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I am choosy, because of these reasons: **BRAHMANANI**

the pioneer The Congress Government introduced the BhuBharati Portal in place of the Dharani Portal assuring that encroached lands will be taken back and given to the poor. One Minister himself has been helping his relatives to grab government lands with the Revenue Department's help. He delivered lectures in the Assembly but now is helping his relatives to grab tribal lands worth Rs 1,500 crore defying HC orders

QUOTE OF THE DAY

— Raghunandan Rao, BJP MP

P2

Syllabus for higher edn to be revised

The Telangana Council of Higher Education (TGCHE) has announced transformative initiatives aimed at strengthening higher education in the State. These reforms focus on curriculum enhancement, stakeholder collaboration and bridging the gap between academia and industry. To align with global trends and evolving job market demands, the undergraduate curriculum is being significantly revised. The updated syllabus aims to balance theoretical and practical knowledge, equipping ...

India will lead in every sector by 2047

India will be number one in the world in every sector when it celebrates 100 years of Independence in 2047, Union Minister Amit Shah said on Thursday. Addressing the 18th convocation ceremony of Ganpat University, he also asked the youth to focus on acquiring knowledge instead of just a degree and to cultivate a culture of cooperation instead of culture of competition. Though there are challenges in front of today's youth, many opportunities have also been created for them by...

Infosys says H1B visa dependence lowered

Days after HCLTech said it has lowered reliance on H1B visas, Infosys on Thursday reported a significant decrease in its dependence on this visa category and exuded confidence in its ent" onerational mode the years, our dependence on H1B visas has reduced significantly. First and foremost our onsite mix has reduced significantly -- we used to be in the 30 per cent range, (but) we are now at the 24 per cent range. Within that, our near shore has increased significantly..

-PAGE: 8

Women must make this year their best

Smriti Mandhana believes India's back-to-back 3-0 series wins against the West Indies and Ireland have provided the perfect momentum for making it their "best year in one-dayers" as the team gears up for the 50-over World Cup at home. India will host the women's ODI World Cup later this year and the team, which has been able to rediscover its form with six consecutive ODI wins. should drive home the advantage now, says Mandhana. "Two 3-0" sweeps are definitely really good in a World Cup year...

CM: Expedite clearances for Telangana projects

Revanth urges Union ministers Says 161 projects stalled due to delays

PNS NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy met Union Ministers in Delhi on Thursday and requested environmental clearances for development projects in Telangana and support for transforming Hyderabad's public transport into a 100% electric model.

The meetings were held at the respective offices of Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav and Union Heavy Industries Minister HD Kumaraswamy.

During his meeting with Bhupender Yadav at the Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Revanth highlighted the stalling of 161 projects across Telangana due to delays in environmental and forest clearances.

He emphasized that these projects, including 38 requiring wildlife-related permissions, are crucial for developing remote and Left Wing Extremism-affected areas. The Chief Minister specifically pointed to issues like the National Highways construction, tower installations in agency areas and connectivity projects linking neighbouring states.



Revanth also requested urgent clearances for the Gouravelli Project, stressing its importance for irrigation. Bhupender Yadav assured positive consideration of these requests. In another meeting with Union

Heavy Industries Minister HD Kumaraswamy, the Chief Minister sought the Centre's cooperation to transform Hyderabad's bus fleet into an all-electric model.

TG may have to cough up Rs 200 crore for cancelling race?

NAVEENA GHANATE naveena.ghanate@gmail.com

HYDERABAD

Formula E organisers filed an arbitration case against HMDA for not conducting Season-10 of the race in Hyderabad but for unknown reasons closed it.

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) arbitration initiated by Formula E Operations (FEO) through DLA Piper UK LLP against the Telangana Government on 11.04.2024 has raised questions about potential financial liabilities.

As per records accessed by 'The Pioneer, filed under the ICC's jurisdiction in London, the arbitration proceedings revolve around unpaid dues and alleged damages arising from the Hyderabad Formula E races. Already on Thursday, KTR urged the government not to waste public funds amounting to Rs 10 crore on lawyers, officials etc.

Continued on Page 2

'Congress will defeat Kejriwal in Delhi like it toppled BRS in TG'

PNS HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said the Congress had defeated the associate partner in the Delhi liquor case in Telangana and it was time the people of Delhi defeated the main partner (Aam Aadmi Party), in the interests of the country.

He said that Telangana people are scared to come to Delhi due to pollution and the fear that they might end up in hospital. He blamed AAP and the BJP for making Delhi polluted.

"We stopped KCR's loot and that money we are using to implement our guarantees in Telangana. We defeated the liquor partner in Telangana and

came to Delhi to defeat the other partner. Corruption will be eliminated in Delhi too," he said.

Meanwhile, the Congress on Thursday promised to provide an LPG cylinder for Rs 500, a free ration kit and 300 units of electricity free to every Delhi resident if voted to power.



KTR challenges CM to live debate, lie detector test

Appears before ED and faces 40-plus questions on Formula E issue

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The ED investigation into the Formula-E Race case concluded at its office in Basheerbagh here, after a seven-hour session from 10:30 am to 5:30 pm.

Addressing the media afterwards, BRS Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) reiterated his commitment to cooperating with investigative agencies and issued a strong challenge to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. KTR said while the ACB asked 80-plus questions, the ED asked around 40-plus questions.

KTR challenged Revanth Reddy to a live debate and lie detector test

on the Formula-E Race case and the Vote for Note' scandal.

He said the debate should be held in the presence of the media and judicial authority. "If Revanth thinks he is innocent, let him face the public and the judiciary with me. I am ready to answer any questions regarding the Formula-E Race, and he must answer questions about the Vote for Note' case.

KTR emphasised that such a transparent discussion would save public funds. "Instead of wasting Rs 10 crore on false allegations and inquiries, let the truth be revealed

Continued on Page 2



KWDT-II Tribunal order favours TG

PNS NEW DELHI

The Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal-II (KWDT-II) has ruled in favour of Telangana by agreeing to hear about water allocation between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh based on the new Terms of Reference (TOR) issued under Section 3 of the Interstate River Water Disputes Act,

The landmark order, delivered on Thursday, is expected to pave the way for the fair distribution of Krishna River waters between the two states. One of the primary reasons for

Telangana formation was the historical injustice in the allocation of Krishna River waters.

After statehood in 2014, the then Government of Telangana accepted only 299 TMCs of water out of the 811 TMCs allocated to United Andhra Pradesh by the Bachawat

Tribunal. However, Telangana argued that with 68.5% of the Krishna River basin within its territory, it was entitled to 555 TMC, highlighting a major shortfall in its rightful share.

In 2015, Telangana approached the Supreme Court seeking the establishment of a new tribunal for a fresh allocation of Krishna waters. However, delays in withdrawing the petition until 2021 hampered

The Union Government issued a new TOR to KWDT-II in October 2023, which expanded the scope to include ongoing and proposed projects in both states. The tribunal ruled that it will pri-

oritize hearings based on the new TOR, which subsume the restrictive provisions of Section 89 of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization

Continued on Page 2

Amit Shah launches FTI-TTP at RO PNS HYDERABAD Hyderabad GMR

No guarantee for Cong guarantees

International Airport announced the launch of the Centre's pioneering 'Fast Track Immigration – Trusted Traveller Programme" (FTI-TTP) for Indian passport holders and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders Amidst enthusiasm, the Home

Minister, Amit Shah, virtually inaugurated the programme by unveiling dedicated counters at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) for Trusted Traveller Programme beneficiaries.



The Fast Track Immigration -Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP) is a visionary initiative of the Government of India – designed to

provide Indians and OCI cardholders with a faster, easier and more secure travel experience. Eligible individuals and students

must apply online. The registration process for FTI-TTP may take up to one month. Applicants must offering application. Membership in the programme will be co-terminus with passport validity.

The application process requires applicants to submit their biometrics (fingerprints and facial image) along with other required information as specified in the application

form. Registration under FTI-TTP will be completed after necessary verifications and confirmation of eligibility.

ensure their passport has at least six emigration/immigration clearance months of validity at the time of for pre-verified travellers, both

RGIA is equipped with 08 electronic gates - 04 for arrivals and 04 for departures - to facilitate a seamless experience for programmes. The number of counters may increase based on demand.

Continued on Page 2

Cong guarantees are a ticket to failure: Sanjay **PNS** ■ HYDERABAD

even after 400 days, says BRS

PNS HYDERABAD Addressing the media at the Telangana Bhavan, BRS MLA Prashanth Reddy launched a scathing attack on Chief

Minister Revanth Reddy, accusing him of deceiving both the people of Telangana and Delhi with baseless promises and politically motivated cases against BRS leaders.

Prashanth that after 13 months, Revanth's governance has been marred by lies and deceit. He questioned the CM's claims about fulfilling promises like farm loan waivers, unemployment benefits, and women's welfare schemes. "Even after 400 days, none of these guarantees have been imple-

Highlighting past remarks, he pointed out the irony of Revanth now praising Sonia Gandhi, whom he had earlier called responsible for delaying Telangana formation. "Revanth's statements are nothing but desperate attempts to get into Rahul Gandhi's good books after being ignored for months," Prashanth said

He defended KT Rama Rao (KTR) against the ED inquiry into the Formula E event, labelling it as a politically motivated case orchestrated by Revanth. "Every rupee spent on the Formula E Race is accounted for. Hyderabad earned global recognition through this event and there was no corruption," he asserted. Continued on Page 2

The Congress's guarantees are a ticket to failure, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay,

Targeting Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who spoke in Delhi on Thursday while releasing the two guarantees posters of the Congress on Thursday, Sanjay said the Congress lost in Haryana and Maharashtra as it cheated the people of Telangana with its false guar-

Posting regarding this on X, Sanjay said, "The Congress' guarantees are a ticket to failure. In Haryana and Maharashtra, the Congress lost. Telangana cheated. The Telangana Chief Minister's lofty promises in Delhi are bound to fall flat, just like



the Congress' guarantees in Telangana. Where are Vidya Bharosa cards, Rs 15,000 Rythu Bharosa. Rs 2,500 for women, Rs 4,000 pension, house sites, MSP and international schools? All empty words. Delhi won't be misled by Congress' fake propaganda and its hollow assur-

India achieves first space docking

In a major boost to India's ambitious future space missions, ISRO on Thursday successfully performed the docking of satellites as part of the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) and announced that post docking, control of two satellites as a single object was also achieved.

"India docked its name in space history! Good Morning India ISRO's SpaDeX mission accomplishes historic docking success. Proud to witness this moment!", ISRO said in a post on 'X'. With the successful docking of satel-

lites --Chaser and Target-- India has become the fourth country after the US, Russia and China to accomplish the technological feat. In space, docking technology is

essential when multiple rocket launches are required to achieve common mission objectives.

The docking experiment is crucial

ISRO successfully docks SpaDex satellites 'Bharatiya Antriksh Station".



astronaut on the moon.

announced that India will have its own

for the smooth conduct of the country's ambitious future missions, including Chandrayaan-4, Gaganyaan, setting up a space station and landing an Space Station by 2035, known as the

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a post on 'X' greeted the scientists for the achievement. He said: "Congratulations to our scientists at @isro and the entire space fraternity for the successful demonstration of space docking of satellites. It is a sig-nificant stepping stone for India's ambitious space missions in the years to come.

Further, ISRO said: "Post docking, control of two satellites as a single object is successful. Undocking and power transfer checks to follow in coming days.

Hailing ISRO, Union Minister of State for Science, Technology and Space, Jitendra Singh said on 'X': Last October, the government

Continued on Page 2

Hindenburg shuts shop

PNS WASHINGTON

Hindenburg Research, which made international waves with campaigns targeting billionaire Gautam Adani that wiped billions from market value of his group companies, will disband, its founder Nate Anderson announced on

Thursday. Announcement by Anderson, 40, who started Hindenburg in 2017, came just days before Donald Trump's inauguration as the new President of the United States.

While he cited the toll of the "rather intense, and at times, all encompassing" nature of the work as the reason for his decision", critics were quick to link the shutting down Hindenburg's alleged ties with George Soros and the so-called deep state being under significant pressure from

the incoming Trump administration. Typically, short-sellers like Anderson, who managed his firm's own money but not that of others, bet against companies they believe are

plagued with mismanagement or involved in some fraud/scam. Short sellers borrow a stock to sell it in the expectation the price will fall, then repurchase the shares and pocket the difference. They book loss if

the reverse happens. Hindenburg in January 2023 published a report accusing the Adani group of

"pulling the largest con in the corporate history", wiping out more than USD 150 billion in value of the group's shares at their lowest point. Adani group vehemently denied all the allegations including that being "engaged in a brazen stock manipu-



Centre to set up 8th **Pay Commission** for govt staff

PNS NEW DELHI

In a major decision, the government on Thursday decided to set up the 8th Pay Commission to revise salaries of central government employees and allowances of pensioners. The decision to set up the 8th Pay Commission was taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, I&B Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said

Continued on Page 2

SC uses Article 142 to deliver complete justice

¬he Constitution will help a student who cannot afford to pay. Can we believe it? Article 142 is a unique provision that grants the Supreme Court the power to pass any order to enforce 'complete justice'. Its draft, Article 118, was adopted by the Constituent Assembly without debate. This means that defining its scope was left entirely to the Court.

Then higher education departments, government-funded universities and schools should have an implementable scheme to fund poor students.

See the judgment in the SC 2024 INSC 749 'Atul Kumar Petitioner Vs The Chairman (Joint Seat Allocation Respondents Authority) and Others' case. The problem was with a young man named

entrance exam but could not pay the admission fee of ?17,500 in time. It's great that the Supreme Court granted Atul Kumar, a Dalit student, admission to the Indian Institute of Technology Dhanbad. It was not a dispute or a litigation, but a problem. They have lakhs of crores but this young man had to knock on the doors of the Supreme Court.

This meritorious student belonged to the Scheduled Caste category. He appeared for the JEE (Advanced) 2024 Examination and secured rank 1,455 in his category. He was allotted a seat in the Indian Institute of Technology Dhanbad for a four-year Bachelor of Technology course in Electrical Engineering. This was his second attempt and

"A talented student like the petitioner who belongs to a marginalized group and has done everything to secure admission should not be left in the lurch," the SC order said. The power of the SC under Article 142 of the Constitution to deliver justice is meant precisely to tackle such a situation

therefore, the last chance for the petitioner to secure admission to an IIT as only two attempts are allowed. The petitioner said that his father was a daily wage labourer. The petitioner completed higher secondary education in Khatauli in the Muzaffarnagar district of Uttar Pradesh. The family is below the poverty line income-wise.

The time frame for completing online reporting, including

the payment of fees and uploading of documents, was 5 pm on June 24, 2024. The petitioner said that his parents had arranged funds to pay the fees. The fee was deposited in his brother's account by 4.45 pm. The petitioner said that he had logged into the portal of the first respondent at 4.45 pm, applied in the 'float category' of admission and uploaded documents. The portal closed at 5 pm and his payment was



ACHARYULU Professor of Law, Mahindra University, Hyderabad

not processed.

The petitioner then sent an email to the first respondent. A response was received on June 26, 2024, from IIT Bombay's office for JEE candidate to the organising IIT, which is IIT Madras. Eventually, these attempts did not bear fruit.

The Supreme Court directed that the petitioner should be granted admission to IIT Dhanbad against the seat which was allotted to him in Electrical Engineering. "The petitioner must be admitted to the same batch to

which he would have been admitted as per the allotment order. The petitioner is willing to pay the fees of Rs 17,500, which may be paid personally at the time when admission is granted to him. A supernumerary seat should be created for the petitioner, if required, to comply with this order and no existing student should be disturbed. The petitioner would be entitled to all the

admission, including allotment of hostel accommodation and other facilities. As the admission of the petitioner was delayed for no fault of his we request the Director of IIT Dhanbad to ensure that the petitioner can duly complete the course work for the period that has already elapsed during the academic year. This will ensure that the petitioner is abreast of his class and does not suffer for the delay in granting him admis-

sion," the SC said in its order (Based on Para 8 of the Supreme Court). A talented student like the petitioner who belongs to a marginalized group and has done everything to secure admission should not be left in the lurch," the SC order said. The power of the SC under

to deliver justice is meant precisely to tackle such a situation.

The Constitution has Article 142 with the phrase 'complete justice.' IIM Åhmedabad conducted an empirical study, which revealed that in 1,579 cases between 1950 and 2023, most were civil cases. The utility of the phrase 'complete justice' has been translated as Article 142 which allowed a writ that resulted in using the constitutional provision. The study found that the SC explicitly used its powers under Article 142 in only 791 cases.

We need to thank Dr BR Ambedkar for this Article of the Constitution, that is, Article 32, the right to remedy. What is the one-word answer to the most important Article in the Constitution? Doubtlessly, it is

CM, Venkaiah Naidu honour Jaipal Reddy

PNS NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy paid tributes to former Union Minister and eminent Parliamentarian S. Jaipal Reddy, recognizing his contributions to realizing the dream of a Telangana State.

Prominent politicians and dignitaries gathered at the PV Marg on Necklace Road to pay homage to former Union Minister S. Jaipal Reddy on his 83rd birth anniversary. The event, held at the 'Spurthi Sthal,' was marked by floral

tributes and speeches high-lighting his contributions to Telangana and national politics. The event was attended by several dignitaries, including Geetha Reddy, the wife of the Chief Minister, who led family members in paying

Former Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu described Jaipal Reddy as a rare combination of integrity, intellect and humility. "He was a tow-ering figure in Indian politics, a principled leader, and an exceptional parliamentarian.

Centre to set up 8th ...

Continued from Page 1

The term of the 7th Pay Commission will end in 2026.

"Prime Minister has approved 8th Central Pay Commission for central government employees," the minister said. The chairman and two members of the Commission will be appointed soon, he added.

There are over 49 lakh central government employees and nearly 65 lakh pensioners.

The minister further said the setting up of the new Pay Commission in 2025 will ensure that its recommendations are received well before the completion of the term of the seventh pay panel.

Make Gurukuls centres of excellence: Seethakka

PNS HYDERABAD

In an address to Gurukul principals and staff on Thursday, Minister Seethakka emphasised the crucial role of educators in shaping the future of students and the nation.

She highlighted the Telangana Government's initiatives to resolve issues in Gurukuls ensuring the highest standards in education and student welfare.

"Students are the future of this country, and their success lies in your hands," said Seethakka.

Drawing inspiration from India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, she likened educators to gardeners nurturing young minds like tender saplings. "A nation's future is built in classrooms, and that



responsibility rests with teachers and principals," she asserted.

She also called for a nurturing approach towards students, emphasizing that kindness must replace punishments. "Shape the lives of underprivileged children with love and care, not fear," she added.

Acknowledging the challenges faced by Gurukul staff, Seethakka urged them to discharge their duties with dedi-

She pointed to the propaganda and misinformation being spread on social media about Gurukuls and urged educators to unite against such false narratives. "The truth takes time to surface, but it will prevail. Until then, we must continue to focus on our mission," she said.

Seethakka also addressed complaints of substandard food in some hostels, assuring that the government is taking the issue seriously and investigating all aspects. She urged staff to ensure proper implementation of upgraded menus and maintain hygiene in hos-

Highlighting the government's commitment to education, Seethakka said that mess charges were increased to

improve the quality of food and that the admin regularized teacher transfers and promotions that were pending for

The government also paid salaries on time and declared Savitribai Phule's birth anniversary as Women Teachers' Day to honour female educators.

"The government views teachers as integral partners in our mission to improve education," she said, emphasizing the focus on fostering a teacherfriendly environment in Gurukuls.

Seethakka also spoke about her hostel life at Mulugu's ST Girls Hostel and how it shaped her as a lifelong learner. "I am a product of Gurukul education, and I cherish my connection with hostels," she said.

Actor Saif Ali Khan stabbed by intruder at Mumbai home Doctors say he is out of danger

PNS MUMBAI

Bollywood star Saif Ali Khan was repeatedly stabbed with a knife by an intruder inside his 12th floor apartment in upscale Bandra early Thursday in a shocking attack that raises intriguing questions about security, motive, and celebrity

Khan, 54, was "out of danger" following an emergency surgery, said the doctors at the Lilavati Hospital where he was rushed following the incident that took place around 2.30 am at his apartment in `Satguru Sharan' building.

A 2.5-inch piece of knife was removed from his spine, the doctors said, adding he was on 100 percent recovery path".

Police registered a case of `armed robbery with attempt to cause death or grievous hurt'. The attacker fled using the



building's staircase, a senior police official said, adding that his CCTV visuals was traced on the sixth floor, and 10 teams have been formed to nab him

Khan's domestic help, who raised alarm first, also sustained a minor injury to her hand during the scuffle. She later lodged a police complaint.

Opposition leaders in Maharashtra said even celebrities were not safe in India's financial capital, and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who holds the home portfolio, has failed to maintain law and

NOTE: PARA 1 WAS NOT CLEAR IN THE ORIGINAL

Mahila Cong demands posts for women

PNS HYDERABAD

Pointing out that the Congress gave the TPCC chief post to B. Mahesh MLC post, Telangana Mahila Congress President Mogili Sunitha Rao said the Mahila Congress will demand posts for women from the TPCC chief if he fails to give adequate posts to them.

Sunitha made it clear that the Mahila Congress would fight against the party sitting on the steps of the Gandhi Bhavan if the party refused to allot posts to them. She said that she has faith in the party and that the party will give priority to women.

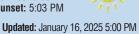
Speaking to the media at the Gandhi Bhavan on Thursday, Sunitha said they had asked the party to give at least one post to them. She said the posts they have got were given based on the membership drive. The TPCC Chief assured that he will give nominated posts and TPCC posts to women, she said.

TODAY **ALMANAC** Month & Paksham Krishna Paksha Jan 17 04:06 AM Chaturthi to Jan 18 05:30 AM Jan 18 05:30 AM to Jan 19 07:31 AM Nakshatram: Jan 16 11:16 AM to Jan 17 12:44 PM

Purva Phalguni: Jan 17 12:44 PM to Jan 18 02:51 PM 11:03 AM to 12:26 PM Rahukalam: 3:12 PM to 4:36 PM Yamagandam: Varjyam: 09:27 PM to 11:11 PM 8:16 AM to 9:39 AM Gulika: 10:12 AM to 11:54 AM Amritakalam: Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:04 PM to 12:48 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER Forecast: Partly Cloudy

Temp: 28° Humidity: 62% Sunrise: 6:50 AM Sunset: 5:03 PM



CM: Expedite clearances ...

Continued from Page 1

He proposed the allocation of buses under the PM e-Drive Scheme on a Gross Cost Contract (GCC) model apart from the refitment of diesel buses with electric

Kumaraswamy that the Telangana government had already sent proposals to the Centre for 2,800 electric buses. He urged the Minister cials.

to speed up the allocation under both the GCC and retrofitment models.

The Chief Minister also met the Union Minister of State for Steel and Heavy Industries, Bhupatiraju Srinivasa Varma, to discuss various state-related issues. He was accompanied by ministers Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Ponnam Prabhakar and Uttam Kumar Reddy as well as MPs and senior offi-

'Congress will defeat ...

Continued from Page 1

This is the fourth such guarantee announced by the Addressing a press confer-

ence, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy announced the Congress's guarantees and urged Delhi voters to vote for the Congress during the upcoming elections.

He also promised to implement the five key guarantees and also the Modi and Kejriwal admins for doing nothing to improve living conditions in New Delhi despite coming to power thrice. "There is no difference between Modi and Kejriwal, their names are different but their actions are the same, that is, lying. Modi has been PM three times, Kejriwal has been the CM three times, but what have they done for Delhi? Today, Delhi is not suitable for living. I request the people of Delhi to vote

for the Congress. We will

implement our five guaran-

No guarantee...

Continued from Page 1

He blamed Revanth Reddy for cancelling the second season of the Formula E Race, causing financial and reputational damage to the state. "If anyone deserves to face an inquiry, it is Revanth for his failures and vendetta politics," he added. He said that Congress and BJP leaders were working in tandem to target KTR, describing it as an "odd partnership with hidden motives." He questioned Congress leaders' influence on investigative agencies like the ACB and the BJP's alleged manipulation of

India achieves ...

tees," he said.

Continued from Page 1

Finally made it. SPADEX has accomplished the unbelievable... docking complete... and it is all indigenous 'Bharatiya Docking

He said this success paves the way for the smooth conduct of ambitious future missions, including the Bharatiya Antriksh Station, Chandrayaan-4 Gaganyaan.
"PM Sh @narendramo-

di's continuous patronage keeps the spirits soaring here at Bengaluru," he added. ISRO Chairman V

Narayanan too congratulated the team which made the mission successful.

TG may have to cough...

Continued from Page 1

The arbitration case was filed for a sum of GBP 4,500,000, the unpaid fees under the Hosting Agreement, damages for the losses caused by the wrongful termination of the race and damages for other appropriate.

The ICC itself nominated Harish Salve as an arbitrator representing the Telangana Government, demanding advance payments of USD 555,000 (approximately Rs 4.7 crore) towards arbitration costs.

The FEO's claims included GBP 4.5 million (approximately Rs 45 crore) as unpaid fees under the hosting agreement and additional damages for wrongful termination of the agreement with Ace Nxt Gen.

The ICC has demanded a payment of USD 1,885,000 (Rs 1,50,00,000 approx.) towards advance on cost for which the bill was communicated on 10 June 2024. However, a month later the FEO terminated the arbitration proceedings on July 23, 2024. But they put a caveat that the FEO can reintroduce the claims made in this proceeding in another arbitration proceeding at a later date. This means, in future, Formula E can still sue HMDA or the

Telangana Government. Sources in the Telangana government said, "the arbitration case was withdrawn after the government decided to initiate criminal proceedings in the entire financial transfer of the race. Should we sell HMDA assets to pay thousands of crores as damages to a foreign entity?"

However, this claim couldn't be verified with Formula E, as at the time of publishing, there was no response from the entity. In a similar case involving

Formula E Operations and the city of Montreal, the FEO reportedly settled damages amounting to USD 3 million for the cancellation of the Formula It may be mentioned here

that Denis Coderre's adminis-

Montreal in 2017. Due to the change in governments in November 2017, the new Montreal Mayor Valérie Plante decided to cancel the editions planned for 2018 and 2019.

The promoters of Formula E then responded by personally suing the new mayor for USD million However settled out of court and Montreal City had to pay USD 3 million to Formula E. This precedent demonstrates the scale of financial liabilities that cities may face for failing to adhere to contractual obliga-

Given the Montreal settlement, the potential damages for Hyderabad could be substantial. If the FEO calculates damages based on unpaid fees, contract breaches and reputational harm, the liabilities could easily exceed Rs 200 crore, aligning with the scale of the Montreal case. As per the records, the arbi-

tration costs include an advance of USD 555,000 (approximately Rs 4.7 crore) requested by the ICC. Additional legal and administrative costs incurred during arbitration would further increase this figure. Rs 54.88 crore Expenses Already Incurred, that is, this amount has already been spent by HMDA towards payments to Formula E Operations.

If we add these components together, that is, the base claim inspired by the Montreal Case: Rs 132 crore, Arbitration Fees (Advance and Legal): Rs 4.7 crore (or more) and Incurred Expenses: Rs 54.88 crore. It would have gone approximately Rs 191.58 crore or higher, depending on additional costs and damages Formula E could

If Hyderabad's case were to follow a similar settlement ratio as Montreal Assuming an 18.6% settlement ratio of GBP 4.5 million the estimated Settlement is GBP 8,37,000 (approximately Rs 8.4 crore)

As the arbitration proceedings were terminated with permission for the FEO to reintroduce claims, Telangana may tration had organized the face renewed demands for compensation in the near future. Formula E race in downtown

Cong Minister, kin trying to grab land worth Rs 1,500 crore: Raghunandan

PNS HYDERABAD

The BJP's Medak MP, M. Raghunandan Rao, said that a register Bilaa Dhakhala land worth Rs 1,500 crore in the name of his relatives defying HC orders. He said that he is not aware of that Minister's position in the government, that is, whether he is number 2 or 3 or

Addressing the media on Thursday at the State BJP office here along with the victims, Raghunandan demanded that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy should do justice to the tribals, who have been cultivating the land for three generations.

Raghunandan said that trib-

als had approached the High Court in 1994 appealing to register those lands in their name.

He said that a dispute regarding 85 acres of Bilaa Dhakhala land costing Rs 1500 crore is going on between the villages of Velimela in Ramachandrapuram mandal of Sangareddy district and the Kondakal village of Shankarpalli mandal in Rangareddy district.

He said that relatives of one of the Ministers — Kommireddy Vikramkumar Reddy and Aurobindo Pharma MD K. Nithyananda Reddy — are now trying to grab the land with the help of CCLA Commissioner Navin Mittal, who faced allegations during BRS rule and is continuing even now.

Raghunandan said that encroachers are now constructing a wall around the land with the help of the police defying court o ordered that the police should not interfere in the land issue, he

He said the police had been vacating the villages forcibly since the last three days defying court orders. "The Congress Government introduced BhuBharati Portal in

place of the Dharani Portal assuring that the encroached lands will be taken back and given to the poor. However, one Minister himself has been assisting his relatives to grab government lands with the help of the Revenue Department.

KTR challenges ...

Continued from Page 1

Expressing his regard for the Constitution and the judiciarv. KTR said, "I have immense faith in the judicial system. I have provided comprehensive answers to the ED and ACB. Not a single rupee of corruption occurred in the Formula-E project, and all transactions

He reiterated his willingness to cooperate fully with the investigation, no matter how many times he is summoned.

are transparent."

KTR submitted two key documents to the ED during the inquiry. A report prepared by Nielsen on the Formula-E Race, which highlighted the USD 82 million economic benefit to Telangana. A copy of the Telangana Electric Vehicle Policy – 2020, showcasing the state's grand vision of promoting EV manufacturing and establishing the Telangana

Mobility Valley. KTR said the Formula-E Race was organised to attract investments in the EV sector and position Telangana as a mobility hub.

KWDT-II Tribunal ...

Continued from Page 1

Andhra Pradesh argued that the tribunal should first consider the earlier TOR under Section 89, but the Supreme Court directed Andhra Pradesh to participate in the proceedings without any interim relief. The tribunal emphasized the relevance of the new TOR in addressing the equitable distribution of water, including project-spe-

cific allocations for Telangana. Telangana officials have accused Andhra Pradesh of deliberately delaying tribunal proceedings by contesting the validity of the new TOR in the Supreme Court through Writ

Petition No. 1230 of 2023. Telangana maintained that these delays undermine justice for its people, particularly those dependent on Krishna Basin projects like Palamuru-Rangareddy, Kalwakurthy and Nettempadu.

Telangana's Irrigation Minister, N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, hailed the tribunal's decision as a victory for the state.

Amit Shah launches FTI-TTP...

Continued from Page 1 Speaking at the launch

of the programme, Mr

Pradeep Panicker, CEO-GHIAL said "As a pioneer in embracing new technology and committed to enhancing air travel and providing a seamless, hassle-free experience for all our passengers, Hyderabad Airport is proud to play a key role in the launch of the Fast Track Immigration - Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP). This technology-driven initiative will simplify and accelerate the

efficient." The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), in collaboration with the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Bureau of Immigration, has developed the roadmap for the FTI-Trusted Traveller Programme.

immigration process, mak-

ing travel faster and more

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Cultural Programmes

By Nrityamala Natyakala Welfare Society

Venue

Ravindra Bharathi January 25 (9 am to 10 pm)

Untamed Baatan

With Zaynab Ali

Lamakaan (2.5 km) January17, (6 pm)

Live Musical Concert

By Khumar Barabankvi

Venue

Lamakaan January 17, (8 pm)

Friday Night

Featuring Dj Sravan Venue

Sounds & Spirits January 17, (8 pm)

City Pioneer

Hyd's global-standard cycle

track develops cracks

but acknowledged persistent structural issues. The track's

foundation is compromised as

it is built over a 3,500 mm

water pipeline laid by the

Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage

Improper trench refilling

during pipeline installation

has not only weakened the

track but also raised concerns

about potential leaks that

could wash away sections of the track. The 23 km track,

costing Rs 3.91 crore per kilo-

meter, was designed to feature

solar panels capable of generating 16 MW of power and

provide night lighting.

Board (HMWSSB).

HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | JANUARY 17, 2025

'Surgical robotic technology crucial for cardiac diseases'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Cardiac diseases are becoming one of the fastest-growing healthcare problems globally and in India. In fact, cardiovascular diseases (CVD) are the leading cause of death and disabilin India. According to a study published in The Lancet, this group of diseases is marked by a greater risk, earlier onset, higher fatality rates, and increased premature deaths

among Indians. Experts opine that advanced and timely treatment interventions using the latest technologies are essential to deal with this growing cardiovascular dis-

ease burden in India. Speaking at STAR Cardiac Connect 2024, a two-day symposium focused on exploring the current scope and future trends in Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery (MICS) and Robotic

Cardiac Surgery in

Hyderabad, many global experts highlighted the role of fourth-generation robotic-assisted surgery systems in transforming cardiac care by empowering surgeons to perform complex procedures with minimal invasiveness for signifi-cantly better patient outcomes. Renowned robot-

ic cardiac surgeon Prof MD Cem Alhan, Professor, Ac?badem University, Istanbul, Turkey, said, "The need for enhanced adoption of roboticassisted surgery technology in cardiology is becoming increasingly pertinent in India as the country faces a rising burden of cardiovas-

cular diseases. With India being home to over a billion people and a growing prevalence of heart conditions, robotic technology offers a transformative solution to address the complexities of cardiac

TGCHE to revise syllabus for higher education

NEW INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME WITH PRACTICAL EXPOSURE

PNS HYDERABAD

The Telangana Council of Higher Education (TGCHE) has announced transformative initiatives aimed at strengthening higher education in the State. These reforms focus on curriculum enhancement, stakeholder collaboration and bridging the gap between academia and industry.

To align with global trends and evolving job market demands, the undergraduate curriculum is being significantly revised. The updated syllabus aims to balance theoretical and practical knowledge, equipping students with industry-relevant skills to boost employability and global competitiveness, said TGCHE Chairman Prof V Balakista Reddy.

TGCHE has invited suggestions from academicians, industry experts, students and policymakers to foster inclusivity and collaboration. Stakeholders can provide feedback on focus areas such as technology integration, curriculum revamp, faculty development, research, equity in education and entrepreneurship. Suggestions can be submitted via a Google form available on the TGCHE website.

A new internship programme is being launched to provide stu-dents and young professionals with practical exposure to high-

er education governance and policy-making. This initiative, aligned with UGC guidelines, aims to prepare a skilled work-force to address contemporary challenges like digital transforma-tion and sustainability. Interns will gain hands-on experience, net-work with experts and receive certificates of completion.

T-Consult partners with 100+ integrated healthcare experts

PNS HYDERABAD

The much-touted cycle track

along Hyderabad's Outer Ring

Road (ÓRR), built at a cost of

Rs 90 crore and promising

international standards, is now

facing severe quality issues.

Recent cracks, particularly at

Vattinagulapally, have raised

concerns about the construc-

tion's durability and the pro-

Frequent cracks have appeared on the track, with the

latest incident going viral on the social media. Hyderabad

Metropolitan Development

Authority (HMDA) officials

performed temporary repairs

ject's execution.

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

T-Consult is working to bring India's traditional healing practices to the global stage by part-nering with over 100 healthcare experts.

Under the leadership of Chairman Sundeep Kumar Makthala, it has launched the T-Consult Integrated Health Network (TIHN). This initiative combines

modern medicine with Indian traditional practices like Thursday Avurveda, Naturopathy, Homeopathy and Yoga to deliver holistic healthcare solu-

TIHN aims to boost medical tourism by showcasing India's and traditional healing to international patients. Operating in 63 countries, TConsult is set to transform global healthcare with its inte-



T-Consult Chairman Sundeep Kumar Makthala, along with members at T-Hub on

grated approach. The initiative was launched at T-Hub on Thursday, with members Eswar Kota, Rajeev Ravulapati, Challa Narender and Vamshi

Chairman Makthala said, "TIHN drives a global healthcare community blending modern and traditional practices, offering unique and com-

prehensive care."

This initiative also provides international exposure for Indian doctors, enabling them to serve global patients seeking reinforces T-Consult's commitment to making India a global leader in healthcare while supporting the economy by boosting medical tourism.

Three arrested in Narsingi double murder case

PNS HYDERABAD

The Narsingi Police has cracked the gruesome double murder case reported on January 11 with the arrest of three suspects. The accused, all from Sidhi district in Madhya Pradesh, were identified as Rahul Kumar Saket (26), driver, Raj Kumar Saket (22), office boy and Sukhendra Kumar Saket (30), housekeeping worker. Technical evidence was

used to arrest them. The mobile phones of both deceased were recovered from the accused. The three suspects are being produced before the local court to obtain transit warrants for further legal proceedings, said Raiendranagar DCP Ch Srinivas. According to Narsingi Police, the deceased woman who had recently turned to sex work had been approached twice by Rahul Kumar Saket.

During one of their encounters, he attempted to record a video without her consent, leading to an altercation. The woman informed her acquaintance Ankith (the male deceased), who then warned Rahul. Rahul was enraged by the confrontation and subsequent altercations, decided to kill Ankith and sought the help of other two accused.

On January 11, he hired the woman through Ankith for Rs 4,000. All five individuals travelled to the crime scene in an auto-rickshaw.

Upon arrival another accused spent time with the woman while two accused took Ankith away and stabbed him by smashing his head with a boulder. The duo d to where was with and killed her using a boulder. The accused fled to their native village early on January 12, said Rajendranagar

SVAG Pet Homes launches 'Barkitecture' for pet industry

With the rise of pet parenting among young people and couples, Hyderabad-based startup SVAG Pet Homes LLP has introduced India's first "Barkitecture" concept, focusing on pet-friendly design.

At a press conference here on Thursday, the startup unveiled innovative products such as Barkkey Villas, Pods, Furniture and more. These dog-centric designs aim to provide comfort and style for pets, blending functionality with aesthetics.

Co-founders Sushanth Kanneganti, Vishal Bothra, Gopal Varma and Y Anudeep launched the products, high-

parenting.'
Vishal Bothra explained that the post-COVID era saw a surge in pet adoptions, particularly dogs, as they provided emotion-



Barkkey co-founders Sushanth Kanneganti, Vishal Bothra, Gopal Varma and Y.Anudeep launch their products in Hyderabad on Thursday

al support and companionship during challenging times. This shift led to the rise of 'Barkitecture,' where interior unique needs and preferences.

Barkkey products transform traditional kennels into personalised spaces where dogs can rest, recharge and feel safe. The startup has a manufacturing facility in Aramgarh, Hyderabad, producing a range of products for B2B and B2C markets. Currently, introduce 50 more.

With four lakh stray dogs in Hyderabad, Barkkey also introduced B-Bowl to ensure every street dog gets love and a meal.

City's Microsoft centre is biggest chunk of land transacted in 2024

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Microsoft's data centre in Hyderabad, covering about 48 acres and valued at approximately Rs 267 crore, represents the biggest chunk of land transacted in 2024, according to Anarock Group. Despite rising land prices, financially strong developers and other entities continued to acquire land throughout the year.

Hyderabad ranks fourth among the top 7 cities with approximately 67.1 acres of land transacted.

Chairman of Anarock Group, Anuj Puri says, "The highest land transactions in 2024 were in the MMR region, with over 607 acres across 30 separate deals.

Zen Tech secures registration for simulator in military training

PNS HYDERABAD

Technologies Limited has received design registration for its "60 mm Mortar Training Simulator" under the Designs Act, India. Zen Technologies, a leader in defence training and antidrone solutions, continues to innovate in military training technologies with this recog-

Hyderabad-based Zen

The simulator provides immersive training for Infantry Rifle Platoon mortar crews, covering key skills like target acquisition, simulated firing and fire corrections. Its advanced design offers realistic battlefield sce-

narios, customizable terrain options and an easy-to-use scenario builder for instruc-

The system operates indoors, enabling year-round training regardless of weather or logistics. It reduces costs compared to live firing exercises and improves safety by avoiding risks of conventional methods.

This innovation aligns with India's push for selfreliance in defence technologies. With widespread military

use of 60 mm mortars globally, the simulator is set for international acceptance, reinforcing India's role as a trusted defence supplier.

'Skill Sprint' internship launched for students

PNS HYDERABAD

Telangana IT and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu announced a new internship programme called 'Skill Sprint,' organised by T-Works and Young India Skills University. The programme aims to improve the skills of students and unemployed youth, connecting academic knowledge with industry needs. The poster for the initiative was unveiled at the State Secretariat on

Minister Sridhar Babu said, "We are committed to making Telangana a hub of skilled talent. By bridging the gap between educational institutions and industries, we aim to equip the youth with job-ready skills."

The 'Skill Sprint' programme lasts 90 days and offers training in various fields, including Engineering, Robotics, Management, Sales, Business Development and Marketing.



Undergraduate and postgraduate students in these areas are eligible to join.

The Minister also emphasised that the proramme would help students match their skills to industry needs, promoting innovation and independence.

Colleges and students can contact T-Works or visit Yisu.in for more details.

Amusement ride stuck upside down at Numaish

PNS HYDERABAD

Panic ensued at the Numaish exhibition on Thursday evening when an amusement ride came to an abrupt halt while upside down, leaving passengers stranded for over 20 minutes.

The unexpected malfunction reportedly stemmed from battery issues, raised concerns among visitors.

An official from the Exhibition Society stated, "The amusement ride got stuck upside down during a trial run due to battery issues. Technicians on-site quickly replaced the battery, restoring the ride's functionality.



Contrary to the official statement, footage of the incident revealed passengers were on board during the malfunction. No injuries were reported, and the ride resumed normal operations following the brief delay.

NATIONAL STARTUP DAY 2025

Telangana is home to over 80 Soonicorn, Minicorn startups

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Highlighting that Telangana is now home to over 80 Soonicorns and Minicorns startups with great potential but facing challenges in scaling, Sreekant Lanka, Chief Strategy Officer (CSO) at the Ministry of ITE&C, Government of Telangana, shared this on National Startup Day 2025.

He emphasised that these startups often struggle with securing funding, accessing talent and navigating regulatory hurdles. Šreekant said Telangana government aims to provide the necessary resources, support and infra-

structure to help these startups grow into industry leaders, ensuring they have the agility and expertise to scale globally. Meanwhile, Karun Tadepalli,

CEO of ByteXL, celebrated National Startup Day by honouring India's entrepreneurial spirit. He pointed out how startups address critical problems, generate employment and drive economic growth. From digital payments through UPI to breakthroughs in space tech, Indian startups are leaders in innovation. He stressed the importance of supporting the ecosystem with policies that drive accessibility, innovation and talent, particularly in

tier-2 and tier-3 cities



Prem Kumar Vislawath, CEO of Marut Drones, noted that startups from non-metro cities now make up 51% of DPIIT-registered ventures.

This shift is driven by increased internet access, digital inclusion and government initiatives. Entrepreneurs from smaller cities are solving local challenges, especially in agriculture, healthcare and mobility. He called for continued regulatory simplification, increased R&D investment and a focus on skill development to

unlock more potential.
Radhika Choudary, Co-Founder of Freyr Energy, shared how startups are transforming clean energy. With policies supporting solar energy and rising investments in climate tech, startups are playing a vital role in India's sustainable development. tainable development goals. She urged for clearer guidelines and stronger public-private partnerships to help startups scale in the clean energy sec-

Armed robbers kill two guards, escape with Rs 93 lakh from ATM

PNS HYDERABAD

In a shocking daylight robbery near the Bidar collectorate, two armed bike-borne robbers killed two security guards before fleeing with Rs 93 lakh meant for an SBI ATM at

Shivaji Chowk on Thursday. The deceased, identified as Giri Venkatesh, was part of the cash-loading team targeted by the robbers. The incident occurred around 10:30 am when the cash van arrived to load money at the busy ATM.

Eyewitnesses reported that the robbers fired six rounds to neutralize the guards, causing panic among bystanders.

CCTV footage revealed the robbers waiting for the cash team and tailing them with guns drawn.

The duo overpowered the security personnel, sprinkling chilli powder before opening fire. Despite some resistance from the guards, the robbers managed to escape after a brief struggle, balancing the cash chest on their bike.

District SP Pradeep Gunti and senior officials conducted spot investigations and are analyzing CCTV visuals. "We have formed special teams to track the robbers and are awaiting confirmation from the bank on the total amount stolen," SP Gunti said. In a related incident on

Wednesday evening, an interstate gang of burglars, involved in a Karnataka heist that left two guards dead, reportedly fired on a police team in Hyderabad's Afzalgunj. Acting on a tip-off, the Bidar Police tracked the gang to Hyderabad.

During the operation, one gang member fired at the police, leading to retaliatory

One suspect sustained injuries and was shifted to Osmania General Hospital. Special teams have been formed to apprehend the gang members.





HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | JANUARY 17, 2025

Outrage as BTech student raped in hostel room

PNS ■ IBRAHIMPATNAM

In a shocking incident, an 18-year-old BTech student was allegedly raped by a driver in her hostel room at Mangalpally under Ibrahimpatnam in Rangareddy district. The incident has caused widespread outrage. The victim, a firstyear engineering student, was alone in her hostel room preparing for her semester examinations when the assault took place.

According to the police, the incident occurred around 11 pm on Wednesday. The accused, identified as Ajith, who worked as a driver, entered the student's room and forcibly assaulted her before fleeing the scene. The victim reported the crime by dialing 100 on Thursday afternoon.

Upon receiving the com-plaint, the police rushed to the hostel and took the victim to a hospital for medical examination. A case has been registered, and the police arrested the accused.

Officials disclosed the details of the case to the media, confirming that the investigation is underway. Authorities have assured swift action and strict punishment for the perpetrator.

Comprehensive field survey to extend welfare benefits begins

The exercise intended to provide Rythu Bharosa and other benefits to eligible beneficiaries

PNS WARANGAL/KAMAREDDY

The officials in district launched a comprehensive field survey on Thursday to identity cultivable land and eligible landless families. The survey will continue till January 20.

The survey is intended to identify cultivable lands for extending the input subsidy of Rs 12,000 per acre under the Rythu Bharosa scheme, which is Rs 2,000 more than the subsidy offered under the previous BRŚ regime's Rythu Bandhu. This subsidy will be available from January 26. The state government has made it clear that input subsidies will not be provided for lands that are not under cultivation, unlike in the previous BRS administration.

Kamareddy district has a total landholding of 5,35,755 acres. During the 2023-24 Vanakalam (kharif) season, 2.99 lakh farmers received Rs 261 crore under Rytu Bandhu, a scheme now renamed Rytu Bharosa under the Congress regime. In the Yasangi (Rabi) season of the same year, 2.88 lakh farmers received Rs 260 crore in input



There have been allegations that the BRS government had extended the Rytu Bandhu subsidy to lands that were not actively cultivated. The Congress gov-ernment, however, is committed

to ensuring that subsidies are provided for lands under cultivation.

The ongoing survey will focus on identifying lands that have been converted into real estate layouts, roads, industrial warehouses, or are filled with rocks and hillocks unsuitable for farming. Lands acquired by the gov-

ernment for various purposes will also be excluded from the subsidy list. The survey is being carried out at the mandal level with Tahsildar, agriculture officials, revenue staff, and AEOs working together.

From January 21 to 24, grama sabhas will be held to read out the details of lands that are not fit for receiving the input subsidy. A final list will be prepared at that

Additionally, the Congress government has introduced the Indiramma Atmeeya Bharosa scheme, providing Rs 12,000 per year to landless agricultural workers. To qualify, workers must have MGNREGS job cards and have worked at least 20 days during the 2023-24 period. Kamareddy district has 2.50 lakh job cards, with 60,500 workers meeting the 20-day criteria. Eligible landless agricultural workers will be identified, and their names will be announced during the grama sabhas. Objections can be raised with the

Regarding the issuance of new ration cards, individuals who do not currently have cards will be identified based on the castebased survey results and will be provided with ration cards after

Furthermore, a survey is underway to identify beneficiaries of the Indiramma Housing scheme, which has sanctioned 3,500 houses per Assembly constituency. With four constituencies in Kamareddy district, including Banswada, which spans both Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts, the district is expected to receive around 12,500 houses.



Kothagudem District Superintendent of Police B Rohit Raju announcing the surrender of two Maoists armed cadre members to the police in Kothagudem on Thursday

Two Maoist armed cadre members surrender to police

PNS KOTHAGUDEM

A member of the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist) Kerlapal area committee surrendered to the police here on Thursday. The surrendered Maoist, Kalumu Payiki from Palya village in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh State, had joined the Maoists in 2009 as a militia member of the Muler Revolutionary People's Committee (RPC).

She became a dalam (armed cadre) member in 2012, according to Superintendent of Police B Rohith

She served as the deputy commander of the Kerlapal Local organising squad (LOS) until 2017, and later as the Jan Militia commander. In 2020, she was promoted to area committee member and became the militia commander. In 2021, she married Kerlapal area committee member Madivi Mohan alias Mohan.

She was carryiing a cash reward of Rs 4 lakh. Payiki decided to surrender to the police due to her deteriorating health, increased encounters, and the establishment of new police camps in Maoist-affected areas.

She was also disheartened by the discrimination shown by top leaders towards lower-ranking cadre. She surrendered to the Kothagudem police after being impressed by the incentives given to surrendered Maoists by the State government.

Underground Maoist cadre who wish to surrender can do so through their family members or by contacting the police, Rohith Raju said.

Team to survey airport sites at Kothagudem, Palvancha

PNS KHAMMAM

A Central team will visit on January 23 to conduct a feasibility study for establishing an airport in Badradri

Kothgudem district.
Agriculture Minister Tummala
Nageswara Rao on Thursday
announced that Union Minister of Civil Aviation Ram Mohan Naidu had agreed to send the Central team to study the feasibility of establishing the airport.

The Minister also mentioned that several airport lands have been identified in the vicinity of Kothagudem and Palvancha. Additionally, funds for this survey have already been sanctioned. Several suitable locations for the Greenfield airport in the district have also been identified.

In response to Minister Nageswara Rao's request, a special six-member team will visit the Bhadradri Kothagudem district to assess the fea-

sibility of setting up the airport.

The Minister directed the District Collector to make all necessary arrangements for the team's visit.

progress is being made in the establishment of the airport in the Bhadradri Kothagudem district. He mentioned that the airport would significantly the study.

change the landscape of the Palvancha and Kothagudem areas. It would provide job opportunities to thousands of youth and contribute immensely to the district's development of commercial, tourism, and industrial sectors.

Minister Nageswara Rao expressed special thanks to Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu and Chief Minister A Revenath Reddy for their cooperation He mentioned Roads and Buildings Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy promptly sanctioned funds when requested for

WELFARE SCHEMES

'Ensure transparency in selection of beneficiaries'

PNS MAHABUBNAGAR

Welfare schemes launched the government should be implemented transparently, ensuring that every deserving poor person benefits, and the selection process should be conducted accordingly. Selection of beneficiaries for Rythu Bharosa, issuance of new ration cards scheme should be carried out transparently in coordination with the people's representatives, Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha said here on Thursday. Raja Narasimha, who is the

District In-charge Minister for Mahbubnagar district, emphasised that government welfare schemes should be implemented transparently, ensuring that every eligible poor person benefits. He chaired a coordimeeting District Mahbubnagar Collector's conference hall with State Minister for Excise, Tourism, and Culture, Jupally MLCs Krishna Rao, Kuchukulla Damodar Reddy,



people's representatives, and other officials to review the implementation of schemes Rythu Bhroasa, Indiramma Housing, and new ration card distribution.

During the meeting, the Ministers and officials discussed the implementation of these welfare schemes, the processes for selecting beneficiaries, and the organisation of village and ward meetings. The meeting was aimed to ensure that the schemes were implemented smoothly, with the active participation of people's representatives and offi-

Minister Raja Narsimha mentioned that the state gov-

ernment would inaugurate four new schemes on January 26. He stressed the importance of transparency and coordina-

tion in the selection process.

He also highlighted the need for officials to conduct field surveys and ensure that all eligible beneficiaries were includ-

It was noted that online preventing some eligible people from getting included. Ministers urged that the new schemes be implemented using modern technology and ensure no lapses in the process.

Further, Minister Jupally Krishna Rao directed the officials to ensure that no eligible beneficiary is denied of benefits of welfare schemes.

The meeting also addressed several local issues, with elected representatives requesting that more Indiramma houses be allocated to Scheduled Castes constituencies, and that houses be issued to those with no land, ensuring that all beneficiaries received their due

Four of family from TG die in accident in Maharashtra

PNS ■ BHONGIR

Four members of a family from Yadadri Bhongir district, including a six-month-old

baby, tragically lost their lives in a road accident near Aurangabad in Maharashtra on Thursday. The family was on its way from Kondagadapa

The accident happened when the tempo vehicle they were in and a tractor collided head-on. Ten others were injured and taken to a hospi-

tal in Aurangabad for treatment. Fourteen members of the same family went to Shirdi for a pilgrimage two days ago. On Wednesday

morning, after the darshan in Shirdi, they rented a tempo vehicle to visit nearby tourist places. After visiting all the locations, while

returning to the hotel in Shirdi, the tragic accident occurred

their tempo collided with a tractor in the Rangaapur police station area, about 80 kilometers away from Shirdi.

Month-long Millet Festival organised by DDS kicks off

PNS SANGAREDDY

A month-long millet festival began on Tuesday in Vaddi village, Nyalakal mandal, under the auspices of the Deccan Development Society (DDS). Celebrating its 25th year, the festival will conclude on February 11 in Machnuru village, Jharasangam mandal. As this marks the silver jubilee of the event, the celebrations are being held on a grand scale.

The festival aims to promote organic farming practices and the benefits of cultivating green and leafy vegetables and millet crops. A special focus will be on involving women from the DDS community in raising

The event has gained significant attention in both Telugu states. Festivities include impressively decorated bullock carts, traditional dance performances, and drum beats that appeal to people of all ages. The DDS activists perform Kolatam dances and travel village to village, carrying earthen pots filled with millet seeds to highlight the significance of millet farming. Bullock carts are greeted with traditional "harati" (offering), and women screen videos that emphasize the

importance of millet crops. As part of the awareness campaign, DDS activists will publicise 100 varieties of green

and leafy vegetables and 80 in its practices, reviving traditypes of millet crops, many of which have been neglected for years. They will also introduce forgotten or lesser-known crops to younger generations. Around 24 years ago, the DDS began a campaign to raise awareness about the health issues linked to changing food habits. The women also share cultivation techniques for millets and ideas for incorporating

Representatives from various countries attend the festival and are encouraged to introduce these crops in their own nations. DDS produces 80 varieties of seeds and uses cow dung-based organic fertilizers

them into daily diets.

tional methods of fertilization. The organization also preserves seeds for marketing purposes.

In addition, during the rainy season, a Green and Leafy Vegetable Festival is held, where participants prepare and share various dishes made from green and leafy vegetables.

The overarching goal of the festival is to raise awareness about biodiversity and the importance of farming in harmony with local conditions.

According to Jadala Chandramma, a DDS member, the current food habits are contributing to various health problems, making the promotion of healthy, traditional

erations. The DDS has been successful in bringing millets back into the market, with sales on the rise.

Suryakala, another DDS member, emphasided the society's role in reintroducing old crops to the community, offering support from seed distribution to marketing.

The services of DDS have

even expanded to other countries, and millet preservation banks have been set up to further this mission. However, the DDS believes that government support is essential to spreading the message more widely, particularly to towns and cities.

400 cotton bales reduced to ashes in fire accident at market yard

A massive fire erupted in the Khammam cotton market on Wednesday evening. The cotton bales stored in the market yard shed were completely reduced to ashes in the fire. It is reported that around 400 cotton bales were gutted in the incident.

The officials immediately informed the fire department. The firefighting personnel arrived at the spot and extinguished the flames. The incident has caused significant loss, and investigations are underway to determine the cause

The Khammam cotton market was closed on account of the Sankranti festival. Cotton traders had already purchased cotton bales and

stored them in the sheds in the market yard before the festival. The fire broke out near these sheds, burning all the cotton, and causing a loss for the traders. The value of the burnt cotton is reported to be substantial. On the other hand, the cotton that was destroyed belonged to two individuals, Srinivas and Panduranga. The

police are investigating the incident. Meanwhile, Agriculture Minister, Tummala Nageswara Rao contacted officials from the Marketing and Fire Departments and instructed them to take immediate action to mitigate the losses caused by the incident.

In another development, a new governing body has been formed for the Khammam Agricultural Market Committee. The government has appointed a new governing body.



Private hospitals served notice for violating norms

PNS MULUGU

The District Medical and Health Department officials, including Dr Gopal Rao, the District Medical and Health Officer (DMHO), Dr Kranti, the Deputy DMHO of ITDA, Dr Chandrakant, the District Vector-borne Disease and TB Control Officer, In-charge Demo Sampath, and DEO Kiran, visited Pasra. They inspected the labs, operation theatres, wards, scanning machines, and records at Java and Sri Chakra Nursing Homes.

They instructed the staff to display doctors' details and price lists as per the Clinical Establishment Act, maintain biological waste management,



cates. They also emphasised that gender determination tests should not be conducted, and if done, legal action would be taken against the nursing homes under the PNDT Act. Dr Gopal Rao informed the nursing home administrators about these regulations.

Further, the nursing homes



notices due to the absence of doctors' details and certificates for paramedical staff, as well as a lack of biological waste management certification, pollution certificates, and fire safety certificates. These notices were served to Jaya Nursing Home and Sri Chakra Nursing Home.

HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
5° Floor, North Wing, Swartelpsynthi Commercial Complex, Ameripe, Hyderabad

NOTIFICATION No.: 29/LPS/HMDA/2025,

NOTIFICATION OF DEGLARATION TO UNDERTAKE AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN CUM LAND POOLING SCHEME AS PER RULE \$(1)(A) AND (B) OF G.O. Ms. No. 308/MASUD (Hg.:1) DEPARTMENT, OF HMDA LAND POOLING / ADP RULES, 2017, DATED: 07.12.2017 IN KURMALGUDA & NADERGUL VILLAGES, BALAPUR (M), RANGA REDDY DISTRICT TO AN EXTENT OF ACRES 115.18 GUNTAS. 1. The Hyderebad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) declares the intention to notify the area specified in Anneours 1 for Land Pooling Scheme and calls for Consent Applications from willing land owners in Form 2, for the lands specified in Anneours 1 expressing consent to participate in the Land Pooling Scheme, in accordance with the provisions of the HMDA Act 2006, and as per HMDAL and Pooling MDP Rules, 2017 the broad objectives, process of the scheme, side and responsibility of Authority (Dovernment) land owners, other salient features and terms and conditions for the Land Pooling Scheme at Armoune 2. The applications which results the HMDA within their Coll dates from the other for deligation of the conditions of the land of t

applications shall reach the HMDA within thirty (30) days from the date of publication of the notification from the willing owners.

Objections and suggestions from interested persons within 30 days from the date of publication of this notification; and any objections of suggestions which are received after the due date or which do not ideatly explain the nature of the senders interest in the proposed lands are liable to be summarily rejected. A copy of the draft plan of the proposed area for the Land Pooling Scheme is kept open for

Inspection of the land owners including the public at the office of the Hyderabed Metropolitian Development Authority (HMDA), Ameetpet, and Hyderabed during office hours and also in the with side of the HMDA (WWW.hmda.gov.in).

ANNEXURE-1

SURVEY NUMBERS & EXTENT COVERED IN THE KURMALGUDA ADP CUM LAND POOLING SCHEME KURMALGUDA & NADERGUL VILLAGES, BALAPUR (M), RANGA REDDY DISTRICT (Kurmalguda Village) 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16(Part,17/Part,19/ Part, 20, 21/ Part, 24/ Part, 25/ Part, 26/ Part, 29/ Part, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 90, 82, 83, 84, 95, 86, 87, 88,89, 90, 91, 92,

R.O. No.: 889-PPICL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2024-25



ACROSS THE STATES



Committed to empowering women: Omar Abdullah

sserting the "Lakhpati Didi" campaign is a monumenta Ainitiative aimed at fortifying families and shaping future generations, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said the government is steadfastly committed to empowering women and is diligently working towards this cause. He said the campaign is revolutionizing the rural economy, paving the way for progress and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir. "The government is steadfastly committed to empowering women and is diligently working towards this cause," Abdullah said addressing the 'Lakhpati Didi Sammelan' organized by the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj in Jammu. The chief minister said the Lakhpati Didi campaign is not merely a means to increase the income of mothers and sisters but a monumental initiative aimed at fortifying families and shaping future generations. "This campaign is revolutionizing the rural economy, paving the way for progress and prosperity," he added.



'Climate change most serious issue facing humanity'

limate change is the most serious issue facing humanity and youth must be aware of it as there is increased exploitation of natural resources due to rise in population and needs of society, said Maharashtra Governor CP Radhakrishnan on Thursday. He was speaking at the inaugural programme of 'International Conference on Climate Change 2025' organised as a joint initiative of SNDT University, CT University of New York and the Maharashtra government. Saving the environment depends on saving water and trees, he said, adding the dangers of climate change included heavy unseasonal rains and very hot summers. "We are losing the environment in which we can live comfortably. Population is increasing and so are the needs of society. We are being forced to exploit natural resources more and more. Global warming is a major problem worldwide.



Vaishnodevi hills receive season's first snowfall

he Trikuta hills ensconcing the cave shrine of Mata Vaishnodevi received the season's first snowfall even as rain lashed large parts of the Jammu region, blocking the Mughal and Simthan roads. Despite the snowfall, pilgrims continued their journey on foot to offer prayers at the shrine, officials said. "We are happy to feel the snowflakes touching us. It is the first time in my life that I have seen snowfall, and that too at the abode of Mata. It is a blessing for me," a pilgrim from Pune said. The world-famous tourist resort of Sanasar in the Ramban district experienced moderate snowfall. Moderate to heavy snow fell in parts of Kishtwar, Doda, Ramban, Poonch, Kathua, and Reasi districts. officials said. Some inter-district roads, as well as the inter-regional Mughal road and Simthan roads, were closed due to snowfall, they added. Jammu-Srinagar national highway remains open for traffic despite rain in Ramban and Udhampur districts. Traffic police issued an advisory stating that vehicles on the highway were moving at a slow pace due to heavy snowfall in the Qazigund-Anantnag sector and the Banihal area near the Navyug tunnel.

Startup India a transformative programme, lauds PM Modi

Lauding 'Startup India' as a transformative programme, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on its ninth anniversary on Thursday that the initiative has propelled India to become one of the largest and most vibrant startup ecosystems globally.

It is a landmark initiative that has redefined innovation, entrepreneurship and growth, he said, describing the programme as "very close to my heart," as it has emerged as a powerful way of furthering youth empowerment.

He said on X, "Over the past nine years, this transformative program has empowered countless youngsters, turning their innovative ideas into successful Startups. People would doubt India's

ability to thrive in this system just a decade ago, he added. The prime minister said this

"transformative" programme

"We are actively promoting innovation and incubation centres so that our youngsters become risk-takers. I have personally been regularly interacting with upcoming startups."

has empowered countless youngsters, turning their innovative ideas into successful startups. From tech-driven solutions to rural innovations, healthcare advancements to biotech breakthroughs, Fintech to EdTech, clean energy to sustainable technology, Indian startups are solving global challenges while at the same time creating employment opportunities and boosting the country's quest towards

Underlining his government's commitment to fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem that uplifts every dream and contributes to 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', he said his dispensation has left no stone unturned to encourage a culture of startups.

He said his government's policies have focused on "Ease of Doing Business", greater access to resources and, most importantly, supporting them at every juncture. He said, "We are actively promoting innovation and incubation centres so that our youngsters become risk-takers. I have personally been regularly interacting with upcoming startups.'

This success of startup India reflects that today's India is dynamic, confident and futureready, he asserted.

Modi said, "I compliment every youngster in the startup world and urge more youngsters to pursue this. It's my assurance you won't be disap-



India welcomes Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal

PNS NEW DELHI

India on Wednesday welcomed the announcement on a Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal between Israel and Hamas.

Israel and Hamas have agreed a deal which would halt the war in Gaza and see the release of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners, the US and mediators Qatar have said.

The deal between Israel and Hamas came after months and it is expected to come into effect on Sunday if both sides fully approve it.

In its reaction, India hoped that the agreement would lead to a safe and sustained supply of humanitarian assistance to the people Hamas.

of Gaza.

"We welcome the announcement of the agreement for the release of hostages and a ceasefire in Gaza," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said. "We hope this will lead to

a safe and sustained supply of humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza," it said in a statement.

The MEA added: "We have consistently called for release of all hostages, ceasefire, and return to a path of dialogue and diplomacy." The full details of the deal

are not yet announced. The deal is expected to stop the ongoing war in Gaza and facilitate release of Israeli hostages held by

Padma awardees in Odisha to receive monthly honorarium of Rs 30,000

PNS BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government will provide a monthly honorarium of Rs 30,000 to each of the Padma awardees of the state from the current month.

The Odia Language Literature and Culture Department issued a notification to this effect on Thursday.

In view of their outstanding contribution to society in various fields, the state government has decided to provide an honorarium of Rs 30,000 to the Padma awardees, the notification said.

All the Padma awardees of the state, who are alive, will receive the honorarium through direct benefit transfer (DBT) mode from January 2025, it said.

The government has asked collectors and culture officers of all districts to submit details of the Padma award winners (who are alive) including the district collector's certificate, bank account details, IFSC code to the Directorate of Odia, Language, Literature and Culture as soon as possible.

'Faulty road construction should be made non-bailable offence'

PNS NEW DELHI

self-reliance, he added.

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday said faulty road construction should be made a non-bailable offence and road contractors and engineers should be held responsible for accidents and sent to prison.

Addressing an event organised by industry body CII, Gadkari further said India is number one in road accidents in the world. "Faulty road construction should be a nonbailable offence and road contractors, concessionaires and engineers should be held responsible for accidents and sent to prison," he said.

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways aims to reduce road accident fatalities to half by 2030. According to the minister, the ministry data of road accidents in 2023 shows five lakh mishaps in the country resulting in 1,72,000 deaths.



"Of this, 66.4 per cent, or 1,14,000, were in the 18-45 years age bracket while 10,000 deaths were of children," Gadkari said.

He pointed out that 55,000 deaths were reported due to absence of helmets and 30,000 were due to non-use of seat

Gadkari also said the highways ministry is spending Rs 40,000 crore to rectify black spots on highways.

Gadkari urged the industry and other stakeholders to partner with the government to set up driver training and fitness centres to address the acute shortage of drivers in the country

by 2047, says Amit Shah Asks youth to cultivate culture of cooperation

India will lead in every sector

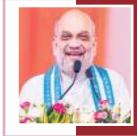
PNS MEHSANA

India will be number one in the world in every sector when it celebrates 100 years of Independence in 2047, Union Minister Amit Shah said on Thursday.

Addressing the 18th convocation ceremony of Ganpat University, he also asked the youth to focus on acquiring knowledge instead of just a degree and to cultivate a culture of cooperation instead of culture of competition.

Though there are challenges in front of today's youth, many opportunities have also been created for them by the Union govern-ment, Shah asserted, adding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had turned India into a global manufacturing hub.

"On the occasion of 75 years of Independence, 140



edical colleges has risen to 6 from 387 in these

crore citizens had taken a resolve to turn India into a developed country. I am confident India will be number one in the world in every sector when it celebrates 100 years of Independence in 2047," Shah said on the occasion.

"Today, companies across the world are eager to set up their plants in India. Youth will be benefited the most due to India's rising manufacturing prowess. Initiatives like Digital India and Startup

India have generated numerous opportunities for today's youth," he said.

"There are nearly 1,000 unicorn startups in Índia at present. In the past 10 years, eight IIMs, seven IITs, 16 IIITs and six new central universities and 54 private universities were set up by the government. The number of medical colleges has risen to 766 from 387 in these 10 years," the Union Home and Cooperation Minister said.

'IRREGULARITIES' IN BPSC EXAM

Prashant Kishor ends fast unto death

Jan Suraaj Party founder Prashant Kishor on Thursday withdrew his fast unto death after 14 days of protest over alleged irregularities in a competitive exam conducted by the Bihar Public Service Commission on December 13 last year.

However, the former political strategist said his 'Satyagraha' would continue for the cause of civil service aspirants, and the youth of the state and also against the alleged 'authoritarian' atti-

tude of the state government.
"The matter, seeking the cancellation of the BPSC's 70th Combined Competitive exam held on December 13, is being heard by the Patna High Court today. It is a coincidence that I am calling off my fast unto death on a day when the matter is being heard before the court. We are quite hopeful that job aspirants will get jus-



tice from the Patna High Court. If they don't get justice, we will knock on the door of the Supreme Court," Kishor

He had started the fast unto death on January 2, demanding cancellation of the BPSC exam. Before withdrawing his fast unto death at the party's camp office here, Kishor took a dip in the Ganga river and offered puja. Kishor was offered fruit juice by his party workers as he withdrew from the hunger

The party has set up its camp office at LCT Ghat on the bank of the Ganga

"Now, my 'Satyagraha' will continue from the Jan Suraaj party office here. We call it 'Bihar Satyagraha Ashram'. We will train at least 1 lakh students at this ashram till March 11," he said.

Rajnath, UK defence secretary hold phone conversation

PNS NEW DELHI

India-UK cooperation in niche defence technology areas such as electric propulsion and jet engines figured in a phone conversation between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his British counterpart John Healey.

Singh and Healey also explored the possibilities of joint work by the two countries in the "We reviewed the excellent

progress made in niche defence technology areas and discussed ways to further deepen cooperation in defence," Singh said on X. An Indian readout of the conversation said the two ministers briefly discussed the ongoing defence cooperation issues and emphasised on the need to maintain the "momentum" in the bilateral relations.

"The defence minister and UK Secretary of State for Defence reviewed the excellent progress made between the two countries in niche defence technology areas such as electric propulsion and jet engines," it said.

NEET-UG will continue to be conducted in pen and paper mode: NTA

PNS NEW DELHI

The Centre has decided against conducting the medical entrance exam NEET-UG in online mode for now, and announced on Thursday it will continue to be conducted in pen and paper mode.

The decision comes after detailed deliberations between education and health ministries on whether to conduct the NEET-UG in pen and paper mode or online mode.

As decided by the National Medical Commission(NMC), the NEET-UG shall be conducted in Pen and paper mode (OMR based) in a single day and shift," a senior National Testing Agency (NTA) official said on Thursday.

The National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) is the largest entrance exam in



for the test. In 2024, a record more than 24 lakh candidates took the exam. The NTA conducts the NEET every year for admission into medical colleges. A

ber of candidates appearing

total of 1,08,000 seats are available for MBSS course. Of the seats available for the MBBS course, approximately

56,000 are in government hospitals and about 52,000 in private colleges. Admissions to undergraduate courses in Dentistry,

Ayurveda, Unani, and Siddha also utilise the results of the

grams of protein per day with

micronutrients) for six months,

with their household contacts

receiving monthly food rations

and micronutrients having 750

kilocalories (23 grams of pro-tein per day with micronutri-

DELHI ASSEMBLY POLLS

Traders to offer discounts to encourage voting

PNS NEW DELHI

Ahead of Delhi Assembly elections to boost voter turnout the Chamber of Trade and Industry (CTI) on Thursday announced discounts in over 50 markets across the city for people who cast their votes on February 5.

CTI Chairperson Brijesh Goyal said voters participating in the elections on February 5 will be eligible for discounts in various markets on February 6. Discounts ranging from 20 to 25 percent will be offered in hotels and guest houses.



Goyal also said that the first week of February is a busy wedding season in Delhi-NCR and emphasised that discustion does not decrease.

sions were held with more than 100 market associations to ensure that voter participa-Mahendra Agarwal, presi-

dent of Nehru Place Market, announced that voters will receive up to a 10 percent discount on computers, laptops, and related items. Similarly, Nitin Gupta, president of Kamla Nagar

Market, said that a 15 percent discount will be offered to those who visit the market after voting. In Khari Baoli, trader leader Bharat Arora offered a 5 percent discount for voters, while Tarun Gupta, president of Dariba Jewelers Association in Chandni Chowk, announced a 1 percent discount on gold and silver purchases.

'Nutritional support could prevent TB deaths' PNS NEW DELHI

In India, providing nutritional support to half the households with individuals undergoing tuberculosis (TB) treatment could prevent roughly 4.5 per cent TB-related deaths and 2.2 per cent of disease episodes by 2035, a modelling study has found.

The study, published in The Lancet Global Health journal, estimated that more than 3.6 lakh deaths and over 8.8 lakh TB cases could be averted through such intervention. Typically, about 24 house-holds would need to be treat-

ed of tuberculosis to prevent

one death, while 10 would

one case, researchers, including those from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)-National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis (NIRT), Chennai, estimated.

The nutritional intervention could have an additional cost of about USD 1,349 million on the health system, with potential benefits of USD 167 for every disability-adjusted life-year averted, they projected. 'Disability-adjusted lifeyear' is a metric that helps measure overall burden of disease.

The researchers said that about a fifth of the world's tuberculosis incidence is attributable to undernutrition, with



the ratio increasing to more than a third in India.

A 2023 study, published in The Lancet journal, by the same research team had enrolled household contacts of

2,800 patients with tuberculosis across 28 units of the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme in four districts of Jharkhand.

Results showed that over a two-year follow up period, tuberculosis incidence in a household dropped by 39-48 per cent, simply by extending nutritional support to house-

hold contacts of the infected. In this study, the researchers used the 2023 study's model to

inform estimates of the impact and costs of nutritional sup-The patients received food

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-PAPER WITH PASSION

Hope and dread

The Gaza truce between Hamas and Israel may be fragile but it is still welcome as it offers some relief to beleaguered people

he recent announcement of a potential truce between Israel and Hamas has brought" a mix of cautious hope and lingering fear to those on both sides of the conflict. After months of violence and suffering following the devastating events of October 2023, which saw Hamas's deadly incursion into Israel and the subsequent retaliatory offensive, the prospect of a ceasefire offers a moment of relief. However, the road ahead remains fraught with uncertainty. The conflict has left deep scars on both Israeli and Palestinian communities. For Israelis, the abduction of hostages—including women, children, and elderly civilians—has been a source of immense anguish. The release of 33 hostages as part of the initial phase of the ceasefire would bring some relief, but many fear the fragile agreement could collapse, leaving their loved ones in limbo. In Gaza, the humanitarian crisis is dire. The death toll exceeds 46,000, with women and children accounting for over half of the fatalities. Massive displacement has left 90 per cent of



the population—approximately 2.3 million people homeless. Entire neighbourhoods lie in ruins, and the lack of basic necessities has pushed residents to the

The proposed truce, brokered by the United States, Egypt, and Qatar, outlines a three-phased agreement. The first phase involves the exchange of hostages and Palestinian detainees, with the release of women, children, and the elderly prioritised. Subsequent phases would address the release of soldiers and other male captives, along with broader discussions to halt hostilities. A crucial component of the ceasefire includes a surge in humanitarian aid to Gaza. This would enable

displaced Palestinians to return to their homes and help rebuild critical infrastructure. Yet, the long-term success of this agreement hinges on both sides' willingness to engage in meaningful negotiations during the second phase. The fragile nature of previous ceasefires—such as the one in November 2023 that lasted only a week—underscores the difficulty of achieving lasting peace. Key obstacles include Hamas's insistence on maintaining its military capabilities and Israel's objective to dismantle Hamas's governing structures. Both sides are under immense domestic and international pressure, but deeply entrenched mistrust makes compromise elusive. For hostages' families, uncertainty looms large. Many remain haunted by the possibility that their loved ones may not survive captivity if the true fails. Meanwhile, Palestinians fear that a breakdown in talks could trigger renewed violence, exacerbating an already catastrophic situation. If the ceasefire holds, it could mark the beginning of a much-needed reprieve for Gaza's beleaguered population. Immediate priorities include addressing food insecurity, medical shortages, and the rebuilding of homes and infrastructure. International aid would play a critical role in alleviating the humanitarian crisis, but long-term recovery would require substantial investment, political stability and lasting peace.



People try to tame a bull as they participate in the 'Jallikattu' event as part of 'Pongal' celebrations, in Tiruchirapalli

Diplomacy: The pillar of India's global aspirations



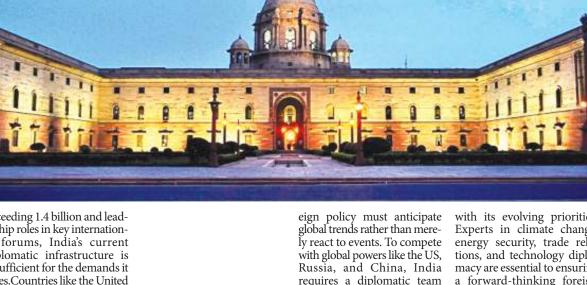
To fulfill its aspirations as a global leader, India must urgently bolster its diplomatic infrastructure by expanding and modernising the Ministry of External Affairs

ndia, the world's most populous nation and the largest democracy is emerging as a pivotal force in global affairs. As a leader of the Global South, its growing economic might, strategic autonomy, and commitment to peace have positioned it at the centre of international diplomacy.

However, despite these achievements, India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)—the critical institution shaping and executing its foreign policy—remains under-resourced. With only about 850 diplomats, the MEA is inadequately equipped to handle the complexities of a rapidly evolving global landscape. For India to realize its potential as a global leader, it must significantly expand its diplomatic infrastructure, scaling the MEA to at least 5,000 personnel. Such an expansion would align with India's ambitions and its stature as a major international power. India's diplomatic requirements have grown substantially alongside its global ambitions.

As the world's largest democracy and one of its fastest-growing economies, India's foreign policy must address a wide range of global issues. From trade negotiations and climate change to digital diplomacy and global security, the MEA serves as the nerve center of India's international engagements. India's foreign policy has traditionally been guided by strategic autonomy and a commitment to peace, rooted in the Nehruvian tradition of nonalignment. Leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and VK Krishna Menon laid the foundation of an independent foreign policy that prioritized non-violence while asserting India's sovereignty. This legacy of non-alignment, which positioned India as a bridge between competing superpowers, remains a cornerstone of its diplomatic

However, the global order is shifting, and India must adapt its foreign policy apparatus to meet strated the transformative challenges. Strengthening the MEA is vital not only for safeguarding India's interests but also for crafting a vision capable of influencing global politics. With a population



exceeding 1.4 billion and leadership roles in key international forums, India's current diplomatic infrastructure is insufficient for the demands it faces. Countries like the United States, China and Russia deploy thousands of diplomats and foreign policy experts to maintain their global influence. In contrast, India's diplomatic corps, though skilled, is a fraction of the size required. This gap underscores the urgent need for a larger, more specialised MEA capable of shaping global discussions and providing strategic depth across multiple domains. Expanding the MEA to 5,000 personnel would ensure that India's foreign policy is both proactive and comprehensive. Such an expansion is not merely about increasing numbers; it is about cultivating strategic expertise across diverse fields.

India's diplomacy must address trade, defense, environmental sustainability, cybersecurity, humanitarian aid, and more. To achieve this, the MEA must recruit specialists who can navigate these complex issues. During the Cold War, figures like US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger demon NEVER BEEN MORE power of strategic brilliance in diplomacy. Similarly, India needs diplomats capable of long-term thinking and crafting policies that reflect its

THE NEED FOR A

DIPLOMATIC CORPS

THAT CAN SHAPE GLOBAL DISCUSSIONS AND PROVIDE THE INTELLECTUAL AND STRATEGIC DEPTH REQUIRED IN AN **INCREASINGLY** COMPLEX INTERNATIONAL **ENVIRONMENT HAS**

requires a diplomatic team adept at building alliances, leveraging emerging opportunities, and addressing global challenges. This necessitates investments in strategic thinking and specialised knowledge. The MEA must develop expertise in fields such as space diplomacy, climate change negotiations, global trade, and defense strategy. Moreover, diplomats must engage with governments, businesses, think tanks, and civil society to shape decisions

in India's favour. A well-staffed MEA would enable India to better engage with key global issues and deepen its relationships with major powers. Just as the US relied on figures like Robert McNamara and John Foster Dulles to shape its diplomacy, India must nurture a generation of visionary diplomats. These individuals should possess deep understanding of global security, international law, multilateral organisations, and global trade—qualities exemplified by VK Krishna Menon, who championed India's interests on the internapower—its rich culture, demotional stage during the 1950s. Expanding the MEA is not just about addressing immediate challenges but about aligning India's diplomatic capabilities

with its evolving priorities. Experts in climate change, energy security, trade relations, and technology diplomacy are essential to ensuring a forward-thinking foreign policy.

The expanded MEA must also

prioritise collaboration with

think tanks, academic institutions, and media professionals. These partnerships can provide the intellectual foundation for strategic decisions and help India anticipate emerging global trends. Think tanks and universities—both domestic and international—can offer critical insights into shifting geopolitical dynamics, new economic policies, and other developments. global Engaging with these institu-tions will ensure that India's foreign policy remains agile and informed. Public diplomacy is another critical component of modern foreign policy. Beyond government-togovernment negotiations, India must focus on shaping global perceptions and building relationships with international audiences. The MEA should work closely with media professionals to effectively communicate India's vision and policies to the cratic ideals, and values—can amplify its global influence and

(The writer is an associate professor; views are personal)

ensure its voice is heard.

India's projector demand soars with eco-friendly innovations



These next-generation projectors not only offer enhanced energy efficiency and sustainability but also excellent output redefining the visual experience

ndia is rapidly becoming one of the fastest-growing projector markets globally, with an anticipated annual growth rate of 8.10 per cent over the next five years. This surge is driven by the increasing demand for projectors in both commercial and personal spaces. Technological advancements are playing a key role in this trend, as new, more ecofriendly projector alternatives are replacing traditional lamp-based models.

These older models, while effective, had significant drawbacks such as high power consumption, reliance on hazardous materials, and limited recyclability. In contrast, modern projectors are designed with sustainability in mind, making them an attractive option for a wide range of applications.

The rise in digitization across businesses and households further accelerates the need for effective display solutions. Eco-friendly projectors not only address this need but also offer a greener, more sustainable alternative to conventional options. With advanced production standards grounded in sus-

tainable development, these projectors are perfectly positioned to meet India's growing demand for high-tech, energy-efficient devices.

Eco-friendly projectors are designed to tackle many of

the issues associated with traditional models. They operate with much higher energy efficiency, sig-nificantly reducing power consumption. The manufacturing process also minimizes carbon footprints, with materials sourced responsibly. Innovations such as LED and laser light sources have significantly improved these devices' energy efficiency and lifespan, making them superior to traditional lamp-based

projectors. These advancements appeal to environmentally conscious consumers and businesses alike, offering a more

generations, eco-friendly projectors offer several clear advantages. Their energy efficiency makes them much more cost-effective in the long term, as they consume far less power and do not require frequent replacements of parts like traditional bulbs. Additionally, the longevity of these projectors decreasing their environmental impact. Importantly, many eco-friendly projectors do not contain harmful substances like mercury, which is found in conventional models, thus contributing to safer disposal practices.

Furthermore, these projectors are built to last longer and require less maintenance, thanks to technologies like LED and laser, which do not degrade as quickly as traditional bulbs. As a result, maintenance costs are significantly lower, tors that can integrate seamand users benefit from reduced downtime and increased durability.

This is an appealing factor for both businesses and consumers, as it translates to sustainable solution to their lower total ownership costs

display and entertainment over the life of the needs.Compared to earlier device.Looking ahead, there are several trends that will further shape the future of eco-friendly display technologies. One of the most promising is the development of even more efficient light sources, such as OLEDs and advanced lasers, which will provide higher brightness while consuming even less power. Another exciting reduces waste, further possibility is the use of solarpowered projectors, especially in rural or off-grid areas, which would reduce reliance on conventional power sources and minimize carbon footprints. Additionally, there is growing interest in integrating biodegradable materials into the production of projectors, which would reduce the environmental impact when the product reaches the end of its lifecycle. The future will also likely see the introduction of more smart projeclessly with smart home and office ecosystems, featuring energy-saving modes based on usage patterns. (The writer is MD Optoma

Technology; views are personal)

RUPEE LOSING SHEEN

evolving global role. India's for-

Madam — There is an ongoing concern over the rupee sharply losing value against the dollar. But then a nation's currency intrinsically represents two notions of value: one for the purchaser and seller in the domestic market and the other for the external one. China, in its monetary parlance, has the yuan and the renminbi. In layman's terms, the domestic standing of the rupee is broadly propped up by an incremental rise in GDP and per capita income, with the purchasing power sustained by low inflation.

Compared to most economies, we are far better placed. Our current concern would be more reining in inflation and fiscal deficit to retain the value of the rupee. The exchange value of the rupee with other currencies is a matter of the difference between the inflow and outflow of foreign currency for our external buying or selling, be it products, commodities, or services. The crux lies in developing our niche in any one of them to reverse the trade deficit. China found it in manufacturing and commodities and dares to keep its currency highly depreciated. The US despite its huge debt has the privilege of printing the dollar, the global currency. We must find it in diligence, research, and human potential.

R Narayanan | Navi Mumbai

NGO SUSPECTED FOR BOMB THREAT Madam—Apropos of the headlines 'Police find NGO, political ties in Delhi bomb threats', it is imperative to dig deeply into the conspiracy of scaring 400 Delhi schools with bombing. The 16-year-old boy is only a juvenile shield to escape punishment. This is a heinous crime closely connected with the terrorist act perpetrated by the sympathisers of terrorist Afzal Guru, who had been hanged during Congress's tenure. Delhi CM Atishi is also a potential source of investigation because of her family's sympathy with the terrorist Afzal Guru. All those associated with the NGO should be slapped with NSA under the zero-tolerance ed the removal of the word secularism from

Meta offers apologises on election remark

THE EDIT



URGENT

ark Zuckerberg's controversial statement has sparked a new debate across India and the world. His remarks about the functioning of Joe Biden's administration and the 2024 Indian elections have angered the Indian Parliament. Now, Meta India has publicly apologised following backlash over its CEO Mark Zuckerberg's comments on India's 2024 general elections. This issue raises critical questions about the responsibility of tech companies and the impact of their statements

on a global scale. Zuckerberg's comments on Joe Rogan's podcast regarding economic challenges and democracy in India are being seen as damaging to India's image. Particularly, the questions raised about Prime

Minister Narendra Modi's government's economic management and COVID-19 strategies are considered serious. India's IT Minister, Ashwini Vaishnaw, has responded strongly, stating that foreign companies must respect India's constitutional dignity. This incident not only scrutinises the social impact of social media giants but also questions their political interference. India's stance highlights that major tech giants are now being held accountable for their actions. This development sends an important message that strict action against misinformation is essential to upholding the dignity of democracy

R K Jain | Barwani

Jaish-e-Mohammad terrorist who carried out the Parliament attack in 2001 earned sympathy for those vying for Delhi rule. It is the most unfortunate for the country and the ugliest face of our political ecosys-

Hitherto, a part of the INDIA bloc, AAP must clarify the role of its Delhi CM. The Khalistani links of the Aam Aadmi Party and Arvind Kejriwal are already in public awareness. There seems to be no end to the revengeful acts of sympathisers of the terrorists, so the strongest punishment should be ensured against the culprits. We are aware that a team of leading advocates will protect the NGO behind the Delhi school bomb threats. Such an ecosystem should be exposed. Delhi has been targeted by the extremist forces; it is very obvious and evi-

Vinod Johri | Delhi

B'DESH AG'S ANTI-SECULARISM PITCH

Madam — Bangladesh's Attorney General Mohammad Asaduzzaman has demandpolicy of the Union Government. The the Constitution. He has said that 90 percent of Bangladesh's population is Muslim, so it should be a Muslim country by removing the word secular. The Attorney General has said that words like socialism and secularism do not present the correct picture of Bangladesh. He has suggested making major changes in the constitution and

removing 'secularism'. He will make these changes before the next elections. Because Yunus is an educationist later and is first a fundamentalist Muslim. Earlier, in the year 2010, the Supreme Court of Bangladesh had ruled that the removal of secularism in 1977 was illegal. The court had reinstated secularism in the constitution. Just as Bangladesh is attacking temples in its country, similarly in India too, deities are being searched for in mosques. The destination of both the neighbours is the same. Bangladesh wants to become an Islamic nation while preparations are on in India to make it a Hindu

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

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FIRST COLUMN

US EXPORT CONTROLS: IMPACT ON INDIA'S AI

US export controls pose new challenges for India's AI and tech ambitions



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

he Biden administration's Interim Final Rule (IFR), effective January 2025, introduces strict regulations on the export, reexport and incountry transfer of advanced computing integrated circuits (ICs) and artificial intelligence (AI) model weights. These measures aim to limit the proliferation of advanced technologies with potential military and intelligence applications, particularly in Al-driven systems. While this move marks a significant policy step from the outgoing administration, its future under the next presidency remains uncertain, as the new administration could pause the implementation for review. India, a nation rapidly advancing its Al infrastructure, faces significant challenges under the IFR. Here are the key implications:

The IFR enforces licensing requirements for exporting advanced computing ICs and Al model weights, particularly those integral to high-performance Al models. For India, which is heavily investing in Al research and infrastructure, these restrictions may hinder access to state-of-theart U.S. technologies. A "presumption of denial" applies to licenses for advanced ICs used in training Al models, limiting India's ability to obtain cutting-edge hardware essential for its AI development.

The regulations impose stringent controls on advanced closed-weight Al models, while open-weight models are exempt. Since closed-weight models often drive groundbreaking AI research, this limitation could slow India's progress in leveraging advanced US AI models. Restricted access to these critical technologies could delay breakthroughs in Al-driven appli-



Although the IFR provides exceptions for low-risk destinations, India is not included in the list of preferred nations. As a result, Indian entities face capped allocations on advanced computing capacity based on total processing performance (TPP). Over the next three years, these limitations could restrict the computational resources available for Indian researchers and developers, potentially stalling Al initiatives.

Indian companies seeking US technology will face heightened scrutiny under the IFK, including stringent checks on supply chain security, personnel vetting, and cybersecurity compliance. These requirements will increase the complexity of partnerships with US firms and may delay India's efforts to scale its AI ecosystem.

India's plans to establish advanced data centers and high-performance computing clusters will be directly affected by the new regulations. The IFR mandates compliance with US security standards, such as NIST guidelines, adding operational costs and potential delays.

India's ambition to lead global Al collaborations, as demonstrated by its participation in initiatives like the Global Partnership on AI (GPAI). faces friction under these controls. With international partnerships playing a crucial role in India's technological growth, the restrictions on high-performance computing components and Al models could disrupt

To mitigate these challenges, India must consider alternative strategies, including strengthening domestic research and development, partnering with non-US technology providers, and leveraging diplomatic channels to negotiate favorable terms with the US The path forward will require Indian companies to adapt rapidly, focusing on self-sufficiency and fostering collaborations beyond traditional partnerships. While the IFR offers limited flexibility through license exceptions and potential adjustments, India's advanced computing and Al ambitions will require resilience and innovation to overcome the regulatory hurdles imposed by these new export controls.

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

The war they waged, the price we paid



With Trump's return, the stage is set for continuation of the bloodstained legacy, with devastating consequences for the world's most vulnerable



he Vietnam War should have been the United States' breaking point—a humilating defeat that exposed the futility of projecting brute force in a world that had long learned to resist imperialism. But instead of becoming a sobering moment of reflection it imited a shain reaction of of reflection, it ignited a chain reaction of conflicts, interventions, and proxy wars that would devastate nations and leave millions dead. From Ronald Reagan to Joe Biden, the American war machine has not only endured but expanded, thriving on chaos and suffering. With Donald Trump poised to return, his new administration promises to perpetuate this bloodstained legacy, consolidating power at home while unleashing destruction abroad. Reagan's tenure marked a revival of the Cold War mindset, framed by a simplistic, almost cartoonish view of global politics.
His administration orchestrated covert operations and military interventions

with reckless abandon, leaving a trail of devastation across continents. In Grenada, a minuscule island nation, the U.S. flexed its muscle in a laughable display of overkill. Yet, the price for the people of NEIGHBOURHOODS Grenada was far from humorous-hundreds of civilians died in an operation sold as a "rescue mission." In Lebanon, Reagan's deployment of U.S. Marines ended in catastrophe, with 241 servicemen killed in a suicide bombing. The retaliatory shelling of Lebanese villages left countless civilians dead, their stories erased from the official narrative.George H. W. Bush brought the carnage to Panama and Iraq. Operation Just Cause in Panama left at least 3,000 civilians dead, according to independent estimates—numbers far higher than the

official U.S. tally.
The Gulf War of 1991 killed tens of thousands of Iraqi soldiers and civilians, with entire neighbourhoods flattened by American airpower. The sanctions that followed—a form of economic warfare—led to the deaths of an estimated 500,000 Iraqi children, as reported by UNICEF. But these deaths were dismissed by then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright as a price worth paying.

Bill Clinton's presidency, often remembered for its charm and centrism, was any-



THE GULF WAR OF 1991 KILLED TENS OF THOUSANDS OF IRAQI SOLDIERS WITH ENTIRE BY AMERICAN AIRPOWER.

THE SANCTIONS FOLLOWED—A ECONOMIC WARFARE—LED DEATHS OF AN ESTIMATED

thing but peaceful. Under his watch, NATO's bombing campaign in Kosovo killed an estimated 500 civilians, while strikes on critical infrastructure plunged the region into chaos. In Somalia, Clinton inherited and expanded a disastrous intervention that culminated in the infamous Black Hawk Down incident. The fallout was not limited to American soldiers—it cost the lives of an estimated 10,000 Somali civilians caught in the crossfire. The Bush-Cheney years saw the bloodbath reach industrial levels. The 2003 invasion of Iraq, based on falsified intelligence, unleashed a catastrophe of staggering proportions. By conservative estimates, 200,000 Iraqi civilians died in the war, though many argue the real number exceeds half a million.
Afghanistan, initially framed as a AND CIVILIANS, righteous response to 9/11, turned nto a gravevard for American credibility. The war cost over 70,000 Afghan civilian lives, with many more lost to starvation and FLATTENED disease caused by the destruction

of infrastructure. These numbers, while horrifying, barely scratch the surface.Barack Obama, heralded as a harbinger of change, instead became the drone king. Under his administration, drone strikes killed an estimated 3,800 people in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. These numbers FORM OF include as many as 800 civilians, though independent investigations suggest the real toll is much higher. Libya, once a stable if repressive state, was reduced to a TO THE failed state after NATO's intervention, with Obama admitting it was his greatest foreign policy mistake. Yet his admission did nothing to rebuild Libya, now a haven for 500.000 human traffickers and militia warlords.Donald Trump's first term shattered even the pretence of CHIDLREN restraint. Civilian casualties from U.S. airstrikes in Syria and Iraq

soared, with independent monitors estimating at least 4,500 civilians killed in 2017 alone.

In Somalia, Trump's loosening of drone strike protocols led to a surge in civilian deaths, including women and children obliterated in remote villages. Yemen's civil war, fueled by U.S.-supplied bombs and logistical support to Saudi Arabia, created what the U.N. calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis. By some estimates, over 377,000 Yemenis have died—many of them from famine and disease exacerbated by the relentless bombing campaigns. Joe Biden's administration, while promising a pivot to diplomacy, has only perpetuated the violence.

The withdrawal from Afghanistan, while ending America's longest war, was executed with callous disregard for human life. At least 170 civilians were killed in a single ISIS-K bombing during the chaotic evacuation. Biden's continued drone strikes and military presence in Syria ensure that civilians remain collateral in America's unending "war on terror." In Ukraine, US military aid fuels a war that has already claimed tens of thousands of lives on both sides, with no end in sight.Across these decades, the pattern is unmistakable: the United States does not fight wars for freedom or

It fights for hegemony, resources, and geopolitical advantage, with human lives as expendable currency. The statistics are staggering but fail to capture the depth of the tragedy. From Vietnam to Yemen, from Iraq to Libya, the human cost is always paid by those least equipped to bear it: the poor, the displaced, and the voiceless.In just days, Donald Trump will return to the White House, his second administration poised to escalate the already relentless machinery of American war. This time, the

gloves are off-his power more consolidated, his team of loyalists more ruthless, and his ambitions unrestrained. The team surrounding him will be battle-hardened ideologues with little patience for opposition.

Trump has openly embraced authoritarian impulses, and his foreign policy will likely mirror his domestic ambitions—unapologetic, ruthless, and geared toward consolidating dominance. For the impoverished, this is a death sentence. The costs will not be borne by those who plan wars from airconditioned offices or justify them in press briefings but by the powerless: Yemeni mothers sifting through the rubble for scraps, Syrian children cowering as drones circle above, and Gazan families freezing to death amid the ruins of their bombed-out homes. These are not accidents of war; they are deliberate outcomes of a global system that treats human life as expendable in the pursuit of dominance over dignity.

The bombs will continue to fall, the starving will continue to die, and the architects of this destruction will dine in opulence, their hands stained with the blood of the voiceless

We collectively absorb these atrocities—not with shock or outrage, but with numbed detachment, anaesthetised by the relentless churn of media cycles and the droning rationalisations of pundits. It is not that we do not care—it is that we have been conditioned not to. Once our souls have been amputated by decades of warmongering, by a system that normalises suffering as the cost of 'security,' we survive in resignation, compelled by the machinery of indifference to keep moving for-

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

Uttarakhand's initiatives to strengthen climate resilience in the Himalayas

The State's efforts, encapsulated in the Dehradun Declaration, highlight the importance of collaboration and community empowerment

he Uttarakhand Council of Science and Technology (UCOST) recently organised a significant workshop in Delhi, focusing on climate resilience and disaster management, with a particular emphasis on Himalayan states. This workshop attracted eminent scientists, disaster management experts, and advocates of climate resilience, underscoring the pressing need to address environmental challenges in the region. This initiative follows Uttarakhand's landmark 2023 International Conference in Dehradun, which drew participants from approximately

50 countries. The conference culminated comprehensive action plan grimages such as the Char

aimed at fostering collaboration, innovation and effective strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change and natural disasters in Himalayan states. Uttarakhand's proactive approach to uniting stakeholders on these critical issues is both commendable and necessary

Rationale **Uttarakhand's Initiatives**

Uttarakhand's unique geographical and cultural significance drives its commitment to addressing climate resilience. With the secondlargest Himalayan boundary after Arunachal Pradesh, the state plays a pivotal role in supporting Northern India's vast

hinterland. in the adoption of the The region's popularity as a "Dehradun Declaration," a hub for tourism, religious pil-



DINESH KUMAR TYAGI

Dham Yatra, and adventure activities exerts considerable pressure on its fragile ecosys-

The state faces recurring natural calamities, including forest fires, landslides, cloudbursts, and glacier shrinkage. These disasters significantly impact local communities, strain state resources, and demand robust measures to minimise their devastating

effects. By organising international workshops and fostering collaborations, Uttarakhand aims to raise awareness, share best practices and leverage technology, such as data analytics and artificial intelligence, to design both preventive and responsive strategies. Highlights of the Dehradun

Declaration

The Dehradun Declaration lays out a comprehensive framework for building climate resilience and disaster preparedness in Himalayan states. Its key features include: **Strengthening Preparedness** Integrating disaster resilience into educational curricula. Framing regulations to protect vulnerable populations. Developing financial tools and frameworks to advance the

"science of survival."



Protecting the Himalayan **Ecosystem**

Merging indigenous knowledge with traditional community practices. Promoting nature-based solu-

tions and active community engagement. Enhancing institutional collaboration for project monitoring

and execution. **Empowering Communities** Establishing community-

based early warning systems. Educating and equipping communities to take local mea-Strengthening livelihoods and

building local networks of like-minded individuals. **Policy Integration**

Establishing an Institute of Disaster Management and a global center for climate resilience.

Formulating policies based on national and international best practices.

Coordinating among state, central, and international organisations.

Promoting Innovation Supporting startups and entrepreneurs in developing tools and technologies for climate

resilience. The Delhi Workshop and **Global Consensus**

The Delhi workshop served as a follow-up to the Dehradun Declaration and brought together disaster management scholars, international organisations, and corporate representatives engaged in CSR activities. Participants praised Uttarakhand's efforts to convene diverse stakeholders, emphasising that protecting the Himalayan ecosystem is a shared responsibility.

The Himalayas, often referred to as the "Soul of India" and the "Third Pole," are crucial for maintaining ecological balance. Workshop attendees agreed on the need for collective action to address challenges such as unchecked tourism and resource exploitation. Recommendations included regulating plastic use, promoting organic farming,

imposing green taxes on vehicles, and training locals to mitigate post-disaster damage. National Perspectives on Climate Resilience

The recently concluded COP 29 in Baku included an agenda to establish a global fund for addressing climate change. Developed nations were urged to allocate higher budgets to support developing and poorer countries in reducing carbon emissions.

Training volunteers at the village level and connecting them through a centralised platform can foster trust and confidence in disaster preparedness efforts.

(The writer is a retired IAS officer and president of Society of Digital Entrepreneurs; views are personal)

HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | JANUARY 17, 2025

IN BRIEF



PFC signs loan pact with **Japan's JBIC**

tate-owned PFC on Thursday said it has inked an agreement with Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) for 120 billion Japanese yen (around Rs 6,600 crore) loan facility. According to a PFC statement, under the agreement signed on Wednesday, JBIC will provide funding of JPY 72 billion, and the balance will be funded by commercial banks. This long-term (up to 20 years) loan to PFC will be provided under JBIC's initiative 'Global action for Reconciling Economic growth and Environmental preservation' (GREEN). The funds will be utilized by PFC to finance its renewable energy portfolio, advancing India's transition to non-fossil-fuel-based energy sources. This deal marks the largest green financing agreement ever executed by JBIC with any company in India The loan agreement was signed by Parminder Chopra, Chairman and Managing Director, PFC and Ogawa Kazunori, Senior Managing Director, JBIC in the presence of Takashi Ariyoshi, Minister & Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan; Shibuya Atsuki, Deputy Director General, JBIC



Spencer's Retail forays into quick commerce segment

pencer's Retail on Thursday announced its entry into the quick commerce space with operations starting from West Bengal. The retail chain aims at delivering orders within 20-30 minutes using its existing stores to meet the demand for fast delivery. "The existing 89 stores of ours will cater to the quick commerce segment in both Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. The operations will begin from West Bengal. We don't incur any capital expenditure for this initiative as we are leveraging existing stores. A dedicated third-party delivery system will handle logistics," Spencer's Retail Chairman Shashwat Goenka said. He stated that the retailer will evaluate building a dark stores network if the situation demands, but now the service will be catered from existing outlets. Goenka noted that quick commerce has impacted modern retail and emphasised the need to adapt to changing consumer preferences. He revealed that the company is looking to double its daily online orders, which currently contribute 10-11 per cent to its overall revenue



HDFC Life shares jump 8 pc after Q3 earnings

hares of HDFC Life on Thursday jumped 8 per cent after the firm reported a 14 per cent rise in net profit to Rs 415 crore in the December quarter. The stock ended 7.92 per cent higher at Rs 641.30 on the BSE. During the day, it surged 11.15 per cent to Rs 660.55. At the NSE, it soared 7.99 per cent to Rs 641.70. Intra-day, it rallied 11.67 per cent to Rs 663.60. In traded volume terms, 10.99 lakh shares of the firm were traded at the BSE and 241.99 lakh shares at the NSE during the day. The private sector insurer's profit stood at Rs 365 crore in the year-ago period, HDFC Life said in a regulatory filing on Wednesday. However, total income declined to Rs 16,914 crore in the latest quarter from Rs 26,694 crore in the year-ago period. The company's solvency ratio also declined to 188 per cent from 190 per cent as on December 31, 2023 as against the regulatory requirement of 150 per cent.

RBI to encourage cross-border transactions in Indian rupee

PNS MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday announced liberalised norms to encourage use of Indian Rupee and local/ national currencies to settle cross border transactions.

The decision comes at a time when the domestic currency is sliding and touched an all-time low of 86.70 per US

dollar on Monday.

The Reserve Bank has already signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the central banks of the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia and Maldives to encourage crossborder transactions in local currencies, including Indian

To encourage greater use of Indian Rupee (INR) for trade transactions, in July 2022, an additional arrangement in the form of Special Rupee Vostro Account (SRVA) was introduced. Several foreign banks have since opened SRVAs with banks in India.

Overseas branches of Authorized Dealer banks will be able to open INR accounts for a person resident outside India for settlement of all permissible current account and capital account transactions with a person resident in India," the RBI on Thursday said while announcing the



The Reserve Bank has already signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the central banks of the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia and Maldives to encourage cross-border transactions in local currencies, including Indian Rupee

changes made in the extant FEMA regulations.

Under the liberalised FEMA regulations, persons resident outside India will be able to settle bona fide transactions with other non-residents using the balances in their repatriable INR accounts such as Special Non-resident Rupee account and SRVA.

Also, persons resident outside India will be able to use their balances held in repatriable INR accounts for foreign investment, including FDI, in non-debt instruments.

RBI further said Indian exporters will be able to open accounts in any foreign currency overseas for settlement of trade transactions, including receiving export proceeds and using these proceeds to pay for imports.

The decision on promotions of cross border transactions in INR and local / national currencies follows a review of the FEMA regulations of 1999 undertaken by the Reserve Bank in consultation with the central government.

Wish to bring as many Indians into market ecosystem: Buch

said.

Sebi chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch on Thursday said the capital markets regulator wants to get as many Indians into the market ecosystem and seize the wealth creation opportuni-

said the Indian economy has a

"huge opportunity" and all the

necessary technological tools

have been put in place as part

of a larger ecosystem with

democratization being the core

but is exclusive does not serve

the nation. We wish for our

market ecosystem to be inclu-

sive and to bring as many citi-

zens of the country into the fold

and into the opportunity of

wealth creation for our nation,"

Sebi is implementing and

... a system that is efficient

Buch said artificial intelligence is "the hero" of a large number of ini-tiatives that the watchdog is embarking on with the focus on serving as many people as possible. Virtuall

addressing an

principle.

Buch said.



event organized by Sebi, Buch organization," she said, calling

technology the magic wand. The commercial bankerturned-regulator said an organization does not have to rely on a small set of specialized talent to deploy technology as AI democratizes that whole process, and added that Sebi has undertaken "numerous trans-

deploying a slew of initiatives and AI, the hero, is at the core

of a large number of them, she

how powerful AI is in terms of technology and what it can do, but the fact that it is hugely

democratizing the ability to deploy technology within an

"To me, it is not just about

formations" using the same. Speaking at the same event, Infosys chairman Nandan Nilekani said Sebi is using AI to adhere to its commitment of clearing the initial public offer documents within its targeted time frame of three months.

Gold rallies Rs 500 to Rs 81,300 per 10 gm

Silver soars Rs 2,300

PNS NEW DELHI

Gold prices rallied Rs 500 to hit over a two-month high of Rs 81,300 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday amid fresh buying from jewellers and retailers and rupee depreciation, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The precious metal had closed at Rs 80,800 per 10 grams on Wednesday.

The price of gold of 99.5 per cent purity climbed Rs 500 to Rs 80,900 per 10 grams. It settled at Rs 80,400 per 10 grams in the previous trading session. Silver also surged Rs 2,300 to Rs 94,000 per kg from the

kg on Wednesday. Meanwhile, gold contracts for February delivery rose Rs 297, or 0.38 per cent, to Rs 79,007 per 10 grams in the futures trade on the MCX on

"Gold surged higher trading above Rs 79,000 in MCX, sup-



ported by a rupee depreciation," Jateen Trivedi, VP Analyst Research Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

On Thursday, the rupee depreciated 16 paise to close at 86.56 (provisional) against the US dollar, dragged down by a overseas, elevated crude oil prices and foreign fund out-

Silver contracts for March delivery appreciated Rs 654, or 0.7 per cent, to Rs 93,510 per kg on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX).

Globally, Comex gold

futures increased USD 19.70 per ounce, or 0.72 per cent, to USD 2,737.50 per ounce. Further, Jateen Trivedi highlighted that in the internation-

l markets Comex gold rally followed the release of US CPI data, which came in line with expectations for However, a lower-than-expected core CPI, provided

additional support to gold prices. The softer inflation reading has strengthened expectations of continued rate cuts by the Federal Reserve, adding momentum to gold's rally, Trivedi added. HDFC Securities' Senior

Saumil Gandhi said market participants will keep an eye on important US macro data, such as retail sales and the Philadelphia Manufacturing Index to be released later on Thursday that will provide more direction for bullion prices.

Sensex, Nifty extend gains on strong global cues

PNS MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rallied for the third session on the trot on Thursday, helped by a rally in global markets after lowerthan-expected consumer inflation in the US ignited hopes of more rate cuts by the Federal Reserve.

Intense buying in Reliance Industries, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank also boosted sentiments, traders said.

The 30-share BSE index climbed 318.74 points or 0.42 per cent to revisit 77,000 level at 77,042.82. During the day, it jumped 595.42 points or 0.77 per cent to 77,319.50.

On the similar lines, the NSE Nifty rallied 98.60 points

As many as 2,778 stocks advanced, while 1,188 declined and 101 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Unabated foreign fund inflows, weakness in the rupee and elevated global crude prices continue to weigh on domestic equity markets,



traders said.

"Benchmark indices continued to trade in the positive, albeit off highs, driven by positive investor sentiment following mild US inflation data, which raised hopes for a potential rate cut by the Federal Reserve.

"Additionally, favourable Hamas ceasefire and a reduced trade deficit further boosted the market's upward movement. However, weak economic growth data from the UK dampened some of this optimism," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

From the 30-share blue-chip pack, Adani Ports, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finserv, Bharti Airtel, Tata Motors, IndusInd Bank, NTPC, Maruti, Reliance Industries and Axis Bank were the biggest

In contrast, HCL Tech, Nestle, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, IŤC and Tata Consultancy Services were among the låggards.

IT services major Infosys on Thursday reported an 11.46 per cent year-on-year increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 6,806 crore in the October-December quarter of FY25. Shares of Infosys slipped

1.21 per cent to settle at Rs 1,926.20 apiece on the BSE.

Meanwhile, Adani group stocks rallied on Thursday after Hindenburg Research founder Nate Anderson announced that he would disband the firm, which made international waves with campaigns targeting billionaire Gautam Adani that wiped billions from the market value of his group companies.

FM meets Singapore Prez, discusses strategic partnership

PNS NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday called on Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam and discussed Comprehensive Strategic Partnership during the bilateral meeting.
"Honoured to meet with His

Excellency the President of the Republic of Singapore @Tharman_S. India values its comprehensive strategic partnership with Singapore. This visit by the President will strengthen our bilateral relationship which marks its 60th anniversary," the Finance Minister said in a post on X.



India-Singapore relations elevated Comprehensive Strategic Partnership during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Singapore in September 2024.

The president is accompanied by Chee Hong Tat, Second Minister for Finance and Minister for Transport.

The two leaders discussed #ComprehensiveStrategicPart nership between the two countries highlighting sectors such as #fintech, #digital technologies, #semiconductor ecosystem and #skill development. Both sides expressed confidence in expanding #trade and #investment relations over the coming decades," the finance ministry said in anoth-

er post on X. The Singapore president arrived here on Tuesday night for a five-day visit, aiming to further boost bilateral ties in a range of areas.

Maha Kumbh: UP's handicrafts to see Rs 35 cr trade

PNS MAHAKUMBH

The Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj is proving to be a significant platform for artisans of Uttar Pradesh. Officials estimate a turnover of about Rs 35 crore for the handicraft industry during the 45-day fair. After taking a dip in the Sangam, people are also visiting the 'One District, One Product' (ODOP) exhibition set up across 6,000 square metres area. The exhibition showcases an array of exquisite handicrafts, including carpets of Kushinagar, zarizardozi work, Firozabad's

De-registration application of Tata Sons as NBFC under 'examination': RBI

The RBI on Thursday again named Tata Sons -- the holding company of salt to software conglomerate -- among the large NBFCs that need to mandatorily list on stock exchanges, but the decision on de-registration of the company as NBFC, which will exempt it from going public, is pending with the central bank.

Thursday released the list of 15 NBFCs in the Upper Layer (NBFC-UL) under Scale Based Regulation for non-banking finance companies, which besides Tata Sons Private Limited, include Tata Capital, LIC Housing Finance, Bajaj Finance, and Aditya Birla

The Reserve Bank on

According to the RBI's 'Scale

Based Regulation (SBR): A Revised Regulatory Framework for NBFCs', NBFC-UL shall be mandatorily listed within three years of identification as NBFC-UL. The norms came into effect from October 1, 2022. Tata Sons Private Limited, a core investment company, was categorised as NBFC-UL on September 30, 2022.

Tata Sons, however, has applied for de-registration as a NBFC, and its application is still pending with the Reserve Bank. "... inclusion of Tata Sons Private Limited in the list of NBFC-UL is without prejudice to the outcome of its application for de-registration.

Infosys says H1B visa dependence lowered

PNS NEW DELHI

Days after HCLTech said it has lowered reliance on H1B visas, Infosys on Thursday reported a significant decrease in its dependence on this visa category and exuded confidence in its "resilient" operational

"Over the years, our dependence on H1B visas has reduced significantly. First and foremost, our onsite mix has reduced significantly -- we used to be in the 30 per cent range, (but) we are now at the 24 per cent range. Within that, our near shore has

"Within the US-onsite population that we have, our H1 independent folks are now at 60 plus percentage. We have now built a pretty resilient model from that perspective. We are, therefore, much more confident from where we are versus where we used to be earlier," Infosys CFO Jayesh Sanghrajka said.

On Monday, HCLTech said that around 80 per cent of its workforce in the US comprises local hires, making its dependence on H1B visas among "the lowest in the industry"



...If I look back over the last 4 odd years, we have been pretty locally self-sufficient. And that reflects in the number of H1Bs that we go through every year. It ranges between 500-1,000 in a year max...so it is

Infosys reported an 11.46 per cent increase in consolidated net profit for the December

minimal dependence,"

HCLTech Chief People Officer

Ramachandran Sundararajan

quarter of FY25, reaching Rs 6,806 crore compared to Rs 6,106 crore during the same period last year. Revenue from operations for this quarter stood at Rs 41,764 crore, marking a 7.58 per cent rise from Rs 38,821 crore in Q3 FY24.

The H1B visa programme allows US companies to temporarily employ foreign workers in specialised roles and has been a significant avenue for Indian companies within the tech sector.

However, with Donald Trump's return to the presidency, implications for the H1B visa programme could

shift again. During his previous administration, Trump enforced stricter regulations aimed at prioritising American workers, a trend that may continue and increase competition for Indian tech professionals seeking these visas.

Data from the US Citizenship and Immigration Services shows that Indian-origin tech companies accounted for approximately one-fifth of all H1B visas issued in recent years. In the April-September 2024 period alone, about 24,766 visas were granted to Indian-origin firms out of a total of 1,30,000 issued.

MORTHERN POWER BISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LIMITED. CIN No.840109TB2800S6C834TI9. SHORT TENDER NOTICE No. 05/ 2024-25 OF SE/OP/BHUPALPALLY WITH SPECIFICATION No. 01/2024-25 to 10/2024-25.

Sealed tenders are invited from TGNPDCL registered contractors of Bhupalpally circle for Tender Document for erection of various 33KV interlinking lines in operation Divisions Bhupalpally and Mulugu in Operation Circle, Bhupatpally. The details of works can be obtained from our website www.tgrpdcl.in.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Operation Circle, Bhupalpally

WITH SPECIFICATION No. 48 of 24-25

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Friday January 17, 2025

TRAVELOGUE

'Travel is more than destinations; it's about connections'



TEJAL SINHA tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

ravelling is not just a physical journey for Srividya Maharshi; it's an emotional and spiritual experi-ence that allows her to disconnect from life's hustle and reconnect with herself. The actor, who has traversed paths for work, family obligations, pilgrimages and vacations, believes in the transformative power of travel. "For me, vacations are a way to unplug. mative power of travel. "For me, vacations are a way to unplug. I prefer peaceful experiences over rushing to cover as many places as possible. The purpose is to rest and reset, not chase deadlines, even on a holiday," she shares.

Srividya ensures her travels reflect this philosophy by choosing accommodations that exude serenity. Whether it's a cozy Airbnb or a well-situated hotel, the place must align with her

need for peace. This approach was evident in her most recent trip, a girls' getaway to Thailand with her closest friends.

Organising a trip with working professionals can be a logistical challenge, but for Srividya and her friends, the effort was worth it. "Making it happen was the best decision we made. Good company makes even the slight hiccups in travelling easier to navigate," she remarks, fondly recalling how her friends'

meticulous planning balanced her laid-back vacation vibe. "They even made Excel sheets for budgets and schedules, and I'm lucky they don't complain about my lack of contribution," she quips.

Whether it's a laid-back beach vacation, a cultural deep dive, or exploring India's rich heritage, Srividya Maharshi believes that travelling is much more than ticking destinations off a list — it's about creating memories and connecting with people. From a fun-filled girls' trip to Thailand to soulful journeys across Uttar Pradesh, she reflects on the experiences that have shaped her as a traveller, offering a glimpse into her most cherished moments and aspirations for future adventures.



Among the most cherished memories from the trip were moments spent in quiet reflection on the beach during sunsets, as well as some amusing cultural surprises. However, what truly stood out was a simple act of carrying an electric cooker and rice to cook meals with "podi" (a South Indian spice mix) when they struggled to find food to their liking. "It felt like a slice of home. We sat together and ate like real Telugu girls in their Ammamma's house," she says with a laugh.

While in Thailand, she and her friends made a conscious effort to explore the culture beyond the tourist hotspots. A cycling food tour through Bangkok turned out to be a highlight. The day-long journey included stops at age-old households to sample traditional recipes, visits to the floating mar-ket, and a trip to the vibrant fruit markets. "It was a wholesome experience that connected us with the locals and gave us a real feel of the place," she recalls.

For her, any place with a beach offers the ultimate rejuvenation. "The vast ocean reminds me of how small we are in the grand scheme of things. The sound of waves drowns out the noise in my head, helping me calm down," she reflects.

Her travels within India have been equally enriching. A recent journey across Uttar Pradesh, covering Agra, Mathura and Ayodhya, offered not only a glimpse into the country's heritage and spiritual significance but also insightful interactions with locals. "Every city and town in India has its own story, culture and history. Even within the same State, the diversity is striking, making every experience unique," she notes.

Not all travel experiences are smooth, and she recalls a particularly nerve-wracking moment during her return from London. A technical glitch with her boarding pass nearly caused her to miss the flight, which would have left her stranded with an expiring visa. "I panicked, imagining being labelled an illegal immigrant and deported," she admits, now able to laugh about it in

Looking back on her travels, she feels a deep sense of accomplishment. "Younger me would be so glad," she says. As a child, she often worried whether she would ever get the chance to explore the world. "Seeing those visa stamps on my passport reminds me that I'm doing something my childhood self

thought was unachievable." Next on her travel bucket list are Vietnam and Sri Lanka, destinations she hopes to visit with her husband. While she hasn't ventured into solo travelling for leisure, she enjoys group trips for the shared responsibilities and camaraderie. "Travelling with others means

less stress and more fun," she shares.
For her, the essence of travel lies in the little details — the stories shared by shopkeepers, drivers and long-time residents. "Tourist attractions often offer a filtered view. The real feel of a place comes from interacting with its people," she concludes.

With her mindful approach to travel and a heart open to experiences, Srividya Maharshi continues to explore the world, one story and memory at a time.

Chidiya Udd delivers gritty drama, but struggles to soar high

Chidiya Udd, streaming on MX Player, presents a gritty exploration of survival, resilience and crime, set against the backdrop of Mumbai's infamous redlight district, Kamathipura. Directed by Ravi Jadhav, the series attempts to shine a light on the struggles of those caught in the web of human trafficking and exploitation. While it boasts a promising premise and a stellar cast, it struggles to break free from the conventional tropes of its genre.

The narrative centres on Seher, a young woman from Rajasthan whose life takes a drastic turn when circumstances force her to flee her hometown and seek refuge in Mumbai. Far from the haven she hoped for, Mumbai thrusts her into the heart of Kamathipura, where she faces the grim realities of prostitution and crime. At the same time, the show introduces Qadir Khan, a menacing figure who holds sway over the area. As Seher fights to reclaim her agency amidst the chaos, the story unfolds with a mix of suspense, emotional depth and moments of harrowing intensity.

The show's greatest strength lies in its character-driven storytelling. Bhoomika Meena's portrayal of Seher is deeply Meenas portrayal of Seher is deeply moving, capturing both the vulnerability and the quiet strength of a woman determined to survive against all odds. Jackie Shroff is compelling as Qadir Khan, exuding authority and menace with ease. Supporting performances from Sikandar Kher and Madhur Mittal add denth to the parartive as their characters. depth to the narrative, as their characters navigate the murky waters of Kamathipura's underworld.

Drawbacks

However, while the series is engaging, it falls short of being groundbreaking. The plot often feels predictable, following a familiar trajectory that seasoned viewers of crime dramas will recognize. There are moments of brilliance, but they are diluted by the reliance on conventional storytelling and an overuse of genre clichés. Despite its efforts to shed light on the grim realities of exploitation, the show fai offer fresh insights or perspectives, which could have elevated it from being just another tale of survival.

Performances

her portrayal of Seher, balancing vulnerability and strength with remarkable ease. She embodies the struggles and resilience of her character with authenticity, making her arc the emo-tional backbone of the series. Jackie Shroff brings gravitas to the role of Qadir Khan. His commanding screen presence and layered performance add depth to the antagonist, making him a memorable figure. Sikandar Kher and Madhur Mittal provide solid support, adding complexity to their characters with nuanced perfor-

Technical aspects

Visually, Chidiya Udd excels in immersing the audience in its gritty setting. The cinematography by Lawrence Alex D'Cunha is striking, vividly capturing the chaos and despair of the redlight district. The dimly lit alleys, crowded streets and claustrophobic interiors paint an unflinching portrait of Kamathipura. The direction by Ravi of Kamathipura. The direction by Ravi Jadhav ensures that the emotional beats of the story land effectively, even if the pacing occasionally falters. The music and background score, composed by Roshin Balu, complement the narrative without standing out as particularly memorable. While the score heightens moments of tension, it does not leave a lasting impression. Similarly, the editing, though generally sharp, struggles to maintain momentum in certain Bhoomika Meena stands out with unnecessarily stretched.

Director: Ravi Jadhav **Producer:** Harman Baweja

Cast: Jackie Shroff, Bhoomika Meena, Sikandar Kher, Madhur Mittal, Mayur More and Mita

Streaming on: Amazon MX Player **Rating:** 3.5/5

In conclusion, Chidiya Udd is a wellcrafted series that delivers a gripping, albeit familiar, exploration of Mumbai's underworld. Its strengths lie in its performances, particularly those of Bhoomika Meena and Jackie Shroff, and its authentic portrayal of Kamathipura's harsh realities. However, its predictable plot and lack of innovation in storytelling hold it back from achieving greatness. Chidiya Udd is a commendable attempt to highlight the struggles of those caught in the web of exploitation, but its adherence to familiar tropes prevents it from standing out. Strong performances and a gripping setting make it worth a watch, though it falls short of being truly

For fans of crime dramas with emotional depth, Chidiya Udd offers an engaging experience, though it may not linger long

The future of car protection

 n the last few years, we have all witnessed that the auto-motive industry and its technology have evolved rapidly. There are several kinds of methods that can be used to protect vehicles from damage and give them an appealing look like never before. Along similar lines, ceramic coating and graphene coating are two cutting-edge technologies at the forefront of the industry. Both are applied to the car's exterior and offer exceptional protection against damages. However, while choosing the best car coating, car owners sometimes need help with their prices, durability, etc. This article delves into some key differences between graphene coating and ceramic coating and, specifically, answers the dilemma of which is better for a vehicle.

Ceramic coating

Ceramic coating is a combination of liquid polymer & ceramic particles applied to a car's exterior, forming a protective layer upon curing. It comes with a wide range of benefits: it elevates the paint's gloss, exuding depth and smoothness to the look, and it protects the car's exterior from external damage. Ceramic coating is also renowned for its hydrophobic properties, making the car look better and improving safety by enhancing vising the car look better and improving safety by enhancing visits. ibility during weather conditions. It quickly beads off the windshield and other glass surfaces, reducing the need for constant windshield wiper usage.

Graphene coating

Graphene coating is a single layer of carbon atoms arranged in a hexagonal lattice, which is one of the most robust materials known among car enthusiasts. Graphene coating leverages its incredible strength and provides unparalleled protec-tion for the vehicle. It forms a very thin yet durable protective layer that is virtually impervious to scratches, chips, and other forms of damage.

Difference between ceramic coating and graphene coating

- Longevity: Graphene coatings are generally considered more durable than ceramic coatings and offer superior protection against harsh environmental factors, including minor scratch-
- Self-healing properties: One of the most important factors that attracts car owners to opt for graphene coating is its self-healing properties. This factor allows minor scratches to repair themselves over a period of time.
- Hydrophobic properties: Both graphene and ceramic coatings exhibit excellent hydrophobic properties, repelling water and other contaminants. However, graphene coatings often



offer superior water beading and sheeting.

• Gloss & Shine Look: While both coatings can enhance a vehicle's gloss and shine, ceramic coatings are often preferred for their ability to produce a deep, wet-look finish.

How do you choose a suitable coating for your

The choice between graphene and ceramic coating depends on the vehicle owner's specific needs and preferences. Graphene coating is an excellent option if they prioritize maximum durability and cutting-edge technology. However, if they prefer a more traditional approach with a strong emphasis on gloss and shine, ceramic coating may be the better choice for

It's important to note that both the coatings require professional application to achieve optimal results. Additionally, it is always advisable to do regular maintenance, such as washing with car-friendly products, which can help prolong the life

of the coating and maintain its protective properties.

In conclusion, as technology in the automotive sector advances, we expect to see even more innovative car protection solutions emerge in the coming years. However, graphene and ceramic coatings currently represent the pinnacle of exterior protection, offering unparalleled durability, gloss, and ease of maintenance to car enthusiasts.

(The author, Kunal Sethi, is the CEO of The Detailing Mafia)

what's brewing?



VCIWU hosts a Three-Day International Conference on the Asaf Jahi Dynasty"First Day of Highlights the Transformation from Royalism to Democracy and the Role of Urdu in Shaping Hyderabad's Cultural Identity The "Veeranari Chakali Ilamma" Women's University in Koti, Hyderabad, inaugurated. 300-year journey of the Asaf Jahi Dynasty from Royalism to

Democracy from 1724 to 2024. Hosted by the University's Urdu Department under the leadership of Professor S. Naseem, inaugural session was Surya Dhananjay, Vice Chancellor of the university, and was graced by Raunaq Yar Khan, the 9th Nizam of the Asaf Jahi dynasty and the first democratic Nizam, who delivered the keynote address.the special guest was M. M. Pallam Raju, Former Union Minister





Deepthi showcases Telangana in Delhi



PNSIHYDERABAD

founder of Womenergy, an inspirational young leader from Telangana proudly represented the State at the prestigious Viksith Bharath Young Leaders Dialogue 2025 held at Bharath Mandapam at New Delhi on January 10th ,11th & 12th. The event organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, featured Prime Minister Narendra Modi who addressed 3,000 select youth pan India chosen over from 30 lakh youth participants; only around 200 selective youth were chosen as special invitees as "Path-breaker Youth Icons. Deepthi was invited as special invitee - Youth Icon from Telangana representing the tracks 'Making India', a

resenting the tracks 'Making India', a manufacturing global power house & women empowerment, providing her a platform to share her valuable insights and inspire young leaders. The dialogue centered around 10 core themes of nation development for the country to become a Viksith Bharath by 2047. Deepthi's participation served as a beacon of hope and motiserved as a beacon of hope and motivation for the emerging women leaders to contribute innovative ideas to women led nation building.





GC Cera Tiles, a trusted name in the ceramic tile manufacturing industry for over 28 years, is proud to announce the grand opening of its exclusive showroom at Autonager Hyderabad. Kishan Patel, CEO of GC Tiles. Says "This new venture allows us to connect with our customers directly and offer them a personalized experience that reflects our dedication to

ARCHIE



Ghousiya and Samina Begun



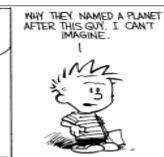




CALVIN AND HOBBES



MERCURY WAS THE GOD OF FLOWERS AND BOUQUETS, WHICH IS WAY TODAY HE IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF FTD FLORISTS.





GARFIELD







REALITY CHECK





CROSSWORD



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9 Painter or sculptor

10 At this place

14 A meal outdoors

18 A large lifting machine 19 A bird's covering

12 Pleased

17 Arrive at



5 People unknown

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11 Ring shape

13 Not asleep

16 Closed

15 Gets closer to

GINGER MEGGS







DIFFICULTY RATING: ** ** \$\frac{1}{2} \frac{1}{2} \fra

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the pioneer

I AM CHOOSY, BECAUSE OF THESE REASONS: BRAHMANANDAM

SURESH KAVIRAYANI sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

egendary comedian Brahmanandam is acting in a film titled 'Brahma Anandam', after a long break. The interesting thing about this film is that his son Raja Goutham is also acting in it. Brahmanandam is playing the role of a grandfather and his son is playing his grandson in it. Another comedian Vennela Kishore is also there in the film. "The director RVS Nikhil told me that he wrote the story for me and he wanted me to act in it, otherwise he won't do. Then they told me that my son is playing the lead actor and also grandson to me. I felt that this is something new for me, so I accepted," said Brahmanandam. More than all this, the title is on his

More than all this, the title is on his name which is another reason to accept. "This is the first time that the title is named as 'Brahma Anandam," he said. He added that though the title of this film is on his name, he didn't feel tense about it. "More than tension, it's a high moment for me because of the title," said the comedian.

Brahmanandam acted in more than 1,000 films as comedian, but recently he is choosy about films. When asked about it, Brahmanandam said one of the reasons is age factor. "Many people are telling me that my performance is good, but they couldn't get laughs like earlier. This is one reason and the other one is the age factor. You have to think about your age and I know I am becoming old and I can't be as active as earlier. So, with these reasons I reduced my films. It is

Brahmanandam talks about his comeback and why he reduced films and what are the reasons. He also talks about the present comedy in films...



not true that I didn't get films, I am getting, but I am choosy. If you want to remembered forever, you have to reduce something and I reduced films," said

Brahmanandam about his gap.
The actor said that his son Raja
Goutham is the first choice for Sekhar
Kampula's Godwori' film Sekhar is a rel

ative of Goutham too. "Goutham didn't do that film because it is a female-oriented one. I didn't say anything to Goutham at that time because I don't want to inter-

fere in his decision, because his generation's thinking is different. I too think that we have to check ourselves and self criticism is very important. That's why I reduced films," said Brahmanandam.

When asked that in recent years, comedy is completely reduced in films, "Without a comedian, you can make a film, without comedy you can't make any film. Nowadays, comedians are not doing comedy in films, the lead actors are also doing comedy. There are some good writers and directors, but I still can't say the reason. I am distant from the industry and choosy about films, so I can't tell," said the comedian.

The actor said that the film has a lot of entertainment and also emotion. "In front of the camera we are actors and we do whatever the director gives us and we don't think that he is my son and how can I act as a grandfather to him. Once we come out of camera, then we come to reality," said Brahmanandam, for another question. The film is releasing on February 14, Valentines' Day and it is not related to anything about it. "It's a beautiful film where the story tells about a bond between a grandson and a grandfather," he said.

Brahmanandam all praises another

Brahmanandam all praises another comedian Vennela Kishore. "He is one of the comedians who continue his legacy now," said Brahmanandam about him. He added that Kishore is doing well at present. Brahmanandam also praises all the actors who acted in 'Brahma Anandam'. "They gave an outstanding performance and it's a young team and I am very happy working with them," said the senior actor.



Venkatesh is Sankranthi winner

enior actor Venkatesh became the Sankranthi winner with his film 'Sankranthiki Vasthunnam' after his film's huge collections at the box-office. The film released on the Sankranthi day, January 14, and got a hit talk from the first show onwards. The first day collections are also sensational and no one expects that it will be huge. This is also Venkatesh's best till today. Dil Raju is the producer, while Anil Ravipudi is the director. Aishwara Rajesh and Meenakshi Chaudhary are the female leads.

Interestingly, Dil Raju's other film 'Game Changer', a high budget one, directed by Shankar, is declared a flop and now he is getting at least some money in 'Sankranthiki Vasthunnam'. Dil Raju may lose more than Rs 100 crore in 'Game Changer', says the source, but he may recover at least some from 'Sankranthiki Vasthunnam'.

"I am happy that my film is getting good response everywhere. Whenever I do family entertainment, the audience comes and

enjoys my films. It gives me a different emotion," said Venkatesh after his film's success. He added that this film is going to be the biggest success in his career. "I should thank director Anil Ravipudi, for giving me a career best film," he added.

Venkatesh did promotions for this film like never before and it definitely attracted the audience. The film may get breakeven on the third day and from the fourth day onwards, it entered into profits.

Boyapati shooting at Kumbh Mela for *Akhanda 2*

irector Boyapati Srinivas is teaming up with Nandamuri Balakrishna for the sequel of 'Akhanda 2'. Balakrishna plays a dual role in this first part and his Aghora character is one of the highlights of the film. Now, Boyapati has already started the shooting of this sequel at the famous Maha Kumbh Mela. "Yes, we started shooting for some key scenes with the Aghora's backdrop. I met a few Aghoras and also Naga Sadhu at this Kumbh Mela. We started shooting from January 11 here and we will almost complete it on Thursday," said director Boyapati.

The first part of 'Akhanda' was a big success and recently they launched the second part. Ram Achanta and Gopi Achanta are the producers of this sequel. Whenever Boyapati and Balakrishna join hands, there are huge expectations on the film. They worked earlier for three films 'Simha', 'Legend' and 'Akhanda', all of them are blockbusters.

Now, he started 'Akhanda 2' with the tagline Thandavam, and the story revolves more around the Aghora character played by Balakrishna. Boyapati canned some key scenes at the Kumbh Mela and now, he starts the regular shoot in Hyderabad. On the other hand, Balakrishna is on cloud nine, delivered his fourth consecutive hit with 'Daaku Maharaaj'. The film was released recently and is doing well at the box office.



Jagapathi Babu is satisfied with his look in Ram Charan's film

Ram Charan is now concentrating on his upcoming film with director Buchi Babu Sana. The film already started shooting sometime back and now will continue for longer days. Buchi Babu later made his debut as director with 'Uppena' that was released nearly four years back. Now, after taking a long break, he is teaming up with Ram Charan, for a period drama and the tentative title is RC16. The film's shooting has been taking place briskly. Janhvi Kapoor is playing the female lead opposite Charan in this one.

Charan in this one.

Apart from the lead pair, the film has some good actors like Kannada actor Shiva Rajkumar, versatile actor Jagapathi Babu, and talented Bollywood actor Divyenndu of 'Mirzapur' fame. Building on the excitement, Jagapathi Babu shared his enthusiasm for the film. The actor posted a high energy behind-thescenes video that offered a peek into the hard work and dedication that is being put into his character transformation.

"After a long time, Buchi Babu gave me good work for RC16. I feel very satisfied after watching my look (getup) in the movie," said Jagapathi Babu, on his social media sharing the video. Maestro AR Rahman is providing the music and definitely it's going to be a highlight of this film. Avinash Kolla is the production designer, while Ratnavelu is the cinematographer.



Chiranjeevi, Jr NTR shocked after an intruder attacks Saif Ali Khan

Popular Bollywood actor Saif Ali Khan was attacked by an intruder at his house in the early hours of Thursday. Saif was injured seriously and is now in the hospital and his condition is stable, according to the doctors. After getting the news, a few Tollywood celebrities expressed their shock and prayed for speedy recovery of Saif Ali Khan. Jr NTR worked with Saif in the film 'Devara' part one directed by Koratala Siva. Jr NTR on his social media expressed shock about the incident. "Shocked and saddened to hear about the attack on Saif sir. Wishing and praying for his speedy recovery and good health, said Jr NTR on his 'X'. Mega Star Chiranjeevi also responded and said he is disturbed after hearing about the news. "Deeply disturbed by news of the attack by an intruder on #SaifAliKhan. Wishing and praying for his speedy recovery," said Chiranjeevi on his social media page.

Melody song from Return of the Dragon unveiled

Pradeep Ranganathan became an overnight star after the success of 'Love Today'. He acted as lead actor, provided the story and also directed the film. It became a huge success in Tamil and also did well in Telugu. Pradeep became a household name with that success. It was made with a small budget, but at the box-office it collected huge money. Now, Pradeep is coming up with a film titled 'Return of the Dragon'. Pradeep is playing lead actor, while Ashwath Marimuthu is the director and also provided the story for

radeep Ranganathan became an overnight star after the success of 'Love Today'. He acted as lead actor, provided the story and also directed the film. It became a huge success in Tamil and also did well in Telugu.

this one. Anupama Parameswaran is the female lead. India's leading production company, AGS Entertainment, is producing it. Ashwath Marimuthu earlier directed a Telugu film 'Ori Devuda' After the chartbuster first single

After the chartbuster first single 'Rise of Dragon', the team dropped the second single titled Madhuvaramae. This most enchanting melody features Pradeep and Kayadu Lohar. The song is sung by Sarath Santhosh and Srinisha Jayaseelan in an enchanting way. Ramajogayya Sastry penned the lyrics.



Australian Open: Iga Swiatek moves into third round against Emma Raducanu

ga Swiatek rushed through the first set in 26 minutes and completed her 6-0, 6-2 second-round win over Rebecca Sramkova in an hour at the Australian Open.

The five-time Grand Slam champion makes a habit of advancing quickly through the early rounds at the majors. She's won almost 12% of her sets in Grand Slams by 6-0, which puts

her in exclusive company.
So when No. 49-ranked
Sramkova ended a seven-game losing run by holding serve on Thursday, she raised her arm to acknowledge the applause from the Rod Laver Arena crowd. It was one of the few chances she had to celebrate.

"It was good to play in such an efficient way and just finish it quick," Swiatek said. "Also, you know, just feel the court and how it is in RLA."

Second-seeded Swiatek next faces

an early break in the second set to hold off Amanda Anisimova 6-3,

Taylor Fritz hasn't wasted any time advancing to the third round, dropping just eight games across two rounds and spending iust over three hours on court. The 2024 U.S. Open runner-up and No. 4 seed beat Cristian

Garin 6-2, 6-1, 6-0 to move into a third-round match against 38year-old Gael Monfils, who last week became the oldest player to win an ATP Tour title. Also advancing on the men's side

were local hope Alex de Minaur, seeded 8th, No. 16 Lorenzo Musetti, No. 19 Karen Khachanov and No. 21 Ben Shelton, who beat Pablo Carreno Busta 6-3, 6-3, 6-7 (4), 6-4.

Raducanu has struggled with injuries since her breakthrough major in 2021, when she became the first qualifier to win a Grand Slam singles title.

She didn't play a warmup tournament ahead of this year's 2021 U.S. Open champion Emma Australian Open because of a Raducanu, who recovered from muscle strain and needed time



her match against Anisimova to get treatment on her back from a trainer. After advancing beyond the

second round for the first time at Melbourne Park, the No. 61she'd recover in time for her next

challenge against Swiatek. "It'll be a very good match for me, ranked Raducanu was confident another opportunity to test my game," she said. "Going into it, I

have nothing to lose. I'm just going to swing.

Swiatek is moving on from the doping infringement which led to her one-month ban last year. And she's not showing any signs of it being a distraction.

She did everything at pace in the second round, including quick claps of her racket to acknowledge the crowd after her win. Swiatek didn't face a break point against Sramkova and converted five of the six she had. She finished off points with winners off both sides, and also hit some clean volleys on her ventures to the net.

She's feeling slightly less pressure this year, too, after losing the No.

1 ranking to two-time defending
Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka.

"Yeah, there was a lot of pressure starting the year as No. 1, but I think overall last year I didn't think about it this much anyway," she said. "Also, I realized last year that I don't have 100% influence on what happens with my ranking sometimes. So now I just

Emma Navarro, a U.S. Open semifinalist last year and seeded in the top eight for the first time at a major, was in trouble after two service breaks early in the third set before she reeled off four straight games to beat Wang Xiyu 6-3, 3-6, 6-4,

She hopped from the baseline toward the net, and made a big, swirling swing of her arm to underline another tough, three-

set victory. "It was really tough the whole time ... Super tough there at the end," Navarro said. "Found some good tennis there in the last

games." She'll next play Ons Jabeur, a three-time Grand Slam runnerup, who struggled with asthma but held off Camila Osorio 7-5,

Sixth-seeded Elena Rybakina, the 2022 Wimbledon champion and runner-up in Australia two years ago, registered her 50th win in a Grand Slam main draw singles match when she beat American qualifier Iva Jovic 6-0, 6-3

Barcelona reaches Copa del Rey quarterfinals with a 5-1 victory over Real Betis

PTI ■ BARCELONA

 $B^{\text{arcelona}}_{\text{rout of Real Madrid in the}} \ \,$ Spanish Super Cup final with a comfortable 5-1 victory over Real Betis in the round of 16 of the Copa del Rey.

Gavi and Jules Koundé scored a goal each in the first halfhour and Raphinha, Ferran Torres and Lamine Yamal added to the lead in the second half to give the Catalan club the win and a spot in the quarterfinals.

It was the fourth straight victory in 2025 for Barcelona, which on Sunday defeated Madrid 5-2 in Saudi Arabia to win the Spanish Super Cup.

We wanted to keep momentum from the Super Cup here at home in front of our fans," Barcelona defender Pau Cubarsí said. continue like this and keep the foot on the throttle. The (Christmas) break did well for us, we were able to refresh."

Barcelona had lost its last two games in 2024 before going on a winning streak against Barbastro in the Copa del Rey and Athletic Bilbao and Madrid in the Spanish Super

Cup. Playmaker Dani Olmo, registered in the last minute after a long battle between Barcelona, the Spanish league and Spain's federation because of a missed deadline by the club, helped set up Gavi's opening goal in the third minute at Montjuic stadium. Yamal gave the pass for Kounde's goal in the 27th. Koundé thought he had

added to the lead in first-half

stoppage time but his effort was disallowed by video review because he was offside. Yamal also had one called back by the VAR because of offside early in the second

Barcelona's third goal finally counted when Raphinha found the net in a breakaway in the 58th. Torres scored the fourth from inside the area in the 67th, a few minutes after coming off the bench, and Yamal sealed it after a nice run in the 75th.

Vitor Roque scored Betis' lone goal by converting an 84thminute penalty kick.
ATLETICO

WINNING

Atletico M without many regular starters, routed second-division club Elche 4-0 to extend its record winning streak to 15 matches. The club had never won more than 13 games in a row across

all competitions before.

Alexander Sorloth scored from close range in the eighth and converted a 29th-minute kick. Rodrigo penalty Riquelme scored the third from long range in the 61st, and Julian Alvarez closed the scoring in the 75th.

Elche played a man down from the 50th after Nicolás Fernández was sent off with a second vellow card.

OTHER RESULTS

Álvaro Rodríguez scored two minutes into the match as Getafe won 1-0 at fourthdivision club Pontevedra. The visitors played a man down from the 41st after a straight red card was shown to Rodríguez.

India women must make this year their best in ODIs: Smriti Mandhana one six, admitted she slowed

PTI RAJKOT

Cmriti Mandhana believes India's back-to-back 3-0 series wins against the West Indies and Ireland have provided the perfect momentum for making it their "best year in one-dayers" as the team gears up for the 50-over World Cup at

India will host the women's ODI World Cup later this year and the team, which has been able to rediscover its form with six consecutive ODI wins, should drive home the advantage now, says Mandhana.

"Two 3-0 sweeps are definitely really good in a World Cup year especially. We have to like keep going and have this for the best year for one-days (dayers)," Mandhana said in a video



shared by BCCI. Mandhana (135) and Pratika Rawal (154) put on 233 for the first wicket for the third highest opening wicket partnership for India in ODIs, setting up their highest ever total of 435/5 and eventually for their biggest ever ODI win by 304 runs on

"I wanted to go out and bat with a lot of freedom. I said in the dugout before I went in about that you know, I'm going to try and play my shots because not many times you get an opportunity to do that," Mandhana said.

Rawal, who notched up her first hundred to make 154 off 129 balls with 20 fours and

down nearing her century but gained pace of scoring once she was past the landmark. "As a batter I always wanted to score more runs and doing that for your country is actually a privilege and I am very happy," she said.
"After (crossing) 70 (runs) I was a bit conscious that there

was a hundred (on the cards). I was taking singles and going slow but when I got the hundred, I was like, let's just go for it. The 50 runs after the hundred came a bit quicker. I was able to score the way I score," she said.

Talking about her 233-run opening stand with the senior batter, Rawal said, "It felt like that it was happening with the flow, we didn't think about it."

"We got to know stats now, actually," Mandhana added.



Leroy Sané answers critics by scoring two goals as Bayern routs Hoffenheim

PTI MUNICH

eroy Sané answered critics Lby scoring two goals as Bavern Munich routed Hoffenheim 5-0 to restore its four-point lead in the Bundesliga.

Sané is subject to increased attention with his contract due to expire at the end of the season. Pundits including former Bayern great Lothar Matthaeus say he hasn't lived up to expectations since joining from Manchester City in 2020, making a contract extension unlikely. Matthaeus was speaking to broadcaster Sky before kickoff.

Sané wasted responding with the opener in the seventh minute when he fired a fierce shot inside the far post after Thomas Müller laid the ball off. Sane's celebrations showed the criticism had perhaps taken its toll.

"You always want to shake him, that he just does something and doesn't think too much. And today he did a lot and didn't think too much and he looked good," Müller said.

Raphaël Guerreiro was celebrating five minutes later as a long evening beckoned for Hoffenheim. Guerreiro played a one-two with Harry Kane before scoring his first Bundesliga goal of the season.

Kane made it 3-0 with a penalty in the 26th. It was his Sané got his second after the break, set up by Mathys Tel,

Isak's form has pushed Newcastle and a point above the bottom

and substitute Serge Gnabry scored minutes after going on for Kane.

Sané went off to applause from the Bayern fans after Gnabry's goal. "In the end, you get praised if

you give a good performance and you might get a bit of flack if things don't go so well," Sané said. "I always try to help the team, to give a good performance. And I'm the first one who's unhappy when I don't give a good performance and can't help the team."

S T U T T G A R T
PRESSURING LEIPZIG
FOR CHAMPIONS LEAGUE QUALIFICATION Fourth-p

finished with nine players after squandering a lead to lose 2-1 at Stuttgart, which moved a point behind the visitors. Benjamin Šeško gave Leipzig

an early lead, but the home team was irate that play had continued after an apparent foul by Ridle Baku on Deniz Undav in the buildup. Referee Sascha Stegemann booked Stuttgart assistant coach David Krecidlo for complaining.

Unday set up winter signing Jacob Bruun Larsen to equalize in the 50th and Nick Woltemade completed the comeback 10 minutes later when he poked home the rebound from an Unday effort. Šeško and Loïs Openda were sent off late as Leipzig slumped to its fifth defeat of the season. Both will miss the next match at Bochum on Saturday.

India men, women hockey teams to commence season with Pro League matches next month women's team making their

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Indian men's and I women's hockey teams commence international assignments this year with the highprofile FIH Pro League matches here from February The Indian men's team will

face Spain, while their women counterparts will take on England on February 15 at the Kalinga Stadium. Most of the Indian men's and women's team players are currently playing in the Hockey India League (HIL) in Rourkela and Ranchi respectively.

The Bhubaneswar leg of the FIH Pro League will be after the Australia leg (February 04-09) in Sydney. Between February 15 and 25, the men's teams of India, Spain, England, Germany and Ireland will go head-to-head with all teams reaching the half-way point of their season by the end of the Bhubaneswar stage.



"Following the Australian leg, the league will move to Bhubaneswar, India, renowned for its passionate hockey fan base. It will be the same in the women's competition for India, Spain, England, Germany and Netherlands," FIH said in a

"With 24 matches over the 11 days, the action will be unceasing among the top ranked teams in the world, which will be a true showcase of the 'League of the Best."

The FIH Pro League action this year will begin in Australia. The Kookaburras, who won the title in the previous edition, will start off defence against

reigning Olympic champions Netherlands, and Spain. The Hockeyroos will also start their 2024/25 campaign simultaneously, facing off against China and Spain. Both the Spanish teams will play their first matches of the season in the Sydney stage of the Pro League, with the

Australia, in both the men's and women's competition.

first appearance since 2020 having qualified for the current season by winning the FIH Hockey Nations Cup in 2024. China women will look to

continue their strong start to the season after taking eight points from the opening four games of their season, played at home in Hangzhou. Netherlands

meanwhile, will be hoping to return to their best, after an uncharacteristic start slow saw them pick up no wins in their opening four games, totalling six points through three draws and a loss. The FIH Pro League action will also simultaneously

continue in Argentina as the Bhubaneswar stage goes on, with Santiago del Estero hosting the final stage from the first half of the season from February 19 to 24. Locking horns in front of the large crowds will be Argentina, Belgium and

16th goal of the season.

Champions

winning streak.

in successive games.

UNHAPPY

FOR MOYES

contention. He's scored 12 in his

Isak opened the scoring in the

34th against relegation-threatened

Wolverhampton at St James' Park.

He got his second in the 57th and Anthony maintained his own scoring form with his fourth goal

Howe's team is now one point

David Moyes' return to Everton

HOMECOMING

ahead of fifth-place Chelsea.

League three. Moyes' immediate priority is to find goals from somewhere. last 10 games in all competitions and Newcastle is on a nine-match Everton has failed to score in nine of its last 11 league games.

LEICESTER SLUMPING The hiring of Ruud van Nistelrooy hasn't paid off for Leicester yet.

A 2-0 loss at home to Crystal Palace leaves the 2016 champion second from bottom of the standings and without a league win since Van Nistelrooy's first game in charge at the start of

December. It's now six straight defeats in the league, with Jean-Philippe Mateta and Marc Guehi scoring for Palace in the second half at the King Power Stadium.

"Six without a win is not good enough. You can't keep talking about performances. We need to win and that needs to happen soon," Van Nistelrooy said. UNITED DROPS

Manchester United doesn't play until Thursday, but Palace's win saw the record 20-time champion

Arsenal closes in on Premier League leader Liverpool after 2-1 win over Tottenham

PTI ■ LONDON

Arsenal closed the gap on Premier League leader Liverpool to four points after a 2-1 victory over Tottenham. Mikel Arteta's team took

advantage of Liverpool's draw with Nottingham Forest on Tuesday, with Leandro Trossard firing the winner in the north London derby at the Emirates Stadium. "Everybody knows you need to

win these games, the fans are buzzing and it's a great night for us," Trossard said. "It's an amazing feeling, especially to get the winner as well, it had to come and now we need to look forward." Arsenal was runner-up to

Manchester City in the last two

seasons and is in contention for

the title again this year. But it was given a fright by Spurs when Son Heung-min opened the scoring for the visitors in the 25th minute. A Dominic Solanke own goal when trying to defend a corner leveled the game in the 40th and Trossard struck low from just

inside the box four minutes later to

put Arsenal ahead.

Liverpool still has a game in hand on second-place Arsenal but has dropped points by drawing its last two league matches and is on a run of just one win in four in all competitions. That was against fourth-division Accrington Stanley in the FA Cup.
Arsenal bounced back quickly

after the disappointment of being knocked out of the FA Cup by Manchester United on penalties and opened up a two-point lead over Forest in third. "Less than 72 hours ago we played

120 minutes in another competition that we went out of that is not easy psychologically. So the way we performed and played today was exceptional," Arteta

Tottenham has won just one of its last nine games in the league. "The losses hurt me but they aren't acceptable. We have had too many losses this year and too many games that have got away from us. That needs to stop," head coach

Ange Postecoglou said. ISAK ON TARGET AGAIN Alexander Isak scored for the eighth straight league game to



propel Newcastle into the top four. The Sweden international struck twice in a 3-0 victory over Wolverhampton to take his season total to 17 in all competitions. He became the fourth player to score straight games.

in eight consecutive games in the Premier League, following Ruud van Nistelrooy, Jamie Vardy and Daniel Sturridge.

Vardy scored a league record 11-

"Like most strikers, Isak wants to practice his finishing. It is an art form. He is there after training every day trying to do more, Newcastle manager Eddie Howe

didn't get off to the start he wanted after a 1-0 loss to Aston Villa. In his second spell at the Merseyside club, Moyes took charge of his 519th game as Everton manager and was welcomed by the Goodison Park crowd.

But he couldn't inspire his relegation-threatened team to sealed Villa's win.

victory as Ollie Watkins' goal six minutes into the second half Everton is 16th in the standings slip to 15th in the standings.