

The CM who opposed land sales while in the opposition, is now leading the charge to auction prime government lands to raise revenue. When I asked about this in the Assembly, they dismissed it as mere land transfers to TSIIIC. But as soon as the session ended, they mortgaged the same land for loans of Rs 10,000 crore. Now, before the next session, they are auctioning the same land

- Harish Rao, BRS MLA P2

'Security apparatus must remain adaptive to emerging threats'

GOVT TAKING STEPS TO MAKE INDIA EXPORT-FRIENDLY: FM

Anurag Kashyap and Manju Warriar's long-delayed collaboration back ON TRACK

DON'T MISS...  
 Tight security at Praja Bhavan amid protests

Heavy police presence was observed at Praja Bhavan on Tuesday during the Prajavani programme, with strict security measures in place. A total of 401 grievance applications were submitted at Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Praja Bhavan. Earlier in the day, a large number of female constables were deployed to prevent protests by Anganwadi workers demanding regularisation of their jobs. As the workers entered the premises, the police silently accompanied them, keeping a police van ready ...

-PAGE: 3

'Why not teaching Tamil in Hindi States'

Targeting the BJP-led Centre over alleged Hindi imposition, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK President M K Stalin on Tuesday wondered why the union government has not facilitated setting up of an institution to teach Tamil or other south Indian languages to people of states in north India. Writing to party workers as part of his series on the theme of "all-time opposition to Hindi imposition" Stalin said, Google Translate, Chat GPT and Artificial Intelligence help people overcome language...

-PAGE: 5

Equity rout: Sensex sinks below 73,000

Falling for the third straight day, benchmark BSE Sensex declined by 96 points to close below the 73,000 mark on Tuesday amid global equity rout on tariff war worries and persistent foreign fund outflows. The 30-share BSE barometer closed at 72,989.93, down by 96.01 points or 0.13 per cent, as 18 of its components declined and 12 settled with gains. During the day, it dropped 452.4 points or 0.62 per cent to a low of 72,633.54 but recovered some of the losses in the second half. Extending the...

-PAGE: 8

Gavaskar backs Rohit Sharma

Backing India captain Rohit Sharma, who was subjected to fat-shaming, cricket legend Sunil Gavaskar on Tuesday said that slim guys are for modelling and in cricket, mental strength is what matters, not physical size. Addressing the unnecessary criticisms directed at India skipper in the middle of Champions Trophy by a politician, Gavaskar reminded how Mumbai's big-hitting Sarfaraz Khan also faced body shaming, but it didn't affect his performance at all. "I have always said, if you want only slim ...

-SPORTS

# Telangana demands immediate release of Rs 1,891 crore dues

CM Revanth, Minister Uttam meet Central Minister Joshi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Civil Supplies Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy have urged the Union Minister for Food and PDS, Pralhad Joshi, to release the pending Rs 1,891 crore dues owed to Telangana. The two met the Union Minister at his residence on Tuesday and demanded the immediate release of the funds.

The Telangana delegation said that Rs 1,468.94 crore has been pending since the 2014-15 Kharif season for rice supplied to the Food Corporation of India (FCI). They pointed out that the TG government had borne the cost of the additional levy collection at the time and insisted that the Centre release the dues without delay.

They also requested the release of Rs 343.27 crore for the additional rice supplied under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) between May 2021 and



March 2022, as well as the dues for rice supplied in April 2022.

Another Rs 79.09 crore is pending for non-NFSA (National Food Security Act) rice distribution between June 2021 and April 2022

and that was also brought to the Union Minister's attention.

Revanth and Uttam requested an extension of the Custom Milling Rice (CMR) delivery period from one month to four months, arguing

Cabinet meet tomorrow

The Telangana government has scheduled a Cabinet meeting on March 6 at 2:00 pm at the Dr BR Ambedkar Telangana Secretariat. Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari issued an official note to the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, and all ministers, urging them to attend the meeting. The meeting is expected to focus on SC categorisation bill and Caste census. Officials from the Law, Finance, and Planning departments, along with senior secretaries, have been notified to be present. The agenda is likely to include discussions on 42 per cent reservation for BCs.

that this would prevent supply chain disruptions and logistical challenges.

In addition to the pending dues, the Telangana ministers also sought the restoration of the 4,000 MW solar power approvals under the PM-KUSUM scheme.

Continued on Page 2

# India defeats Aussies, enters CT final

PNS ■ DUBAI

Virat Kohli did not finish the chase for once but his measured 84-run knock steered India into their fifth Champions Trophy final with a clinical four-wicket win over an under-strength and profligate Australia in the first last-four clash here on Tuesday.

The Indian triumph ensures that the final of the eight-team competition will now be held here instead of Lahore, the original host of the marquee clash, as Rohit Sharma's men will not travel there owing to security concerns.

Player of the match Kohli (84, 98 balls, 5x4) was the fulcrum of Indian batting as they scaled down 265 in 48.1 overs after Steve Smith

(73) and Alex Carey (61) led the Aussies to 264.

Now, India will await the winner of the second semifinal between South Africa and New Zealand at Lahore on Wednesday.

Kohli had wonderful support from Shreyas Iyer (45) with whom he realised 91 runs for the third wicket, and steadied the ship after the early departures of skipper Rohit Sharma (28) and Shubman Gill (9). Australia were weakened by the absence of some of their premier stars, but India had not beaten them in the knockouts of an ICC tournament since the quarterfinal of the 2011 World Cup.

However, Kohli was determined to correct that anomaly. The pitch used for

Continued on Page 2



# 800 tonnes of debris being removed per hour from SLBC tunnel

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Attempts to speed up the rescue operation at the Domalipenta SLBC tunnel in Nagarkurnool district gained momentum on Tuesday, with officials announcing that the restoration of the conveyor belt has enabled the removal of 800 tonnes of debris an hour.

Disaster Management Special Chief Secretary Arvind Kumar and Collector Badavath Santosh held a review meeting at the tunnel inlet office, assessing the rescue operation

at the Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) project.

The meeting was attended by the Director General of Fire Services DGP Nagireddy, TSSPDCL CMD Musharraf Ali, SP Vaibhav Gaikwad Raghunath, Colonel Parikshit Mehra, NDRF officer Prasanna, representatives of HYDRAA, SCCL Rescue, the SDRF, Fire Services and the South Central Railway.

Officials reviewed the progress of the rescue operation, the challenges, and coordination among various

Continued on Page 2

# SC issues notices to MLAs, Assembly Secy, ECI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has issued notices to MLAs, the Telangana Assembly Secretary and the Election Commission in connection with the MLA defection case. The bench headed by Justice BR Gavai directed the respondents to file their counter-affidavits by March 22.

The court postponed the next hearing to March 25, indicating that it will closely scrutinise the issue of reasonable time limits for deciding defection cases.

Justice Gavai raised critical questions about democratic principles and procedural delays, asking, "Does reasonable time mean waiting until the end of the term?"

He also questioned how long such cases should take, emphasising that the "Operation Success, Patient Dead" approach is not acceptable in dealing with defections.

The Supreme Court's intervention comes amid increasing concerns over delays in acting against defecting legislators.

# CBN defends Godavari-Bankacharla Project

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has defended his government's decision to take up the Godavari-Bankacharla Project, asserting that he is only using water that would otherwise have flown into the sea. He was speaking at a Graduates' winning rally on Tuesday at the TDP office.

The water I am diverting is what is wasted in the sea. Some people are making this a political issue, while others are reacting just to stay ahead and not fall behind. This is not the right approach," he said

# Hails Kaleshwaram Project



Drawing a parallel to Telangana's Kaleshwaram Project, he said that TG had done a good job in harnessing Godavari waters, and he intended to do the same in Andhra Pradesh. He said the Godavari-Bankacharla Project is for Telugus and their welfare.

"I had promised to bring Godavari water to Bankacharla,

from Polavaram to Bankacharla. The water I am diverting is what is wasted in the sea. Some people are making this a political issue, while others are reacting just to stay ahead and not fall behind. This is not the right approach," he said, taking an indirect swipe at political parties in Telangana.

Continued on Page 2

# HC hears PIL on KCR's absence from Assembly, issues notices

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana High Court on Tuesday heard a PIL seeking a directive to ensure that BRS chief KCR who represents Gajwel in the Assembly attends Assembly sessions.

The petition, filed by the Federation of Farmers Association Telangana General Secretary Vijay Pal Reddy, said that KCR had been absent from the Assembly despite being the Leader of the Opposition.

The case was heard by a Bench comprising Justice Sujay Pal and Justice Renuka Yara. The petitioner's lawyer, Paduri

Srinivasa Reddy, argued that KCR, as the opposition leader, has a responsibility to raise issues of public importance and farmers' problems in the Assembly.

He said that if an MLA remains absent for several months he could face disqualification as per the law and requested the court to issue directions to the Assembly Secretary regarding this.

During the hearing, the Bench questioned the court's jurisdiction in the matter. The lawyer representing the Assembly Legislative Affairs countered that the PIL was not maintainable.

Continued on Page 2

# Restoration of Ayyagari, Ravula Cheruvus approved

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Government has accorded administrative approval for the restoration of the Ayyagari Cheruvu and Ravula Cheruvu in the Manthani Municipality of Peddapally district. The government has sanctioned Rs 299 lakh and Rs 405.50 lakh for the restoration.

The approval came after requests from the Chief Engineer (MI), who had sought clearance for the project through official correspondence in

Continued on Page 2

# 'Focus on kindness towards animals'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday lauded the unique wildlife conservation, rescue and rehabilita-

# PM Modi hails 'Vantara'

tion initiative 'Vantara', which he visited this week, and urged people to

focus on kindness towards animals. Modi on Sunday visited Vantara,

the animal rescue, conservation and rehabilitation centre in Gujarat's Jamnagar district.

Spread over 3,000 acres, Vantara is located at Reliance Industries' Jamnagar refinery complex. It is a rescue centre dedicated to the welfare of captive elephants and wildlife, providing sanctuary, rehabilitation and medical care to animals rescued from abuse and exploitation.

Modi said in a post on X, "Inaugurated Vantara, a unique wildlife conservation, rescue and rehabilitation initiative, which provides a safe haven for animals while promoting ecological sustainability and wildlife welfare. I commend Anant Ambani and his entire team for this very compassionate effort."

"An effort like Vantara is truly commendable, a vibrant example of our centuries-old ethos of protecting those we share our planet with," he said.

Continued on Page 2

# Meenakshi starts operation clean-up

## To appoint Political Affairs Committee in all erstwhile districts

KOLISHETTY VENKATESHWARLU  
 venkat.k.wartu@gmail.com  
 ■ HYDERABAD

The AICC secretary in-charge of Telangana, Meenakshi Natarajan, has started cleansing the party. She conducted a review meeting of Medak Parliament constituency which was attended by all Congress leaders of the constituency.

She said the party will appoint the District Political Affairs Committees in all erstwhile districts to look after party programmes. The Committee will coordinate leaders in the district, it is learnt.

The Committee will have Ministers from the district, the in-charge Minister, MLAs and MLCs. The party will soon decide how to set up the District Political Affairs Committees.



AICC incharge Meenakshi Natarajan participates in Medak Parliament constituency review meeting on Tuesday

The intention of appointing District Political Affairs Committees is to ensure that there are no differences between leaders who may be old or new and to strengthen the party.

Meenakshi made it clear that she would not remain silent if party workers engage in fights and comment publicly against the party.

She also made it clear that she will remove in-charges if problems arise due to them, it is learnt.

She also inquired with party leaders about the losses suffered by party candidates in Parliament elections. She suggested that Assembly constituency in-charges should function together

Continued on Page 2





# TDP's entry into Telangana politics worrying KCR

The TDP's re-entry into Telangana politics after a brief period, probably to stop the BRS from coming to power a third time, needs to be discussed in detail. After keeping away from contesting the TG Assembly elections in 2023, which enabled the Congress to grab power, the TDP is now planning its future moves in TG. This development is worrying the BRS as it can polarise votes in favour of the main players.



**CONGRESS PARTY** headed by YS Jagan Mohan Reddy in AP. Although the TDP is happy with AP, it wants to protect its identity in TG as it was there the TDP took birth 43 years ago under the leadership of NT Rama Rao. Despite being defeated by the TDP in his home turf Chandragiri in Chittoor district, Congress legislator Chandrababu left the Congress and joined the TDP headed by his father-in-law NTR. Very soon he became the TDP General Secretary and gained NTR's confidence. When NTR was dethroned in an internal coup by his finance minister Nandendla Bhaskar Rao in August 1984, Chandrababu played the key role in preventing the TDP's MLAs from being poached by rivals. The coup was carried out with the support of the Congress headed by Indira Gandhi. NTR became the greatest adver-

**As everyone knows the NDA comprising the BJP, the TDP and the Jana Sena Party (JSP) headed by film star Pawan Kalyan fought jointly against the YSR Congress Party headed by YS Jagan Mohan Reddy in AP**



**M D RATNA KUMAR**  
Senior Journalist  
ratnakumarm@gmail.com

sary of the Congress as he was responsible for the first defeat of the Congress in Andhra Pradesh. NTR's toppling united the entire opposition in the country against Indira Gandhi. After a month NTR was reinstated on September 16, 1984. Chandrababu had a good image in NTR's mind, particularly after the parading of MLAs in front of the Rashtrapathi Bhavan in New Delhi. Chandrababu gained more power and it made him engineer another coup with the support of NTR's family.

This was the reason for the success of Chandrababu's second coup carried out in 1995 after a gap of 11 years.

The TDP is going to make its presence felt in Telangana which it considers as its 'motherland'. NTR launched a party for all Telugus irrespective of caste and creed. Despite its strong roots in a major caste, the TDP was considered a political party of all Telugu groups under NTR's leadership.

Another power centre has emerged with the TDP's

going to be declared backwards after the enumeration of Backward Classes (BCs) by the TG government? How many seats will go to the BCs as their population is higher than those of the ruling castes?

The BRS relies on Telanganites and specialises in inciting anti-Andhra sentiment. Its leadership has asked TG people to reject Chandrababu as he was trying to rule Telangana indirectly by aligning with the Congress in the 2018 Assembly polls. The results came out as per the expectations of KCR after his focused campaign against CBN. With the sole objective of toppling the BRS government, Chandrababu decided not to contest the 2023 Assembly elections paving the way for the easy transfer of TDP votes to the Congress.

In the first election held after the 2014 bifurcation, the TDP won 15 seats out of 119 seats in the TG Assembly. This was because non-locals living in

and around Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy district backed the TDP. The TDP got only two seats in rural Telangana. But the BRS admin headed by KCR made TDP legislators join the BRS. The same thing was repeated in 2018 also. Chandrababu couldn't concentrate on TDP affairs in Telangana as he had to look after his party in residual AP.

Now AP politics is in CBN's control as the NDA posted an impressive victory winning 164 seats out of 175. Chandrababu is planning to replicate the same NDA experiment in Telangana as the BJP is also emerging as a strong party in TG. If the experiment is successful in TG, it will be an inspiration to continue the same combination in the next AP elections too.

KCR is worried over the possible replication of the NDA experiment in TG. With his image dented after the filing of cases against his son and daughter, KCR is struggling

politically. He is unable to attend Assembly sessions despite the completion of a year after his election as the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) as he is facing medical problems.

If the TDP enters TG politics through the NDA then equations may change for KCR. If it becomes reality then TDP sympathisers across TG might rally behind NDA. The situation can become embarrassing for the BRS in the event of a direct fight between the Congress and the NDA.

KCR seems to be thinking of ways to stop the TDP from entering TG. Andhra people living in Telangana have a soft corner for the TDP. So far the BRS managed to gain the sympathy of non-locals by offering them a few seats in the Assembly and local bodies. KCR tried out this strategy in the GHMC polls and it yielded good results. KCR might be looking for people who can turn the tide in his favour.

## 'Conduct regular meetings with political parties' ECI seeks reports by March 31

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has directed all Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs), District Electoral Officers (DEOs) and Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) to hold regular meetings with political parties and ensure that all election-related issues are resolved within the statutory framework.

The Commission has also asked every CEO to submit an issue-wise action taken report by March 31, 2025, to their respective Deputy Election Commissioners (DEC). The instructions were issued during a two-day conference of CEOs from all states and Union Territories at the IIIDEM in New Delhi.

This was the first meeting since Gyanesh Kumar took charge as the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC). The

**The event, attended by over 100 officials, focused on strengthening election management and ensuring adherence to legal provisions, including the RP Act 1950 & 1951, the Registration of Electors Rules 1960 and the Conduct of Election Rules 1961**

event, attended by over 100 officials, focused on strengthening election management and ensuring adherence to legal provisions, including the RP Act 1950 & 1951, the Registration of Electors Rules 1960 and the Conduct of Election Rules 1961.

CEC Gyanesh Kumar urged all election officials to be approachable and transparent, ensuring smooth coordination with political parties. He emphasised that all officers –

CEOs, DEOs, ROs and EROs – must be well-versed about their legal responsibilities.

He reiterated the need to ensure voter registration for all eligible citizens above 18 years, as mandated under Articles 325 and 326 of the Constitution. The CEC also said that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) should be trained to interact courteously with voters while ensuring that no election staffer faces intimidat-

tion due to false claims.

Officials were directed to make sure that every polling booth accommodates 800 to 1,200 electors and is located within 2 km of the residences of all voters.

The Commission also stressed the establishment of polling stations with Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF), particularly in rural areas, high-rise buildings and slum clusters to increase urban voter participation.

The ECI has mapped 28 key stakeholders in the electoral process, including CEOs, DEOs, EROs, political parties, candidates and polling agents.

These stakeholders have been grouped into the four categories of Electoral Rolls, Conduct of Elections, Supervisory and Enforcement Mechanisms and Political Parties and Candidates.

## Cong leaders must work together to ensure party's victory: Mahesh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress leaders should work together to ensure the party's victory in local body elections, TPCC Chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud said.

Addressing review meetings at Medak and Malkajgiri constituencies on Tuesday at the Gandhi Bhavan, Mahesh said that party workers and leaders should move unitedly in coordination with new and old leaders.

He appealed to all Congress activists to take the development and welfare schemes launched by the TG government to the ground level. However, he warned that the party will take action against leaders who cross the party line and asked constituencies in-charge to behave responsibly and take the leaders together.

## Govt selling already mortgaged land: Harish

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BRS has strongly criticised the Congress Government's move to auction government lands worth Rs 30,000 crore, accusing Chief Minister Revanth Reddy of hypocrisy.

BRS MLA Harish Rao lashed out at the ruling party, alleging that the CM, who opposed land sales while in the opposition, is now leading the charge to auction prime government lands.

Harish also pointed to GO Ms. No. 54, issued on June 26, 2024, which revealed plans to

sell land at Rs 75 crore per acre, amounting to Rs 30,000 crore.

"When I questioned this in the Assembly, they dismissed it as mere land transfers to TSIIIC. But as soon as the session ended, they mortgaged the same land for Rs 10,000 crore for loans. Now, before the next session, they have moved to auction the same land," he alleged.

Harish pointed out that as TPCC chief, Revanth had declared government lands as Telangana's public assets, arguing that selling them would

leave no space even for grave-

yards in future. "He shed crocodile tears then, but now, as CM, he is shamelessly putting these lands up for auction," he said.

The BRS leader accused the government of misleading the Assembly on the issue. He recalled that Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy had assured the House three months ago that government lands would not be sold.

"But tenders for appointing consultants to facilitate the auctions were issued on February 28 exposing their double standards," he said.

## India defeats ...

Continued from page 1

the semifinal was fresh but much smoother than the ones on which the previous matches were played.

Kohli does not need a second invitation to exploit such conditions and a near-perfect control helped him keep pace with the asking rate. Kohli's struggle point in an ODI innings is his inability to force the pace against spinners, but here the champion batter negated leg-spinner Adam Zampa, who had his number on a few occasions in the past, quite effectively.

The 36-year-old used the pull and drives, two of his most productive shots, to optimum effect. He placed him in the wide arc between sweeper cover and mid-wicket for easy, risk-free runs.

He lost the company of both Iyer, who played some delectable shots, and Axar Patel (27) in rather quick succession but Kohli went past his 50 in 53 balls.

Glenn Maxwell dropped him on 51 off left-arm spinner Cooper Connolly, a perceived early signal of an inevitable Kohli hundred.

## HC hears PIL...

Continued from page 1

However, the petitioner's counsel argued that courts had the authority to intervene and requested a timeline to present arguments. After hearing both sides, the court adjourned the case to April 9.

The High Court issued advocate notices to the Assembly Speaker, the Assembly General Secretary and BRS Working President KTR asking them to ensure KCR's attendance in the Assembly.

Another notice was also sent to KCR, directing him to be present for legislative proceedings. The case has now gained political significance, with legal experts debating the constitutional and procedural aspects of disqualification from the Assembly for absenteeism.

## Govt stresses tourism development, reviews PPP projects

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Government is giving top priority to tourism development, focusing on utilizing the state's tourism resources to generate revenue.

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu and Excise and Tourism Minister Jupally Krishna Rao chaired a pre-budget meeting on Tuesday at the secretariat to discuss budget proposals for the Prohibition & Excise, Tourism, Culture, and Archaeology departments for the financial year 2025-26.

The leaders directed officials to align budget proposals with the state's tourism policy, ensuring adequate funds for sectoral growth. They stressed the potential of ecotourism, medical and wellness tourism, temple tourism and spiritual tourism and asked officials to integrate these segments into the state's tourism development plans.

Bhatti and Jupally emphasised the importance of public-private partnership (PPP) projects in tourism, stating that many investors are eager to collaborate. However, they directed officials to review existing PPP projects where the government has not received the expected revenue.

The government is also focusing on developing tourism assets already allotted to the tourism department, ensuring that they are optimally utilized to boost state revenue. Recognizing the need for urban recreational spaces, officials revealed that 59 blocks of forest land around Hyderabad have been identified for development into urban parks.

## GRMB meeting postponed

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The 17th meeting of the Godavari River Management Board (GRMB), which was scheduled on March 5, has been postponed as per a request from Andhra Pradesh. The revised date for the meeting will be communicated later.

The Board, which operates under the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti, had earlier issued a letter regarding the meeting. The decision to postpone the meeting was taken with the approval of the GRMB chairman.

Officials from the Irrigation and CAD Department of Telangana, the Water Resources Department of Andhra Pradesh and GRMB members were expected to participate in the discussions.

## BJP candidate in lead with 7,323 votes after fifth round

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Graduate MLC election for Karimnagar-Nizamabad-Adilabad-Medak constituency vote counting has been creating tension. By the time, the third round counting was over, the BJP candidate Anji Reddy was in the lead. The counting staff counted 103,000 votes in five rounds. Anji Reddy is leading with 38,967 votes and nearby Congress candidate V Narendar Reddy is in second place with 31,644 votes and BSP candidate is in third place with 26,562 votes. Anji Reddy is in the lead with 7,323 vote margin.

The result will not come with first priority votes if the same trend continues. The result will come with second priority votes.

## TG demands ...

Continued from page 1

They informed the Union Minister that while Telangana was earlier granted approval for solar energy projects of 4,000 MW capacity, the Centre later reduced it to just 1,000 MW.

The Chief Minister emphasized that Telangana is actively promoting solar power through women's self-help groups and urged the Centre to reinstate the earlier approval.

Union Minister Pralhad responded positively to the state's demands and assured that the requests would be considered. The meeting was attended by CMO Secretary Manickaraj, Civil Supplies Commissioner DS Chauhan and Telangana Bhavan Resident Commissioner Gaurav Uppal.

## Restoration of ...

Continued from page 1

September 2024. The project aims to enhance the water retention capacity of these reservoirs while ensuring better irrigation facilities in the region.

The government order says that the Chief Engineer (I), of Ramagundam has been directed to ensure adherence to IS codes and standard specifications while implementing the project. The conditions include obtaining approved designs and drawings from competent authorities, selecting appropriate cross-drainage structures to facilitate the smooth discharge of excess water and complying with the guidelines outlined in a previous government order issued in February 2016.

The sanctioned expenditure will be met through the designated account, and the Engineer-in-Chief (General), I&CAD Department, Hyderabad, has been asked to take necessary action. The Finance Department had given its concurrence for the project in November 2024.

The project is expected to improve water availability for irrigation and other purposes.

## Meenakshi starts ...

Continued from page 1

and asked MLAs to be always available to the people. She made it clear that action would be taken immediately if anyone crosses the party line.

Meeankshi also said that she was wary over the social media posts of some party activists. It is learnt that she criticised party leaders for posting material criticising their leaders.

"Some Congress activists are posting three posts against our leaders and only one against opposition leaders. This must be changed immediately. Congress leaders should take info about the government's social welfare and party programmes to the people and also about the caste census and SC categorisation," she said.

Meanwhile, the Congress candidate who contested in Patancheru, Kata Srinivas Goud, said the party has not yet taken any action against MLA Gudem Mahipal Reddy even though he had kept KCR's photo in his office instead of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's photo. Srinivas appealed to the party to take action regarding this as soon as possible.

Some leaders said that some government officials are not listening to them and are still working to the tune of BRS leaders. They told Meenakshi that the party should give Indiramma houses to people recommended by them.

## CBN defends ...

Continued from page 1

Clarifying his stance, the TDP chief insisted that he had never opposed the Kaleshwaram Project, but had supported it. He pointed out that 1,000 TMCs of Godavari water is flowing into the sea, and it was only logical to use it in drought areas. "Godavari is Sri Rama Raksha for both Telugu states, and it is the only river that can meet our water needs," he said. He emphasized that Telugus are one and he sees both states as equals. Questioning Telangana, he asked, "How can they talk about water rights now?" He also cited historical references, recalling how NTR came to power in 18 months, PV Narasimha Rao introduced economic reforms, and expressed his ambition to interlink rivers for the benefit of both states.

Addressing Telangana directly, CBN urged its leaders not to feel bad about water that was going into the sea being redirected to drought regions.

"If water crosses Rajahmundry, it will reach the sea. What is wrong if we use it to help dry areas?" he asked. He said if there is a water shortage in Telangana they can take 20 to 300 TMCs of water.

Calling for Urging rational discussions instead of political fights, CBN warned that remaining silent would only embolden critics. "If we don't speak up, they will assume they are right," he said, in response to Telangana's objections over the project.

## Singer Kalpana...

Continued from page 1

After reaching the house, the police broke open the door and found Kalpana unconscious. She was immediately rushed to a nearby private hospital. Reports said that Kalpana's husband is coming from Chennai to be with her.

## 800 tonnes ...

Continued from page 1

mining and fire service teams. The discussions covered the specialised role of rat miners and the use of plasma cutters and they decided to enhance inter-team coordination to speed up the operation.

Authorities said that excavation is underway in areas identified by ground-penetrating radar, with two escalators kept ready for assistance. The final components of the tunnel boring machine are set to be cut using a gas cutter and removed through a loco train. The water inside the tunnel is being pumped out.

Meanwhile, the National Centre for Seismology's team has also arrived at the site to assist in the rescue operation. Officials said that providing food and making healthcare arrangements for the rescue teams are being given priority.



# City Pioneer

the pioneer

HYDERABAD | WEDNESDAY | MARCH 5, 2025

03



CITY EVENTS

## Women's Day Celebrations

By Sree Maatha Seva Samithi  
Venue  
Ravindra Bharathi  
March 5, (1:30 pm)

## Workshop

On system change for sustainability  
Venue  
Lamakaan  
March 5, (10:30 am)

## Those Stars In The Sky

English Movie  
Venue  
Lamakaan  
March 5, (5:30 pm)

## Rashomon

Japanese Movie With English Subtitles  
Venue  
Lamakaan  
March 5, (7:30 pm)



## IT Minister commissions green vehicles worth Rs 51 lakh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Information and Technology Minister D Sridhar Babu commissioned green vehicles worth Rs 51 lakh donated by Jaguar Land Rover and Badruka Trust, to Sparsh Hospice, India's largest palliative care facility at Khajaguda on Tuesday. The fleet includes three green cars and three green bikes.

Sparsh Hospice, a project of the Rotary Club of Banjara Hills Charitable Trust, provides free palliative care to terminally ill patients through inpatient, outpatient and home-care services. Over 15 years, it has served 12,000 patients and currently supports 300 to 400 patients daily. The 65,000 sq. ft. facility has 82 beds and requires Rs 50 lakh per month to operate, funded entirely by donations.

Minister Sridhar Babu appreciated Sparsh Hospice's humanitarian work, recognising the emotional strength of caregivers. He assured government support, including reviewing water bill exemptions and property tax waivers. He also emphasised the need for palliative care in rural areas and government hospitals.

Meanwhile, Dr Patolla Sanjeev Reddy, MLA of Narayanekhed, offered land for the Sparsh Hospice expands to rural areas. K Varaprasad Reddy, a governing board member, highlighted the caregivers' compassion.

## Heavy police deployment at Praja Bhavan amid protests

SAMUEL JOSHUA  
samueljoshuamjmc@gmail.com  
■ HYDERABAD

Heavy police presence was observed at Praja Bhavan on Tuesday during the Prajavani programme, with strict security measures in place. A total of 401 grievance applications were submitted at Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Praja Bhavan.

Earlier in the day, a large number of female constables were deployed to prevent protests by Anganwadi workers demanding regularisation of their jobs. As the workers entered the premises, the police silently accompanied them, keeping a police van ready in case of any protests. Many questioned the heavy security, stating that it restricted public access to grievance filing. Even the media was confined to a corner tent strictly, limiting free expression.

Meanwhile, Over 15 members of the Telangana Sarpanch Association Joint Action Committee protested, demanding their pending salaries. Committee president Survi Yadaiah criticised government representatives for ignoring their pleas despite multiple petitions. He urged the AICC in-charge for Telangana, Meenakshi Natarajan, to address the unpaid dues, stressing the financial and mental



Heavy police deployment at Praja Bhavan amid protests on Tuesday

struggles faced by sarpanches.

Yadaiah said that while they are protesting peacefully for salaries, the police are detaining and arresting them in vil-

lages. He called this police action unfair and government oppression, while the government says it is 'Praja Palana' (people's government). He said,

"The administration should be ready to meet people's needs instead of suppressing their voices". He said they were not allowed to meet the authorities at Praja Bhavan. Praja Bhavan appeared emptier than usual, as visitors were directed to nearby Praja Palana Seva Kendras (PPSKs) for updates. Due to rising complaints regarding 2BHK housing and GHMC issues, a poster listing PPSK locations, in-charges, and contact details was displayed. Even the entry was restricted to first-time petitioners, requiring proof of prior applications for re-entry.

## PRAJAVANI

### Delay in provision of houses, gas, electricity top grievances

FATIMA HASAN  
hasanfatimafax@gmail.com  
■ HYDERABAD

The prolonged delay for Indiramma houses and other welfare schemes are among the top concerns of the people in Prajavani complaints.

Speaking with The Pioneer about the prolonged wait, D Renuka, a housemaid from Balnagar said that she applied for the Indiramma house twice and has been waiting for months. "This is the third time I am coming here and they just

asked me to wait as they did not start distributing the houses in Hyderabad," added Renuka. Similarly, Mohammad Mustafa is frustrated that the prolonged wait in distribution of houses is piling up his rent which he has to pay, being unemployed. "I have applied for the house and this is my 10th time coming here. All they say is to wait, but for how long," questioned Mustafa, a resident of Begum Bazaar. He requested Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to fast track granting houses and pay the electricity and LPG subsidies on

time. While Shaikh Ahmed Pasha, who is a driver, said that he applied for a house under Indiramma houses and gas in June last year but did not get any response. He said that the officials have asked him to apply again when the Praja Palana Scheme opens up. When asked, a majority of people who came for Prajavani voiced their concern, saying that the officials request them to wait for beneficiary verification inquiry after submitting an application but no one really comes to survey and they are just asked to apply again.

## Mayor lays stone for Rs 59.40 cr development works in Begumpet

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The State government is fully committed to supporting Hyderabad's development, said Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi.

On Tuesday, along with Cantonment MLA Ganesh and Deputy Mayor Srilatha Shobhan Reddy, GHMC Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi laid the foundation stone for development works worth Rs 59.40 lakh in Begumpet Circle.

The projects include the construction of CC roads at three locations in Monda Market Division at a cost of Rs 32.50 lakh, a VDCC road in East Marredpally for Rs 25.50 lakh, curbing works for the GHMC nursery and repairs to the compound wall of GHMC Park-2 in East Marredpally at a cost of Rs 1.40 lakh.

Speaking on the occasion,



GHMC Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi, along with Cantonment MLA Ganesh and Deputy Mayor Srilatha Shobhan Reddy, laid the foundation stone for development works in Begumpet Circle on Tuesday

the Mayor stated that the current government has released Rs 700 crore to the GHMC in the past four months, an unprecedented move compared to previous administrations.

She expressed heartfelt gratitude to Chief Minister Revanth

Reddy on behalf of the city's residents and the GHMC. She also announced that Rs 25 crore is being allocated to each GHMC zone for development works, reaffirming GHMC's commitment to improving urban infrastructure for the citizens of Hyderabad.

## 140 students participate in World Wildlife Day

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In all, 140 students joined the World Wildlife Day 2025 event at Nehru Zoological Park on Tuesday. Drawing, painting and essay writing competitions were held. Students from four government schools took part. Prizes were given to the winners by J Vasantha, Curator of Nehru Zoological Park.

Vasantha congratulated all participants and winners for taking part in the Wildlife Education Programme. Later, M Deepak Tarun, ZEO of Nehru Zoological Park, conducted a Reptile Awareness



J Vasantha, Curator of Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad, presenting prizes on Tuesday

Show. The students also enjoyed a free train ride around the zoo and a visit to

the Reptile House. Several other Nehru Zoological Park officials attended the event.

## WORLD OBESITY DAY '80% of Hyd IT employees are over-weight'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

AIG Hospitals marked World Obesity Day with the launch of 'Break the Weight', an initiative aimed at tackling obesity as a major public health concern.

A study conducted by AIG Hospitals among IT professionals in Hyderabad's Hitech City found that 80 per cent were overweight. Another alarming finding revealed that 40 per cent of children in government schools suffer from non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD).

The programme brought together medical experts, policymakers and health professionals to raise awareness, promote engagement and explore effective obesity management strategies.

Hyderabad Commissioner of Police CV Anand who was the chief guest, said that obesity is influenced by more than just diet and lifestyle, highlighting its mental, societal and environmental factors. As part of the initiative, AIG Hospitals showcased its Obesity and Metabolic Centre, which offers advanced, minimally invasive weight-loss treatments, including bariatric surgeries and emerging weight-loss medications.

Dr D Nageshwar Reddy, Chairman of AIG Hospitals, raised concerns over India's increasing obesity rates, stating that 60 per cent of Indians are overweight, with 30 per cent on the path to obesity. He warned that obesity significantly worsens conditions related to the heart, liver, lungs, and kidneys.

professors and associate professors who were supposed to be attending to outpatients.

Additionally, he raised concerns over delays in IVF services and instructed the Director of Medical Education (DME) to issue show-cause notices to the doctors responsible. The Minister reiterated the government's commitment to improving healthcare services and ensuring doctors fulfill their duties diligently. Surprise inspections are expected to continue to ensure better patient care and accountability in government hospitals.



Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha inspecting Gandhi Hospital on Tuesday

During his visit, the Minister personally inspected key departments, including Outpatient (OP), Inpatient

(IP), MCH, IVF, OP diagnostic services and scanning wards. He expressed dissatisfaction over the absence of



Members of NAREDCO Telangana in an interactive session on the BuildNow portal in Hyderabad

## BuildNow portal streamlining building and layout approvals

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BuildNow portal is simplifying and speeding up building and layout approvals. This BuildNow application, scheduled to be introduced shortly, will replace the TG-BPASS system.

Introduced during the Prajapalana Vijayotsavulu in December 2024, this platform aims to streamline online approvals with advanced technology, significantly reducing processing time. The BuildNow team presented a detailed overview and gathered feedback for further improvements.

President of NAREDCO Telangana, Vijaya Sai Meka appreciated the initiative, stating that they commend the Telangana government for introducing BuildNow, a game-changing tool that simplifies and accelerates approvals.

He mentioned that this platform enhances the ease of business in Hyderabad's real estate sector. "With BuildNow, we anticipate faster approvals, greater efficiency and stronger infrastructure growth, ensuring a more sustainable and dynamic future for Telangana's real estate industry," he added.

## Chit fund fraud busted; four arrested

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Crime Investigation Department (CID) of Telangana apprehended four individuals involved in a chit fund scam that allegedly defrauded around 1,300 victims of nearly Rs 70 crore.

The arrests were made following a complaint filed by Pasham Venugopal Reddy of Hyderabad. The case was initially registered at Shankerkally police station before being transferred to the CID, Cyberabad, for further investigation. The accused were found to have operated an illegal chit fund under the name of Shankerkally Veerabhadriya Parapathi Shakara Sangam, promising high returns to investors. However, after collecting substantial deposits, they defaulted, leaving hundreds of investors in financial distress. The four arrested individuals have been identified as: Chavva Kumar, a businessman from Shankarpally, Ranga Reddy district, currently residing in Hyderabad; Chavva Yadagiri, a private employee from Ramanthapur; Chavva Chinna Esthari, a private employee from Saidabad; Chavva Venkatesh, a private employee from Shankarpally, Ranga Reddy district.

## Collector orders completion of Central Library renovation

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

District Collector Anudeep Durishetty inspected the Central library at Afzalgunj on Tuesday. He directed the authorities to complete the renovation works before the monsoon season.

During his inspection, the Collector examined the library registers, the textbook section, the digital library, computers, Xerox machines and other sections. The Collector enquired whether competitive exam books were available in Telugu and suggested that UPSC books be made available. Furthermore, the Collector interacted with students preparing for various competitive exams and asked if they had access to adequate resources and encouraged them to set clear goals, prepare diligently for exams and utilise the library as a valuable source of knowledge.



District Collector Anudeep Durishetty inspecting the Central library at Afzalgunj

## EDUCATION IS THEIR RIGHT, SAY PARENTS

## Three children in conflict with law to write inter exams

DEEPIKA PASHAM  
deepikapasham2015@gmail.com  
■ HYDERABAD

Education is a fundamental right for every child and individual, regardless of their circumstances, unless they are legally declared criminals, said parents fighting for bail in Juvenile Justice Courts in Telangana.

Currently, five boys categorised as Children in Conflict with Law (CCL) who are housed at the State Home for Boys, Saidabad, were supposed to write Intermediate public examinations. Among them, three have been granted bail to appear for their Intermediate examinations, which begin on March 5. Notably, no girls from the State home are attempting the exams this academic year.

The three boys, from

Hyderabad, Sangareddy, and Vikarabad, will be escorted to their respective examination centres. Meanwhile, one boy was denied bail and another may receive it at a later stage. These juveniles were recently brought to the home under charges related to theft and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO).

An official from the State Home for Boys shared with The Pioneer that efforts are made to ensure juveniles continue their education. "Most of these children have a regular academic history. Our role is to inform them about upcoming exams, but the process of applying for bail, paying fees and obtaining hall tickets is handled by their parents.

The parents also provide study materials, while we help them prepare for the exams," the official

explained. If a child is granted bail, an escort will be provided by the State home to accompany them to the exam centre.

The parents of the juveniles expressed their determination to support their children's education.

"This is our fight because we believe our child is innocent. If we don't encourage their education, no one else will. Education can help them improve their behavior. Until they are convicted, they are not criminals, and they have a right to education," they stated.

When asked whether CCLs show interest in academics, officials noted that juveniles with a consistent education record prior to their offense are more likely to continue their studies. However, those who have been repeatedly booked for crimes often lose interest in academics.

## 'Marrying within small communities key factor for hereditary diseases'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The practice of marrying within small communities is a key factor contributing to population-specific hereditary diseases in India.

India is a land of rich cultural and genetic diversity with numerous distinct populations. A study led by Dr K Thangaraj, CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow at the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad, explains that persistent practice of endogamy i.e., marrying within small communities, is the primary cause for population-specific diseases in India.

The findings have been published in the Journal of Genetics and Genomics. "We have analysed 281 high-coverage whole exome sequences from four anthropologically distinct populations. We examined several key factors, such as extent of inbreeding and novel genetic variants in populations. We also looked pharmacogenomic markers that influence drug metabolism to understand why different drugs seem to work differently in different popula-



tions," said Dr Pratheusa Machha, lead author of the study.

One of the key findings of this study was identifying that the widespread prevalence of ankylosing spondylitis, a type of arthritis that causes inflammation in the joints and ligaments of the spine, is linked to the HLA-B27:04 risk allele, a genetic variant that increases the likelihood of developing a disease.

"We found a high incidence of ankylosing spondylitis disease in the Reddy community, who dwell in a specific geographical region of Andhra Pradesh," said Dr Sarath Chandra Mouli Veeravalli, Rheumatologist from Krishna

Institute of Medical Sciences, Hyderabad, and one of the authors of this study.

In addition, the authors found a significant number of disease-causing genetic variants, many of which are unique to specific populations. This study also uncovered novel genetic variants associated with drug metabolism, with implications for personalised medicine, especially in response to some of the common drugs, such as tacrolimus (an immunosuppressive drug) and warfarin (an anticoagulant drug). Dr Thangaraj highlighted that, "Our study forecasts the impact of endogamy in causing population-specific genetic diseases and drug responses."

## Health Min catches docs off guard at Gandhi Hospital

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In an unexpected move, Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha conducted a surprise visit to Gandhi Hospital on Tuesday, catching hospital staff off guard. For nearly 15 minutes, the Minister walked through the premises unnoticed before doctors and administrators realised his presence.

According to a highly placed source, the Minister instructed the hospital superintendent to take action against doctors who were absent without prior intima-

tion. At least two to three doctors are expected to receive show-cause notices for dereliction of duty.

Speaking to the media, Minister Raja Narasimha emphasised the importance of discipline in government hospitals. "Surprise inspections will continue across all government hospitals.

Today, we reviewed attendance records at Gandhi Hospital and found doctors missing from duty. Strict action will be taken. Doctors, professors and RMOs skipping duty will not be tolerated," he warned.

During his visit, the Minister personally inspected key departments, including Outpatient (OP), Inpatient

(IP), MCH, IVF, OP diagnostic services and scanning wards. He expressed dissatisfaction over the absence of





An Anganwadi centre in a facility built with corrugated roof sheets

## Anganwadis in Charla mandal grapple with poor facilities

PNS ■ BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

In villages under Charla Mandal, located in forest areas, Anganwadi centres are grappling with poor facilities. The government intends to promote the holistic development of children through nutritious food, primary education, and play activities. The lack of basic amenities is keeping many children away from the Anganwadi.

Some Anganwadi centres are operating without buildings, with children sitting on the floor, leading to difficult situations.

In Kandipadu village under Charla mandal, the Anganwadi centre is facing severe difficulties as there is no building to house it. Although 37 children, two pregnant women, and some nursing mothers are enrolled here, many children are staying away due to the lack of infrastructure.

Previously, the Anganwadi was temporarily housed in a school building, but when new teachers came and occupied the classrooms, the Anganwadi had to be set up outside.

The Anganwadi teacher, Devendra, set up a shed using his own money, but the issues remain unresolved, and the

teachers have expressed their frustration. Since the government has not provided funds, Devendra arranged a thatched shed with his own money. However, within a few days, swarms of ants began to infest every nook and corner of the shed, creating fear among the children and parents.

Currently, the Anganwadi is being conducted in a small room of the teacher's house, but the lack of basic facilities means children are sitting on the floor to study. This has resulted in children being distanced from play activities.

There are allegations of discrepancies in the supply of nutritious food for children and nursing mothers. While the government is providing toys, chairs, and TVs to all Anganwadi centres, this particular centre has received none so far. As a result, children are completely deprived of play activities. Additionally, parents have alleged that there are irregularities in the distribution of nutritious food. They claim that essential items and eggs are being offloaded in other areas, 3 km away from the village, and the authorities have been washing their hands of responsibility.

## Soaring temperature keeps students on tenterhooks

PNS ■ MEDAK

The roads in Mirdoddi mandal, part of Dubbaka constituency, have been eerily deserted after 10 am as the soaring temperatures keep people inside their homes. Despite the summer season still in its early stages, the maximum temperature has already reached 32°C, making it unbearable for many to venture outside. The soaring temperatures have kept the intermediate students on tenterhooks as examinations are set to start from Wednesday.

To cope with the heat, locals are relying on air coolers and fans, while also stocking up on earthen pitchers to store water.

Doctors have been urging the public to take necessary precautions against sunstroke, especially as the sun's intensity is expected to increase in the coming days.

## Inquiry ordered into 'anomalies' at Gadwal Jogulamba temple

PNS ■ GADWAL

The Gadwal Jogulamba Temple, regarded as the fifth Sakti Peetham, has recently become embroiled in a series of controversies, raising concerns about its administration. Allegations of mismanagement and embezzlement of temple funds have surfaced, with accusations that some priests and officials have been involved in the illicit activities.

One of the key allegations is that the temple authorities have failed to maintain proper records for gold and silver ornaments and other items donated by devotees through the temple's hundi. A temple priest is believed to be at the centre of these alleged irregularities, including providing special treatment to VIPs at the expense of ordinary devotees.

An official inquiry into the matter has been ordered by the Endowments Commissioner and the Collector. Residents, particu-



larly those living near the temple, are keenly awaiting the outcome of this investigation.

Over the past two years, the Jogulamba Temple has been mired in a series of controversies. These include suspending a temple employee for supporting "Love Jihad," a priest secretly photographing the MLA and his family at a cinema, and accusations of corruption regarding the leasing of temple lands.

Additionally, there have been

ongoing issues related to the mismanagement of records for gold and silver offerings, the mysterious disappearance of ornaments, and allegations of financial discrepancies.

A recent incident involved a homam at the temple, during which a devotee donated 50 kg of ghee. The temple authorities allegedly created false bills claiming the ghee was purchased by the Endowments Department, collecting the amount under pre-

tences. Similarly, another donor contributed 41 rechargeable bulbs, yet the authorities allegedly fabricated bills stating they had been purchased by the department.

Another example involves a rice cooker donated by a devotee, but fake bills were again created to show the department as the purchaser.

Allegations have surfaced regarding the leasing of 15 acres of temple land in Kalluru, near Kurnool. The temple authorities reportedly leased the land at a significantly lower price—Rs. 1.50 lakh—compared to its market value of Rs. 5 lakh. Accusations have also been made that kickbacks were received in exchange for awarding the lease to specific parties. Further claims suggest the temple's funds were misused in constructing arches at Bairapuram and Budidapadu X roads without approval from the temple committee.

## Tension rises over land acquisition for Warangal airport

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Land disputes related to airport construction often arise over the compensation offered to landowners, especially when the lands have highest market value or the farms are essential for their livelihood. In Warangal, the Mamnoon airport has seen similar conflicts, with farmers staging protests against the survey being conducted for land acquisition process on Nakkalapally Road, near the airport.

Following the Central government's approval for the Mamnoon airport, farmers have strongly opposed the land acquisition survey associated with the project. On Tuesday, a protest was held on the Nakkalapally road near the airport, where farmers, particularly women, demanded fair



Farmers, particularly the women farmers staging a protest against land acquisition for Mamnoon airport in Warangal on Tuesday

treatment from the State government. In response to the unrest, a huge police force has been deployed to keep the peace. A farmer present at the demonstration stated, "An acre in this region is valued at approximately Rs 4 crore to 5 crore, and the government must provide compensation that reflects this value."

As of now, there has been no official statement from the State government. Minister for Forest and Environment Konda Surekha promised compensation based on market value or the allocation of land in lieu of land acquired. The land acquisition for the airport will result in the loss of 175 acres for the farmers.

## Police Commissioner stresses importance of women empowerment

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Marking International Women's Day, the Rachakonda Commissionerate and Rachakonda Security Council organised a grand celebration at PBR Convention Hall, Nagole. Women officers and staff from various departments participated in the event, which highlighted women's contributions across different sectors.

Speaking as the chief guest, Rachakonda Police Commissioner Sudheer Babu emphasised the importance of women's empowerment, stating that women possess immense willpower and can achieve anything. He acknowledged the challenges women face due to discrimination but praised their determination in overcoming obstacles to



Rachakonda Police Commissioner Sudheer Babu at Women's Day Celebrations at Nagole in Rangareddy district on Tuesday

excel in various fields. "Women are proving their excellence in every domain, working as lawyers, police officers, engineers, doctors, scientists, and educators. Their contributions are strengthening the nation," he said. The

Police Commissioner also noted that countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Pakistan have seen women rise to the highest positions, such as President and Prime Minister, further proving their capabilities.

He reiterated that women have equal rights in all sectors and encouraged women officers to work with dedication to fulfill their dreams. He expressed pride in the commitment of women personnel in the Rachakonda Police Commissionerate, highlighting their efficiency in handling responsibilities across departments, including SOT, traffic, and crime.

He also appreciated the role of women officers in providing counseling to victims of domestic violence and marital disputes.

The Police Commissioner assured the women that special measures are being taken for the welfare of women staff within the Rachakonda Commissionerate, promising full support for their professional growth.



## Sniffer dogs play crucial role in detection: CP

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Sniffer dogs will play a crucial role in catching criminals involved in offenses, said Warangal Police Commissioner Amber Kishor Jha here on Tuesday. The Police Commissioner was welcoming the newly arrived sniffer dogs at the Warangal Police Commissionerate. On February 28, five sniffer dogs, who had completed eight months of training at the police dog training centre in Moinabad, have now joined the Warangal Commissionerate's Police Dog Squad and are ready to perform their duties.

Among these dogs, three are Belgian Malinois and two are Golden Retrievers. These dogs have been named Rana, Jani, Diana, Max, and Cairo. The handlers provided full details of these newly arrived dogs to the Police Commissioner.

The Commissioner recalled that the previous police dogs had successfully detected many explosives. On this occasion, the Police Commissioner instructed the authorities concerned to provide better facilities for the new dogs.

In this programme, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police Suresh Kumar, Reserve Inspector Srinivas, Dog Squad In-charge head constable Prabhakar, along with handlers Rajesh Kumar, Venkanya, Suresh, and Dilip, participated.

## DC praises efforts to improve functioning of Gurukul School

PNS ■ NALGONDA

District Collector Ila Tripathi praised the significant improvements at the Telangana Social Welfare Girls Residential College at Kondmallapalli, noting that the conditions have greatly improved compared to the past.

On Tuesday, the District Collector conducted a surprise inspection at the Telangana Social Welfare Girls Residential School/College in Kondmallapalli. During the inspection, the Collector reviewed the cleanliness and maintenance of the hostel kitchen, store room, areas for storing vegetables and rice, cleaning areas, classrooms, and the college surroundings.

The Collector recalled that during a previous visit, the

cleanliness was not up to mark, but now, the kitchen and surroundings are kept clean.

Additionally, she appreciated the installation of stands for storing rice, new stoves, and stands for vegetables. The Collector commended the principal and staff for these improvements and urged them to maintain cleanliness in the kitchen, dining area, and storage spaces at all times.

Following the inspection, the District Collector interacted with

Class 8 students. She asked various questions related to English and Mathematics, testing their knowledge and spelling. She appreciated the students for answering all the questions correctly and distributed chocolates as a reward.

## Maize farmers in distress as 'spurious seeds' damage crops

Agriculture Department officials have so far failed to inspect the failed crops, let alone take action

PNS ■ MULUGU

A farmer named Chela Seetharamulu from Narsapur village under Tadvai mandal in Mulugu district, suffered a loss of crops on 20 acres after planting a maize seed. The seed agent had promised that the maize yield would be higher and that the produce would be bought at Rs 3,600 per quintal. He also promised that the seed company ensure protection from planting to harvesting. Believing this, the farmer went ahead with the planting.

When the crops did not yield as expected, the agent



A farmer, Chela Seetharamulu, showing the complaint he filed with the authorities against a maize seed company, in Mulugu on Tuesday

assured him that he would be compensated with Rs 70,000 per acre. However, after four months, when the crops were ready for harvesting, there was no sign of the agent, and

the farmer noticed the maize kernels were missing when he opened the cobs. Upon inspection, it was revealed that the seeds were counterfeit. The farmer then filed complaints with the authorities concerned but is not receiving justice.

The family of Seetharamulu became visibly distressed, urging the authorities to take legal action against the company that distributed counterfeit seeds and to provide compensation for the loss. It is reported that counterfeit maize seeds were distributed across approximately 1,000 acres in Tadvai mandal.

## Suspected food poisoning: Six inter students take ill

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Six Intermediate student took ill due to suspected food poisoning at SR College here on Tuesday. The student experienced stomach pain, vomiting and diarrhoea lunch at the college hostel in the afternoon.

The college management immediately shifted the students to a hospital. Among the affected students, three are receiving treatment at KIMS Hospital in Khammam, while



A girl, who fell ill due to food poisoning at the college hostel, convalescing in hospital in Khammam on Tuesday

the details of the other three are yet to be confirmed.

## Negligent officials warned of action

SRINIVAS GUDUPALLI ■ RANGAREDDY

Rangareddy District Collector C Narayana Reddy has directed authorities to ensure better facilities for students in social welfare hostels and Gurukul schools. On Tuesday, he conducted a surprise inspection at Kammadanam Gurukul School in Farooqnagar mandal under Shadnagar division. Additionally, he reviewed the T-Fiber net services implemented as a pilot project in Hajipalli village.



Rangareddy District Collector C Narayana Reddy inspecting the kitchen at Gurukul School in Farooqnagar mandal on Tuesday

Gurukul schools. He warned officials that negligence towards students' welfare would not be tolerated and that nutritious food must be served daily as per the government-approved menu. He also cautioned that any deviation from

the prescribed menu would lead to strict action.

Emphasising the importance of maintaining food quality, Narayana Reddy instructed authorities to replace expired food items with fresh supplies. He further urged teach-

ers to monitor students regularly and take necessary steps to improve the pass percentage this academic year.

Inspecting the T-Fiber net services in Hajipalli village, the Collector noted that the village was chosen as part of a pilot project in Telangana to provide internet connectivity to every household. He encouraged villagers to utilise the internet for economic growth, adding that if the initiative succeeds in Hajipalli, it will be expanded to other villages in a phased manner. He also reminded that Hajipalli has already gained recognition as a model village in the state.

Shadnagar Revenue Divisional Officer Sarita, Tahsildar Parthasarathi, teachers, and other officials accompanied the Collector during the inspections.



Nalgonda Superintendent of Police Sharath Chandra Pawar interacting with the police personnel at sand reach at Ammanabolu in Nalgonda district

## Cops directed to record details of vehicles transporting sand

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Nalgonda District Superintendent of Police Sharath Chandra Pawar conducted a surprise inspection of the sand reaches in the Ammanabolu surrounding area under Narketpally mandal to curb illegal sand mining and transportation. During the inspection, the police officer emphasised

that strict actions would be taken against anyone involved in the illegal transport of sand. The SP issued a stern warning that severe consequences will follow for those caught transporting sand illegally. As part of the initiative to prevent such activities, a check post will be established to monitor the transportation of sand more effectively.

**GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
TENDER NOTICE  
NIT No. 57/EE-28/SBZ/GHMC/2024-25 Date: 03-03-2024  
Name of the Work: Maintenance Works Others -03, Estimate Amount: Rs. 41.25 lakhs. Bid Submission Start date & Time / Bid Submission of Closing Date & Time: 04-03-2025 @ 03.30 PM / 11-03-2025 @ 03.30 PM. Name & Address of officer Cell. No.: Executive Engineer, 9154796465 / 7331189186. For further details can be sent at e-procurement @ http://www.tender.telangana.gov.in  
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Division No. 28, GHMC.

**Indian Bank**  
ZONAL OFFICE, RECOVERY DEPARTMENT,  
CVRN ROAD, OPP. CSI MISSION HOSPITAL,  
KARIMNAGAR- 505 001

**PUBLICATION DEMAND NOTICE**  
Notice under Sec. 13 (2) of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002.  
Sent on 19.02.2025 by Regd. Post.  
To: Borrower/ mortgagee/ Borrower's mortgagee: M/s. Telikonda Krishnaveni (D/o) Tarunee Ranga Reddy Address: 1. Flat No. 36, Sakshi Colony, Chanda Nagar, Setlimganjapally, Hyderabad-500050. Address: 2. H.No. 115, Shanti Srinagar, Ameerpet, Patancheru Mandal, Sangareddy-500032. Co-Borrower: 2. Mr. Tallikonda Sanni Alias Sunny Kumar S/o Telikonda Anand Rao Address: 1. Flat No. 35, Sakshi Colony, Chanda Nagar, Setlimganjapally, Hyderabad-500050. Address: 2. H.No. 115, Shanti Srinagar, Ameerpet, Patancheru Mandal, Sangareddy-500032. Guarantor: 3. Mr. Thammireddy Narayana Reddy S/o T Bell Reddy Flat No. 262, Sai Colony, Beeranguda, Astika Nagar, Telangana-500099.  
Sub: Your House Loan No. 1637879587 with Indian Bank, Sangareddy Branch. Reg. No. 1637879587. You committed default in repayment of loan to the tune of Rs. 1362441/- (Rs. Thirteen Lakhs Sixty Two Thousand Four Hundred Forty one Only) as on 19/02/2025 together with interest from this date till date of payment. The Bank issued notice under the Act on 19.02.2025 asking you to repay the outstanding amount of Rs. 1362441/- (Rs. Thirteen Lakhs Sixty Two Thousand Four Hundred Forty one Only) as on 19/02/2025 together with interest from this date till date of payment. You are called upon to pay Rs. 1362441/- (Rs. Thirteen Lakhs Sixty Two Thousand Four Hundred Forty one Only) as on 19/02/2025 together with interest from this date till date of payment within 90 days from the date of the notice being which Bank will be constrained to exercise its rights of enforcement of security interest against the secured assets given in the schedule hereunder. This Notice is without prejudice to any other rights lawfully available to the Bank.  
SCHEDULE: The specific details of the assets in which security interest is created are enumerated hereunder:  
Mortgaged assets: All that piece and parcel of and bearing Plot No. 115, in survey No. 107 & 108, measuring 200 Sq. Yds or 186.66 Sq. Yds. Allocated house constructed thereon with plot area of 1082.50 Sq. Ft., situated at Shanthi Nagar of Ameerpet Village and Mandal, Sakshi Colony, Medak District, presently Sangareddy Dist., Telangana State belonging to Telikonda Krishnaveni and bounded by: North - 40' wide road; South - Plot no. 94 East: Plot no. 154 West: Plot no. 116.  
Date: 04.03.2025 Sd/- AUTHORISED OFFICER  
Place: Sangareddy Dist. Indian Bank



ACROSS THE STATES



**Odisha: Man kills father for refusing to give Rs 10**

A 40-year-old man in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district beheaded his father on Tuesday after he refused to give him Rs 10 to buy 'guthka', police said. The accused went to a police station carrying the severed head to surrender himself, a senior officer said. "The man beheaded his 70-year-old father with a sharp weapon and surrendered at Chandua Police Station along with the severed head. His mother fled the spot. The murder took place following a heated exchange of words between the accused and his parents," he said. The deceased was identified as Baidhar Singh. Baripada SDPO Pravat Mallick said, "The murder occurred over a petty issue. The accused became angry when his father refused to pay Rs 10 for 'guthka', a tobacco product. The police reached the village along with a forensic team, and an investigation is underway, the officer said.

**'Security apparatus must remain adaptive to emerging threats'**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's security apparatus must remain adaptive to emerging threats such as cyber and hybrid warfare as well as "space-based espionage", Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Tuesday. He said internal security is not just about managing conventional threats like terrorism, separatist movements, and left-wing extremism but it is also about preparing for unconventional threats that can destabilise the nation's economic and strategic interests.



"The adversaries of today do not always come with traditional weapons; cyber-attacks, misinformation campaigns, and space-based espionage are emerging as new-age threats that require advanced solutions," he said. The defence minister was speaking at a conference on 'Advanced Technologies for Internal Security and Disaster Relief Operations' organised jointly by the Defence Research

and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). In his address, Singh highlighted the growing complexities in global security and the increasing overlap between internal and external threats. "Security challenges in the modern world are evolving rapidly, and the overlap between internal and external security is increasing," he said. "It is imperative that our institutions break silos and

work collaboratively to ensure a strong, secure, and self-reliant India." The defence minister said India's national security must be viewed holistically, integrating efforts across different security agencies and leveraging the latest technological advancements. "The DRDO has played a pivotal role in enhancing India's defence capabilities, and its contributions to internal security are equally commendable," he said.

**Policy decisions needed to protect patients from being fleeced: SC**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday left it to the states to take appropriate policy decisions to protect patients and their attendants from being "fleeced" and taken "undue advantage" of after a PIL alleged that they are compelled to purchase medicines and medical devices at a higher rate from pharmacies run at private hospitals. The apex court also stressed that any mandatory direction by it may hamper the functioning of private hospitals and have a cascading effect.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kottiswar Singh disposed of a PIL filed by a law student Siddharth Dalmia and his advocate father Vijay Pal Dalmia that alleged that the private hospitals compel the patients and their attendants to purchase medicines from in-house pharmacies or

those with which they have collaboration, and they are charged higher rates for medicines, implants and medical devices. The bench said, "We dispose of this petition with direction to all state governments to consider this issue and take appropriate policy decisions as they deem fit." Noting that health is a state subject, the bench said relevant regulatory measures can be taken by the state governments keeping their local conditions in mind.

Highlighting that the issue falls in the policy domain, the bench said it is for the policymakers to take a holistic view of the matter and frame appropriate guidelines ensuring there is no exploitation of the patients and their attendants and, at the same time, there is no discouragement and an unreasonable restriction for the private entities to enter the health sector.



**Court sends SDPI president M K Faizy to 6-day ED custody**

Delhi court on Tuesday sent SDPI national president M K Faizy to the custody of the ED for six days in an alleged money laundering case over proscribed Popular Front of India (PFI). Additional sessions judge Chandar Jit Singh sent Faizy to custody on the plea of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) seeking his interrogation and confronting him to unearth the money trail in the case and conspiracy. The Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), founded in 2009 and headquartered in Delhi, is alleged to be the political front of the now banned Popular Front of India (PFI). In its application seeking 10 days of his custody, the ED alleged Faizy was on the run. The accused opposed the application, saying the funds were transferred before the PFI was declared unlawful. "How could accused know that the government was going to declare it unlawful so that could have stopped the transaction," the defence counsel said.



**Oppn demands restoration of OPS in Assam**

Opposition parties in Assam on Tuesday demanded the restoration of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) for government employees, leading to uproarious scenes in the assembly, a brief adjournment of proceedings and suspension of an MLA for the day. The matter was moved as a resolution by Independent MLA Akhil Gogoi, urging the government to restore OPS for all government teachers and other employees "in order to secure their future, ensure social security and to give recognition for dedicating the active period of their lives to serve the public and the government". He maintained that the National Pension System (NPS) and the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) were not beneficial for employees as they would be entitled to a meagre amount of money after attaining superannuation. Other opposition parties, including Congress, AIUDF and CPI(M), also supported the resolution, urging the government to restore OPS. Congress MLA Jakir Hussain Sikdar said, "The employees work for the government during their most productive years.



**'Four more days are left'**

AAP demands clarity on monthly aid to women

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The AAP staged a protest here on Tuesday and demanded clarity from the BJP-led Delhi government on the promise to roll out Rs 2,500 monthly financial assistance to women by the International Women's Day on March 8.

The demonstration outside the Mandi House metro station here was led by former Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition Atishi along with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLAs and party workers.

Atishi in a post on X questioned the BJP government over the delay in implementing the scheme.

**Post-Independence, Cong formed a self-imposed govt: Khattar**

PNS ■ PATNA

Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Tuesday asserted that the Congress, upon Independence, had formed a government in the country that was "self-imposed and not democratically elected".

The senior BJP leader also claimed that the Jana Sangh, the party's previous avatar, was formed to prevent the Congress from enjoying "unbridled" power, alleging that the Emergency imposed by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had put a "question mark" on democracy.

"After Independence, the Congress did not form a democratically elected government. The government was self-imposed. In 1951, a year ahead of the first general elections, our ideological forefathers formed the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. The idea was to ensure that power does not become unbridled," Khattar said.

The Union minister was addressing the state council meeting organised by the BJP's



Bihar unit, in which Dilip Jaiswal was unanimously elected as the provincial president. Khattar, who is a former Haryana chief minister, also recalled having travelled to Delhi to attend a rally of Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan, who had risen up in revolt against the then Congress government headed by Indira Gandhi.

"I was all of 21 years back then. Indira Gandhi's Emergency had placed a question mark before the country's democracy. I might not have understood much of what JP said at the rally in Maurice Nagar locality. But the speech inspired me to devote myself to serving the nation," said the BJP leader.

**Stalin asks why Centre not teaching Tamil in northern states**

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Targeting the BJP-led Centre over alleged Hindi imposition, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK President M K Stalin on Tuesday wondered why the union government has not facilitated setting up of an institution to teach Tamil or other south Indian languages to people of states in north India.

Writing to party workers as part of his series on the theme of "all-time opposition to Hindi imposition" Stalin said, Google Translate, Chat GPT and Artificial Intelligence help people overcome language issues and it would be beneficial for students to learn only necessary technology and imposing a language shall only be a burden to them.

The DMK chief said Gandhi believed that people of southern states learning Hindi and those in northern states learning one of the southern languages would pave the way for national unity and the Dakshina Bharat



Hindi Prachar Sabha was founded to fulfil the wish of Father of the nation. "Gandhi himself had taken part in programmes in the sabha's headquarters in Chennai. Now, the sabha is operational across southern states with 6,000 centres," Stalin said.

Further, the chief minister, refraining from specifically naming anyone, posed whether an organisation like "Uttar Bharat Tamil Prachar Sabha or Dravida Basha Sabha" was established in north India to facilitate people of northern states to learn one of the languages of southern states.

Hitting out at BJP without naming it directly, the chief minister alleged that those who claimed to get installed a statue of saint poet Thiruvalluvar on the banks of River Ganga had it dumped on a garbage heap and wondered whether such people would set up an institution to propagate Tamil. "Those who follow the path of Godse will never fulfil the objectives of Gandhi." Even during the bygone times of Madras province, Gandhiji was instrumental in the christening of provincial Congress party unit as Tamil Nadu Congress.

**Munde's resignation not enough, dismiss Fadnavis govt: Aaditya**

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray on Tuesday demanded the dismissal of the Devendra Fadnavis-led government and imposition of President's rule in Maharashtra in view of the "deteriorating" law and order situation in the state.

He was speaking to reporters here in the wake of the resignation of state minister and NCP leader Dhananjay Munde, days after his close aide Walmik Karad was named as the mastermind in the Beed sarpanch murder case.

He said only Munde's resignation was not sufficient considering the law and order situation in the state.

Deshmukh, the sarpanch of Massajog village in Beed, was abducted, tortured and murdered on December 9 last year allegedly for attempting to



stop an extortion bid targeting an energy company in the district.

Talking to reporters, Thackeray said, "Resignation (of Munde) is not enough. The government should be dismissed and President's rule should be imposed in the state."

The former minister also cited recent instances of crime against women like the rape of

a 26-year old woman in a Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) bus in Pune and the setting ablaze of a 17-year-old girl in Mumbai.

"Law and order situation in the state has been deteriorating since the last three years. If the government is not dismissed, who will come to Maharashtra for investment, how will citizens be safe?" he asked.

**Governor accepts Munde's resignation**

Maharashtra Governor CP Radhakrishnan on Tuesday evening accepted the resignation of cabinet minister Dhananjay Munde. The NCP minister, who held the food, civil supplies and consumer protection portfolio, earlier in the day submitted his resignation to CM Devendra Fadnavis, who forwarded it to the Governor. A Raj Bhavan statement said the Governor has accepted the resignation of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Minister Munde on the recommendation of Fadnavis. After the state CID filed a chargesheet in the sarpanch Santosh Deshmukh murder case in Beed district naming Walmik Karad, Munde's close aide, as the accused No. 1, Fadnavis asked his cabinet colleague to resign.

**NDA govt ended Hindu-Muslim riots in Bihar: Nitish Kumar**

PNS ■ PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Tuesday claimed that the NDA government headed by him put an end to frequent Hindu-Muslim clashes in the state by taking measures such as fencing graveyards and bringing to justice those named in communal riots. The longest-serving chief minister of Bihar, who would seek a fifth consecutive term in office in assembly polls due later this year, was replying to a debate on a motion of thanks to the governor's address to the joint session of the bicameral legislature.

Opposition members began raising angry slogans, as soon as the JD(U) president said, by way of an introductory remark, "Before we came to power in 2005, the law and order situation was so pathetic that people feared going out of their homes after dusk. Bad roads also made commutes difficult."



The 74-year-old got miffed over the ruckus and told the opposition members in an admonitory tone, "You people are children. Do you know what was the situation back then?" Pointing towards Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Yadav, Kumar said, "Even he is a child", and raised his finger in the direction of the press gallery to remark, "Ask the journalists if you want to know how bad things were back then."

The CM, who has been a BJP ally for most part of his career, also indirectly referred to the RJD-Congress combine with the remark, "Earlier, the state was always plagued by clashes between Hindus and Muslims.

**'India may have over 440m overweight people'**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

By 2050, India could have over 440 million obese and overweight people, a global analysis published in The Lancet journal has estimated.

Number of overweight and obese adults by mid-century in India (218 million men and 231 million women) could be the second highest in the world, after China, with the US, Brazil and Nigeria expected to rank third, fourth and fifth, respectively, the findings by an international team of researchers reveal.

These researchers, including those from the Indian Council of Medical Research, collabo-

rated for the Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2021.

As per the study, already almost half the world's adults -- a billion men and over a billion women aged 25 years and above -- were overweight and obese in 2021. In India, the numbers were over nearly 180 million -- 81 million men and 98 million women.

However, by 2050, this number globally could rise to nearly 3.8 billion -- 1.8 billion men and 1.9 billion women -- "over half of the likely global adult population at that time", the authors said.

"While China, India, and the USA will continue to constitute a large proportion of the glob-



al population with overweight and obesity, the number in the sub-Saharan Africa super-region is forecasted to increase by 254.8 per cent," they wrote. The researchers also estimated that about 16 million boys and over 14 million girls in India, aged 5-14 years, could be overweight and obese by 2050,

making it world's second highest after China.

However, in the 15-24 age group, the world's highest burden could come from India, with over 22 million men and nearly 17 million women in the country suffering from this health crisis in 2050.

Lead author Emmanuela Gakidou, Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), University of Washington, US, which coordinates the GBD study, said, "The unprecedented global epidemic of overweight and obesity is a profound tragedy and a monumental societal failure."

The study, the "most comprehensive global analysis to

date", could help governments and the public health community "identify priority populations experiencing the greatest burdens of obesity who require immediate intervention and treatment, and those that remain predominantly overweight and should be primarily targeted with prevention strategies", Gakidou said.

The latest estimates come against the backdrop of Prime Minister Narendra Modi making a strong pitch for combating obesity in his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' radiocast on February 23.

Obesity will have to be dealt with to be a fit and healthy nation, he said.

**CBI busts exam racket in ECR**

**ARRESTS 26 RAILWAY OFFICIALS**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the arrest of 26 railway officials, the CBI on Tuesday said it has busted a departmental exam racket in East Central Railway (ECR) and seized Rs 1.17 crore cash.

The railway officials were arrested on Monday night for allegedly leaking papers of departmental examination for the elevation to posts of chief loco pilot at Mughal Sarai, they said, adding the exam was to be conducted on Tuesday.

"During the checks conducted by CBI, at three spots on the intervening night



(March 3-4) at Mughal Sarai, a total of 17 candidates were found with photocopies of hand-written question papers," a CBI spokesperson said.

All 17 departmental candidates who are presently working as loco pilots had allegedly paid money for the question paper and were caught red-handed with the copies during the raid, he said.

"Overall, 26 railway officials (including the 17 aspirants) have been arrested in this case so far," the spokesperson said in a statement.

The agency has registered the FIR against a senior divisional electrical engineer (operations) who was given the responsibility for setting and preparing the question paper for the said examination.





www.dailypioneer.com

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

PAPER WITH PASSION

## Securing the skies

With adversaries rapidly upgrading to next-generation aircraft, India must prioritise air combat readiness

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is at a critical juncture, balancing the need for rapid modernisation with self-sufficiency under the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative. A recent report by the Empowered Committee for Capability Enhancement of the IAF, has identified key thrust areas and provided recommendations to address shortfalls and enhance the force's capabilities. The IAF is currently operating at 31 fighter squadrons, significantly below the sanctioned strength of 42 squadrons. The delays in the induction of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mk1A and the gradual phasing out of ageing Jaguar, MiG-29UPG, and Mirage-2000 present an urgent need for new acquisitions. The report underscores the necessity of accelerating the production of the LCA Mk1A, LCA Mk2, and the fifth-generation Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA). Besides, the need for additional Airborne Early-Warning and Control (AEW&C) aircraft, mid-air refuelers, and advanced missile systems is crucial for operational capabilities. The committee has stressed the role of the private sector in complementing efforts by Defence PSUs and the DRDO to boost production capacity and efficiency in aerospace manufacturing. The slow pace of domestic fighter jet production has led to gaps in operational readiness, particularly when adversaries like China and Pakistan are rapidly modernising their air forces with fifth- and even sixth-generation aircraft.



The complex procurement process and lack of streamlined decision-making continue to delay critical acquisitions compromising the air strength. While progress has been made in indigenous defence production, there are still gaps in high-end technologies such as jet engine development, advanced avionics, and stealth capabilities. The financial allocation for defence needs to align with modernisation goals, ensuring adequate funding for both indigenous projects and immediate acquisitions. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has directed that the committee's recommendations be implemented in a structured and time-sensitive manner to prevent further delays. The government must ensure the timely execution of the AMCA program and increase HAL's production capacity to meet annual fighter jet requirements. Besides, a reformed procurement mechanism, reducing bureaucratic delays, is essential to fast-track approvals and acquisitions. Strengthening collaborations with global aerospace leaders to bring in advanced technology while setting up domestic manufacturing hubs will help accelerate modernisation. Encouraging private defence manufacturers through policy reforms, incentives, and infrastructure support will boost self-sufficiency in aerospace production. The recommendations underscore call for urgent action and need for addressing systemic challenges, and fostering innovation through private sector involvement. Indeed, India must achieve a combat-ready and self-sufficient air force capable of countering emerging threats. The need for a modern and highly efficient Air Force is more critical than ever.

development, advanced avionics, and stealth capabilities. The financial allocation for defence needs to align with modernisation goals, ensuring adequate funding for both indigenous projects and immediate acquisitions. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has directed that the committee's recommendations be implemented in a structured and time-sensitive manner to prevent further delays. The government must ensure the timely execution of the AMCA program and increase HAL's production capacity to meet annual fighter jet requirements. Besides, a reformed procurement mechanism, reducing bureaucratic delays, is essential to fast-track approvals and acquisitions. Strengthening collaborations with global aerospace leaders to bring in advanced technology while setting up domestic manufacturing hubs will help accelerate modernisation. Encouraging private defence manufacturers through policy reforms, incentives, and infrastructure support will boost self-sufficiency in aerospace production. The recommendations underscore call for urgent action and need for addressing systemic challenges, and fostering innovation through private sector involvement. Indeed, India must achieve a combat-ready and self-sufficient air force capable of countering emerging threats. The need for a modern and highly efficient Air Force is more critical than ever.

### PICTALK



Women participate in bike rally 'Queens on the Wheel', in Bhopal.

## RBI's Repo Rate cut: A golden opportunity for homebuyers

With the RBI lowering the repo rate by 25 basis points, home loan borrowers stand to benefit from reduced EMIs, making homeownership more affordable

Any time is a good time when it comes to buying a home. However, the recent repo rate cuts signal a lowering of interest rates in the future, thus, hinting at a possibly more stable economy and increased scope for real-estate investment. Home buyers in India are wondering whether they should consider purchasing a home following the recent repo rate cuts by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The country's central bank recently lowered the repo rates by 25 bps from 6.5 per cent to 6.25 per cent. This marks the first rate cut in five years by the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), which can result in significant savings for home loan borrowers.



Small and steady savings on EMIs Home loan applicants stand to benefit from RBI's recent decision, as it will help them service loans at a lower cost. This reduction in EMIs would also make homeownership more affordable for potential buyers. Let's illustrate this with an example. Suppose that you took a 20-year home loan of Rs 20 lakhs at an 8.75% interest rate. Your current monthly EMI would be somewhere around Rs 17,674. With the new rate, your monthly EMI drops to Rs 17,356, resulting in a total savings of Rs. 76,259. If you maintain your current EMI payments, you could pay off your loan 5 months earlier than originally planned. For those who are hesitant to enter the housing market due to high property prices and interest rates, this may be a good opportunity to take advantage of reduced borrowing costs. However, it is imperative to consider other factors such as market trends, location, and personal financial stability before making a decision. **Way to loan refinancing options**

Borrowers might feel that the savings from reduced repo rates are minimal when it comes to monthly EMI outgoings. As the saying goes, "A penny saved is a penny earned," and even a small saving on EMIs could contribute to larger savings in the long term. Additionally, borrowers with strong credit scores can take advantage of competitive refinancing options. Since they are considered low-risk by lenders, they are most likely to secure lower interest rates on refinanced loans.

**Win for the housing sector** The RBI aims to stimulate the economy by making home financing more accessible. This can lead to increased demand in the housing sector, especially in areas where property prices have been sharply increasing due to infrastructure development and improved amenities. The reduction in the cost of borrowing can help mitigate some pressure from skyrocketing housing.

(The writer is CEO & Co-Founder, BASIC Home Loan; views are personal)



ATUL MONGA

Atul Monga is the CEO and Co-Founder of BASIC Home Loan, a company that provides home loan services. He has extensive experience in the financial services industry and is passionate about helping people achieve their dream of homeownership. He is also an active member of various industry associations and is committed to staying updated on the latest trends and regulations in the housing market.

# Russia China help Junta hold the fort

Myanmar's civil war sees resistance forces making major gains, yet the Junta retains key cities and economic hubs with China and Russia's backing



ASHOK K MEHTA

Last week, Home Minister Amit Shah held a review meeting of Manipur under the President's Rule and also discussed the trade routes to Myanmar with the border areas no longer under Junta's control. Myanmar's civil war has ruled the roost since 1962. Their fourth coup February 2021, is the longest but one which has met with the biggest resistance and for the first time, the Bmar (Burmese) joined the opposition which consists of Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAO), People's Defence Force (PDF) under National United Government (NUG), local militias and rebel groups all united in defeating the Junta.

Under Junta's rule organized crime of which it is beneficiary has risen phenomenally to USD 2bn in cyber scams and other frauds. Many Indians have been unsuspecting participants and victims. Never before has Resistance been so organized in its fight against the military; success has come without any unified command and what at best is coordinated operations like Three Brotherhood Alliance which launched Operation 1027 by three EAOs - TNLA, MNDAA, and AA. The last of these - the Arakan Army - is militarily the strongest and operates in the Rakhine province in the south while the other two EAOs operate in the northern Shan state. Codename 1027 denotes the launch date of the massive offensive in the north on October 27, 2023.

China plays a double role: supporting the Junta as well as some of the EAOs. Lately, there has been a policy shift - full support to the Junta. But Chinese pronouncements are deceptive; best to go by Chinese deeds, not words. On the ground, in the fourth year of the war, the Junta has lost considerable ground but is nowhere near being defeated. On the scale of conflict measurement, Junta holds 21 per cent of the territory which consists of the precious Irrawaddy heartland of Bmars and includes the new capital Naypyidaw, Yangon and Mandalay, the two largest cities; and all sea ports and air bases. Only one seaport the India-operated Sittwe is under threat surrounded by the Arakan Army. Two military command headquarters and two air bases in the north and south have been taken by Resistance forces. Some 145 of 350 townships are lost by Junta which has also lost all trade routes/posts on the borders with Bangladesh, India, China, and Thailand. Only one trade route Moosa, is with Junta. The Resistance controls 42 per cent territory with the remaining being No Man's Land. More importantly, 80 per cent of people especially Bmars support resistance while only 20 per cent are with Junta. During previous uprisings, Bmar always supported the Junta. Corruption is endemic, top down and has eroded Junta's military capabilities. It has led to defections and desertions with fighting battalions down to 100 men against the standard 600 soldiers. Some 167 battalions appear to have been lost, and weapons sold resulting in low morale and scant will to fight. Casualties are numerous on both sides but no figures have been released. Junta commanders have made false claims about facts on the ground. Some ghost units are on the Orbat. Most supply lines have been rendered unusable for reinforcements. All movement is by air and counter-attacks therefore also launched from air causing heavy casualties among the civilian population. The Resistance has been enriched



by defectors who bring weapons and skills. Women now comprise 60 per cent of the force though they are mainly in support roles. In earlier uprisings, women constituted only 10 per cent. This time diaspora support is unprecedented and a significant factor. Recruitment to PDF has also risen with support being provided by external players. PDFs are called 'watermelons' green outside and red inside. While green is the colour of the National League for Democracy flag, red is the colour of the National League for Democracy flag. Despite the high morale and momentum of success, Resistance requires a new military strategy, another 1027. Resistance is expected to attack Junta's defence ordnance factories - their defence industrial base - near Mandalay and its loss will be a big blow to the military but still not enough to unhinge it. PDF has to reorganize into battalion/brigade formations under a command structure to be able to capture and hold ground and take strategic targets like airbases. China and Russia, two P5 members in the UNSC, are partners with No Limits but not military allies. Both support the Junta. Russia is now the key military supplier and since 2021, has provided equipment worth USD 406 mn. Junta supreme Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visited Russia last year ostensibly for a medical check-up.



**CHINA PLAYS A DOUBLE ROLE: SUPPORTING THE JUNTA AS WELL AS SOME OF THE EAOs. LATELY, THERE HAS BEEN A POLICY SHIFT-FULL SUPPORT TO THE JUNTA. BUT CHINESE PRONOUNCEMENTS ARE DECEPTIVE; BEST TO GO BY CHINESE DEEDS, NOT WORDS**

up. Russia supplied six Su30 aircraft while six Burmese elephants were sent to Moscow. The Sukhois will significantly enhance aerial capability and cause additional civilian casualties. China remains the key stakeholder in Myanmar and is supporting the Junta as it has made major military and economic investments in Myanmar. It eyes the rich minerals, oil, gas and hydropower. Its gas pipeline from Kyaukphu seaport on the Andaman Sea to Kunming in Yunnan provides Beijing access to the Indian Ocean. Gas pipelines are being supplemented by road and railway arteries. Along with Coco Island given on lease, the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor constitutes an alternative route to China's Malacca dilemma. With 20,000 new recruits with Junta, Beijing has calculated that Resistance cannot defeat it. So Beijing-brokered ceasefires with EAOs in Kachin and Shan states and Kokang region in the north and also with MNDAA in January 2025. Beijing will also support Junta to hold elections in November 2025 giving it the fig-leaf of legitimacy. (The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. The views are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### A GLIMMER OF HOPE IN MANIPUR

Madam - The editorial, "A Fresh Start..." (March 4, 2025), presents a positive outlook on the surrender of illegal arms in Manipur. However, as noted in the editorial, this is likely only a fraction of the weapons still in the possession of warring groups. Despite this development, nothing substantial has been done to bring lasting peace to the state—except for the resignation of the Chief Minister, who was widely seen responsible for the unfortunate turn of events. The 60,000 displaced individuals forced into the forests must be allowed to return to their homes and lead normal lives. For this to happen, the government must establish an impartial administration that earns the trust of all sections of society. Symbolic gestures alone will not suffice; all looted and illegal arms must be surrendered to achieve real progress.

If both the state and central governments had been genuinely committed to fostering peaceful coexistence among the groups, the situation would not have deteriorated so severely for so long. Even after major incidents—including the looting of arms, around 250 murders, women being paraded nude, and places of worship being ransacked—the government's inefficacy remained glaringly evident. Yet, it took an inordinate amount of time to secure the Chief Minister's resignation. President's Rule alone cannot bring about meaningful change, as it operates under directives from the Home Ministry, which itself has been exposed for its lack of a clear strategy. True peace will return only when an impartial and competent administration takes charge. Unfortunately, neither the state nor the nation has a charismatic leader capable of inspiring a positive response from the people.

A G Rajmohan | Chandigarh

### FORMER SEBI CHIEF IN TROUBLE

Madam—Apropos the front page news item, "Buch Booked", published on Mar. 3, this is my response. With a special court directing the Anti-Corruption Bureau

## The Legacy of Sri Ramakrishna



The birth anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna, according to the Bengali lunar calendar, was celebrated on March 1 this year. Sri Ramakrishna urged us to liberate ourselves from religious dogma. He

famously said, "There are many doors to God's house... No matter which door you enter through, you get inside." He did not merely preach tolerance—he practiced it. Sri Ramakrishna followed the path of Islam for some time and adhered to its teachings. Later, he practiced Christianity for a brief period, demonstrating his belief in the idea that "Many opinions, many paths." Swami Vivekananda, his devoted disciple, once said, "Each human being embodies God. This is what I have learned from my Master, Sri Ramakrishna." His teachings serve as a powerful antidote to inhumanity, religious hatred, and untouchability—values that remain profoundly relevant today.

Sujit De | Kolkata

### REIN IN SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

Madam - In a recent ruling, the Supreme Court emphasized that individuals engaged in social media influencing or podcasting must uphold morality and decency in their content before broadcasting it. The Court stressed that such influencers must recognize their responsibility towards society. Creating humor through vulgar slang and offensive language does not contribute positively to society. Instead, it fosters a negative mindset, particularly in the younger generation (Gen Z). Striving to appear as a "cool dude" in front of an audience does not absolve influencers of their responsibilities as citizens. In his defense, Ranbir Allahabadia argued that his controversial statement was made purely in jest. Humor should not come at the expense of emotions or sensitivity. Instead, influencers should focus on fostering a respectful and thoughtful environment that contributes to a united society.

### REIN IN SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

Madam - In a recent ruling, the Supreme Court emphasized that individuals engaged in social media influencing or podcasting must uphold morality and decency in their content before broadcasting it. The Court stressed that such influencers must recognize their responsibility towards society. Creating humor through vulgar slang and offensive language does not contribute positively to society. Instead, it fosters a negative mindset, particularly in the younger generation (Gen Z). Striving to appear as a "cool dude" in front of an audience does not absolve influencers of their responsibilities as citizens. In his defense, Ranbir Allahabadia argued that his controversial statement was made purely in jest. Humor should not come at the expense of emotions or sensitivity. Instead, influencers should focus on fostering a respectful and thoughtful environment that contributes to a united society.

Dimple Wadhawan | Kanpur Nagar

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com







## FIRST COLUMN

PURIFYING THE MIND,  
RESTORING THE EARTH

If we truly wish to combat pollution, we must first cleanse our thoughts and correct spiritual imbalance



RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJJI

Most of us are very much aware of the word 'Pollution', be it a child, a youngster or an old person. However one could not contemplate the reasons or source from which this dreadful monster called pollution occurs. Today, globally every country is facing consequences of pollution, contamination or abuse of air, water, food & even Space on a very large scale, but they are not able to find a foolproof solution to this dangerous threat to humanity. Although many institutions & regulatory bodies have been established.

Today a fast-developing country like India stands poised on a pinnacle of wealth and power, yet we Indians live in a land of vanishing beauty, increasing ugliness, shrinking open spaces, and an overall environment that is diminishing daily by pollution noise and blight. So where does this take us? Would there be a solution to control or tackle pollution problems & save humanity? Well!! The answer lies with the ones who are posing this question, i.e. we the humans, YES! Over the years, while discussing deeply about cause & effect of pollution, we smartly avoid looking at the actual problem that's deeply rooted in the mental sphere rather than the sphere of matter. If we look up the dictionary meaning of the word pollution, we may find something like 'to destroy purity of; to contaminate'. However, we humans are only aware of the material pollution in the branches of the polluted tree & we have disregarded the seed or root of 'thought pollution' which gave growth to that tree. So without destroying the root basis of pollution, the source can never be purified. It won't be an exaggeration to say that the problem of environmental pollution is actually due to the pollution of man's mind which is full of selfishness, jealousy, greed, anger, etc. The problem of ecological imbalance is due to our mental imbalance, and the disequilibrium in nature is due to disequilibrium in man's mind. Another fact that is generally



unknown or is little realised is that the vibrations from a polluted mind contaminate or corrupt the atmosphere; they make it tense and vicious. Most of us make a mistake by thinking that our thoughts are invisible & psychic and hence they can't do anything, but actually, thoughts have both hands and legs, because one can control one's hand to rob nothing, control one's legs to kick nobody, but one can scarcely control one's thought without thinking as thought is too deep to be expressed, too strong to be suppressed, too fast to be drawn back, hence he who will not command his thoughts, will soon lose command of his actions.

The wars struggles and quarrels of mankind are very often caused by this. Deep thinking would reveal that most of the present global problems are due to thought pollution, for this pollution destroys a person's sense of being impartial, considerate and cooperative and makes him callous, inimical, violent-prone and vicious. It influences economics, politics, commerce, business, even friendship and all relationships

The ultimate solution to this problem lies in realising the self and also our relationship with other human beings. Remember !! Great men are those who see that the spiritual force is much stronger than the material force. Hence without a spiritual orientation of the relationship between man and man, moral and spiritual values cannot be brought into play or be sustained, and, in the absence of these core values, no problem can be solved for a considerable length of time. It is, therefore, essential for all of us to understand the real and intrinsic nature behind the mask or the garment of the body to set the direction right. If this is not done, then possibly science without spirituality may dangerously lead mankind to a nuclear catastrophe population explosion or environmental upheaval. So, let us use the powerful weapon of spiritual wisdom to cleanse our souls from thought pollution & survive in harmony with nature & its elements without any kind of disturbance whatsoever.

(The writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist, views are personal)

Unlocking Punjab's  
export potential

A S MITTAL

With targeted policy support, infrastructure investment and global market integration, Punjab can play a transformative role in India's trade success story

India has vast industrial and agricultural capabilities across 800 districts, yet 40% of its merchandise exports originate from only 10 districts. Gujarat dominates this landscape with five key contributors: Jamnagar, Surat, Ahmedabad, Bharuch, and Kachchh. The other significant players include Mumbai and Pune in Maharashtra, Bengaluru in Karnataka, Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu, and NOIDA in Uttar Pradesh. Alarmingly, Punjab—home to a robust industrial base in textiles, bicycles, sports goods, engineering goods, tractors, agricultural implements and food processing—is conspicuously absent from this export powerhouse. The 'One District-One Product' (ODOP) initiative was introduced to rectify this imbalance, but meaningful progress has yet to materialise. If India is serious about reaching its ambitious target of \$1 trillion in exports by 2030, it must expand its export landscape beyond this handful of districts.

The next wave of growth will undoubtedly come from unlocking the potential of industrial hubs like Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur and Mohali. These regions must receive robust, targeted policy support, a conducive environment and infrastructure development, and substantial financial support to enable Punjab's industries to compete with the country's top export-driven districts. India's Global Export Challenge India's share of global exports has stagnated for decades, hovering around 2% and currently at 1.8% as of 2024. Ranked 17th among the world's top exporters, India falls behind various developing nations like Mexico, which ranks 9th.

To achieve the goal of at least doubling India's merchandise export value from \$437 billion in FY 2023-24 to \$874 billion by FY 2030, a strategic overhaul is essential—one that prioritises the establishment of export hubs in underrepresented regions, particularly Punjab, entire of potential. The Imperative for a Decentralised Export Strategy Punjab accounts for a mere 2% of India's total exports, but this share holds immense growth potential. To unlock this potential, the 'Districts as Export Hubs' initiative must go beyond paper & policy discussions and be actively and aggressively pursued. The government should prioritise transforming Punjab into a significant export player, leveraging the state's industrial cities, which are primed for expansion.

**Punjab's Key Districts with High Export Potential**  
**Ludhiana:** The Unrivaled Textile and Bicycle Powerhouse Ludhiana dominates India's bicycle exports with an astounding 80% market share. However, India's presence in the global \$33.3 billion bicycle market is alarmingly low, standing at less than 1%, while China effortlessly commands 60%. Similarly, in the textiles, apparel, and hosiery sector—valued at \$1.7 trillion—India's share languishes at a mere 5%, compared to China's commanding 37%. With strategic branding, robust trade facilitation, and decisive policy support, Ludhiana is poised to become a global leader in these vital sectors.

**Jalandhar: The Untapped Giant in Sports Goods**  
Exports Jalandhar produces an impressive 45% of India's sports goods and con-



IF INDIA IS SERIOUS ABOUT REACHING ITS AMBITIOUS TARGET OF \$1 TRILLION IN EXPORTS BY 2030, IT MUST EXPAND ITS EXPORT LANDSCAPE BEYOND THIS HANDFUL OF DISTRICTS.

tributes 75% of the country's sports-related exports. Yet, India holds a mere 0.56% share in the global sports goods market, valued at \$220.57 billion, while China captures a staggering 42.2%. Jalandhar must actively integrate into international supply chains to aggressively penetrate markets in the USA, UK, Brazil, Germany, Mexico, and South Africa.

**Hoshiarpur and Mohali:** The Manufacturing Titans Hoshiarpur and Mohali are home to one-third of India's Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and are the undisputed leaders in tractor exports. The global tractor market, valued at \$62.7 billion, is dominated by Germany with a 16% share, while India barely scrapes by with 2.2%. Mohali is also emerging as a significant tech and pharmaceutical hub, which is crucial for high-value exports that will fuel economic growth.

**Amritsar: The Strategic Gateway to Global Trade**  
Amritsar, a historic trade hub, can leverage its advantageous proximity to the Wagah-Attari border to significantly enhance cross-border trade with Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia. By expanding trade policies, Punjab and northern India can assertively access high-demand markets in the Gulf, Turkey, and Europe. The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) will further solidify Amritsar's role as a pivotal player in global trade.

**Basmati Export Zone:**  
A Major Global Opportunity Punjab leads the charge by contributing 40% of India's basmati rice exports, which account for 65% of the global market. Amritsar, Tarn Taran and Gurdaspur must be developed into a dedicated Basmati Export Zone under the One District, One Product (ODOP) scheme. With the correct branding

and compliance, Punjab has the potential to tap into previously unexplored markets.

**Tackling Key Export Challenges Head-On**

**1. Infrastructure and Logistics:** Access to ports is strategically essential to any state when engaging in international trade, as landlocked regions face the comparative disadvantage of high trade costs and hindrances in the freedom of transit from the seas. Punjab's landlocked status must not be a hindrance. The Amritsar-Kolkata Industrial Corridor (AKIC) needs to be expedited to enhance dry ports and logistics hubs under the Trade Infrastructure for Exports Scheme (TIES). Introducing state-owned wagons will be a game-changer for bolstering Punjab's exports and addressing the freight burdens associated with shipping.

**2. Cost of Industrial Land:** Land prices in Ludhiana and Mohali are prohibitively high, ranging from Rs. 5-7 crore per acre, stifling expansion. Authorities must prioritise the allocation of vacant industrial plots in focal points and Panchayati Raj-owned land for industrial use to establish a viable industrial land bank.

**3. Global Market Compliance:** With 18% of India's exports directed toward the European Union (EU), Punjab's industries require substantial support to meet evolving international regulations, including the EU's carbon border adjustment mechanism and stringent deforestation laws.

**4. Leveraging Free Trade Agreements:** Many exporters in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities are currently unaware of India's FTAs. Local chambers and business federations must launch aggressive awareness campaigns to maximise these agreements among entrepreneurs.

**5. Boosting MSMEs:** Punjab's micro, small, and medium enter-

prises (MSMEs) need targeted financial support and strong market linkages to thrive in global trade. District Export Promotion Councils (DEPCs) headed by respective deputy-commissioners (DCs) are underperforming as DCs are already overburdened with multiple administrative tasks, and dedicated senior officials to be assigned to formulate District Export Action Plans (DEAPs) to bolster MSMEs.

**6. Promoting Geographical Indications (GIs):**  
Punjab's GI-tagged products, such as Basmati rice, Phulkari embroidery, Amritsari Papad, and Jalandhar sports goods, possess immense global potential. Establishing dedicated stalls at international airports and providing financial backing for branding will amplify their presence in international markets.

**Visit Bharat Demands Viksit Districts:** India's ambitious export targets can only be realised through a decisive, decentralised approach centred around its more districts. With Punjab's rich industrial and agricultural heritage, it is positioned to emerge as a key export powerhouse. By fortifying district industries, enhancing trade infrastructure, and driving global market integration, Punjab will play a crucial role in India's export-led growth narrative. For India to achieve a truly 'Viksit Bharat', its districts must assume a more prominent role in export activities. This strategic shift will reshape India's global trade landscape and ignite widespread economic development and employment generation.

(The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika IITL Group, Vice-Chairman of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board and Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council. Views expressed are personal)

## Unmasking the financial networks threatening national security

Illicit financial flows drive disruptive activities by foreign-backed dubious NGOs, influencing policies and protests that impact India's growth and development

India is at a pivotal moment in its history, reclaiming its status as a global leader. Our economic resilience, democratic foundation, and cultural unity have driven our progress, but hidden forces seek to undermine this advancement. This battle is not fought with conventional weapons but through financial manipulation, foreign influence, and strategic disruptions disguised as humanitarian aid, social activism, and policy advocacy. Foreign-funded networks have infiltrated India's socio-political fabric, threatening our sovereignty from within. One major threat is illicit financial flows fuelling disruptive activities in India. Nepal's recent grey listing by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)



BINOD ANAND

highlights how money laundering networks in South Asia pose a significant security risk. Nepal has become a hub for financial irregularities, increasing the possibility of unregulated funds entering India through informal channels. This is not just an economic issue—it is a matter of national security, stability, and control over our developmental path. For years, foreign-backed

organizations such as USAID, DFID, Open Society Foundations, and the Ford Foundation have funneled substantial financial resources into India under the pretext of supporting human rights and social causes. While genuine welfare efforts are welcome, evidence suggests that some of these funds have been strategically diverted to disrupt India's growth, create internal discord, and propagate anti-India narratives globally. A glaring example is the farmers' protests, which began as a movement for agrarian reforms but quickly escalated into a global propaganda campaign. Foreign lobbying groups, anti-India activists, and Khalistani supporters exploited the movement to mobilize protests, shape media

narratives, and turn a domestic issue into an international crisis. Financial audits have exposed a complex network of foreign funding behind this orchestration. This raises the question—are these movements truly in India's interest, or are they calculated efforts to delay our growth? The infiltration of foreign narratives into India's civil society directly threatens our self-reliance and policy-making sovereignty. While India welcomes foreign investments aimed at development and genuine social progress, we cannot allow our policies, protests, or progress to be dictated by external forces with hidden agendas. The FATF's decision to place Nepal on its grey list is a direct consequence of its weak finan-



cial regulations, unmonitored cross-border transactions, and insufficient anti-money laundering measures. These financial loopholes have created a shadow economy, facilitating illicit funding that could have serious implications for India's security. India shares a 1,751 km-long porous border with Nepal, allowing free movement of people and goods. While this has strengthened economic and cultural ties, it has also enabled smuggling,

unaccounted money transfers, and potential terror financing. Intelligence agencies have flagged instances where hawala networks in Nepal were used to channel funds into India to support destabilizing activities. One major concern is Nepal's financial exemption allowing investments in infrastructure without disclosing sources of funds, making it a conduit for dubious transactions. While FATF's grey listing does not impose sanctions, it signals global financial institutions that Nepal is vulnerable to illegal money transfers, potentially triggering reduced foreign investments and regional financial instability. Recognizing these threats, the Modi government has taken decisive action to curb foreign

interference. Over 20,700 NGOs have lost their FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) licenses due to financial irregularities, undisclosed foreign funding sources, and misuse of contributions. The tightening of FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act) regulations ensures greater scrutiny of financial transactions linked to activism, political lobbying, and potential terror financing. Collaboration with FATF, INTERPOL, and global security agencies has enhanced India's ability to track cross-border fund flows and dismantle illegal financial networks fuelling unrest. Strengthening oversight on foreign-funded NGOs, think tanks, and advocacy groups to ensure full transparency and

accountability. Enhancing security measures along the Indo-Nepal border to curb illicit financial transactions and smuggling networks. Promoting domestic funding mechanisms to empower local organizations and grassroots initiatives, reducing reliance on external financial aid. Our civil society is strong enough to drive change through indigenous resources and a vision rooted in national interests. The need of the hour is self-reliance—strengthening grassroots organizations and building an Indian developmental model based on internal merit rather than foreign charity. (The writer is Secretary General, Confederation of NGOs of Rural India; views are personal)



IN BRIEF



**Apollo Green Energy to form subsidiary**

Apollo Green Energy (AGEL) on Tuesday said it will set up a subsidiary AGEL Renewable Energy Ltd and invest Rs 500 crore to develop 1 GW renewable energy portfolio over the next 2-3 years. The subsidiary will focus on utility-scale solar while integrating advanced energy storage solutions, including hydrogen-based systems, a company statement said. According to the statement, through this investment, AGEL Renewable Energy Ltd aims to develop a 1GW renewable energy portfolio over the next 2-3 years, starting from FY26, to bridge critical gaps in India's renewable energy landscape and contribute to the country's clean energy goals. AGEL has announced plans to launch its subsidiary AGEL Renewable Energy Ltd and is planning to invest Rs 500 crore, it added. The company will actively bid for large-scale government tenders and establish power purchase agreements (PPAs) with utilities and commercial consumers. Additionally, AGEL Renewable Energy will hire up to 200 people across various roles, including engineering, project management, research and development, and operations.

**Govt taking steps to make India export-friendly: FM**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said the government remains steadfast in reducing regulatory burdens, besides enhancing trust-based governance and taking steps to make India a "seamless, export-friendly" economy.

A robust manufacturing sector free from unnecessary regulatory bottlenecks will further attract both domestic and foreign investments, driving economic growth, positioning India as a trusted global player, Sitharaman said while addressing a post-budget webinar on "MSMEs as engine of growth, manufacturing, exports, regulatory, investment and EoDB Reforms". "Our government remains steadfast in reducing regulatory burdens and enhancing trust-based governance to improve the ease of doing business. Through the budget announcements, we are taking various steps towards making India a seamless, export-friendly economy, one where businesses are free to focus on innovation and expansion, and not paperwork and penal-



ties," Sitharaman said.

Addressing the webinar earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked Indian industry to take "big steps" for taking advantage of global opportunities at a time when the world is looking at India as a trusted partner, which can produce quality goods.

"I want that our industry should not look at these expectations of the world as a mere spectator. We cannot remain spectators, you will have to look for your role in this, you will have to seek opportunities for yourself,"

Modi said.

In her 2025-26 Budget speech, the minister had announced that a high-level committee for regulatory reforms will be set up for a review of all non-financial sector regulations, certifications, licences, and permissions.

"The committee will be expected to make recommendations within a year. The objective is to strengthen trust-based economic governance and take transformational measures to enhance 'ease of doing business', espe-

cially in matters of inspections and compliances," said the Budget speech.

Sitharaman said decriminalisation of business related laws reduces the legal risks, allowing industries to operate with greater confidence. Over 42,000 compliance requirements have already been removed, and over 3,700 legal provisions have been decriminalised since 2014. In the Jan Vishwas Act 2023, more than 180 legal provisions were decriminalised.

"Our government will now bring up the Jan Vishwas Bill 2.0 to decriminalise more than 100 provisions in various laws. It will further simplify processes for businesses," Sitharaman said.

She said the government's "unprecedented" push for infrastructure development helps create jobs, strengthen industries, and also lays the foundation for greater private sector participation in India's growth story.

"The pathway for reforms are complemented by the government's unwavering focus on capital expenditure as a driver of economic growth," Sitharaman said.

**World looking at India as trusted partner: PM**

**Stresses industry should take advantage**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday nudged the Indian industry for "big steps" to take advantage of global opportunities at a time when the world is looking at India as a trusted partner, saying the government will launch two missions to promote manufacturing and exports.

Addressing a post-budget webinar on Regulatory, Investment and Ease of Doing Business Reforms, Modi asked the industry to identify new products that can be manufactured in the country to meet global demand.

"Our country is capable of doing this, all of you (industry) are capable, this is a great opportunity for us. I want our industry should not look at these expectations of the world as a mere spectator. We cannot remain spectators, you will have to look for your role in this, you will have to seek opportunities for yourself," Modi told the industry players.

The Prime Minister also stressed the need to develop new modes of credit delivery to ensure access to timely and low-cost funds to over six crore micro, small and medium units across the country.

He said five lakh first-time women and SC&ST entrepreneurs will be provided loans of up to Rs 2 crore.

"Today, India is a growth



engine for the global economy. India has proved its resilience even in difficult times... Today, every country wants to strengthen its economic partnership with India. Our manufacturing sector should take advantage of this partnership," Modi added.

The Prime Minister said the industry has gained new self-confidence due to the government's consistency and assurance for reforms.



**Galaxy Health insurance launches Top-up plan**

Standalone health insurance company Galaxy has rolled out Galaxy Top-up that has been designed to offer extra protection at a lower cost and ensures policy holders have access to quality healthcare, the city-headquartered company said on Tuesday. Galaxy Top-up provides a 'Premium Promise' to customers, guaranteeing no premium hikes until policy holders make a claim or turn 55 years of age, whichever comes first. Unlike traditional health insurance products, Galaxy Top-up offers higher sum insured ranging from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 2 crore and provides comprehensive coverage and flexibility, the company said in a statement here. "Health insurance is no longer a luxury -- it is a necessity as health issues in individuals continue to pose significant challenges. Many policyholders now prefer top-up plans over additional basic covers because they are more budget friendly and offer greater benefits. Keeping this in mind, we have introduced Galaxy Top-up, a smart and cost-effective solution that ensures access to advanced medical care without financial stress," Galaxy Health Insurance MD and CEO G Srinivasan said.



**Mizoram govt presents Rs15,198 cr budget**

Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma on Tuesday presented a Rs 15,198.76 crore budget for 2025-2026 and announced a 75 per cent increase in fund allocation for the flagship 'Bana Kaih' (Handholding) scheme, a financial assistance programme for farmers and small entrepreneurs. He said the government will introduce a scheme from April to provide health insurance of up to Rs 5 lakh cover per year to beneficiaries. The chief minister, who also holds the finance portfolio, also presented supplementary demands for grants for the current fiscal (2024-25) amounting to Rs 3,512.33 crore. There was no proposal for levying new taxes in the budget. Presenting the annual budget and supplementary demands in the assembly, Lalduhoma said the government gives priority to the state's flagship programme 'Bana Kaih' scheme and allocated Rs 350 crore for the 2025-26 fiscal, a 75 per cent increase from Rs 200 crore earmarked in the current fiscal.

**Sensex sinks below 73,000 amid global equity rout**

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Falling for the third straight day, benchmark BSE Sensex declined by 96 points to close below the 73,000 mark on Tuesday amid global equity rout on tariff war worries and persistent foreign fund outflows.

The 30-share BSE barometer closed at 72,989.93, down by 96.01 points or 0.13 per cent, as 18 of its components declined and 12 settled with gains. During the day, it dropped 452.4 points or 0.62 per cent to a low of 72,633.54 but recovered some of the losses in the second half.

Extending the losses for the 10th straight session, the 50-share Nifty of NSE fell by 36.65 points or 0.17 per cent to close at 22,082.65. The index opened below the 22,000 level at 21,974.45 but managed to recover some losses later.

From the Sensex pack, Bajaj Finserv, HCL Technologies, Nestle India, Asian Paints, Bharti Airtel, Sun Pharmaceuticals, Infosys, Maruti Suzuki India, Titan, Hindustan Unilever and Reliance Industries were

among the laggards. On the other hand, State Bank of India, Zomato, Tata Consultancy Services, Adani Ports, Power Grid, Tata Steel and HDFC Bank were the gainers.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, "The domestic market exhibited a recovery from today's lows but remained in negative territory due to adverse global cues related to



escalating global trade tensions."

"Weak global cues continue to weigh on sentiment, but selective buying is limiting the downside," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd said.

Despite the market ended in the red zone, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 1.28 per cent, and midcap index rose 0.08 per cent.

Abhishek Jaiswal, Fund Manager at Finavenue, said

**Cement prices fall 7% amid weak demand**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Cement prices declined around 7 per cent year-on-year in April-January FY25, amid weak demand, and increasing competition due to large supply additions by leading companies, according to a report by rating agency IInd-Ra. Though prices of cement (a bag of 50 kg) have increased sequentially from November 2024 with construction activities picking up pace following the monsoon and festive season, they remained low year-on-year, it said.

"While the prices are likely to improve in the seasonally stronger Q4, large capacity additions are likely to keep the overall pricing environment weak; FY25 is likely to witness a high single-digit decline - the highest in the past decade," it said.

It further said the volume ramp-up from some of the acquired capacities that were operating sub-optimally earlier would keep the prices under pressure over the near term. "In 10MFY25, the cement industry saw around 45 million tonne of capacity changing hands across five deals, majority in the southern region.

**Auto component industry targets US\$ 100 bn from exports**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's auto component industry is expecting USD 100 billion in exports over the next 7-8 years, according to a report by Boston Consulting Group.

The country's auto component exports reached USD 21.2 billion in FY24, marking a significant turnaround from a USD 2.5 billion deficit in FY19.

The report 'Revving Up Exports: The Next Phase of Export Growth for the Auto Component Industry', conducted in association with the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA), presents a comprehensive, multi-faceted strategy to achieve this ambitious target.

"We have not only achieved a positive trade balance, but for auto-specific use cases, the surplus is even more pronounced, reaching approximately USD 0.5 - 1.5 billion. We are committed to sustaining this growth trajectory and have set an ambitious target of USD 100 billion in exports over the next 7-8 years," ACMA President Shradha Suri Marwah said.

As per the findings, doubling down on classical components, India can potentially



The report 'Revving Up Exports: The Next Phase of Export Growth for the Auto Component Industry', conducted in association with the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA), presents a comprehensive, multi-faceted strategy to achieve this ambitious target

add another USD 40-60 billion in incremental exports by prioritising 11 product families with a focus on the US and European markets.

Besides, capitalising on emerging EV and electronic value chain through localisation today, India can look to tap into additional USD 15-20 billion exports in components like battery management systems, telematics units, instrument clusters, and ABS, it stated. "We are at a pivotal juncture, with immense poten-

tial to scale. To fully capitalise on this opportunity, major Indian players must aim to expand their exports by 5-10 times and achieve deeper penetration into global supply chains," ACMA Director General Vinnie Mehta said.

This expansion necessitates building closer proximity to customers, enhancing testing and tooling capabilities, and gearing up for ESG compliance-key areas where ACMA can facilitate industry transformation, he added.

**Sebi's total income rises 48 pc to Rs 2,075 cr**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi's total income rose 48 per cent year-on-year to Rs 2,075 crore in 2023-24, driven by increased earnings from fees and subscriptions.

Of the total income, the regulator earned a fee income of Rs 1,851.5 crore, which was way higher than Rs 1,213.22 crore garnered in the preceding financial year, according to Sebi's annual statement of accounts 2023-24 made public on Tuesday.

Additionally, income from investments widened to Rs 192.41 crore from Rs 161.42

crore and other income increased to nearly Rs 18 crore from close to Rs 15 crore.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) acknowledged that fees and subscriptions are the major sources of its income.

This category of income included earnings from annual fees and subscriptions, listing fees contribution from stock exchanges, income generated from registration, renewal, application and offer documents filed by companies and market infrastructure institutions.

Overall, the market watch-

dog's total income rose to Rs 2,075 crore in the financial year ended March 31, 2024 from Rs 1,404.36 crore in the preceding fiscal, indicating a growth of 48 per cent, the annual accounts showed.

Apart from total income, the total expenditure of the regulator rose to Rs 1,006 crore for the year ended March 31, 2024, from Rs 851.33 crore in the previous fiscal.

The establishment expenses grew to Rs 696.43 crore during the period under review from Rs 576 crore in the preceding fiscal and other administrative expenses increased to

Rs 218 crore from Rs 172.42 crore.

Sebi said its general fund has a closing balance of Rs 5,573 crore including an amount of Rs 1,065 crore as surplus income over expenditure transferred from Income and Expenditure Account for financial year 2023-24. Earmarked funds include Investor Protection & Education Fund (IPEF) and Disgorgement Fund.

IPEF has a closing balance of Rs 533.17 crore including income from investment of Rs 27.66 crore and Disgorgement Fund has Rs 7.38 crore for FY24.

**Non-tariff barriers and 'red tape' should go: USIBC**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Non-tariff barriers and "red tape" that slow market access should be dismantled with haste to boost India-US trade ties, the US-India Business Council (USIBC) said as the two sides are holding initial negotiations for a trade deal.

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal is in Washington to hold the talks with his American counterpart Howard Lutnick and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer. India and the US agreed to begin negotiations for a trade deal following talks between

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump in Washington DC last month.

"We wish both governments success in their negotiations, and urge both sides to leverage the trade relationship for shared growth," (USIBC) President Ambassador Atul Keshap said on Tuesday (Monday US time).

"Meaningful trade facilitation through a sweeping bilateral trade deal is long overdue, and would be instrumental in boosting the GDPs of both America and India and bind our two mighty economies



closer together," he said. It is expected that a major focus of the trade negotiations will be on tariff.

Trump's policy on "reciprocal tariff" for all trading part-

ners of the US has stoked global concerns.

For years, the US and Indian businesses have invested in each other's countries without a formal investment or trade

framework, Keshap said. India represents only 2.5 percent of America's trade volumes, and that number can and should increase substantially, he said.

Keshap said both sides should now work with focus to formalise a level playing field, full and open market access, swift dispute arbitration, and predictable tax and regulatory policies to boost investment, growth, and job creation in both countries.

"Non-tariff barriers and red tape that slow market access should be dismantled with haste. The opportunity for

both sides is a landmark bilateral agreement that can further unleash entrepreneurship and GDP growth in both countries," he said.

"Now is the time for ambitious outcomes between Washington and Delhi."

"Our USIBC member companies - American and Indian - enthusiastically applaud the efforts of both governments and wish them productive talks that deepen the strategic, economic, and technological partnership between the people of the United States and the people of India," he added.

**SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF T.G. LIMITED**  
e-Procurement Tender Specification No. eM2- 15/24-25  
Tender Notice No.17/24-25 (Paper Notifications)  
Tenders are invited from the eligible agencies for tender for the work of Extension of HT Supply at 33 KV level under C&E-II for a C&E-II of 750KVA with connected load of 150HP (in phased manner initial - 2500KW during release of supply and 1st phase 1075KVA after release of supply and 2nd phase 2000KW after release of 1st phase and 3rd phase 1042KVA after release of 2nd phase to M/s. DEPUTY CHIEF ELECTRICAL ENGINEER-IN-CHARGE, at Secunderabad Railway Station, Secunderabad in Padmanagar Nagar section of Padmanagar Sub-Division of Paradise Division of Secunderabad Circle under Capital Works under General Category. Any further information in this regard can be viewed from the website of www.tenders.telangana.gov.in or www.spsdhepower.in 545 Chief Engineer, P.O. No. -108814PCLADN/15/24-25, Dt. 04/03/2025 Operation, Metro Zone, Hyderabad

**ZONAL OFFICE, RECOVERY DEPARTMENT, CVRN ROAD, OPP. CSI MISSION HOSPITAL, KARIMNAGAR- 505 001**  
**PUBLICATIONS DEMAND NOTICE**  
Notice under Sec. 13 (2) of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002.  
Sent on 10.01.2025 by Regd. Post To Borrower mortgagee/Borrower Mortgagee: Mr. Hardeep Singh S/o Mr. Kuldeep Singh Address: H.No.11-1-842, New N.G.O.S Colony, Subhashnagar, Nizamabad District, Telangana PIN- 503002. Address: 2: Plot No.3, Ward No-6, Block No-23, Opposite to Vignan High School, Adarshnagar Nizamabad District, Telangana PIN- 503002. Borrower: 2. Mrs. Javinder Kaur W/o Mr. Hardeep Singh Address: 1: H.No.11-1-842, New N.G.O.S Colony, Subhashnagar, Nizamabad District, Telangana PIN- 503002. Address: 2: Plot No.3, Ward No-6, Block No-23, Opposite to Vignan High School, Adarshnagar Nizamabad District, Telangana PIN- 503002. Guarantor: 1. Mr. A Sreerath S/o Mr. A Raghunath Address: H No 5-11-656, Yellamma naguda, District: Nizamabad Telangana - 505001  
Sub: Your Loan No.6505891234 HOME LOAN & 6631943214 HOME LOAN PLUS with Indian Bank, Nizamabad Branch (CBS code-442)-Reg  
You committed default in repayment of loan to the tune of Rs.31,72,173/- (Rs. Thirty One Lacs Seventy Two Thousand One Hundred and Seventy Three only) as on 09/11/2025 and the said amount carries further interest at the agreed rate from 10/11/2025 till date of repayment. The Bank issued notice under the Act on 10.01.2025, calling upon you to repay the outstanding amount of Rs.31,72,173/- (Rs. Thirty One Lacs Seventy Two Thousand One Hundred and Seventy Three only) as on 09/11/2025 and the said amount carries further interest at the agreed rate from 10/11/2025 till date of repayment. You are called upon to pay Rs.31,72,173/- (Rs. Thirty One Lacs Seventy Two Thousand One Hundred and Seventy Three only) as on 09/11/2025 and the said amount carries further interest at the agreed rate from 10/11/2025 till date of repayment within 60 days from the date of this notice failing which Bank will be constrained to exercise its rights of enforcement of security interest as against the secured assets given in the schedule hereunder. This Notice is without prejudice to any other right remedially available to the Bank.  
SCHEDULE: The specific details of the assets in which security interest is created are enumerated hereunder: Mortgagee's Assets: The Ground Floor & First Floor R.C.C. roof (Duplex) Residential House constructed on Open Plot No.3 lies in SV No 391 & 392 of Kantheshwar Shivra, as per LP No 8507 allotted in Ward No.6, Block No.23 in Adarshnagar, Nizamabad, addressing 200 (0) Sq Yd or 167.22 Sq Mts, within the municipal Corporation limit of Nizamabad, Registration Sub District and Registration District Nizamabad, Nizamabad Mandal and District North - Plot No.4, South: Plot No.2 East: 47-07 Wide Road, West: Plot No.10  
Date: 04.03.2025 Place: Nizamabad Sd/- AUTHORISED OFFICER Indian Bank



## 'I APPROACH EACH REMIX LIKE A FULL SONG, NOT JUST AN ALTERED VERSION'

In a fascinating conversation with **The Pioneer, Kazinama**, who's redefining the boundaries of music, we dive into the heart of his creative process, where classic melodies meet cutting-edge innovation, the success of his latest *Ahista Ahista* and more

TEJAL SINHA  
tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

Kazinama's musical journey is nothing short of extraordinary, blending the soulful essence of classic melodies with a bold, modern twist. A master of fusing genres, *Ahista Ahista*, for instance, has not only captured global attention but also resonated deeply with audiences around the world. His ability to weave together vintage sounds with fresh, innovative production techniques has made him a true trailblazer in the music industry. "Generally, how I make music can vary," he begins this exclusive chat with **The Pioneer**, noting that there is no one right or wrong way to approach music production. For *Ahista Ahista*, his process started with crafting the music first. The influence of Bollywood music is apparent in *Ahista Ahista* and Kazinama saw the fusion of the two genres as a way to create something unique. "The song gradually transitions to different music and I really liked that flow," he adds, describing it as a journey. The track was not just a song for him; it was an evolving experience, one that he described as a journey, reflecting his deep personal connection to the music. When asked about his creative process for *Ahista Ahista*, he delves into the core of what made the track stand out. "I never thought it would resonate on such a global scale. I started with the drum groove, and I'm heavily influenced by soul, R&B and jazz elements. The music was already rooted in soul, but adding

Hindi lyrics created something unique for Indian audiences," he says. As he worked through various chord progressions and synth elements, Kazinama approached the track as a puzzle, with each new musical element fitting into the larger picture. His ability to strike a balance between honoring the essence of a song while giving it a fresh twist is also a hallmark of his remixes. When discussing his approach to remixes, he reveals that his goal is always to preserve the original soul of the track. "If you see my remixes, they're a bit different from the typical DJ or producer remix. Most DJ remixes use a four-on-the-floor beat, but I don't see myself as just remixing a track—I see it as an opportunity to tell my version of the song." Kazinama's approach is rooted in storytelling, treating each remix as a full-fledged song rather than just an altered version of the original. This mindset allows him to preserve the emotional essence of the track while giving it his personal twist. "I arrange music from a song perspective, not just a remix," he reflects. His extensive experience as a session guitarist and bass player has undoubtedly influenced his musical choices, especially in terms of instrumentation and arrangement. He shares that his love for live music has played a significant role in his sound. "I've been in the industry for 15 years and I've played nearly 2,000 shows with artists across the globe," he says. Despite being primarily a guitar player, his deep connection to bass shines through in his music. Despite not anticipating the track's massive reception, he has some insights into why the song resonated so powerfully with listeners, particularly on platforms like Instagram. "I think the virality comes from the fact that the music is novel. It's packaged in a fresh way—soul music with vintage elements," he says. He believes that the song's lyrics also played a crucial role. The poetic nature of the words, which explore themes of travel and journey, resonates with listeners in a personal way. "Poetry is all about different interpretations, and I think people saw the lyrics through their own lens, which helped them connect to

the song," he adds. The visual component of the video, which integrates Japanese anime elements, further amplified the song's appeal to the younger generation, particularly the 18-25 age group. Kazinama notes that these visuals, combined with

the familiar melody, created a unique and compelling experience. "The melody was already embedded in their subconscious from Bollywood's past renditions, but my version brought something new," he explains.

As we transition into the next segment of the conversation, Kazinama reflects on how his work has been shaped by his deep love for classic melodies and timeless hits. He points to his ongoing exploration of vintage sounds, drawing inspiration from iconic figures like Lata Mangeshkar, but with a modern twist. "I always find people subconsciously connected to these melodies. The challenge is to put them in the right context, creating something that feels fresh yet familiar," he shares. For *Ahista Ahista*, he created the music first before searching for the right melody, choosing a lower pitch for the original vocals to blend better with the modern arrangements. "It's not rocket science," he says modestly, "it's just about feeling what works best."

While discussing the challenges that arose during the production process, he candidly opens up about the technical

hurdles he encountered. "In the second part of the song, there's a chord progression I heard in a sample library that I really wanted to use," he recalls. To replicate the chord exactly, he spent two hours on guitar, painstakingly figuring out the exact sound before modifying the sample to match his vision. "That was probably the biggest challenge in the song. The rest of the journey was pretty fun for me, though."

**"I SEE MUSIC AS STORY-TELLING. I DON'T JUST REMIX; I CREATE A FRESH PERSPECTIVE, USING ELEMENTS THAT SPEAK TO ME WHILE PRESERVING THE HEART OF THE ORIGINAL PIECE."**

Kazinama's remixes, such as *Je Tu Akhiyan De Samne* and Gulam Ali Classics, are celebrated for preserving the essence of the original songs while offering something new. Reflecting on his approach to reimagining these timeless tracks, he says, "I see music as storytelling. I don't just remix; I create a fresh perspective, using elements that speak to me while preserving the heart of the original piece." He also shares the personal story behind his remix of Gulam Ali's songs, revealing how his father's love for Gulam Ali's music inspired him during the

lockdown. "I thought, maybe I can give this a new perspective, something that connects the younger generation to the depth of the original poetry," he says. His collaboration experiences with renowned artists like Kailash Kher, Raeth, Farhan Saeed and Suryaveer, have also left a lasting impact on his musical journey. Most of these collaborations happened during live shows, where he was deeply inspired by the artists' stage presence and their ability to engage the audience.

Over the years, Kazinama has expanded his musical influences, which range from heavy metal to neo-soul and jazz. He attributes his sound to a combination of various genres and artists. "From Metallica to Robert Glasper, Daft Punk and Gulam Ali, I've been influenced by so many different styles," he says. His musical exploration has allowed him to grow and experiment, drawing inspiration from both Western and Indian music. "I'm not confined to any genre—I like whatever resonates with me. If it sounds good to my ear, it's good for me." Despite his success, he remains grounded and humble about his journey. He reflects on some of the challenges he faced as a guitarist, particularly when he wanted to experiment with keyboard-based chord progressions. "Being a guitarist, I always faced a challenge when it came to working with keys," he shares. "But I found a way around that by using a midi guitar converter, which allowed me to play keyboard chords on my guitar. It was a breakthrough for me." Through trial and error, Kazinama has found ways to overcome these technical hurdles, which has only fueled his creativity and passion for music.



## 'Stop watching reels, make movies in your head,' urges Atul Sabharwal

PNS| EXCLUSIVE

Atul Sabharwal, the acclaimed screenwriter and director, returns as a jury member for the second edition of the Jury for Red Lorry Film Festival, bringing with him an insightful and passionate perspective on cinema. Known for his thoughtful storytelling and masterful direction, Sabharwal's involvement in the festival is driven by his love for diverse, untold stories and his desire to explore films that transcend borders.

Atul Sabharwal expressed his enthusiasm for being part of the jury at the film festival for a second consecutive year. He highlighted that the festival provides a rare opportunity to explore diverse films that might not be seen at other festivals. "What motivated me to take on this role was the opportunity to watch different kinds of films. Red Lorry's selection last year was very different from other festivals," the *Berlin* filmmaker explained adding, "Since I've received the screenings for this year as well, I can see that these films mostly were not there at other festivals. So, it's my chance to watch these films, which I otherwise might not have gotten a chance to watch."

He shared his hopes for this year's festival, saying, "I'm just hoping that it continues the tradition of being a very organised festival, where people can interact in a warm, informal way, shedding the class divide that festivals unfortunately come to inhabit."

When asked about the role of platforms like this festival in promoting international cinema, the *Aurangzeb* filmmaker emphasised their importance not only in promoting films but also in expanding cultural awareness. "I think it's very important not just for the promotion of international films, but also it enhances our awareness." He believes films have the power to transcend political borders and language barriers, helping viewers recognise shared emotions across cultures.

He cited the global success of *Parasite* by Bong Joon Ho as an example, saying, "Movies are these magical works of art that can transcend political borders and language barriers." He also noted the reciprocal benefits of showcasing international films, which open new markets for filmmakers while offering fresh perspectives to local audiences. "Watching international films and having Indian films showcased abroad is a great chance for cross-pollination and bilateral business," he said.

Reflecting on his role as a jury member, he acknowledged the expertise of his fellow jury members but emphasised his own passion for cinema. "I am watching the films as a film buff more than anything else," he said. He explained that his enthusiasm for movies, rather than a purely technical or academic perspective, is what he hopes to bring to the panel. "I've now started watching the screenings as a film buff rather than a filmmaker," added the *Jubilee* writer.

As a seasoned filmmaker with both writing and directing experience, he shared his approach to evaluating films in the competition segment. "I think only the emotional connect," he said, focusing on how well a film resonates emotionally with him. He stressed the importance of experiencing a film as a whole rather than analysing it by departments like cine-

matography or writing. "If it impacts me emotionally in its first viewing, then that's the quality I'm looking at," he explained.

He further highlighted the importance of the first viewing experience, noting that it's rare to find a film that leaves a strong emotional impression at first glance. "I'm just hoping these unknown bunch of films give me that," he remarked.

His film *Berlin*, which is set against the backdrop of the Cold War era, draws from his own experiences

growing up during that period. "I grew up in this period, so I saw a lot of Delhi visually in that period from my own eyes," he explained. He mentioned how his exposure to Eastern European cinema and espionage novels helped form an emotional and visual connection between the city of Delhi and the world of Cold War-era espionage. "It just also sort of amalgamated itself into my head that it became a movie," he said, reflecting on how these influences converged into his directorial project.

Looking back on his directorial debut with *Aurangzeb* in 2013, Sabharwal reflected on how his approach to filmmaking and storytelling has evolved over the years. "I think what I have learned to do is minimise my over-explanation and overstaying my welcome," he noted. He revealed that he's become more confident in letting the story breathe, focusing on pacing while still maintaining the emotional depth of his work. "I am now at a stage where my story moves at a much faster pace than it used to, but it also is told unhurriedly. It's told with confidence," he added.

In discussing the current trends in Indian cinema, the *Class of '83* director shared his belief that the industry has stagnated rather than evolved. "I don't think it's evolving in any sense. The only time I felt that our cinema was evolving was in my first year in Bombay when I moved to join the film industry," he reminisced, pointing to the early 2000s when films like *Company*, *Lagaan* and *Dil Chahta Hai* reshaped the industry. "That was the point I felt that something is evolving. I think as of now, we have de-evolved."

He also discussed the cyclical nature of trends in culture and cinema, where periods of progress are often followed by regression. Despite this, he sees opportunities for filmmakers to be subversive and break from the mainstream. "As long as you have the desire to be subversive, you can find something which breaks the norm," he remarked, highlighting how filmmakers can still push boundaries even in a landscape dominated by action-driven blockbusters.

Looking forward, Sabharwal expressed excitement about exploring themes of romance and family in his future projects. "The only genre that I'm excited to explore as of now is romance and family," he said. He suggested that these themes might be incorporated into a variety of genres, whether espionage or action films, but emphasised that romance remains a central focus for him.

Sabharwal offered a piece of valuable advice to emerging filmmakers: "Stop watching reels. Make movies in your head," he urged. He stressed the importance of developing a deep connection with creativity and story before jumping into the fast-paced world of social media. "We have started living our creativity in spurts, but we need to allow things to ferment and gestate inside us, then react to them," he said, lamenting how the rush to instantly share thoughts on platforms like Twitter or Instagram can hinder creative development. He likened the current generation's approach to creativity to a chef who only eats quick snacks like pani puri but never immerses themselves in the full process of culinary art. "You can't become a great chef just by eating pani puri," he quipped, suggesting that filmmakers must allow their emotions and ideas to build up before bringing them to life in the form of a film.

In an exclusive chat with **The Pioneer, Atul Sabharwal**, the renowned director and screenwriter, opens up about his return as a jury member for the second edition of the jury of Red Lorry Film Festival, reflecting on his filmmaking journey and also urges emerging filmmakers to focus on cultivating creativity away from the distractions of social media



## GROOMING NEXT-GEN LEADERS

Family businesses form the backbone of global economies, accounting for nearly 79% of enterprises worldwide. They are not just economic entities but custodians of legacies built over generations. However, sustaining these businesses across multiple generations comes with its own set of challenges—navigating succession, maintaining continuity and ensuring that core values remain intact while adapting to modern business landscapes. In this delicate balancing act, mentorship emerges as a crucial element, facilitating the transfer of knowledge, leadership skills and strategic thinking from one generation to the next.

A structured mentorship program plays a defining role in succession planning. Studies suggest that family businesses with well-established mentorship frameworks are 30% more likely to experience smooth leadership transitions. Senior leaders bring decades of experience, while the younger generation often introduces fresh perspectives, digital fluency, and innovative problem-solving approaches. When effectively guided, this synergy enhances decision-making, emotional intelligence and strategic vision—ensuring that successors are equipped to lead in an evolving business environment.

Beyond preparing the next generation for leadership, mentorship preserves the company's legacy. The values and principles on which a business was built are not always documented but are embedded in everyday operations, relationships and decision-making. Without deliberate mentorship, these intangible assets risk being diluted over time. A strong mentor-mentee relationship fosters this continuity, helping successors internalise the ethos of the business while finding ways to align it with contemporary challenges.

At the same time, knowledge transfer extends beyond philosophy—it encompasses technical expertise, industry insights and operational best practices. A well-mentored successor benefits not only from the wisdom of senior leadership but also gains access to invaluable business networks and strategic alliances.

Mentorship also acts as an important guiding force in navigating family dynamics within the workplace. The intersection of personal and professional relationships in family businesses often leads to conflicts and having a mentor helps young leaders strike a balance between business decisions and familial expectations. However, for mentorship to be truly effective, it must be structured rather than informal. One of the most common pitfalls in family businesses is the blurring of lines between parenting and mentoring.

The transition from a familial role to a leadership role requires clear differentiation to ensure that guidance remains professional and goal-oriented.

Open communication is another cornerstone of effective mentorship. Successors must feel empowered to share ideas, ask questions and challenge the status quo without any fear of judgment. Equally important is the willingness of the senior leaders to recognise that learning styles and capacities differ across generations.

Despite the significance of mentorship, many family businesses still lack structured leadership training initiatives. In India, 44% of family-run enterprises report an absence of formal mentoring programs. This gap presents an opportunity for businesses to institutionalise mentorship as a long-term investment. Global studies indicate that companies with dedicated mentoring programs witness a 45% higher success rate in leadership transitions. Indian business families, such as those behind Infosys and the TVS Group, have demonstrated how mentorship fosters continuity and growth. A Deloitte study further highlights that 70% of family business successors consider mentorship as a critical factor in their leadership readiness.

Yet, challenges persist. Generational differences can lead to resistance to change and balancing professional growth with family expectations is never straightforward. In addition, ensuring diversity and inclusion in leadership roles remains an ongoing concern.

Overcoming these challenges requires a cultural shift—one that embraces mentorship not as an obligation but as a strategic priority for business sustainability. Mentoring by the Senior Leadership requires them to understand the psyche of the younger generation, while also restraining themselves from constant references to past laurels. Hence the Mentors need to be open to accepting effective.

Engaging external mentors, where necessary, can also provide unbiased perspectives and technical expertise that complement internal mentoring efforts.

Looking ahead, mentorship will be instrumental in shaping the future of leadership in family businesses. It is not just about preparing successors to take over but about equipping them to evolve the business while staying rooted in its foundational values. HR and senior leadership must actively foster a mentorship-driven culture that enables businesses to remain competitive across generations. Investing in structured mentoring today ensures that family enterprises continue to thrive, seamlessly bridging the past with the future.

(The author, Kavita Nigam, is the CHRO of KARAM Safety.)







LaLa Land 6.0, a unique retro-themed flea market, took place at the HITEX Exhibition Center in Hyderabad, marking another successful season of this premier experiential event. Organised by Nihita Raju, Varun Chakkilam, Vineeth Reddy and curated by Sheena Kaur, this year, the event featured over 100 brands, more than 40 food joints and live performances from artists such as The Deccan Project, Band Aarohi and Band Fossegirim.

iSprout is transforming the airport experience for business travelers with the launch of Flyers Club, equipped with state-of-the-art private meeting rooms, high-speed internet, business-class amenities and an alfresco seating area. Flyers Club offers a seamless environment where productivity can continue uninterrupted, even while waiting for a flight.



SHARP Business Systems (India) Pvt. Ltd. has unveiled its latest innovations in air conditioning technology with the launch of the Reiryuu, Seyrou, and Plasma Chill series. These newly introduced air conditioners are equipped with advanced features such as 7-stage filtration, 7-in-1 convertible functionality, i-FEEL, self-diagnosis and self-cleaning technology.



Elite Elevators is making significant strides with the launch of its innovative Elite X300 and X300 Plus home lifts. These state-of-the-art models represent a new era in modern home mobility, seamlessly blending luxury, advanced technology, and sustainability. As part of its ambitious growth strategy, the company plans to expand its market presence into new geographies, including the USA and Canada, by 2025.

**GIFT FONZIE FOLKSY'S O'LIVE IT THIS WOMEN'S DAY**

While everyday should be an ode to the wonderful women in your life, special days like a women's day help you take a moment and cherish the love and warmth they add to your life! A luxury fragrance from Fonzie Folksey like 'O'live It', is the perfect gift this women's day for your special lady be it your mother, sister, wife, daughter or a friend. It is a lively and playful fragrance that brings alive a burst of citrus with notes of Fresh Grapefruit setting the stage for an uplifting experience. At its heart, erupts delicate Magnolia blooms that transports you to euphoria and settles to the warm caress of Amber and Soft Woods, leaving you yearning for more.

Price: INR 4299



**what's brewing?**

**GIFT INDIA'S FIRST RESULOOK INFUSED EYELASH GROWTH SERUM THIS WOMEN'S DAY**

Re/do beauty is a premium beauty brand that has launched India's first and only eyelash enhancing serum infused with Resulook and WKPeP Pro-Lash peptide complex and shows visible difference within 3-4 weeks making it the perfect gift this women's day.



**GIVE THE GIFT OF BEAUTY WITH ANASTASIA BEVERLY HILLS**

Whether it's a flawless blush, a precision brow tool, or a long-lasting eyeliner, these high-quality makeup essentials make the perfect present for the women of your life. This Women's Day gift is the —Anastasia Beverly Hills Blurring Serum Blush. This ultra-lightweight, cream formula melts into the skin, delivering a natural, radiant flush with a seamless second-skin effect. Its buildable, blendable texture glides on smoothly for long-lasting, comfortable wear without feeling sticky or settling into lines. Complete with a sleek rose gold design and a precision brush for easy application, this blush is the perfect way to show your love and appreciation!

Shades- LATE, PINK DAHLIA, PEACH CARAMEL, SOFT ROSE

Price: INR 3500



**JUHT HYDRÉME – THE ONLY MOISTURISER YOU'LL EVER NEED BY JUST**

Light as a gel, powerful where it counts—Hydrème delivers deep hydration without the heaviness. Packed with Reishi Mushroom Peptides for skin resilience and Cica for soothing repair, it keeps oil in check, strengthens your barrier, and works effortlessly in Indian weather. No matter your skin type, no matter the season, it just works. Use it as your everyday moisturiser, a smooth makeup base, or a quick skin refresh. One jar, endless ways to glow. Your skin's been waiting—ready to dive in?

Price: INR 2,160



**WOMEN BEHIND ALBELI LUXE**

Albeli Luxe is an emotional luxury powerhouse, a poetic fusion of couture, storytelling and transformative artistry. Founded by Dhanashree Patil, it embodies the essence of the Alchemist, the Gatherer. The beautiful sunset orange ombré shade is so stunning paired with our statement embroidery, chunky yet intricately done. The chunky glass stones and acrylics are surrounded with minute glass beads, glass stones and sequins.

Price: INR 22,055



**FUN**

**ARCHIE**



**CALVIN AND HOBBS**



**GARFIELD**



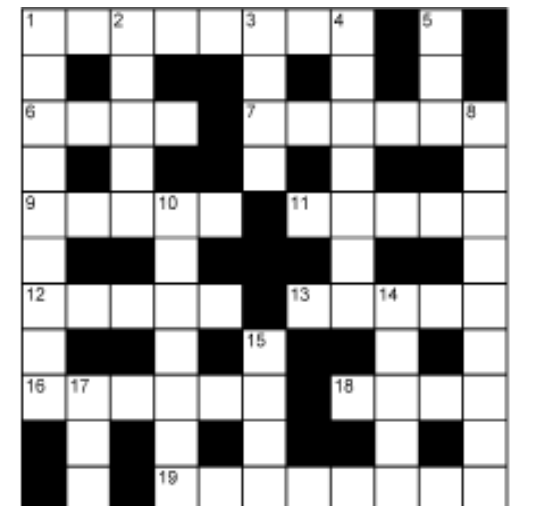
**REALITY CHECK**



**SPEED BUMP**



**CROSSWORD**



**NANCY**



**SUDOKU**

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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.

**ACROSS**

- A happy sound
- This supports your head
- Goes rotten
- Tiny mark
- A liquid measure
- A house made of hard snow
- This makes dough rise
- Follows seventh
- Final
- A long strip of paper used as a decoration

**DOWN**

- Avalanche
- A male relation
- Neat
- Take delivery of
- Purchase
- Someone watching a game or show
- You wear these
- A type of clock that makes a noise to wake you up
- Blacken with heat
- Frozen water

SOLUTION

5	3	0	0	R	A			
G	N	A	T	T	B	O	A	R
S	T	A	G	N				
T	R	A	N					
I	T	E	E	U				
N	I	G	H	T	F	E	V	E
A	O	R	I	T	E			
T	R	A	V	E	L	L	I	N
E	T	E	M	E				



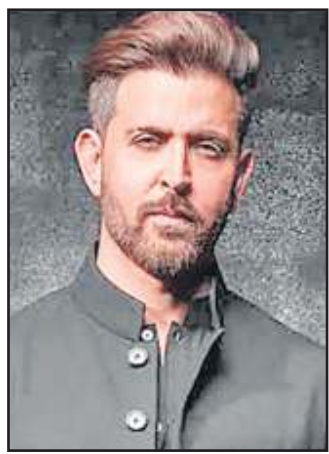
## NTR and Hrithik Roshan set to deliver a dance showdown in *War 2* climax



After *RRR*, N.T. Rama Rao Jr. (NTR) is making his Hindi debut with *War 2*. Bollywood actor Hrithik Roshan stars as the lead actor, while NTR plays the antagonist. Reports suggest that the two actors are currently shooting a song for the film. Both NTR and Hrithik are renowned for their dance skills and when these two stars share the screen for a dance sequence, it promises to be a major treat for the audience.

Director Ayan Mukerji is filming this dance sequence in a studio in Mumbai, which also features Kiara Advani. Bosco Martis is the choreographer for this song, which is being shot with 500 artistes. The song will appear in the film's climax, adding to the elevation of *War 2*. Reports indicate that both actors underwent 15 days of rehearsals for the dance, which will showcase their on-screen rivalry. Hrithik Roshan plays a RAW agent, while NTR portrays the antagonist. Producer Aditya Chopra is taking every precaution to prevent any leaks from the shoot, including ensuring that no one with a mobile phone is allowed on set. This move has generated curiosity among fans and the media, making it a highly anticipated moment. The shoot for the song is expected to continue until March 10.

*War 2* is slated for release on August 14. NTR's dance performance alongside Ram Charan in the hit song *Naatu Naatu* from *RRR* gained global acclaim, further building excitement for the duo's collaboration in this upcoming film.



# ANURAG KASHYAP AND MANJU WARRIER'S LONG-DELAYED COLLABORATION BACK ON TRACK

Renowned filmmaker Anurag Kashyap has shared intriguing details about the casting process for *Sacred Games*, revealing that he initially approached Malayalam film star Manju Warriar for the role of RAW agent Kusum Devi Yadav. Known for her exceptional performances in films like *Rani Padmini*, *Ennum Eppozhum* and *Odiyan*, Warriar was initially considered for a key role in the critically acclaimed Netflix series. Kashyap also suggested Tamil star Nayanthara for the part while collaborating with the streaming platform.

Despite these efforts, the role ultimately went to Amruta Subhash in the second season of *Sacred Games*, which premiered in 2019.

Kashyap discussed the behind-the-scenes process during a recent roundtable interview, where he mentioned that the casting team was initially considering various actors for the role. "We were trying to get Manju Warriar for Amruta Subhash's role. We were auditioning for *Sacred Games* and gave Netflix three options—her, Nayanthara and one more person," he revealed. Kashyap also explained the logistical challenges of working with Netflix at the time, particularly because the streaming giant didn't yet have an office in India. "At that time, Netflix didn't have an India office. Everything was going to the US and OTTs weren't looking at the South market. Their choices were mostly driven by algorithms to attract subscribers from Maharashtra or other regions," he said.

Kashyap and Warriar share a special bond, dating back to their first meeting between 2011 and 2013, where they connected through mutual friends, including *Moothon* director Geetu Mohandas and cinematographer Rajeev Ravi. Kashyap also shared an interesting personal fact: he and Warriar share the same birthday, further cementing their connection.



*Footage*, directed by debutant Saiju Sreedharan, tells the story of Vishak and Gayatri, a couple known for their mysterious YouTube vlogs. Trapped indoors during the COVID-19 pandemic, they become intrigued by the strange story of their maid's mute employer who resides in the same complex. With a gripping plot and fresh storytelling, *Footage* marks a major step in Malayalam cinema's exploration of cross-linguistic markets.

As an avid fan of South Indian films, Kashyap made sure that *Footage* was treated with the same level of respect as a Hindi film during its post-production. He mentioned that he insisted the film not be dubbed in the usual rushed, poor-quality manner. "I reached out to a dubbing agency and told them to treat it like a Hindi film, not just a Malayalam film dubbed into Hindi," he said. Kashyap's passion for quality translation underscores his belief in the

importance of accurate, high-quality dubbing for films from diverse languages. He also emphasised his distaste for poorly dubbed films, citing *Maharaja* as an example of a poor dubbing experience that hindered his enjoyment of the film.

Meanwhile, during the roundtable interview, Warriar spoke candidly about her wish to work in Hindi cinema under the direction of Anurag Kashyap. "I am really looking forward to working in Hindi with Anurag sir. It depends on Anurag sir. If he does a film with me... I have to wait for it," she said, highlighting her admiration for the filmmaker and her excitement about the prospect of a future collaboration.

Warriar's connection with Kashyap has already begun with *Footage*, a found-footage genre thriller directed by debutant Saiju Sreedharan. Kashyap came on board as the presenter for the Hindi version of the film, which is set to explore the eerie world of a couple who, during the pandemic, uncover unsettling truths about their neighbor's silent, mysterious life. Warriar expressed her gratitude to Kashyap for his involvement with the project, saying it was an honor to have him lend his expertise to the film.

In addition to her anticipation for a Hindi film collaboration with Kashyap, Warriar also reflected on an unfinished project she was working on during the COVID-19 pandemic. She was shooting a film alongside actor Madhavan, but the production was disrupted when Madhavan contracted COVID-19. "We shot half of the film, but then it was during COVID. I was working on a film with Madhavan, and we had to wrap the shoot when Madhavan got COVID. Later, he was busy with post-production and the release of *Rocketry*, so we couldn't finish the shoot of the film," Warriar explained. She added that, due to various reasons, the shoot could not be resumed after that.



## Nani's *The Paradise*: A bold statement or a strategic move for OTT deals?

On Monday, the much-anticipated promo for *The Paradise*, starring Nani and directed by Srikanth Odela, was released. However, in an unusual move, none of the film's key members—Nani, the director, or the producer—attended the launch event. The promo was instead

labelled as a 'Raw Statement,' showcasing intense violence and introducing Nani in a never-seen-before avatar. While the promo generated buzz, industry insiders have mixed reactions. Some feel Nani's rugged look doesn't suit him, while others believe the promo was strategically released to secure an OTT deal before platforms close their acquisition windows at the end of March. A producer, speaking on the condition of anonymity, revealed, "OTT platforms will pause new acquisitions by the end of March and

resume after three to four months. The makers of *The Paradise* may have released this promo now to lock in an OTT deal before that deadline." Despite Nani's consistent filmography, his recent releases have struggled to achieve blockbuster success. His attempts to expand into Malayalam, Tamil and Hindi markets have not yielded the expected results. Given the rising budgets of his films and the reliance on digital rights for revenue recovery, *The Paradise* faces a critical test—will it bring in the returns its makers are hoping for?

## Karthi injured on *Sardar 2* set, film's release likely to be delayed

Tamil star Karthi, who has a strong fan base in both Tamil and Telugu cinema, has suffered an injury while shooting for *Sardar 2*, the sequel to his 2022 hit *Sardar*. The action-packed film, directed by PS Mithran, has been filming in Mysore for the past few days.

During an intense sequence, Karthi sustained a leg injury, leading the crew to rush him to a nearby hospital. According to reports, doctors have advised him to rest for at least two weeks.

The film features Malavika Mohanan as the female lead, with SJ Suryah, Ashika Ranganath and Rajisha Vijayan in pivotal roles. Music is composed by Yuvan Shankar Raja, and the film is produced by S. Lakshman Kumar and Siddharth Srinivas.

Initially slated for a May 31 release, *Sardar 2* might face a delay depending on Karthi's recovery. A source close to the production stated, "It all depends on how soon Karthi heals and can resume shooting." In the film, Karthi reprises his dual roles as a police inspector and a RAW agent. Fans are eagerly awaiting an official update on whether the injury will impact the film's release schedule.



## Adarsh Gourav takes the plunge into tollywood with a dark psychological thriller



gripping storyline and a unique narrative, instantly attracted Adarsh, who was eager to dive into this darker, more intense genre.

Talking about his upcoming venture, Adarsh shared his excitement about exploring the South Indian film industry. He said, "I've always believed that great stories transcend language. As an actor, the most exciting part of my career is to dive into diverse narratives, irrespective of industry or language. The South film industry has been known for its bold, innovative and powerful storytelling and I'm thrilled to be a part of that legacy. This particular project is very different from anything I've done before – a psychological horror film with a story that immediately captivated me. The experience of working with a visionary team and debuting in Telugu cinema under Jahnavi's production is truly special."

Adarsh's decision to enter Tollywood further exemplifies the growing trend of Bollywood stars embracing the South Indian film industry, which has increasingly become a hub for creative collaborations and regional crossovers. His entry into the Telugu film industry adds another layer of excitement for both his fans and the Telugu cinema audience, eager to witness the actor's signature depth and emotional intensity in a new light.

As Bollywood actors continue to make their mark in South Indian cinema, Adarsh Gourav's debut stands as a testament to the rising trend of cross-regional collaborations. His ability to seamlessly move between different film industries showcases not only his versatility as an actor but also the broader movement of diverse storytelling that is reaching audiences across India and beyond.

## Sreeleela spotted at Kartik Aaryan's house—What's brewing?

Actress Sreeleela is set to make her Bollywood debut opposite Kartik Aaryan in Anurag Basu's upcoming film. Though rumored to be titled *Aashiqui 3*, the official name hasn't been confirmed due to potential legal issues. Off late, a video of Sreeleela at Kartik Aaryan's house went viral, fueling speculations. In the clip, she is seen dancing at a party while Kartik records another video on his phone. However, she suddenly stops after a few steps, leaving fans curious.

Reports clarify that Sreeleela was attending a celebration hosted by Kartik's family for his sister, Dr. Kritika, who recently completed her medical studies. Netizens have pointed out an inter-



esting coincidence—Kartik's mother, a doctor, once mentioned in an interview that she wished for a doctor daughter-in-law. Interestingly, Sreeleela, who hails from a family of doctors, recently completed her MBBS exams. Sreeleela made her Telugu debut with *PellisandaD* and quickly gained popularity, though her career hasn't reached the expected heights. Her latest, special song, *Kissak*, in *Pushpa 2*, received a good response.

Additionally, she is making her Tamil debut with *Parasakti*, directed by Sudha Kongara. Now, with Bollywood calling, she is reportedly in talks for multiple Hindi projects.



## TUK TUK RELEASING ON MARCH 21



Young actors like Harsh Roshan, Karthikeya Dev, Steven Madhu, Saanve Megghana and Nihal Kodati are starring in a film titled *Tuk Tuk*. Directed by C. Supreeth Krishna and produced by Rahul Reddy, the film is set to release on March 21. On Tuesday, the makers unveiled the teaser of the film, which includes a supernatural element alongside plenty of entertainment.

Speaking about the film, Saanve Megghana, who previously starred in *Pushpaka Vimanam* and *Prema Vimanam*, said, "After the two *Vimanam* (aeroplanes), I've now come to this auto to entertain," referring to the change in her roles. She added, "There are many surprises in the film. I can't reveal much about the story, but the supernatural element, along with loads of entertainment, will definitely captivate the audience." Harsh Roshan, who previously played a child artist in *Salaar* (starring Prabhas), plays an important role in *Tuk Tuk*. Karthikeya Dev, who portrayed a young Prudhviraj Sukumar in *Salaar*, also plays a significant role in this film. These young actors are excited about the movie and eagerly await its release.



# India to host second Asian Yogasana Championship

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A total of 16 countries will participate in the second Asian Yogasana Championship, scheduled to be held at the Indira Gandhi Stadium here from March 29 to 31.

The championship, being organised in collaboration with the Sports Ministry and Yogasana Bharat, aims to showcase Yogasana at the international level while embracing its rich heritage and deep-rooted cultural significance.

The event, being supported by the Olympic Council of Asia, World Yogasana, Asian Yogasana and Yogasana Indraprastha, will also help create a roadmap towards inclusion of the discipline in the Olympic curriculum.

"India, the birthplace of yoga, is honoured to host the second Asian Yogasana Championship. This event is more than just a competition; it is a celebration of our ancient wisdom evolving into



a modern competitive sport," Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said in a release. "We are committed to making Yogasana a global sporting discipline, and this championship is a significant step toward that goal. Through this event, we will showcase not just the athleticism of Yogasana but also its power to transform lives, both physically and mentally."

Asian Yogasana president Sanjay Malpani emphasised

the championship's impact, saying, "The Yogasana Championship is a defining moment in our mission to establish Yogasana as a globally-recognised sport. We are witnessing the fusion of tradition with modern athletic excellence. "This championship is proof that Yogasana is not just a practice but a competitive sport that demands precision, endurance, and artistry. With every athlete who competes, we take one step closer to

Yogasana's rightful place on the world stage."

World Yogasana secretary-general Jaideep Arya added, "The championship in New Delhi marks a significant milestone in our mission to promote Yogasana as a global competitive sport."

"This championship brings together exceptional athletes from across Asia, showcasing the strength, flexibility, and discipline that define this ancient practice. We are proud to witness the growing enthusiasm for Yogasana and remain committed to its development as a mainstream sporting discipline."

Yogasana Bharat president Udit Sheth said India is committed to shaping the future of the ancient sport. "Our mission is to provide young athletes with a platform to shine, to elevate Yogasana to premier sporting events, and to reinforce India's commitment to sharing this invaluable heritage with the world," he added.

# Mental strength matters, not size: Gavaskar backs Rohit Sharma

PTI ■ DUBAI

Backing India captain Rohit Sharma, who was subjected to fat-shaming, cricket legend Sunil Gavaskar on Tuesday said that slim guys are for modelling and in cricket, mental strength is what matters, not physical size.

Addressing the unnecessary criticisms directed at India skipper in the middle of Champions Trophy by a politician, Gavaskar reminded how Mumbai's big-hitting Sarfaraz Khan also faced body shaming, but it didn't affect his performance at all.

"I have always said, if you want only slim guys, then you should go to a modelling competition and pick all the models. It's not about that," Gavaskar said.

"It's about how well you can play cricket. We talked about Sarfaraz Khan, he was vilified for a long time because he was on the heavier side. But if he scores 150 for India in a Test match and follows it up with another two or three fifty-plus scores, then what's the



Rohit Sharma prays as he walks to open the innings during the ICC Champions Trophy semi-final cricket match between India and Australia in Dubai

issue?" "I don't think size has anything to do with it. It's your mental strength - whether you can last the distance-that's the most important thing. Bat well, bat for long, and

score runs." Congress spokesperson Shama Mohamed called Rohit "fat for a sportsman" and described him as "the most unimpressive Captain India has ever had." However, she faced backlash

on social media for her unwarranted comment and was forced to delete her post from the 'X'. Congress also distanced itself from Shama's comment and requested her to delete the post.

# India honors Shivalkar with black armbands in Champions Trophy semifinal

PTI ■ DUBAI

The Indian team players on Tuesday wore black armbands during their Champions Trophy semifinal against Australia in the memory and honour of domestic cricket legend Padmakar Shivalkar, who passed away due to age-related illness.

Shivalkar was one of the finest spinners who did not get to play for India as he played in the era of greats like Bishan Singh Bedi.

He was 84 and breathed his last in Mumbai on Monday. In the 124 First Class matches he played for Mumbai, Shivalkar took 589 wickets with his left-arm spin. Shivalkar was conferred with the prestigious CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award by the BCCI.

The current India skipper Rohit Sharma also hails from Mumbai.

# Aaqib Javed to continue as Pakistan's head coach

PTI ■ LAHORE

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has asked former pacer and national selector, Aaqib Javed, to continue as interim head coach for the white-ball tour of New Zealand.

A PCB official said due to time constraints between the Champions Trophy and New Zealand tour, Aaqib will continue as interim head coach.

"The PCB meanwhile has started the process of finding a new head coach for the national team and due process would be followed," he said. The official said Pakistan should have a new head coach when they begin their new cycle of the World Test Championship (WTC) in August.

Last year, the PCB had appointed Jason Gillespie and Gary Kirsten as the red ball and white ball coaches respectively, but both resigned within six to eight months of their appointment citing issues with the Pakistan board.

Aaqib, a senior selector, was then asked to take over as interim head coach of the white ball squad and then also the red ball team for the Test series in South Africa and against West Indies at home.



Pakistan interim head coach Aaqib Javed, left, speaks as Salman Ali Agha watches during a press conference in Lahore

He also continued in the post in the three-nation event in Pakistan and the Champions Trophy from which the team bowed out without registering a win.

Former Pakistan captain, Mohammad Yousuf, will now work as batting coach of the national side. The PCB also said that it has appointed Salman Ali Agha as captain and Shadab Khan as vice-captain of the T20 squad keeping in mind the T20 World Cup next year.

"The decision to appoint Salman and Shadab as T20I captain and vice-captain, respectively, has been made with an eye on two major upcoming tournaments - the ACC Men's T20 Asia Cup 2025 (September 2025) and the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 (February or March 2026)," the board said. Salman has previously led Pakistan in a T20I series against Zimbabwe, winning it 2-1. As part of preparations for the

T20 World Cup, Pakistan are set to play a minimum of five T20Is in the Asia Cup 2025 and three T20Is each against West Indies (away in July), Afghanistan (home in August), Ireland (home in September), South Africa (home in September/October), Sri Lanka (home in November) and Australia (home in January 2026).

The board said that Mohammad Rizwan will continue leading the ODI side as Pakistan build for the 2027 ODI World Cup, which will take place in Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The board also confirmed that opens Fakhar Zaman and Saim Ayub were not considered for either format for the New Zealand tour on medical advice.

"Fakhar suffered a left lower intercostal muscle sprain during Pakistan's ICC Champions Trophy opener against New Zealand, while Saim is recovering from a right ankle fracture sustained on the first day of the Cape Town Test against South Africa in January," the board said.

It confirmed that both are expected to be fully fit for the Pakistan Super League 10, starting in Rawalpindi on 11 April.

# Babar, Rizwan dropped from Pakistan's T20 squad



Babar Azam plays a shot during the Champions Trophy 2025 cricket match

PTI ■ LAHORE

Captain Muhammad Rizwan and Babar Azam were on Tuesday dropped from the Pakistan squad for the five-match T20 series in New Zealand. Salman Ali Agha replaced Rizwan as captain of the T20 outfit with all-rounder Shadab Khan being recalled and named his vice-captain.

Rizwan has been retained as captain of the ODI squad after the team's disappointing show in the Champions Trophy. The

selectors have avoided an overhaul in the one-day squad and retained majority of the players who flopped in the ongoing ICC event.

Babar is also retained in the ODI squad but batters Saud Shakil and Kamran Ghulam have been axed. The selectors have also sidelined fast bowlers Shaheen Shah Afridi and Haris Rauf from the one-day squad.

Pakistan play five T20s and three ODIs in New Zealand starting March 16. Pakistan will still be without

dashing opener Saim Ayub, who is yet to recover from an ankle injury while opener, Fakhar Zaman has also been ruled out of the tour with an injury he sustained in the first match of the CT.

His injury came after making a comeback to the Pakistan squad last month in the three-nation event while Saim got injured while fielding during the Test series in South Africa earlier this year.

**Pakistan squads:** ODI: Muhammad Rizwan (captain), Salman Ali Agha (VC), Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Akif Javed, Babar Azam, Faheem Ashraf, Imam ul Haq, Khushdil Shah, Muhammad Ali, Muhammad Wasim junior, Muhammad Irfan Khan, Naseem Shah, Sufyan Muqeem, Tayyab Tahir.

T20: Salman Ali Agha (captain), Shadab Khan (VC), Abdul Samad, Abrar Ahmed, Haris Rauf, Hasan Nawaz, Jahandad Khan, Khushdil Shah, Muhammad Abbas Afridi, Muhammad Ali, Muhammad Khan, Muhammad Irfan Khan, Omaid Bin Yousuf, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Sufyan Muqeem, Usman Khan.



South Africa's Ryan Rickelton celebrates after scoring century during the ICC Champions Trophy cricket match

# South Africa has more class than NZ: Ponting

PTI ■ LAHORE

South Africa have a "bit more class and power" in their lineup, which makes them favourites in the Champions Trophy semifinal against New Zealand, feels Ricky Ponting, though the Australian leader added that if someone like Kane Williamson comes to the party he could get the job done for the Black Caps.

New Zealand are coming into the knockouts on the back of a big defeat against India in Dubai, while South Africa are on a roll following their massive seven-wicket win against England in the group stage. While momentum could play a big role in the contest, Ponting said with a deep batting line-up, just like India, South Africa enjoy an edge.

"If I look at both the sides, I think there's that little bit more class in the South African lineup. They bat deep. I think they might have a little bit too much power for New

Zealand," Ponting opined on ICC Review on Tuesday. "I'm actually going with South Africa (to win the contest) as much as I've praised New Zealand," he added.

The former Australian captain added that New Zealand top-order batter Williamson will have to play a leading role in the contest as every team relies on its big players to guide them in crunch games.

"Williamson, I think, needs to make runs for them in this game. Every team needs their big players standing up in big moments. Big games mean big names. It doesn't get bigger than the Champions Trophy semifinals. And, Williamson is a big-game player, he will understand the enormity of his role going into the game and I won't be surprised if he gets the job done," Ponting said. Williamson, after hardly making any contribution against Pakistan (1) and Bangladesh (5), struck a 120-ball 81 against India in the

final group game, which would have given him some confidence.

However, Ponting feels the likes of opener Ryan Rickelton, skipper Temba Bavuma, Aiden Markram, David Miller and Heinrich Klaasen could make things difficult for the Kiwis.

"He's (Klaasen) very important because he is such a dangerous player of spin bowling. He's such a great, clean hitter of spin. He is important to the middle order but South Africa bat deep like India. And, with a world-class all-rounder like Marco Jansen and obviously Aiden Markram, (Temba) Bavuma, David Miller. Their batting is really strong. That middle order. "I think Klaasen has been the No.1 T20 batter for long and if he brings that sort of stuff to the 50-over game. If he goes in around the 30-over mark and South Africa are 2-3 down, then he can be truly dangerous," he said.

# NZ, SA aim to shed underachiever tag in Champions Trophy semifinal

PTI ■ LAHORE

Loaded with world-class talent but haunted by the underachievers tag at ICC events, New Zealand and South Africa will square off in an evenly-matched second semifinal of the Champions Trophy here on Wednesday.

South Africa and New Zealand have won the Champions Trophy once each in 1998 and 2000 respectively but the tournament was called the ICC Knockout Trophy at that time and didn't carry the significance which it has now.

While South Africa would look to shed their big tournament "chokers" tag, the Kiwis will also be desperate to lay their hands on a title after having finished second best twice in the ODI World Cup (2015 and 2019) and once in the T20 World Cup (2021). Led by Mitchell Santner, New Zealand finished behind India in Group A, while South Africa topped Group B ahead of



New Zealand players celebrate the wicket of Virat Kohli during ODI match of the ICC Champions Trophy in Dubai

Australia. But there is little to separate the two sides. Both are evenly-matched in most departments but the Proteas look to be slightly ahead on the bowling front because of variety. The two teams have enough

firepower in their batting line-ups and have quality fielders but the contest is expected to be decided by the spinners. Although the pitches here are a bit on the slower side but they haven't spun as much as the surfaces in Dubai and it will be inter-

esting to see how the spinners of both the teams fare.

The 44-run loss to India in their last group match notwithstanding, New Zealand will take confidence from their win over South Africa in the tri-series here last month.

Recently, New Zealand successfully chased 305 against South Africa here and then went on to win the tri-series, beating Pakistan in the final, and senior batter Tom Latham feels those experiences will hold them in good stead.

"Yeah, the (South Africa) team that we played potentially will be slightly different, they had a lot of guys that that weren't in that side. They were still playing in their SAT20 back in South Africa so will be slightly different. "But I guess from our point of view, we'll lean back on those experiences of Lahore in playing against South Africa," Latham had said.

"We'll do everything that we do leading up to a game. It's obvious-

ly going to be a reasonably quick turnaround, but it is what it is. And, we'll be looking forward to the challenge of a semifinal," he added referring to the hectic travel schedule. New Zealand were in Dubai on Sunday to play against India and headed to Lahore the next morning.

Latham has been New Zealand's best batter so far with 187 runs from three matches, but Kane Williamson's return to form with a classy 81 against India also augurs well for the Kiwis. On the bowling front, Matt Henry stood out and is currently the highest wicket-taker with eight scalps and has good support from Will O'Rourke (six wickets). In skipper Mitchell Santner, Michael Bracewell, Rachin Ravindra, Glenn Phillips and Mark Chapman, New Zealand boast of a good spin attack. South Africa too are in red-hot form. The Proteas have fielded one of their most prolific squads in the tournament and have all their bases covered.

# It has been a different Varun Chakravarthy since his comeback: Suryakumar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's T20I captain Suryakumar Yadav on Tuesday said mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy has been a different player since his comeback to international cricket, for he has become mentally tougher and plays with a smile on his face. Chakravarthy returned excellent figures of 5/42 in India's convincing victory over New Zealand in Dubai on Sunday, which helped the team to top their group on way to the semifinals of the tournament. "The way he left in 2021 and the way he has come back, there are

two different Varun Chakravarthys," Suryakumar, the brand ambassador of Moha, told the media here at an event. "He has become a little tough mentally, yet he is smiling a lot and taking everything in his stride irrespective of what happens on the field which is very good from a cricketer's point of view." The selection of Chakravarthy, who did not feature in the first two group matches, proved to be a masterstroke. "I am really happy for him. He deserves everything (for) what he has been doing and all the recognition for what has been happening with him,"

Suryakumar added. "He has been a really hard working athlete since 2021. I have been watching him and have spoken with him a lot of times since he made his comeback to international cricket." Suryakumar said it is important for teams to pick players with specific skill set even though the focus has primarily been on all-rounders in the shortest format. "At the end of the day it's all about your skill and what skills you offer to the team. If it's in the best interest of the team, then you have to pick those bowlers." Suryakumar also said that

Mumbai Indians will not face any leadership conundrum in the IPL given that they have each of the current Indian captains in their side.

"As soon as we go to our house, it's like a family, so we don't think about that, that we have three captains or we have four captains. We think that we are one team," he said. "It's as good as an institution where we have learned a lot, grown over there, and gone on to play for India. We work as a unit when we get into that dressing room," he added. While Hardik Pandya is Mumbai Indians' captain, the five-time winners also boast of

India's Test leader Rohit Sharma, T20I skipper Suryakumar and also Jasprit Bumrah, who had led India in two Tests on the Australia tour. "Yes, there are a lot of captains in the team, but (when) we sit together, (be it) five people, seven, (or) ten, we take a call. How do we want to take the ship forward?" The 34-year-old Suryakumar said he wants to continue focusing on all formats for now. "When I started playing my cricket, it was all red ball. Slowly, I came into white ball formats and then I was introduced to ODIs and then T20Is," he said.