

QUOTE OF THE DAY
 The pioneer
The Congress government should block Megha Engineering Infra Ltd in Telangana immediately or else the BJP will make Central agencies to enter the scene. What is the need of entering into a MoU worth Rs 15,000 crore with Megha Krishna Reddy who stays in Hyderabad city. We will reveal the secret behind this deceptive MoU. Chief Minister Revanth had demanded earlier that the BRS admin should blacklist Megha as it is corrupt and had looted Telangana
 - Paidi Rakesh Reddy, BJP Armoor MLA

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

'CITY GAVE ME COUNTLESS CHANCES TO FULFILL MY DREAM'

Payal Rajput makes waves in a woman-centric FILM

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. Revanth 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 IX: Rajiv Gandhi International



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 allocate funds for the project. The CM emphasized the urgent need for financial support for the Musi Riverfront Development Project. Proposing a budget of Rs 17,212 crore Comprehensive 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 national economy.

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

entity like FEO involves a multi-step process. The Telangana Government, through the Ministry 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 transfer of Rs 55 crore from the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) 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**



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 ... **PAGE: 3**

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 breaches Rs 83k mark for first time

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 aggressive buying triggered by 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**

Rohit shows some spark but falls

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 37-year-old falling for a 19-ball 3 in the opening hour of the Ranji Trophy clash... **SPORTS**

Slugflest over Godavari—Banakacherla Project



Minister Uttam assures action

PNS ■ HYDERABAD
 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

Scheme. Addressing the media at the Secretariat, Uttam accused Harish of fabricating claims and misleading the public about the status of the proposed project by Andhra Pradesh. He clarified that the project, submitted by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu to the Centre, is still at the proposal stage, with no approvals or ground-work initiated. "Not a single drop of water has been diverted from the Godavari to Andhra Pradesh. Harish is creating imaginary situations to mislead people," he asserted. Uttam outlined the Telangana government's proactive measures to counter Andhra Pradesh's plans. Letters have been sent to Union



Jal Shakti Minister CR Patil and Finance Minister Nirmala 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 (GWD/T) Award of 1980 and the Andhra Pradesh **Continued on Page 2**

Why did you hide letters?, asks Harish

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

Godavari-Banakacherla Project. Harish responded sharply to Uttam's statements by questioning his delayed reaction to Andhra Pradesh's proposed water projects and challenging the veracity of his claims. 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 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 on the Godavari-Banakacherla project,



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**

Ponguleti loses cool, fires at Karimnagar Collector Pamela

PNS ■ HYDERABAD
 A tense exchange occurred in Karimnagar when the Minister for Housing, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, publicly expressed his displeasure with District Collector Pamela Satpathy during a Manohar Lal Khattar event. The agitated Minister questioned the Collector's handling of the event, stating, "What are you doing? Do you have no common sense?" The incident reportedly stemmed from protocol issues linked to the absence of the Karimnagar Commissioner of Police Abhishek Mohanty. With the Union Minister

and state ministers attending the event, the minister raised concerns about inadequate security. Ponguleti's outburst was directly connected to CP Abhishek Mohanty's absence. Pamela Satpathy, attempting to explain the situation, informed Ponguleti that the CP was not at the event. However, this explanation appeared to do little to placate the Minister, who continued to express dissatisfaction over the perceived protocol breach. Karimnagar Collector Pamela Satpathy confirmed that the Minister was referring to her about the CP's absence and security 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**

Farmers with new passbooks must apply for Rythu Bharosa

Government frames guidelines

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. The Finance Department has

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 documents needed for applying

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 Extension Officer (AEO).

Vijayasai bids goodbye to politics

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 In a surprising development, V Vijayasai Reddy, the 67-year-old Rajya Sabha Floor Leader and national general secretary of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP), announced his retirement from politics on Friday. His decision to retire is being seen as a major blow to both the YSRCP and its president, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, especially 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 significant implications for the YSRCP, particularly in terms of leadership and its influence at the national level. His exit marks the end of an era, as he has been one of the most influential figures in the state's political landscape for nearly four decades. In a heartfelt post on X (formerly Twitter), Sai Reddy, a two-time Rajya Sabha member, 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 entirely personal. **Continued on Page 2**



Sridhar Babu welcomes GCC to Hyd

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. "Telangana's investment outreach continues to forge global connections. 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.

City Pioneer

the pioneer HYDERABAD | SATURDAY | JANUARY 25, 2025

03



CITY 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

Cyclotron

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, Director of (Government e-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.

Metro Rail key to make Hyd a world-class city

■ Expansion works are in full swing in Old City ■ Compensation paid to 170 people

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

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 kilometers.

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 transformation.

The Metro expansion is already in progress, with significant work underway in the Old City. The stretch from MGBS to Chandrayangutta is seeing rapid development. NVS Reddy revealed that Rs 80 crore in compensation has been paid to 170 property owners, and another Rs 80 crore will be disbursed soon



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

after the scrutiny of ownership documents. Of the 1,100 properties affected by the project, 270 owners have voluntarily offered

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.

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.

For the first time, EVZIP has introduced women-driven two-wheeler 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 ECLIP. Plans are in place to extend this service to other stations soon.

Senior officials from L&T Metro Rail, including Murlu 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.

TG govt appoints first regular Director of Medical Education

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

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 General Hospital in 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 as the Director of Medical Education (Academics).

After the State bifurcation, the DME post was allocated to Andhra Pradesh, leaving Telangana without a regular



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

Director. For the past decade, the position had been made but no regular appointments were made, said Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha in a statement.

The appointment was an order issued by Health

Secretary Christina Z Chongthu.

The post of Director of Medical Education (DME) had been held by in-charge Dr N Vani after the Congress forming the government in Telangana.

Advantage Assam 2.0 Roadshow organised to promote investments

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 Ranoo 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 University.



Assam's Minister for Education and Tribal Affairs Dr Ranoo 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 Chakravarty, Additional Chief Secretary, noted Assam's economic growth, 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 and skill development were also emphasized.

Meanwhile, Co-Chairman of FICCI Telangana, VV Rama Raju appreciated Assam's potential in semiconductors, aerospace and renewable energy.

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

HM orders officials to hand over Alakananda kidney case to CID

DEEPIKA PASHAM
deepikapasham2015@gmail.com
■ HYDERABAD

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.

Officials informed the Minister that Alakananda Hospital conducted illegal kidney transplant surgeries without the required permissions. The racket involved individuals from Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, exploiting economically 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



Pradesh and Kerala, should be notified about the racket.

Minister Rajanarasimha noted that a similar case was previously reported in Kerala and called for an inquiry to determine any potential links between the two incidents.

The Minister also directed officials to investigate the alleged involvement 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.

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.

Parks, roads encroached in Ameenpur: HYDRRAA

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

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

Municipality.

In a statement, HYDRRAA 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 HYDRRAA, 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 HYDRRAA to plan a more detailed survey in collaboration with Survey of India and ED Survey teams.

Counterfeiter arrested

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

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 multimedia and design to create counterfeit Rs 500 notes worth Rs 5 lakh.

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

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 Chowrangee

classical music with modern genres like Bollywood songs and ghazals, Sounak mesmerized the audience.

The evening also featured Arpita Chatterjee, a renowned theatre artiste, in My Name is Jaan. She portrayed the role of

Gauhar Jaan, the first Indian musician who recorded on a Gramophone over a century ago. Gauhar Jaan's recordings made her famous and she later supported India's freedom movement at Mahatma 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 first-ever Kids Business Carnival. Supported by Carniwell, 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, horses, birds, 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 Mainecon 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 projects, 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 Insider.



www.dailypioneer.com

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

PAPER WITH PASSION

Rekindling historic ties

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

India 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, signalling 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.

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, signalling 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.

PICTALK



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

Cooperative commodities exchange: A global vision for farmer empowerment

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

The agricultural sector is the backbone of many economies, particularly 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.



GFCCE will leverage the Government of India's support to develop a robust and accessible digital platform integrated with blockchain technology to ensure transparency 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 accountability. The project will adopt a PACS-to-APEX (Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies to Apex-level organisations) approach, leveraging India's extensive network of over 95,000 PACS. These societies will act as the foundational nodes, aggregating produce from farmers at the village level. The commodities will then be funnelled through district and state-level federations, culminating

at the national apex organisation, which will oversee operations, ensure fair pricing and manage exports. To address storage issues, a network of modern warehouses will be constructed and integrated with blockchain systems. These warehouses, equipped with real-time inventory tracking, temperature controls and pest management systems, will be strategically located across key agricultural regions. Blockchain connectivity across warehouses will enable seamless tracking of stored produce, ensuring reduced wastage and pilferage. Farmers will also receive warehouse receipts, which can be used as collateral for loans, providing them with immediate financial support. This interconnected system will not only provide farmers with better access to markets but also ensure that the supply chain is efficient, transparent and secure. It will serve as the backbone for procurement planning and play a vital role in stabilising food prices.

Impact on Food Inflation The GFCCE's blockchain-enabled supply chain and warehouse network will revolutionise procurement planning and control food inflation. With real-time data on production, storage, and distribution, government agencies will have accurate insights into commodity availability and demand patterns. This data-driven approach will enable timely procurement decisions, ensuring that 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 lead to price spikes. 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 efficiently and exported strategically to global markets, preventing a price crash domestically.

(The writer was a member of the high level MSP committee, Ministry of Agriculture; views are personal)



BINOD ANAND

Relationships 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. The life story moves from one end of the spectrum to an often incoherent hurtling down the slope of not only a difference of opinion but also a difference in personalities. The analysis can go only so far because then logic gives way to preferences and pas-

The complex terrain of relationships

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



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM



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 significant 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 an asset in keeping relationships positive. Interpersonal relationships apart, work relationships, also get affected and the impression of losing an argument, even in workspaces, is a personal defeat. This, by itself, is a self-defeating proposition. It is self-defeating because even if one wins the argument due to positional power or manipulative skills, the scars of a lost argument leave long-lasting damage to relationships. One can indeed often lose a battle to win the war. As indicated earlier, this applies to work situations as much as to real-life, non-work situations. Gentleness and soft words go far, especially when gentleness is received not as a proposition of the weaker person, but as a characteristic and indicator of mutual respect. The best solution to many conflicts is when both come out as winners, and no one is



THE LIFE STORY MOVES FROM ONE END OF THE SPECTRUM TO AN OFTEN INCOHERENT HURLING DOWN THE SLOPE OF NOT ONLY A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION BUT ALSO A DIFFERENCE IN PERSONALITIES

growing, smitten by the dangerous 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 handled 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' and that no personalities are involved. This can be a useful approach to handling institutional issues because every resolution of a conflict should be for the institutional good. (The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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 imperialist 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



To 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

level, Maha Kumbh is truly a festival of positivity 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-of-a-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

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, Mandasaur, 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

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



FIRST COLUMN

SEEKING TRUE SHELTER IN THE DIVINE

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



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

We 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 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 'dhyani' (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)

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



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

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



Of freezing marrows and choking breaths William Shakespeare, emperor 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.

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 during the last ice age which had covered



AS THE CHILLING FLIP SIDE 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

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—including the chest-thumping democracies 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 action.

All of these, at a certain elevated level, power the wheels of history. These also affect inter-personal relations, causing friction and hostility arising from anger and discontent, or cordiality and warmth caused by harmony. The sum total of the interaction among these factors determines the quality of a community's social existence in terms of tensions between collective bodies like class and caste, and stress caused by individual actions like crime, which is often caused by alienation resulting from marginalisation, poverty and anonymity in impersonal societies. A crime can be a perverse act of self-assertion, a sub-conscious statement like, "I kill, therefore I exist"—a variant of Rene Descartes much-quoted assertion, "Cogito ergo sum (literally, "I think, therefore, I am")."

Another form of self-assertion can be participation—to say nothing of playing a leading role—in a mass movement. Eric Hoffer writes in The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements, "There is in us a tendency to locate the shaping forces of our existence outside ourselves. Success and failure are unavoidably related in our minds with the state of things around us. Hence it is that people with a sense of fulfilment think it a good

world and would like to conserve it as it is, while the frustrated favour radical change. The tendency 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 invariably lead to struggles with status quoists. Besides, social tensions and conflicts will increase following rising ocean levels, caused by global warming, 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.

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."

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 butt-freezing, breath-choking winter. Can one be happy in its midst? The answer will be in the affirmative, as the news of a progeny 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 quotidian existence brings and that, again, are ephemeral.

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 mortality.

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 venerable cliches blessed with eternal life.

(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

Cultural tourism, as 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 its reuse. Similarly, tourism has evolved from being largely

centered on pilgrimage to a multifaceted industry encompassing learning, entertainment, experiences, and relaxation. This transformation has elevated tourism as a catalyst for inclusive economic growth and job creation across diverse sectors, such as hospitality, transportation, and entertainment. The industry's ripple effect benefits individuals and communities alike, engaging local businesses, transport operators, craftspeople, tourist 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 experiences that resonate with travelers while preserving the



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, 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 degradation. To mitigate these issues, regulated practices in cultural heritage tourism must prioritise the symbiotic relationship

between factors influencing tourist experiences and those fostering cultural understanding. Tour operators and tourists must respect the sanctity and protocols of cultural heritage sites. Travelers should be encouraged to appreciate local customs without overstepping boundaries, ensuring 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 management efforts, such as cata-

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

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

Hyderabad, a city known for its rich heritage, vibrant culture, 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 industry, 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 without 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 industry," 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 attitudes. 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.

As a working mother, Lavanya has



always believed in empowering other 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

love," she adds with a smile.

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 professionally 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.



DIRECTED BY :

Victor Mukherjee

PRODUCED BY :

Jyoti Deshpande,

Neha Anand, Pranjali

Khandhiya

CAST : Mithila Palkar,

Amol Parashar,

Meiyang Chang,

Sauraseni Maitra

STREAMING ON :

Disney+Hotstar

RATING : 2.5/5

Sweet Dreams

A rom-com with heart, but not enough spark

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 seemingly perfect partner. Dia, on the other hand, is a corporate professional grappling with career and relationship 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 their quest to connect in real life through the modern world of social media, with the help of their friends.

ANALYSIS

"Sweet Dreams" is built on an intriguing concept: the idea of finding love through dreams and questioning whether one should chase their fantasies or embrace reality. The premise feels fresh and has the potential to reinvigorate the rom-com 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.

HIGHLIGHTS

One of the strongest aspects of Sweet Dreams is its fresh and unconventional concept, exploring the idea of two individuals connecting through their dreams, which brings a unique twist to the rom-com genre. The film stands out for its charming performances, particularly 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 stability to the narrative. These elements together infuse the film with moments of charm and intrigue, even when the overall execution falters.

DRAWBACKS

Despite its intriguing premise, Sweet Dreams falters in execution, struggling with a bland and uninspired 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 component of any rom-com, is forgettable 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

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 disconnected. While the cinematography captures picturesque visuals, especially 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.

TACKLING CERVICAL CANCER

Challenges and solutions for India's women

IN INDIA, CERVICAL CANCER IS THE SECOND MOST FREQUENT DISEASE IN WOMEN 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, stigma associated 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 preventative 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 of its high cost, lack of awareness, and misconceptions.

- **Gaps in Healthcare Infrastructure:** Inadequate facilities plague India's healthcare 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.



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 policy, 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 its effectiveness 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, especially 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 cancer 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 prevention 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.)



● Sravya



Student Tribe, India's largest and fastest-growing student community, witnessed a spectacular evening as they hosted the Grand Finale of st. GOT - The Ultimate Talent Hunt at Shiipakala 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.



● Faria Abdullah



● Priya



● Snigdha



● Sricharan



● Megha



PARTY

Photos by - SV Chary



● Sudhakar Reddy and Sithamahalakshmi



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 Sudhakar Reddy are seen.



● Sushanth



● Virajetha



Rakul Preet Singh and Jacky 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.



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.

FUN

ARCHIE

THAT'S AN ODD PLACE FOR A TISSUE DISPENSER!
IT'S NOT A TISSUE DISPENSER!
THESE ARE PETITION SLIPS FOR TARDY STUDENTS!
WHIP!

CALVIN AND HOBBS

A CHICKEN? YOU TRANSMOGRIFIED ME INTO A CHICKEN!!
YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO TURN ME INTO A PTERODACTYL, YOU NINCOMPOOP!!
ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS THINK OF A PTERODACTYL! WHY DID YOU THINK OF A CHICKEN??
IT'S ALMOST LUNCHTIME.
OH, I SEE! WELL, I'M GLAD YOU WEREN'T HUNGRY FOR A HOTDOG!

GARFIELD

THEY SAY THAT DOING HOUSEWORK IS GREAT EXERCISE
JON! WHAT A GREAT IDEA!
I'LL CLEAN OUT THE REFRIGERATOR!

REALITY CHECK

WELCOME TO THE CHANNEL 7 NEWS HOUR. I'M NANCY ANN CUNCIFF FILLING IN FOR MATT MANNHEISEL WHO WAS JUST FIRED. IN THE NEWS TONIGHT AS WE ONLY HAVE AN HOUR I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE EASIER TO LIST THE MEN WHO HAVEN'T BEEN ACCUSED OF INAPPROPRIATE SEXUAL MISCONDUCT TODAY.

SPEED BUMP

CROSSWORD

1	2		3	4	5
		6			
7			8		
	10				
11			12		
		13			
14					
16			17		
18			19		

NANCY

YOU'RE RIGHT! I CAN'T LOSE HER, OR I'D LOSE MY MIND! BUT... WHAT IF SHE SAYS "NO"?
DON'T WORRY, SON. FRITZI WILL SAY "YES"!!
YOU BET SHE WILL!!
DINER
(WHAT DO WE DO IF SHE SAYS "NO"?)
(DO WHAT WE ALWAYS DO-- TRUCK IT OUTTA TOWN QUICKER THAN BURT REYNOLDS AND JERRY REED!!)

SUDOKU

			1	9	6			
1	9		5					
4	6				1			
		3	5				8	
2			6	3			1	
9				8	5			
	7						3	5
			8				6	7
3	1	6						

Yesterday's solution

4	5	3	2	1	7	8	9	6
8	9	7	6	3	5	1	4	2
2	6	1	4	9	8	5	3	7
6	3	8	9	2	1	4	7	5
9	7	2	5	8	4	3	6	1
1	4	5	7	6	3	2	8	9
5	8	4	1	7	9	6	2	3
7	1	6	3	4	2	9	5	8
3	2	9	8	5	6	7	1	4

Rules

- 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.

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

ACROSS

- Opposite of brother
- A fairy's magic stick
- A bird's bill
- To stay
- Ripping
- A deer's horns
- Weapons with long blades
- A tube in the body which carries blood
- Seven days
- A paper handkerchief
- Houses for dogs
- A small bomb made for throwing
- A puzzle with lots of pieces
- Welcomes
- Stopped sleeping
- One time

DOWN

- Cries with big gasps
- Frightened
- A camel rider in the desert
- An animal like a small horse with big ears

SOLUTION

E	L	E	P	H	A	N	T	S
I	O	N	R					
S	T	O	N	E	C	R	E	P
R	O	S	E	F	U	E	L	
V	O	B	A	L				
A	C	T	O	R	S	E	C	H
N	O	I	A	L				
T	O	W	E	L				
E	L	I						
P	R	E	S	I	D	E	N	T

GINGER MEGGS

DON'T TELL ME, BENNY'S JUST BEEN DOWN DEADMAN'S HILL!
NOPE...
HE'S JUST MENTALLY PREPARING.

REVIEW

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

SURESH KAVIRAYANI
sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

Some 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 Jagannathan 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 Ilendula 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 Balakrishna) 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 Dharmendra Reddy is in debt and he has a love interest Salima (Pooja Ramachandran). Sudha also sees Reddy's daughter Kavitha's (Bindu Chandramouli) angle for the movie.



Film: Hatya

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 fictitious 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 murder 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 interestingly 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 Reddy's daughter for the motive.

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

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 Balakrishna 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 dialogue delivery, body language is good and she behaved in every scene naturally. 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 Bhadrappa, and they all supported well. Most of the characters speak in the Rayalaseema dialect, which is a good thing.

Finally, 'Hatya' story is based on a real-life murder case, but director Srividya Basawa succeeded only half way through. If the director focused on the story more rather than to do favour a person through the film, she definitely failed. Earlier also, many directors made 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 Raja 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.

"After 'Mangalavaram', 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.



PRAGYA JAISWAL OUT, SAMYUKTHA IN FOR AKHANDA 2

Nandamuri Balakrishna and Boyapati Sreenu combination is a successful one and they proved it with three blockbusters. Now, they are joining hands for the fourth time for the sequel of 'Akhandam 2: Thandavam'. The first part 'Akhandam 2' was a hit 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.

Ram 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 rounds. According to a source, director Boyapati changed the story to suit Samyuktha's character. The child in the 'Akhandam' 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 Salman Khan's 'Bajirangi 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.



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

Bollywood actor Sunny Deol joined hands with Telugu director Gopichand Malineni for the film '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

announced the release date. 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.



Thandel promotions in full swing

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

The story is based on a real incident that happened near Srikakulam, with fishermen 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 wonderful 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

On one side, the Income Tax (IT) officials raided big production 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 concept-driven 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

film. The teaser of this film was 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.



