees to intricate understory plants, each adapted to thrive in the humid, water-rich environment. This dense vegetation supports a wide range of wildlife, contributing to the region's biodiversity and ecological stability.

In contrast, the arid deserts of Rajasthan present a landscape where life has remarkably adapted to survive with minimal water. Vegetation here is sparse, but highly specialized, with species like cacti, acacias, and thorny bushes dominating the terrain. These species are equipped with unique adaptations, such as water-storing tissues and deep root systems, allowing them to conserve and access water efficiently and ensuring their survival in such

harsh conditions. The intimate relationship between plants and their environment becomes even more evident when observing specific species in particular areas. For instance, in floodplains, trees such as sycamore, Gular, and ash Gurjan thrive in fertile, wet conditions where water and nutrients



THE

GANGES RIVER, REVERED AS SACRED,

NUMEROUS **AQUATIC AND** TERRESTRIAL SPECIES. ITS WATERS FIELDS THAT FEED MILLIONS,

Karanj (Pongamia). Similarly, along riverbanks, trees like Jamun and Arjun flourish in the constantly wet conditions, highlighting how plant life reflects the local ecosystem. Just as plant life reflects environmental conditions, rock formations provide a window into the geological history and processes that have shaped the land. Sedimentary rocks, often rich in marine fossils such as shells, corals, and fish, indicate that the region was once submerged under-

These rocks may also display ripple marks or mud cracks, further supporting the presence of ancient water bodies. For example, the fossil-rich Shivalik Hills provide a glimpse into prehistoric times, FLOWS OVER showcasing the variety of life forms that once thrived in the area. The types of sediment and their layering can also offer insights into past climate conditions, such as periods climate conditions, such as periods ACROSS of drought or heavy rainfall. For instance, fine-grained sediments suggest calm, shallow waters, while coarser sediments point to more turbulent conditions. SUPPORTING Igneous rocks, formed from cooled

magma, reveal the area's volcanic history, while metamorphic rocks provide evidence of the intense transformations that occur deep within the Earth. Understanding the geology beneath the surface, which shapes the land, is equally impor-tant, and soil reveals much about this. For example, limestone regions, IRRIGATE where rock weathering creates caves and stone pillars, typically have alkaline soils high in calcium. Conversely, granite-dominated areas, where rock breakdown leads to acidic soils, often develop wetlands due to poor drainage.

Soil colour offers further clues: Dark brown soil, rich in organic matter, supports diverse ecosystems; grey soil suggests wetter conditions; yellowish soil may indicate nutrient depletion. Dramatic shifts in soil colour often point to human influence. For example, in Karnataka and in the landscape—such as fissures or cracks in the soil—can indicate instability, caused by factors like erosion, seismic activity, or human intervention.

In hilly regions like the Western Ghats or Himalayas, slipping or bending tree bark may signal shifting ground, a clear indicator of potential soil movement. Recognizing these signs is crucial for the safety of campers and hikers. Water bodies, including rivers, lakes, and wetlands, are vital components of India's ecosystems and are deeply intertwined with the land's geology. Major rivers such as Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Godavari are true lifelines for the

The Ganges River, revered as sacred, flows over 2,500 kilometres across northern India, supporting numerous aquatic and terrestrial species. Its waters irrigate fields that feed millions, and it is a critical source of drinking water for countless communities. Similarly, the Brahmaputra River, originating from the Tibetan Himalayas, meanders through Northeast Índia, sustaining rich floodplain ecosystems and supplying water for agriculture and hydropower.

The Godavari, often called the "Dakshin Ganga," flows through central India, nourishing one of the largest river basins in the country and supporting diverse habitats. India's wetlands, such as the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, span the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna delta and are a haven for Bengal tigers, crocodiles, birds, and other wildlife, while its mangroves protect the coastline from storms and floods. As we explore these natural habitats, subtle signs like paw prints, droppings, and other traces offer glimpses into animals' presence and activities.

Each animal leaves a distinct signature reflecting its unique anatomy and behaviour. For example, cats,

with their stealthy grace, leave tracks showcasing the soft pads of their paws, devoid of sharp imprints of their retractable claws, hinting at their elusive nature.

Rabbits, in contrast, leave bounding tracks with hind legs landing ahead of their forelegs, showcasing their hurried movements and vulnerability. Understanding these signs provides deeper insights into wildlife behaviour and habitat preferences. Like us, animals are drawn to places that offer the essentials of life: food, water, and shelter. A patch of trees followed by an open field and a water source, such as a lake or pond, indicates a popular spot for wildlife. However, animals in these areas are often cautious and aware of their surroundings.

They possess an innate ability to detect and avoid human presence long before we notice them, typically only breaking cover to make a quick escape. Birds, in particular, use vocalizations to mark territory and alert others to predators.

For instance, the sudden flight of pigeons on a quiet woodland path can trigger a group warning system, notifying nearby animals—deer. rabbits, and foxes—of a potential threat. Similarly, a chorus of noisy bird calls may indicate a coordinated defence against a predator, such as a crow mobbing an owl. Birds also emit sharp alarm calls, like the high-pitched "seet," specifically designed to warn others of a bird of prey overhead. It is in paying close attention to these subtle cues that we begin to truly understand the richness of the natural world. The next time we find ourselves amidst the whispers of the woods, let us listen closely.

The forest invites us to unlock its wisdom, learn from its resilience, and contribute to its legacy. By embracing the profound lessons found within the diverse elements of the forest, we not only enrich our own lives but also ensure that this invaluable library remains open for generations to come.

(The writers are former principal chief conservator of Forests, UP and Maharashtra; views *are their own)*

The rise of religious realty: How India's infrastructure push is transforming spiritual tourism

This emerging sector is transforming pilgrimage sites with upscale hospitality and commercial developments, meeting the needs of faith-driven travelers

he Indian economy has witnessed a significant push towards infrastructure, real estate and tourism, especially spiritual tourism especially in the 2025-26 Union Budget. The government's focus on urban redevelopment, affordable housing, and tourism-friendly policies has positioned India as a global hotspot for real estate and hospitality investments. Among the most prominent emerging trends is the rise of religious realty—an intersection of real estate, hospitality, and spiritual tourism, where projects are developed to cater to the growing number of pilgrims and faith-driven trav-

With disposable incomes on



MAYANK JAISWAL

up to Rs 12 lakh under the new tax regime—India's middle class is set to invest more in homeownership and travel. Additionally, the introduction of the Rs 15,000 crore SWAMIH Fund 2 for affordable and mid-income housing will fast-track stalled projects, ensuring homebuyers see the fruition of their investments.

exponential rise, with 50 toptier tourist destinations being developed with state partnerships, reinforcing the nation's status as a must-visit destination for both spiritual and leisure travellers. The Rise of Religious Realty:

A New Era in Development India's spiritual destinations have long been major attractions for domestic and international tourists. However, what was once a fragmented market with limited infrastructure is now being transformed into a sophisticated segment within the hospitality and real estate industries. The religious tourism boom has led to a surge in demand for premium hotels, commercial complexes, and mixed-use the rise due to tax relief mea sures—such as no income tax Simultaneously, India's hospidevelopments that cater to tality sector is poised for an both pilgrims and high-end

travellers. The Solitaire Group has been at the forefront of this evolution. Recognising the immense potential in religious reality, it has strategically invested in prime pilgrimage destinations such as Ayodhya, Varanasi, Prayagraj, and Haridwar.

Its flagship development in Ayodhya—a luxury Taj hotel in partnership with the Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL)—exemplifies its commitment to redefining spiritual tourism. The 300-key Taj Ayodhya, spanning 7.2 acres, will feature high-end villas, luxury accommodations, wellness facilities, and state-of-theart banqueting spaces to cater to both pilgrims and travellers seeking opulent experiences. Unlocking the Potential of Tier II and III Cities



The narrative of real estate growth in India is no longer limited to metro cities. Government-backed infrastructure projects, improved regional connectivity under the modified UDAN scheme, and growing investor interest are propelling the development of Tier II and III cities.

Cities with religious and cultural significance are seeing an influx of premium residential and commercial projects, as Master List (HML), ensuring

demand for quality real estate soars. The Solitaire Group has been a pioneer in this domain. Its developments in Prayagraj, including the city's first and largest township, are a testament to its vision of creating world-class urban spaces beyond metro hubs.

Through strategic land acquisitions and partnerships, the Group aims to bridge the infrastructure gap in smaller cities and deliver projects that enhance both living standards and economic prosperity.

Hospitality Meets Spiritual **Tourism** India's push for religious and spiritual tourism has been backed by key government ini-

tiatives, including hotels in pilgrimage hubs being added to the Infrastructure Harmonised

easier access to low-cost financing, streamlined e-visa services and visa fee waivers for select international tourists to encourage global arrivals, and MUDRA loans for homestays to support budget travel and rural tourism.

This structured approach to hospitality growth has enabled developers like the Solitaire Group to envision and execute projects that cater to a diverse range of travellers. The focus remains on integrating worldclass amenities into heritagerich locations while maintaining the cultural and spiritual

essence of these sites. Building a Legacy of

Excellence Since its inception in 2005, the Solitaire Group has established itself as a leading player in real estate and hospitality. From residential developments in emerging urban centres to luxury hotels in religious destinations, its portfolio reflects its commitment to innovation, sustainability, and excellence.

With the Indian government's ambitious push for infrastructure, tourism, and real estate reforms, the opportunities in religious realty are boundless. Indian leading players would continue this transformative journey, crafting spaces that offer both spiritual fulfilment and contemporary luxury. The focus be on delivering exceptional living experiences and fostering economic growth in the communities that are being served.

(The author is the founder and CEO of Solitaire Group. Views expressed are personal) HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | FEBRUARY 18, 2025

IN BRIEF



Sugar production falls 12 pc so far: ISMA

ndia's sugar production fell 12 per cent to 197 lakh tonnes till February 15 of the current marketing year ending September mainly due to lower output in Maharashtra and Karnataka, according to industry body ISMA data. Sugar marketing year runs from October to September. The data of sugar production is after diversion of sweetener for ethanol making. In a statement on Monday, Indian Sugar and Bio Energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA) said that sugar production till February 15th, 2025 in the current 2024-25 marketing year reached 197.03 lakh tonnes as against 224.15 lakh tonnes in the corresponding period of the preceding year. Among states, ISMA data showed that sugar production has fallen in Uttar Pradesh to 64.04 lakh tonnes from 67.77 lakh tonnes In Maharashtra, the production has dipped to 68.22 lakh tonnes from 79.45 lakh tonnes, while the output in Karnataka fell to 35.80 lakh tonnes from 43.20 lakh tonnes during the period under review. As per ethanol supplies data up to January 31 ISMA said that sugar diversion towards ethanol is estimated around 14.1 lakh tonnes against a diversion of around 8.3 lakh tonnes in the year-ago period.



SBI Card appoints Salila Pande as MD & CEO

BI Cards and Payment Services on Monday said its board has appointed Salila Pande as the Managing Director & CEO with effect from April 1, 2025. The appointment of Pande, who has been nominated by State Bank of India, will be for a period of two years, SBI Card said in a filing to the BSE. The board has approved the appointment of Pande pursuant to the superannuation of Abhijit Chakravorty from the services of State Bank of India from March 31, 2025, it said. Pande is a Chief General Manager at the State Bank of India. She is a career banker and had joined the SBI in 1995 as a probationary officer, and has been with the country's largest banking group since then. Pande is a post graduate in physics a Certified Financial Risk Manager (FRM by GARP, USA) and a Certified Associate of the Indian Institute of Bankers. Shares of SBI Cards and Payment Services Ltd closed at Rs 853.75, down 0.56 per cent over previous close on the BSE



Rupee falls 16 paise to close at 86.87 against US dollar

he rupee depreciated 16 paise to close at 86.87 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, weighed down by significant foreign fund outflows and a recovery in the US dollar index from intraday lows. Forex traders said the Indian rupee is trading with a negative bias as foreign banks went on a dollar-buying spree and importers scrambled to secure dollars. as they feared further depreciation amid global uncertainty. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 86.70 and touched the high of 86.68 against the greenback during intraday. It also touched the low of 86.88 before ending the session at 86.87 (provisional) against the dollar, logging a loss of 16 paise from its previous close. On Friday, the rupee extended its recovery and settled 21 paise higher at 86.71 against the US dollar. "Indian rupee declined today on a weak tone in the domestic markets and a recovery in the US dollar index from intraday lows. However, weak tone in crude oil prices and a decline in US treasury yields cushioned the downside," said Anuj Choudhary – Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan.

trade pact soon

India and the US will sit together in the next couple of weeks to decide on the nature of the proposed trade agreement and finalise its broad contours, a senior official said on Monday.

During the recent visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Washington, India

the US announced to more than double the two-way com-merce to USD 500 billion by 2030 and negotiate the first tranche of a mutually beneficial, multi-sector bilateral trade agreement (BTA) by fall of 2025.

'Give us a couple of weeks to decide what is the level of ambition in the first tranche (of the agreement) that we are looking at and what is the nature of the agreement that we will be arriving at. The two sides will need to sit together and try to finalise the broad contours," Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce Rajesh Agrawal told reporters here.

The two countries have also agreed to collaborate to enhance bilateral trade by increasing US exports of industrial goods to India and

Indian exports of labourintensive manufactured products to the US.

The two sides will also work together to increase trade in agricultural goods.

India exports agri goods worth over USD 4 billion to America and that will get a further boost, he said, adding that there is a "tough" timeline for concluding the first tranche



of the trade pact.

"Both sides have agreed to do that in the next 8-9 months. So we need to get going and work on that," Agrawal said.

Briefing media, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said the visit agreed to a roadmap to boost trade ties between the two countries.

Normally in a free trade agreement, two trading partners either eliminate or significantly reduce customs duties on the maximum number of goods traded between them. Besides, they ease norms to promote trade in services and boost investments.

India, US to finalise broad contours of trade pact soon Profit booking leading FIIs to sell Indian equities: FM

Seeking to assuage concerns over foreign institutional investors (FII) selling Indian equities lately, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday attributed the action to profit booking.

Speaking to reporters in the financial capital, Sitharaman said the Indian economy is one where the investors are bagging better returns which leads to profit booking.

FIIs also go out when they are able to or in a position to book profits. Indian market today, Indian economy today, has an environment in which investments are also yielding good returns and profit booking is also happening," she said.

It can be noted that FIIs have sold over Rs 1.56 lakh crore of stocks since October last year, including nearly Rs 1 lakh crore in 2025 itself, which has led to a sharp correction on the indices and wiping out investor wealth.

Finance Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said FIIs are not moving from one emerging market to other, and added that in times of global uncertainties like the one being witnessed right now, they tend to go back to the country of origin, which is mostly the US.

He also hinted that these shifts may be temporary, and added that Indian markets are



FIIs also go out when they are able to or in a position to book profits. Indian market today. Indian economy today, has an environment in which investments are also yielding good returns and profit booking is also happening," she said

Explaining that apart from demand-supply issues, growth prospects also influence investor behavior, Pandey said India remains the fastest growing large economy and added that the recently announced Budget has a slew of growthoriented measures.

We have faced global headwinds in the past, and will continue to face them. But I think India is in a strong position to handle it," he added.

Ajay Seth, Secretary of the Department of Economic

Affairs, dismissed any idea of a government interference in the market because of the heavy sell-offs, stating that such a move can be carried out only if there is any evidence of market failure, which is not the case at present.

Seth said equities do not function on government policies alone, and added that foreign investors go to developed or bigger markets in periods of uncertainties.

He said that while India has shown resilience when it comes to world events in parts,

it is not fully de-coupled either.

To a question on the US osturing on tariffs, Sitharaman said India is working towards becoming more investor friendly and pointed to recent budget announcements on reforms in customs duties.

India has already taken several measures over the last two years on the duties front with the view to protect local indus-try and jobs, she said, adding that the safeguard or antidumping duties are also periodically reviewed

Adani pledges Rs 2,000 cr for setting up schools

PNS NEW DELHI

Adani group on Monday announced Rs 2,000 crore donation for building at least 20 schools across the country as it continued to reveal details of the Rs 10,000 crore charity committed at the wedding of founder Gautam Adani's younger son.

The conglomerate had previously announced Rs 6,000 crore for constructing hospitals and another Rs 2,000 crore for skill development.

The Adani Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Gautam Adani-led group, "has collaborated with GEMS Education, a global leader in private K-12 education, to establish temples of education across the country.

"With an initial donation of INR 2,000 cr from the Adani family, the partnership will prioritize making world-class education and learning infrastructure affordable to people from all strata of society," it said in a statement.

Earlier this month, Adani



had committed to spending Rs 10,000 crore on social causes when his younger son Jeet tied nuptial knots.

with GEMS Education will also give rise to best-in-class research institutions focused on developing teaching competencies supported by innovation and capability development, it said the first 'Adani GEMS School of Excellence' will come up in Lucknow in the academic year 2025-26.

"Over the next three years, at least 20 such schools in the K-12 segment will be rolled

out across India's primary metropolitan cities and, subsequently, also in Tier II to IV cities," the statement said.

seats in CBSE curriculum will be free for under-served and deserving children.

Leveraging the Adani Group's pan-Indian presence and extensive infrastructure capabilities and also GEMS' educational expertise, the partnership plans to develop a scalable, affordable and sustainable model for quality education for students across

SBI MF launches Rs 250 SIP

PNS MUMBAI

Asset management company SBI Mutual Fund launched a systematic investment plan (SIP) aimed at democratizing access to the product on Monday.

An investor can invest as low as Rs 250 per transaction under the JanNivesh SIP scheme, which was launched in presence of Sebi Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch.

Investors typically put Rs 500 in SIP, which could go down to Rs 100 depending on the scheme in which money is being put. With the aim of deepening the MF reach, the lower SIP of Rs 250 was considered, sachetisation effectively used by consumer goods compa-

"By lowering entry barriers and leveraging digital platforms, we aim to attract first-time investors, small savers, and those in the unorganized sector, with SIP starting at just Rs 250," SBI Mutual Fund's managing director and chief executive Nand Kishore said.

Exports contracts 2.38 pc; trade deficit widens PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's exports declined for the third month in a row in January by 2.38 per cent to \$37.32 billion due to volatility in petroleum

prices and global uncertainties. The trade deficit widened to \$222.99 billion as imports rose by 10.28 per cent year-on-year to \$ 59.42 billion in January.

(TGTS) Telangana Technology Services Limited TGTS invites bids for Establishment of AR & VR Labs in 164 Schools of School Education

Department, Telangana. Tender Ref. No. TGTS/HWP1/SE/862/2025 Dt. 18/02/2025 Bid Calling Date: 18/02/2025, Pre-bid meeting Date: 20/02/2025 11:30AM at Old TGTS, 2nd floor, HACA Bhavan, Nampelly, Hyderabad. Bid Closing Date: 26/02/2025. Contact details: General Manager-Srinivasrao,T@gov.in, lic. General Manager-<u>butso-tigts-ts@felangena.gov.in</u>. For further details please visit <u>www.tgts.telangena.gov.in</u> and www.eprocurement.telangena.gov.in. Contact Phone Nos.: 9965029392, 9963029403

Sealed Tenders are invited from registered contractors for Tender SP.No.30/24-25 (General), Estimate for rectification of 11 KV DTR B switches, Re-conducting of 34 Sq.mm 8 55 Sq.mm conductor, Conversion of 1-ph 2W/L to 3-ph 4W/L, erection of Addl. DTR and LT Additional Circuits in Mallapur Section of Habsiguda Subdivision in Habsiguda Division Habeiguda Circle. The last date of sale of above tenders is 24.02.2025 upto 17:00 Hrs Further information can be obtained from the Q/o the Divisional Engineen OP/Habsiguda Contact Person: Sri, DEE/OP/Habsiguda: 9440613131. DEE / OP / HABSIGUDA

APPENDIX - IV

(Rule – 8(1))POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable property)

(Rule — 8(1))/POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable property)
Wherealthe undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Indian Bank, Secundesiaed Branch
under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act
2002 and in councies of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with rule 8 Surrey, 9 of the Security
Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 19,11,2004 calling upon the borrower
IR. G. Vijay Kumar Chowdary, (Borrower-Wortgager) Site G. Verketssowan Rec., Plot No. 6, Pactorswith
Rasidency, 403, Jayanagar, New Bowerpails, Securitation and Mr. G. Phanesenths (Guerintor) Site G.
Verketssowan Rec., Plot No. 6, Pactorswith Rasidency, 403, Jayanagar, New Bowerpails, Securities and with our Securities and Security Site G. Verketssowan Rec., Plot No. 6, Pactorswith
aith our Securities of Capacity of the Securities of the Interest Recompanies of the Interest Capacity of the Security Chily) together with Interest thance from
19.11.2034 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The amount due as on 31.01.2005 is
Rs. 9,93,0071. Aith further interest costs, other charges and deeperases between.
The borrower having failed to repair the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken pessession of the property described fearant below in exercise of powers conferenced on him under Section 13 (4) of the said Act read with rule 8 Section 2 of the said rules on
this 14th day of February of the year 2025.

his 14th day of February of the year 2025.

this 14 thinday of February of the year 2023. The between in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of the Indian Bank, Secundrabaid Branch file an amount of Rad 9,0,0074, as on 31,01,2005 with further interest, costs, other charges and expenses thereon. Whe clave attention to the provisions of Section 1989 of the SARFAESI Act and the Railes framed there under which deals with your rights of rectemption over the securities."

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All that the Residential Flat No E-305, third Floor, Swarpia Aroade, 9 no 87 and 90, together with undivided share of land admeasuring 20,000 Sq. Yds or 16.72 Sq. Mts., Out of 1854 Sq. Yds along with build up area 1100 Sq. P. Including common areas) shusted at Hasmartheat, Beverapelly, Secunderabad Contomment, Hydratisch, Telengama State Beudaries of Platt/North Copins to Sty & File F-306, Such Open to Sty & Flat D-304 East. Contidor; West. Road Boundaries of Landt North: Neighbous Land. South:30"Mide Road: East: Neighbours Land; West: 30, Wide Road

Date: 14.02.2025

NAME: VUXY BARDAL, Chief Monage Authorised Officer Indian Bank, Secundrabad Branch

KARIMNAGAR BRANCH # 3-5-335, Gandhi Road

PUBLICATION DEMAND NOTICE otice under Sec. 13 (2) of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets

Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002. Sent on 11.02.2025 by Rogd, Post

To,Borrower: 1.Nr Gajan Lai Bhukya Sio Kirthi Lai (Applicant & Mortgagor) Hno 10-2-50945 Vidhya Nager Karimnagar 2. **Mr Madan Lai Bhu**kya Sio Kirthi Lai (JApplicant & Mortgagor) Hni

10-2-5084B, Vichya Nagar Karimnagar 3. Mrs. Jyethi Bhukya Wo Gajan Lai Bhukya (Co Applicant) Hno 10-2-5034B, Vidhya Nagar Karimnagar 4. Mrs. Padma Bhukya Wo Madan Lai Bhukya (Co.Applicant) Hno 10-2-5034B, Vidhya Nagar Karimnagar Sub: Issue of Demand Notice on Your Housing Lean - Account No. 6538152608 for Rs.

50.79Lakhs and With Indian Bank, Karimnagar branch - Reg. You committed default in repayment of loans to the tune of Rs. 53,54,945.001 (Rupees Fifty Three Lakhs Fifty Four Thousand Nine hundred and forty five rupees only together with interest from 12.02.2025 till date of payment. The Bank issued notice under the Action 11.02.2025 calling upon you to repay the outstanding amount of Rs. 53,54,945.004 (Rupees Fifty Three Lakhs Fifty Thousand Nine hundred and forty five rupees only together with interest fro 12.02.2023 till date of payment. The notice was sent to you by "Regd, post. You are called upon to pay. Rs.53,54,945.004 (Rupees Fifty Three Lakhs Fifty Four Thousand Nine hundred and forty five rupees only together with interest from 12.02.2025 till date of payment. within 60 tays from the date of this notice failing which Bank will be constrained to exercise its rights of inforcement of security interest as against the secured assets given in the schedule hereunds This Notice is without projudice to any other right namedy available to the Bank.

SCHEDULE: The specific details of the assets in which security interest is created are enumerate

Mortgaged assets: (As per the registered sale Deed no 5705 dated 19.062017) Plot no 0 admeasuring 242,00sq yards or 203,28 Sq Mhrs in Sy No 1228 Situated at Vichyanaga Kothayaswada) Locality of Karimnagar Town, within limits of Municipal Corporation Karimnaga and under the Jurisdisction of Sub Diat and Diatrict registration Karimnagar, Near House No 10-2 87. East: 20-0" Wide Road, West: 30-0" Wide Road, North: Open Plot No 3, South: Open Plot No

Sensex, Nifty end 8-day losing run

Eke out gains in a volatile session

PNS MUMBAI

Stock markets snapped the eight-day losing run in a volatile session on Monday with benchmark Sensex closing higher by 57 points on the back of value buying in blue-chip stocks HDFC Bank and Reliance Industries.

Helped by fag-end buying, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 57.65 points or 0.08 per cent to settle at 75,996.86. During the day, the barometer tanked 644.45 points or 0.84 per cent to 75,294.76.

The NSE Nifty rebounded 30.25 points or 0.13 per cent to 22,959.50.

Reports that the US and India will meet soon to decide on broad contours of a trade agreement for reducing tariffs supported buying in metal, pharma and financial shares, analysts said.

From the 30-share blue-

chip pack, Bajaj Finserv, Power

Grid, IndusInd Bank, Adani

Ports, UltraTech Cement, HDFC Bank, Zomato and Tata Motors were among the

Bharti Airtel, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, ICICI Bank, and ITC were the

biggest laggards. Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 4,294.69 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

The total outflow by FPIs has reached Rs 99,299 crore near Rs 1 lakh crore -- in 2025 so far, data with the depositories showed.

Mahindra & Mahindra,

Dhankhar calls for revival of rural economies

PNS CHANDIGARH

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Monday called for the revitalization of rural economies through micro industries that add value to agricultural and dairy prod-

ucts.
"There must be evolution of a mechanism in a village or in a cluster of villages where you have micro industries at the farm that add value to the agro produce, that add value to the livestock produced, milk produced. This will help evolve a sustainable society and the nutritional food value will certainly go up.
"What stops us from having entrepreneurial skills to produce ice creams, paneer, sweets, and the like in village clusters? This is very important because it will generate employment and satisfy rural youth,'

Dhankhar said. Dhankhar was the chief guest at the inauguration of Advanced Entrepreneurship Skill Development Program (A-EDSP) on "Functional Foods, Neutraceuticals and their Safety" at National Agri-Food and Biomanufacturing

Institute in Mohali. Emphasising that technolo-



must be integrated into farming practices to improve efficiency and productivity, the vice president said, "startups are there in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. They have to trickle to villages now because

agriculture produce is lifeline of economy, raw material for industry. And when this takes place, close to the farmland in the rural firmament, evolving as a cluster, economy will take a jump, and people will believe

in technology and its potential benefits, he said, "A farmer is by and large clinging to his tractor. He wants to use the tractor for as long as it can last, ignorant of the fact that new technology is becoming envi-ronment-friendly, fuel-efficient, multifunctional, and highly subsidized".

Urging farmers to stay informed about advancements

He said there has to be an awareness campaign to tell the farmers that you don't need anybody's help. "You only have to know your inner strength to change your economy to a groups, market your product at a price of your choice; you can. "But by and large, I see farm

produce is sold when it is not farmers' market, it is buyers' market. The government provides facilities to hold on to the stock by massive warehousing and cooperative movement. I can tell you the farm policies of the government are so helping the farmer.

"The farmer has to know about it. You (premier institutes like NABI, Mohali) can play a great role because we cannot allow that our farmers get anything but the very best.

VCLE pioneer Dack

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Tuesday February 18, 2025

'THERE'S A LOT TO COME': CHUM DARANG HINTS 'BIG' ON HER NEW CHAPTER

TEJAL SINHA tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

hum Darang's journey from the quiet corners of the entertainment industry to the bright lights of Bigg Boss 18 has been nothing short of a revelation. Known for her quiet strength and raw authenticity, Chum Darang made an unforgettable mark on the show, captivating audiences with her fierce authenticity and undeniable presence. Born in Arunachal Pradesh, she wasn't just another contestant—Chum's journey was one of transformation, where vulnerability met strength and where every nerability met strength and where every moment in the house revealed a side of her fans couldn't get enough of. From forming lasting bonds to standing up against criticism, she quickly became a fan favourite, leaving a legacy that extended far beyond the Bigg Boss house and into the hearts of viewers everywhere.

While we can just not adore her posts and reels of 'ChumVeer', we had an equally fun chat The Pioneer with her. So, let's take you through our exclusive chat with her.

Reflecting on her Bigg Boss Journey, she

With gratitude and confidence, actress and former Bigg Boss contestant **Chum Darang opened up** about her transformative journey on Bigg Boss 18, her evolving bond with Karanveer Mehra, her emotional struggles in the house and more

describes it as nothing short of fantastic. "It was more than I could ever imagine," she says, her voice filled with gratitude. For someone who describes herself as an introvert, this journey was not just about being a part of a reality show, but also about personal growth. "I'm someone who takes time to open up. But during the course of the show, I've tried to come out

of my shell and become more outspoken. That's been a great change for me."

Before she could make a mark of her-

self in the entertainment industry, She was crowned Miss AAPSU in 2010 and later represented India at Miss Earth India 2016 and Miss Asia World 2017. Later, she made a remarkable performance with her roles, a remarkable performance with her roles, in films like *Badhaai Do* and *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, though relatively brief, has also helped her gain recognition. But it was after her *Bigg Boss* appearance that the love and recognition from fans reached new heights. "Doing Bigg Boss was one of the best decisions I ever made," she reflects. "It gave me visibility and recognition that I never imagined. I'm really grateful for the love that has come my way."

Despite her initial reluctance to join the show, fearing judgment from the public,

show, fearing judgment from the public, she is now thankful for taking that leap. "I was nervous at first, but everything turned out fine and I've gained so much from this experience," she adds.

from this experience," she adds.

Throughout her time in the house, she formed strong bonds, particularly with fellow contestant Karan. There was a lot of talk among fans about the chemistry between the two, with several speculating about a deeper connection. In fact, even post the show, their videos can make us go 'awwww'. Chum also shared a video in which Karan Veer Mehra could be heard confessing his love to her. He said, "Roses are red, violets are blue, I don't care about anybody but I love you." Chum was seen blushing and showing a thumbs-up sign after Karan's confession. In fact, Chum had also captioned her post stating, "Valentine's Day it was. Thank you, you." Chum, however, sets the record straight: "The bond I share with Karan is real. It's not just for the show. What we share is true and it will last beyond Bigg Boss. People will talk, but we know the truth," she says confidently.

Chum also shared a candid moment when she opened up about the emotion-

when she opened up about the emotion-

ally challenging moments in the house. The task with Vivian, which led to an emotional breakdown, was particularly tough for her. "It was one of the worst moments for her. "It was one of the worst moments for me in the house. Both Shrutika and I went through panic attacks, and we cried a lot. It was very tough emotionally," she recalls, her voice growing somber. She appreciates the support she had from close friends like Karan and Shilpa, which helped her cope with the difficult time. Going ahead, she also spoke out about

the recent incident where Elvish Yadav made derogatory and racist remarks about her during a podcast. She stated that disrespecting someone's identity and name is no fun. In a post that she had shared, she went on to emphasise that there is a line between humour and hate, and such behavior must not be tolerated. She also extended her support to the Northeastern extended her support to the Northeastern

community, standing firm against racism.
"I stand with everyone who has faced racism. We all deserve respect, dignity and

equality," she shared with strength. Her response was met with an outpouring of support from her fans, who appreciated her courage in standing up for herself and for others who face discrimination.

Another controversy that Chum faced during her time on the show involved accusations that she played the "woman accusations that she played the "woman card" during some of the tasks. She is quick to dismiss these claims with a laugh. "I find it funny when people say that," Chum says, shaking her head. "I'm not the type of person to play any card. I was just being myself, and I think everyone knows that. People can say what they want, but I've lived those moments, and I know the truth" I know the truth."

Her emotional vulnerability was evident Her emotional vulnerability was evident during her conversations with Vivian, who expressed regret after a task involving the two of them. In the aftermath of the task, Vivian organised a surprise party for Bigg Boss contestants, yet Chum was not invited. Some fans speculated about the reainvited. Some fans speculated about the reasons for her absence, but Chum clarifies, "It was a surprise party for Vivian and it was organized at the last minute. I spoke to Nouran after that, and we cleared things up. Everything is good now."

As for what the future holds, Chum has a lot to look forward to. She shares that she was working on a project before entering the *Bigg Boss* house and is now eager to

the *Bigg Boss* house and is now eager to resume filming. She hints at more exciting things ahead, although she's keeping some details under wraps for now. "There's a lot to come," she teases. "I'm excited about whot's next." what's next."

what's next."

Her journey from the *Bigg Boss* house to her growing fanbase has been a testament to her resilience, strength, and unwavering authenticity. Despite facing personal challenges, online criticism and even racism, she has proven time and time again that she will not be defined by negativity. For her, it's about embracing who she is, celebrating the relationships that matter, and, most importantly, standing up for what's right. "We all deserve respect and equality," she concludes with a smile, "and that's what I'll always fight for."

As Chum embarks on new projects, her

As Chum embarks on new projects, her fans are eagerly waiting to see more of the multi-faceted actress, who continues to inspire with her powerful voice and her fearless approach to life.



WHAT KARAN AND I SHARE IS REAL AND SOMETHING THAT WILL LAST AND WAS NOT JUST FOR THE SHOW. BOTH OF US KNOW ABOUT IT.

'A sharp and fearless cop'—now that's the role Tinaa looks to explore!

PNS EXCLUSIVE

inaa Dattaa has always been a force to reckon with in the entertainment industry. From captivating audiences as Ichcha in Uttaran to reinventing herself with bold and unconventional roles, she has consistently defied expectations. Known for her versatility, she has seamlessly transitioned between television, reality shows and now, the ever-evolving digital space.

With every project, she proves that she is not just here

to play safe but to challenge the status quo and explore characters that push her boundaries.

Now, with Personal Trainer, the actress takes on one of the most intriguing roles of her career. Premiered on January 28, 2025, on Hungama OTT, this crime thriller plunges into the dark side of Mumbai's elite gym culture, unraveling

Known for her versatility, Tinaa **Dattaa has** effortlessly transitioned from television to OTT, taking on roles that push the boundaries of her craft. In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, actress **Tinaa Dattaa** opened up about her passion for portraying strong, unconventional characters that challenge her as an artist

a gripping tale of love, betrayal, and secrets. Dattaa plavs Neha Dharamrajan, a married woman whose life takes unexpected turns, pulling her into a world of suspense and emotional turmoil.

Talking about her character and the series, the *Bigg* Boss fame describes Personal Trainer as an intense and unpredictable thriller. "It's a gripping crime drama filled with suspense, passion and unexpected twists. My character is complex—she is a married woman caught in a web of emotions and secrets. The show keeps you guessing till the very end, and every episode unfolds a new layer of the story. It's intense, intriguing and something I've never done before, which

makes it even more special for me."

For her, this project is more than just another role—it's a reinvention. Over the years, she has proven her ability to mold herself into vastly different characters, from innocent and vulnerable to fierce and rebellious. With Personal Trainer, she steps into a grey-shaded role that defies the conventional boundaries of a protagonist. "This is a character I haven't done before. There's love, betrayal and a lot of suspense surrounding her. She's married, but there's so much more to her than what meets the eye. The story keeps you guessing about why she does what she does and what ulti-

mately happens."

This role also marks a significant shift in her on-screen persona. Sporting a new bob cut and a bold saree look, the Fear Factor star embraces a striking transformation that fans have loved. "Everyone has been telling me that this bold new

look suits me well! It's a very different avatar for me especially with the bob cut and saree combination, something I've never done before," she says. But it wasn't just the look that challenged her; Personal Trainer also featured her first-ever intimate scene on screen. "I honestly thought I wouldn't be able to do it—I kept blushing and laughing and funnily enough, Gulshan was even shyer than me!" she reveals, adding that the director handled it with utmost profession-

alism, making her feel comfortable. Her dedication to stepping out of her comfort zone is evident, not just in her choice of roles but also in her approach to fitness. As someone who strongly believes in discipline, she ensures that fitness remains a core part of her lifestyle. "I actually tell my fitness trainer to be strict with me—I might be the first client ever to say that!" she laughs. "I don't like to over-exhaust myself, but I've noticed that if you start skipping workouts, it becomes a habit. That's why I prefer a trainer who keeps me consistent. Thankfully, my kickboxing

trainer does exactly that, and it helps me stay on track? While her journey has been marked by diverse roles, she sees *Personal Trainer* as a stepping stone to even more unconventional projects. She admires performances that showcase strength and depth, particularly roles like Kangana Ranaut's in *Fashion*. "I'd love to play a strong, feisty, independent woman. Maybe even a sharp and fearless cop—someone who knows exactly what she's doing. That kind of role would be very exciting for me."

Her journey so far has been a testament to her relentless pursuit of artistic growth and with the digital space offering newer, bolder opportunities, she is ready to take them head-on. "OTT platforms give actors the opportunity to explore without being typecast or judged for a role. As an actor, this is my bread and butter—I am always hungry for good characters, whether it's in a series, OTT, or any other format."

On a personal note, Tinaa also reflects on what she values most in life, including relationships. "Respect and good communication are the biggest green flags for me. A guy should be well-spoken—bad tonality is a huge turn-off. Honesty and loyalty matter a lot, too. I believe in going the extra mile to keep my partner happy, but at the same time, it's important to understand each other's perspectives and be vocal. When you discuss things openly, a relationship only grows stronger." With Personal Trainer, Tinaa Dattaa has once again proven that she is an actress who refuses to be boxed into a single image. Whether it's on television, OTT, or any other platform, her willingness to experiment and evolve makes her one of the most exciting performers to watch.



My character in Personal Trainer is something I haven't done before. There's love, betrayal and a lot of suspense surrounding her. She's married, but there's so much more to her than what meets the eye. The story keeps you guessing about why she does what she does and what ultimately happens

Nurturing kids & empowering teachers to revolutionise education

ducation is a word we hear every day. It's a topic we discuss endlessly, yet how often do we truly pause to reflect on its deeper meaning? Education is much more than imparting facts and figures; it is the foundation upon which societies are built, the key to unlocking our potential, and the roadmap to a brighter future. On this journey, we must rethink the purpose of education, particularly when it comes to nurturing the holistic development of children and empowering our educators.

True education transcends academic success. It's about preparing children to thrive in all aspects of life. Emotional intelligence, critical thinking, physical well-being and social skills are just as essential as math and science. While academic performance certainly matters, it is not the only indicator of future success. What truly matters is helping children become well-rounded individuals—capable of navigating life's challenges with resilience, creativity, and curiosity.

In today's fast-paced interconnected world, we can no longer rely on traditional rote learning methods. These outdated systems, which emphasize memorisation over comprehension, are ill-equipped to prepare children for the complexities of modern life. Today's learner needs more than just facts; they need to be given the freedom to question, explore and create. Inquiry-based learning, where curiosity leads the way, is a vital approach. Schools must foster an environment where students can take risks, learn from failure, and discover their true potential. For this to happen, however, educators must be given the right tools and the freedom to

nurture this type of learning.

Teachers are the architects of the learning experience. They shape the way children think, feel, and interact with the world. But for teachers to have the maximum impact, they, too, must be empowered. Teaching extends far beyond curriculum delivery; it's about emotional intelligence,

adaptability, and the ability to integrate technology meaningfully into the classroom. Teacher training, therefore, must evolve—focusing not only on pedagogy but also on equipping educators with the skills that help them inspire and connect with their students.

At Birla Open Minds Education Pvt Ltd, we believe in holistic education that nurtures both students and educators. Our 'Soul Science' program builds emotional resilience, while LearnLeapempowers teachers with evolving strategies. Through Birla Brainiacs' unique hybrid model, we blend online and offline learning, ensuring real-world experiences that foster academ-

ic, emotional and practical growth.

Looking ahead, India's education system is at the cusp of transformation. As the country prepares to emerge as a global leader, our education system must evolve to meet the demands of the future. It's time for a paradigm shift—one that pri-oritises flexibility, personalized learning, and skill-based education. The future of education lies in unlocking the full potential of both students and teachers. It's about creating an education system that is dynamic, personalised and inclusive. In the classroom of the future, technology will empower learning, creativity will be nurtured, and emotional and social development will be prioritised just as much as academic success. But to achieve this, we must invest in both students and educators, providing them with the tools, training, and freedom to innovate and lead.

As we look toward this future, we must remember the timeless words of Nelson Mandela: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."



what's brewing?







The Maurya Foundation is organizing the Run for Hearing event to raise awareness about hearing health and support individuals with hearing impairments. Scheduled for March 2, 2025, at Gachibowli Stadium in Hyderabad, the event will feature a 2K Fun Walk, 5K Run, 10K Challenge, and a Virtual Run. The mission of Run for Hearing is to promote early detection of hearing issues, provide accessible hearing care, and inspire action toward creating a sound-aware community. Dr. Sri Prakash, an ENT Surgeon and Chairman of the Maurya Foundation, along with Dr.









Shohaib from Telangana, are

seen. Presence of Mittu Sai

Fisher, Committee Chairman

and Osman Alhairi, contested

MLA Karwan are seen.





Villa Marie Degree College for Women has made waves in both basketball and swimming, securing outstanding positions in multiple prestigious tournaments this month. Organised by Gowtham Reddy, Villa Marie Degree College's basketball team clinched 1st place in this highly competitive event.



The Kanhaiyalal Shantadevi Lohiya Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Lohiya Group, has unveiled a new school block dedicated to advancing girls' education. The newly constructed block at Medchal ZPHS Girls School, a beacon of hope for the community, features eight modern classrooms equipped with digital learning tools. Over 600 girls from underprivileged backgrounds will gain access to better educational facilities, a significant step towards removing obstacles that often hinder their academic growth.



The Second edition of the Hybiz.TV Realty Awards was held with grandeur. The event took place at HICC Novotel in Hyderabad. As part of the event, awards were presented to organisations and individuals who have made significant contributions to the real estate sector. More than 40 awards were distributed, and 12 individuals received the prestigious Legend Award.

Vishal Mishra -IAS, MD, Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam Ltd (a unit of Uttarakhand Govt.), Virender Singh Rana, Public Relations Officer, Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam Ltd, Ramesh Iyyengar, Regional Manager, Tour Times, have announced the First Bharat Gaurav Train to Char Dham in collaboration with Indian Railways, Tour Times is India's top-rated tourist train operator. This special Tourist Train covers Haridwar, Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath. The 16-day all-inclusive Indian Railways special train package tour begins on May 8th,

2025, and bookings are open.



ARCHIE









MUCH AS I LOVE MY 'CHOCOLATE FROSTED CRUNCHY SUGAR BOMBS,' THE BEST THAT'S WHEN YOU EAT THE LEFTOVER MILK THAT'S ALL SLUDGY FROM THE EXTRA PART IS AFTER THE CEREAL IS SUGAR YOU ADDED. GONE.



CROSSWORD



GARFIELD













GINGER MEGGS





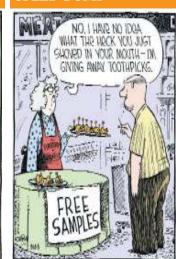


REALITY CHECK

CALVIN AND HOBBES



SPEED BUMP



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ACROSS

- 1 Little by little 6 Court case
- 7 Country of the Spanish 9 Second-hand
- 10 A citrus fruit 12 A health professional
- 14 Grow plants in this 17 A horse rider's straps 18 Unlocks
- 15 Follows orders 16 Connect together

6 This comes after

8 Use these when knitting

11 Talk a lot about other

people's business

13 Porcelain things

lightning



19 Joy

DOWN

Hyderabad | Tuesday February 18, 2025

Producer's veiled criticism of Telugu actresses: Is Baby actress the target?

sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

n Sunday night, the team of the Tamil film *Dragon* visited Hyderabad for the release of the Telugu version, titled *Return of the Dragon*. Pradeep Ranganathan stars as the lead actor, with Anupama Parameswaran and Kayadu Lohar playing the

and Kayadu Lonar playing the female leads. Ashwath Marimuthu directs the film. Telugu producer SKN attended the promotional event as one of the chief guests and his controversial comments about Telugu actresses have since gone viral. It seems that the producer's remarks were directed at *Baby* actress Vaishnavi Chaitanya, who worked with SKN in that film. While the producer did not name anyone specifically, Vaishnavi Chaitanya is the latest Telugu actress to have worked with him.

Anupama Parameswaran was absent from the event, while another female actress, Kayadu Lohar, was present. During his speech, SKN said that after the release of Baby, they received compliments from Pradeep Ranganathan and Ashwath Marimuthu. "We love non-Telugu-speaking girls so much more than Telugu girls. We realised what happens when we encourage Telugu girls in our films, so my director Sai Rajesh and I decided to encourage non-Telugu girls only," said SKN. He further added that Sai Rajesh had delivered a cult film and helped him become a cult producer.

It appears that the producer's remarks were indirectly aimed at Vaishnavi Chaitanya, especially since he referred to a "cult film," which likely refers to *Baby*. The reasons behind SKN's comments remain unclear, but some speculate it may relate

to the fact that after the success of *Baby*, Sai Rajesh and SKN had announced another project with the same pair—Anand Deverakonda and Vaishnavi Chaitanya. However, that film never materialised and the same pair is now working with another production house, Sithara Entertainments, on a new project. It's possible that this situation led to SKN's comments, as Vaishnavi may not have provided the necessary dates

for his film.

The exact reasons remain unknown, but SKN's controversial statements about Telugu actresses have sparked a wide debate. Interestingly, SKN's other film *Taxiwala*, featuring Vijay Deverakonda, also starred a Telugu actress, Priyanka Jawalkar. *Return of the Dragon* is set to

release on

February 21.

WE LOVE NON-TELUGU-SPEAKING GIRLS SO MUCH MORE THAN TELUGU GIRLS. WE REALIZED WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE ENCOURAGE TELUGU GIRLS IN OUR FILMS, SO MY DIRECTOR SAI RAJESH AND I DECIDED TO ENCOURAGE NON-TELUGU GIRLS ONLY



tollywood

Thandel earns ₹100 crore: True or hype? Industry weighs in

he Naga Chaitanya and Sai Pallavi starrer *Thandel* was released on February 7. Directed by Chandoo Mondeti, the film is produced by Bunny Vas of Geetha Arts and presented by top producer Allu Aravind. The makers released a poster claiming that *Thandel* grossed Rs 100 crore, marking the first time an actor from the Akkineni family has entered the Rs 100 crore club. "We promised, we did it," said Bunny Vas on his social media, sharing the poster celebrating the film's Rs 100 crore milestone. However, this has sparked a heated debate within the industry and trade circles While Thandel is considered a decent hit with good collections in the first three days, its earnings took a significant dip from the fourth day onward, although it is still holding well at the box office. Before the film's release, Bunny Vas promised to deliver Naga Chaitanya's first Rs 100 crore film. As promised he appounced that the film had grossed this amount on Sunday, but some trade analysts arque that the

handles of the producer could attract the attention of IT officials," said another producer, who wished to remain anonymous. The film didn't receive rave reviews, with the general consensus being that the talk was average. Some critics felt that the second half of the film dragged on, particularly in the emotional scenes set in the Pakistan jail, where the director failed to deliver the expected emotional depth. The director himself admitted in a latest interview that due to censor issues, he had to remove several scenes, which resulted in less emotional impact. It has become a common practice for filmmakers to add extra crores to the reported collections to create hype around the film and impress the lead actors, said one producer. The announcement of Rs 100 crore collections on the tenth day is seen by trade analysts as premature, further fueling the debate. Sai Pallavi, who is a huge star with a massive fan base in the Telugu states, also contributed to the film's audience, as many fans watched

are inflated. The film has been a major disappointment overseas, yet

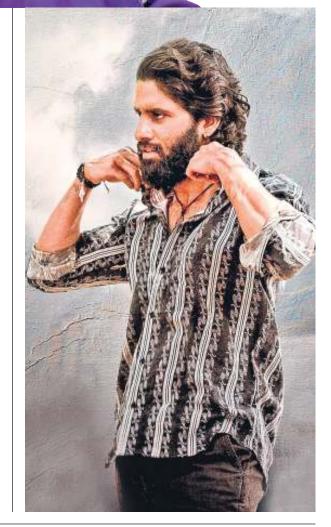
the makers have claimed it has

collected worldwide. "By reporting

these inflated figures, the producers

are inviting unnecessary risk. These

statements posted from the official





Chiranjeevi's Vishwambhara introduction song features Mega Family cameos

hiranjeevi is currently shooting for the introduction song of his film *Vishwambhara*, directed by Mallidi Vassishta. The film's shoot is almost complete, with the exception of this introduction song, which is now being filmed in Hyderabad on a specially erected set. In an exciting development, two actors from the Mega family, Sai Dharam Tej and Niharika Konidela, will make cameo appearances in this song.

According to a source, both actors will be

According to a source, both actors ween dancing alongside Chiranjeevi in the song. The lyrics of the song are reportedly centered around Rama, Lakshmana and Bharath, highlighting their bonding. At a particular moment, Sai Dharam Tej and Niharika will make their entry into the frame,

as per the source.

Niharika, in a recent social media post, subtly mentioned this shooting. Vishwambhara is a fantasybased film, with Mega Star Chiranjeevi playing the lead role. Bollywood actor Kunal Kapoor will appear as the antagonist.

After many years, MM
Keeravani is providing the music for a Chiranjeevi film. Trisha plays the female lead and several other actresses will play key roles in the film. Rao Ramesh, the versatile and talented actor, also has an important role. The teaser of the film was released a few months ago but received a lot of criticism for its use of subpar computer graphics.

Ram Charan undergoes look test for Sukumar's next



am Charan is currently shooting for his film with director Buchi Babu Sana, having already completed two schedules. Janhvi Kapoor is the female lead in this film. After completing this project, Ram Charan will once again collaborate with top director Sukumar. The film was officially launched some time ago. According to a source, Ram Charan is now undergoing a look test for Sukumar's film.

Sukumar's film.

"Though there is still some time before the new film with Sukumar begins, the director wanted some sketches of Ram Charan with a beard, so they are currently conducting the look test," said a source. Mythri Movie Makers is producing the film, which is tentatively titled RC17. Sukumar is planning to make this film on a large scale. "The makers are planning to release the film directly in Hollywood, so they are looking to tie up with a production house there," added the source.

Sukumar is riding high after the success of his recent blockbuster *Pushpa 2* and is now aiming for something even bigger with this Ram Charan film, according to the source. The look test is currently underway and another one will be conducted once Charan removes his beard, the source further revealed.



Ravi Teja teams up with director Kishore Tirumala for new film

Rollowing this, reports suggest
at Ravi Teja is currently busy shooting for the film Mass Jathara, which is directed by debutant Bhanu Bhogavarapu. The film is set to hit the screens this coming May. Following this, reports suggest at Ravi Teja has joined hands director. Kalvan Shankar of

screens this coming May. Following this, reports suggest that Ravi Teja has joined hands with director Kalyan Shankar of MAD fame. Now, according to a source, Ravi Teja is also working with director Kishore Tirumala, known for Nenu Sailaja. Kishore's last film was Aadavallu Meeku Joharlu, which was released in 2022. After a long break, Kishore is now collaborating with Ravi Teja for a

new project.

The source also revealed that Ravi

Teja initially wanted to work on both films simultaneously, but the Kishore Tirumala film will release first. The producer for this film has not yet been finalised, but the details are expected to be announced in the coming weeks.

Meanwhile, Ravi Teja is pinning

Meanwhile, Ravi Teja is pinning his hopes on *Mass Jathara*, as he is in need of a successful break. His last four films were failures at the box office and the actor is looking for a solid hit.

He hopes that debut director Bhanu will provide him with that opportunity. Regardless of the outcome of *Mass Jathara*, Ravi Teja will continue working with directors Kishore Tirumala and Kalyan Shankar for his upcoming projects.

Bhagyashri Borse continues to shine with major film projects in her kitty



ypically, when a female actress makes her debut in a film that flops, filmmakers tend to overlook her for future projects. However, this is not the case for Bhagyashri Borse, who made her debut in *Mr Bachchan* opposite senior actor Ravi Teja. Directed by Harish Shankar, the film was a huge disaster at the box office, but Bhagyashri's performance garnered significant attention and

Following the film's release, Bhagyashri quickly signed several projects. She is currently starring opposite Vijay Deverakonda in a film directed by Gowtham Tinnanuri. Additionally, she has been paired with Malayalam superstar Dulquer Salmaan in the film *Kantha*, directed by Selvamani Selvaraj, with Rana

Daggubati producing.
With these exciting projects already in her portfolio, Bhagyashri has now landed another prestigious role. According to sources, she has been signed on to star opposite Tamil superstar Suriya in a film directed by Venky Atluri. Sithara Entertainments is producing the film, which will be released in multiple languages. This marks another significant project for Bhagyashri in her growing career.

The actress is also working on another Telugu film with Ram Pothineni, directed by P Mahesh Babu, known for *Miss Shetty Mr Polishetty*. The shooting is currently underway near Rajahmundry.

Despite her debut film's failure, Bhagyashri is on a roll with a series of exciting and high-profile projects. It seems she has quickly become one of the most in-demand actresses in the South and it won't be long before she is considered among the top actresses in the industry.

Liverpool continues its charge with a 2-1 win against Wolverhampton

iverpool continued its charge toward the Premier League Little with a 2-1 win against Wolverhampton. For Manchester United, it just keeps getting worse after a 1-0 loss at Tottenham.

The fortunes of England's two most successful teams could hardly be more contrasting.
Victory for Liverpool saw the club

restore its seven-point lead over Arsenal at the top of the table and move ever closer to equaling Man United's record haul of 20 league

United, meanwhile, lost for the 12th time in the league this season and is 15th in the standings after James Maddison's first-half strike for Spurs.

It is turning out to be another miserable campaign for the club that dominated English soccer under former manager Alex Ferguson. That is a distant memory now, with United's wait to end its title drought set to extend to 12 years this season.

United has not been champion since Ferguson's final campaign in 2013. Ruben Amorim is the sixth permanent coach since then to be charged with the responsibility of restoring its supremacy, but his There could yet be a fourth

early tenure has been fraught with problems.

I am not worried. I understand our fans, what the media think about it. I hate to lose, that feeling is the worst," Amorim said. "I am here to help my players. I understand my situation, my job, I am confident on my work and I just want to win games. The place in the table is my worry, I am not worried about me."

CLASH OF CLUBS IN CRISIS

This was Amorim's ninth defeat in 21 games in all competitions since taking over in November. He has only overseen four league wins in that time.

He already claimed in January that this could be the worst United team in the club's storied history and there is little sign of improvement.

Against a Spurs team that is also struggling in the wrong half of the table, Maddison's goal in the 13th minute at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium was enough to settle this clash of clubs in crisis. Some Tottenham fans are so dismayed by the state of their club that they staged a pre-match protest against chairman Daniel Levy. But this was the third time their team had

encounter if both teams continue to advance in the Europa League. But the Premier League is Amorim's primary concern right now — even if a relegation fight remains unlikely. Despite being just three places above the drop zone, United is 12 points above the

United eight points off the top

NERVOUS LIVERPOOL

Liverpool had to withstand a fightback from Wolves, which included a brilliant long-range goal from Matheus Cunha. First-half strikes from Luis Diaz

That is little to shout about with and Mohamed Salah secured the win for Arne Slot's team, but an unconvincing performance after the break saw the home team fail to register a single shot on target as Wolves dominated the chances. "Obviously 2-0 at halftime, we know that can be one of the most dangerous results in football. We

start well - and we didn't quite do that," said Liverpool defender Andrew Robertson. "When they scored, everyone gets nervous. The players get nervous, the crowd get nervous - of course that's only natural. But it's a massive win for us and another game down."
Diaz bundled the ball over the line

had to come out and we had to

from close range in the 15th minute to give Liverpool the lead. And Salah doubled the advantage from the penalty spot in the 37th after Diaz was brought down.

It was the Egypt international's 28th goal of an outstanding season and extended his current scoring streak to six straight games. But if the home crowd was

expecting a routine victory against until the first minute of time 17th-placed Wolves, it was added on to make a substitution anything but.

Liverpool conceded a goal in stoppage time to draw 2-2 with Everton on Wednesday and was pushed again.

Cunha's drag-back and curled finish from around 20 yards (meters) in the 67th came after a sustained period of pressure from the visitors.

Before that Marshall Munetsi was denied when through on goal — it took a crucial block in front of goal from Jarell Quansah to prevent

him from converting late on. "In a season where you want to achieve something, you need to have wins like this as well," Slot

INJURY CRISIS

United named eight teenagers on the bench who had never played a senior game for the club following an injury crisis at Old Trafford. Amad Diallo is likely to miss the

rest of the season with an ankle

injury and Lisandro Martinez has

already been ruled out with cruciate ligament damage Amorim was also without Leny Yoro, Kobbie Mainoo, Manuel

Ugarte and Toby Collyer through injury or illness at Spurs. It meant the United coach waited

replacing Casemiro for debutant Chido Obi.

FANS PROTEST

Tottenham fans protested outside the stadium before kickoff, calling for chairman Daniel Levy and owner ENIC to go. Giant banners read "Profits before

glory" and "We want our club back" as supporters let their feelings be known.

The protest was organised by a fans' group called "Change for Tottenham".

Frankfurt beats Kiel 3-1

 $E_{\text{snapped its run of three}}^{\text{intracht}}$ Frankfurt draws and consolidated third place in the Bundesliga with a 3-1 win over relegation-threatened Holstein Kiel.

Hugo Ekitiké saw a penalty saved and had a late goal ruled out for offside, but others stepped up to score the goals that showed Frankfurt can live without Egypt forward Omar Marmoush. Marmoush, Frankfurt's top-

scorer with 15 league goals this season, joined Manchester City for a reported 70 million euros (\$73 million) during the winter transfer period and scored a hat trick for his new team on Saturday.

"We sent an extremely young team onto the field, one that played with confidence, composure and maturity," Frankfurt coach Dino Toppmöller said.

'We've finally won again and now gone seven league games in a row without defeat," he but there are still many games French forward's penalty. confident."

Toppmöller's team moved five points clear of fourth-placed botched backpass to score his Bremen in the early game.



Leipzig, which occupies the fourth goal of the season in last place for Champions League qualification after 22 of 34 rounds.

Goal gift

corner. Ekitiké had the chance to make it 3-0 before the break but Thomas Dähne dived the said. "The table looks nice, right way to push away the to play. We have to stay Frankfurt was later gifted the and just a point above Kiel.

Hugo Larsson broke the deadlock with his knee in the 18th minute, and Brazilian defender Tuta was left free at the back post to score Frankfurt's second in the 37th after Kiel failed to deal with a

Kiel's Finn Porath scored at the third attempt in the 73rd after Kevin Trapp saved his first two efforts but it wasn't enough to stop Kiel dropping to last place after this round of games. Bochum climbed off the bottom by defeating Borussia Dortmund 2-0 on Saturday.

the 59th.

Kiel could take some solace from Heidenheim's 2-0 loss at home to Mainz in Sunday's late game. Heidenheim stayed on 14 points, ahead of Bochum on goal difference, third goal anyway. Can Uzun Hoffenheim came from gratefully took David Zec's behind to win 3-1 at Werder

Tejas Dhingra retains | Indian women aims to return Show Jumping title

PNS NEW DELHI

Tejas Dhingra Defends National Championship Title at NEC Show Jumping 2024-25Tejas Dhingra of Beeya's Riding Facility successfully defended his National Championship title at the National Equestrian Championship (Show Jumping) 2024-25, held at Modi Equestrian Academy in Meerut on Sunday. The reigning champion secured victory in the Championship Tour with 16 points, finishing ahead of joint runners-up Amar Sarin from Tarc Equestrian Centre and Ashray Butta of EGC

Meanwhile, Yashaan Zubin Khambatta of Tarc Equestrian Centre achieved Equestrian Centre achieved a remarkable double triumph, dominating both the Novice and Medium Tours. In the Medium Tour, Sehaj Singh Virk and Abhishek Chopra shared second place, while in the Novice Tour, Narayan Singh secured the runner-up position, joining Yashaan on he podium after the latter impressively claimed the top Appreciation Prize.

Saturday to take a one-stroke

lead and set himself up for

the breakthrough victory in

his return to competitive golf

after a long run as a

Leonard has starred at all

levels, winning the 1992 U.S.

Amateur and 1994 NCAA

title for Texas to cap his

television analyst.



two spots.

On Saturday, the Preliminary Tour Individual Final saw Avik Bhatia of Modi Equestrian Stables clinch the gold medal with a flawless performance and a time of 31.02 seconds. Major Ritika Dahiya of Team ASC delivered a strong showing to secure second place, while Dushyant Nagar finished while third.

A standout moment of the competition was the performance of 13-year-old Sravya Vohra, the youngest participant. She impressed with her composure and skill, finishing fifth overall. In recognition of her remarkable effort, the Modi Equestrian Academy and the Equestrian Federation of India awarded her a Special

to winning ways against Spain

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Indian women's hockey team will be eager to get back to winning ways when it faces a confident Spain in the doubleheader

After a promising start with a thrilling 3-2 victory over England in their opener, the India narrowly missed out on a bonus point in their second game, losing 2-1 in a dramatic shootout after the match ended 2-2 in regulation time. Despite showing resilience, India currently sit in eighth place in the standings with four points from two games and will be looking to climb higher in the points table as they face a confident Spanish side on Tuesday and Wednesday.

India's performance against England offered glimpses of their potential, particularly in penalty corner conversions, where they scored twice from three attempts in their opening match. However, they failed to replicate that success in the second game.



three penalty corners. 'Spain is a tricky team, and we know it's going to be a

challenging contest. However, we are ready for the challenge," India captain Salima Tete said. "We've analysed performances

performances against England and identified the areas where we need to improve, especially in converting penalty corners.
We are focused on tightening our defense and making the most of our scoring opportunities." Spain, on the other hand,

arrives on the back of two unable to convert any of their consecutive victories against Wednesday.

Germany in the India leg. They secured back-to-back 2 1 wins over the Germans, boosting their confidence. Despite their strong recent performances, Spain has had

a mixed run overall, with just

two wins and one shootout victory in six games. Currently placed fourth in the points table with eight points, Spain will be looking to further consolidate their position. Patricia Alvarez has been their standout player, scoring twice to lead the

team's goal tally.

Match starts 5:15 PM on
Tuesday and 7:30 PM on

Leonard wins Chubb Classic for first PGA Tour Champions victory

PTI NAPLES

Tustin Leonard won the it was good. It was good for Chubb Classic for his first me. Made some changes with PGA Tour Champions victory, overcoming a slow start with a back-nine charge on Tiburon's Black Course. Leonard birdied five of the last seven holes for a 4-under 68 and a four-stroke victory over Billy Andrade. The 52-year-old Texan won in his 45th start on the 50-andover tour, his first victory since the last of his 12 PGA Tour titles in the 2008 St. Jude Championship.

"It's been a long time since I've won, and I tell myself all the time that I have won," Leonard said, fighting back tears on the 18th green. "But it's easy to kind of forget a that I was still in it," Leonard little bit, and say, 'Well, you know, is it going to be?

"I just put a lot of work in... I mean, last year was so bad my golf swing. ... It's just so fun to finally be here because I always felt like I would be. But it's nice to finally get it done."

After a bogey on 10 dropped him to 1 over for the day, Leonard scrambled for a key par on the 11th, then birdied the next three. He scrambled again for par

on the par-3 16th, then got a 30-footer to catch the right edge for birdie on the par-4 17th and got up-and-down from a greenside bunker on the par-5 18th for one last birdie.

said. "I felt like my best golf was ahead of me. I played under 201. He shot 65 on



OK the first 10 holes. Eleven, the end of it was good, but it just wasn't my best golf. I kept telling myself to just own the last seven holes. Once I got a little bit of momentum I felt like I could

Leonard finished at 15-

amateur career, then taking the 1997 British Open at Royal Troon and making the winning putt in the 1999 Ryder Cup at Brookline. "I didn't think about anything in particular today,

but just knowing I've been there," Leonard said. "Even though it might have been 10, 20, 30 years ago, I've been able to do it before."

Andrade also shot 68. Darren Clarke was third at 10 under, also shooting 68. Fred Couples had a 66 to tie for fourth at 9 under with Richard Green (68), Heath Slocum (70) and Paul Stankowski (71).

Ernie Els, a stroke behind Leonard entering the day, shot a 75 to finish 11th at 7 under. Bernhard Langer closed with a 70 to tie for 12th at 6 under.

India look to continue winning momentum against German hockey

PTI BHUBANESWAR

Their campaign back on Track after a jittery start, India will look to continue the winning momentum when they take on Paris Olympics silver medallist Germany in their next men's FIH Pro League match on Tuesday. India had a woeful start to their home leg matches of the Pro League, losing 1-3 to Spain in their opener. But the hosts bounced back

strongly to tame Spain 2-0 in the return match on Sunday. With three points from two games, India are currently sitting in eighth place in the standings and will be desperate to climb up the table. After a relatively off day on Saturday, the Indians star performer Jugraj Singh looked a completely different cut a sorry figure from set side on Sunday, dominating for most part of the match and scoring two field goals through Mandeep Singh (32nd minute) and Dilpreet Singh (39th) to pocket all three points.

While the strikers shone bright in the second game, India's chief coach Craig Fulton would be a bit concerned about penalty corner conversions.

Despite winning seven penalty corners across their two games, India failed to convert a single chance. In the absence of India captain Harmanpreet Singh,

who was rested for the second

match, Hockey India League

Dilpreet, Mandeep and Sukhjeet Singh have each netted a goal for India so far in the tournament and will be looking to add to their tally against Germany.

The Indian defence produced

pieces.

a much-better display in the second game, and were able to absorb pressure from the Spanish strikers. Germany, who will be playing

The forwardline comprising

their first match of the India leg, are placed just above India in seventh place with four points from as many games and will be determined to turn their fortunes around.

He said, hopefully, Pakistan

would also host the women's

World Cup qualifiers later this

tournament is unprecedented and with Naqvi himself

heading the federal interior

ministry, no chances are being

Senior police official SSP

taken for the visiting teams.

The

security for the

Cricket fever grips Pakistan ahead of Champions

PTI KARACHI

Cricket fever has gripped Pakistan as the Champions Trophy unfolds with fans eagerly waiting for the action to begin here on Wednesday and businesses related to the game too picking he had always admired Kohli up before the tournament opener between hosts Pakistan and New Zealand.

However, many in the country are disappointed that India are not playing their matches in Pakistan.

"It is disappointing because generally there is so much admiration for the Indian team and players, especially Virat Kohli, in our country," shopkeeper Moiz Ahmed said at the famous Zainab Market in the heart of Karachi's

bustling Saddar area. Moiz is surprised at the among the cricket fans along with the Pakistan team. "Virat Kohli definitely has a

big fan following in Pakistan," he said as youngsters mingled in the shop choosing different team shirts. Kashif, a college student, said

as a player and also because of his humility. 'He is so down to earth in his behaviour from what we see in

the media," he said. Shopkeepers in Zainab market, which is famous for selling original licenses and copies of the team shirts whenever a big cricket or football event happens, are clearly happy that the Champions Trophy is being

held in Pakistan. "I have sold nearly 4 to 5000 shirts in the last three days of the Pakistan and Indian demand for the Indian shirts teams," Javed Pakhali, a tournament.

shopkeeper, said. Even in the enclosures during

matches fans are not shy to wear or display pictures of Kohli and wear shirts with his name printed on them. The Champions Trophy fever

is also evident when one visits the match venue, National Stadium, as many fans are moving around the main gate to catch a glimpse of their favourite players as they come and go from the stadium.

On Monday, with the Pakistan team having a practice session at the stadium's high performance centre, fans clamoured to see them in action.

Ticket sales online and through booths have also picked up according to a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) official who now just wants the Pakistan team to do well in the



"I am sure if the team keeps on up around the city announcing winning the demand for keep tickets increasing," he said.

The fact that a ICC event is being held in Pakistan with some matches in Karachi is now evident from the colourful banners, posters put

the staging of the event. It is after 29 years that Pakistan is holding a proper multi team event although it hosted some matches of the Asia Cup in 2023 but the excitement didn't reach the levels being witnessed now.

Although the PCB and ICC held a low-key opening ceremony, without the teams at the Lahore Fort on Sunday night, in Karachi clearly the tempo is growing.

Former captain Javed Miandad praised the PCB for bringing the ICC event to

"I think the next few weeks are a celebration of the passion for cricket we have as a nation," Miandad said.

Miandad said that it is after a long time cricket fans will get to see top international players in action in their backyard. PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi also said at the opening ceremony that the tournament was a platform for Pakistan to showcase its hospitality and love for

For 10 years, no top team visited Pakistan after the

cricket.

militant attack on the Sri Lankan team bus in Lahore in March 2009.

Pace great Waqar Younis said having the Champions Trophy in the country was a big step forward for Pakistan cricket. "I think it means a lot to everyone that we have shown how resilient we were as a cricket nation and how much our people love cricket even when for 10 years no top team

played in Pakistan." Wagar, also a former captain and who was head coach when Pakistan were their home matches in UAE, said there was a big difference between playing at home and your home series in UAE.

"I think this Champions Trophy will only increase the cricket passion and talent in the country," he added. Naqvi also said they would be trying to get more ICC events

Muqadas Haider said that the PCB and security agencies had planned things in such a way that visiting players also got a chance to go out and see the city.

Pakistan play New Zealand in

the tournament opener and

everyone expects a full house

despite the ticket prices being on the higher side. The provincial government

has also declared a public holiday on Wednesday for a religious festival.