

DON'T MISS...

Chowrangee hosts Raag-o-Rang

Chowrangee, a new platform for arts and culture in Hyderabad, hosted its first event, Raag-o-Rang, on Friday evening at Shilpakala Vedika. The event featured music and drama, with participation from Hyderabad's Bengali community and their families. Retired Supreme Court judge Pinaki Ghose. Special Chief Secretary for IT Jayesh Ranjan and other notable guests



Ten oppn MPs suspended

Ten opposition members attending the joint committee of Parliament meeting on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill were suspended on Friday as they accused its chairperson of reducing its proceedings to a "farce", while the committee readies to adopt its draft report next week. The appearance of Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, a moderate Hurriyat leader who is also the religious head of Muslims in Kashmir, before the panel to voice his disapproval of the proposed law was the highlight of the meeting but ... -PAGE: 5



Gold prices extended the rally for the eighth consecutive session and climbed Rs 200 to breach the psychological level of Rs 83,000 per 10 grams for the first time in the national capital on Friday amid buying triggered global market uncertainties. According to the All India Sarafa Association, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity rose Rs 200 to hit a fresh lifetime high of Rs 83,100 per 10 grams. It had closed at Rs 82,900 per 10 grams on Thursday. "Gold extended gains on Friday, with spot... -PAGE: 8

CM seeks Central support for Housing, Metro, Musi projects

PNS HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has appealed to the Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, Manohar Lal Khattar, to allocate 20 lakh houses to Telangana under the Prime Minister Awas Yojana (Urban) 2.0 scheme.

During a review meeting in Hyderabad, the CM stressed that Telangana constitutes 8% of the country's urban population and is ready with comprehensive data and plans to implement the housing scheme efficiently.

Reventh urged the Union Minister to approve the detailed project reports (DPRs) for six corridors identified under Metro Phase-II expansion which will cost Rs 24,269 crore

The corridors are Corridor IV: Nagole to Shamshabad International Airport (36.8 km), Corridor V: Raidurgam to Kokapet Neopolis (11.6 km), Corridor VI: MGBS to Chandrayangutta (7.5 km), Corridor VII: Miyapur to Patancheru (13.4 km), Corridor VIII: LB Nagar to Hayathnagar (7.1 km) and Corridor

CM Revanth Reddy with Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar at a meeting on Friday

Airport to Fourth City (Skill University) (40 km)

He requested the Central Government to partner with the state under a joint venture model to to prevent sewage inflow into the allocate funds for the project. The CM emphasized the urgent

IX: Rajiv Gandhi International Project. Proposing a budget of Rs 17,212 crore Comprehensive national economy.

10,000 crore, he explained that the funds would be utilized to construct 110 km of canals, box drains and sewage treatment plants (STPs) river. He also sought assistance for a comprehensive drainage system need for financial support for the in Hyderabad and 27 adjoining Musi Riverfront Development urban local bodies, for which a Rs

Sewerage Management Plan (CSMP) has already been prepared.

Revanth sought Central assistance for the development of Warangal, the second-largest city in Telangana. He requested Rs 4,170 crore for the city's underground drainage system, which has been included in the master plan. Additionally, he urged the Union Minister to allocate one lakh solar pumps under the PM Kusum scheme to provide uninterrupted irrigation water to tribal farmers.

The CM also requested 2,500 MW of solar capacity under the Kusum-C FLSS component and sought funds for strengthening the power infrastructure in Telangana by submitting nine project reports worth Rs 488 crore to the Centre for approval.

Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar congratulated CM Revanth Reddy for securing Rs 1.78 lakh crore worth investments for Telangana. Revanth reiterated his vision of making Telangana a \$1 trillion economy in alignment with the Prime Minister's goal of a \$5 trillion

FORMULA E RACE PROBE Notices likely to FEO

NAVEENA GHANATE naveena.ghanate@gmail.com HYDERABAD

The Formula E Race case, currently under investigation by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED), is progressing as the Telangana Government is likely to issue notices to Formula E Operations Limited (FEO), the official organisers of the event.

Sources indicate that while FEO has not been listed as an accused, the ACB is now moving towards seeking clarifications regarding possible procedural and financial irregularities while organising the event. Issuing notices to a foreign-based

of Home Affairs (MHA), is likely to initiate this by using either diplomatic channels or judicial cooperation agreements. The primary focus of the investigation is the alleged unauthorized

entity like FEO involves a multi-step

Government, through the Ministry

Telangana

process. The

transfer of Rs 55 crore from the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (ĤMDA) to the FEO. The main question here is whether due approvals were obtained and whether the transfer violated financial and procedural norms. Already, the ACB has looked at outstanding payments despite which the race was conducted. Continued on Page 2



Slugflest over Godavari—Banakacherla Project Scheme. Addressing the media at the Secretariat, Uttam accused Godavari-Banakacherla Project. Harish responded sharply to HAHAMM Harish of fabricating claims and misleading the public about the sta-tus of the proposed project by Andhra Padesh. Uttam's statements by questioning his delayed reaction to Andhra Pradesh's proposed water projects and challenging the veracity of his He clarified that the project, subclaims. **Minister Uttam**

ect, Harish clarified, "I never said 200 TMCs of water has already been diverted. My point was that the project is being designed to divert water, and your silence has emboldened Andhra Pradesh." He alleged that the Telangana Government is reactive rather than proactive in protecting the state's water rights. Harish further accused Uttam of distorting facts about the 512-299 Krishna Continued on Page 2

stage, with no approvals or ground-work initiated. "Not a single drop of water has been diverted from the Sitharaman urging them to withhold financial and regulatory support for the Rs 80,112 crore project. He emphasized that the proposal violates both the Godavari Water Disputes Tribunal (GWDT) Award of 1980 and the Andhra Continued on Page 2 Pradesh



He thanked Uttam for finally releasing a letter dated January 22, 2025, but mocked the delay. "If you truly wrote the letter on January 22, why did you hide it until now? If Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister



Rohit shows some spark but falls

He pulled Umar Nazir for a trademark six, effortlessly lofted Augib Nabi and Yudhvir Singh for a couple of more hits over the ropes to give a glimpse of his absolute best. But eventually, a fifty on Ranii comeback was not meant to be for India captain Rohit Sharma who fell for 28 here on Friday. Playing his first game for Mumbai in domestic red-hall cricket in nearly a decade, Rohit's first day on the field was a disaster with the 37-year-old falling for a 19-ball 3 in the opening hour of the Ranji Trophy clash.. -SPORTS Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy has dismissed the allegations levelled by BRS leader Harish Rao regarding the Godavari-Banakacherla Link

assures action

Godavari to Andhra Pradesh. Harish is creating imaginary situations to mislead people," he asserted.

mitted by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu

to the Centre, is still at the proposal

Uttam outlined the Telangana government's proactive measures to counter Andhra Pradesh's plans. Letters have been sent to Union

and state ministers attending the

letters?, asks Harish

BRS MLA Harish Rao strongly criticised Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy and accused him of spreading lies and distorting facts regarding

Chandrababu Naidu sent letters to the Centre on November 15, 2024, and December 31, 2024, why did you remain silent for so long?," he questioned.

Responding to Uttam's remarks the on the Godavari-Banakacherla proj-

Ponguleti loses cool, fires at Karimnagar Collector Pamela

PNS HYDERABAD

Khattar event.

event, the minister raised concerns A tense exchange occurred in about inadequate security. Ponguleti's outburst was directly Karimnagar when the Minister for

Housing, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, connected to CP Abhishek Mohanty's absence. Pamela Satpathy, publicly expressed his displeasure with District Collector Pamela attempting to explain the situation, Satpathy during a Manohar Lal informed Ponguleti that the CP was not at the event. However, this The agitated Minister questioned explanation appeared to do little to the Collector's handling of the placate the Minister, who continued event, stating, "What are you doing? to express dissatisfaction over the

perceived protocol breach. The incident reportedly stemmed Karimnagar Collector Pamela Satpathy confirmed that the from protocol issues linked to the absence of the Karimnagar Minister was referring to her about Commissioner of Police Abhishek the CP's absence and security Mohanty. With the Union Minister matters.

Cabinet expansion likely after Delhi polls

PNS HYDERABAD

The much-awaited Cabinet expansion in Telangana is expected after the Delhi elections scheduled for February. Highly placed sources said the expansion is expected to follow the Delhi elections, where the Congress is focused on strengthening its national standing.

Sources said that now as the TPCC committees will be announced the focus is more on that. The Congress government completed its first year in office on December 7, with six of the 18 Cabinet berths vacant. There has been pressure from veteran and first-time **Continued on Page 2**

Sridhar Babu welcomes GCC to Hyd

Farmers with new passbooks must apply for Rythu Bharosa

PNS HYDERABAD

The TG Government has framed guidelines for implementing the Rythu Bharosa scheme on Friday.

The government has also prepared plans to implement the scheme transparently to ensure that the money meant for investment in crops does not get wasted.

The government has fixed the date for releasing of Rythu Bharosa funds and is going to deposit Rs 6,000 per acre in the bank accounts of farmers who have arable lands.

Government frames guidelines

estimated that the government needs Rs 8,900 crore for the Rythu Bharosa scheme. However, the government identified that land cultivated during the Kharif season is 1.49 crore acres as per Agriculture Department data. The government has also identified around three lakh acres that are not cultivable and has

blocked those survey numbers. The Agriculture Department has asked all eligible farmers to prepare The Finance Department has the documents needed for applying Extension Officer (AEO).

for the Rythu Bharosa scheme. The government said that farmers, who got new pattadar passbooks by January 1, 2025, should apply for the Rythu Bharosa scheme.

The farmers should apply with photostat (Xerox) copies of the Pattadar passbook or digitally signed copy, Aadhaar Card and bank passbook. They should give the filled-up application form with Xerox copies to the Cluster Officer working under the Agriculture

Vijayasai bids goodbye to politics

PNS VIJAYAWADA

In a surprising development, V Vijayasai Reddy, the 67-year-old Rajya Sabha Floor Leader and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP), influential figures in the state's announced his

retirement from politics on Friday. His decision to retire is being seen as a major blow to both decades and three generations. the YSRCP and its I wish Jagan garu all the best' president, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, espe-cially in the wake of the

party's disappointing performance in the recent elections. The decision has

sent shockwaves through Andhra Pradesh's political circles, with Sai Reddy's

departure potentially having signif-icant implications for the YSRCP, particularly in terms of leadership and its influence at the national level. His exit marks the end of an national general secretary of the era, as he has been one of the most

Do you have no common sense?

political landscape for nearly family, who have believed four decades.

In a heartfelt in and supported me for four post on X (formerly Twitter), Sai Reddy, a two-time Rajya

Sabha m e m b e r , expressed his intention to formally resign from his parliamentary seat on Saturday, January 25. "I will not resign in the hope of another position, benefits, or money. This decision is entire-

ly personal.

Continued on Page 2

PNS HYDERABAD

In a significant boost to Telangana's investment and innovation ecosystem, Industries Minister Sridhar Babu has announced that Germany's Multivac Group, a global leader in packaging solutions, will establish its first Global Capability Centre (GCC) in Hyderabad.

This milestone was confirmed during a meeting with Mr Umashakar, Multivac's representative, at the Invest Telangana Roundtable held at Zurich Innovation Park. The new GCC will focus on digital transformation and is seen as a testament to Hyderabad's growing reputation as a hub for technology and innovation.

"Delighted to welcome Multivac Group to Hyderabad. Their first India GCC underscores Telangana's global appeal as an investment destination," Sridhar Babu stated.



He also highlighted his discussions with Nick Mayencourt from Dream Lab Technologies during the roundtable in Zurich. The talks centred on exploring synergies in

innovation and technology, which are expected to contribute to Telangana's growth trajectory.

continues to forge global connec-

tions. Meetings like these underline our commitment to making the state a global innovation hub," Sridhar remarked.

These developments add to Telangana's growing list of international partnerships, reaffirming the state's position as a leader in driving innovation and attracting global investments.

NITI AAYOG REPORT TG ranks 8th in financial health

PNS HYDERABAD

Telangana has emerged as one of the best-performing states in India preserving its financial health and securing the 8th position in the NITI Aayog's 2022-23 fiscal year report.

The report, released by the Chairman of the 16th Finance Commission, evaluated states on revenue generation, expenditures, debt levels, and repayment capabilities.

The study highlighted Telangana's robust revenue collection mechanisms, controlled expenditures and efficient fiscal policies as key factors contributing to its higher ranking. The state's focus on increasing its

own tax revenue and maintaining

fiscal discipline has significantly

improved its financial stability.

In contrast, Andhra Pradesh ranked 17th, with the report pointing to concerns about levels of debt and challenges in revenue generation. While most states, except Punjab, were noted for maintaining stable financial health, Andhra Pradesh's fiscal management issues were highlighted as a pressing concern.

Telangana's efficient financial management aligns with its development goals, focusing on infrastructure, education and healthcare. The state's success underscores the importance of sound fiscal policies in achieving sustainable growth.

Meanwhile, the report suggests that Andhra Pradesh needs to adopt measures to enhance its fiscal discipline and reduce dependency on borrowed funds.

Telangana's investment outreach



hyderabad 02

'Revanth govt took local bizmen to Davos and signed deals with them'

PNS HYDERABAD

The Telangana Congress Government took businessmen resident here to Davos and signed agreements with them there, Telangana BJP President G. Kishan Reddy said.

Addressing the media after releasing the BJP's 2025 diary on Friday at the state BJP office, Kishan asked Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to explain why his government took the Telanganaite businessmen to Davos and signed agreements with them there. Investments should come from foreign countries and they must not be limited to paper, he said. However, there is no need for criticism if the CM's Davos tour helps the state, he said.

Pointing out that no one is

PNS HYDERABAD

The Megha Engineering Company is bagging contracts

in Telangana by paying kick-

backs to the party in power, the BJP's Armoor MLA, Paidi

Rakesh Reddy, said. He said that Megha

Engineering Company owner

Krishna Reddy is known for

corruption and has been pock-

Demanding that the TG Government should block the

Megha Engineering Company

immediately, he said that oth-

erwise the BJP will ask Central

on Friday, Rakesh asked Chief

Minister Revanth Reddy to

explain the need for entering

into an MoU worth Rs 15,000

crore with Megha Krishna

Reddy at Davos when he is

here? We will reveal the secret

The same deal can be done

staying in Hyderabad.

Addressing a media channel

agencies to enter the scene.

eting public funds.

TG BJP president G Kishan Reddy releasing the BJP 2025 diary on Friday along with party leaders at State BJP office

the government in Telangana, Kishan said the real estate business has also weakened in the state.

Meanwhile, Kishan posted on 'X' that Congress leaders like former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru never considered Dr BR Ambedkar for now accepting contracts from the Bharat Ratna award.

behind the deceiving MoU.

The CM when he was in the

opposition, had asked the BRS

Government to blacklist the

Megha Engineering Company

as it was corrupt one and had

looted Telangana. However,

after coming to power, Revanth gave four contracts to

Megha Engineering Company.

The Megha Engineering

Company has been facing cor-ruption charges and a CAG report says that it engaged in corruption while handling the Kaleshwaram Project," he said.

Rakesh said that the com-

mission percentage was eight

during BRS rule and that now

it has increased to 14 per

cent. He said that Revanth

signed an MoU with the

Megha Engineering Company

in Switzerland to send bags to

Delhi. Facts will come out

shortly regarding where that

money behind the MoUs with

the Megha Engineering

Company went, he said.

which now sheds crocodile tears for Ambedkar showed its true colours then. The Congress which built memorials for Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Raiiv Gandhi did not do

Alakananda Megha bagging contracts by paying kickbacks: BJP

In a significant development, Saroornagar Police have registered a case based on a complaint by DMHO Geetha and detained eight individuals in Alakananda Hospital Kidney Racket case.

Among them are hospital Gopi, and six others. phone numbers and other of involvement in the incident.

Sumanth and Gopi, currently in police custody, were arrested and presented before the magistrate. Sources suggest that the police may soon seek their custody for further investigation. Additionally, reports indicate that both Sumanth and Gopi have filed a habeas corpus petition.

Congress considers Gudem Mahipal's

The TPCC has taken up Mahipal Reddy's comments

However, Nehru and Indira Gandhi were given Bharat Ratna awards. The Congress,

that for Ambedkar, he said.

kidney racket: **Eight held**

PNS HYDERABAD

chairman Sumanth, mediator Investigators are examining details collected from the suspects to uncover the extent

comments on CM's photo seriously

PNS HYDERABAD

Patancheru MLA Gudem MLAs. regarding Chief Minister mittee will study the issue of fil-Revanth Reddy's photo issue.

TPCC chief B. Mahesh Congress activists. He said that umar Goud said on Friday he will solve the problems of the

mittee appointed by the TPCC. He said that there are some issues with the newly joined

Mahesh said that the coming illegal cases against

also examine the comments of Khairatabad MLA Danam Nagender. He said that the party will take appropriate action after the committee's

report is published. Meanwhile, the Patancheru police filed cases against 42 rress activists i

Grant 20 lakh houses to TG under Central scheme: Ponguleti

PNS HYDERABAD

Revenue and Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy appealed to the Union Minister for Urban Development and Housing, Manohar Lal Khattar, to give priority to Telangana and allot 20 lakh houses to the state considering its population.

Ponguleti said that in the last 10 years, the construction of houses for the poor has not been done as per the hopes of the people of Telangana. Due to this, there is a huge demand from people for constructing houses. Keeping this in mind, Ponguleti appealed to the Centre to sanction the houses required for Telangana.

The Union Minister for Urban Development, Manohar Lal Khattar, who arrived here on a one-day visit, was welcomed by Ponguleti at the RGI Airport here on Friday. From there, Khattar and Ponguleti Reddy went to Karimnagar together. Addressing a meeting held after returning to Hyderabad together. from Karimnagar, Ponguleti raised various issues connected to housing. "The BRS Government

ignored the construction of houses for the poor. It weakened the housing department

PNS HYDERABAD

Youth Congress's extended

meeting held on Wednesday.

leaders who were issued show

cause notices are Bhadradri

Kothagudem district Vice-

President G. Rajashekar,

Bhadradri Kothagudem dis-

trict Vice-President B. Sunny,

Bhadradri Kothagudem dis-

trict General Secretary Ch.

The five Youth Congress



Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy with Union Housing Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Friday

and redeployed its employees to other departments. In these circumstances, our government, which came to power a year ago, is prioritising the construction of houses for the poor. The target is to build 20 lakh houses in the next four years. For this, the Housing Department has been revived and a necessary system has

been set up," he said. The Minister said that according to the survey, there are about 44 lakh eligible homeless people in the state. A special mobile app has been developed for the documentation of eligible beneficiaries, geo-tagging and their current said. residence. With this, a door-to-

door survey was conducted. Desk verification was done with a 360-degree tool. Gram Sabhas were held to prepare the final lists, he said. He said that rapid urbaniza-

tion is taking place in Telangana and that 6,867 villages of 26 districts have been recently brought under UDA. This should be included in the Union Government portal, he said and added that he had appealed to Khattar regarding

He said that according to the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Phase-1, out of the two crore houses sanctioned across the country, only 1.58 lakh houses have been sanctioned for Telangana. This is just 0.79 per cent of the total sanctioned. Telangana has eight per cent of India's urban population, he

"In this context, Telangana is eligible to get another 24 lakh more houses. At least 20 lakh houses should be sanctioned under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban Scheme (2.0)," Ponguleti said.

ing state in-charges and the

state President aggressively

with intention to attack. You

Opposition playing petty politics over ration cards: Uttam

PNS HYDERABAD

Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy accused the opposition of engaging in petty politics regarding the

distribution of ration cards. Speaking at the Jan Pahad Dargah in Huzurnagar's Palakeedu mandal on Friday, Uttam said the BRS is spreading lies as they could not stomach the Congress Government's commitment to the poor.

The BRS during its decadelong rule had refused to issue new white ration cards, he them.

said. "They do not have the moral right to criticise the Congress Government, which is now trying to provide ration cards to all eligible individuals," he said. Uttam said the Congress

Government is fully committed to issuing ration cards to all eligible individuals and added that there is no possibility for confusion in the ration card issuing process. Dismissing opposition claims as baseless he said that the issue of ration cards is a continuous process and would not stop till everyone eligible got

Congress sends Eno packets to KCR & KTR

PNS HYDERABAD

Congress MLC Balmoor Venkat sent 'Eno' packets to former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao and his son BRS MLA KT Rama Rao on Friday to reduce the fire in their bellies and digest the state's growth.

Balmoor Venkat tweeted regarding this lashing out at BRS leaders. He said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and IT Minister D. Sridhar Babu brought investments of Rs 1.78 lakh crore to the state. However, BRS leaders KCR and KTR are trying to spit venom regarding their failure to control their belly fire over the state's development. Venkat said that he sent Eno

Packets to control their belly fire and to enhance their digesting system while launching the campaign named Digest the Growth.

He appealed to party lead-

BRS demands white paper on Davos investments, accuses CM of hypocrisv

PNS HYDERABAD

Notices likely ...

Continued from page 1

It may be mentioned here that FEO

filed an arbitration case against the

Telangana Government seeking damages from ICC London.

However soon they withdrew the

Directorate has been probing the

involvement of senior officials and

the then Minister KT Rama Rao. The

BRS has consistently highlighted

the absence of any formal action

against FEO. Party leaders have

questioned why the entity, which

played a central role in organizing

the race, has not been named in the

the FEO could mark a turning point

in the case. However, the procedur-

al complexities involved in interna-

tional coordination may slow down

the process. As investigations by both

the ACB and ED continue, the case

remains a focal point of political and

administrative discussions in

The potential issue of notices to

case so far.

Telangana.

The ACB and Enforcement

adding that the people of Telangana deserve transparency

Congress MLC Balmoor Venkat showing Eno Packets and later sent them to KCR and KTR on Friday

ers to send Eno Packets to BRS leaders, who are unable to digest the development of the state. He said that BRS leaders may digest the growth of the state while consuming Eno. KTR, who is not in a position to digest the development, is writing whatever he wants and warned that the Congress will not keep quiet if BRS lead-ers try to block the develop-

BRS leader Manne Krishank has

ment of the state.

Cabinet ...

Continued from page 1 MLAs eyeing berths and communities as there is no representation for major communities like Lambada, Mudirai Muslims and some

Youth Congress issues show cause notices to 5 TG YC leaders Sudheer Kumar, Bhadrachalam the IYC. You started approach-

Assembly constituency The Indian Youth Congress Y. Pradeep, President (IYC) issued show cause Aswaraopeta Assembly con-stituency President G. Ravi notices to five Telangana Youth Congress leaders on Friday for engaging in a fight during the

IYC Secretaries Surbhi Dwivedi and Syed Khalid Ahmed issued the notices saying, "The Telangana unit of the Indian Youth Congress had its first state executive meeting on January 22 at the Indira Bhavan where you along with

were also seen addressing the

some outsider boys and queers who are not members of the Youth Congress entered the

building where it took place

was completely destroyed.

Residents of three villages in

shaking, said a local man

Pictures taken immedi-

ately after the explosion

showed a huge cloud of

smoke rising above the site.

Nitin Gadkari had said that

as per the preliminary infor-

Earlier, Union minister

was among the deceased.

media criticising the IYC outside the TPCC office. Your complaints due to which you protested were addressed several times. After valid explanations on this issue, the protest was uncalled for and looked staged. Reply within 48 hours

explaining why action should not be taken against you, and also give details on whether meeting hall to protest against anyone else is involved in this."

that it will consider the comments of Mahipal seriously and will take action based on Patancheru constituency. the report of a two-men com-

party and that there is a probtion with the attack by lem of old and new leaders in Congress activists on MLA Gudem Mahipal Reddy's camp He said the TPCC should office on Thursday.

We worship goddesses but ignore daughters: SC

PNS NEW DELHI

TODAY

Tithi:

Ekadashi

Dwadashi:

Nakshatram:

Anuradha:

Jyeshta:

Rahukalam:

Yamagandam:

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham

Castigating a man for throwing out his estranged wife and minor daughters from the matrimonial home, the Supreme Court on Friday said such behaviour eliminated the basic difference between human and animal.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh asked, "What kind of a man you are if you don't even care for things). your minor daughters? What

done in coming to this world?"

wrong have the minor daughters the case, the bench said it would not allow the man to An irked bench went on, enter court unless he paid the "He was only interested in maintenance or part with some agricultural land to his daughhaving multiple children. We cannot allow such a cruel man ters and the wife.

"Ask this man to part with to enter our court at all. Sara din ghar pe kabhi saraswati some agricultural land or fixed puja and kabhi laxmi puja. Aur deposit or maintenance amount in the name of his fir yeh sab (you worship Goddess Saraswati and Laxmi daughters and then the court may think of passing some all day, and then you do such favourable order," the bench Anguished with the facts of told his counsel.

Minister Uttam assures ...

Continued from page 1

Reorganization Act (APRA) of 2014. "The project seeks to divert 200 TMCs of surplus Godavari waters through the Bollapalli Reservoir and Banakacherla Head Regulator, connecting the Godavari, Krishna and Penna rivers. However, this water remains unquantified and unallocated between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Telangana's rightful share of 968 TMCs under the GWDT Award cannot be compromised," he said. Uttam said that Andhra Pradesh has not sought mandatory clearances from the Central Water

Commission (CWC), Godavari River Management Board (GRMB), Krishna River Management Board (KRMB), or the Apex Council. "Without approvals from these statutory bodies,

Andhra Pradesh cannot move ahead. But they are already inviting tenders and promoting the project through press conferences, which is unacceptable," he added. He urged the Centre to prevent Andhra Pradesh from advancing the project and ensure that no financial assistance is provided until all statutory requirements are met. "The Congress Government is committed to pro-

tecting Telangana's water rights and will not allow any project to jeopardize the state's interests," he reassured.

In a sharp attack on the BRS government, Uttam river waters," he added.



8 killed, five injured in blast at ordnance factory in Bhandara, Maharashtra

PNS BHANDARA

Eight workers were killed and five others injured as a the vicinity felt the ground blast ripped through a unit whose 20-year-old cousin of the ordnance factory in eastern Maharashtra's Bhandara district on Friday morning, officials said. At the completion of res-

cue operations after nearly eight hours, the final death toll stood at eight, said a district official.

The impact of the blast mation, eight persons had was so powerful that the died in the incident.

accused it of failing to protect Telangana's water interests during its tenure. He pointed out that the BRS government accepted a lower allocation of Krishna water - 299 TMC in 2015 - without fighting for Telangana's rightful 70% share.

He also criticized the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project, calling it a 'Rs 1 lakh crore failure'. He said poor planning and execution have led to the project underperforming, leaving people questioning its utility.

Uttam blamed former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao for enabling Andhra Pradesh to begin work on the Rayalaseema Lift Irrigation Scheme (RLIS). He accused the BRS government of delaying the Apex Council meeting scheduled for August 5, 2020, thereby giving Andhra Pradesh the opportunity to move forward with RLIS tendering. Uttam reaffirmed that the Congress Government would continue to oppose the Godavari-Banakacherla project at all levels, including the courts and statutory bodies. "We are handling the situation with utmost caution to ensure that Telangana's water rights are not compromised," he stated.

He concluded by calling Harish Rao's allegations baseless and emphasized the Congress government's proactive approach to safeguarding the state's resources. "Unlike the previous regime, we are fully committed to protecting Telangana's interests and ensuring the equitable management of interstate

Why did you ...

Continued from page 1

water-sharing agreement. "Your documents clearly state that the 512-299 agreement was valid for only a year. Why are you misleading the public by claiming otherwise?" he asked. He also highlighted the efforts of the BRS government to secure Section 3 of the AP Reorganization Act for equitable water distribution, questioning why such efforts would have been necessary if the 512-299 agreement were permanent.

Harish strongly refuted Uttam's claims that the BRS Government did not oppose the Rayalaseema Lift Irrigation Project. "This is a blatant lie. From the day Andhra Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy announced the project in the Assembly, we have opposed it. Numerous letters were sent to KRMB, the Union Government, and Jal Shakti Minister Shekhawat. It was our pressure that led Shekhawat to write to Andhra Pradesh, halting the project," he asserted.

asked the Telangana Government to release a white paper on the investments it has claimed to have secured during Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's Davos visit.

Addressing a press confer-ence at the Telangana Bhavan, Krishank said that the CM turned the high-profile visit into a "bogus exercise," filled with empty promises and rehashed agreements and accused him of misleading the public with exaggerated claims.

"Revanth must explain how many of the agreements signed at Davos last year have turned into reality. The government announced investments of Rs 40,000 crore last year, but none have materialized. Where is accountability?" asked Krishank, progress.

Krishank criticised the Chief Minister for his inconsistency, reminding the public of Revanth's earlier opposition to Davos investments when he was in the opposition. "He used to call these investments pointless and claimed they benefitted only companies and not the people. Even Uttam criticized them. Now, the same Revanth is praising these visits. This is outright

hypocrisy," Krishank said. He said that many of the agreements signed during Davos trips, including those with companies like Adani, JSW, and Godi India remain only on paper. He cited Bhatti Vikramarka's previous statements, describing these deals as mere "expressions" of interest" with no substantial

others in the Cabinet. The Election Commission of India has announced that the Delhi Assembly elections will take place in the first week of February, and results can be expected mid-month.

Once the elections conclude, the Congress leadership is expected to shift its focus to Telangana, where internal consultations for the Cabinet reshuffle have been going on. Last year the exercise got delayed due to elections in Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Maharashtra and Jharkhand.

The Chief Minister faces the tough task of having to balance regional aspirations and manage expectations inside the party.

Vijayasai bids ...

Continued from page 1

There was no pressure. No one influenced me," he wrote, emphasising that his decision was entirely his own While announcing his retirement, Sai Reddy thanked the YS family, stating that he would be 'forever grateful' to YS Jagan Mohan Reddy for the opportunity to serve as a Rajya Sabha member twice. He also expressed gratitude to the late YS Rajasekhara Reddy, his mentor and former AP chief minister, for guiding him throughout his political career. "I am indebted to the YS family, who have believed in and supported me for four decades and three generations. I wish Jagan garu all the best," he added.

Sai Reddy's decision to retire comes at a time when his name has been linked to a high-profile investigation. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) had summoned him to their Hyderabad office on January 6, as part of an inquiry into his alleged role in pressuring stakeholders of Kakinada Sea Port Limited (KSPL) to sell their shares at undervalued prices.

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1:52 PM to 3:16 PM 01:01 PM to 02:43 PM Varjyam 6:53 AM to 8:16 AM Gulika: 11:09 PM to 12:50 AM Amritakalam: Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:06 PM to 12:50 PM HYDERABAD WEATHER

Temp: 32° Humidity: 45% Sunrise: 6:49 AM Sunset: 6:08 PM

Updated: January 24, 2025 5:00 PM

Forecast: Sunny

Krishna Paksha

Jan 24 07:25 PM

Jan 25 08:32 PM

Jan 24 05:08 AM

Jan 25 07:07 AM

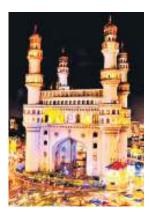
to Jan 25 08:32 PM

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to Jan 25 07:07 AM

to Jan 26 08:26 AM

9:40 AM to 11:04 AM



City Pioneer

the pioneer Hyderabad | SATURDAY | JANUARY 25, 2025

EVENTS

Cricket Tournament

By Gunfoundry Sena

Venue Nizam College Grounds January 25,(7 am)

Annual Day Celebrations

Sindu Degree College For Women

Venue Ravindra Bharathi

January 25, (9 am to 5 pm)

Meeting on various topics

By Health League

Venue Ravindra Bharathi January 25, (6 pm to 10 pm)

HMTV

Cyclothon

Venue Sanjeevaiah Park January 25, (5 pm)

SCR launches 'Fortify Lecture Series PNS HYDERABAD

The South Central Railway (SCR) launched the 'Fortify Lecture Series' on Friday, as part of a capacity-building initiative by the Vigilance department. The event took place at Rail Nilayam Auditorium, Secunderabad, with senior officials including Neeraj Agrawal, Additional General Manager, and others in attendance

Addressing the launch, irector of Marketplace) Anuj Kumar delivered the first lecture on "Procurement of goods and services through GeM." GeM facilitates online procurement for various government departments, aiming to improve transparency, efficiency and speed in public procurement. The Railways utilise the GeM portal to procure goods and services as per the provisions under the Government Financial Rules (GFR) 2017. Meanwhile, AGM Neeraj Agrawal emphasised that the Fortify Lecture Series is a valuable initiative to enhance the knowledge and skills of SCR staff. He highlighted that the GeM portal has brought more transparency to the procurement process, benefiting the Railways. Anuj Kumar provided an in-depth presentation on the GeM portal, covering its features such as e-bidding, reverse e-auction, and demand aggregation. He also addressed staff queries to improve their understanding. In line with Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's vision of making Hyderabad a world-class city, Hyderabad Airport Metro Limited Managing Director NVS Reddy has announced the Metro Rail expansion project, aiming to increase the current network from 69 kilometers to over 200 Speaking at an event where electric two-wheelers and cabs for 'First and Last Mile Connectivity' were launched by EVZIP, NVS Reddy emphasised the pivotal role of Metro Rail in the city's The Metro expansion is already in progress, with significant work

Electric two-wheelers and cabs for 'First and Last Mile Connectivity' being launched by Hyderabad Airport Metro Limited Managing Director NVS Reddy

Chandrayangutta is seeing rapid development. NVS Reddy revealed that Rs 80 crore in comafter the scrutiny of ownership documents. Of the 1,100 properpensation has been paid to 170 ties affected by the project, 270 owners have voluntarily offered property owners, and another Rs 80 crore will be disbursed soon

their properties for demolition to facilitate Metro Rail construction. During the event, NVS Reddy, along with L&T Metro Rail MD

KVB Reddy, flagged off new electric two-wheelers and cabs introduced by EVZIP as part of their connectivity program.

TG govt appoints first regular **Director of Medical Education**

PNS HYDERABAD

PNS HYDERABAD

kilometers.

transformation.

underway in the Old City. The stretch from MGBS to

The Telangana government has issued orders appointing its first Regular Director of Medical Education (DME) and Academic Director of Medical Education vacancies on Friday. Dr Narendra Kumar, Superintendent of Government Hospital in General

Wanaparthy has been temporarily promoted to the role of Regular Director of Medical Education (DME).

Dr K Siva Ram Prasad, principal of Government Medical College in Jagtial, will take over asthe Director of Medical Education (Academics). After the State bifurcation,

the DME post was allocated to Andhra Pradesh, leaving Telangana without a regular order issued by Health



Dr Narendra Kumar being congratulated by doctors after being appointed as Director of Medical Education on Friday

Director. For the past decade, Secretary the position had been made but Chongthu. The post of Director of Medical Education (DME) had no regular appointments were made, said Health Minister

been held by in-charge Dr N Vani after the Congress forming the government in Telangana.

HM orders officials to hand over Alakananda kidney case to CID

deepikapasham2015@gmail.com

Health Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha convened a review meeting on Friday to discuss the kidney transplantation racket at Hyderabad's Alakananda Hospital. During the meeting, he examined the preliminary report submitted by a committee of doctors, which revealed serious violations of medical regulations

fied about the racket. Officials informed the Minister that Alakananda Hospital conducted a similar case was previously reported in Kerala and called for an inquiry illegal kidney transplant surgeries without the required permissions. to determine any potential links The racket involved individuals from between the two incidents. Telangana, Tamil Nadu and vulnerable and unsuspecting people by coercing them into donating kidneys. Two women from Tamil Nadu reportedly had their kidneys removed and transplanted to recipients from Karnataka at the hospital. Minister Rajanarasimha confirmed that the hospital has been seized and its owner arrested. However, he emphasised the need for a deeper investigation to uncover the extent of the illegal operation. Taking the matter seriously, the Minister said that the case will be handed over to the CID for a thorough investigation. Health Secretary Christina Z Chongthu has been instructed to release orders for the CID probe immediately. Neighbouring states, including Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra



HYD LITFEST 'Cartoons, creative ideas can improve policy-making'

PNS HYDERABAD

Emphasizing that cartoons and creative ideas can improve policy-making, former Telangana Special Chief Secretary BP Acharya and Former Secretary General of India's National Human Rights Commission Satya Narayan Mohanty held a panel discussion at the Hyderabad Literary Festival (HLF) 2025. The threeday open-to-all event began on Friday at Sattva Knowledge City. Highlighting that Hyderabad is not just a city of tall buildings but also of warm-

hearted people, poetry and discovery, Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma officially inaugurated the Hyderabad Literary Festival (HLF) 2025. In his address, he emphasised that in today's world of technology, we are losing touch with books. He also noted that people in Hyderabad love writing on various subjects and announced that the festival might be held at Raj Bhavan next year.

Meanwhile, BP Acharya, author of the first cartoon book showcasing a bureaucrat's journey, reflected on life after retirement. He said, "We are bound by laws, but not by light, even after we retire."

Acharya added that commenting on politicians and bureaucracy is difficult and often leads to jealousy, but he chose to move forward. He emphasised the importance of setting personal boundaries to manage risks.

Manage risks. Satya Mohanty, discussing his book Unpolitically Correct, said it goes beyond being politically correct and focuses on data and facts that are non-political. He noted that politics often takes priority, leading to the disappearance of evidence leading to the disappearance of evidence, which has always been weak in policymaking. He pointed out that evidence is not being properly reviewed. Politics has shifted towards direct transactions and quick results, sidelining long-term welfare. He stressed that sustainability and its consequences are often ignored or hidden.

Reflecting on his tenure, Acharya discussed key policy-making in Cyberabad and Genome Valley, noting that the vision of a globalised city was only partially realised. He highlighted how real estate overshadowed other priorities, driving housing prices beyond the reach of software employees. While he expressed some satisfaction, he also shared feelings of dismay.

Ex-SHO Balu Chowhan in ACB net for accepting bribe

DEEPIKA PASHAM HYDERABAD

Christina Z

Metro Rail key to make Hyd a world-class city ■ Expansion works are in full swing in Old City ■ Compensation paid to 170 people

Highlighting the importance of these services, NVS Reddy said that approximately 5 lakh people use the Metro daily, with 1.25 lakh passengers relying on first and last-mile connectivity services provided by nine companies, including EVZIP.

03

For the first time, EVZIP has introduced women-driven twowheeler electric vehicles under the initiative 'EV Zip Esha.' Around 100 such vehicles have been deployed from Parade Grounds and Secunderabad East Metro stations to areas like Malkajgiri, Sainikpuri, and ECIL. Plans are in place to extend this service to other stations soon.

Senior officials from L&T Metro Rail, including Murli Varadarajan and Rishi Verma, along with Keolis Metro MD SC Mishra, and EVZIP founders Sridhar Sivalenka and Seetharam Cherukupally, attended the event, underscoring the collaborative effort toward Hyderabad's progress.

Advantage Assam 2.0 Roadshow organised to promote investments

Damodar Raja Narasimha in a

The appointment was an

statement.

PNS HYDERABAD

The Government of Assam, in collaboration with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), hosted the "Advantage Assam 2.0" Hyderabad Roadshow at Hotel Taj Krishna on Thursday. This event aimed to promote the "Advantage Assam 2.0 - Investment & Infrastructure Summit 2025," scheduled for February 25-26 in Guwahati.

Assam's Minister for Education and Tribal Affairs Dr Ranoj Pegu highlighted the state's investor-friendly policies and progress in education, including AI-driven school management and new medical and engineering colleges. He also mentioned significant poverty reduction and the launch of Assam Skill and skill development were University. also emphasized.



Assam's Minister for Education and Tribal Affairs Dr Ranoj Pegu, along with Co-Chairman of FICCI Telangana, VV Rama Raju light the lamp at Advantage Assam 2.0" Hyderabad Roadshow at Hotel Taj Krishna

Dr Kalyan Chakravarthy, Meanwhile, Co-Chairman of FICCI Telangana, VV Rama Raju appreciated Assam's Additional Chief Secretary, noted Assam's economic potential in semiconductors, aerospace and renewable energrowth, doubling its GDP in a decade, and the state's focus on mega projects like multi-modal logistics parks. The Tata Group's investments in semiconductors

gy. The Roadshow highlighted Assam's vision for inclusive development and global investment opportunities.

ment of private ambulance drivers in illegal organ transplantation and to monitor surgeries at private and corporate hospitals more closely. He emphasised the need to maintain comprehensive records of all surgeries, similar to the registration process for pregnant women.

Pradesh and Kerala, should be noti-

Minister Rajanarasimha noted that

The Minister also directed officials

investigate the alleged

Meanwhile, senior sources also explained that this illegal organ transplantation had many questions on how one hospital right among housing localities could pull off business. The officials are also looking into how the District Medical Health Officer of Rangareddy did not know about the racket when it was freely doing for the last six months. However, the eyewitness told the Police that there are all dark rooms inside the hospital with no

staff but one technician used to enter the premises.

PNS HYDERABAD

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) apprehended L Balu Chowhan, previously SHO of Shahinayatgunj police station for demand-ing Rs 50,000 bribe to remove a complainant's name as suspect from a missing case.

The ACB officials said that the accused officer allegedly demanded Rs 1,50,000 from the complainant to remove his name from the suspect list in a missing case registered at Shahinayathgunj police station and to avoid further harassment. After negotiations, the bribe amount was reduced to Rs 50,000. The officer's actions were deemed improper and dishonest, violating his public duty.

Inspector Balu Chowhan was arrested and produced before the Principal Special Judge for SPE and ACB cases at Nampally, Hyderabad. The case remains under investigation.

Parks, roads encroached in Ameenpur: HYDRAA

PNS HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency (HYDRAA) in its preliminary survey has concluded that parks and roads have been encroached in Venkataramana Colony of Ameenpur

Municipality. In a statement, HYDRAA has said that it initiated more efforts to investigate land encroachments in Ameenpur Municipality. focusing on roads, parks and government lands. Residents of Venkataramana Colony lodged complaints with HYDRAA, alleging

that Golden Key Ventures encroached upon parks, roads and plots in their neighborhood, specifically in survey numbers 152 and 153. Initial findings confirmed the encroachments. prompting HYDRAA to plan a more detailed survey in collaboration with Survey of India and ED Survey teams.

ARTS & CULTURE OF HYD

Chowrangee hosts Raag-o-Rang

PNS HYDERABAD

Chowrangee, a new platform for arts and culture in Hyderabad, hosted its first event, Raag-o-Rang, on Friday evening at Shilpakala Vedika. The event featured music and drama, with participation from Hyderabad's Bengali community and their families.

Retired Supreme Court judge Pinaki Ghose, Special Chief Secretary for IT Jayesh Ranjan and other notable guests attended.

Hindustani vocalist Sounak Chattopadhyay rendered a special tribute to Mohammad Rafi on his birth centenary. Known for blending Indian



Retired Supreme Court judge Pinaki Ghose and Special Chief Secretary for IT Jayesh Ranjan among notable guests at the Raag-o-Rang hosted by Chourangee

ago. Gauhar Jaan's recordings

classical music with modern Gauhar Jaan, the first Indian genres like Bollywood songs musician who recorded on a and ghazals, Sounak mesmer-Gramophone over a century ized the audience.

The evening also featured made her famous and she later Arpita Chatterjee, a renowned supported India's freedom theatre artiste, in My Name is movement at Mahatma Jaan. She portrayed the role of Gandhi's request.

Petex India and Hyd Kids Fair to be held from Jan 31 to Feb 2

PNS HYDERABAD

With pet adoption emerging as therapy, India's largest pet expo, Petex India (7th edition), and the Hyderabad Kids Fair will take place from January 31 to February 2 at the Hitex Exhibition Centre.

At a press conference on Friday, Business Head of Hitex, TG Srikanth shared that Petex will run alongside the Kids Fair and the firstever Kids Business Carnival. Supported by Carniwel, Petex will feature over 60 exhibitors, including companies from Turkey, Japan, Singapore, Germany, and more. He noted



that visitors can expect 70+ varieties of ornamental fish, birds, horses, the International Cat Championship, dog fashion shows, and demonstrations by K9 School. The Indian Cat

Club will organise the Cat Championship, with rare breeds like Mainecoon and British Shorthair priced between Rs 80,000 and Rs 2 lakh

The Kids Expo, supported

by Akshayakalpa Organic, will showcase over 60 exhibitors. The Kids Business Carnival, supported by Meru International School, will feature children's entrepreneurial projects like robotic pro-jects, DIY games and hand-made products. Over 90 young entrepreneurs are expected. Additional events include a

Kids Run, the Masqati India Bake Show, and an investor meeting with five angel investors. Over 25,000 visitors are expected, with tickets available through BookMyShow and PayTm available Insider.

A graduate with a diploma in web and graphic design, Karli Naveen Kumar, was arrested by the Special Operations Team (SOT) of LB Nagar and Maheshwaram Zone, in coordination with Pahadi Shareef police, for operating a large-scale fake Indian currency notes (FICN) manufacturing and distribution racket. Naveen, a resident of Mahabubnagar, used his expertise in multi-media and design to create counterfeit Rs 500 notes worth Rs 5 lakh.

Counterfeiter

arrested

PNS HYDERABAD

Police seized an array of equipment from his rented house in KCR Colony, Divitipalli, Mahabubnagar.

lelangana the pioneer 04HYDERABAD | SATURDAY | JANUARY 25, 2025

MP praises CM for 'attracting' massive investments

PNS VADADRI BHUVANGIRI

Bhongir Lok Sabha member Chamal Kiran Kumar Reddy and Tungaturthi MLA Mandula Sameelu countered the allegations made by BRS leaders in regard to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's Davos tour.

Speaking at a media conference here on Friday, they stated that Telangana has attracted the highest investments in India

They pointed out that the former chief minister did not know about Davos and the Secretariat, and only knew about farmhouses.

In the last nine years, the previous rulers brought Rs 25,750 crore rupees in investments whereas CM Revanth Reddy has already brought Rs 1,78,950 crore in

just one year. They also mentioned that over 50,000 people will get employment from these investments.

BRS leaders cannot tolerate the development and welfare programs being carried out by the Congress government and are speaking against it.

They also criticised the BRS leaders, saying they were unable to handle the huge investments coming into the state and were speaking out of jealousy.

The companies that have come forward to invest are not small companies but large ones.

They requested that if there are any mistakes in the government's programmes, the opposition can point them out. But the opposi-tion leaders should not spread misinformation.

HOUSING IN URBAN AREAS Centre to allot more than its share to Telangana: Union

PNS KARIMNAGAR

The Centre would allot more than its share to Telangana in the one crore houses to be built by it in urban areas as the state government did not take the benefit of the houses sanctioned earlier, Union Minister Manohar Lal said on Friday.

Addressing a public meeting after attending various development programmes in

Karimnagar, he said the state can be compensated by allotting more in view of its loss in construction of the houses in the past.

Lal, who highlighted the NDA government's various welfare and development schemes, said tap water connections have been provided to 12 crore houses in the country under Jal Jeevan Mission.

Under the Jal Jeevan Mission, 12 crore households across the country have been provided with tap connections. In Telangana, 38.3 lakh house-holds have received tap connec-

tions. Nearly every family in the rural areas of Telangana has access to tap connections, made possible through the Jal Jeevan Mission.

The previous BRS government, however, claimed this achievement as their own under the name of "Mission Bhagiratha.

It is unfortunate that the previous BRS government did not implement the PM Rural Housing Scheme, depriving the poor of a home. It is worth mentioning that in

the neighboring state of Andhra Pradesh, over 20 lakh homes were approved by the



Union Minister Manohar Lal addressing a public meeting in Karimnagar on Friday

central government. The Union Minister for

Housing and Urban Affairs and Power also said Karimnagar and Warangal in Telangana have been included among the 'smart cities' programme taken up by the Centre in 100 corporations in the country.

He also said the Centre would extend financial and technical support to address the problem of dumpyard in Karimnagar, also assuring that there would be no power shortage for Telangana.

Union Minister of State for Home Bandi Sanjay Kumar, who is Lok Sabha member from Karimnagar, Telangana's Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar and Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and BRS MLA Gangula Kamalakar were present on the occasion.

Bandi's efforts contribute to resolution of dump yard problem

The dedicated efforts of Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar have finally paid off. The long-standing 'dump yard' issue that has been troubling the people of Karimnagar for years is now on its way to resolution, thanks to the visit of Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar

Bandi Sanjay's relentless efforts to address this problem have yielded results, with the Union Minister announcing at a public meeting that the Central government would ensure the issue is resolved. He also promised to ensure that any necessary funding is provided. This announcement has brought

immense joy to the people of Karimnagar, who are now hopeful of a permanent solution. Political leaders across party lines and the public have acknowledged this achievement as a testament to Bandi Sanjay's determination and hard work. Bandi Sanjay's strategic approach to bring Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar to Karimnagar and secure these crucial announcements was commendable

said the people. On another front, the collaborative efforts of Minister Ponnam Prabhakar and BRS MLA Gangula Kamalakar with Bandi Sanjay for Karimnagar's development was hailed by people

Need to complete developmental work on time stressed



SCCL develops eco park in Kothagudem

PNS KOTHAGUDEM

Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) has developed an urban eco-park near Kothagudem, at an investment of Rs 3 crore. Located near the closed open-cast mines, the park is attracting both tourists and students on study tours focused on nature conservation.

The initiative is part of SCCL's efforts to comply with the Union Environment Ministry's directive for mining companies to mitigate environmental impact. Initially, SCCL planted trees around the closed mines; now, they've taken it

further by creating eco-parks. Spanning over eight hectares, the eco-park features several attractions, including a butterfly garden, a medicinal plant-themed park, a bonsai garden, a palm tree collection from various nations, and a desert plant section. The park also includes two ponds spread across five acres and a Buddha Vanam to offer a peaceful space for meditation. Other

amenities include a bird-watching center, a viewpoint, toilets, and a cafeteria, all nestled within hills and surrounded by dense greenery.

SCCL plans to eventually transfer the eco-park to the state's tourism development department once it is fully established. The state government is showing increasing interest in eco-tourism as it continues to grow in popularity.

Additionally, SCCL is developing another eco-park in the Srirampur area and aims to establish similar parks in all 11 mining regions across six districts in Telangana over the next two to three years. These ecoparks will be located near future mine closures, with plans to hand them over to the government once completed.

Alongside the eco-park, SCCL is also developing a cycling park and a four-kilometer trekking path on the overburden mounds of the nearby GautamKhani open-cast mine. The area will eventually be upgraded into an eco-adventure park.

Man climbs tower to protest 'exclusion' from Indiramma

PNS SIDDIPET

The Congress government has been holding Gram and Ward Sabhas as part of its initiative to transparently identify eligible beneficiaries for welfare schemes, such as Rythu Bharosa, Indiramma Atmiya Bharosa, Indiramma Housing and new white ration cards. But, the meeting have been marred by protests by a section of people whose names are missing from the list of beneficiaries.

People are confronting officials and elected representatives at several places. Recently, in protest against the "exclusion" of his name from the beneficiary list related to Indiramma Housing Scheme, a man climbed a cell tower. Mindla Raju, a resident of Lachapet

village in the Dubaka Municipality area, climbed the tower demanding that his name be included in the list.

On Friday, when officials released the vince him to come down, but of no avail. beneficiary list for the Indiramma Raju alleged that many ineligible individeme at a village meeting. Raju became upset as his name was missciaries. ing. He climbed the cell tower and threatened to jump if officials did not include his name in the list. He also demanded a guarantee from district in-charge Minister Konda Surekha. Officials and the police tried to conhim of justice.



A man staging protest on cell tower at Latchapet village in Medak district on Friday

uals were included in the list of

PNS SURVAPET

the Garidepalli police sta

Uttam escapes unhurt as

convoy meets with accident

Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy narrowly escaped an accident. Uttam Kumar Reddy was on his way to attend the Urs celebrations at John Pahad from his constituency Huzurnagar when an accident occurred in his convoy.

While travelling in the convoy, the minister stopped his car when he noticed some Congress party leaders and workers standing in front of



Two of the damaged vehicles in Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy's convoy

tion, a mandal headquarters. PNS KHAMMAM

The driver suddenly stopped the car, and as a Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao has emphasised the result, six cars following the convoy, travelling at high speed, applied their brakes simultaneously, causing a chain collision

No one was injured in the accident. After the minister's car moved on, the police arrived and cleared the traffic. Uttam Kumar Reddy's escape from the accident brought relief to his fans and

need to complete proposed developmental works on time and with quality. The Minister was laying the foundation stone for road development and expansion works from

Balepalli to Balapet in Division 8 of Khammam Municipal Corporation limits. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister mentioned that road

expansion works were being undertaken with an investment of Rs 3.95 crore, which would benefit the medical college. He further stated that road expansion works would also be carried out in the coming days. The government would provide land and construct houses for the poor who would lose their homes in the road expansion project

The Minister also directed officials to make efforts to provide housing plots to the impoverished. He highlighted that drainage works would be launched with Rs 249 crore from Saturday, to complete



Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao laying the foundation stone for road works in Kahammam on Friday

them before summer.

Regarding the construction of a slaughterhouse, the Minister announced that Rs 8 crore would be allocated, and directed the Commissioner to identify suitable land and start work promptly.

He announced that Rs 1 crore would be allocated to clean and maintain municipal parks in Khammam, ensuring they are pleasant spaces for citizens. The development works for the Velugumatla Urban Park, with an investment of ?5 crore, should also be expedited, he added.

Addressing the farmers of Raghunathapalem mandal, the Minister promised to provide necessary amenities in Khammam city and improve facilities at the farmers' market. He also said that steps would taken to ensure better profits for local farmers by promot-

ng the sale of fresh vegetables. In the programme, Municipal Commissioner Abhishek Augustya mentioned that developmental works in the areas merged with the Municipal Corporation were being undertaken as per the minister's guidance.

A long march for justice finds mention in law journals

PNS WARANGAL

An unassuming rural man, Burla Vishnu, rose to prominence by championing the cause of his village. Standing firm against opposition from within the community, he relentlessly pursued justice. Skilfully invoking Constitutional provisions and highlighting legal loopholes, he navigated the judicial system with determination. Despite not contesting elections, his tireless efforts earned him the position of Sarpanch. Burla Vishnu's extraordinary journey has now found a place in law journals.

The village, Shivunipalle under the Station Ghanpur constituency in Jangaon district, has made history. The historic event that took place in this village has found a place in the law book.

The case dates back to the 2013 Panchayat elections, in which the Sarpanch position in Shivunipalle was reserved for the Scheduled Tribes woman according to the 2011 census. After the state reorganisation, the gov-



Burla Vishnu

ernment introduced a new Panchayat Raj Act in 2018, and in 2019, a new notification for the Gram Panchayat elections was issued. According to the new law, the Sarpanch position in Shivunipalle was reserved for an Scheduled Tribes general candidate. The village leaders had formed a Joint Action Committee (JAC), decided to boycott the elections, arguing that it was inappropriate to reserve the position for the Scheduled Tribes community twice. The JAC had prevented anyone from filing nominations for all 14 wards and also the post of sarpanch. Subsequently, in February 2019, the Election Commission issued another notification for the elections to the vacant and pending positions across the state. Once again, the JAC called for a boycott of the elections. However, a resident of the village, Burla Vishnu, filed

his nomination for Ward 8. In response, the JAC fielded a candidate to oppose him. The elections for this single ward were held on February 28, 2019. In this unusual election, Vishnu won with a surprising victory against the JAC's candidate. Having won as the only ward member in the village, Vishnu approached the court to be appointed as the in-charge Sarpanch, citing Section 38(3) of the Panchayat Raj Act, which stipulates that in the event of unfilled Sarpanch and Deputy Sarpanch positions, the authorities must appoint an in-charge within 15 days. On the orders of the High Court, on January 11, 2023, that Vishnu be appointed as the tempo-rary sarpanch. However, the District

Panchayat Officer (DPO) rejected the order citing Sections 2(14) and 136(3), which require a minimum of two or three ward members for such an appointment.

Not willing to give up, Vishnu filed another writ petition (W.P. No. 8973) in the High Court in February. The court once again directed the authorities to appoint Vishnu as the temporary Sarpanch in April, but the Collector rejected the order citing the same sections. Vishnu continued to pursue the case and filed a third writ petition (W.P. No. 14667) in May. Finally, on October 20, the High Court ruled in favour of Vishnu, ordering the authorities to appoint him as the temporary sarpanch.

The Collector, following the court's decision, issued orders on November 18, 2023, and Vishnu was appointed as the in-charge sarpanch, and he officially took charge on December 13. Though he served for only a short period, his efforts led to significant development in the village

The locals, upon learning of the incident, assembled at the cell tower, and pleaded with Raju to come down. He descended the tower after Municipal Commissioner Ramesh Kuamr assured

Congress trying to suppress farmers' protest: Jagadish

PNS NALGONDA

The Congress government has unleashed repressive measures to suppress the farmers and the poor from staging protests, said former minister G Jagadish Reddy on Friday. An undeclared emergency was prevailing in the State, he said.

The people have been protesting the failure of the government. The people have exposed the failure of the government. The BJP and the Congress have colluded with each other to exploit the people. The Central and State

governments. He alleged that the government was making futile efforts to suppress the growing dis-

Annual sports day held

in Sri Chaitanya School

The grand inauguration of

the Udaan Sports Event was held at Sri Chaitanya Global

Vista School on Puttakota

The event was inaugurat-

ed by Additional Deputy

Commissioner of Police

Naresh Kumar, District Youth Sports Officer T Sunil

Reddy, Corporator Karuna

Saidubabu, and renowned

tennis coach Nagaraju, who

lit the ceremonial lamp to

begin the sports activities.

PNS KHAMMAM

Road.

content among farmers and the public. Reddy accused the government of conspiring to block meetings organized by various political parties and claimed that the true reflection of people's opinions could be seen in village meetings.

He further criticized the government for not fulfilling promises made to the

OVERNMENT OF TELANGANA PANCHAYAT RAJ ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICES (3" & 4" & 5" Call) Online tenders are invited for the NIT No 87/2024-25 (3rd Call), 88/2024-25 to 93/2024-25 (4th Call), 94/2024-25 To 96/2024-25 (5th Call) from the eligible registered contractor or 10 works in Khammam district sanctioned under SDF Funds with an estimate cost of Rs.67.45 Lakhs. Description of items ECV, EMD, availability of tender documents, important dates, tender conditions, eligibility of tender and all other details are available from 27.01.2025 onwerds on https://tender.telangana.gov.in. Sd- District P.R. Enginee R.O. No.: \$584-PR/CLIADVT/12834-25, DI. 34-01-2925 PIU Khamman





Former minister G Jagadish Reddy speaking at a media conference i algonda on Friday

> people and stated that it was the responsibility of leaders to lead the people who were ready for strug-

He also pointed out that farmers were ready to revolt against the government due to issues like power cuts, fertilizer shortages, and the mishandling of the Rythu Bharosa and loan waiver schemes.



Nation 05

HYDERABAD | SATURDAY | JANUARY 25, 2025

ACROSS THE STATES



35 acres of illegal poppy cultivation destroyed

anipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Friday said that a combined team of police, CRPF and forest officials destroyed 35 acres of illegal poppy cultivation in Kangpokpi district. Singh, in a post on X, said, "I commend the Kangpokpi Police, 133 Bn CRPF, Forest department, and the executive magistrate for their coordinated and resolute efforts in conducting the destruction drive of illegal poppy cultivation at Lhungjang village under Saikul police station. "The destruction of approximately 35 acres of illegal poppy cultivation is a significant step toward our shared vision of a drug-free Manipur. I urge all stakeholders and citizens to join hands in this fight against drug-related activities and illegal practices," Singh added.



JP Singh appointed India's new ambassador to Israel

easoned diplomat Jitender Pal Singh was on Friday appointed as India's new ambassador to Israel, a Oposting seen as important in view of the current situation in the Middle-east. Singh, a 2002-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) diplomat, is presently serving as the joint secretary in the crucial Pakistan-Afghanistan-Iran (PAI) division of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). "He is expected to take up the assignment shortly," the MEA said in a brief statement. As India's pointperson for Afghanistan, he played an important role in execution of India's policy approach towards the Taliban set up in that country. In November, Singh met the Taliban's acting defence minister Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob and discussed ways to expand the relations between the two sides. The meeting is believed to have paved the way for Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri's talks with Taliban regime's acting foreign minister Amir Khan Muttaqi in Dubai over two weeks back. Singh's posting to Israel comes amid an upswing in India's bilateral ties with that country.

Ten oppn MPs suspended

PNS NEW DELHI

Ten opposition members attending the joint committee of Parliament meeting on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill were suspended on Friday as they accused its chairperson of reducing its proceedings to a "farce", while the committee readies to adopt its draft report next week. The appearance of Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, a moderate Hurriyat leader who is also the

religious head of Muslims in Kashmir, before the panel to voice his disapproval of the pro-posed law was the highlight of the meeting but not before opposition members' noisy protests drowned its proceedings till their suspension.

Opposition MPs alleged that Jagdambika Pal, the committee's chairman, was steamrolling the agenda at the government's behest with an eye on the February 5 Delhi polls. They later wrote to Lok Sabha

Speaker Om Birla to ask Pal to postpone the January 27 meeting and consult other members on the next date and agenda.

Pal accused opposition mem-bers, especially the Trinamool Congress' Kalyan Banerjee, of hurling abuses and insults at him in their bid to scuttle the proceedings.

They broke all boundaries, he



The suspension was for Friday and opposition MPs can attend the next meeting.

The January 27 meeting is set to consider the Bill clause by clause before finalising the report. Opposition MPs have sought more time to allow them to frame their views after studying the views of stakeholders.

the country in the last 10 years

is unparalleled. We are already

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occupy the third spot... viksit

Bharat is not a pipedream. It will

be realised by 2047, when we cel-

ebrate the centenary of

These members, including Banerjee, DMK's A Raja, Congress' Naseer Hussain, and BJP MPs traded allegations, with the former insisting that they protested in a civilised manner after not getting a response from

BJP MP Aparajita Sarangi termed the conduct of Banerjee, often the most vocal opposition

member, as "disgusting" and said opposition members created a ruckus as part of a design to

sabotage the meeting. Banerjee said Pal informed them on January 21, when the committee members were in Lucknow meeting stakeholders, that the next meetings would be held on January 24-25. Raja wrote on behalf of opposition MPs, requesting the chairman to schedule the meeting after

January 30 or 31 but in vain. He said the agenda of Friday's meeting was changed late on Thursday and intimated to members close to midnight. "The chairman is treating

opposition members as domes-tic helps and ordering them around," Banerjee said.

He said Pal received several phone calls in the meeting and alleged that he was taking orders from senior government members.

Slamming his critics, Pal said he was steering the committee in the most democratic manner and allowed every opposition MP to register their view whenever they wanted.

It was the 35th meeting on

Friday, he added. The seasoned BJP MP claimed that opposition members were spreading propaganda against the Bill's proposals in a similar way they allegedly stoked fears over the implication of the abro-gation of Article 370 and instant iple talaq.

Pal added that he adjourned the meeting twice so as to restore order and was forced to suspend them on a motion moved by BJP member Nishikant Dubey due to their "ruckus"

The suspended members were Banerjee and Nadeem-ul Haque (Trinamool Congress), Mohammad Jawed, Imran Masood and Hussain (Congress), Raja and Mohamed Abdullah (DMK), Asaduddin Owaisi (AIMIM), Mohibullah (Samajwadi Party) and Arvind Sawant (Shiv Sena-UBT).

Ready to work with other nations on water management: Patil

PNS DAVOS

India is ready to collaborate with other countries on water conservation efforts, Jal Shakti Minister C R Patil told the global leaders here during the World Economic Forum Annual

Meeting. Participating in a discussion here during the five-day summit ending on Friday, Patil also list-ed out the sustainable water management practices adopted by the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

India is ready to share them for the benefit of the world community, he told the global leaders present at the meeting. "India is prepared for collab-

orations on potential water management issues," he said and called upon the world to engage in water conservation efforts, highlighting the challenges that need attention.

He also urged all nations to come forward for equitable water management.

He reiterated India's commitment and readiness to promote global cooperation and initiate transformative discussions to ensure a water-secure future.

at the governments preceding Modi's rise to power in 2014 for failure to give the likes of Karpoori Thakur and former Prime Minister Chaudhary Chaun Singh their dua

"I recall the excitement in

Rajya Sabha when the announcement of Bharat Ratna

for Karpoori Thakur and

Chaudhary Charan Singh was

made. A thought sprung in my

mind -- the honour came 36

years after Thakur's death. Why

did it not happen earlier? There

is now definitely a shift. Our

heroes (Adarsh) are being pulled

Charan Singh their due.



this issue very seriously. Water conservation, water security and ensuring access to water for all are his top priorities. There was a time when many areas of Gujarat faced a severe water crisis, but the visionary steps taken under his leadership have brought water security and stability across the region," he said.

"Prime Minister Modi takes

Patil, the first Indian Water Resources Minister to participate in the WEF, said that PM Modi set a target of at least 75 Amrit lakes in every district, while today, over 60,000 lakes have been built or revived, contributing significantly to water resources and management efforts.

India to be 'Vishwa Guru' by 2047: VP Dhankhar

PNS SAMASTIPUR (BIHAR)

Vice-president Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday lavished praise on the Narendra Modi government at the Centre, asserting that the country has witnessed "unparalleled" growth in the last decade, causing people's aspirations to soar.

Dhankhar made the observations at Samastipur district in Bihar, the birthplace of former chief minister and Bharat Ratna awardee Karpoori Thakur, where a function was organised on the 101st birth anniversary of the late socialist leader.

'The growth witnessed by become the vishwa guru", said

SAIF ATTACK CASE



"The growth witnessed by the country in the last 10 years is unparalleled. We are already the fifth largest economy and in five years from now, we will occupy the third spot... viksit Bharat is not a pipedream. It will be realised by 2047, when we celebrate the centenary of Independence. Bharat shall become the vishwa guru", said Dhankhar.

Dhankhar. He lauded Modi for "zealously (junoon ke saath)" bringing in schemes that improved the quality of life of the common people by providing them with gas connections, electricity and toi-"The people have now tasted

Independence. Bharat shall development. Their aspirations

are reaching the skies", said Dhankhar, even as he urged the youth "do not constrict yourselves by thinking in terms of government jobs. The government's policies of today are meant to tap your unlimited potential. Make full use of the opportunities".

out of obscurity and being given The VP also took a veiled dig what is their due".

JALGAON TRAIN TRAGEDY CRS probe not needed if passengers die due to own negligence, say experts





PNS NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) supremo Arvind Kejriwal addressed a rally in the rural constituency of Najafgarh here on Friday, promising roundthe-clock electricity supply for free if his party retains power in the upcoming Delhi Assembly polls.

Claiming to be the "only orician



Indian fisherman dies in Pak custody; 8th in 2 years

n Indian fisherman, who was languishing in the Karachi jail even after completion of his sentence, has died, Anofficial sources said on Friday. The fisherman identified as Babu died Thursday, they said. He is the eighth Indian fisherman who died in Pakistan in last two years, the sources said. "Babu was arrested by Pakistani authorities in 2022. Despite completion of his sentence and confirmation of his Indian nationality, he was not released by Pakistan authorities," said a source. One-hundred-eighty Indian fishermen who have completed their sentences await release from Pakistani jail, the sources said. India has been continuously raising the issue of early release of prisoners with the Pakistan side.

Custody of accused extended, father says he is being framed

PNS MUMBAI

Police on Friday told a Mumbai court that they needed to conduct a facial recognition test of the Bangladeshi man arrested allegedly stabbing Bollywood actor Saif Ali Khan to ascertain that he was the one in the CCTV footage. The court extended the police

custody of Shariful İslam Shehzad Mohammad Rohilla Amin Fakir (30) till January 29, while defence lawyers questioned the actor's version of the incident, asking why he did not call the police immediately.

Shariful's father said he will soon approach Bangladesh foreign ministry and the Indian High Commission for the release of his son, who he

claimed was being framed. Shariful was arrested on January 19 for allegedly breaking into Saif Ali Khan's 12th floor flat in Bandra for robbery three days earlier, and stabbing

the actor multiple times when confronted.

The police on Friday sought his further custody, claiming that while substantial progress had been made in the probe, more interrogation was required to investigate certain crucial aspects.

Public prosecutors told the court that facial recognition test of the accused was needed to be done at a Forensic Science Laboratory to ascertain that he was the same person seen in the CCTV footage recovered from the staircase of Khan's building. The prosecution's statement followed reported claims made

by the accused's father that the person seen in the CCTV footage was not his son.

Judicial magistrate K C Rajput extended Shariful's police remand till January 29, noting that it was necessary considering the nature of the offence and progress in the probe.

An independent probe from the Commissioner of Railway Safety is unlikely in the Jalgaon train tragedy in light of the conduct of the passengers who overlooked their safety, railway sources said.

On Wednesday, 12 passengers were mowed down by a train coming on an adjacent track after they stepped down from their train due to a rumour of fire in North Maharashtra's Jalgaon district.

Though the Railway Board on Thursday appointed a team of its five senior officials to probe the tragedy, a probe by the CRS is unlikely, experts say.

The CRS is an independent body under the administrative control of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and is empowered by various acts and rules to inspect, investigate and advise in the matters of safety of rail travel and train operations. "As per the norm, the rail

administration informed the CRS, Central Circle, Manoj Arora, about the accident and now it's his call to take the probe or not," a railway source said. Arora could not be contacted to comment on the matter

despite several attempts.



Meanwhile, a section of safetrain, which had stopped due to ty experts, quoting The Railway pulling of the emergency chain (Notices of the Inquiries into between Maheji and Pardhade Accidents) Rules, 1998, said that stations at 4.45 pm on Wednesday, remained on the the death of or injury to any train passenger is treated as a 'serious side tracks despite the imminent railway accident' and mandates danger. The approaching Karnataka CRS investigation.

They, however, said that if the death or injury is due to a passenger's own negligence, it cannot be treated as such and it's the discretion of CRS to initiate a a hurry. The 1998 Rules has defined probe or not.

More details of the Jalgaon train tragedy which emerged later suggested that passengers of the Pushpak Express, who got down from the train due to a fire rumour, had sufficient time to move to safer locations as the Karnataka Express which mowed down 12 of them arrived 20 minutes later.

ous railway accident' for the sake Officials in New Delhi said of CRS inquiry," a retired CRS that those who alighted from the said requesting anonymity.

electricity", Kejriwal warned the voters against bringing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to power. "If the BJP comes to power,

your free electricity will be stopped and you will be slapped with bills of Rs 5,000 or more, he said.

Kejriwal slammed Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath over the electricitysupply scenario in Uttar Pradesh. "I want to ask the Uttar Pradesh chief minister, why are there power cuts for five to eight hours in Lucknow? Why are there six-hour power cuts in Noida?" he asked.

The former Delhi chief minister also alleged that he was pressured to hand over the power companies operating in the national capital to a close ally of Prime Minister Narendra Modi but claimed that he resisted the move to safeguard the interests of Delhiites.

The AAP supremo accused the BJP of continuously targeting and abusing him. He also took the opportunity to reiterate his party's development promises in the face of a tough electoral challenge from the saffron party.

CBI busts Rs 350 crore countrywide crypto ponzi scam swooped down at locations in

PNS NEW DELHI

The CBI has conducted search operations across seven locations after registering a case of Rs 350 crore crypto ponzi scam against seven persons, officials said Friday.

The accused persons were allegedly running seven separate modules based in the cities of Delhi, Hazaribag, Bathinda, Ratlam, Valsad, Pudukkottai and Chittorgarh, taking money from gullible investors promising investments in cryptocurrencies, they said.

"These ponzi schemes were being promoted through multiple social media groups. An analysis of bank account transactions and cryptocurrency wal-



Delhi, Jharkhand, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan. During the searches, the CBI seized digital virtual assets totalling USD 38,414 (approximately) in the cryptocurrency wallets of the accused persons, which had been digitally secured for investigation. "The searches resulted in the

recovery of cash amounting to ?34.2 lakh(approx), along with lets has revealed that the illegal proceeds from these schemes were being converted into crypsignificant digital evidence, tocurrencies to obscure their oriincluding seven mobile phones, one laptop, one tablet, three hard disks, 10 pen drives, memgin," CBI's spokesperson said in a statement. It is alleged that they ory cards, SIM cards, ATM/debit had conducted transactions of over Rs 350 crore in these cards, email accounts, and sevschemes, the officials said. eral incriminating documents," On Thursday, the agency the statement said

India demands action against elements disrupting screening of 'Emergency' in UK

PNS NEW DELHI

India on Friday said it expects the UK to take strong and appropriate action against anti-India elements allegedly involved in disrupting the screenings of actor Kangana Ranaut's new movie "Emergency" in that country.

Freedom of speech and expression cannot be applied selectively and those obstructing it must be held accountable, External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal



screening of the movie was disrupted in North-West London,

on how the film 'Emergency', which was being screened in several halls, was being obstructed," Jaiswal said.

Express, which ran over 12 pas-

sengers, passed by at around 5.05

pm, they said, while dismissing

reports that some passengers of

Pushpak jumped off the train in

what constitutes a 'serious rail-

way accident' and according to

it death or injury of a single pas-

senger can be treated as a 'seri-

ous railway accident.' Not only

that, even loss to railway prop-

erties amounting to over Rs 2

crore can also be treated as a 'seri-

"We consistently raised concerns with the UK government regarding incidents of violent protest and intimidation by anti-India elements," he said, responding to a question at his weekly media briefing.

"Freedom of speech and expression cannot be applied selectively and those obstructing it must be held accountable. We hope that the UK side will take appropriate action against those responsible," he added. Jaiswal said the Indian high commission in London remained in touch with the Indian community members for their safety and welfare.

"We expect the UK side to take strong and appropriate action in this matter," he said.

"Emergency" is a biographical drama that is seen as an attempt to chronicle events that took place under the leadership of former prime minister Indira Gandhi during the period when she imposed Emergency in the country.

There were reports that the Wolverhampton, Birmingham,

Slough, Staines and Manchester. "We have seen several reports HYDERABAD | SATURDAY | JANUARY 25, 2025

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Rekindling historic ties

The President of Indonesia is the chief guest at the Republic Day, a fitting tribute to the friendship between two nations

ndia will celebrate its 76th Republic Day on January 26, 2025, marking a moment to reflect on the country's remarkable journey since its first Republic Day in 1950. This year's celebrations will have a special touch as Prabowo Subianto, President of Indonesia, will be the chief guest. His presence is a reminder of the deep historical and cultural ties between the two nations, which have seen their share of highs and lows but continue to thrive. Incidentally, the chief guest at the first Republic Day parade was President Sukarno of Indonesia, highlighting the camaraderie between two newly independent nations that had emerged from colonial rule. The relations between the two countries have come a full circle. The early years of India-Indonesia relations were marked by solidarity and mutual support. Biju Patnaik, a prominent Indian freedom fighter, played a key role in aiding Indonesia's struggle for independence, even flying its leaders to safety during critical moments. This partnership extended to global platforms like the Bandung



Conference of 1955, which laid the groundwork for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), co-sponsored by India and Indonesia.

India has come a long way since 1950. From grappling with post-independence challenges like poverty, illiteracy and infrastructural deficits, the nation has emerged as one of the world's fastest-growing economies. It boasts advancements in science, technology, space exploration and global diplomacy, while remaining rooted in its democratic ethos. Similarly, Indonesia has evolved into a vibrant democracy and a leading voice in Southeast Asia. Both nations share a legacy of anti-colonial struggles and have worked

together in various domains, including trade, culture and defence. The partnership between India and Indonesia has seen its ups and downs. In the 1950s, ties were warm and cooperative, but by the 1960s, geopolitical differences, particularly over relations with China and the 1965 India-Pakistan war, strained the relationship. Indonesia's support for Pakistan during that conflict and claims over parts of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands led to significant diplomatic tensions. However, the 1970s marked a period of reconciliation, with agreements on maritime boundaries and a renewed focus on cooperation. Today, Indonesia is one of India's largest trading partners in Southeast Asia, with bilateral trade reaching nearly \$30 billion in 2023-24. The two nations have also strengthened defence ties, including a Defence Cooperation Agreement signed in 2018, signaling a strategic partnership in a region increasingly shaped by competition with China. Prabowo Subianto's visit as the chief guest at India's Republic Day parade holds symbolic and strategic importance. This visit underscores the growing warmth in India-Indonesia relations. The presence of the Indonesian president at this year's parade is a tribute to the enduring friendship between two nations that have weathered challenges and found common ground in their aspirations for peace, prosperity and global cooperation.

The complex terrain of relationships



06

nion

VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

Relationships, whether personal or professional, are a delicate balancing act of emotions, perspectives and communication

elationships are a tricky business. Two people who, at one stage of life, can agree so well that they cannot see or believe in having any difference in the point of view that they will hold. Different perspectives are an enigma; affection, agreement and endorsement are all rolled into one. Identification with each other is more important than identity any day. Very often, it is the bedrock of affection and togetherness in action. The same couple, as time passes and because of hormonal changes in their systems, can and do start having different points of view. What is initially a pleasant disagreement can soon become an assertion of identity. Personality conflicts follow.

These personality conflicts can be a logical derivation, and very often, it is difficult to find the origin of the derivation itself. Coherent dialogue in a spirit of give and take can often be substituted by the urge not only to protect one's turf but also to prove oneself more talented and resourceful. It can often become the source of further identity conflicts. The skill to handle such disagreements cannot be taught and is often taken over by other habits.

These habits may include being short-tempered, incoherent talking and having a high pitch in conversation, which is seen as an extension of good logic. The aberrations are far too many to be recounted, and the results are easy to identify. Instead of working together to resolve the differences, it becomes a battleground to show who can prevail. The rest, as they say, is history. In an era, that is full of talk about skills, it is important at this stage of dialogue to focus on life skills. Two people who cannot get together try to demonstrate who has the right of way in a marital relationship.

slope of not only a difference of

opinion but also a difference in

gives way to preferences and pas-

The life story

enabling research and it has to end of the spectrum to an often do with life skills. Solving incoherent hurtling down the this situation, which afflicts

personalities. The analysis can go and yet difficult. It is easy to

only so far because then logic control if one can limit one's



sion. This is at the root of many marital discords, and it is difficult to reverse the gears and change the pitch. Unfortunately, while there are numerous dissertations in psychology and elsewhere on relationships, practical-oriented thinking in handling relationships is few and at best, commonsensical.

One is merely indicating the value of focused research and showing how a structured approach to problem-solving, even in everyday life, can be very valuable. There is a need to see research as an enabling situation for problem-solving, and many use the phrase 'applied research' for it. In the present day and age, more of the fashion world is about skill, and it is being generously used because of its attractive value in situations that cannot be practically handled. Sometimes it works; sometimes it does not. The important thing is to

realise that research requires insights and the adoption of a structured methodology, even in commonsensical situations. It is this aspect of research that can lead to a better quality of life, which can be termed as

many interpersonal relation-

ships, is simultaneously easy

communication and how

much one talks more wisely, keeping the number of words used in a conversation minimal. The truth is, that the more one seeks to talk and explain, the more complex it can become. Let simple things remain simple; it is a signifi-

cant strategic choice. This approach works because passion subsides, irritations sort itself out and the choice of words and pitch of the voice can be better controlled. One only has to look around to notice how talking less is such THE LIFE an asset in keeping relationships positive. Interpersonal STORY MOVES relationships apart, work rela-FROM ONE tionships, also get affected and the impression of losing END OF THE an argument, even in workspaces, is a personal defeat. This, by itself, is a self-defeat SPECTRUM to an ing proposition. It is selfdefeating because even if one OFTEN wins the argument due to positional power or manipu-INCOHERENT lative skills, the scars of a lost HURTLING argument leave long-lasting damage to relationships. One DOWN THE can indeed often lose a battle to win the war. As indicated SLOPE OF earlier, this applies to work sit-NOT ONLY A uations as much as to real-life, DIFFERENCE OF Gentleness and soft words go

gerous feeling of having 'lost one's face'. Be that as it may, it is necessary to reduce differences, not to personalities, but to find the best way forward. This best way forward must focus on protecting everyone's ego and be in the interest of the larger good. Much will depend on the personality elements of the players in the situation and indeed the time available to sort it out. Many times, a shortage of time necessitates two decisions that are suboptimal and more to 'get along with a job' than finding the best option'. Using tentative words and a hypothesis open to correction and improvement may be the best recipe for conflict resolution. In such situations, the personalities do not win or lose; it is the cause that is han-

growling, smitten by the dan-

dled in a far-sighted way. Examples can be many, and one has to see what the issue at stake is how people perceive the result of the outcome and how they interpret it. In all cases, if there is a loser in an argument, it is best to make him feel that he has not 'lost' non-work situations. and that no personalities are involved. This can be a useful approach to handling insti-



Children holding national flags in a mustard field ahead of Republic Day 2025, at a village near Balurghat

Cooperative commodities exchange: A global vision for farmer empowerment



BINOD ANAND

This initiative leverages technology, blockchain and India's PACS network to empower farmers with fair pricing, sustainability and direct market access

tems. These warehouses,

equipped with real-time

agement systems, will be

strategically located across

Blockchain connectivity

across warehouses will enable

seamless tracking of stored

produce, ensuring reduced

warehouse receipts, which

can be used as collateral for

key agricultural regions.

he agricultural sector is the backbone of many economies, particular ly in India, where nearly 60 per cent of the population depends on farming for their livelihood. Yet, smallholder farmers often remain at the mercy of intermediaries, fluctuating market prices and unequal access to global markets.

To address these challenges and promote equity, sustainability and growth, a bold initiative is proposed: the establishment of a Global Farmer-Centric Cooperative Commodities Exchange (GFCCE). This platform, rooted in the cooperative model, aims to empower farmers by ensuring fair pricing, direct market access, and sustainable practices. This ambitious project resonates with the global agenda of the World Cooperation Economic Forum to foster inclusive economic growth social and equity. Empowering Farmers Through Technology

APEX Integration at the heart of this initiative lies technology—a powerful enabler that can bridge the gap between farmers and markets. The



GFCCE will leverage the Government of India's support to develop a robust and accessible digital platform integrated with blockchain technology to ensure trans-parency and reduce pilferage in the supply chain. Blockchain will create a tamper-proof record of transactions, from production to storage and distribution, enhancing trust and account-

loans, providing them with ability. The project will adopt a immediate financial support. PACS-to-APEX (Primary This interconnected system will not only provide farmers Agricultural Cooperative Societies to Apex-level organwith better access to markets isations) approach, leveraging but also ensure that the sup-India's extensive network of ply chain is efficient, transparover 95,000 PACS. These the backbone for procuresocieties will act as the founment planning and play a vital dational nodes, aggregating produce from farmers at the role in stabilising food prices. village level. The commodities Impact on Food Inflation will then be funnelled The GFCCE's blockchainthrough district and statelevel federations, culminating

at the national apex organisa- olutionise procurement plantion, which will oversee oper- ning and control food inflation. With real-time data on ations, ensure fair pricing and manage exports. To production, storage, and disaddress storage issues, a nettribution, government agenwork of modern warehouses cies will have accurate insights will be constructed and inteinto commodity availability grated with blockchain sysand demand patterns.

This data-driven approach will enable timely procureinventory tracking, tempera-ture controls and pest man-food stocks are adequately food stocks are adequately replenished and distributed. By reducing post-harvest losses and pilferage, the initiative will improve the efficiency of the Public Distribution System (PDS), preventing artificial shortages that often wastage and pilferage. lead to price spikes. Farmers will also receive Additionally, the transparent pricing mechanism of the exchange will curb hoarding and speculation.

This system will also facilitate targeted interventions during periods of surplus or deficit. For instance, in the case of bumper harvests, surplus stocks can be stored effient and secure. It will serve as ciently and exported strategically to global markets, preventing a price crash domestically.

(The writer was a member of the high level MSP committee, enabled supply chain and Ministry of Agriculture; views warehouse network will revare personal)

LETTERS TO

OPINION BUT

DIFFERENCE IN

PERSONALITIES

ALSO A

TRUMP'S HYPOCRISY EXPOSED

Madam — The ultimatum from Trump to end the prolonging Ukraine-Russia war exposes his hypocrisy. He is aware that it is with the pumping of arms by his country and its allies in Europe that Ukraine is continuing the war. He is also aware that the sanction imposed on Russia had failed miserably, as the same EU partners are buying the same Russian oil from different sources like India. Pumping arms and funds into Ukraine on one hand and giving an ultimatum to end the war on the other is rightly understood by one and all as meaningless, non-serious, and merely publicity-orientated. The entire world knows that maximum wars are waged or promoted by his country.

Even while addressing after assuming office, he had demonstrated his imperial thirst by expressing his policy to take over the Panama Canal and Greenland, besides arbitrarily changing the name of the Gulf of Mexico into the Gulf of America. His threat to wage a tariff war goes against the very basic principles of globalisation that promote the free movement of goods, labour, and capital. The world also knows the key role played by the production of arms and promotion of arms trade in the economy of America. Therefore, America needs a war between some countries or the other. Mr. Trump speaking with concern over the huge human loss in Ukraine and Russia due to war is another display of his hypocrisy. Because more devastating impacts are experienced due to climate change, and his actions are hostile to the global efforts to overcome this serious issue. Therefore, one need not attach so much importance to his utterances or Quixotic actions. A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

LIQUOR BAN AT RELIGIOUS SITES Madam-CM of Madhya Pradesh Mohan Yadav has formally announced in Narsinghpur district that a liquor ban

UNESCO honours Mahakumbh

far, especially when gentleness

is received not as a proposition of the weaker person, but as a

characteristic and indicator of

mutual respect.



o foster the honour and delight of every Indian, the 45-day-long Mahakumbh Festival was listed in the UNESCO list as the largest peaceful religious congregation of pilgrims on earth. To disperse the Hindu aesthetic religious and spiritualism at the next

will be implemented in 17 religious places in 11 districts of the state. It is believed that the government will send an order to the administration of the cities of the districts where the liquor ban is to be implemented, and the licensed liquor shops will be closed. He also said that liquor will not be allowed to be sold at any cost in the places where God Ram and Krishna set foot.

These include Ujjain, Amarkantak, Maheshwar, Omkareshwar, Chitrakoot, Mandsaur, etc. In the Narsinghpur program, he also talked about the harm caused to the health of the family due to alcohol. I do not understand one thing: more or less all the politicians in India, in their speeches, there is a lot of mention of the ill effects & demerits of alcohol and the diseases caused by it. All those smart politicians are found appealing to the people that 'please stay away from consuming alcohol; it harms your health. Hey, when these leaders are so concerned about the health of the people, then why do they not declare a complete ban on the production and

tutional issues because every resolution of a conflict should be for the institutional good. (The writer is a well-known management consultant of

The best solution to many conflicts is when both come international repute. The out as winners, and no one is views expressed are personal)

> level, Maha Kumbh is truly a festival of pos itivity and spiritualism in India. From Naga Sadhus to Aghoris to all the other pilgrims. Kumbh is an auspicious celebration of Hindu devotees to enchant spirituality for developing godly connection, inner peace, and spiritual harmony.

A dip in the Triveni Sangam of the three rivers of Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati will be considered as the precursor of all devil deeds done during the lifetime. A congregation of 450 million, including people from local and global communities is one of a kind incidence. It is welcoming that UNESCO added this one-ofa-kind religious festivity to its list. It is a moment of extreme celebration and glee for every Indian back at home. We all welcome the UNESCO listing favourably and positively with utmost joy in our hearts.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

marketing of alcohol?

Jang Bahadur Singh | jamshedpur

SCAMMERS TARGET JOB SEEKERS

Madam — The rise of job scams has become a significant problem, with scammers deceiving job seekers by creating fake job postings. These scammers often promise unsuspecting victims the opportunity to work from home and earn a high income, but only after paying for training or equipment. Research the company thoroughly to verify its legitimacy and reputation. Use reputable job boards and websites to search for job openings.

Report any suspicious activities or job postings to the relevant authorities. By being aware of these job scam tactics and taking the necessary precautions, job seekers can protect themselves from falling victim to these fraudulent schemes

Khushi Uchenia | Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

HYDERABAD | SATURDAY | JANUARY 25, 2025

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SEEKING TRUE SHELTER IN THE DIVINE

Amid the chaos of desires, ego and karmphal, how do we find lasting peace



AJIT KUMAR **BISHNOI**

e are small, ignorant, helpless and unsafe. There should not be any doubt about our smallness with eight billion of us on the earth's planet itself. How knowledgeable we are or can be? Knowledge is unlimited. How much can we learn in one lifetime? Helpless we are from the time we are born till the time comes to dispose of our bodies. Just count how many people we need daily to survive well. And unsafe all of us are, as the Covid-19 pandemic proved. Therefore, we instinctively seek shelter all the time. An infant needs his parents. As one grows, one takes shelter from education to maintain oneself. Education /training over, time comes to seek shelter in a job or a business.

The idea is to have the shelter of enough money to be able to survive decently. Sex overpowers thinking beginning from a young age. Some are drawn towards fame like a sportsperson, while others get into politics, etc. for power. The most fortunate seek the shelter of God. Shelter of God is crucial to exist well. Let us see the degree of difficulty for a quality life. Our nature ('svabhava') is a huge handicap. Something or other from lust, anger, greed, jealousy, ego, etc. predominates if not more than one.

What chance is there to have a quality life? Lust derails almost everyone. One assumes that sex is pleasure, and it has so many forms. The worst thing is it's possessing our minds. Ego is not far behind. Have you met anyone who does not feel his or her superiority vis-



à-vis others? Greed does not allow us to assess our needs sensibly. More is better is the desire and there is no satisfaction. Anger is always lurking near the surface. It surfaces at the drop of a hat, literally. Then, there are karmaphalas always ready to manifest. We know how bad ones hurt. What most people don't realise are the

Winter's tale in Northern India: A season of discontent



analys \$ 07

Northern India's winter is more than just a fleeting season; it is a relentless narrative of marrow-freezing cold, breath-choking pollution and a grim forecast for years to come



f freezing marrows and choking breaths William Shakespeare, emperor of narratives, master of metaphors, celebrated craftsman of sentences and acclaimed presenter of deep insights into human nature, had a way of coming up with expressions surviving the passage of time. One of them is "winter of our discontent." Richard, Duke of Gloucester, says in Richard III, "Now is the winter of our discontent/ Made glorious summer by this sun of York;/ And all the clouds that lour'd upon our house/ In the deep bosom of the ocean buried." The expression, which adorns one of John Steinbeck's most famous novels as its title, should resonate particularly strongly with people in northern India still in the grip of a winter that is cold, damp and utterly polluted. The chances of things improving in the next few years, are, to put it mildly, bleak As the chilling flipside of global warming, the cold months will continue to be increasingly marrow-freezing, since, with Donald Trump taking over as the United States' president, the chances of a deceleration in the pace of climate change, have diminished significantly. This is not to look wistfully back over one's shoulder to a mythical place like the island valley of Avilion, where, pace Alfred Tennyson in a very different context, "falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, / Nor ever wind blows loudly." Climates and the weather have been notoriously fickle cousins throughout history. If any part of the past seems golden, it is because of the distance in time which lends it enchantment.

about 30 per cent of the earth's surface and ended 15, 000 to 20,000 years ago. On a more specific note, slavery was legal in most parts of the world–includ-ing the chest-thumping democra-cies of the West–as late as the second half of the 19th century. The weather, doubtless, has an impact on life and its moods, which influence thought, speech and feeling which, in turn, trigger AS THE action. CHILLING

All of these, at a certain elevated FLIP SIDE OF level, power the wheels of history. These also affect inter-person-al relations, causing friction and GLOBAL hostility arising from anger and discontent, or cordiality and WARMING, THE warmth caused by harmony. The sum total of the interaction COLD MONTHS WILL CONTINUE among these factors determines TO BE the quality of a community's status quoists. Besides, social social existence in terms of ten-INCREASINGLY sions between collective bodies like class and caste, and stress MARROWcaused by individual actions like crime, which is often caused by FREEZING, alienation resulting from margin-SINCE, WITH alisation, poverty and anonymity in impersonal societies. A DONALD TRUMP crime can be a perverse act of self-assertion, a sub-conscious statement like, "I kill, therefore I TAKING OVER AS THE UNITED exist"-a variant of Rene Descartes much-quoted asser-STATES' tion, "Cogito ergo sum (literally, "I think, therefore, I am"). PRESIDENT. Another form of self-assertion THE CHANCES can be participation-to say nothing of playing a leading OF A role-in a mass movement. Eric Hoffer writes in The True DECELERATION IN Believer: Thoughts on the Nature THE PACE OF of Mass Movements, "There is in us a tendency to locate the shap-CLIMATE CHANGE, ing forces of our existence outside ourselves. Success and failure are HAVE unavoidably related in our minds DIMINISHED with the state of things around us. SIGNIFICANTLY Hence it is that people with a sense of fulfilment think it a good

it as it is, while the frustrated favour radical change. The ten-dency to look for all causes outside ourselves persists even when it is clear that our state of being is the product of personal qualities such as ability, character, appearance, health and so on." What is the result? Hoffer quotes Thoreau as saying, "If anything ail a man, so that he does not perform his functions, if he has a pain in his bowels even ... he forthwith sets about reforming — the world." (Italics by Hoffer; Thoreau has used the plurals "ail" and "have" as it was done by many in his time in such contexts). Attempts to reform the world

world and would like to conserve

And he says in Twelfth Night, "I hate ingratitude more in a man/ Than lying, vainness, babbling, drunkenness,/ Or any taint of vice whose strong corruption/ Inhabits our frail blood." Character attributes like proneness towards gratitude are rooted deep inside one's DNA and are modified by the environment as one grows up. Seasonal changes can impact their intensity, as discomfort caused by extreme heat or cold can put one's temper on a short leash.

On the other hand, as Anton Chekhov put it, "People don't notice whether it's winter or summer when they're happy."

This brings us back to our starting point—northern India's buttfreezing, breath-choking winter. Can one be happy in its midst? The answer will be in the affirma-

scaling new heights at work or

being gifted with a baby, will

warm the cockles of one's heart.

This, however, is most likely to be

a passing phase, overwhelmed,

sooner than later, by the many

worries and sadnesses that quo-

tidian existence brings and that,

The more relevant question will

be whether one can survive

northern India's winter and for

how long. The transition to the

hereafter caused by pollution

stalks one silently but lethally.

The final truth in life is mortal-

All this has been said before, and

will be said again, as one will hear

the much-quoted proverb, "What

can't be cured must be endured."

It has joined the ranks of vener-

able cliches blessed with eternal

life.

again, are ephemeral.

ill effects of good karmaphalas. This is when one gets the feeling of invincibility and makes big mistakes.

People look for rewards during success, and we know what these rewards do to us. The third big enemy is old age, when we become weak and are mostly written off. Are we stuck? Far from it. God would not have made such a sorry Creation. Guidance and help are available to all of us if we accept the role of God in our lives. Ignorance, false pride or laziness stops us from taking God's help, who is the owner, controller and everything. You seek guidance sincerely and see what happens. But we don't; we prefer to be in cyclic thinking short-circuiting our own lives. We condemn ourselves by our obstinate attitude. God is prepared to help all of us at any time, but there is a rider.

We must deserve such help. How to determine who should get or who shouldn't? Therefore, the question everyone should be asking is: how do we become deserving of God's 'kripa' (favour)? Simply, you recognise yourself as a soul - part of God. Then, all spiritual activities will make sense.

Shouldn't parts take shelter from God? Shouldn't we be very respectful to God and pay obeisance to Him? What about the 'dhyan' (meditation) of the entity, who is everything? How about thanking God for all that He does for everyone like providing air, water and sunlight free. In short, we should stop taking shelter of anyone or anything except God, and remain there.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher; views are personal)

It had, when it was the present, its warts, some of them rather large and ugly. Floods and droughts took very heavy tolls when meteorological devices and skills for predicting their advent and coping with their aftermath, were far less advanced. In the absence of electrical heating devices, which we have, life could not have been terribly pleasant dur-ing the last ice age which had covered

increase following rising ocean levels, caused by global warming, tive, as the news of a progeny submerging coastal areas. Inward migration of people from these regions would trigger clashes over land and resources in the interior areas. The same factors will also be in operation in other areas to which people may escape from regions made uninhabitable by temperatures rising too high to support life.

invariably lead to struggles with

One can, of course, argue that people would be kind to global warming refugees, realising that they may have to leave their homes someday for the same reason. But then, kindness is not what a person encounters frequently in life; it is the same with gratitude, the lack of which weighed heavily on the Bard of Avon. "Ingratitude," he lamented in King Lear, "thou marble-hearted fiend...." He bewailed in As You Like It, "Blow, blow, thou winter wind, / Thou art not so

unkind/As man's ingratitude."

(The author is Consulting Editor, The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal)

Cultural heritage tourism: A path to sustainable growth and mutual understanding

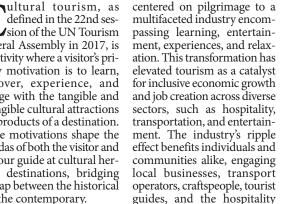
Respecting the balance between tourism and heritage enables a mutually beneficial relationship that supports communities, preserves cultural identity and promotes global harmony

defined in the 22nd session of the UN Tourism General Assembly in 2017, is an activity where a visitor's primary motivation is to learn, discover, experience, and engage with the tangible and intangible cultural attractions and products of a destination. These motivations shape the agendas of both the visitor and the tour guide at cultural heritage destinations, bridging the gap between the historical

and the contemporary.

The Evolution of Cultural Heritage and Tourism

Cultural heritage has undergone a significant shift in perception, moving from an archaeological focus to the concept of "living heritage" and



guides, and the hospitality industry in a symbiotic relationship.

For these benefits to be fully realised, collaboration among stakeholders is essential. They must work collectively to offer authentic and meaningful its reuse. Similarly, tourism has experiences that resonate with



SUKHDEV SINGH

integrity of cultural sites. Cultural Heritage as a Driver of Tourism

A rapidly growing segment within the tourism industry is cultural heritage, which encompasses natural and architectural sites, traditional crafts, cultural events, performances, and intangible knowledge. Recognised as both a commodity and an experience, evolved from being largely travelers while preserving the cultural heritage attracts mar-

ket players, planners, and governments aiming to expand the scope of tourism. It promotes inclusive growth, intercultural exchange and mutual understanding. The relationship between

tourism and cultural heritage is built on mutuality. While cultural heritage serves as a key attraction for tourism, the latter provides the financial and structural support required for its preservation and promotion

Navigating Contradictions Tourism operates on the principle of profit and economic growth, while cultural heritage centers on identity and inheritance. These differing foundations can create contradictions. For the tourism industry, cultural heritage is often commodified, whereas for her-



itage conservation, tourism acts as a feeder for sustainability. While these sectors can support one another to an extent, unchecked tourism practices can lead to significant challenges, including overcrowding, environmental and degradation. To mitigate these issues, regu-

lated practices in cultural heritage tourism must prioritise



a balance between immersion and respect. Sustainable cultural heritage tourism, thus, becomes a pathway to fostering "culture for peace." Economic and Cultural Benefits of Heritage Tourism

Cultural heritage tourism creates opportunities for income generation and employment. This is achieved by maintaining and showcasing heritage structures, sites, and products. Preservation and manthe symbiotic relationship agement efforts, such as cata-

loging and storytelling, directly benefit from tourism revenue. Simultaneously, the broader economic ecosystem, including hospitality, transportation, and entertainment, flourishes through increased

However, cultural heritage is far more than a revenue-generating commodity. It serves as a repository of customs, values, and artifacts, connecting communities to their past and reinforcing their identities. Tourism, when responsibly managed, can amplify the significance of heritage sites by fostering research, introducing new narratives, and raising awareness. Reinvestment of economic returns into preservation ensures the longevity and authenticity of cultural heritage.

Challenges of Cultural Heritage Tourism

While tourism can elevate the value of cultural heritage, it also introduces challenges. Overcrowding, environmental degradation, and disruptions to the local population's way of life are common issues.

Sustainable and Responsible Tourism

To maintain a harmonious balance between tourism and cultural heritage, sustainable practices are essential. These include regulating visitor numbers, promoting eco-friendly initiatives, and ensuring that tourism revenue is reinvested into preservation efforts.

(The writer is retired professor of Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar and Vice-Chairman, INTACH; views are personal)

visitor engagement.



Money 08

IN BRIEF



Amul cuts milk prices by Re 1 across India

ujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF) which markets dairy products under the Amul brand, has Greduced milk prices by Rs 1 per litre across India. However, the reduction in prices is only for one-litre packs. "We have reduced the prices of one-litre packs by Rs 1 per litre across India," GCMMF managing director Jayen Mehta said. "This is to encourage consumers to buy larger packs of milk and get incentive for the same," he said. In Delhi, the rate of Amul Gold milk has been reduced to Rs 67 from Rs 68 per litre while price of Amul Taaza will now be Rs 55 from Rs 56 per litre earlier. GCMMF's turnover increased 8 per cent to Rs 59,445 crore in the 2023-24 financial year. Mehta had earlier said that the cooperative is expecting double-digit growth in revenue during this fiscal on strong demand. GCMMF handled 310 lakh litres of milk per day on average during the last fiscal.

क.रा.बी.नि.

ESIC

ESIC adds 16.07 lakh

new members

mployees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) has

scheme in November, about one per cent higher as

compared to the year-ago month, according to the latest payroll

data released on Friday. The ESIC had added 15.92 lakh new

members in November 2023, a labour ministry statement said.

According to the statement, the year-on-year analysis shows a

November 2023. The provisional payroll data of ESIC reveals

that 16.07 lakh new employees have been added in November

2024, it stated. As many as 20,212 new establishments have

Scheme in November 2024, ensuring social security for more

workers. The statement said that out of the total 16.07 lakh

amounting to around 47.11 per cent of the total registrations

employees added during the month, 7.57 lakh employees,

belong to the age group of up to 25 years.

growth of 0.97 per cent in net registrations compared to

been brought under the social security ambit of the ESI

added 16.07 lakh new workers enrolled under the ESI



PNS DAVOS

The World Trade Organisation on Friday pitched for strengthening the rule-based multilateral trading system in view of increasing geopolitical tensions, economic fragmentation and threats of unilateral measures.

As many as 23 members of the WTO took part in the informal ministerial meeting organised by Switzerland here on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum

Annual Meeting. Switzerland Federal Councillor Guy Parmelin hosted the meeting, which was attended by WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and selected representatives of the private sector.

The meeting emphasised the important role of the WTO and the rule-based international trading system and discussed the current challenges facing the WTO and the priorities in the organisation's activities.

The private sector representatives presented the current challenges of global trade



from their perspective in the year's time.

first part of the event. "The dialogue with the pri-vate sector focused on the importance of the rule-based multilateral trading system underpinned by the WTO, emphasising that stable regulatory conditions and legal certainty are paramount for the economy during periods of trade tensions," a Swiss government statement said.

In the second part of the meeting, the ministers exchanged views on the WTO's most urgent tasks and the priorities for the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference, which will take place in Yaounde, the capital of Cameroon, in just over a



Switzerland said it is closely integrated into global value chains and benefits greatly from smooth cross-border trade.

In his concluding remarks, Parmelin said the meeting underlined the significance of the WTO and the rule-based, transparent and predictable multilateral trading system.

Building on the achieve-ments at MC13, ministers reaffirmed their commitment to delivering a successful result at the next Ministerial Conference. Ministers also declared

their determination to preserve and strengthen the rulebased multilateral trading

view of increasing geopolitical tensions, economic fragmentation and threats of unilateral measures.

At the same time, ministers pointed to the need to adapt the WTO's instruments and rules to the current challenges in global trade and also reiterated the importance of having a fully functional dis-

pute settlement system. Ministers stressed the need to launch substantive negotiations on agricultural trade, while some ministers called for a comprehensive or balanced treatment of all relevant negotiation topics.

Others argued that priori-ty should be given to the topics mandated in earlier ministerial decisions and ministers expressed their willingness to further engage in this matter.

Many ministers also called for a further extension of the moratorium on customs duties on electronic transmissions at MC14. The conclusion of the extension on the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies was also mentioned as a key deliverable for the organisation.

UNION BUDGET 2025 Insurers expect tax benefits, concessions for healthcare

PNS NEW DELHI

February 1.

SBI General Insurance MD and CEO

Naveen Chandra

Jha said that as

Índia advances

toward financial

inclusivity and universal health-

care, the upcom-

ing Budget is

expected to fur-

designed to achieve the goal of

'Insurance for All' by 2047, are

expected to receive regulatory

and fiscal support to address the

protection gap, he noted. "Additionally, the budget is

likely to focus on expanding

access in underserved regions

through government-private partnerships, targeted subsi-

dies, and advancements in dig-ital infrastructure," Jha added.

Bajaj Allianz Life MD and

Reliance Industries, Larsen & Toubro, UltraTech Cement,

HDFC Bank, Adani Ports and

Bajaj Finserv were among the

major laggards.

the gainers.

cent.

ance sector.

Insurers are hopeful of a host of

tax benefits, including conces-

sions for the insurance and

healthcare sectors, from the

CEO Tarun Chugh said India's economic growth presents immense opportunities for the insurance sector to enhance financial resilience.

"Aligning tax deduction of life insurance annuity prod-ucts with the National Pension Union Budget 2025-26 to be unveiled by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Scheme (NPS) and addressing the issue of tax on

principal component on annuity products can evolve retirement needs effectively, he added. Chugh also

made a case for the introduction of a separate tax deduction for term insurance

ther strengthen the healthinsurand extending the tax deduction on life insurance premiums Initiatives like Bima Sugam,

under the new tax regime. According to the Annual Report of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai), the country's insurance penetration in 2023-24 was 3.7 per cent compared to 4 per cent in 2022-23.

The penetration for life insurance industry marginally declined from 3 per cent in 2022-23 to 2.8 per cent during 2023-24

India's forex reserves decline to \$623.983 bn

PNS MUMBAI

India's forex reserves dropped by USD 1.88 billion to USD 623.983 billion in the week ended January 17, the RBI said on Friday.

On the other hand, Hindustan Unilever, Tech Earlier, the overall kitty declined by USD 8.714 bil-lion to USD 625.871 billion Mahindra, Nestle, Bharti Airtel and ICICI Bank were among in the week ended January 10, the Reserve Bank of India

The BSE smallcap gauge said. dropped 2.23 per cent, and the The reserves have been on midcap index declined 1.60 per a declining trend for the last few weeks, and the drop has

Among BSE sectoral indices, been attributed to revaluarealty tanked 2.50 per cent, oil tion along with forex market & gas went lower by 2.30 per interventions by RBI to help cent, industrials (2.22 per cent), reduce volatilities in the energy (1.95 per cent), capital rupee. goods (1.89 per cent), con-sumer discretionary (1.79 per The forex reserves had cent) and auto (1.69 per cent).

increased to an all-time high of USD 704.885 billion in end-September. For the week ended

January 17, foreign currency assets, a major component of decreased by the reserves USD 2.878 billion to USD 533.133 billion, the data released on Friday showed. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Data centre market continues to grow: Report

PNS NEW DELHI

India's data centre market continued its growth during 2024, with an addition of 191 MW IT capacity during last year, while absorption was 407 MW, according to Savills.

In a statement on Friday, real estate consultant Savills India noted that the demand for data centres in India continues to rise, driven by factors like the increasing adoption of cloud computing, the expansion of big data, the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and the rapid growth of e-commerce and digital transformation initiatives.

"In 2024, India witnessed an absorption of 407 MW IT capacity and the addition of 191 MW IT capacity across key cities," the consultant said.

Savills highlighted that

dragged by realty, healthcare stocks

PNS MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty surrendered early gains to close with losses in a volatile session on Friday, snapping their two-day winning streak as investors pared exposure to realty, oil & gas and healthcare stocks amid a mixed trend in global markets.

Unabated foreign fund outflows also dented investor sentiment.

After swinging between gains and losses, the 30-share BSE benchmark dropped 329.92 points or 0.43 per cent to settle at 76,190.46. During the day, it slumped 428.63 points or 0.56 per cent to 76,091.75.

The NSE Nifty declined 113.15 points or 0.49 per cent

Gold breaches Rs 83k mark for first time

Sensex, Nifty snap two-day rally

to 23,092.20

On a weekly basis, the BSE index declined 428.87 points or 0.55 per cent, and the Nifty dipped 111 points or 0.47 per cent.

"Markets ended weak in volatile trade amid selling in auto, oil & gas and realty shares. A sharp appreciation in

the rupee against the dollar limited the fall, but the under-

Ltd, said. From the 30-share bluechip pack, Mahindra & Mahindra, Zomato, Tata Motors, IndusInd Bank,

caution ahead of the upcoming Union Budget announcement," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities

were the gainers.





Denta Water IPO garners 221.52 times subscription

he initial share sale of Denta Water and Infra Solutions Ltd garnered 221.52 times subscriptions on the closing day of bidding on Friday. The initial public offer got bids for 1,16,29,62,200 shares against 52,50,000 shares on offer, as per NSE data. The quota for non-institutional investors bagged a massive 507.05 times subscription, while the Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) portion subscribed 236.94 times. The portion for Retail Individual Investors (RIIs) garnered 90.33 times the subscription. Denta Water and Infra Solutions on Tuesday said it has raised a little over Rs 66 crore from anchor investors. The issue has a price band of Rs 279-294 per share. The IPO is entirely a fresh issue of 75 lakh equity shares worth Rs 220.5 crore at the upper end of the price band. Proceeds to the extent of Rs 150 crore will be utilised to meet working capital requirements, and a portion will be used for general corporate purposes. Founded in 2016, Denta Water and Infra Solutions Ltd has emerged as one of the key players in the field of water engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) services.

this demand was fuelled by hyperscalers, BFSI (Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance), IT & ITeS, and service sectors, all of which heavily rely on data centre operators for colocation and related services.

The operational capacity stood at 1,110 MW IT as of 2024, reflecting a CAGR (compounded annual growth rate) of 22 per cent since 2014.

Gold prices extended the rally for the eighth consecutive session and climbed Rs 200 to breach the psychological level of Rs 83,000 per 10 grams for

PNS NEW DELHI

capital on Friday amid aggressive buying triggered by global market uncertainties.

outcomes.

Sarafa Association, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity rose Rs 200 to hit a fresh lifetime high of Rs 83,100 per 10 grams. It had closed at Rs 82,900 per 10 grams on Thursday. "Gold extended the first time in the national gains on Friday, with spot gold in the domestic market hitting fresh all-time highs," Saumil

According to the All India Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

The current bullish momentum in gold is driven by uncertainty surrounding the potential US tariffs plan and other policies from President Donald Trump, which has led to a recent surge in safe-haven buying, Gandhi added.

The yellow metal of 99.5 per cent purity also appreciated by Rs 200 to hit a record high of Rs 82,700 per 10 grams from the previous close of Rs 82,500 per 10 grams.

Teck and BSE Focused IT

Additionally, silver climbed Rs 500 to Rs 94,000 per kg on Friday. The white metal finished at Rs 93,500 per kg in the last trading session.

The country's largest airline

IndiGo on Friday saw its prof-

it after tax slide 18.3 per cent to

Rs 2,448.8 crore in the three

months ended December 2024,

as currency volatility took a toll

number of capacity and passen-

gers, the carrier's total income

jumped 14.6 per cent to Rs

22,992.8 crore in the third quar-

ter of the current financial year,

In the year-ago period, the

InterGlobe Aviation is the

same stood at Rs 20,062.3 crore.

parent of IndiGo, which flew

according to a release.

With the increase in the

Gold reserves increased by USD 1.063 million to ÚSD 68.947 billion during the week, the RBI said.

'Weaker rupee seen as boost for exports' ..But reality is more complex, says FIEO

PNS NEW DELHI

A weaker rupee is often seen as a boost for Indian exports by exports. A strategic, multimaking goods more competipronged approach is needed to tive globally, but the reality is address the root causes of depreciation while mitigating its more complex, the apex exporters' body FIEO said on adverse effects," he said. Friday.

Explaining it further, he said, Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President that if the rupee depreciates by 2 per cent and the currencies of Ashwani Kumar also said the key competitors decline by 3-5 recent depreciation of the per cent, Indian exporters lose domestic currency against the competitiveness in global mar-US Dollar represents a complex kets. economic scenario with mixed "This relative disadvantage

erodes any potential price "A weaker rupee is not a oneadvantage Indian goods might size-fits-all solution to boost gain," Kumar added.

The domestic currency has depreciated over 4 per cent last year. The rupee closed at 86.22 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday, weighed down by a stronger American currency.

Kumar added that the depreciation also results in a rise in input cost, exchange rate volatility, inflationary pressure, and external debt burden. Many Indian exporters depend on imported raw materials and

components. A weaker rupee significantly raises these input costs, often nullifying the perceived benefits of depreciation.

"Fluctuating exchange rates create uncertainty, making it difficult for exporters to price their products competitively and plan for the long term," he said adding that the depreciation inflates the cost of imported goods like oil and commodities, driving up production costs and fuelling domestic inflation and this reduces consumer purchasing power.

PNS NEW DELHI

on the bottom line.

31.1 million passengers in the latest December quarter.

In the 2023 December quarter, the carrier had a profit after tax of Rs 2,998.1 crore.

"Driven by strong demand for air travel, continued growth, and lower fuel cost, for the quarter ended December 2024, IndiGo reported a solid profit of Rs 38.5 billion, excluding the impact of currency movement against a profit of 30.5 billion during the same period last year. "Including the impact of foreign exchange, the net profit for the quarter aggregated to Rs 24.5 billion," the release said.

Investment in infra, startup can push job creation: Experts

PNS NEW DELHI

The government should provide investments and incentives in infrastructure, hospitality, startup ecosystem, EdTech and MSME sectors in the General Budget to boost employment and skill development, say industry experts.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the General Budget 2025 in the Lok Sabha on February 1.

On expectations from the forthcoming budget, Noormahal Group CMD Manbeer Choudhary said the hospitality sector in India plays

a crucial role in job creation and is one of the largest con-

tributors to the economy. The Union Budget 2025 could be pivotal in enhancing the industry and significantly contributing to the vision of a USD 3 trillion tourism GDP by 2047, he added.

Choudhary stated that one of the longing demands is granting industry status to the hospitality sector, as this recognition could lead to improved access to finance, regularised policies, and a more strategic approach to tourism development.

The special allocation for said



infrastructure development, T9L OUBE founder Gauray especially in tier II and III Gaggar said the government cities can boost tourism in the will continue to prioritise the regional areas while generating needs of startups and venture employment opportunities for studios this year. Currently, youth in their native place, he one of the pressing concerns of the sector that persists is fund-

angel tax was one of the revolutionary steps toward easing investment flows, more such initiatives are expected this year, he pointed out. Venture studios serve as

one of the key factors contributing towards nationbuilding by boosting the start-up ecosystem in the country, he said. The government

should focus on simplifying foreign investment regulations and improving access to credit, which will bolster the financial landscape of the industry, he suggested. The budget, he said, should

ing. Although removing the also prioritise investment in research and development for sustained innovation.

The government-backed funds, tax incentives and benefits to venture capitalists dedicated to fostering startup companies could elevate India's dynamic startup ecosystem to unprecedented levels, he added.

As the Indian startup ecosystem has become one of the biggest employment generators, levelling up the ecosystem will support the government in addressing skill development and unemployment

issues, he stated.

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IndiGo Q3 profit falls 18 pc to

Rs 2,448.8 cr on currency woes





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> Saturday January 25, 2025

WITH HYDERABAD AS HER BASE, LAVANYA REDDY HAS NOT ONLY CARVED A NICHE FOR HERSELF IN THE COMPETITIVE WORLD OF CINEMA BUT HAS ALSO BECOME A TRAILBLAZER IN THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY. IN AN EXCLUSIVE CHAT WITH THE PIONEER. LAVANYA, ONE OF TOLLYWOOD'S MOST SOUGHT-AFTER MAKEUP ARTISTS, OPENS UP **ABOUT HER INCREDIBLE JOURNEY FROM A SMALL-TOWN BEAUTICIAN IN GUNTUR TO** WORKING WITH SOME OF THE BIGGEST NAMES IN THE TELUGU FILM INDUSTRY

'City gave me countless chances to fulfill my dream'

TEJAL SINHA tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

yderabad, a city known for its rich heritage, vibrant cul-ture, and booming film industry, has long been a hub for creative talent. Among the many success stories that the city has nurtured is that of Lavanya Reddy, one of Tollywood's most sought-after makeup artists. With an unwavering dedication to her craft and a passion that knows no bounds, Lavanya has carved a unique space for herself in the competitive world of cinema. From her humble beginnings in Guntur to working with some of the biggest names in the Telugu film indus-try, her journey is as inspiring as it is remarkable. In this exclusive chat, Lavanya shares her career milestones, her deep connection with Hyderabad, and her exciting plans for the future. "Hyderabad is very close to my heart. My association with this city is one of the

best choices I've ever made in my life. It gave me countless opportunities to fulfill my dream career," Lavanya says with pride. "I feel Hyderabad welcomes everyone from any corner of the world with-out any racism, and that's what makes it so special."

Born and brought up in Guntur on April 8th, 1992, Lavanya initially worked as a regular beautician in her hometown. However, a challenging experience in 2017 changed her life forever. "A client gave a bad review about my makeup work, and it hit me hard. But instead of giving up, I realized that makeup was my true passion and decided to pursue it professionally," she recalls.

After moving to Hyderabad, Lavanya trained under renowned makeup artist Mr. Naresh Thogathi. "That professional course changed everything for me. Soon after, I got a chance to work with Lakshmi Manchu, and that was my first step into the Tollywood industry," she shares.

From there, Lavanya's career took off. "I've worked with almost everyone in the ndustry," she says with a smile. Currently she is the go-to makeup artist for stars like Catherine Tresa and Sreeleela. "It's been an incredible journey, and I'm grateful for all the opportunities that have come my way." Lavanya also cherishes her work with the Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) cricket team. "It's always a pleasure working with the SRH Hyderabad team. They are such amazing people with down-to-earth atti-tudes. This isn't my first time working with them; I've had the privilege of collaborating with them in previous years too," she says fondly.



love



IRECTED BY : Victor Mukherjee ODUCED BY : voti Deshpande, leha Anand, Pranjal Khandhiya : Mithila Palkar Amol Parashar, Meiyang Chang, Sauraseni Maitra IG ON Disney+Hotstar ATING : 2.5/5

Sweet Dreams A rom-com with heart, but not enough spark

One of the strongest aspects of Sweet Dreams is its fresh and

unconventional concept, exploring the idea of two individuals connect-

ing through their dreams, which

PNS HYDERABAD

PLOT

"Sweet Dreams" brings a unique twist to the rom-com genre, narrating the story of Kenny (played by Amol Parashar) and Dia (played by Mithila Palkar), two individuals who see each other in their dreams every night. Kenny is a charming influencer with a stable career but a tumultuous love life. After a breakup 10 months ago, he's haunted by recurring dreams of Dia, his seem-ingly perfect partner. Dia, on the other hand, is a corporate profes-sional grappling with career and relasional grappling with career and rela-tionship uncertainties. Despite being in a serious relationship with Arjun (played by Meiyang Chang), Dia feels drawn to Kenny, who appears nightly in her dreams. When fate intervenes, the two spot each other during separate trips to Alibaug. Kenny, who is supported by his new friend Roop (played by Sauraseni Maitra), embarks on a journey to find Dia. Similarly, Dia begins to question her reality and chases after the dream man. The film follows the dream man. The film follows their quest to connect in real life through the modern world of social media, with the help of their friends. **ANALYSIS**

brings a unique twist to the rom-com genre. The film stands out for its charming performances, particularly by Amol Parashar and ularly by Amol Parashar and Mithila Palkar, who bring warmth and relatability to their characters. Additionally, the chemistry between Kenny and Roop, played by Sauraseni Maitra, is a highlight, as their bond develops beautifully, adding depth and a sense of stabil-ity to the narrative. These ele-ments together infuse the film ments together infuse the film with moments of charm and intrigue, even when the overall exe-

HIGHLIGHTS

cution falters. DRAWBACKS

Despite its intriguing premise, Sweet Dreams falters in execution, struggling with a bland and unin-spired narrative that fails to fully engage the audience. The lack of emotional depth in the storytelling makes it difficult for viewers to feel invested in Kenny and Dia's journey, leaving their romantic arc underwhelming. Additionally, the supporting cast feels underutilized, serving more as placeholders than meaningful contributors to the story. The climax, which should have been the emotional high point, falls flat and feels anticlimactic, robbing the narrative of a satisfying resolution. Moreover, the film's soundtrack, an essential com-

and hesitations with finesse, making her character relatable, though her arc remains underdeveloped. Sauraseni Maitra is a standout as Roop, adding much-needed stability and maturity to the narrative while sharing delightful chemistry with Amol, which becomes one of the film's highlights. Meanwhile, Meiyang Chang and Faye D'Souza deliver competent performances, but their characters feel peripheral and contribute little to the overall story

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

Victor Mukherjee's direction struggles to find consistency, as it fails to balance the film's dreamy premise with its real-world elements. The pacing is uneven, and emotional moments are often underplayed, leaving the audience discon-nected. While the cinematography captures picturesque visuals, espe-cially the Alibaug sequences, it doesn't add significant depth to the storytelling. The editing, though keeping the runtime to 1 hour and 49 minutes, makes the film feel stretched, with certain scenes dragging unnecessarily. The soundtrack, a crucial element in romantic films, is uninspiring and misses the opportunity to create memorable, emotionally resonant moments.

VERDICT

Sweet Dreams" has all the ingredients for a heartwarming rom-com but fails to deliver on its promise. While the performances, particularly by Amol Parashar and Sauraseni Maitra, add charm, the lackluster storytelling, weak emotional arcs, and unconvincing resolution prevent the film from making a lasting impact. It's a watchable film if you're in the mood for a lighthearted story, but it's unlikely to leave you with the warm, fuzzy feeling that great rom-coms do. "Sweet Dreams" is a forgettable watch that barely scratches the surface of its intriguing concept. It's a film that had potential but fell short in execution.

As a working mother, Lavanya has

women. "I support and train women who are interested in the beauty industry. Nowadays, the doors to the wedding and movie industries are widely open for upcoming professional makeup artists. It's an exciting time for anyone entering this field," she says.

Lavanya's love for Hyderabad goes beyond professional opportunities. "I absolutely adore the weather and the vibe of the city," she says, though she admits that traffic can be a challenge. "Whenever I go out of town, even for small business trips, I find myself missing Hyderabad. It's

Reflecting on her journey, Lavanya credits her profession for helping her achieve independence. "Makeup has not only been my passion but also a means to become financially and professionallv independent. It's empowering to know that I've built something meaningful through my work," she says.

Lavanya Reddy's story is a testament to the power of determination and passion. From Guntur to Tollywood, her journey inspires countless aspiring makeup artists to dream big and work hard to achieve their goals.

m space. Unfortunately, while the story's foundation is promising, the execution leaves much to be desired. Victor Mukherjee attempts to weave a modern fairy tale, but the storytelling falters due to its lack of depth and emotional engagement. The film's linear narrative fails to hold the audience's attention, and the pacing feels uneven. While the core idea raises interesting questions about love and compatibility, the treatment lacks the complexity or emotional intensity needed to leave a lasting impact.

"Sweet Dreams" is built on an intriguing concept: the idea of find-

ing love through dreams and ques-

tioning whether one should chase

their fantasies or embrace reality.

The premise feels fresh and has the

potential to reinvigorate the rom-

ponent of any rom-com, is forget table and does little to enhance the emotional beats of the story. These shortcomings collectively make the film less impactful than it could have been.

PERFORMANCES

Amol Parashar shines as Kenny, bringing charm and vulnerability to the character while effectively portraying his inner conflict between staying grounded in reality and pursuing an elusive dream. Mithila Palkar captures Dia's confusion

TACKLING CERVICAL CANCER Challenges and solutions for India's women

N INDIA, CERVICAL CANCER IS THE **SECOND MOST FREQUENT DISEASE IN** NOMEN AND A SERIOUS PUBLIC HEALTH **CONCERN. BECAUSE OF A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE, SCREENING, AND TREATMENT FACILITIES, IT CONTINUES TO** TAKE THOUSANDS OF LIVES EVERY YEAR. ADDRESSING PREVENTION STRATEGIES TO LESSEN THE INCIDENCE OF CANCER IS A **CHALLENGE FOR THE INDIAN POPULACE.**

CERVICAL CANCER IN INDIA: REALITY CHECK

One-fourth of all cervical cancer cases worldwide occur in India. The World Health Organisation (WHO) reports that in India, approximately one lakh women are diagnosed with cervical cancer, and 60,000 women are losing their lives to the disease each year. Alarmingly, studies report death of one woman passes from cervical cancer every seven minutes. Given that cervical cancer is mostly avoidable with early screening and immunisation, this fatality rate is concerning. Due to a lack of knowledge about the disease, stigmaassociated with gynaecological health, and restricted access to medical care, the burden is greater in rural areas.

OBSTACLES IN TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

• Low Awareness and Education: A large number of Indian women are ignorant of cervical cancer, its risk factors, and HPV

vaccination and Pap screenings as preven-tative interventions. Women are prevented from getting appropriate medical advice or going through routine tests because of cultural taboos and stigma around talking about reproductive health issues.

· Inadequate Screening and Early Detection: Cervical cancer screening services, including Pap smears and HPV tests, are not easily accessible or generally available, particularly in rural areas. According to studies, just 3–5% of Indian women have regular cervical cancer screenings, while approximately 70% of women in affluent nations do so.

 Limited HPV Vaccination Coverage: Although some states have recently implemented it, the HPV vaccination, which can prevent up to 70-90% of occurrences of cervical cancer, is not included in India's universal immunisation program. The vaccination is not widely adopted because to its high cost, lack of awareness, and misconceptions.

Gaps in Healthcare Infrastructure: Inadequate facilities plague India's health-care system, particularly in rural areas where basic healthcare centres lack the funding necessary for follow-ups and screenings. Advanced-stage cases with few and costly treatment choices are the result of delayed diagnosis.

• Socioeconomic Barriers: Access to healthcare is further hampered by poverty, illiteracy, and gender inequity. Many women put the health of their families above their own, which causes screenings to be postponed or overlooked.



• Limited Oncology Workforce: Timely diagnosis and care are impacted by the lack of qualified oncologists and specialised treatment facilities, particularly in underprivileged areas.

STEPS TO LESSEN THE IMPACT OF CERVICAL CANCER

India needs to take a multifaceted approach that prioritises affordable treatment, prevention, and awareness in order to effectively combat cervical cancer.

• Raise Awareness and Education: Start national programs to inform women about the importance of early detection, risk factors for cervical cancer, and HPV infection. To combat stigma and misunderstandings, incorporate education on cervical cancer into community health initiatives and school curricula.

• Strengthen Screening Programs: Put in place extensive screening initiatives in both rural and urban regions. In situations where Pap smears and HPV testing are not available, low-cost alternatives such as Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid (VIA) can be used. Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) and other healthcare professionals should receive training on how to do initial screenings and recommend patients for follow-up care.

• Increase Coverage of HPV Vaccines: As part of India's universal immunisation pol-icy, the HPV vaccine should be made avail-

able to girls aged 9 to 14 for free or at a reduced cost. Address vaccination hesitancy by educating the public and busting myths about itseffectiveness and safety.

• Enhance the Infrastructure for Healthcare: Invest in mobile screening units to reach underserved communities and guarantee follow-up care. Open additional cancer screening and treatment facilities, espe-cially in rural and isolated locations.

• Address Socioeconomic Barriers: Provide financial support and subsidised medical care to women from low-income families. Work together with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to increase community awareness and close the gap in healthcare delivery.Enhance the Workforce in Oncology:

Provide additional training in cervical can-cer management to gynaecologists, oncologists, and other medical professionals. Connect rural communities with urban specialists by utilising telemedicine tools.

• Innovation and Research: Encourage research on accessible, affordable diagnostic instruments and treatment modalities that are suited to India's heterogeneous populace. Promote public-private collaborations to create cutting-edge approaches to the treatment and prevention of cervical cancer.

GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND POLICY SUGGESTIONS

Although India has made progress in combating cervical cancer, more work remains. Plans to incorporate the HPV vaccine into the national immunisation program were

recently revealed by the government. However, the following legislative actions ought to be given top priority in order to have a long-lasting effect:

• Mandate routine screening at primary healthcare facilities as part of standard health examinations, require • Establish a National Cervical Cancer Task

Force to oversee developments and guarantee state-by-state coordination of efforts.

• As part of the National Health Mission, provide specific financing for screening, immunisation, and treatment initiatives.

· Collaborate with private organisations and NGOs to expand vaccination drives and awareness campaigns.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Despite being avoidable, cervical cancer still has a significant impact on Indian women. By removing the obstacles to pre-vention and treatment with effective awareness efforts, reasonably priced immunisation programs, and enhanced healthcare infrastructure. India can lower the incidence of cervical cancer. Furthermore, better results will be possible if women are empowered to put their health first and if the government and healthcare stakeholders continue to work together. Numerous lives can be saved by early diagnosis, prompt treatment, and preventative measures, guaranteeing a healthy future for women nationwide.

(The author, Dr Rahul S Kanaka, is a Consultant - Surgical Oncology, at Manipal Hospital, Yeshwanthpur, Sarjapur and Hebbal.)



what's brewing?





Student Tribe, India's largest and fastest-growing student community, witnessed a spectacular evening as they hosted igveethe Grand Finale of st. GOT - The Ultimate Talent Hunt at Shilpakala Vedika in Hyderabad. The event brought together the brightest young talents from across the Telugu states, showcasing their creativity, passion, and skills on a grand stage emphasizing Student Tribe's commitment to creating opportunities for students from all backgrounds, including those in tier 2 and tier 3 colleges. Event attended by Naga Chaitanya, Allu Arvind and Faria Abdullah.



Rakul Preet Singh and Jackky Bhagnani have joined hands with KLO Sports as co-owners of the Hyderabad Superstars in the upcoming World Pickleball League starting in Mumbai from tomorrow. "Pickleball is the fastest-growing sport in the world and is currently being played across age groups. Hyderabad Superstars will only further popularise and inspire players from Hyderabad and across the country to go after excellence. Joining the World Pickleball League is an exciting new chapter in my sports journey and I wish the team the best of luck." said Rakul Preet

Singh at the onset of the league





Photos by- SV Chary



OPPO India has officially launched the much-anticipated Reno13 Series 5G, designed to redefine the smartphone experience. Featuring a flagship-level camera system, powered by the MediaTek Dimensity 8350 SoC, and equipped with cutting-edge AI features for both imaging and productivity, the Reno13 Series is engineered to deliver exceptional performance.





Manvantara Motion Pictures & Demicod Creatives, Production House & VFX Animation Studio was inaugurated by Actor Kiran Abbavaram at Gachibowli, Team Sushanth Mahaan, Harish, Santhosh, Sathwik and Sudhakara Reddy are seen.



ARCHIE

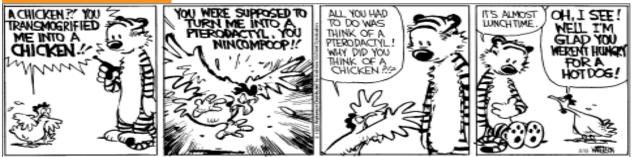






CALVIN AND HOBBES

FUN



20.0

GARFIELD







REALITY CHECK WELCOME TO THE CHANNEL 7 NEWS HOUR I'M NANCY ANN CIANCL FILLING IN FOR MATT MANUFASEL WHO WAS JUST FIRED IN THE NEWS TONIGHT. AS WE GALY HAVE AN HOUR I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE EASIER TO LIST THE MEN WHO HAVENT BEEN ACUSED OF INAPPROPRIETATE SEDUAL MISCONDUCT TODAY-NEN HOUR

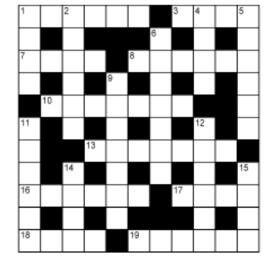
ANNADES



SUDOKU



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Opposite of brother
- 3 A fairy's magic stick
- 7 A bird's bill
- 8 To stay 10 Ripping
- 13 A deer's horns 16 Weapons with long blades
- 17 A tube in the body which
- carries blood
- 18 Seven days
- 19 A paper handkerchief

DOWN

- 1 Cries with big gasps
- 2 Frightened
- 4 A camel rider in the desert
- 5 An animal like a small horse with big ears
- LEPHAN

6 Houses for dogs

for throwing

pieces

12 Welcomes

15 One time

11 A puzzle with lots of

14 Stopped sleeping

SOLUTION

9 A small bomb made

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SPEED BUMP

 Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.

• The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.



tollywood

REVIEW DHANYA BALAKRISHNA SHINES; BASED ON A REAL-LIFE STORY!

SURESH KAVIRAYANI sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

ome small films were released this week and one of them is 'Hatya'. Generally, director Ram Gopal Varma made movies with incidents that happened in Telugu States, but this time Srividya Basawa came up with this film 'Hatya'. A few films were already made in the backdrop of Rayalaseema politician YS Jaganmohan Reddy's uncle YS Vivekananda Reddy's murder. Srividya also has taken this murder story for 'Hatya' and she narrated it for somebody's favour; who is that? It is just a coincidence that this week only female directors' movies were released. Padmavathi Malladi came up with her film and now Srividya comes up with this one. The film is releasing without proper publicity as many people don't even know about it. Names of persons and places are changed because of censor problems.

Story:

Dharmendra Reddy (Ravi Varma) is a popular leader in Illendula and his murder was mysterious. Initially, they said it was a heart attack, but later revealed it was a murder. He is also uncle to Chief Minister Kiran Reddy (Bharath Reddy). So, he appoints a strict police officer Sudha (Dhanya Balakrishnan) to investigate his uncle's murder. The problem starts after Reddy's murder. Some people cleaned the house and the entire murder scene. So it is very difficult for the investigation team to get clues about the case. But still she starts her investigation and comes to know some interesting things that Dhamendra Reddy is in debt and he has a love Salima (Pooia interest Ramachandran). Sudha also sees Reddy's daughter Kavitha's (Bindu Chandramouli) angle for the movie.



Film: Hatva Cast: Dhanya Balakrishna, Ravi Varma, Pooja Ramachandran, Bindu Chandramouli, Sivaji Raja, Srikanth Iyengar, **Cinematographer:** Abhiraj Nair **Music:** Naresh Kumaran Producer: S Prashanth Reddy Director: Srividya Basawa Release date: January 24, 2025 Rating: 1.5/5

What happened in the end, who is behind Reddy's murder and what is the motive, is the crux of the story.

Analysis:

Director Srividya gave discrimination in the beginning of the movie that the story is completely ficticious with names and places not resembling anyone dead or living. Though she did that, people can still understand that this story is based on YS Viveka's mur-der case. This murder was a big sensation at that time and it is also a mysterious one. Even after six years, the investigation is still going on. More than that, most of the viewers know about this case and they read and heard about it in newspapers and also

on television and social media. There are many stories that came out on this murder. So, how the director narrates

the murder case is interesting. Srividya narrates the first half inter-estingly with Sudha, the leader of the investigation team entering Reddy's house and starts enquiring from all corners. The way the team interrogates everyone related to this murder is interestingly narrated. But the director completely falls flat in the second half with the love story of Reddy, which is not up to the mark, and the way the investigation deliberately pointed out

In reality, the CBI has taken over the case and it still it pending. But the director in the film wanted to do

PRAGYA JAISWAL

OUT, SAMYUKTHA

favour to someone. So, she pointed out that Reddy's daughter is behind the murder. If she leaves with different angles and without bias, the film is definitely interesting. At some point it is predictable that the director's story will go the way it is going and then interest is lost. The movie was made with good production values. The cinematography is good, especially in the first half of the investigation. Before the film's release, the director said that she didn't conclude in the end, but she ends the story with how and what happened.

When it comes to the performance, Dhanya Balakrishnan steals the show with her performance. After a long time she gets to play the main role in a film and in this one, she perfectly played the cop role. Her dia-logue delivery, body language is good and she behaved in every scene nat-urally. Ravi Varma played the role of Dharmendra Reddy and he carried it in a very graceful manner. Definitely, this film is a good one for him as an actor. Pooja Ramachandran played the love interest of Reddy and she too did her part well. Ravi Teja's brother Raghu, Sivaji Raja also played as cops. There are actors who played the roles of Venkatesh Reddy, Peddireddy, Kavithamma, Kishore Reddy, Shaik Ali, Anand Yadav and Bhadrayya, and they all supported well. Most of the

Finally, 'Hatya' story is based on a films favouring one particular political party and they failed at the box-office. 'Hatya' too falls in the same category.

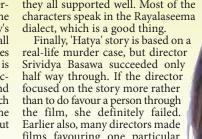
Payal Rajput makes waves in a woman-centric film

Payal Rajput is making waves with her debut film 'RX 100' and after that she didn't get much success. Before last year she played the lead role in 'Mangalavaram', which was a great success and now, the actress signed another woman-centric film. The film was officially launched on Friday morning at a private studio and it is directed by Muni. She is playing the title role of this new film called 'Venkatalachimi'. Produced by Raia and NS Choudhary, they announced that the film is releasing in six languages.

According to the director, the film's story revolves around a tribal girl and it is an action-revenge drama. When I wrote the story of 'Venkatalachimi', I thought of Payal Rajput for the lead role. The story is based on a tribal girl with action at its core," said director Muni. He added that the film will be released in Telugu, Hindi, Punjabi, Kannada, Malayalam and Tamil.

"Áfter 'Mangalavaaram', I came across several scripts but none impressed me. When director Muni narrated this story, I was captivated. This story is so powerful that it might even make people remember me as 'Venkatalachimi' forever. I firmly believe this Pan-India project will take my career to the next level," said actress Payal.

Reddy's daughter for the motive.



IN FOR AKHANDA 2 Raam Achanta and Gopichand Achanta are the producers of this film, while the film is presented by M Tejaswini Nandamuri, daughter of Balakrishna. The makers announced that Samyuktha comes on board to play the female lead in this film. Then what will Pragya's character be in this sequel? This is the question doing



Sunny Deol locks the April 10 date, what about Prabhas film?

B dilywood actor Sunny Deol joined announced the release date. The teaser, which premier unprecedented 12,500 screet 'Jaat'. It is touted to be an action thriller, and is all set to release. On Friday, the makers announced the release date as April 10, 2025. Interestingly, on the same date, Prabhas starrer 'The Raja Saab' is also supposed to be released, but it is now evident that Prabhas film is postponed to another date.

Produced by Naveen Yerneni and Y Ravi Shankar, along with People Media Factory, the makers officially

The teaser, which premiered on an unprecedented 12,500 screens globally, along with 'Pushpa 2', has already set the stage for what promises to be the most explosive action drama of the year. Sunny Deol, known for his powerful performances and larger-than-life action sequences, will remind everyone why he remains the best in action. The film also stars Randeep Hooda, Vineet Kumar Singh, Saiyami Kher and Regina Cassandra. Thaman is providing the music.

and now they are gearing up for the sequel. Boyapati already started shooting this film, canning some important scenes at the ongoing Kumbh Mela. Now, the news about this film is that Pragya Jaiswal is out of this project and Samyuktha is replacing her. The makers on Friday officially announced Samyuktha's name. It means Pragya Jaiswal is not there. Pragya attended the film's official launch, and her name was also there in the list. Actually, Pragya played as Balakrishna's wife in the first part and the director wanted to continue. Even Pragya talked highly about Balakrishna and many thought she will continue in the sequel. But to everyone's surprise, Pragya is not there in the cast and Samyuktha is added.

andamuri Balakrishna and Boyapati Sreenu combination is a successful one

blockbusters. Now, they are joining hands for

the fourth time for the sequel of 'Akhanda 2:

Thandavam'. The first part 'Akhanda' was a hit

Sreenu combination with three and they proved it with three

rounds. According to a source, director Boyapati changed the story to suit Samyuktha's character. The child in the 'Akhanda' is now grown up as a teen in this sequel, according to a source. Now, the makers wanted to rope in the girl who played in Salaman Khan's 'Bajarangi Bhaijaan' in this film as Balakrishna's daughter, added the source. The shoot of the movie is presently underway. And the sequel is being mounted on a bigger canvas with a high budget, says the makers.



Thandel promotions in full swing

Aga Chaitanya and Sai Pallavi are playing the lead in the film 'Thandel', direct-ed by Chandoo Mondeti. Top producer Allu Aravind is presenting, while Bunny Vasu is the producer. The film is releasing on February 7. So, the mak-ers started the promotions aggressively and released another song 'Hilesoo Hilesso'. Devi Sri Prasad is the music director.

The story is based on a real incident that happened near Srikakulam, with fish-ermen backdrop. Shreya Ghoshal and Nakash Aziz are singers of this song. Sai Pallavi and Naga Chaitanya's chemistry is adorable. Not only does the couple look loveable, but the song composition alongside the extraordinary vocals paired with won-derful visuals ensures this song to be a blockbuster love song. The movie is one of the most-awaited ones in the coming days.

IT raids going on, promotions also not stopped

duction houses like Mythri Movie Makers, and on the other side, the production house didn't stop promoting their upcoming films. After 'Pushpa 2' and 'Robinhood', the makers are now coming up with a small film titled '8 Vasantalu', which is a conceptdriven film directed by Phanindra Narsetti. He had earlier directed a film titled 'Manu'.

Ananthika Sanilkumar of 'MAD' fame is playing the female lead which is also the main one in this

n one side, the Income Tax (IT) officials raided big pro-released on Friday and it shows love released on Friday and it shows love and break-ups, pain and sorrow. They also revealed the characters' internal struggles and the theme of heartbreak. Phanindra Narsetti's poetic touch in the writing and narrative, paired with the clever reverse flashback, adds depth and resonance to the teaser. Ananthika Sanilkumar impresses with her mature portrayal of the character, while the teaser also introduces the pivotal roles of Kanna Pasunoori and Hanu Reddy. The makers are expected to announce the release date soon.



sports 12



Bumrah, Jadeja and Jaiswal named in ICC Test Team of the Year

PTI 📕 DUBAI

Indian pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, veteran all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja and young opener Yashasvi Jaiswal deservedly found a place in the ICC's Test Team of the Year 2024 that featured four Englishmen

with Australian Pat Cummins as its captain. The team also had two New Zealanders, including the redoubtable Kane Williamson. Cummins was the lone Australian to make the all-star XI.

magical in 2024, dominating every team and every batter he bowled to. He became the first bowler to average under 20 with a minimum of 200 wickets in Test cricket, solidifying his place in

history. In total, Bumrah took 71 wickets in 2024 at an astonishing average of 14.92, finishing as the highest wicket-taker in Test cricket for the year. Thirty two of these scalps came in the

Border-Gavaskar recent series against Australia,

which India lost 1-3. He began the year with a stellar performance against England, taking 19 wickets in four matches, including a remarkable nine-wicket haul in Visakhapatnam. At home against Bangladesh, he further extended his tally with 11 wickets in just two

games. Although his outing against New Zealand was subdued, where he picked up three wickets, it was against Australia that Bumrah truly Bumrah was nothing short of magical in 2024, dominating of the greatest bowlers of all time.

Jadeja, meanwhile, scored 527 runs in 2024 at an average of 29.27 and picked up 48 wickets at an impressive average of 24.29. Jaiswal established himself as a premier Test opener and a standout figure in Indian batting during 2024. After a challenging series in South Africa, he made an impressive comeback in the home series against England,



amassing a staggering 712 runs. This included two double centuries and three fifties, showcasing his dominance.

The 23-year-old left-handed batter continued his fine form with three halfcenturies in four innings as India thrashed Bangladesh at home. He was also one of the few bright spots in an otherwise disappointing series for India, as New Zealand achieved a historic whitewash on Indian soil.

In the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, Jaiswal demonstrated his class with a magnificent 161 in the magnificent 161 in the second innings at Perth, bouncing back strongly after a first-innings duck. He finished as India's top scorer in the series, accumulating 391 runs.

Over the calendar year, Jaiswal scored a remarkable Jaiswal scored a remarkable 1,478 runs at an impressive average of 54.74, a tally second only to England's Joe Root (1,556 runs in 2024 at an average of 55.57), who was also named in the ICC

all-star team. Williamson was also one of

the stand-out performers in 2024 as he accumulated 1,013 runs in 2024 at an outstanding average of 59.58, making him the sixth-highest run-scorer of the

year. Sri Lanka's Kamindu Mendis also figured in the team after his 1,049 runs in 2024 at an extraordinary average of 74.92.

Cummins led his team to series victories against the West Indies, New Zealand, and most notably India. He took 37 wickets in 2024 at an average of 24.02 and scored 306 runs, averaging 23.53. ICC Test Team of the Year

2024:

Pat Cummins (c) (Australia), Yashasvi Jaiswal (India), Ben Duckett (England), Kane

Williamson (New Zealand), Joe Root (England), Harry Brook (England), Kamindu Mendis (Sri Lanka), Jamie Smith (wk) (England), Ravindra Jadeja (India), Matt Henry (New Zealand), Jasprit Bumrah (India).

Zverev in Australian Open final as injured Djokovic left | Smriti Mandhana, Deepti Sharma in ICC women's ODI Team of the Year

PTI MELBOURNE

Spectators booed an injured Novak Djokovic as he left the court in Rod Laver Arena after quitting one set into his Australian Open semifinal against Alexander Zverev on Friday.

Dealing with a what he said was a torn muscle, Djokovic lost the opener 7-6 (5) when he put a forehand volley into the net, then began shaking his head and immediately walked over to shake Zverev's hand. The 37-year-old Djokovic packed up his equipment and walked off toward the locker room, pausing to respond to the jeers by giving two thumbs-up. At his news conference,

Djokovic said the pain in his taped left leg was "getting worse and worse." He hurt it during his quarterfinal victory over Carlos Alcaraz on Tuesday night.

"I knew," Djokovic said, "even if I won the first set, it was going to be a huge uphill battle for me.'

He was bidding for an 11th



French Open.

them," Zverev said.

championship at the Australian Open and record match at Melbourne Park and on Sunday will face the winner 25th Grand Slam title overall. But this is the second time in the past four major of Friday's second semifinal between number one Jannik Sinner of Italy, the defending champion, and number 21 Ben tournaments he was unable to finish because of an injury: He withdrew from last year's French Open before the Shelton of the United States. Zverev, a 27-year-old German, quarterfinals because he tore is a two-time runner-up at the meniscus in his right knee other major tournaments, losing finals in five sets at the 2020 U.S. Open and 2024 during a match.

Djokovic underwent surgery in Paris and, less than two months later, reached the final at Wimbledon, then won a gold medal for Serbia at the Paris Olympics. The number two-seeded The

"For that, I need to get better. I need to improve on the court. I need to improve physically." During his on-court interview, Zverev pleaded with the fans not to give Djokovic a hard

time. "I know that everybody paid for tickets and everybody wants to see hopefully a great five-set match," he said. "But you've got to understand -Novak Djokovic is somebody that has given this sport, for the past 20 years, absolutely everything of his life."

The only set of Djokovic vs. Zverev lasted one hour, 21 minutes and included 19 points that lasted nine strokes or more apiece. The first four games alone lasted 31 minutes, slowed both by the lengthy baseline exchanges and Diokovic's deliberate pacing between points, taking the 25second serve clock down to -and occasionally slightly beyond - the full allotment.

"My goal is still to compete with the big guys and to compete for these kind of The match was grueling - and would have been even without dealing with a leg problem that tournaments and try to win initially became an issue late in the first set against Alcaraz.



PTI DUBAI

Star batter Smriti Mandhana and all-rounder Deepti Sharma were on Friday named in the ICC women's ODI Team of the Year 2024 but none of their male counterparts found a place in the men's side that was dominated by Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The women's all-star team

has three players from England, two Australians, two South Africans and one each from Sri Lanka and West Indies, besides the two Indians. South African batter Laura Wolvaardt, who scored 697 runs in 12 matches in 2024, was named captain of the ICC team.

The men were, however, absent from the ICC XI and that can be attributed to lack

of ODI engagements for the hundred, Mandhana became of ODI engagements for the country last year. India played only three ODIs -- an away series against Sri Lanka --, losing two of them while the third one ended in a tie. The 28-year-old Mandhana the most prolific century-maker for India in the Women's 50-over format. Deepti scored 186 runs and took 24 wickets in 13 matches in a fine all-round show in accumulated 747 runs in 13 matches to be the highest 2024. Sub-continent shines in Men's all-star line-up The men's all-star ODI team run-scorer in women's ODIs in 2024. She is also in the running for the ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of announced by the ICC features four players from Sri the Year award.

In the home series against South Africa, Mandhana was in sublime form, beginning with back-to-back centuries in the first two ODIs. She narrowly missed a third consecutive ton, falling for 90, though her remarkable tally of 343 runs in the series earned her the Player-of-the-Series award.

Mandhana had a shaky start in the first two ODIs against New Zealand in October, but ended the series on a high note with a brilliant century in the final match. With this

Lanka, three each from Pakistan and Afghanistan and one from the West Indies. Sri Lanka captain Charith Asalanka was named skipper of the ICC team as well for his stupendous batting through

the vear. In his 16 ODI appearances in 2024, Asalanka scored 605 runs at an average of 50.2 including a century and four

fifties. Sri Lanka played 18 ODIs in the year gone by, the highest among all teams, and won 12 of them.

and wide to put the ball away for another four on the off-

side.

U-19 Women's T20 World Cup: Pakistan, | Indian GM P Iniyan Rohit Sharma shows some spark Nepal win fourth place play-off matches but falls for 28 on Ranji Trophy return

PTI KUALA LUMPUR

Pakistan and Nepal were hardly tested on way to winning their fourth-place play-off matches in the ICC Women's U-19 T20 World Cup here on Friday.

Pakistan, riding on young pacer Haniah Ahmer's fourwicket haul, crushed Samoa by 52 runs while Nepal got the better of Malaysia by seven wickets in a low-scoring match.

Put into bat, Pakistan scored 136/8 with Maham Anees and Fatima Khan scoring 28 and 25 respectively. Norah Salima was the most successful Samoa bowler taking three wickets for 20 runs.

Right-arm pacer Haniah then unsettled the Samoan batters, returning with excellent figures of 4/20, while Quratulain Ahsen (2/13) and from the early loss and folded took all three wickets.



Fatima Khan (2/19) were the up for 45 runs with skipper Puja Mahato (4/9) and other wicket-takers as Samoa Rachana Chaudhary (3/5) were all out for 84 in 18.5 emerging as the most successful bowlers. overs.

Malaysia were off to an In reply Nepal reached 47/3 in inauspicious start with Nepal striking off the very first ball to 11 overs to complete a sevenwicket victory with Mahato dismiss Nur Aliya Binti Mohd scoring 23 runs. Left-arm spinner Suabika Manivannan Hairun for a duck. The team could not recover

wins title in Malaysia

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

Tndian Grandmaster Iniyan Panneerselvam clinched the ninth Johor International Open chess tournament title in Malaysia with a dominating performance. The 22-year-old from Erode

in Tamil Nadu accumulated 8.5 points in nine games. He finished 1.5 points ahead of his nearest rival, winning against four International Masters and one Grandmaster.

The nine-round tournament, which ended on Thursday, had 84 participants from eight countries, out of which 24

were titled players. In fact, at the end of the penultimate round where he beat Indonesian IM Nayaka Budhidharma, Iniyan had already secured the title as he



was 1.5 points ahead in the points table. İniyan beat Vietnamese GM

Nguyen Van Huy in the final round in an impressive performance.

Indian IM VS Raahul and Chinese IM Li Bo finished second and third respectively. Iniyan, who had won the Chennai Open earlier in January, secured 15 rating points from the title win.

PTI MUMBAI

He pulled Umar Nazir for a trademark six, effortlessly lofted Auqib Nabi and Yudhvir Singh for a couple of more hits over the ropes to give a glimpse of his absolute best. But eventually, a fifty on Ranji comeback was not meant to be for India captain Rohit Sharma who fell for 28 here on Friday. Playing his first game for

Mumbai in domestic red-ball cricket in nearly a decade, Rohit's first day on the field was a disaster with the 37year-old falling for a 19-ball 3 in the opening hour of the Ranji Trophy clash against Jammu Kashmir.

But on Friday, Rohit gave a far better account of himself to notch up a fluent 28, his best in first-class cricket since a 52 in the second innings of the

Bengaluru Test against New khen he could not grab a zealand last year.

It indeed has been that long through. for Rohit, who has since Rohit immediately responded scored 0, 8, 18, 11, 3, 6, 3 and with a pull shot for a six over the square leg. A thick outside edge then flew between the fielder at gully 9 in subsequent outings against New Zealand and Australia. and second slip, and on the final ball Rohit flashed hard

Back then in mid-October, India were cemented on top of the World Test Championship points table and the house was in complete order for the national side.

Dropped on one, Rohit had But it all came crumbling down following defeats to New Zealand and Australia which forced Indian raced to 21 off 11 balls at one stage but he remained cautious mostly, even though there were a few times he was superstars to play domestic beaten. cricket.

With comparatively no On Friday, he looked for a big moisture on the second day one but it wasn't to happen. wicket here at the BKC, I&K Rohit's knock of 28 was mixed bowlers also had to work hard with hits and misses in the to keep it tight but could not initial stages, which all began with a tough dropped chance by Nazir in the fourth over stop Rohit from freeing up his arms for a total of three sixes and two fours.

India keeps eye on Shami's fitness, looks to extend lead against England

PTI CHENNAI

Unruffled by the lingering concerns surrounding Mohammed Shami, the well-oiled machine that is India's T20 team will be eyeing an encore of its opening game performance against a stunned England in the second game of a five-match series, here on Saturday. India lead the rubber 1-0 after a

facile seven-wicket victory at the Eden Gardens on Wednesday. The hosts would certainly want to see Shami in action but his inclusion in the eleven, as things stand now, will depend on further evaluation of his fitness.

The 34-year-old was expected to feature in the first game and he was actively involved in the side boasts of quality and

nets too, but his comeback was postponed possibly because the management wanted to take a deeper look at his readiness. However, India did not miss Shami much in Kolkata where pacer Arshdeep Singh, with the

new ball, and spinner Varun Chakravarthy, in the middle phase, wrecked England, producing impressive spells. The Chepauk spin

The Eden pitch had enough help for both quicks and their slower colleagues but the corresponding 22-yard trampoline here could offer more assistance to the spinners, as it often has been the case in the past.

India would not be complaining whatever be the nature of the track. The home



variety in a line-up consisting Varun, vice-captain Axar Patel consistently. and Ravi Bishnoi.

From England's perspective, they would require much better contributions from experienced spinners Adil Rashid and Liam Livingstone to challenge the Indians.

Apart from pacer Jofra Archer, none of the other English bowlers could survive the onslaught of Abhishek Sharma and the mini cameo of Sanju Samson in the first match. Sanju-Abhishek pair on a roll Since coming together in the T20Is last year, Samson and Abhishek have had considerable success, often

giving India a flying start. The desired double-barrel firing has been occasional, but at least one of them has

produced the goods rather balls. Time for Surya to shine

It's not a matter of grave concern yet but skipper Suryakumar Yadav will be In Kolkata, Abhishek hurt England with a brutal knock, striking at over 230. Samson has three hundreds in mindful of the fact that he has

the last six innings, and it would not be unrealistic to imagine these two as the first-choice openers once India hit the road to next year's T20 World Cup at home.

significant contributions in the last three matches, including a They also offer that rare righthand-left-hand combination at the top.

Here too, the Indian openers will have to give their side a solid start considering the tricky nature of the pitch. England too will hope for a

fiery start from their openers to clinch early momentum, as Phil Salt and Ben Duckett jointly made just four runs off seven

three-ball duck at Kolkata. But such things often get papered over when the team is on a roll as the reigning T20 World Champions have steamrolled Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and South Africa in

just two fifties in the previous 11 innings after the T20 World Cup final last year.

Further distilled, the stats will

show that he has made no

their last three assignments. But he would not want to miss the party for long and will be eyeing a fruitful outing here.

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