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Mahesh Babu-Rajamouli film begins, with all





QUOTE OF THE DAY

- Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy,

Police crackdown on sale of banned manja

Hyderabad City Police's Mangalhat division has launched a stringent drive against the sale of banned Chinese manja, a synthetic, nonbiodegradable kite string known to endanger human lives, birds and animals. Acting on credible information, the police seized a total of 1,094 bobbins of the illegal string and registered 18 cases against 22 accused individuals during their operation, which began on November 10, 2024. Led by Inspector M Mahesh and Sub-Inspectors of Mangalhat police station, the drive was conducted under the supervision ..

PM's resolutions mere 'jumlas '

The Congress on Thursday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's new year resolutions are nothing short of 'jumlas' (rhetoric) destroying the lives of every citizen. In a post on X, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the government has given no solution for the economic turmoil created by it as he cited seven indicators to substantiate his point. "The Modi government has no solution for the economic turmoil it has created! Seven...

White-collar hiring up 9% in Dec: Report

White-collar hiring activity in December witnessed a 9 per cent increase compared to the same period of the previous year driven hy high-skill and strategic roles, a report said on Thursday. According to Naukri Joh index reached an impressive 2,651 points in December 2024. reflecting a robust 9 per cent yearon-year growth, a promising sign for the year ahead. Key sectors that were primary growth drivers in December 2024, included AI/ML (36 per cent), Oil and Gas (13 per cent), FMCG.. -PAGE: 8

Dressing room debates should stay there

Asserting that "debates" in the dressing room should not come out in public domain, India head coach Gautam Gambhir on Thursday said he has had some "honest" conversations with his players and that the ongoing transition in the team will be allencompassing Gambhir also sidestepped queries on whether outof-form skipper Rohit Sharma will get a place in the final XI for the fifth and final Test against Australia starting on Friday. Amid reports of unrest in the dressing room, the head coach sought...

'BRS regains lead, BJP making gains in TG'

'It is encouraging to see that

the BRS has managed to

recover quickly after its

Lok Sabha defeat.

The BRS leadership believes

that this turnaround is a

result of their swift action to

reconnect with people'.



PNS HYDERABAD

The New Year has brought good news for the BRS as recent public opinion surveys conducted by various survey agencies have brought optimism to the BRS.

Sources in the BRS indicated that the party has reportedly regained the lead in Telangana, followed by the Congress. The BRS is now 9% to 10% ahead of the Congress in surveys, said sources.

What stands out, however, is the unexpected rise of the BJP, which has made significant gains despite min-

Maheshwar resorting

Government Whip Adi Srinivas stat-

ed that BJLP leader Alleti Maheshwar

Reddy has been resorting to black-

mail politics while making cheap alle-

Srinivas alleged that Maheshwar

Reddy has been creating hungama

every two months before the media

while making allegations against the

government as he wished.

Maheshwar Reddy has been telling

lies to the media in the name of cor-

ruption and irregularities. In a video

statement issued on Thursday, Srinivas asked Maheshwar Reddy to

stop baseless and meaningless allega-

tions against the government. It is not proper for Maheshwar Reddy to

make cheap allegations, he alleged,

demanding Maheshwar Reddy to

should fight in courts if he has evi-

dence of corruption or else he should

give that evidence to the CM as CM

is ready to order a probe. Our CM has

been setting right Rs 7.5 lakh crore

debt-ridden State while working 18

been speaking about thousands of

crores of corruption as he is unable

to digest what he is eating. Our gov-

ernment is exposing KTR's Formula

E-Car Racing Scam. However,

Maheshwar Reddy is supporting

KTR. Why is Maheshwar Reddy not

speaking about KCR family irregu-

However, Maheshwar Reddy has

hours per day.

Srinivas said, "Maheshwar Reddy

show evidence if he has guts.

to blackmail: Adi

PNS HYDERABAD

imal visible activity on the ground. Top BRS sources revealed that the surveys were conducted by the same agencies that had accurately predicted the party's defeat in the 2023 elections. This credibility adds weight to the current projections, making the

results a topic of discussion across

political circles.

"It is encouraging to see that the BRS has managed to recover quickly after its Lok Sabha defeat," said a party source. The BRS leadership believes that this turnaround is a result of their swift action to reconnect with people.

Meanwhile, the BJP's rise, despite limited initiatives or visible campaigns, has puzzled observers. "It's surprising that the BJP is gaining momentum without much effort. This is something we need to keep an eye on," the source added.

The Congress, which seemed to be gaining ground earlier, appears to be falling behind the BRS in the latest survey. With local body elections on the horizon, the evolving dynamics between these three major parties are expected to set the stage for an intense political battle in



Alleging that scams running into thousands of crores are taking place, BJLP leader Alleti Maheshwar Reddy said that he will expose the Congress government's scams within two days. Maheshwar said that he had evidence of the scam and that Ministers were involved in it. He said he will reveal details of the scam with full evidence.

He said that demanding applica-Bharosa is nothing but deceiving them. The BRS government gave Rythu Bandhu, he said and asked the Congress government to reveal why it is not going to give in the same manner.

It is not proper for the Congress government to pass time without revealing the guidelines of the immediately.



Addressing the media at the BJP State Office here on Thursday, Maheshwar said the Congress government should not show empty hands to tenant farmers. He demanded the government should give identity cards to tenant farmers and give them Rythu Bharosa

PHONE TAPPING CASE

SC concerned over long winding probe



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Supreme Court heard the bail petition of Additional SP Mekala Tirupathanna, a key accused in the phone tapping case, on Thursday. The petition, originally filed in October 2023, was heard by a two-judge bench comprising Justice BV Nagarathna and Justice N. Kotishwar Singh. Senior advocates Siddharth Luthra and Dushyant Dave represented the government and the petitioner, respective-

During the proceedings, the court expressed concern over the prolonged nature of the investigation into Tirupathanna's role in the case. The court observed that investigations should not infringe on the petitioner's freedom and said that such delays could not be justified by continuing inquiries.

The court emphasised that while it does not intend to interfere with the investigation, a balance must be struck to ensure that the petitioner's rights are not hindered. The Bench directed the government counsel to present a detailed account of Tirupathanna's involvement in the case during the next

The court adjourned the case to



CM: Bhu Bharati will improve revenue services in TG

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy announced that the new ROR (Record of Rights) Act, known as 'Bhu Bharati,' will soon come into effect to improve revenue department

services in Telangana.

Speaking at the launch of the annual diaries of the Telangana Tahsildars Association (TGTA) and the Telangana Revenue Services Association (TGRSA) on Thursday, the CM emphasised that the initiative aims to resolve land disputes and improve transparency in revenue administration.

Highlighting the shortcomings of the Dharani Portal, Revanth said that Bhu Bharati is designed to provide quick, efficient services to farmers and the public and address the issues created by the earlier system.

problems are resolved at the district evel and will decentralise powers to improve service delivery," he said.

The CM reminded revenue officers of their expanded powers and responsibilities under the new system. He urged them to effectively implement the new law, which includes provisions for the appointment of a revenue officer in all villages. This decentralized approach aims to make revenue services accessible at the field level providing immediate relief.

Telangana Employees Joint Action Committee Chairman V. Lachi Reddy raised concerns about the transfer of tahsildars during elections, stating that many have not been reassigned to their home districts, causing difficulties. Responding positively, the CM assured that the transfer process would be speeded up.

ED asks BLN, Arvind to appear on Jan 8 & 9

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has ramped up its investigation into the Formula E-Car Race case and has issued fresh notices to BLN Reddy and Arvind Kumar, IAS. The notices, sent on Thursday, directed both individuals to appear for questioning on

BLN Reddy and Arvind Kumar both sought 2 to 3 weeks to appear and submit documents.

Earlier, the ED had scheduled hearings for BLN Reddy on January 2, Arvind Kumar on January 3, and KTR on January 7. However, BLN Reddy was absent for his hearing on Thursday. Citing the need for more



time, he sent an email to the Joint Director handling the case. The ED officials responded positively, granting a slot to appear on January 8 and

Meanwhile, speculation surrounds whether KTR will appear on January

7, fuelling discussions about the progress of the investigation.

The ED's intensified scrutiny has

drawn attention to this high-profile case, as it continues to probe the alleged irregularities associated with the Formula E-Car Race. The ED had written to a foreign

company involved in the organisation race to gather deta actions. It is also investigating payments made through the Himayat Nagar branch of the Indian Overseas Bank and is examining who authorised these transactions.

The ED's focus on the Formula E-Car Race case highlights its commitment to uncovering financial malpractices and ensuring accountability.

Govt to explain *Rythu Bharosa* terms to farmers at *Grama Sabhas*

PNS HYDERABAD

Paralympics.

for the year 2024 were men's hockey

captain Harmanpreet Singh and para-

athlete Praveen Kumar.

The Congress Government has decided to explain to the people Rythu Bharosa conditions at Grama Sabha meetings held from January 5 to 7 in villages across the state. The government also decided to accept applications from farmers again from January 5 to 7 after dividing mandals into three parts.

The Cabinet Sub-Committee on Rythu Bharosa took these decisions at its meeting held on Thursday at the secretariat. However, a final the Cabinet meeting being held on

Cabinet meeting to take final decision on Jan 4 Govt may deposit funds in farmers' accounts on 14th Farmers can apply for the scheme again

Saturday when the Cabinet Sub- 5 to 7. Committee on Rythu Bharosa will submit its report.

The Cabinet Sub-Committee is expected to recommend to the Cabinet to give Rythu Bharosa funds to all farmers who cultivate lands. For this, the government is decision will be taken only during going to launch a comprehensive campaign in villages from January

It is learnt that the government will deposit Rythu Bharosa funds in the bank accounts of farmers on January 4. It is learnt that the Cabinet Sub-Committee said that the BRS government had misused Rs 21,000 crore by giving Rythu Bandhu funds to ineligible farmers. Continued on Page 2

RECORD 17 PARA-ATHLETES TO RECEIVE ARJUNA

Manu Bhaker, Gukesh among 4 Khel Ratnas

Kavitha to lead rally of BCs at Indira Park today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

"We are going to ask the Congress government to implement the promises made by the Congress to Backward Class communities. We have planned a meeting on Friday at the Indira Park in Hyderabad. We will ask the government to fulfil the promises it made to Backward Class communities," BRS leader Kavitha said.

Koneru Suresh Kumar, the Telangana State Youth President of the Pusala Sangham, has called a massive rally of Backward Classes (BCs) at Indira Park on January 3, marking the birth anniversary of Savitribai Phule.

The event, titled Chalo Hyderabad - BCs' Garjana, aims to



highlight the betrayal of weaker sections by the Congress government under the guise of the BC Declaration.

Continued on Page 2

TG ranks 2nd in leveraging social media

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has ranked Telangana second in the country for effectively leveraging social media for voter engagement and information dissemination. The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Telangana announced this achievement, highlighting the state's consistent efforts in transparency, voter education, and inclusivity in electoral processes.

Jharkhand secured the top position, with Telangana following closely. The CEO-Telangana credited this success to a robust social media strategy that includes timely updates, myth-busting and direct engagement with electors. enhanced voter outreach The CEO stated, "Beyond con-



ducting elections, our role extends As per the ECI's latest report, to ensuring transparency, accuracy and the upholding of democratic values in the world's largest democracy."

With over 3 lakh subscribers across its social media platforms, CEO-Telangana has significantly

Continued on Page 2



independent India's first athlete to win two medals in a single edition of the The awards will be conferred on the Olympics with her bronze-winning athletes by President Droupadi Murmu show in the 10m air pistol individual at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on January and 10m air pistol mixed team events 17. The 22-year-old Bhaker became in August. The announcement comes



a few days after reports that Bhaker had been ignored for the Khel Ratna as the award selection committee did not recommend her due to the absence of an application from her

Continued on Page 2

Deepthi Jeevanji bags Arjuna Award

HYDERABAD: Chief Minister Revanth Reddy extended heartfelt congratulations to Telangana's para-athlete and Warangal resident, Deepthi Jeevanji, on being conferred the Arjuna Award for 2024. Deepthi secured a bronze medal for India in the 400-meter race at the Paralympics. As part of the state's sports policy to encourage athletes who represent India in national and international events, the Chief Minister had earlier presented Deepthi with Rs 1 crore and her coach, Nagapuri Ramesh, with Rs 10 lakh. The state government had also given a Group-2 level government job and 500 square yards of land in Warangal for



Deepthi in recognition of her achievements. Revanth reiterated the government's commitment to promoting sports and nurturing talent through initiatives like the Young India Sports University and the establishment of sports complexes across the state Continued on Page 2

CM urged to clear double decker skyway

connecting Hyd to Karimnagar

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former MP B. Vinod Kumar

has appealed to Chief Minister

Revanth Reddy to approve

the construction of a double-

decker skyway from the JBS

This project, he said, would

substantially ease travel

between Karimnagar and

Hyderabad and benefit people

from Siddipet, Karimnagar, Peddapalli, Mancherial and

Addressing a press conference, Vinod said that the pro-

posed double-decker skyway

would have three levels. The

top level would accommodate a metro rail, the middle

would serve as a flyover, and

the ground level would func-

Asifabad districts.

Bus Stand to Shamirpet.

Revanth became 'Pan India' CM after arresting Allu Arjun, says Chamala

PNS HYDERABAD

The Congress's Bhongir MP, Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has become a 'Pan India' Chief Minister after arresting 'Pan India' film star Allu Arjun.

Some CMs became known to the people through corruption. However, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy gained attention by taking daring decisions," he

Kiran said the BRS govern-ment had planned to deceive farmers by changing the Regional Ring Road (RRR) alignment. He said the Congress has no habit of hiding money after looting it from the people. He criticised BRS Working

President KT Rama Rao for say-

ing that there is a scam involving Rs 12,000 crore in the RRR project as its value is just Rs 7,000 crore. He said that one can understand the fear haunting KTR through his meaningless statements and added that the Congress will not file false cases against anyone like the BRS. He said that KTR, Harish Rao and Kavitha are wilfully engaging in an evil campaign against the Congress government.

"KTR is speaking differently every day about the Formula E-Car Race case. He will certainly go to jail if he has committed illegal acts. However, I hope that KTR comes out innocent in the E-Car Racing case. But unfortunately, it has been proved that KTR has committed an offence in this case," Kiran said

'Kavitha using BCs to regain ground she lost via liquor biz'

PNS HYDERABAD

BRS MLC Kavitha is using BCs to clear the blot that she had acquired through involvement in the Delhi illegal liquor business, TPCC chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud said.

Mahesh said that Kavitha had raised the curtains to her new deceptive drama in the name of BCs to regain the ground she lost in the BRS and as part of it she is conducting a dharna at Indira Park on

Addressing the media at the Gandhi Bhavan on Thursday,



Mahesh said the BRS is remembering BCs only after losing power. The BRS is the party that cut the throats of BCs in local body elections, he

He said the Congress is giving top priority to BCs and the best example of that is making him the TPCC President. The Congress also gave top priority to BCs in its Cabinet. Everybody knows how much importance the BRS gave to BCs in its Cabinet, he pointed

He said the BRS suppressed the BCs and is now chanting BC slogans. This is nothing but the devil quoting scripture, he added.

He asked Kavitha to explain whether she is staging a dhar-

na as the Congress government is going to field 23,973 candidates to contest to panchayats and municipalities.

"Is Kavitha staging the dhar-

ma as the Congress government is for setting up 10 welfare boards? Is Kavitha conducting dharnas as the Congress government increased BCs' diet charges in residential schools? Is Kavitha staging a dharna for constructing new Young India Integrated Schools?" he asked. Kavitha should first reveal why she is staging her dharna,

for girls. She claimed that the

Congress, within a year of

coming to power, is facing

massive public discontent due

to its inability to fulfil its

Kavitha warned that the

Congress's anti-farmer stance

would cost it heavily in the

upcoming local body elec-

tions. She urged BRS cadres to

prepare for a decisive victory,

asserting, "The Congress gov-ernment has betrayed the

people and the BRS flag will

once again fly high."

commitments.

tion as a regular road. He stressed that this project would offer a seamless travel experience for people from the

above districts by addressing the persistent traffic prob-

lems on Hyderabad's outskirts. Highlighting the challenges faced by travellers, Vinod pointed out that the 18.5-km stretch from Shamirpet to JBS witnesses heavy traffic.

He suggested widening roads and constructing a flyover in the Cantonment area, including Hakimpet, Bolaram, Alwal, Tirumalagiri, Karkhana, and JBS. This would unclog the bottlenecks that people encounter while entering the city.

"Traffic problems from Shamirpot to IBS have long

Shamirpet to JBS have long troubled passengers from Karimnagar and other districts. The double-decker skyway is the only viable solution to ensure smooth travel to Hyderabad without the delays caused by congestion," Vinod

Youngest chess champion

Billionaire Gautam Adani called teenager Gukesh

"It was an absolute privilege to meet and hear the victory story of reigning World Chess Champion @DGukesh," Adani, chairman of ports-toenergy Adani Group, said in

Posting pictures with the teenager and his parents, Adani said, "Equally inspiring was meeting his incredible

Dr Padmavathi, whose quiet sacrifices laid the foundation for his success.' "At just 18, Gukesh's poise

and brilliance are a testament to India's unstoppable youth. Prodigies like him are inspiring a new generation, building an army of champions ready to dominate global chess for decades. This is the confident, resurgent and rising India. Jai Hind!" he

Gukesh became the 18th world champion after defeating Ding in a 14-game match in Singapore last month.

He is four years younger than Garry Kasparov, who

PK begins fast unto death, demands BPSC exam cancellation

founder Prashant Kishor on Thursday began a fast unto death to press the demand for cancellation of an examination recently held by Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC).

Kishor made the announcement at the historic Gandhi Maidan in the state capital, three days after giving a "48hour ultimatum" to the Nitish Kumar government for acting on the demand, raised by

aggrieved candidates.
"My primary demand, of course, is cancellation of the exam held on December 13 and conducting a fresh test. I have also heard allegations that posts to be filled by the exam were virtually put on sale. Such corrupt officials must be identified and brought to justice", said

Kishor, who was accompanied by a number of supporters.

The venue was barely a couple of kilometres from Gardani Bagh where the aggrieved aspirants have been holding a round-the-clock sit-

Rythu Bharosa conditions cruel injustice: Kavitha PNS HYDERABAD

In a passionate address in Bodhan, BRS MLC Kavitha launched a sharp attack on Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, accusing him of implementing anti-farmer policies and betraying the agricultur-

al community. She criticised the Congress Government for attaching conditions to the Rythu Bharosa scheme, which she called a 'cruel injustice' to the farmers of Telangana.

Speaking to BRS activists,

Kavitha questioned the need aid for women and scooters for placing burdensome conditions on farmers to access their entitlements.

"Why are farmers, who are the backbone of this nation, forced to beg for what is rightfully theirs? The Congress government's policies are nothing short of humiliating," she said, demanding unconditional disbursement of Rythu Bharosa funds.

She accused the Congress of failing to deliver on election promises, including financial

He emphasised the need for unity and coordination in the BRS to counter Congress'

and oppression, you have

stood firm. Your resolve is his-

toric and extraordinary," KTR

alleged "divisive politics." KTR also reiterated the BRS slogan, 'Telangana First,' urging cadres to expose and resist what he described as the Congress' betrayal at every

"Together, we will protect Telangana's self-respect and secure its future," he concluded, extending New Year greetings to all party workers.

Gukesh meets Adani PNS ■ NEW DELHI parents, Dr Rajinikanth and

Dommaraju -- who became the youngest world chess champion by beating defending champion Ding Liren of China -- a testament of India's unstoppable youth.

The chess champion, along with his parents, met Adani in Ahmedabad.

a post on X.

had been the youngest world champion since 1985 when he beat Anatoly Karpov.

'Hike BCs quota to 42% in local body polls'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Social Justice Forum has reiterated its demand for 42% reservations for Backward Classes (BCs) in local body elections and has urged the state government to fulfil the promises made in the Kamareddy BC Declaration.

Speaking at a meeting held here on Thursday, Dr Vakulabharanam Krishna Mohan Rao, the National munity should no longer Coordinator of the Forum remain on paper. "This year and former Chairman of the State BC Commission, and not mere assurances for

PNS HYDERABAD

Former MP B. Vinod Kumar

emphasised the need to fill all

vacant posts of judges in the

Telangana High Court to speed

up cases and ensure justice for

Addressing a press meeting at the Telangana Bhavan here, he

highlighted the chronic under-

representation of Scheduled

Tribes (STs) and the limited

inclusion of Scheduled Castes

(SCs) among judges. There are

in Parliament six years ago,

Vinod recalled his statement

no ST judges, he said.

marginalised communities.

BRS wants more HC judges,

social justice in appointments

address these long-pending

Dr Krishna Mohan Rao criticised the government's inaction and called for the immediate abolition of the creamy layer policy, which he said limits opportunities for BCs in education and employment.

He stressed that the commitments made to the comshould bring tangible results

expressing thanks for the establishment of a High Court for

Telangana. He said that Telangana got its High Court on

December 31, 2019, after per-

sistent efforts during KCR's

tenure. This includes the

increase in the sanctioned

strength of judges to 42. However, he said the court has

never seen more than 23 judges

"Despite a sanctioned strength of 42 judges, the

Telangana High Court remains

understaffed, and this shortage

has resulted in a growing back-

log of cases," he said.

in office at any given time.

emphasised the urgency to the BC community," he said. During the meeting, representatives from various parts of the state discussed strategies to mobilise public sup-

port for their demands. The meeting decided to conduct awareness programmes at the village, mandal and district levels to inform people about the promises made to BCs.

Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube will be actively used to engage a broader

KTR: Intensify fight against Congress

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) called upon party cadres to intensify their fight against the Congress government in Telangana and accused it of misrule and cor-

In a New Year message on Monday, KTR hailed the yearlong efforts of BRS workers to expose the failures of the Congress admin and pledged to continue the struggle until justice is delivered to the peo-



said, "The relentless spirit you have displayed over the past year has strengthened the party. Your unwavering efforts Addressing the cadre as are the backbone of our move-"Gulabi (pink) soldiers," KTR ment to protect Telangana's

Project" and the "Lagacharla farmers struggle," which he said proved the party's commitment to the people of He also pointed out how the

party's protests led to the reversal of a Rs 100 crore Adani-linked project and compelled the government to abandon plans for an ethanol factory in Nirmal.

the "corruption in the Musi

"The Congress regime's policies are rooted in deception. Despite wrongful cases

The award is given to coaches to honour their outstanding work and for enabling athletes to achieve excellence in their chosen sport in top international compe-

Murlikant Petkar gets Lifetime

India's first Paralympic goldmedallist Mulikant Petkar, who won the top honours in the 50m freestyle swimming event of the 1972 Heidelberg Paralympics, was named for the Arjuna Awards (Lifetime).

An Army man, Petkar's inspiring tale of resurrecting himself as a para-athlete after being disabled due to bullet wounds sustained during the 1965 India-Pakistan war, was recently turned into a The Dronacharya award in the biopic, 'Chandu Champion', star-

Upping the ante, Jan Suraaj

in for nearly two weeks.

The 47-year-old former poll strategist, who hopes his fledgling party to make a big impact in assembly polls due in less than a year, also made it clear that the demands he is making were just a few of the things on which he expected the government to act.

TG ranks 2nd in ... Continued from Page 1 The State witnessed a 3% increase in voter turnout during the 2024 parliamen-

tary elections, rising from 62.77% in 2019 to 66.3%, a testament to its impactful voter education initiatives. The State actively uses social media

under the Election Commission's flagship programme, SVEEP (Systematic Voter Education and Electoral Participation). Customised communication strategies address diverse segments, including youth, women, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities (PwD). Special efforts have also been made to include marginalised groups, such as third-gender individuals and Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG), ensuring inclusivity in the electoral process.

The CEO-Telangana expressed gratitude to the ECI and its followers for their continuous engagement, stating, "Elections are the biggest festival of democracy, and social media has become an indispensable tool in fostering participation and inclusiv-

Jan 03 01:08 AM

to Jan 03 11:39 PM

to Jan 04 10:01 PM

02 11:10 PM

TODAY

Chaturth

Nakshatram:

Temp: 29°°

Humidity: 36%

Sunrise: 6:47 AM

Sunset: 5:54 PM

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham

Manu Bhaker, Gukesh among 4... The Khel ratna awardees receive hockey team captain Salima Tete, a cash prize of Rs 25 lakh along world champion boxers Nitu manager Armando Colaco and

Continued from Page 1

The shooter later admitted that there may have been a lapse on her part while filing the nomination. Once the procedural issues were sorted, there was never any doubt that Bhaker would be among the

In the same Paris Games, Hamranpreet led the Indian hockey team to its second consecutive bronze medal.

The 18-year-old Gukesh, on the other hand, became the youngestever World champion while also helping the Indian team win a historic gold in the Chess Olympiad last year.

The fourth recipient, para highjumper Praveen, was crowned the T64 champion in the Paris Paralympics. The T64 classification is for athletes who have one or both legs missing below the knee and rely on a prosthetic leg for

ation and a medallion The Arjuna awardees are given Rs 15 lakh as cash reward, a statuette of Arjuna and a citation.

Arjuna for Paris medallists

The athletes selected for this year's Arjuna award include Paris Olympics bronze medal-winning lot of wrestler Aman Sehrawat, shooters Swapnil Kusale and Sarabjot Singh and the men's hockey team players Jarmanpreet Singh, Sukhjeet Singh, Sanjay and

The para-athletes outnumber the able-bodied ones in the list of Arjuna winners this time due to the magnificent Paris showing in which they returned with 29 medals, including seven gold and nine silver.

The official list also includes sprinter Jyothi Yarraji, javelin thrower Annu Rani, women's lifetime category will be con-ring Kartik Aaryan.

swimmer Sajan Prakash, Olympiad gold-winning chess player Vantika Agrawal and squash star Abhay Among the para athletes, Paris

Paralympics gold-medallists Dharambir (club throw), Navdeep

Singh (javelin throw) and Nitesh

Kumar (para badminton) are the prominent names in the record number of Arjuna winners. Paris Olympics bronze-winning para-archer Rakesh Kumar, parashooters Mona Agarwal and Rubina Francis also feature in the

list among others. The ministry also cleared three coaches for Dronacharya award in the regular category, including Olympic bronze-medallist Swapnil Kusale's coach Deepali Deshpande.

Kavitha to lead rally of BCs at Indira ...

Continued from Page 1

Addressing the press, Suresh urged leaders of BC castes and

He demanded the establishment of a special corporation for the Pusala community, and loans of Rs 5 lakh to every member without conditions. He also called for the construction of BC Bhavans in all district headquar-

ing to deliver on its promises, he reminded attendees of the assurance given in the Kamareddy BC Declaration by Congress leaders, in the presence of Siddaramaiah, to provide 42% reservations for BCs in local bodies.

tion with no further action. The BC Commission has remained silent on this matter, and the BC Sub-Plan is nowhere to be seen, he said.

to increasing BC reservations to 42% in local bodies, citing Telangana's comprehensive family survey, which found BCs constitute 54% of the state's population. He demanded that the government issue an ordinance to increase reservations immediately and consider elections only after implementing the Kamareddy

He warned of large scale protests if the government fails to act on these demands. "We must remain vigilant against Congress's deceptive guarantees, as they have already betrayed the BCs of Telangana. This rally is our collective voice against their failures," he added.

Deepthi Jeevanji bags Arjuna... Continued from Page 1

"This will help Telangana's athletes excel and bring laurels to the state," he said. The Chief Minister also

congratulated other sports personalities recognized with prestigious awards in 2024. He hailed D Gukesh (Chess), Harmanpreet Kaur (Hockey), Praveen Kumar (Para Athletics), and Manu

Bhaker (Shooting) for receiving the Dhyan Chand Khel

Ratna Award. He also conveyed his sports.

'Name college after Manmohan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress-affiliated National Students' Union of India (NSUI) has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging him to name Delhi University's upcoming college after former prime minister Manmohan Singh, instead of Veer Savarkar.

PM Modi is set to lay the foundation stone for Veer Savarkar College in Najafgarh on Friday. The institution was approved by Delhi University's Executive Council, its highest decision-making body, in 2021. In a letter to the Prime Minister, NSUI national president Varun Choudhary highlighted Singh's contributions to education and governance, requesting that the college honour his legacy.

to Jan 03 10:21 PM Jan 03 10:21 PM Shatabhisha: 10:58 AM to 12:20 PM Rahukalam Yamagandam: 3:05 PM to 4:28 PM Varjyam: 05:16 AM to 06:48 AM 8:13 AM to 9:35 AM Gulika: 12:19 PM to 01:51 PM Amritakalam: Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:58 AM to 12:42 PM HYDERABAD WEATHER Forecast: Mostly Sunny

Updated: January 2, 2025 5:00 PM

CM: Bhu Bharati will improve ...

Continued from Page 1

The event was attended by key officials, including Collectors Association General Secretary K. Ramakrishna, Telangana Tahsildars Association representatives S. Ramulu and Ramesh Pak, and the Telangana Revenue Services Association President Banala Ram Reddy.

The CM concluded by reaffirming the government's commitment to enhancing transparency in revenue administration, ensuring that Telangana's land-related issues are resolved promptly under the new framework.

Govt to explain Rythu Bharosa terms to farmers ...

Continued from Page 1

Committee said that due to the BRS government's policies, those who are not on the field and even owners of lands filled with stones and hills got Rythu Bandhu funds. The Cabinet Sub-Committee said that the number of beneficiaries' will decrease if it removes ineligible

The Cabinet Sub identify cultivated lands through agriculture officers and satellite mapping.

farmers. However, the Sub-Cabinet Committee said that there will no extra conditions for giving Rythu Bharosa funds to farmers who are paying Income Tax and that

there is no need of placing any upper limit on land ownership for farmers while giving Rythu Bharosa funds. The government will

The meeting of the Rythu Bharosa Sub-Committee was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Chief Bhatti Minister Vikramarka. Members Tummala Nageshwara Rao, Duddilla Sridhar Ponguleti Babu, Srinivas Reddy, and

Komatireddy Venkat

Reddy also attended

Minister

R&B

the meeting.

associations to participate in the rally and make it a resounding

Accusing the Congress of fail-

"Within six months of coming to power, the Congress promised BC caste enumeration but has only passed an Assembly resolu-

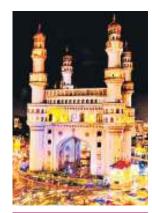
Suresh emphasized that there are no significant legal obstacles

Declaration.

appreciation to all athletes and coaches chosen for the Arjuna and Dronacharya Awards this year for their outstanding contributions to Indian

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Vijay Hazare Trophy

Kerala vs Tripura Venue

Rajiv Gandhi **International Cricket** Stadium January 3, (9 am)

Live Performance

By Dhrutam (Band)

Venue 36 Downtown Brew Pub (Vapour) January 3 (8 pm)

15 Years Of Excellence

(Bharathanatyam, Flute, Violin) by Kalavarshini Institute Of Dance, Music & Arts

Venue Shilparamam January 3, (4:30 pm)

Friday Night

With DJ Asif Iqzal

Venue Insomnia January 3, (8 pm)

Live Performance

By Kalakaari (Band)

Posh Nosh January 3, (8 pm)

Migrant Memory

Art Exhibition By Raki Nikahetiya

Venue

Kalakriti Till January 5 (8 pm)

Weekend kids cooking camp

Master cooking and bak-

Venue

Culinary Guru Institute, Hyderabad. Till January 11, 2025.

Rs 70.01 lakh of defrauded woman recovered

PNS HYDERABAD

Rachakonda Cyber Crime Police recovered Rs 70,01,788 for a 65-year-old woman, Geetha Upadhyay from Uppal who fell victim to digital arrest scam. According to the Police, the victim received a WhatsApp call on December 8, 2024, from a person impersonating a Mumbai Cyber Crime officer named Mohit Sharma. The caller falsely accused her of being linked to a mobile SIM card issued in her name, which was allegedly used for illegal activities, including harassment and sharing obscene content. He further claimed that 24 complaints had been filed against the SIM card and threatened her with legal conse-

Exploiting the victim's fear, the fraudster coerced her into disclosing personal information and transferring Rs 1.58 crore, including funds from fixed deposits (FDs) and Public Provident Funds (PPFs), to various accounts. The victim was also warned against sharing the matter with anyone. Realising she had been duped, she approached the Rachakonda Cyber Crime Police Station in LB Nagar.

ACP S Shivashankar swiftly registered the case and led the investigation. With coordinated efforts, Inspector Maqbool Jani and his feam traced the funds to ICICI Bank, Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, and successfully recovered Rs 70,01,788.

City Pioneer



Tourism dept unveils 'Telangana

Awaits You' promotional video

Kumram Bheem Project

The state's cultural and his-

torical wealth is also promi-

nently displayed, with stun-

ning visuals of the UNESCO-

recognised Ramappa temple and Bhudan Pochampally,

honoured as the Best Tourism

Village by the UNWTO.

Other notable sites featured

include the Yadagirigutta tem-

ple, the fort temples of Ghanpuram, Pandavulagutta,

Nagarjuna Sagar, and the picturesque Ghanpuram lake.

initiative, the department aims

to entice global travellers and

showcase its unique blend of natural splendor, historical

grandeur and cultural rich-

ness. The tourism depart-

ment is confident that this

video will play a pivotal role

in positioning Telangana as a premier global travel destina-

Through this promotional

Police crackdown on sale of banned Chinese manja



With Sankranti season round the corner, shop-keepers get set with the sale of kites and manja

PNS HYDERABAD

Hyderabad City Police's Mangalhat division has launched a stringent drive against the sale of banned Chinese manja, a synthetic, non-biodegradable kite string known to endanger human lives, birds and animals. Acting on credible information, the police seized a total of 1,094 bobbins of the illegal string and registered 18 cases against 22 accused individuals during their operation, which began on November 10, 2024.

Led by Inspector M Mahesh and Sub-Inspectors of Mangalhat police station, the drive was con-

ducted under the supervision of ACP K Venkata Reddy and guided by Additional DCP Md Ashfaq and DCP G Chandra Mohan of the South West Zone. The team targeted shops selling the banned manja and kites in the Mangalhat area, ensuring swift action against

Authorities have issued stern warnings to shopkeepers, instruct-

offenders

ing them to refrain from selling the prohibited manja.

Those who fail to comply will face severe legal consequences. To further prevent harm, police con-

ducted awareness meetings with residents and customers, highlight-

2025 CALENDAR

ing the dangers posed by the synthetic kite string and the need for safer alternatives.

The police have also emphasised the importance of precautions during kite-flying, urging residents to use rooftops with compound walls or railings to prevent accidents. Citizens have been advised not to purchase or use the banned Chinese manja, as violators will face legal penalties.

The South West Zone Police remains committed to ensuring public safety and protecting the environment by cracking down on the sale and use of non-biodegradable kite strings

NMDC aims for 50 MT

milestone in FY25

Payinstacard chairman Pachipala Doraswamy inaugurates the new office in Gachibowli on Thursday

Payinstacard plans

to grow its workforce to 100 by year-end

Payinstacard, a leading fintech company, has opened a new office in Gachibowli, show-

ing its rapid growth. The company aims to expand its workforce to 100 by the end of

On Thursday, Pachipala Doraswamy, India partner at Brandix India Apparel City

and Payinstacard chairman, attended the inauguration alongside board member

Payinstacard has achieved impressive milestones, including 100,000+ users and a

gross transaction volume exceeding Rs 1 billion in just six months. Its customerfocused approach and low fees have made

it a preferred choice for digital payments in

sectors like utilities, rent and education. Recently, the company also launched its ser-

CEO Sai Krishna highlighted their com-

mitment to innovation and customer sat-

isfaction. Meanwhile, Co-founder Nagesh

Kotipalli emphasised the new office's mod-

ern design, aimed at driving collaboration

and productivity. He also noted plans to

recruit top talent from Tier 2/3 cities while

NPCI authorisation position Payinstacard to scale operations, drive innovation and

deliver secure, seamless payment experi-

He also mentioned strategic partnerships with banks, RBI-licensed aggregators and

promoting a supportive work culture.

vices on Play Store and iOS.

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

FY 2025-26.

Sandhya Rani.

PNS HYDERABAD

The National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) achieved its highest-ever December production in 2024, with 4.71 million tonnes (MT), a 5.13% growth compared to the previous year. It also sold 3.91 MT during the same

By the end of 2024, NMDC recorded cumulative production of 30.77 MT and sales of 31.80 MT. Although these figures slightly declined from the previous year, the company's strong performance in Q3 offset the dip and signaled a promising Q4. NMDC's Q3 production of 13.29 MT was its highest ever for the quarter, setting a new operational benchmark.

Commenting on the achievement, CMD (additional charge) Amitava Mukherjee stated that the NMDC overcame challenges like the monsoon slowdown and price fluctuations with consistent growth in iron ore production. He emphasised the company's focus on balancing production and expansion, expressing confidence in achieving a 50 million tonnes milestone in FY25. He also noted as India's leading iron ore ing capacity to 100 MT in the next five years.

TSAA set to expand with focus on medium drones

DEEPIKA PASHAM

PNS HYDERABAD

In a bid to elevate the global

profile of Telangana's tourist

destinations, the State

Tourism department has

released a captivating promotional audio-visual (AV) video titled "Telangana Awaits

You.' The 58-second video,

designed to attract tourists

from across the globe, beau-

tifully showcases the state's

natural beauty and heritage

The video highlights some

of Telangana's most iconic

locations, including the

breathtaking Jodeghat valley,

the lush expanse of the

Nallamala Amrabad Tiger

Reserve and the serene

Sanctuary. It also features the

scenic backwaters of the

Sriramsagar Project (SRSP) at

Nandipet and the historic

Wildlife

Kinnerasani

deepikapasham2015@gmail.com HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Aviation Academy (TSAA) is set to expand its Drone Academy in 2025 by introducing a new drones. Additionally, they are testing First Person View (FPV) drones and may soon receive authorisation to train applicants in this technology.

The TSAA has collaborated with the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) to offer advanced drone pilot training.

SN Reddy, Secretary and CEO of TSAA, mentioned that aspiring drone pilots undergo a five-day training programme at TSAA. Those interested can further their education at NRSC, focusing on data management and analysis. Since the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in February, approximately 91 students have completed train-



ing at NRSC.

In the upcoming year, TSAA plans to provide ample opportunities for applicants and aspiring drone pilots to learn how to operate medium drones. They have acquired two medium drones to enhance their training programmes, which previously focused solely on small drones.

Women are coming forward to become drone pilots, the last batch has three women from different fields. One woman has a drone at home and as she wishes to travel she wanted to use it for video pur-

The current drone pilot

training spans five days, after which pilots receive a certificate from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) authorising them to operate small drones. The course fee is Rs 35,000, and the fee structure for the upcoming

Dinakar Devireddy, Head of Drone Pilot Training at TSAA, highlighted that there is no age limit for applicants, noting a significant increase in aspirants for each batch. Regarding employment opportunities, he stated that the drone industry is rapidly growing. While individuals can assemble drones at home, obtaining permission to fly them requires formal training, underscoring the role of academies like TSAA.

Devireddy also mentioned that he assists students seeking employment by connecting them with startups. Additionally, the expanding use of drones in agriculture opens various avenues for freelancers.

M.C. MEMBERS



The 2025 calendar of Swatantra was launched by Swatantra channel Chief Editor Ramesh Kandula. event. Ramesh extended New Year greetings to the people of Telugu states

Delegates from NIT Hamirpur meet Governor

The delegates of Yuva Sangam Phase V from NIT Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh and Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad visited Raj Bhavan in Telangana and met Governor Jishnu Dev Varma on Thursday.

This visit, under the Ministry of Education's 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' initiative, is aimed to promote cultural exchange and national unity. Delegates from NIT Hamirpur shared

Himachal Pradesh's rich heritage, while those from Telangana highlighted their state's vibrant traditions. Governor Varma emphasised youth empower-



ment and regional harmony and urged the delegates to embrace diversity and work collectively for progress. Discussions on leadership, innovation and respect were also conducted.

GRAND INAUGURATION

Today 5.00 pm at Exhibition Grounds

Sri Komatireddy Venkat Roddy Garu. Sri Pownam Prabbakar Garu.

Guests of Honor

Meanwhile, Dr Param Singh, Nodal Officer of Yuva Sangam Phase V, expressed gratitude to the Governor, reaffirming the programme's dedication to national integration.

Yuva Sangam, aligned with EBSB, provides youth exposure to five areas: tourism, traditions, development, people-to-people connections and technol-

Launched in 2016, the initiative stems from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for unity, proposed during Rashtriya Ekta Divas in 2015. Over 4,795 participants have joined 114 tours across previous phases, showing massive enthusiasm nation-wide.

HYDRAA uncovers traces of Eedula Kunta lake

PNS HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency (HYDRAA) has initiated efforts to reclaim the historical traces of Eedula Kunta lake in Khanamet, located in Serilingampally mandal.

Acting on complaints from locals that the lake had disappeared, HYDRAA conducted detailed survey with the Survey of India on Thursday to demarcate the

lake's boundaries. Using high-resolution maps from the National Remote

Sensing Centre, HYDRAA had already identified the lake's remnants. A month ago, Hydraa Commissioner AV Ranganath inspected the site and observed encroachments on the lake area.

Tumudukunta and Eedula Kunta was blocked during the construction of a bridge near Cyber City (HITEC City), leading to water inflow being cut off. This allowed portions of the lake to be filled with soil and occupied by alleged land-grabbers. The controversy intensified as a real estate

company claimed ownership of the site, countering local complaints.

HYDRAA officials summoned both parties for an inquiry, during which evidence was submitted

about the alleged encroachments. On Thursday, Survey of India conducted a detailed survey using topographical maps to confirm the presence of Eedula Kunta lake between Khanamet and Kukatpally village boundaries. The survey also identified Complaints revealed that the the Full Tank Level (FTL) and flood channel connecting water spread areas of the lake.



OFFICE BEARERS





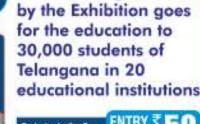


& President - Exhibition Society









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HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | JANUARY 3, 2025

CRPs' strike delays survey to identify out-of-school children

The survey aimed at identifying out-of-school children, including those in the 15-19 age group, which was scheduled to begin on December 12, has yet to commence due to an ongoing strike by the Cluster Resource Persons (CRPs) of the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan. The CRPs have been on strike for the past 22 days, demanding the fulfillment of their various concerns, and there is no indication that the survey will proceed in the near future.

The month-long survey, which was supposed to start on December 12, is crucial for identifying children who have remained out of school for nearly a month. It is also intended to find students aged 15-19 who have dropped out or never enrolled. Teachers, retired educators, youth associations, and panchayat secretaries were supposed to assist the CRPs in conducting the survey. In cases where physically chal-



lenged children are identified, the details are to be forwarded to inclusive education resource persons for further support.

Once the data is collected, it is expected to be uploaded onto the Prabhandh portal, and the out-of-school children should

be enrolled in the nearest government schools. College students would be encouraged to take advantage of open education

The survey also includes children of brick kiln workers, who are typically migrant labourers from states like Odisha and Maharashtra. Schools are set up near brick kilns or the children are enrolled in neighboring government schools. Special volunteers, paid by brick kiln owners, assist these children. Mid-day meals are provided from nearby schools, and transfer certificates are issued before the children move to new locations.

Last year, 420 children were successfully identified and enrolled in nearby schools. However, due to the ongoing strike, this year's survey has yet to begin.

Officials said the survey would commence as soon as the government is likely to take a decision regarding the ongoing



/aishnavi, wife of Rakesh who was allegedly harassed by a moneylender, speaking to the media in

'Harassed' by moneylender, man dies of heart attack

A tragedy unfolded at the dawn of the New Year at Vangapally village under Kamalapur mandal in the district. Akunuri Rakesh, a resident of Vangapalli, reportedly died of a heart attack late at night after being unable to bear the harassment from a finance company. His family members stated that he passed away due to a heart attack.

Rakesh's wife, Vaishnavi, shared with the media that her husband had taken a personal loan from Arman Finance. Due to financial difficulties over the past three months, there was a delay in repaying the loan, which led to repeated visits by finance recovery agents to their house. These agents created disturbances, filed cases, and

threatened to send him to jail, causing immense stress.

Rakesh told his wife that he had

chest pain, and he was rushed to the hospital by ambulance. The doctors informed her that he died of a heart

Vaishnavi also mentioned that they had filed a complaint at the local police station regarding the harass-ment by the finance company. Villagers accused these finance companies of luring people with initial small loans and later exploiting them for profit, often leading to severe consequences. They demanded that the government take action to regulate such microfinance institutions.

The untimely death of Rakesh cast a shadow of sorrow over the vil-

CPM alleges Gairan land grabbing

PNS NAGARKURNOOL

The Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) has alleged that some individuals have encroached upon the Gairan land – the land ear-marked by Collector for free pasturage village cattle - in Atchampeta and wanted the State government to take possession of the land from them and distribute it to the landless poor, according to a memorandum submitted by the

Police Commissioner

unveils *Swatantra*

Channel calendar

The Swatantra TV Channel's 2025 cal-

endar was unveiled by Ramagundam

Police Commissioner M Srinivas. He

emphasised that Swatantra News

Channel should remain a platform for

the common people and stand by the

people every day. The calendar was

released at the Ramagundam Police

PNS RAMAGUNDAM

Commissionerate.

PNS KAMAREDDY

The mystery surrounding the

death of a sub-inspector, woman constable and comput-

er operator in Kamareddy dis-

trict remains unresolved. The police are investigating

whether the three individuals

committed suicide or were

blackmailed into taking their

lives. Important developments

are unfolding every day in the

case. The police have reported-

ly gathered key information.

Along with the call data

records of the deceased, their

WhatsApp chats have also

been collected. This data has

party leaders to Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO) here on Thursday.

According to the memorandum, an extent of 4.31 acres of Gairan land under Survey number 293 near the Idgah on Nagarkurnool road should be immediately freed from the individuals who grabbed it for distribution to the homeless poor. District executive body member of the party and former sarpanch of Narasayapalli L Desh Nayak alleged that

PNS HYDERABAD

some individuals have been levelling the Gairan land to develop housing plots and sell them and appealed to the State government to take possession of the Rs 50 crore worth land.

According to the land records the said land is the government land from 1954 to 2013. However, the individuals are trying to encroach on the land by falsifying the land

memorandum

Cybercriminal prevented

from stealing money

An unknown miscreant, who claimed to have been call-

ing from the IndusInd Bank Credit Card Department,

has stolen Rs 66,000 from the bank account of a per-

son. The victim filed a complaint at the Khammam

Khanapuram Haveli Police Station, according to

Inspector Bhanuprakash. The incident occurred when

the victim, a resident of Balajinagar in the Khammam

in the limits of Haveli Police Station, received a call from

ing from the IndusInd Bank Credit Card Department,

asking for an update on the credit card. The caller, using

the number 9835074668, spoke with the victim and

transferred Rs 66,739 from the victim's bank account.

called the 1930 helpline. As a result, the funds were not

transferred to the cybercriminal's account. The fraud-

ster, identified as Bhupal Chandra Mandal from

Upon realising the fraud, the victim immediately

an unfamiliar person who claimed to have l

Jharkhand, is currently under investigation.

appealed to Atchampeta RDO to respond immediately and take possession of the lands. If the government officials failed to take possession of the lands, the CPI-M would see to it that huts are raised on the said land and wage struggles till the land is distributed to the landless

CPI-M Atchampeta mandal secretary S MalleshBalmuru, secretary M SankarNaik and others took part in the event.

Probe ordered

into fake

certificates

High-level officials have

launched an investigation at

the Mannanu DDO office

into nearly 200 individuals

allegedly obtaining jobs in

various departments with

Recently, a group of local

people in Amrabad and

Padara mandals were found

to have illegally acquired

agency documents and got

jobs in police, forestry, and

other departments. A state-

level complaints led to the

District Forest Officer

Rohit Gopidi, Achampet

Revenue Divisional Officer

Madhavi and the Amrabad

and Padara Tashildars are

investigating the bogus cer-

tificates. Local outsiders

allegedly bribed officials to

obtain fake agency certifi-

cates, depriving the local

youth of job opportuni-

ties. The local unemployed

youth are expressing their

anger over the issue. They

are demanding a fair and

legal investigation.

the Amrabad mandal.

PNS NAGARKURNOOL

Security at Rajanna temple grossly inadequate

PNS VEMULAWADA

Devotees have alleged that security at the Rajanna Temple in Vemulawada is grossly inadequate. Though thousands of devotees visit the temple daily, and the temple secures considerable income, security measures taken by the

authorities are inadequate. While temple officials claim that dozens of CCTV cameras installed to monitor security, in practice, it appears that the authorities have taken steps to monitor the oper-

ation of the

flaws in the temple's security. For instance, a few days ago, three minor children were caught stealing money from the temple's hundis in the sanctum Earlier the money from the same hundi, but neither the temple staff nor

were no traces of the girl in the footage obtaiend from the

devices. Recently, several incidents have highlighted the unpleasant experience. There

the security personnel noticed it. This reflects the failure of

Additionally, about a week

ago, a young girl went missing during her visit to the temple,

and her parents filed a com-

plaint at the local police sta-

tion. When the police tried to review the CCTV footage in

security at the temple.

cameras installed in the temple. Upon further investigation, it was revealed that there was no data on the same minors had stolen cameras. This led to significant doubts about the security at Rajanna Temple.

Car mows down 40-year-old woman

PNS NAGARKURNOOL

In Nagar Kurnool district, a car travelling at high speed caused a disaster near Peddamuddunoor village under

The car flipped into the air and wreaked havoc, killing a woman, named Lakshmamma (40). The driver of the car was seriously injured.

The incident came to light on Thursday. The car, which was on its way from Nagarkurnool to Kollapur on Wednesday, lost control and veered off the road. Due to the high speed, the car flipped and ran over Lakshmamma, who was walking on the side of the road. The woman died on the spot.

The injured driver was rushed to Nagarkurnool Area Hospital by ambulance for treatment. Based on a complaint from the victim's family, the police have filed a case and launched an investigation into the incident.

Nightmare for cyclist as Chinese manja slits neck

PNS BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

The deadly nature of kite manja (kite string) has once again been proved. A cyclist was severely injured when the banned Chinese manja (string), used for flying kites, wrapped around the neck of the cyclist, causing his neck to be cut and resulting in heavy bleeding. This incident occurred in Ramavaram in Bhadradri

Kothagudem district. The condition of the injured person is stated to be critical, and he was immediately rushed to the hospital in Kothagudem. From there, he was transferred to Hyderabad for better treatment. Despite the ban on Chinese manja, it is still wide-



ly available in the market. Unaware children are purchasing it and using it to fly kites. Chinese manja threads had been responsible for several fatalities in the past. There have also been increasing injuries and deaths among birds. Police are urging kite flyers to avoid using Chinese manja threads during Sankranti



Land deal irregularities alleged in Rangareddy district

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Allegations of widespread land deal irregularities in Ranga Reddy district have been made, drawing attention to the state of government lands and the role of officials in protecting them. Accusations against former District Collector Amoy Kumar regarding his alleged involvement in these irregularities have added fuel to the controversy.

As government leaders intensify their scrutiny of land issues in the district, numerous incidents of malpractice are reportedly being uncovered. Reports suggest that irregularities involving ponds, Sikham lands, Launi lands, and even trust lands. In several constituencies, including Ibrahimpatnam, Maheshwaram, Chevella,

Shadnagar, Serilingampally, LB Nagar, and Rajendranagar took place. Confusion over government lands persists. Allegedly, some unsettled or disputed lands have even disappeared from official records.

The situation has raised concerns about corruption within the administrative system. Observers note that if senior officials are implicated in such malpractices, it could indicate deeper issues at the grassroots.

The government has introduced a new law aimed at protecting public lands, but questions remain about its effective-

Whether these measures will restore order and accountability in land management in Ranga Reddy district is something the public eagerly awaits.

Collector inspects Indira Mahila Shakti canteen

PNS KHAMMAM

Collector Muzammil Khan, along with Additional Collector P Srija and trainee Collector Mrinal Shrestha on Thursday visited the Indira Mahila Shakti Canteen on the premises of the Collectorate

and had tea at the canteen. He advised the organisers

ments for cleaning the utensils at the canteen and asked them to keep the surroundings hygienic.



Khammam Collector Muzammil Khan visiting Indira Mahila Shakti Canteen in

Further, he suggested that the management adjust the menu based on customer preferences. He advised the restaurant management to get feedback from the Collectorate

employees. For the benefit of the people visiting the Collectorate, boards should be installed on the premises and near the bus station there is a canteen on the second floor of the Collectorate building and bringing outside food is not entertained.

District Development Officer Sanyasaiah, Additional DRDO Nooruddin, officials and others were present. The Collector advised restaurant management to adjust the menu based on customer preferences.



Maruthi Nagar Branch # 8-3-222/tiS/204,Shalimer Apartments Yousufguda Main road,MadhuranagacHyder

(*Retain whichever is applicable) Sale notice for sale of immovable properties E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation an Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 road wit proviso to Rule 8 (E) 9(1))*(Rotain whichover is applicable) of the Security Intere (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in perficular to the Borrower (s) and Guerantor () that the below described immovable property mortgagad/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical (whichever is applicable) possession of which has been laken by the Authorised Officer of Indian Bank, Manutinagar branch, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is whe s", and "Whatever there is" on: 24.01.2025. for recovery of Rs 64.67,356.00F-(Rupses Sixty Fo Laiths Sixty Seven Thousand Three Handred Fifty Six Only (as on 30.12.2004.) due to the India Bank, Manuineger branch, Secured Creditor, from Mc.Wa.Wis NY Gandikota Srimivasa Ra

borrower) Mr. Nacimpali Gopala Krishna, SrO Sto Rams Raju (Gaussentor) Laskapel Remesh, Sro L. Raguwsiah (Gaurantor), & Mr. Gandikota Sai Sandeep (Borrower). The specific details of the property intended to be brought to sale through e-auction mode as

Detailed description of the Property

All that the Office Unit No 2. On first floor of Other Manaion North east Admessuring 1765 sq. including common area), alongwith car parking together with proportionate undivided share and 37.12 sq yards out of 297 sq yards in premises no 6-3-166211, situated at Enragada. Nec Jokus Theatre Hydershad Boundaries North: Open to sky, South: Unit No 1, East: Open to Sk;

Encumbrances on property	NII
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Bid incremental amount	Rs.10000/- (Rupees ten thousand only)
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Uliance Pvt. Ltd. to perficipate in online bid. For Technical Assistance, please call 8291220220. togishation status and CMD status, phases email to support transmittigistalifance.com/F reporty details and photograph of the property and auditor terms and conditions, please vis stgas/basniknet com and for clarifications related to this portet, please contact PSB Aliance Pric. Ltd Contact No. 8291230220, Bidders are advised to use Property ID Number mentioned above while irching for the property in the website with https://bearkinst.com

Sdi-Authorised Officer

nesses to the incident. The police suspect that one of them jumped into a lake, and until they met at a specific

the case from various angles.

now become the most crucial aspect of the investigation. The death case of subinspector Sai Kumar, woman constable Shruthi and computer operator Nikhil has caused a stir across Telangana. It has been eight days since the tragedy took place, but the mystery of the suicide case remains unsolved. There are many doubts regarding the deaths of Sai Kumar, Shruthi and Nikhil. The Kamareddy district police are investigating

The Superintendent of Police Sindhu Sharma confirmed there were no eyewit-



them, which led to their deaths. The police are also investigating the complaint by Nikhil about a threat to his life. Meanwhile, pressure is

Mystery surrounding death of two

cops, computer operator deepens

The call data records, according to sources, showed that sub-inspector

Saikumar, woman constable Shruti and computer operator Nikhil spoke to

each other hours together before they jumped into the tank on December 25

increasing on the Kamareddy police to make progress in the case. The cyber forensic report is expected to play a crucial role in the investigation. At this point, much of the investigation is based on speculation.

The phone call and WhatsApp chat data of the victims have become key elements in the case. Police have discovered that on the day of their deaths, Sai Kumar, Shruthi, and Nikhil spoke on the phone for hours. It is known that they drowned in a large lake near Adloor Yellareddy in Kamareddy district on December 25. According to call data, they talked on the phone from early morning on Wednesday SIM cards across two phones, Nikhil used two phones, and Shruthi used one. It seems they had been talking a lot on the phone for about a week before the incident. The police found that

Shruthi and Nikhil were in constant contact via WhatsApp messages. The WhatsApp chats suggest there was a romantic relationship between them. However, the key question now is why Sai Kumar was involved in this relationship. There are rumours that Nikhil and Shruthi were planning to marry, but due to some disagreements, their wedding was postponed, which led to the conflict. In this triangular love story, local people are now considering sub-inspector Sai Kumar as the main antagonist. However, there is speculation that the police are dragging their feet in the investigation to portray Sai Kumar as a hero.

of the canteen to run the facility on profitable lines. He asked the organisers to make special arrange-



Khammam on Thursday

I will not comment on what the motives were behind the distribution

of free power generated using environmentally harmful core sector material. But sustainability in the

the pioneer

ACROSS THE STATES



Odisha doubles pension of freedom fighters

disha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Thursday announced that the pension of freedom fighters would be doubled. The CM also announced that those who were arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) during the emergency period will now be eligible for a monthly pension of Rs 20,000. Majhi made the announcements while addressing a function held on the occasion of the All India Freedom Fighters Day. "Acknowledging freedom fighters role in India's struggle for independence, the state government will enhance their pension amount. The freedom fighters who were imprisoned will get an increased pension of Rs 20,000 from earlier Rs 10,000 a month," he said. Freedom fighters who actively participated in the Independence struggle, but were not imprisoned, would now get Rs 15,000 instead of Rs 9,000 a month. Majhi said those who were arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) during the 21-month Emergency period will now be eligible for a monthly pension of Rs 20,000.



Assam elephant population increases to 5,828

ssam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday said Aelephant population in the state increased to 5,828 from 5,719 in the last seven years. The forest department's Elephant Population Estimation in 2024 revealed a growth in elephant population, with 36 per cent of them being adult females. "A safe haven for our Gentle Giants. Assam means animal safety & their thriving numbers tell the tale. The Elephant Estimation Exercise carried out by @assamforest has captured 5,828 jumbos in the State with 36% adult females, bringing joy to every animal and nature lover", the Chief Minister posted on X. The elephant population comprised 3,044 adults, both male and female, 1,042 sub-adults, 717 juvenile and 1,025 calves. The estimation was conducted in 1,536 survey blocks, across 43 forest divisions with a total manpower of 5.743 involved in the exercise. Drones were also used extensively during the survey.



K'taka decides to hike bus fare by 15%

he Karnataka cabinet on Thursday decided to increase the bus fares in the state-owned transport corporations by 15 per cent. The decision was taken in view of the substantial hike in operational costs such as increase in spending on fuel prices and staff, Karnataka Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H K Patil said. "The cabinet has decided to revise the bus fare of the four state transport corporations of Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), North West Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC), Kalyana Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (KKRTC) and Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) by 15 per cent," Patil said while briefing reporters here. The Minister said the decision will come into effect from January 5. According to him, the BMTC bus fares were increased on January 10, 2015 when the diesel prices were Rs 60.90 per litre. "The daily diesel consumption was Rs 9.16 crore 10 years ago by the four corporations, which has now increased to Rs 13.21 crore. The expenditure on staff in these four corporations was Rs 12.95 crore daily, which has increased to Rs 18.36 crore daily.

'Don't depend on freebies, produce own solar power'

(KARNATAKA)

Union Minister for Renewable Energy Prahlad Joshi urged people on Thursday not to be dependent on the governments for freebies, but to produce their own solar power.

Joshi attended a consultative meeting with the consumers, electricity supply company (ESCOM) officials, and people's representatives to discuss Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana here on Thursday.

"I will not comment on what the motives were behind the distribution of free power generated using environmentally harmful core sector material. But sustainability in the power sector is going to be the key to a safer future for the country," said Joshi, who is also the Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

According to Joshi, Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 15, 2024 aims to provide free electricity to households in India by providing a subsidy to install solar panels on their roofs. The subsidy will cover

power sector is going to be the key to a safer future for the country. I remember the statistics: 2.5 lakh tonnes of coal were being mined at enormous cost and environmental

up to 40 percent of the cost of

He said with the free

"In this bargain, so many

short cuts will have to be taken

by the implementation bodies

in the form of cutting produc-

tion costs, thereby becoming

unproductive and ending up

coal minister, Joshi said the

cost being paid is enormous for

what is being distributed as

"free". "I remember the statis-

tics: 2.5 lakh tonnes of coal

were being mined at enormous

cost and environmental degra-

dation, transported to the ther-

Recalling the time he was a

schemes involving non-renew-

able sources, somebody still

the solar panels.

has to pay a price.

sick," said Joshi.

degradation, transported to the thermal power producers, and the process of producing thermal power involved a very high cost. mal power producers, and the process of producing thermal

cost," he added. Joshi also said the other renewable energy sources the government was looking at for development in the future, tidal, wind, and geothermal power are on the anvil.

power involved a very high

"Research and product development are underway in

these forms of energy.

The solar power management is also undergoing ground breaking research and product development, which will extend the life of solar power units from 25 years to 40 years. Their installed capacity will also increase, and the cost is going to be rationalised depending on the demand," added Joshi.

He said there is scientific data available that by 2050, the heat on earth is going to reach 'critical' levels.

"If we do not buckle up and use fewer heat-generating power modules, we may reach there even by 2030," Joshi pointed out. He also pointed to Rajasthan and Gujarat, which experienced temperatures rising up to 50 degrees Celsius in 2024, as examples.

"If the temperature retains its upward tendencies, it is projected that the GDP will come down by 19 percent as a result of manpower loss due to fatigue and health issues of the human resource," said Joshi.

BSF allowing infiltrators to enter India to destabilise Bengal: Mamata



PNS KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday accused the Border Security Force of letting infiltrators from Bangladesh enter India and charged the BSF with trying to destabilise the state.

Stating that she could sense a "blueprint of the central government behind this attitude of the BSF", Banerjee also accused a section of district magistrates and SPs of helping the border guards in their illegal act.

"We have got information that the BSF is letting infiltrators enter India through Islampur, Sitai, Chopra and several other bordering areas. The BSF is also torturing women and trying to desta-bilise the state," she said at an administrative review meeting at the state secretariat 'Nabanna'. Visa is not our matter but that of the central government. We used to get the

'Ultimate level of delusion'

PNS NEW DELHI

Union minister Sukanta Majumdar flayed West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday over her accusations against the BSF and said she has reached the "ultimate level of delusion".

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader's remarks came after Banerjee accused the Border Security Force (BSF) of letting infiltrators from Bangladesh enter India and trying to destabilise West Bengal. The Trinamool Congress (TMC) supremo also said she could sense a "blueprint of the central government" behind this attitude of the BSF.

list of who were taking flights to come here, but now it has been stopped. So, we do not know who all are coming," she said. The Trinamool Congress supremo claimed that it was a conspiracy to blame the TMC for the infiltration issue.

CENTRE-DELHI FACE-OFF



Union Minister accuses Atishi govt of blocking farm schemes

PNS NEW DELHI

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Thursday accused the Delhi farmers of benefits under central schemes and urged Chief Minister Atishi to keep political differences aside in matters of farmer welfare.

In a letter to Atishi, Chouhan said the AAP government has failed to implement major central initiatives including the Integrated Horticulture Development Mission, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, and the Beej Gram programme. "I am writing this letter in

sadness. You have never taken proper decisions in the interest of farmers. Your government has stopped implementation of farmers-friendly central schemes. Your government is not sympathetic towards farmers. Today, farmers in Delhi are upset and worried," Chouhan said in the let-

ter dated January 1.

Due to the non-implementation of multiple central schemes, Delhi's farmers are being denied crucial benefits ranging from seed distribution to infrastructure development, he said.

The Union minister said the absence of the Integrated Horticulture Development Mission has prevented farm-

"I am writing this letter in sadness. You have never taken proper decisions in the Your government has stopped implementation of farmers-friendly central schemes. Your

government is not sympathetic towards farmers. Today, farmers in Delhi are upset and worried," Chouhan said.

ers from accessing benefits for nursery establishment, tissue culture facilities, planting material procurement, and post-harvest infrastructure.

The non-implementation of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana has further impacted farmers' access to agricultural mechanization, precision irrigation, soil health initiatives, crop insurance, and the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, he added.

Chouhan expressed concern over Delhi's failure to implement the Beej Gram programme, which offers benefits including seed distribution, testing facilities, laboratory infrastructure improvement, and assistance for seed certification agencies.

Record tourist inflow in Kaziranga

PNS GUWAHATI

Kaziranga National Park (KNP) recorded the highest tourist inflow in the last two decades with 1,64,636 people visiting its four ranges since its opening this season in October 2024, an official said on Thursday.

The park earned a revenue of Rs 43,226,225 from entry fee which is a testament to its growing appeal and success of recent initiatives, the official added. The park generally remains open from October to May, following which it takes a monsoon

In October 2024, 30,058 tourists visited the park, up from 17,271 in the same month the previous year. In November, there were 53,367 visitors, compared to 35,006 December, the number rose to 81,211, from 65,139 in 2023, the official added.

PM's new year resolutions nothing short of 'jumlas'

PNS NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's new year resolutions are nothing short of 'jumlas' (rhetoric) destroying the lives of every citizen.

In a post on X, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the government has given no solution for the economic turmoil created by it as he cited seven indicators to substantiate his point.

"The Modi government has no solution for the economic turmoil it has created! Seven indicators that illustrate the extent of mess in the lives of ordinary Indians. "50 percent increase in Gold Loans and 30 per cent jump in gold loan NPAs. Private consumption the total value of goods and services purchased by households has slowed down in the last 8 quarters and has not



has no solution for the economic turmoil it has created! Seven indicators that llustrate the extent of mess in the lives of ordinary Indians."

recovered to pre-COVID levels," he said in his post.

Kharge said car sales growth has plunged to a four-year low and wages have grown at a 0.8 per cent in the engineering, manufacturing, process, and infrastructure (EMPI) sectors

ment, particularly to Prime

Minister Narendra Modi, to

intervene and negotiate with

'We want our son back and

we don't know how to bring

him home. We are calling on

the prime minister to help us,"

Babu's mother said, speaking

to reporters. "He was a simple

boy. He never did anything

Police (Rural) Amrit Jain con-

Aligarh Superintendent of

like this before," she added.

Pakistan for Babu's release.

in the past 5 years (2019-2023). Food inflation, he said, has averaged 7.1 per cent over the last eight quarters. Indirect taxation in the form of GST on essential items are depleting household savings which are at a 50-year low, the Congress chief claimed. "Household financial liabil-

ities are now 6.4 per cent of GDP – the highest in decades. Rupee has hit all-time low, forcing foreign fund outflows and loss to small investors worth lakhs of crores.

"Narendra Modi ji, Your annual 'New Year Resolutions' have been nothing short of 'jumlas' destroying the lives of every citizen," Kharge alleged.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also said according to the RBI, the continuously decreasing and the number of borrowers is

Romance leads Aligarh man to Pakistan jail

PNS ■ ALIGARH (UP)

A 21-year-old man in Aligarh district has found himself behind bars in Pakistan due to a romantic relationship with a girl from across the border, officials here said.

The young man, identified as Badal Babu, was arrested on December 28 by Pakistani authorities in the Punjab province for illegally crossing into the neighbouring country without any legal documents, the officials said.

The shockwave from this unexpected incident reached Babu's village through the media. His parents, who had believed their son was working in a factory in Delhi, were shocked to learn of his arrest through a report sourced from a Pakistani news portal. Babu's father, Kirpal Singh, who lives in Khitkari appealed to the Índian govern-



tion area, told media that the family learned of their son's arrest via social media.

'We couldn't believe it. For us, The family has now

village under Barla police sta-

till this moment we knew that he was working in Delhi, but the next moment we are shocked to discover that he's in a Pakistani jail. It's like something out of a movie," he said, in disbelief.

firmed that they had received a memorandum from the family and would be taking the matter up with the Ministry of External Affairs.
"We will approach the proper channels to provide

whatever assistance is necessary and work towards establishing contact with Babu. Our primary goal is to secure his release from custody in Pakistan," Jain said.

No pressure from BJP-led NDA on us: J-K CM

PNS SRINAGAR

Dismissing suggestions that his National Conference was under pressure to join the BJP-led NDA, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday expressed optimism that the promises made by the Centre to restore statehood of Jammu and Kashmir will be fulfilled at the earliest.

During his first media meet here since assuming office in October, Abdullah emphasised that the region's current status as a Union Territory should be viewed as a temporary arrangement, with the restoration of statehood being the "biggest challenge" his government faces.

Abdullah dismissed rumours suggesting pressure from the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) to alter the National Conference's ideology and join the alliance.

Centre trying to 'bring back' revoked farm laws: Punjab CM

PNS CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Thursday claimed that the Centre was trying to"bring back" the now-repealed farm laws, referring to the newly announced draft of the National Framework Agricultural Marketing.

The AAP-led Punjab government has termed the newly announced draft policy as an attempt to reintroduce the three central agricultural laws passed in 2020 "through backdoor." After a yearlong protest by farmers, the Centre had repealed



Speaking to reporters here, Mann also stated that the demands of the protesting farmers pertain to the central government, which should hold a dia-

logue with the farmers.
"All the demands of the farmers pertain to the Centre, whether

they come from the two forums leading the ongoing agitation at the Shambhu and Khanauri borders or from other farmers' unions. The demands are the same, even though the farm unions may differ," Mann said. "Why does the Centre not invite farmers for a dialogue?" he asked.

Farmers, under the banner of Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, have been camping at the Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana since February 13, after their march to Delhi was stopped by security forces.

After 40 yrs, toxic waste shifted from Bhopal's Union Carbide ed for the nearly seven-hour

PNS ■ DHAR (MP)

Forty years after the Bhopal gas tragedy, 377 tons of hazardous waste has been shifted from the defunct Union Carbide factory for its disposal at a unit in Dhar district, officials said on Thursday.

The toxic waste was transported at around 9 pm on Wednesday in 12 sealed container trucks via a 'green cor-ridor' from Madhya Pradesh capital Bhopal to Pithampur industrial area in Dhar district, located 250 km away.

Amid tight security, the vehicles reached around 4.30 am on Thursday at a factory in Pithampur where the waste will disposed of, Dhar

Superintendent of Police Manoj Singh said over phone. The trucks were currently parked on the factory campus

n Pithampur, he adḋed. "A green corridor was creat-

journey of the vehicles to the Pithampur industrial area in Dhar district," Bhopal Gas Relief Tragedy Rehabilitation Department



Director Swatantra Kumar Singh said on Wednesday.

Nearly 100 persons worked in 30-minute shifts since Sunday to pack and load the waste in trucks, he said.

"They underwent health check-ups and were given rest every 30 minutes," Singh added. The highly toxic methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas leaked from the Union Carbide pesticide factory on the intervening night of December 2-3, 1984, killing at least 5,479 persons and leaving thousands with serious and long-lasting health issues.

The Madhya Pradesh High Court on December 3 rebuked authorities for not clearing the Union Carbide site in Bhopal

despite directions from even the Supreme Court. The HC set a four-week

deadline to shift the waste, observing that even 40 years after the gas tragedy, authorities were in a "state of inertia".

contempt proceedings if its directive was not followed. "If everything is found to be fine, the waste will be incinerated within three months.

The high court bench had

warned the government of

Otherwise, it might take up to nine months," Singh said. Initially, some of the waste will be burnt at the disposal unit in Pithampur and the

residue (ash) will be examined to find whether any harmful elements are left, he said

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Save Priya

Priya's story reveals a harrowing struggle. Efforts must intensify to stop her execution and ensure repatriation

■he story of Nimisha Priya, a nurse from Kerala, currently on death row in Yemen, has sparked widespread debate and concern. With her death sentence sanctioned by Yemen's President Rashad al-Alimi, the clock is ticking on securing her release. Her story is not an isolated case but an ordeal that many workers face in the Gulf and many other countries. This case is not only about the fate of one individual but also raises critical questions about justice, diplomacy and human rights. Nimisha Priya, a trained nurse, moved to Yemen to work in private hospitals and make a career. In 2015, she partnered with Yemeni national Talal Abdo Mahdi to set up a clinic in Sana'a. Yemen's laws necessitate local sponsorship for businesses and Mahdi played that role for Priya. However, this professional relationship spiraled into a nightmare. Mahdi manipulated ownership documents of the clinic, claimed he was her husband using forged and morphed photographs and seized control of her finances. She was harassed mental-



ly and subjected to physical torture and imprisonment in her own home. In 2017, desperate to reclaim her passport and escape his clutches, Priya attempted to sedate Mahdi. Unfortunately, the sedatives proved fatal due to an overdose, leading to his death. The Yemeni judicial system found her guilty of murder, sentencing her a death sentene.

Efforts to appeal her conviction have been exhausted, with the Yemeni Supreme Court and President rejecting her pleas. While Mahdi's death is undeniably tragic, Priya only wanted to regain her life and runaway from coercion and cruelty. If she is executed than it would be travesty of justice and would mean

penalising a victim. Priya's actions, though legally punishable, occurred in a context of desperation and fear for her safety and freedom. The Government of India must assist Nimisha Priya and her family in securing her release and repatriation. Her release hinges on a complex process involving Yemen's tribal justice system and the payment of blood money to Mahdi's family must be paid by the accused to get a pardon. High-level diplomatic discussions with Yemeni authorities and tribal leaders are essential to secure a waiver of the death penalty. Besides, mobilising public support to raise blood money can be a way out. Employing a dedicated legal team with expertise in Yemeni law and tribal negotiations is crucial to ensuring fairness and efficiency in the process. Highlighting Priya's case on global platforms as a human rights issue may garner international support and pressure Yemen to reconsider her sentence. Priya's case underscores the plight of expatriates caught in abusive circumstances. Her actions, while grave, were not premeditated but driven by self-preservation against a backdrop of systemic exploitation. Repatriating Priya to India would allow her a better trial. The Indian government and civil society must step up efforts to secure her release and ensure she receives a fair chance to rebuild her life.



ocal folk singers (Baul Fakir) perform to entertain visitors and wishing them Happy New Year, in Birbhum

science research funding

Crowdfunding can transform

By connecting directly with the public, crowdfunding offers

researchers an opportunity to explore bold ideas fueled by passion

Winter session stalemate: Urgent need for reform



There is a pressing need for parliamentary reforms to ensure discipline, decorum and efficiency as a lot of parliamentary time is simply wasted

he Parliament's productivity in the Session was a record low, with only 52 per cent of scheduled work completed. Various factors, including disruptions and lack of quorum, contributed to the reduced output. The confrontation between the treasury benches and a belligerent Opposition continued throughout. The current performance highlights the challenges in maintaining productivity.

The Opposition, in particular, wanted to discuss the Adani issue. Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi has been raising the issue in public. It is a matter of significant public interest due to its implications. Also, the Opposition asked Union Home Minister Amit Shah to apologize for his comments about Dr BR Ambedkar, a highly respected figure in Indian history. The government was not willing to be flexible. With a productivity of merely 40.03 per cent during the Winter session. Lok Sabha passed four of the

five bills it received. Rajya Sabha approved 3 bills. During this session, the Lok Sabha lost 65 hours and 15 minutes, the highest in 2024. Many requests for adjournment motions made in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha were not accepted. The 18th Lok Sabha is different in many respects. For the first time in a decade, we have a strong opposition with an official leader of Opposition (LOP). The bitterness between parties within and outside Parliament is increasing. Neither side is willing to accommodate. Discipline, decorum and dignity of Parliament are of paramount importance. The pressing need for parliamentary reforms is more evident than ever, and action is needed now. Over Rs 97 87 50 000 of taxpayers' money was spent during the Winter Session. The cost of running a Parliament session is over Rs 2.5 lakh per minute, a considerable burden on the exchequer, which should prompt reevaluating our parlia-



mentary practices. The Parliament's high cost and low productivity must be addressed sooner or later. House is often adjourned many times a day. In the last five decades, it has increased by over 100 times. This underlines the need to address the issue. For instance, Parliament saw protests from the ruling BJPled NDA and the aggressive Opposition INDIA Bloc. BJP MPs accused the Congress party of "insulting" Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar. Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi and INDIA Bloc MPs demanded the resignation of Union Home Minister Amit Shah over his comments about Ambedkar.

THE HIGHEST The escalating conflict over this issue resulted in two injuries and police involve-REQUESTS FOR ment. Political parties should focus on honouring **ADJOURNMENT** Ambedkar's legacy instead of **MOTIONS** blaming each other.Other bills include the Mussalman MADE IN Wakf (Repeal) Bill, the Bharatiya LOK SABHA AND Vidhevak. Management (Amendment) RAJYA SABHA Bill, the Bills of Lading Bill, WERE NOT the Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, the Railways (Amendment) Bill, the Banking

Development) Amendment The government also introduced a controversial bill, 'One Nation, One Poll'.

DURING THIS

THE LOK SABHA

LOST 65 HOURS

AND 15 MINUTES,

SESSION,

While the MPs are called lawmakers, Bills have been passed amidst the din and noise without proper discussion. The decreasing time available for parliamentary debates is detrimental to democracy. Protests, adjournments, and shortened sessions have lost nearly half of the sessions. Parliamentarians question the government, elicit information, and check it mainly through the Question

Oilfields (Regulation and

Short Notice questions, calling attention, and adjournment motions all check the MANY executive. But all these are relevant only when the House runs. More efforts need to be made to establish the success of a parliamentary system: Discipline, reforms is more evident than ever, and the time for action including political analysts and citizens, must understand the urgency of the sys-

political parties to citizens interested in governance and parliamentary affairs, should feel this urgency. Economic reforms are imperative to ensure sustainable economic growth. The role of Parliament is linked with the new economic policy, which should lead to a drastic reduction in the role of the State.Professionalising floor management techniques is crucial to ensuring Parliament's efficient func-

tioning.

While we can legitimately be proud of the reasonably successful work of Parliament during the last five decades, Parliament must function in step with the needs of the changing times. We must proceed carefully and cautiously and evolve a national consensus on desirable changes. After Parliament is the communication link between the people and the government. The solution lies in adopting character, and a strong sense healthy parliamentary pracof public morality. The need tices and maintaining decofor comprehensive and rum and discipline, which immediate parliamentary are crucial for dignified conduct in the Parliament. For this, both the governis now. All stakeholders, ment and the Opposition must cooperate.

(The writer is a popular columnist; views are personal)

(Amendment) Bill, and the

heartfelt appreciation for the excellent article titled 'The Statesman and a Gentleman' published in your esteemed newspaper. The article captures the life, legacy and unparalleled contribution of Dr Manmohan Singh to India's economic and political landscape. The article is very informative and educative. I have found Dr V K Bahuguna extremely well-informed. His writings are excellent

Madam —The H-1B visa system, a vital

The lack of a minimum wage threshold further fosters unfair competition for U.S. workers. Tesla CEO Elon Musk has called for reforms, including a minimum wage of \$150,000 to ensure only highly skilled professionals qualify. He advocates simplifying and automating processes to enhance efficiency. Musk also suggests reducing fees to support startups and small businesses, aligning the system with its goal of advancing America's technological and industrial leadership. Reforming the H-1B visa system could boost U.S. innovation, productivity, and tax revenues while balancing competition beauty of deliveries. Yashasvi Jaiswal was

Farmers' protests disrupt daily lives

E EDITO

tem.All stakeholders, from

AN EXCELLENT ARTICLE ON DR SINGH Madam — I am writing to express my

R K Sharma | New Delhi

SIMPLIFY H-1B VISA PROCESS

link between international talent and US companies, has become a contentious issue in the global workplace. It offers opportunities for skilled professionals in fields like technology, medicine, and engineering but faces significant challenges such as intense competition, complex procedures, and unclear minimum wage thresholds. According to a 2024 report by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, only 85,000 of 387,000 applications were approved, with the lotterybased system often excluding highly qualified professionals. Companies like Infosys, TCS, and Google face talent shortages due to limited approvals, while startups struggle with high costs, ranging from \$35,000 to \$50,000 per applica-

forces added up force in the agitation under the grab of farmers Though obviously the so-called farmers who are



eople at large are angrily fed up with the farmers agitation that started with the 3 farm laws enacted by the parliament, which were touted to be the game changer to improve the economic health of farmers across the country. As usual, about every decision of the Union Govt. led by Narendra Modi since 2014, the political opposition with tacit anti-India international forces successfully built the narrative after their anti-CAA agitation faded out and the anti-

between local and foreign workers. With the lone fighter in the middle and his flutransparent and efficient procedures, the system could become a cornerstone of global collaboration and long-term growth, positioning the U.S. as a leading hub for global talent.

R K Jain | Barwani

ROHIT SHARMA NEEDS A BREAK Madam — Australia is the champion in the 'Boxing Day' test at Melbourne when they have everything in their command. The will to win made all the difference and the Aussies did it professionally at MCG in the fourth test to take the lead 2-1 in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. While India lost by a margin of 184 runs by bowled out for a meagre 155 in their chase, the selectors must take a serious call at this juncture. It's once again the pathetic failure of Rohit Sharma, which has been highly disappointing and Kohli partnered him soon in the pavilion by recklessly fishing one well outside the offstump. K L Rahul and N K Reddy can't always be among runs and get out by the

Hindu sentiment of the fundamentalist Khalistani

agitated are from Punjab and have been the recipient of the biggest cake from the state in the name of MSP, subsidies, loan waivers, free electricity etc, what they are demanding now is untenable. The Supreme Court which called for suspension of the farm laws without exercising its authority against the roadblocks is still deaf towards the tragedy of commuters on the highway blocked by these anarchists supported by AAP, Congress and SAD politically just to vent their hatred towards the BJP and Modi. Only forcible evacuation of the highway is the very first thing that needs to be done, the SC and the CJI must order the use of force in public and national interest at the earliest

Jai Prakash Gupta | Ambala

ent 84 couldn't help the team when wickets were falling like ninepins at the other end.

When Pat Cummins sets an example by his responsible all-round display for the Aussies, Rohit Sharma can't have any excuses for his dismal batting. Selectors would continue with Rohit for the final test at Sydney and if the stewardship doesn't go to change in the near future it will be construed as gross injustice for Jasprit Bumrah by denying him the captaincy at the right time. Time has ripened for Bumrah to take over and it's high time for Rohit to gently take a break from the test cricket format to make room for deserving young guns who are in the waiting for long to take pride by wearing the Indian hat. Maybe the Head Coach Gautam Gambhir might have felt that his fitness and form are much better than relying on Rohit and Kohli at this stage.

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



nificant challenges for scientists and institutions, making it a complex and often timeconsuming endeavour.

shift in numerous regions of

A novel paradigm is emerg-

ing, one that is influenced by

the digital economy: crowd-

funding for research. Is it pos-

sible that this community-dri-

ven, decentralised approach

could revolutionise the way

we finance science?

Government funding has

been a cornerstone of scien-

tific research across the globe,

particularly in the domain of

basic research. This funding

plays a vital role in driving

innovation, supporting the

exploration of fundamental

scientific principles, and fos-

tering advancements that

often serve as the foundation

for applied research and tech-

nological development.

Despite its critical impor-

research grants presents sig-

the globe.

The exhaustive application process is one of the foremost difficulties in securing government funding. Researchers must navigate hectic administrative paperwork, including filling out detailed forms, providing extensive documentation, and adhering to strict procedural guidelines. This bureaucratic overhead often becomes a distraction, diverting researchers' time and energy away from their primary focus—scientific dis-

Writing and refining grant proposals, ensuring compliance with submission requirements, and coordinating with tance, accessing government

months. This process can be overwhelming for many scientists, particularly those involved with teaching responsibilities or other professional commitments.

Another challenge is the influence of governmental policy on funding priorities. The allocation of research funds is often tied to the strategic objectives of the ruling government. This means that researchers must tailor their proposals to align with themes or areas of focus deemed significant by policy-

As a result, projects that do not align with government priorities may struggle to find financial support, even if they hold substantial scientific or societal value. Moreover, the eligibility criteria for government funding further restrict access. Typically, government grants are available only to individuals holding doctoral degrees and those affiliated with recognised academic or research institutions, and some agencies restrict people from private

institutions. Crowdfunding is emerging as institutional administrators a revolutionary alternative to

consume weeks or even overcome these hurdles. Crowdfunding involves gathering financial support for a project or venture by soliciting small contributions from a large group of people, typically through online plat-

DHARMAPALAN

It offers a direct, democratic, and flexible solution, empowering researchers to pursue their ideas with fewer constraints while promoting passion-driven inquiry. Crowdfunding researchers to connect directly with the public, garnering financial support for projects that resonate with a broader audience. Platforms like Kickstarter, Indiegogo, FundRazr, Hoope, GoFundMe, etc. have already successfully funded creative projects and their application in scientific research is growing. Crowdfunding science projects require researchers to dedicate considerable time and effort to campaign management, diverting resources away from their core research

(The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies; views are personal)

FIRST COLUMN

INDIA'S NEW TRADE PARADIGM WITH THE US

India faces new challenges from the Trump's tough stance, spurring urgent talks on tariffs and trade



KUMARDEEP BANARJEE

he year gone by saw some crucial path-altering elections in nearly 70 of the most powerful democracies in the world. Some of the most populous countries led by India and including the US, Bangladesh, Indonesia etc. voted for a leadership of their choice in 2024. While the Indian electorate chose to renew another 5-year term for Prime Minister Modi (albeit with a less-than-expected mandate), Bangladesh too renewed its faith in Sheikh Hasina (who was accused of rigging the electoral process to retain power), which ultimately led to her been thrown out in a coup. In a highly polarised election ground, in the US, the incumbent President a front runner for the top job at the white house, pulled out near the finish line, leaving his second in command the Vice President to throw her hat in the ring against a mighty opponent Donald Trump. The US electorate gave a clear mandate for Donald Trump to lead the new global order for the US. Donald Trump's clear victory in the US elections, now potentially could lead to several multilateral, bilateral rejigs, around the globe. President-elect has already nominated several friends and allies from the past, in some of the top jobs.

He has threatened high tariffs for Canada and Mexico while joking that the former is another state of the US. He has strong views on India's trade surplus with the US which is already an issue of concern for Indian officials. Several Indian ministries were in a huddle in the last week of the year 2024, trying to assess the amount of exports from their respective sectors, while looking at the tariffs imposed on US imports. New Delhi-based policy research institute Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) spent the last day of the year discussing 'Trade Tariff and Trump'. Several recommendations were made by the



A press release from the event highlighted in the first paragraph that "India should have comprehensive engagement with the US, as new administration led by President-elect Trump takes over. India should explore a comprehensive new institutional framework to address the multiple issues that arise from trade, investment, technology and finance linkages. India should urgently consider appointing a Task Force or create other institutional mechanisms that bring in domestic policy coherence on these lines." In an unrelated development, India's External Affairs Minister Jaishankar spent the last week of the year in the US, meeting key presidential nominees for the incoming Trump administration and also attending the last foreign affairs ministers meeting under President Biden, even though QUAD as the framework was empowered by Trump Presidency 1.0.

The policy research institute RIS has cautioned to not respond with any knee-jerk reactions, to possible volatile statements emerging from Washington, immediately after President Trump's swearing-in, instead, it suggests "India may need to plan first, plan hard, and yet plan fast." An agile, business approach may be the best way forward to dealing with the incoming administration.

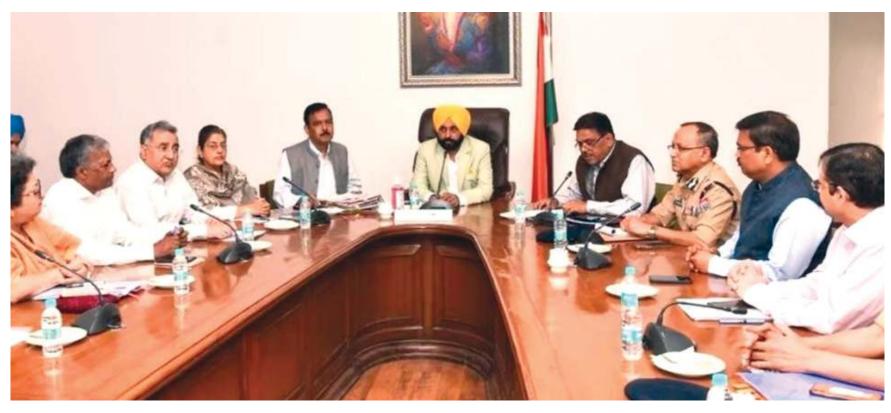
It may also be worthwhile to note that the Indian government should reconsider some of the non-tariff barriers it imposes on imports in the form of regulatory compliances and compulsory testing etc. To avert losses, tie up with our US importers need to be strengthened so that they lobby for their own needs. However, low technology products have high US tariffs. We may be left with an avenue there to improve our participation in the value chains being built up in the US manufacturing sector. "A diversification of markets for Indian products may be needed, which could also have a sectoral focus. India can focus on exporting a certain bunch of products to say the Gulf Nations or the ASEAN group of countries depending on the price advantage. Some hedges need to be built to prevent any major hit of Trump tariffs.

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

AI: Revolutionising Punjab's governance



Punjab has the potential to harness artificial intelligence as a cornerstone for global competitiveness and unprecedented growth and bring about substantial gains



rtificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer a futuristic concept confined to science fiction; it is a transformative force ally. For a state like Punjab, rich in culture and potential but grappling with multifaceted challenges, embracing AI could be a game-changer. With a technocrat policymaker like Arvind Kejriwal, Punjab is uniquely positioned to leapfrog other states by recognising AI as a critical element for global competitiveness to unlock unprecedented growth. One of the first steps toward AI-driven transfor-mation is the creation of a dedicated Ministry of Artificial Intelligence (MAI). Such a ministry, backed with an Artificial Intelligence policy equipped with adequate budget provisions, could centralise its AI initiatives, ensuring that dayto-day work across multiple departments is well-coordinated and strategically aligned.

The ministry could also promote AI lit eracy among citizens, emphasising the benefits of AI and addressing any potential concerns or ethical challenges. A robust policy framework led by MAI could position Punjab among innovative states. States like Télangana have already set an example by launching an AI mission to drive AI adoption across governance, healthcare, and agriculture. Punjab can adapt these learnings to build a robust AI ecosystem that attracts accountability and efficiency. Fostering Accountability and EfficiencyAI is not a replacement for human effort but a tool to support it. AI can free up human resources for more strategic work by automating routine tasks and providing real-time insights. For example, Finland has successfully used AI to improve public services, ensuring accountability and efficiency in governance without over-

burdening employees. Punjab's administration can similarly use AI to track project progress, measure outcomes, and enhance transparency. AI can also play a vital role in curbing corruption, a long-standing issue in governance. By using AI algorithms to analyse pat-



FINANCIAL can be the cornerstone for transformation in Punjab's key sectors:

TRANSACTIONS

1. Health: AI-powered diagnostic tools can receive the corners of the corners o

resources and build public trust in the governance. Empowering Citizens Through AI Successful implementation of AI empowers citizens. AI-driven e-governance platforms can simplify adminis-AI CAN ALSO
PLAY A VITAL
ROLE IN CURBING
CORRUPTION, A
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AI CAN ALSO
PLAY A VITAL
ROLE IN CURBING
CORRUPTION, A
LONG-STANDING
AI can enhance public safety by
AI can enhance public safety by

terns in financial transactions

and detect anomalies, the govern-

ment can identify and address

instances of mismanagement or

fraud. Such measures save

ISSUE IN AI can enhance public safety by enabling predictive policing and improving disaster management systems. By analysing data on crime patterns and natural disasters, AI can help authorities take preventive measures, ensuring ANALYSE PATTERNS IN Revolutionising Key Sectors - AI PATTERNS IN Revolutionising Key Sectors -AI

AND DETECT care delivery in Punjab, especially in rural areas with limited access to quality healthcare. Tamil Nadu's use of AI to predict disease outbreaks and improve maternal healthcare, outcomes, offers, a tic tools can revolutionise health-CAN IDENTIFY healthcare outcomes offers a AND ADDRESS model worth emulating. Punjab's healthcare system could leverage INSTANCES OF AI for telemedicine, enabling remote consultations and reduc-MISMANAGEMENT ing the burden on overworked OR FRAUD Medical professionals. Moreover, AI can assist in making cutting-edge treatments more accessible

> **2. Education:** AI-driven platforms can personalise student learning experiences, addressing individual strengths and weaknesses. For instance, a country

like Estonia has integrated AI into its education system to offer tailored teaching, ensuring no student is left behind. Punjab can adopt similar systems to improve education levels and employable skill development. AI can also predict dropout rates and identify at-risk students, enabling timely interventions to keep them in education. Additionally, AI tools can train teachers, equipping them with modern methodologies to enhance classroom engagement.

3. Agriculture: Agriculture is Punjab's backbone, but the sector faces multifaceted challenges. AI can optimise irrigation, predict weather patterns, and offer crop-specific advice to farmers. Karnataka's use of AI to predict crop yields and help farmers secure better prices exemplifies how technology can empower agricultural communities. Punjab could take this further by implementing AI-powered precision farming techniques, which use data from drones and sensors to monitor soil health and pest activity, ensuring higher productivity with lower resource con-

sumption. 4. Industry and Infrastructure: For enterprises, AI could bring regulatory clarity or, conversely, added scrutiny in areas such as data sharing, intellectual property and the ethical use of AI.

It can streamline manufacturing processes, enhance supply chain efficiency, and improve project monitoring in infrastructure development. Gujarat's use of AI to attract investments and facilitate industrial growth shows how a state can harness technology to boost its economy. Punjab's industrial sector could use AI to identify global market trends and adapt its manufacturing capabilAI can ensure better planning and execution of projects, reducing delays and cost overruns.

5. Resource Mobilisation: AI tools can help Punjab's government enhance efficiency in tax collection, reduce revenue leakages, and improve financial planning. Andhra Pradesh's Real-Time Governance Society (RTGS) uses AI to monitor and optimise resource allocation, providing a blueprint for Punjab to follow. AI can also assist in identifying untapped revenue streams. enabling the government to fund developmental projects without increasing the financial burden on its citizens.

The Way Forward By embracing AI with a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach, Punjab can address its existing challenges and set itself on a path toward sustainable and inclusive growth. The magic of AI lies in its ability to amplify human potential and solve complex problems. Under the visionary leadership of Bhagwant Mann and with the proper policy framework, Punjab can harness this magic to transform its socio-economic landscape. Establishing a dedicated AI ministry, investing in infrastructure, and adopting AI across key sectors will make Punjab a leader in good governance and improve its people's quality of life. The time to act is now, and Punjab must rise to the challenge to set a precedent for other states to follow. (The Author is Vice-Chairman of

Sonalika ITL Group, Vice-Chairman (Cabinet minister rank) of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council and President of Tractor and Mechanization Association. Views expressed are personal)

From vision to reality: How good governance is transforming education in India

Vajpayee's vision of a 'New India,' anchored in democratic principles and citizen-centric governance is giving a new look to the education

en years ago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi set forth his vision of sushasan (good governance), calling it "the key to a nation's progress." He declared December 25, former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birth anniversary, as Good Governance Day. Vajpayee had envisioned a "New India" where the government would embody the principles of democracy and development, emphasising citizen-centric decisionmaking, transparency, and public participation.

Put simply, good governance means that the day-to-day functioning of the government is effective, transparin the modern age natural- track and compare gover- landmark Sarva Shiksha Survey, and Gujarat's particularly in learning out- standards. The proposed ly includes e-governance and nance among the states and Abhiyan (SSA) in 2002, groundbreaking Vidya comes. Various learning sur- SSSA would be an indepen-



TUHIN A SINHA

digital empowerment. In fact, in the context of a welfare government functioning in a vastly unequal society good governance is fundamental for ensuring sustainable development, social justice, and the protection of human rights.

In 2019, India also adopted a metric called the Good ent, and accountable, which, Governance Index (GGI) to

union territories across ten key sectors. The 11th Good Governance Day presents an apt moment to pause and reflect on the state of governance in one of the most critical sectors—education. Even though Human Resource Development, composed of indicators like 'quality of education" and "elementary school retention rate," is one of the ten key sectors covered by the GGI, a close look at India's education governance reveals substantial room for improvement, particularly at the school level.

Vajpayee's commitment to education was evident during his tenure as Prime Minister—he pioneered the

which emphasised universal school enrollment and went on to form the cornerstone of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009. Building decisively on this foundation, Prime Minister Modi's leadership has elevated education to new heights through bold reforms. The introduction of the National Education Policy

(NEP) 2020, along with the NIPUN Bharat Mission, has revolutionised the approach to foundational learning. This shift is being carefully monitored through multiple assessment initiatives - states have implemented thirdparty evaluations, while programs like CBSE's SAFAL, the National Achievement



Samiksha Kendra (VSK) use cutting-edge technology to track progress systematically. These assessment systems have revealed both progress and persistent challenges in our education sys-

The data highlights critical areas that need attention,

elementary-grade students lack foundational literacy and numeracy skills. Learning gaps for these children only keep widening as they progress through grades with a weak founda-tion. It is then unsurprising that almost 33 per cent of Grade VIII students are unable to read simple sentences or do basic arithmetic

Recognising these challenges, PM Modi's administration has taken a step through the State School Standards Authority (SSSA), recommended in the NEP 2020, which emerges as a pivotal reform to enhance India's school governance standards. The proposed

veys show that over 5 crore dent quality regulator for all schools, both public and private. One of the key functions of the SA is to ensure public disclosure of school performance data for all schools through a digital

portal. With all schools being held to clear and uniform quality standards and policymakers being informed by datadriven insights, educational resources will be used more efficiently. The SA can create a culture of transparency where parents are active participants in their children's education.

With its emphasis on streamlining bureaucracy, focusing on outcomes rather than inputs, and integrating technology to reduce administrative burdens, not only

does it embody Prime Minister Modi's ideal of "minimum government, maximum governance". A pertinent example is the set of eight principles of good governance recommended by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)participation, rule of law, transparency, accountability, equity, effectiveness, consensus, and responsiveness. As the nation observes Good Governance Day, the call to action is clear: states must embrace the SA to realise the shared vision of a "New India," where quality education is a right, not a privilege.

> (The writer is National Spokesperson, BJP; views are personal)

HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | JANUARY 3, 2025

IN BRIEF



Rupee falls 9 paise to close at 85.73 against US dollar

he rupee depreciated 9 paise to close at 85.73 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, as strong dollar demand from importers and foreign fund outflows dented investor sentiments. Forex traders said the dollar gained against most currencies during 2024 and continued to remain on a strong footing this year. Moreover, persistent foreign fund outflows further dented investors' sentiments. Additionally, global markets are expected to see low volumes as the holiday season is underway in major economies like those in Europe. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened on a weak note and witnessed an intra-day low of 85.79 and a high of 85.68 against the American currency. The local unit settled for the day at 85.73 (provisional), registering a fall of 9 paise over its previous close amid a sharp recovery in domestic equities. On Wednesday, the rupee settled flat at 85.64 against the US dollar. On December 27, the local currency touched its lifetime intra-day low of 85.80 against the greenback. "We expect the rupee to trade with a negative bias on strength in the US Dollar and dollar demand from importers.

Govt to revise WPI base year from 2011-12 to 2022-23

Sets up 18-member working group

PNS NEW DELHI

The government on Thursday said it has constituted an 18member working group, under the chairmanship of NITI Aayog Member Ramesh Chand, to revise the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) base year from 2011-12 to 2022-23. The

revision of the base year helps in presenting a more realistic picture of the price situation in the country.

As per the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the group, it will suggest the commodity basket of WPI and Producer

Price Index (PPI) with the base year 2022-23 in the light of structural changes in the economy; review the existing system of price collection and suggest changes for improvement; and decide on the computational methodology to be adopted for WPI / PPI.

The group will also examine the methodology for the compilation of PPI, suggest further improvement in compilation and presentation and recommend a roadmap for

switch over from WPI to PPI. The members of the group include representatives from the RBI, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Statistics, Department of Agriculture, Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas; Soumya Kanti Ghosh, Chief



Economist, SBI Group. The non-official members include Economist Surjit Bhalla; Shamika Ravi, Member, Economic Advisory Council to PM; Dharmakirti Joshi, Chief Economist, Crisil; Nilesh Shah, MD, Kotak Mahindra Asset Management; and Indranil Sengupta, Co-Head and Economist, Bank of America Merrill Lynch. Earlier, there was a plan to revise the base year from 2011-12 to 2017-18.

'India-EFTA trade pact likely to come into force by year end'

The implementation process of free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the fournation European bloc EFTA is progressing fast and is expected to come into force before the end of this year, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said.

The two sides signed the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) on March 10, 2024. Under the pact, India has received an investment commitment of USD 100 billion in 15 years from the grouping while allowing several products such as Swiss watches, chocolates and cut and polished diamonds at lower or zero duties.

The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) members are Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.

"Yes, EFTA is progressing very fast," Goyal told PTI when asked if the agreement would come into effect this year. The minister said the Swiss

Council of States has approved the agreement and now will go to their National Council for



approval.
"So this overwhelming support in political circles in Switzerland for the TEPA with EFTA is truly a sign of the times to come... and in their statement also, it shows that that it has cleared an important hurdle and they are hoping to bring in entry to force by autumn of 2025, before the end of calendar year 2025," Goyal said. The bloc committed an investment of USD 100 billion

-- USD 50 billion within 10 years after the implementation of the agreement and another USD 50 billion in the next five years -- which would facilitate the creation of 1 million direct jobs in India. This is a first-ofits-kind pledge agreed upon in

any of the trade deals signed by

India so far.

The commitment is the key substance of the TEPA (Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement), which took almost 16 years to conclude, for India in return for opening its markets for several products coming from the EFTA

There is a provision in the agreement that if the proposed investments would not come because of some reasons, India can suspend duty concessions

Domestic customers will get access to high-quality Swiss products such as watches, chocolates, biscuits, and clocks at lower prices as India will phase out customs duties under the trade pact on these

goods over 10 years.

It is taking time to implement the agreement due to an elaborate ratification process of these pacts in different countries. In India, such agreements are approved by the union Cabinet, in EFTA countries, they need approval from their parliament.

On the progress of FTA negotiations with other countries, Goyal said he has held meetings with the new UK trade minister on the proosed pact.

India and the UK are expected to hold the next round of talks for a proposed FTA later this month to resolve the pending issues and close the nego-

The talks for the proposed FTA began in January 2022. The 14th round of talks stalled as the two nations stepped into their general election cycles.



India sugar production declines to 95.40 lakh tn

ugar production fell by 16 per cent to 95.40 lakh tonne in the first quarter of the ongoing current marketing year that started in October, mainly due to a decline in output in Maharashtra, according to industry body ISMA data released on Thursday. Mills had manufactured 113.01 lakh tonnes in the year-ago period. The production data excludes the diversion of sugar for ethanol making. According to the Indian Sugar and Bio-Energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA), crushing rate in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka was better than last year. However, the crushing rate suffered in Uttar Pradesh during the last week of December 2024 due to a temporary disruption

in cane supply owing to rains. During the first quarter, 493 mills were operational as against 512 factories a year ago.



DMart's revenue up 17.5 pc to Rs 15,565 cr

venue Supermarts Ltd, which owns and operates retail chain DMart, has reported 17.5 per cent increase in standalone revenue from operations at Rs 15,565.23 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2024. The company had posted a revenue of Rs 13,247.33 crore in December guarter a year ago, Avenue Supermarts informed BSE on Thursday. The total number of stores as of December 2024 stood at 387. Revenue for the quarter is subject to limited review by the statutory auditors of the company, it said. In October-December 2022-23, standalone revenue was Rs 11,304.58 crore. Promoted by Radhakishan Damani and his family, DMart retails basic home and personal products across Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, NCR, Tamil Nadu, Punjab

Oil, gas demand to remain strong in FY26: India Ratings

PNS NEW DELHI

India's oil and gas demand is likely to remain strong in the next financial year even as weak global demand will drive down refining margins, India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) said on Thursday.

The agency expects the credit profile of downstream companies to remain stable during the year, driven by healthy demand for petroleum products and healthy marketing margins that would offset compressed Gross Refining Margins (GRMs), yielding healthy overall EBITDA.

Credit profile may see an addition of debt on account of under-construction refinery expansion projects for all the major oil marketing companies (OMCs). The credit profile of upstream oil companies shall remain dependent on crude oil prices, Ind-Ra said in the FY26 Oil and Gas Outlook.

EBITDA generation for upstream companies may fall with a moderation in oil prices and a reduction in production from legacy fields. However, the impact of low crude oil prices is expected to be offset by the removal of special excise on the production of crude and an increase in production expected from new discover-



"Indian oil and gas demand is expected to remain strong in FY26, leading to an expansion in the refinery and petro-chemical capacities. India's refinery capacity is expected to increase by 22 per cent in the

next two-three years.

Ind-Ra expects the strong demand to be driving oil and gas investment decisions in India," said Bhanu Patni, Ind-Ra.

Ind-Ra expects the City Gas Distribution (CGD) sector's credit profile to remain stable in FY26 post-reduction of lowcost domestic gas allocation. Return on invested capital could moderate, however it would remain healthy.

New geographical areas could see some pressure on capex execution as internal

accruals for funding capex may come down. The performance of standalone petrochemical players may improve during FY26 as they benefit from an improvement in the crack spreads and easing of the oversupply situation created due to the rampant capacity addition during FY19-FY24, especially in China.

The agency expects GRMs to remain subdued during FY26 like in 1HFY25, on account of a slowness in global consumer and industrial demand, especially in China, and additional supply flowing from refinery capacity additions seen globally.

However, demand for petroleum products in India is expected to remain strong during FY26, with bulk demand coming from diesel,

'Employment increases 36 pc to 64.33 cr in last ten years'

PNS NEW DELHI

Union labour minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday said employment in the country has increased by 36 per cent to 64.33 crore in 2023-24 from 47.15 crore in 2014-15, which shows improvement in job creation during NDA period.

Talking to media persons, the minister also stated that employment under UPA grew by just about 7 per cent between 2004 to 2014.

He noted that under the UPA government between 2004 to 2014 just 2.9 crore additional jobs were created whereas under the Modi government between 2014-24, 17.19 crore jobs were added.

In the last one year (2023-24) alone, the Modi government has created around 4.6 minister stated.

The data assumes significance in the backdrop of pressure on the government for job creation in the coun-

About the agriculture sector, the minister stated that employment declined by 16 per cent between 2004 to 2014 under UPA tenure whereas it has grown by 19

per cent between 2014 -2023 under Modi tenure.

Similarly, employment in the manufacturing sector grew by just 6 per cent between 2004 to 2014 under UPA tenure while it increased by 15 per cent between 2014-2023 under Modi tenure.

He further informed that employment in the services sector grew by 25 per cent between 2004 to 2014 under UPA tenure while it increased by 36 per cent between 2014 -2023 under Modi He also stated

that the unemployment Rate (UŔ) dropped from 6 per cent in 2017-18 to 3.2 per cent in 2023-24 while the employment rate (WPR) grew from 46.8 per cent in 2017-18

to 58.2 per cent in 2023-24. Similarly, he informed that

Labour grew from 49.8 per cent in 2017-18 to 60.1 per cent in 2023-24. About the growth in youth joining the formal job market, the minister also informed that in the last seven years (between Sept 2017-Sept 2024) over 4.7 crore youth (Age 18-28 years) have joined Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) fold.

Sebi to continue proceedings against ZEEL

PNS NEW DELHI

Markets watchdog Sebi on Thursday said it will slap a fresh show cause notice on ZEEL founder chairman Subhash Chandra, and his son Punit Goenka as it vowed to continue the investigation into alleged violation of listing norms against the media baron and his company.

The order passed by

Sebi's adjudicating officer said the contents of the earlier Show Cause Notice (SCN) issued to them will also be incorporated "in the SCN to be issued in the instant matter".

The ZEEL and its top management are under Sebi scrutiny for alleged violations of disclosure norms and initially a show cause notice was issued to them in July 2022.

Following the July 2022 Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEEL) and Punit Goenka filed settlement applications with the Sebi.

However, the application to settle the adjudication proceedings was rejected by a panel of whole-time members of Sebi and the matter was referred to the markets watchdog for further investigation.

Govt clears PLI incentive of Rs 246 cr

PNS NEW DELHI

Ministry of Heavy Industries has approved incentive claims of Rs 246 crore submitted by Mahindra & Mahindra and Tata Motors under the Rs 25,938 crore PLI scheme for the automobile and auto com-

ponents industry, officials said. Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H D Kumaraswamy has expressed satisfaction with the progress made by auto original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) toward achieving localized manufacturing through initiatives like PLI scheme.

He also congratulated Tata Motors and M&M for devel-

oping this capability and exuded confidence that more applicants would take advantage of the PLI scheme.

According to sources, Tata Motors submitted an incentive claim of approximately Rs 142.13 crore based on determined sales in FY 2023-24.

The eligible sales of Advanced Automotive Technology (AAT) products from Tata Motors include the Tiago EV (electric four-wheeler), Starbus EV (electric bus), and Ace EV (electric cargo vehicle), totalling Rs 1,380.24

Mahindra & Mahindra submitted an incentive claim of Rs 104.08 crore based on deter-



mined incremental sales of AAT products totalling Rs 800.59 crore for FY 2023-24, with a cumulative investment of Rs 978.30 crore, officials

The eligible sales from their e3W models, including Treo, Treo Zor, and Zor Grand amount to Rs 836.02 crore,

domestic value addition (DVA) issued by the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI). Research

"The total claims from these two applicants amount to approximately Rs 246 crore, which have been examined and recommended by the Project Management Agency (PMA) and subsequently approved by Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI)," an official said.

The scheme aims to enhance India's manufacturing capabilities in AAT products, address cost disabilities, and establish a robust supply

Investors richer by Rs 8.52 L cr in two days of market rally

PNS NEW DELHI

Investors' wealth surged Rs 8.52 lakh crore in two days of market rally, with the benchmark Sensex climbing nearly 2 per cent on Thursday alone.

The 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex jumped 1,436.30 points or 1.83 per cent -- its best single-day gain in more than a month -- to settle at 79,943.71 on Thursday. During the day, it soared 1,525.46 points, or 1.94 per cent, to 80,032.87.

On Wednesday, the benchmark gauge had climbed 368.40 points, or 0.47 per cent, to set-

le at 78,507.41. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms surged Rs 8,52,239.27 crore to Rs 4,50,47,345.71 crore (USD 5.25 trillion) in two days. 'While markets failed to

deliver a Christmas rally over the past few weeks, the New Year has provided strong optimism in the first two days with Sensex touching the psychological 80,000-mark on the back of broad-based short-cov-

"Gains in banking, IT, auto and metal triggered a major rally despite concerns in the currency market which saw the rupee scaling fresh lows amid rising crude oil prices and subdued growth," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

From the 30 Sensex blue-chip firms, Bajaj Finserv jumped nearly 8 per cent while Bajaj Finance soared 6.50 per cent.

White-collar hiring up 9 pc in December: Report

PNS MUMBAI

White-collar hiring activity in December witnessed a 9 per cent increase compared to the same period of the previous year, driven by high-skill and strategic roles, a report said on

Thursday. According to Naukri JobSpeak, the index reached an impressive 2,651 points in December 2024, reflecting a robust 9 per cent year-on-year growth, a promising sign for

the year ahead. Key sectors that were primary growth drivers in December

2024, included AI/ML (36 per cent), Oil and Gas (13 per cent), FMCG (12 per cent) and Healthcare (12 per cent), said the report. Top metro cities collective-

ly posted a 10 per cent growth as the year came to an end, it added.

The Naukri JobSpeak is a monthly Index representing the Indian job market and hiring activity based on new job listings and job-related searches by recruiters on the resume database

Naukri.com. Meanwhile, according to the



report, fresher hiring, which had majorly been muted through 2024, saw an impressive 6 per cent growth in December 2024, driven by creative, lifestyle and retail sectors

like Design (39 per cent), Beauty and Wellness (26 per cent) and Consumer Durables 19 per cent), respectively.

The FMCG sector achieved an 18 per cent growth in fresher hiring during December 2024, marking the highest monthly increase for the sector in fresher recruitment throughout the year, it added.

The creative industry showed an interesting technical tilt in December as video editors and interior designers were among the top roles hired, reflecting a balanced demand for visual storytelling and spatial innovation, it stated. The Architecture and

Interior Design industry stood out with a 39 per cent growth in fresher hiring, contributing to the design sector's impressive 51 per cent growth overall, it added.

The report also revealed that following the strong hiring trends highlighted in October, South India continued its robust performance into December 2024, reinforcing its position as a key driver of white-collar employment.

While Chennai (35 per cent) and Bangalore (21 per cent)

sustained their impressive growth, Coimbatore emerged as a standout, with fresher hiring growing by 14 per cent,

fueled by a 52 per cent surge in foreign MNC hiring. Hyderabad also posted 15 per cent growth, reflecting the region's sustained appeal for high-skill and fresher roles across sectors like IT, Consumer Durables, and Real

"India's job market is entering 2025 with vigour, driven by AI/ML (Artificial Intelligence/ Machine Learning) growth and creative sectors.

TENDER NOTICE Tender Notice Number: 07/2024-25

Name of Work; Construction of Guest House in the Old Guest House premises of 18CAD Department in Tandur (V) & (M), Vikarabad District-Balance Estimate - 2nd call mount: Rs.60.55 Lakhs, Tender Starting Date: 03.01.2025, Tender Closing Date 10.01.2025, Tender Opening Date: 10.01.2025, Time Period in Months: 6 Sd/- Superintending Enginee

R.O.No: 8586-PPICL/ADVTH/9824-25, Date: 02-01-2025

🍘 GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION 🧀 E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE Short NIT No.886/ UBD /Sec-bad Zone/GHMC/2024-25 No. of Works: 01 Works, Estimated amount: Rs. 3.85 Lakhs, Bid Submission

Start Date & Time: Dt: 03.01.2025 @ 11.30 AM, Bid Submission Closing Date & Time: Dt: 10.01.2025 @ 11.30 AM, Name & Address Officer Cell No.: Dy. Director, USD, Sec'bad Zone, GHMC, Cell No. 7207923113. Further details can be seen at @ https://www.tender.telangana.gov.in Sdi- Dy. Director, UBD.

R.O.No: 8569-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2024-25, Dt. 82-01-2825

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> Friday January 3, 2025

'Every dish I create carries the memory of the place'

Travel and food share an inseparable bond, enriching the other in ways that create unforgettable experiences. For celebrated chef Ranveer Brar, this connection goes beyond mere exploration—it's a philosophy, a way of life that shapes his culinary creations and storytelling. Here's diving in deep into his travel diaries and exploration

TEJAL SINHA tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

hether wandering through the bustling streets of a foreign city, soaking in the serene beauty of a remote mountain range, or tasting the local flavours of a quaint village, travel offers a unique lens through which we can experience the world. It's a chance to break free from routine, embrace spontaneity and create memories that last a lifetime. Each trip, whether near or far, carries the promise of discovery—of new places, new people and perhaps, a new sense

ery—of new places, new people and pernaps, a new sense of purpose.

For celebrated chef Ranveer Brar, food is not just a craft— it is a lifelong institution of learning. His journey into the world of cooking began in the bustling communal kitchen of a langar in his hometown, where the act of feeding hundreds selflessly planted the first seeds of his culinary passion. "The sheer volume of food being cooked by 50 to 60 people, without tasting it and yet producing dishes of such delicious perfection—it was fascinating," Brar reflects. "It taught me the importance of emotion in cooking, hygiene, and above all, self-

tion in cooking, hygiene, and above all, self-lessness in the kitchen." Brar's love for cooking truly blos-somed when he

> explored the streets of Lucknow as a young man. The city, rich in culinary heritage, folklore and gastronomic tales, unfolded before him as an end-less source of inspiration. It was here that he apprenticed under Munir Ustad, a skilled kebab vendor, who provided Brar with his first formal tutelage in cooking. Lucknow's vibrant food culture, with its rich history and iconic dishes, cemented Brar's connection to cuisine and fueled his desire to pursue it as a career.

After completing his education at IHM Lucknow, Brar began his professional journey with the Taj Group of Hotels.

Over the years, he expanded his culinary horizons, opening restaurants across India and abroad, but he never forgot the foundational lessons learned in the langar or the streets of Lucknow. Brar firmly believes that travel is essential to becoming a better chef. "To innovate or reinvent any dish, you need to experience it in its original form, at its place of origin," he says. His travels have taken him across India and to distant lands like Turkey, Scandinavia and Kerala, all of which have left an indelible mark on his culinary style. "Kerala's spices, Turkey's vibrant street food and the minimalist elegance of Scandinavian cuisine have

all been deeply inspiring."

His trip to Georgetown left a lasting impression. "It's a melting pot of cultures, and you see that reflected in its food," Brar shares. "At Line Clear, I had an unforgettable plate of nasi kandar. Exploring the street food—from Chinatown to Little India—was a culinary adventure in itself. For me, street food is always the best way to understand the true essence of a place."

Brar takes great pleasure in observing how people today are connecting more deeply with food. "It's wonderful to

see people not just eating but also engaging with food, exploring its stories and history," he says. He encourages food enthusiasts to dive into local culinary scenes when traveling. "Talk to the locals. Visit older establishments that have stood the test of time. You'll uncover stories of culinary evolution that no book can teach you." When

tion that no book can teach you." When Brar travels, he brings back more than recipes. His trips are a source of stories, inspiration and cultural understanding. "Every dish I create carries the memory of a place, a flavor, or a conversation," he shares. His travels also fuel his passion for poetry, which he often pens during his journeys.

In Melbourne, Brar found inspiration in an unexpected way. "I got lost in Hosier Lane, mesmerised by the graffiti. Those vibrant colours and the creativity of the artists stayed with me long after I found my way out."

When asked to name the best food city, Brar hesitates. "Best would be limiting it. Mavbe I'm yet to find one." he

"Best would be limiting it. Maybe I'm yet to find one," he savs thoughtfully. However, he admits to having a soft spot for Istanbul's rich and diverse food culture, as well as for Lucknow and Kolkata back home.

For Ranveer Brar, every journey is an opportunity to explore, learn and connect—both with people and their food. It's this ethos that makes him one of the most beloved chefs, as he continues to transform his experiences into dishes that tell stories of tradition, innovation and shared

AI-powered cardiac devices pave way for heart disease management

Adisease treatment for cular disease management," real-time monitoring and said Cynthia Stinchcombe, dynamic therapy adjustments, Medical Devices Analyst at

according to a report.

The report by GlobalData, a data and analytics company,

data and analytics company,

GlobalData.

The report projects that advancements in cardiac care, advancements in cardiac care, applied with novel therashowed that these devices offer continuous, precise interventions enabling better patient outcomes. These also present a pies, will transform the field, providing new solutions for millions affected by heart disshift toward more effective and responsive management of heart disease.

devices like pacemakers that deliver consistent outputs, the modern healthcare. With these novel adaptive cardiac technologies leverage artificial intel-ligence (AI) to analyse heart ing towards more tailored and effective treatment strategies activity. The adaptive technology also adjusts treatment both quality of life and clinical based on fluctuations in cardiac outcomes," Stinchcombe said. rhythms, leading to a personalised approach. This ensures that therapy aligns precisely with a patient's evolving condition, providing 24/7 care and better health outcomes.

According to GlobalData ous monitoring outside clinical environments, while adaptive devices market is expected to implants offer precise therapeugrow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.20 per cent from \$84.8 billion in 2023 to \$140 billion in 2033. This growth highlights the increasing demand for advanced diagnostic and therapeutic tools tailored to cardiac care.

market is undergoing rapid expansion and diversification. AI-enhanced solutions exemplify the industry's shift toward these innovations are set to precision medicine, aligning with regulatory bodies like the reshape cardiac care, delivering transformative benefits to US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) prioritis-

daptive cardiac devices ing innovative approaches to are revolutionising heart improve outcomes in cardiovas-

combined with novel thera-

hift toward more effective and esponsive management of leart disease.

In contrast to traditional infinitions affected by fical tradisease globally.

"The adoption of cutting-edge technologies in cardiovas-cular care emphasises the critadvanced systems, we are mov-ing towards more tailored and for heart conditions, improving

The report also highlights the synergy between wearable cardiac monitors — such as ECG-enabled smartwatches — and AI-driven devices.

Wearables provide continutic interventions, creating a comprehensive framework for cardiac health management.
"As cardiovascular diseases

remain a leading global health concern, the advancements we're seeing offer renewed hope. Emerging technologies "The cardiovascular devices arket is undergoing rapid pansion and diversification."

In the cardiovascular devices are crucial in expanding diagnostic and therapeutic capabilities. With the FDA's support for AI-driven medical devices, patients worldwide," Stinchcombe said.



Turning trauma into triumph

PNS|HYDERABAD

utism support goes beyond providing care—it's about fostering understanding, inclusion and empowerment for individuals spectrum and their fam ilies. It encompasses early diagnosis, therapeutic interventions, educational programs and emotional assistance tailored to meet unique needs. Effective support focuses on fostering communication, social skills and independence through methods such as speech therapy, behavioural interventions, and sensory integration. Equally crucial is empowering families by providing resources, counseling and tools to navigate challenges and celebrate progress. Now this is where Leeza app comes to the rescue.

Mohammad Ibrahim Raza, a pioneer in

the development of the Leeza App, is driven by a strong sense of personal connection to families living with autism and great desire to transform their existing conditions. With a vision of compassion and innovation, Raza, seeks to create a life-altering experience for families dealing with autism. He explains that the app is a comprehensive autism support service that begins with free preliminary assessments for early signs of autism and con-

tinues with appropriate interventions.
Raza had another story to tell. He shared the story behind Leeza App and expressed how he envisions society to be more inclusive and supportive in an inspiring conversation with us.

The beginning of this engagement was very personal. "I had a cousin who was diagnosed with autism. The struggle that we went through in terms of getting a propwe went through in terms of getting a proper diagnosis and therapy centers was traumatic. We were duped and the void of being understood and supported was so painful." After this experience, Raza felt responsible and decided to do something about autism which led him to conduct

research on the condition.

The app was officially launched on January 30, 2024, after a soft launch in October 2023 and an official one in August 2024 where its full features were visible and functional. The development of the app was in progress for some time before people witnessed its official version "The idea was conceived in October 2023 when we started working on the idea. We hosted an unofficial launch on December 30, 2023, and an official launch on August 2024 when all operations were initiated."

Through the intelligent application of AI, novel techniques in prediction assessments, free counseling's and formal assessments are offered. The app also gives parents the needed tools so that they can work together with the child as partners in therapy. Raza underlines the point by saying: "Our focus is to simplify treatment and decrease the level of dependence on the therapist's profession. As far as we hope, parents can do a lot and they must have the means

In addition, Raza appreciates the value of



I was horrified when I found out that the majority of autistic people in India, around nine out of every ten people, are unable to get appropriate help. The Census 2011 estimates that 1 crore children have autism. Out of these, 70 lakh are said to be unable to afford proper care

collaborations and partnerships. For instance, Leeza App does not have any formal partnership with the Parents Association for Welfare of Mentally Handicapped Persons (PAWMH), but the two organisations operproper care." The research by Raza brought him to the ate within the same ecosystem. Raza states, "During the visa's international phase, I've gone to the USA, Poulsen, and has seen by myself what neurodevelopmental condi-

The parents are kept in

the dark and therefore,

always remain in denial

and confusion in a bid to

help their child. Parents

are the people who are

with the child, the child

is with them the longest

and empowering the

parents is critical

tions do to families. It made me even more determined to develop the platform for the community that the app strives to build."

As its expands and manages to make an impact, Raza stays focused on the course. "I want the Leeza App to be a light for families who have autism. We are not only an app – we are a network of solidarity which tran-scends borders." Raza has taken it upon herself and through Leeza App, initiates a new revolution of how fam-

ilies impacted by autism get detection, support and integration.

The diagnosis of his cousin made him more cautious and encouraged him to search for ways that would help people with autism and their families. Raza recalls, "I was horrified when I found out that the majority of autistic people in India, around nine

out of every ten people, are unable to get appropriate help. The Census 2011 estimates that 1 crore children have autism. Out of these, 70 lakh are said to be unable to afford

The research by Raza brought him to the conclusion, "The parents are kept in the dark and therefore, always remain in denial and confusion in a bid to help their child." He points out, "Parents are the people who are with the child, the child is with them the largest and empower.

the longest and empowering the parents is critical." This insight triggered the idea of Leeza App where the idea is to enable the services for autism to be available at lower costs.

Raza reflects when he started he was doing something wrong, "I was worried I'd cause more harm than good, because I'm not autistic." He tells a story about thinking about charging

the app a nominal fee to use its services. But his mentor, Mirash Rahim, cautioned him against doing so because of the fear and uncertainty parents feel when seeking out assessments for their children. Raza says of an autistic child: "It's a lifelong condition, and their life is going to change completely. We cannot afford to increase their stress."

His approach reflects Raza's commitment to empathy and to understanding. He understands how sensitive the matters in question are and how plainly it needs to be said. "I have to be so careful because this topic is really sensitive and I can't do them more harm than good." With Leeza App, Raza aspires to create a supportive ecosystem for families with autism impacting parents to be co-therapists for their children.

He also envisioned partnering with existing therapy centers to offer affordable options, but the reality turned out less than perfect. "The therapy prices were soaring high, with certain centres pricing as high as Rs 40,000 a month," Raza explains. People living below extremely low debt lines hardly manage to spend Rs 9,000 a month on nutrition. How could they pay Rs 40,000?

This made him re-evaluate and look for different solutions. In his search, he found Bharati Vidyalaya, a teacher training institute and therapy centre. Raza met the founder Ayesha Rubina, and discovered a common vision. "The thing is we picked each other up, and since then we've been impacting families. Therapy is now accessible even to people from low-income backgrounds, like auto drivers."

He is working on enabling the parents to treat their own children as a co-therapist such that financial reasons should not cap their children's development. He says, "Our agenda is whenever a parent comes to us, the last thing that they should be worried about is oh but the price or money' - but their biggest headache should be on how to make their child independent."

Dimple Hayati

what's brewing?

Binge-worthy January!

Here's a list of spectacular lineup of fresh content to start your year with excitement on Disnev+ Hotstar! Swing into action with Your Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man and laugh out loud with the hilarious standup special Roy Wood Jr.: Lonely Flowers. Relive childhood thrills with Goosebumps: The Vanishing and experience high-stakes drama with Gunaah Season 2.

Indian titles

Gunaah S2 (January 3)

With heightened stakes, Gunaah Season 2 takes viewers on a gripping journey of revenge, betrayal and love. As Abhimanyu, Tara, Shiva and JK navigate complex choices, their lives intertwine in unexpected ways, leading to emotional drama and shocking revelations. Directed by Anil Senior and starring Gashmeer Mahajani, Surbhi Jyoti and Zayn Iqbal Khan, this season promises intense twists and turns.

The Secret of the Shiledars (January 31)

A tale of valor, loyalty, and unyielding commitment to kartavya. Disney+ Hotstar brings the first-of-its-kind treasure hunt-based series - The Secret of the Shiledars. The series narrates the story of the Shiledars -stalwart defenders and trusted stewards whose unwavering dedication shaped the course of an era.

All We Imagine As Light (January 3)

All We Imagine as Light is a evocative drama that explores the intertwined lives of two Malayali nurses in Mumbai-Prabha, a straitlaced woman yearning for her absent husband and Anu, her outgoing roommate entangled in a forbidden love affair. Through their friendship, the film captures themes of love, identity and the contradictions of life

MARVEL TITLES

Your Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man (Season 1) (January 29) (English)

Your Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man is an animated series that follows Peter Parker on his way to becoming a hero, with a journey unlike we have ever seen and a style that celebrates the character's early comic book roots.

Roy Wood Jr.: Lonely Flowers (January 17)

In this stand-up special, Roy Wood Jr explores how

lack of connection has sent society spiraling into a culture full of guns, rude employees, self-checkout lanes and why some of us would rather be alone rather than

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Blink (January 5) (English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu)

When three of their children are diagnosed with an incurable disease that leads to severe visual impairment, the Pelletier family embarks on a journey to see the world's beauty while they still can. As they experience breathtaking destinations and once-in-a-lifetime encounters, their love, resilience and unshakeable sense of wonder ensure that an uncertain future does

A Real Bug's Life (Season 2) (January 15) (English)

Enter an unseen micro-universe where a charismatic cast of miniature heroes use mind-blowing superpowers to survive—from the fast-legged tiger beetle escaping the heat of Borneo's beaches to the magical metamorphosis of a damselfly on a British pond to the Smoky Mountain luna moth whose quest is to grow wings, find love and pass on his genes all in one short night!

Goosebumps: The Vanishing (January 10) (English)

Goosebumps: The Vanishing begins with fraternal twins Devin and Cece adjusting to life with their recently divorced dad, Anthony. When the duo discovers a threat stirring, they quickly realize that dark secrets are among them, triggering a chain of events that unravel a profound mystery. As they delve into the unknown, Devin, Cece and their friends — Alex, CJ and Frankie — find themselves entangled in the chilling tale of four teenagers who mysteriously vanished in 1994.



Vega Jewellers hosted a spectacular New Year's Eve Celebration at My Home Bhooja, HITEC City.

Jewellers, Hyderabad,

Lakshmika celebrated the opening of their new store in marking their first store. The event marked the presence of actresses Dimple Hayati and Divi.

Lakshmi and Kavya, the founders of



ARCHIE









CALVIN AND HOBBES









GARFIELD

















GINGER MEGGS







REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



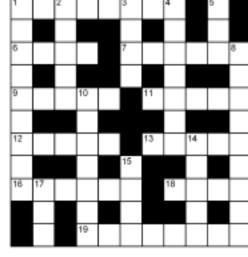
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CROSSWORD



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- 7 Stopped doing something
- 9 A pale purple colour
- 11 A crown-wearing woman
- 15 The largest continent 12 A female relation 17 Adult males
- 13 Workers sit at these in
- affices 16 Hot coals left after a fire
- 18 A list of restaurant meals
- 19 People who work in
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8 Large extinct animals

14 A person from Sweden

5 A female sheep

10 Very old

Hyderabad | Friday January 3, 2025

MAHESH BABU-RAJAMOULI FILM BEGINS, WITH ALL SHUSH!

SURESH KAVIRAYANI

sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

uperstar Mahesh Babu is teaming Superstar Mahesh Babu is teaming up with acclaimed director SS Rajamouli for the first time. While the film was officially announced some time ago, the team held a formal pooja ceremony on Thursday at the Aluminium Factory, which have a Primarel's office. The which houses Rajamouli's office. The event was attended by Mahesh Babu and his family, including his wife Namrata, along with Rajamouli, his wife Rama Rajamouli, music direc-tor MM Keeravani and Rajamouli's

father, Vijayendra Prasad. Producer KL Narayana and his family members were also pre-

sent at the ceremony.

Interestingly, Mahesh Babu, who traditionally avoids attending pooja ceremonies for his films due to his personal sentiments, surprised everyone by making an exception for this project. For many of his latest films, his family members would attend such events in his place. Breaking his own tradition, Mahesh's presence at this event added a unique significance.

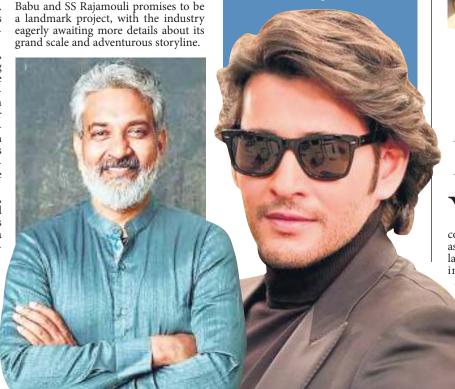
The pooja was a private affair, attended by assistant directors and unit members. Unlike Rajamouli's usual practice of announcing a film with a formal media conference, this launch was kept entirely low-key. According to sources, Rajamouli may hold a press meet later to share more details about the film.

The shooting for the film is set to commence immediately, with initial plans for locations in India. While earlier reports suggested that filming might begin in South Africa or other international locations, it is not yet confirmed. Rajamouli scouted locations in Odisha, hinting that portions of the film might be shot there as well. Rajamouli has often mentioned that the story of this film is inspired by an Indiana Jones-style adventure. According to unit sources, Priyanka Chopra has been confirmed as the female lead. Known for her prominence in both Hindi cinema and Hollywood, Priyanka's involvement elevates the project's international appeal.

"This film with Mahesh Babu is being

made on a grand scale with international standards. It will be released not only in Indian languages but also in Hollywood," revealed a source. The decision to cast Priyanka Chopra aligns with the film's ambition to reach global audiences.

This collaboration between Mahesh Babu and SS Rajamouli promises to be a landmark project, with the industry



This film with Mahesh

Babu is being made

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Indian languages but

international

on a grand scale with

Ilaiyaraaja and Keeravani join hands for a film

and MM Keeravani, have come together for a film, but not as co-composers. Instead, their collaboration takes on a unique form in the upcoming movie Shashtipurthi. Directed by Pavan Prabha, the film features veteran actor Rajendra Prasad in a key role, with Roopesh playing the lead. National Award-winning actress Archana also stars alongside Rajendra Prasad, marking their

> Music maestro Ilaiyaraaja is composing the soundtrack for

reunion on screen after

38 years since their

iconic film Ladies Tailor.

res, you heard it right. Two musical legends, Ilaiyaraaja composer MM Keeravani has contributed by penning the lyrics for a song titled Edo Ye Janmalodo, which is set to release soon.

Director Pavan Prabha expressed his excitement, stating, "There are five songs in the film. Chaitanya Prasad has written lyrics for four of them, while Keeravani Garu graciously wrote the lyrics for the fifth. We were fortunate that Keeravani Garu had some spare time in Chennai and was kind enough to contribute. This song is especially significant as it represents the coming together of Ilaiyaraaja Garu and Keeravani Garu."

Producer Rupesh Chowdary shared his elation, calling this collaboration the best thing to happen



Pawan Kalyan croons for Hari Hara Veera Mallu

and it has been a while since we last heard a song from his upcoming film. Now, the makers of Hari Hara Veera Mallu have announced that they will be releasing a song from the film on January 6. The song, Maata Vinali, will be released not only in Telugu but also in other languages such as Tamil, Kannada, Malavalam and Hindi.

What makes this song particularly interesting is that Pawan Kalyan himself has sung it. The track is a powerful and mesmerising song

A ctor-turned-politician Pawan Kalyan has been busy serving as the Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh that showcases his impressive vocal prowess. The music has been composed by MM Keeravaani, while the lyrics for the Telugu version have lyrics for the Telugu version have been penned by Penchal Das. What truly sets this song apart is Pawan Kalyan's vocals for the Telugu version. Over the years, he has lent his voice to several memorable tracks in films like Thammudu, Kushi, Johnny, Attarintiki Daredi, Agnyaathavaasi and a few other films. This song is set to make waves with its electrifying energy and soulful lyrics. The movie is currently in its final stages of shooting and post-production, with only 5 days of shooting left.

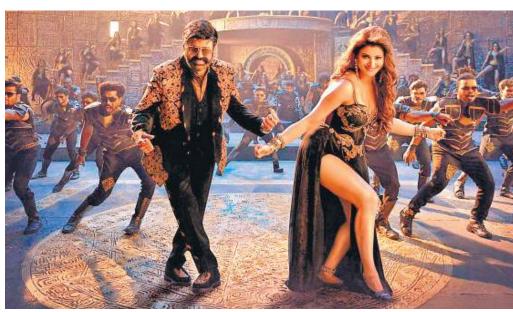
7G Brindavan Colony 2 nears completion



Director Selvaraghavan created a sensation with his 2004 film *7G Brindavan Colony*. Starring Ravi Krishna in the lead role alongside Sonia Agarwal, the movie, produced by Ravi Krishna's father AM Rathnam, became one of the most celebrated classics of its time. Now, nearly 20 years later, the muchanticipated sequel, 7G Brindavan Colony 2, is set for release. Ravi Krishna reprises his role as the male lead, while Anaswara Rajan takes on the role of the female lead. Selvaraghavan, who helmed the first installment, returns to direct this sequel as well.

According to the makers, 7G Brindavan Colony 2 will retain the emotional depth and impact of the original, promising to tug at the audience's heartstrings once again. The sequel features a stellar supporting cast, including the versatile Jayaram, the comedic brilliance of Suman Shetty and the seasoned acting skills of Sudha. Adding to the excitement is the return of Yuvan Shankar Raja, whose music for the original film remains iconic. His compositions for the seguel are expected to recapture the magic while introducing fresh melodies for a new generation.

"7G Brindavan Colony is a film that touched hearts and holds a special place in Tamil cinema history. With this sequel, we aim to recreate that magic while delivering a fresh and compelling narrative for today's audience," said producer AM Rathnam. Fans of the original and new audiences alike eagerly await the release of 7G Brindavan Colony 2. which promises to be an emotional and cinematic treat.



Urvashi Rautela sizzles with NBK in *Dabidi Dibidi*

The words *Dabidi Dibidi* are instantly recognisable and synonymous Nandamuri Balakrishna. Now, a

lyrical song titled Dabidi has been released from Balakrishna's upcoming film Daaku Maharaai. The film is directed by Bobby Kolli and produced by Suryadevara Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya.

Urvashi Rautela, known for her glamour, is the actress featured in the song, grooving alongside Balakrishna. She brings enough oomph to the song, making it a surefire attraction for the mass audience, especially Balakrishna fans.

This interesting song is penned by lyricist Kasarla Shyam, who skillfully blends Balakrishna's iconic monologues with Thaman's high-octane beats and dynamic musical arrangement. This song is undoubtedly going to be a favorite among fans.

Apart from Urvashi Rautela, the film also features other talented actresses, including Pragya Jaiswal, Shraddha Srinath and Chandini Chowdhary. Balakrishna is playing a unique role, one that he hasn't portrayed in many years. Director Bobby promises that this film will be the best in Balakrishna's illustrious career. Notably, Hindi actor Bobby Deol plays the villain in the film, which is set to hit the screens on January 12.

Kannada actor Ganesh eyes on Telugu



After a few Kannada actors like Upendra, Shivaraj Kumar, Rishabh Shetty, Yash, Rakshith Shetty, now another popular Kannada actor Ganesh is now widening his market into Telugu. Though the actor did many films in Kannada, the Telugu audience knew very little of him as his films didn't release much in Telugu. Now, the actor is coming up with a film titled Pinaka which is made with a black magic and fantasy backdrop. The film's teaser was released on Thursday. Interestingly, this film is produced by TG Vishwaprasad of People Media Factory. So, the film is releasing in Telugu also.

B Dhanunjaya, a choreographer, is now turned as director with this *Pinaka* film. The teaser looks promising as Ganesh appeared in a different avatar in this one. The story deals with Kshudra shakti and Rudra Shakti. The visuals and the way they portrayed Ganesh in this teaser is interesting. It seems People Media Factory put a lot of money on this film as it needs a lot of graphics. Apart from Kannada, the makers are planning to release the film in Telugu and other languages too.

VENKY IN FULL PROMOTIONAL MOOD



Senior actor Venkatesh is everywhere, promoting his upcoming film *Sankranthiki Vasthunnam*, which is set to release on January 14. He has been making appearances on various channel reality shows, giving video interviews, and even participated in the *Unstoppable* show. Additionally, he took part in a special chit-chat with the film's leading ladies, Aishwarya Rajesh and Meenakshi Chaudhary, along with producer Dil Raju and director Anil Ravipudi. During this chit-chat, they all dressed up as characters from their earlier films, with Aishwarya as Chanti, Meenakshi Chaudhary as 'Bobbili Raja', director Anil Ravipudi as 'Jayam Manadera', and Dil Raju as 'Gharshana'.

The film's songs are also going viral on the internet, indicating that Venkatesh is aggressively promoting his film this time around. Last year, his Sankranthi release did not fare well, but this time, he has an entertaining film and is leaving no stone unturned. As a result, he is ahead of the promotions compared to the other two films releasing during the Sankranthi festival.

Director Anil Ravipudi is known for his expertise in writing comedy scenes. After F2 with Venkatesh and Varun, he is now coming up with Sankranthiki Vasthunnam, which promises to be even more entertaining than his previous film, according to the makers. This film has all the ingredients of a perfect Sankranthi release, making it a must-watch during the festival.

Debates in dressing room should stay there: Gautam Gambhir

PTI SYDNEY

sserting that "debates" in the Adressing room should not come out in public domain, India head coach Gautam Gambhir on Thursday said he has had some "honest" conversations with his players and that the ongoing transition in the team will

be all-encompassing.
Gambhir also side-stepped queries on whether out-of-form skipper Rohit Sharma will get a place in the final XI for the fifth and final Test against Australia starting on Friday.

Amid reports of unrest in the dressing room, the head coach sought to douse the fire by declaring that they were "just reports, not truth".

There were some honest words is all I can say. Honesty is extremely important if you want to go on and achieve some great things," Gambhir told mediapersons on the eve of the Test match that India need to win to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy and stay alive in

the World Test Championship.

The straight-talking former opener refrained from taking names but acknowledged that a transition is in progress and performance will be the sole criteria to stay in the side.

"Indian cricket will always be in

safe hands as long as there are honest people in that dressing room. Honesty is the most important thing for any transition. "And it's not phasing out senior players and bringing in new players. Ultimately what will keep you in the dressing room is performance," Gambhir couldn't be more precise.

If one read between the lines, it seemed that even Mohammed Shami's days as an international cricketer are numbered. Shami could not regain fitness for the current series despite being a rehab for a while.

"Earlier when transitions happened it seemed, one department is taking the team forward but (in this case) transition will happen in both



batting as well as bowling," he said. The question of natural game versus situational awareness cropped up and the coach reiterated his stand that the team's needs come first.

needs come tirst.

"Only one ideology matters and that's team first. It's a team sport and you have got to play how team needs you to play. You can play the natural game but in team sport, individuals only contribute."

When Rishabh Pant's shot-selection in the Melbourne Test was specifically mentioned, he brushed it aside, saying, "I don't want to talk about individuals,

they know where they stand."
The feisty Gambhir was on full view when an Australian reporter threw a query on why Rohit had not showed up for the interaction as is the "tradition".

"Can you confirm the playing eleven?" he asked. The response was vague when it came to addressing the question

on his final XI. "Everything is fine with Rohit and

traditional here. The head coach is here and that should be good enough," he said.

"We will decide on the playing XI after looking at the pitch," he added.

When the same question was repeated, he was more terse.

The answer remains the same." So, what are the conversations that he has had with Rohit and Virat Kohli, whose dismissals outside the off-stump continue to hurt the team.

"There's only one conversation and that's how to win matches for India. We all know how important that is," he said.

However, Gambhir said that he doesn't appreciate dressing room debates get space in public discourse.

Debates between coaches and players should be confined between them. This sport is known for results but conversations between individuals should stay inside dressing room," he asserted.



Lanka beats New Zealand runs in the 3rd T20

AP NELSON

Kusal Perera scored Sri Lanka's fastest Twenty20 International century — from 44 balls — on Thursday to spur his team to a consolation win over New Zealand by seven runs in the the final match of the three-match series.

Perera's career-best score in a century partnership with captain Charirth Asalanka lifted Sri Lanka to 218-5 — its second-highest T20 score, as it batted first for the first time in the series.

New Zealand held a winning 2-0 lead in the series after winning the first match by eight runs and the second by

New Zealand needed to achieve its highest run chase in T20s to complete a clean sweep of the series and was given a good start by Rachin Ravindra who made 69 from 39 balls. But it fell just short, held to 211-7.

The Black Caps began at a pace to match Sri Lanka, reaching 60-0 in the six-over power play. But Asalanka slammed the brakes on the New Zealand innings when he dismissed Ravindra, Mark Chapman (9) and Glenn Phillips (6) in quick succession.

Asalanka had figures of 3-25 after those dismissals but Daryl Mitchell hit four consecutive sixes from his final over to wreck his analysis and bat New Zealand back into the game.

Wanindu Hasaranga then dismissed Mitchell Hay (8)

and Michael Bracewell (1) in the 16th over to tip the match back in the visitors' favor. Asalanka took a superb diving catch to remove Bracewell and managed his bowlers well in a superb all-round performance. "I think it's a good win for us," Asalanka said. "I think throughout the series we've played good cricket but couldn't manage to get a win. Finally we got it. I hope this is a momentum shift for us. Adapting to these conditions has been a key for us."

New Zealand came to the last over, bowled by Binura Fernando, needing 22 to win. After taking six runs from the first three balls, one of which was a wide, Zak Foulkes hit the fourth ball for six, leaving New Zealand needing 10 from the last two balls.

It was too much and the New Zealand batters managed only three more runs.

The start of the match was delayed by 30 minutes by a wet outfield and when it began Sri Lanka lost the toss but had the chance to bat first on a good pitch at Saxton Oval.

The tourists lost both openers, Pathum Nissanka and Kusal Mendis, inside the power play. But Perera powered up the Sri Lanka innings in an outstanding batting performance, hitting 13 fours and four sixes in his 101 from 46 balls

One of the keys to victory was the 75 runs Perera and Asalanka hit between the 14th and 18th overs which proved vital in making the run chase just too much for New

Australia captain Pat Cummins likely to miss tour of Sri Lanka

ustralia captain Pat Australia capiani Inc.
Cummins hinted that he may skip the tour of Sri Lanka later this month to be present for the birth of his second

Australia are scheduled to play two Tests in Sri Lanka on January 29 and February 6, around the same time his wife - Becky - is due to give birth.
"It's pretty hard to plan exactly the day, but definitely (I might miss the Sri Lanka tour), Cummins told 'The Daily Telegraph' at the launch of the Pink Test, starting here on Friday.

In Cummins absence, Steve Smith or Travis Head will lead Australia.

Cummins revealed that his mother's death last year had a profound impact reshaping his priorities in life.
The pacer had returned



midway through the tour of India to be with his mother when she passed away.

"In some ways, it really makes you focus in on what I think is important. It's family, it's enjoyment, it's trying to find joy in life and I think that's been a slight shift in the way I've approached playing and

touring and it's just given me that real decluttering mindset. "When you go out, you just want to play well, and of course, there's going to be pressure, but you don't want to forget what mum and dad used to say to us every time we went out to play as kids: 'Go and enjoy it. Try your

best, but make sure you enjoy it.' I try to remind myself of that every time I go on a tour

'Whatever you choose to do, there's always an opportunity cost," Cummins reflected.

"In the last few years, that's really rung true. When you go away on tour, you're missing out on family time or moments. That's a deliberate choice, so you have to make sure you're making the most of that tour or that game, if that makes sense."

Cummins has previously admitted that he regretted missing the early weeks of his son Albie's life due to his commitment to the World

"I missed a big chunk (of Albie's early days) last time and I want to work out how we can spend a bit more time at home for that initial period

Liverpool has a game in hand on the Gunners, who play at

Brighton on Saturday.

Liverpool hosts Manchester

Brentford remained in 12th

place and has lost three of its

past four Premier League

HAVERTZ SENT HOME

Several Arsenal players were

dealing with a virus before

and during the game, Arteta

Kai Havertz was sent home,

and Declan Rice only entered

the game as a substitute in

United on Sunday.

WITH ILLNESS

matches.

Marsh dropped, Starc declared fit for BGT finale

PTI ■ SYDNEY

All-rounder Beau Webster will replace an out-of-form Mitchell Marsh in Australia's squad for the fifth and final Test against India, home skipper Pat Cummins said here on Thursday.

The 33-year-old Marsh scored only 73 runs in seven innings across four Tests and Cummins cited this as the reason for his axing. He has bowled merely 33 overs in the series so far, claiming just three wickets.

We have one change in our side. Beau Webster comes in place of Mitch Marsh. Mitch knows that he hasn't scored enough runs," Cummins said at the pre-match press

"Mitchie obviously hasn't quite got the runs or perhaps wickets said he would have liked this series. So, it felt like it was time for a freshen up and Beau's been with the squad. He's been great. But I feel like now is a good week for Beau to get a chance." The 31-year-old Webster, who

played against India A in November, has scored 5247 runs and taken 148 wickets in first-class cricket. Webster has been in good form in the Sheffield Shield as well and averaged over 55 last season. "He's just been one of those star performers for Tasmania with the bat or ball, or in the field. He always seems to have a big impact, quite aggressive. (He) can change the game, like we've seen Mitch Marsh or Travis Head or Alex Carey do in that middle order." Cummins admitted that

Webster's crafty bowling played a role in the decision, That was definitely a factor. It's always nice to have a fifth bowler that bowls quite a lot for Tasmania. So if we need to call on that, we can.

"Firstly, if you're going to bat six, you picked for your batting, which he's shown in Shield over the last couple years when he takes the game on, and he's really changed some games for Tasmania. That pace bowling of Beau's going to be handy," said Cummins.

However, Cummins asserted that the Boxing Day match will not be Marsh's last Test for Australia. "Particularly here in Australia,

when a batter misses out or gets dropped it's always see as a big thing, but it's not the case. We love pulling a squad of players together who we can call on at different times, and we thought the time was right for Mitchy to have a freshen-up and miss this one. "But doesn't mean that he won't be back in the team at some point," the skipper said. Starc fit

Cummins also put to rest the speculation surrounding Mitchell Starc's fitness, saying the left-arm pacer will play the game.

He went for scans yesterday. But he got the all clear to play this match. He is good to go," Cummins said.

The 34-vear-old's fitness was the main concern for the hosts after he battled through sore ribs in the Boxing Day Test but still managed to bowl effectively with help from the

Arsenal moves up to 2nd place in Premier League with 3-1 win over Brentford

Arsenal is back into second place in the Premier League and in no rush to add players in the transfer window. Mikel Arteta's team beat

Brentford 3-1 on Wednesday to leapfrog Nottingham Forest and close the gap on league leader Liverpool to six

points.
"If there's an opportunity, we'll look at it," Arteta said of the January window. "I really like my players. I really value what we have, because it's a lot of quality and a lot of commitment from all of them."

That includes 17-year-old Ethan Nwaneri, who got his first Premier League start in place of the injured Bukayo Saka. The teenager was involved in second-half goals by Mikel Merino and Gabriel



Martinelli.

Bryan Mbeumo put the home team ahead in the 13th minute at Gtech Community Stadium, but Gabriel Jesus made it 1-1 just before the half-hour mark — his sixth goal in the past four games. Merino scored in the 50th minute and Martinelli added

a third three minutes later. It was Arsenal's second straight win without Saka, who is likely to be sidelined until at least March. The England winger tore his right hamstring in a 5-1 win over Crystal Palace on Dec. 21. Arsenal extended its

the 78th minute. "These things happen. There are always things thrown at you, infections, viruses, so I try to delay the lineup as late as possible because you can get up in the morning and unfortunately have a surprise unbeaten streak to 12 games

said.

like this," the manager said.

going to be different conditions where they're playing in Dubai. One-day cricket does really free He placed his faith in Kohli's

"Kohli is an absolute master of

them both as well," said Watson.

extraordinary ODI numbers -

295 ODIs, 13906 runs, Average:

58.18 with 50 hundreds and 72

one-day cricket." 'Yes, he's a master of all formats, but especially ODIs. You see his extraordinary numbers over a long period of time, averaging around 57 and a strike rate of 93 over a long period of time. It's crazy to think the control that he has over his innings."

Watson said Rohit could be back to his best in ODIs.

We'll see that again in the Champions Trophy. Rohit, like we saw in the one-day World Cup (2023), when he was at his very best, he was taking on the game. "It's more difficult to be able to do that in Test cricket. He hasn't been able to find that balance here in Australia. But when he goes out for the batting in one-days, he lets

loose. That's when we see the very

best of Rohit Sharma."

"So I'd be very surprised if he doesn't perform really well in the Champions Trophy, knowing that he probably doesn't have a lot of time left, whatever that is, but a lot of time left in international cricket. So I'm sure he'll let the handbrake off," he added.

Pat for Nitish Kumar Reddy

Watson said Nitish Kumar Reddy who made a hundred in the Boxing Day Test, will have to improve as a bowler to realise his full potential as an all-rounder.

"It's exciting to see a young allrounder coming through, be able to do what he did in the IPL just from a batting perspective. (because of) The impact player, which is sort of one of the rules that I don't particularly like...Someone like Reddy didn't get an opportunity to be able to really bowl much.

"But now we're seeing it in Test cricket and he will fit beautifully into one-day cricket and T20 cricket because of the versatility he provides. He's got all the gears from a batting perspective and his bowling is only going to get better the more exposure he gets," he concluded.

Unfortunate that India aren't travelling to Pakistan for Champions Trophy: Shane Watson

Former Australia all-rounder Shane Watson termed India's inability to travel to Pakistan for the Champions Trophy as "unfortunate" but said the ICC showpiece will offer star batters Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma a chance to liberate themselves from

a prolonged form slump. The global governing body has adopted the 'Hybrid' model for this edition of the CT with India scheduled to play its matches at a neutral venue in Dubai.

"It's unfortunate that things have worked out that way for sure. But there's no doubt that what everyone loves seeing — the India-Pakistan games. Whenever they come together, whether it's an ICC event, it is a really special time because we've got a sense of what's on the line," Watson told the media here during the Champions

Trophy Tour. "It's unfortunate that India aren't travelling to Pakistan for this Champions Trophy. unfortunately, that's just the way it is right now," he added. Watson said the CT offers cricket a

fresh context, breaking the long lull of four years between two ODI World Cups.
"The CT is a critically important

tournament in world cricket because the One Day World Cup is only once in every four years. It is great because it breaks up those four years," he noted. The 43-year-old also said the CT

keeps the ODI format alive amidst the rightful prominence Test cricket receives and the upsurge of

"You keep giving one-day cricket the energy that it needs because it is a great game. It's a great format. It provides that balance between Test cricket and T20 cricket. 'We never want to lose the format of one-day cricket, but there needs

And the CT certainly provides "When you play a CT where there's only eight teams, there is something riding on every ball. And as a team, you have to hit the ground sprinting. Otherwise, you'll be out like it was for the

to be context as often as possible.

Australian team in 2013." Then defending champions Australia had finished at the



bottom of Group A with a solitary win and crashed out of the tournament, which India won eventually under MS Dhoni. Current form no worry for Rohit,

Both Rohit and Kohli were part of that victory in England 12 years back, but now these two superstars are finding it tough to make big runs as they did in the past.

surrounding their retirement. "I don't think it (current poor form) will really play a part at all

with Rohit Sharma and Virat's But Watson was not worried over impact in one-day cricket. It's