

# the pioneer

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Published From: HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH BHUBANESWAR RANCHI DEHRADUN VIJAYAWADA

QUOTE OF THE DAY  
 The pioneer

The BJP won the 'Champion Trophy' of MLC elections. This is through ballot papers and not EVMs. The BJP won two MLC seats through the ballot paper as the Congress crumbled. Be it EVMs or ballot papers, the people will choose the BJP. Now, will Rahul Gandhi, who keeps crying about EVMs, answer? Or will he find another excuse for Congress's failure?

- Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Union MoS for Home

Your 'mangalsutra' remarks have come true.



INDIA LOOKS AT WAYS TO NAVIGATE TRUMP'S RECIPROCAL TARIFF

Artiste to impress as a new psycho-thriller: Director RATAN RISHI



DON'T MISS...

SHE Cyber Lab identifies 185 leads

One of the communication channels, Telegram, has become notorious for individuals sharing Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM). The investigation officers of SHE Cyber Lab used Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) to join these Telegram channels. They engaged in conversations with individuals and traced the links back to the original senders. It has identified 185 leads related to CSAM and shared 65 intelligence reports with police departments across 13 states in India. Director General, Women Safety Wing Shikha Goel said...

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Don't allow anyone to dictate your future

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Wednesday advised students not to allow anyone to dictate their course of action, asking them not to be afraid of failure. Dhankhar made these remarks while addressing a convocation ceremony of Jan Nayak Chaudhary Devi Lal Vidyapeeth (JCD) in Sirsa. Haryana minister Ranbir Gangwa, Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) leader Abhay Singh Chautala, who is president of the Devi Lal Memorial Trust, and INLD MLA Arjun Chautala, who is chairman of JCD Vidyapeeth...

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Meghalaya CM tables deficit budget

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Wednesday tabled a Rs 1,970 crore deficit budget for the financial year 2025-26, announcing a Rs 6,000 scholarship for all post-matric students of the state. The Rs 1,970 crore budget is around 2.96 per cent of the projected Rs 66,645 crore GSDP, in line with the targeted USD 10 billion economy by 2028. According to the budget document, the total receipts for 2025-26 are estimated at Rs 30,415 crore, of which revenue receipts are...

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Trying to get my rhythm: Shami

Mohammed Shami conceded that operating as India's lone front-line pacer after coming back from a lengthy injury layoff has been a heavy "responsibility" but said he is trying to regain his "rhythm" to suit the team's needs in the ongoing Champions Trophy (CT). Throughout the ICC showpiece here, Shami has shared the new ball duties with either Harshit Rana or Hardik Pandya because of the injury-forced absence of Jasprit Bumrah. Rana is still learning the ropes, while Pandya is an all-rounder and delivering...

-SPORTS

## BC commission reviews caste census, plans final survey

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Backward Classes (BC) Commission convened a meeting on Wednesday at its office in Khairatabad under the chairmanship of G. Niranjan. The meeting was attended by commission members Rapolu Jayaprakash, Tirumalagiri Surender, Balalakshmi Rangu and Commission Member Secretary Balamayadevi IAS.

The commission welcomed the Telangana Government's initiative to deploy enumerators for a 50-day caste census survey, followed by an additional window from February 16 to 28 for those who had not been registered earlier.

It expressed optimism that the findings of this caste survey would lead to an increase in BC reservations.

As part of its efforts, the BC Commission conducted widespread awareness campaigns across the 10 erstwhile districts and twin cities,



The commission welcomed the Telangana Government's initiative to deploy enumerators for a 50-day caste census survey, followed by an additional window from February 16 to 28 for those who had not been registered earlier

educating people on the caste census. The meeting also reviewed the implementation of the resolutions passed

in the February 5, 2025, session. However, as the election code is in force due to Graduate and Teacher

MLC elections, the commission's scheduled field visits had to be postponed. It was decided to complete these field visits by the end of March, after which final decisions on certain caste classification amendments would be taken.

The commission has initiated steps to collect caste-based data from all government departments including details of employees across all sectors.

Caste-wise student data is being gathered from the School Education, Intermediate Education, Higher Education, and Kaloji Narayana Rao Health University. This data is expected to play a crucial role in formulating policy recommendations for BC welfare and reservation expansion.

The commission reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring fair representation for backward classes and vowed to continue its research, consultations and public engagement before submitting its final report.



## Premier Energies moves unit from TG to AP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Premier Energies Limited has announced a major change in its operations by relocating its 4 GW Solar PV TOPCon Cell manufacturing unit from Telangana to Andhra Pradesh.

The decision, approved during a board meeting on March 3, comes as part of the company's backward integration strategy aimed at co-locating its silicon ingot and wafer manufacturing facility with solar PV

cell production.

The company had originally planned to set up the four GW Solar PV TOPCon Cell unit at the UDL-5 Part in the Industrial Park, Seetharampur, Ranga Reddy District, Telangana.

However, after a comprehensive market analysis, the board decided to shift this unit to the Industrial Park in Naidupeta Village in the Nellore District of Andhra Pradesh.

Despite the relocation of the cell unit, Continued on Page 2

## TPCC panel discusses MLA quota MLC tickets with CM

Revanth for Delhi, may discuss with High Command

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The TPCC's Core Committee discussed the MLA quota MLC tickets issue with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy at his residence on Wednesday.

The Core Committee comprising AICC in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan, TPCC Chief Mahesh Kumar Goud, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy had been meeting for more than an hour.

They discussed the guidelines for the selection of MLA quota MLCs and it is learnt that they had debated how to filter ticket candidates to ensure that the party does not get a bad name. It is learnt that the party is con-

templating giving MLC tickets to Congress leaders who are loyal to the party. The party is going to prepare a list of hopefuls who come under the guidelines.

The party would also consider the number of years of service the leaders had put in for the party and how many years they had been in the party. The party would also prepare the list considering community pressure to maintain balance. It is learnt that the high command would examine the list prepared by the core committee and take a final decision.

The CM is going to New Delhi on March 7 and will stay there for two days. It is learnt that the CM will discuss with the high command for MLA quota MLC tickets.

## BJP wins two MLC seats, Congress none

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP's Chinnamalai Anji Reddy won the Karimnagar-Medak-Adilabad-Nizamabad MLC Graduates constituency, maintaining his lead throughout all the rounds of priority vote counting, giving a significant blow to the ruling Congress.

Although Anji Reddy did not secure over 50 per cent of the votes (with the quota set at 1,11,672), election officials declared him the winner as he garnered the highest number of votes.

Congress candidate V. Narendar Reddy initially objected to the decision, but election authorities reportedly addressed his concerns and provided clarifications.

As no candidate secured a majority in the first priority votes, officials proceeded to count the second priority votes, eliminating candidates in ascending order.

Out of the 56 contestants in the graduates' MLC elections, 54 were eliminated. BSP candidate Prasanna Harikrishna, who consistently held the third place from the first round

of priority votes, was also eliminated in the 54th stage.

With the BSP candidate's elimination, only Anji Reddy and Narendar Reddy remained in con-

vention. After 53 candidates were eliminated, the BJP candidate led with 78,635 votes, while the Congress hopeful followed with 73,644 votes.

A total of 2,52,029 votes were cast, out of which 2,23,343 were deemed valid, while 28,686 votes were invalid. The required quota for victory was set at 1,11,672 votes.

With this win, the BJP claimed two MLC seats - one from the graduates' constituency and another from the teachers' constituency - while the PRTU secured the second teachers' constituency in the elections held on February 27.

Malka Komaraiah of the BJP emerged victorious from the Medak-Nizamabad-Adilabad-Karimnagar Teachers' constituency, whereas PRTU's Pingili Sripral Reddy defeated incumbent MLC A. Narsi Reddy to win from the Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda Teachers' constituency.



Graduate MLC winner Anji Reddy and Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay showing victory sign after winning the election at Karimnagar

## BJP won Champions Trophy in MLC elections, says Bandi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, said the BJP had won the 'Champion Trophy' in MLC elections held in Telangana.

He said the MLC election verdict was a lesson for the Congress, which is giving priority to one group. He said that if all Muslims unite to defeat the BJP, the Hindu community would defeat the Congress and give the party a "Ramzan" gift.

Saying hats off to the struggles of BJP workers, Sanjay bowed his head and saluted the voters who stood by the BJP. He said the Congress candidate was expected to win by distributing money. He said that those who distributed currency notes will not be spared

and that Google Pay details are being calculated.

"India entered the Champions Trophy final match a few days ago. Ours is the India team. We said that we would win. They distributed bags of money. We trusted the voters. The bags of notes got lost. The voters won. I challenge Rahul Gandhi, who has repeatedly spread the lie that the BJP will win by managing EVMs. The BJP won the MLC elections through the ballot papers as well. What will be the answer to this?" Rahul said.

After BJP candidate Chinnamalai Anji Reddy won the Karimnagar-Nizamabad-Adilabad-Medak graduate elections, former MLA Chintala Ramachandra Reddy, party state treasurer Shanthi Kumar, district president Gangadi Krishna Reddy,

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## Complain to Sonia, Rahul or Kharge if I do anything wrong: Meenakshi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The AICC's Telangana in-charge, Meenakshi Natarajan, said that she will act strictly as per party rules and has no objection to Congress leaders filing complaints with the high command.

"All Congress activists should conduct themselves as per the party line. Tell me if you have problems. You can complain to Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi or Mallikarjuna Kharge if I do anything wrong," she said.

Attending a meeting of front organisations and a meeting of Adilabad, Peddapalli parliament constituencies on Wednesday, she said that she would come to know about what Congress leaders and

workers are doing whether they file reports or not.

"I receive information about those who are working and who just act as if they are working. All Congress activists must work for the party's

growth. No one should reveal the party's internal matters outside. Action will be taken against leaders if anyone crosses limits. No one should reveal internal party matters to others," she said.



AICC in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan and TPCC Chief B Mahesh Kumar Goud participate in Adilabad Parliament constituency review meeting on Wednesday

## Harish slams CBN for blocking TG's irrigation projects

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Senior BRS leader Harish Rao strongly condemned Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's statement on water distribution and accused him of hypocrisy and deception.

Addressing the media at Siddipet, Harish said that while Chandrababu claims that he stands for justice for both states, his actions contradict his words.



Continued on Page 2

## SLBC tunnel rescue teams using robotic services

Debris removal from tunnel boring machine's final section over

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A high-level review meeting on the SLBC tunnel rescue operation was held on Wednesday by the Special Chief Secretary for Disaster Management, Arvind Kumar, along with Nagar Kurnool Collector Badavath Santosh and senior officials. The meeting assessed the progress of the rescue operations and analysed operations department-wise.

During the review meeting, Border Roads Organisation (BRO) Colonel Parikshit Mehra displayed a tunnel-boring machine model to explain the rescue attempt inside the tunnel.

Officials were told that debris removal from the tunnel boring machine's final section had been completed and that rescue teams were trying to clear the rubble. Ground Penetrating Radar identified surface disturbances and excavation is being expedited in those areas, he said.



SDRF teams were using water jets to clear accumulated mud from the trapped tunnel boring machine, with live demonstrations displaying the method. The conveyor belt system had been restored, and commissioning work was underway to ensure seamless operations. Officials confirmed that challenges in the rescue process were being systematically addressed, speeding up the operation. Ventilation and lighting systems inside the tunnel had also been extended to facilitate the ongoing efforts.

The meeting was attended by Fire Services Director General Nagireddy, TSSPDCL CMD Musharraf Ali, District SP Vaibhav Gaikwad Raghunath, Colonel Parikshit Mehra, NDRF officer Prasanna, HYDRAA representatives, SCL Mines Rescue, SDRF, Fire Services and the South Central Railway, along with plasma cutter experts, rat miners and geologists from the Geological Survey of India.



## TG showcases tourism potential at Berlin ITB

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Tourism Development Corporation Chairman Patel Ramesh Reddy represented Telangana at the International Business Trade (ITB) Conference held from March 4 to 6 at the Berlin Expo Center City in Germany. Tourism Development Corporation Managing Director N Prakash Reddy also attended the prestigious global event alongside Ramesh Reddy.

The inaugural ceremony saw Ramesh Reddy sharing the stage with Andhra Pradesh Tourism Minister Kandula Durgesh, Indian Ambassador to Germany Ajit Gupte and Berlin Mayor Kai Wagner. The Telangana delegation received a warm welcome from the Indian diaspora in Berlin, with cultural performances by Telangana women showcasing the vibrant traditions of Bathukamma and Bonalu.

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# Govt turns SHGs into economic powerhouses

**NAVEENA GHANATE**  
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HYDERABAD

Telangana's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are now emerging as economic powerhouses, due to the Congress Government's policies. No longer limited to micro-financing, the women's SHGs of Telangana are now running petrol pumps, TGSRTC buses, solar power plants and entering high-revenue businesses, creating a new wave of financial independence.

The government, led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, is ensuring that women are not just seeking employment but are becoming employers themselves. The Congress government has redefined Mahila Samaikhyas from self-reliant groups to major economic contributors, investing heavily in their growth across industries.

The Congress-led 'People's Government' has expanded SHGs beyond micro-businesses, positioning them as key players in energy, transportation, retail and urban services.

Women's SHGs have been given ownership of petrol pumps, providing them with a steady, high-revenue income source.

For the first time in Telangana, SHGs are operating public transport buses, ensuring women-led mobility solutions. In 32 districts, women's groups have been given mobile fish trucks, with a government subsidy of Rs 6 lakh per vehi-

cle, expanding their role in retail.

Telangana is the first state to allocate solar power generation projects to SHGs, with 64 MW capacity plants sanctioned in the first phase, ensuring sustainable revenue for women's groups.

A Rs 9 crore commercial complex is being developed in Hyderabad's IT hub, where over 100 stalls will be run

**For the first time in Telangana, SHGs are operating public transport buses, ensuring women-led mobility solutions. In 32 districts, women's groups have been given mobile fish trucks, with a government subsidy of Rs 6 lakh per vehicle, expanding their role in retail**

exclusively by SHGs, ensuring direct market access for their products. 100 Women-led canteens operating from the secretariat to major tourism hubs generate sustainable income for thousands of women.

Telangana is set to celebrate International Women's Day in an unprecedented manner with a grand Mahila Sadassu at the Parade Ground on March 8, where the Chief Minister will unveil the Mahila Shakti Policy - a revolutionary roadmap for women's economic independence and social empowerment.

The Congress Government has ensured that financial road-

blocks do not hold women back by launching massive funding and credit programmes.

Business loans amounting to Rs 22,000 crore have been allocated to 17 women-led enterprises covering agriculture, logistics, retail and technology. Zero-interest loans for SHGs, with the government covering all interest payments, ensure that women's business-

empower them with financial freedom. Women's SHGs will get interest-free loans with the state covering interest payments. The Rs 10 lakh insurance scheme for SHGs has provided 400 women with insurance benefits of Rs 40 crore this year.

Under the Indiramma Athmiya Bharosa, a Rs 309 crore fund, provides an annual allowance of Rs 12,000 to three lakh women. The government understands that economic empowerment must go hand in hand with financial relief at the household level. With this objective, it introduced free travel facility in TGSRTC buses for women.

This scheme facilitated 115 crore journeys by women and Rs 4,500 crore was reimbursed by the government for this scheme. Subsidized cooking gas has been provided at Rs 500 per cylinder, benefiting 50 lakh families.

The state has increased stitching charges for school uniforms. Contracts have been granted to SHGs for charges ranging from Rs 50 to Rs 75 per uniform, ensuring an income of Rs 80 crore for women's groups. Telangana's self-help groups are no longer just support systems, they are driving economic growth. The Congress Government is making sure that women are not just beneficiaries of social schemes welfare but also active contributors to Telangana's economy.

# Uttam accuses Harish of making false allegations, blames BRS for water crisis

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy accused BRS MLA Harish Rao of making false allegations and held the BRS admin responsible for Telangana's water crisis.

During an informal chat with the media at the Gandhi Bhavan on Wednesday, Uttam said that Telangana produced more paddy during Kharif than United Andhra Pradesh and added that the Rabi paddy sown area would exceed 55 lakh acres.

He said the Congress Government is supplying water as per the Rabi action plan.

Uttam emphasised that the Congress Government has been efficiently managing limited water resources. However, he said that the BRS govern-

ment's mismanagement of Krishna and Godavari waters is causing severe hardships to farmers now.

He accused the BRS of recklessly allowing Andhra Pradesh to build infrastructure to draw excess water and even giving a written commitment to allocate 512 TMCs from the

Krishna River. He said that after the Congress came to power, attempts were made to amend these rules. He blamed the BRS for the water crisis in the Godavari basin and cited its failure to construct the Tummidihatti Project a major loss for Telangana.

He also cited an NDSA report warning that if safety measures are not taken at the Medigadda Barrage, entire villages could get submerged. He also reiterated his demand that Harish should stop misleading people with his false allegations against the Congress Government.

## Meenakshi chalks out 'Three Groups Formula' to reconcile old & new leaders

The AICC's TG in-charge, Meenakshi Natarajan, has decided to divide Congress leaders into three categories. She took this decision while deciding on individuals to appoint to nominated posts. Meenakshi is going to divide Congress leaders as

original leaders, leaders who joined from other parties before the 2023 Assembly elections and leaders from other parties who joined after the party came to power. It is learnt that the party is going to give priority to leaders who have been with the party from the beginning of their political career.

Meenakshi has sought a list of leaders who have been with the party for the last 10 years. However, it is learnt that the party is going to give top priority to leaders who have been with the party from the beginning of their political career.

# Will invite Revanth personally to join BJP if Cong sacks him: Arvind

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP's Nizamabad MP, Dharmapuri Arvind, said that he will personally invite Revanth Reddy to join the BJP if the Congress removes him from the post of Chief Minister.

"Will Revanth just sit back and watch silently if he is removed from the post of Chief Minister? I will invite him personally to join the BJP if the Congress removes him from the CM's post. But whether the BJP will accept Revanth or not is not in my hands," he said. The BJP's Nizamabad MP, Dharmapuri Arvind, said that Rahul Gandhi was an 'alien' and added,

Addressing the media at the State BJP office here on Wednesday, Arvind said that Revanth and Congress leaders are his friends. "The CM may name 'Future City' as 'Lotus City' and so he is showering praises on Prime Minister Modi. 'We will definitely hail the CM if he names Future City as Lotus City,' he said. Declaring that Rahul Gandhi was an alien, Arvind said the Congress Government had failed in governance and its defeat in the three MLC elections is proof of that.



Nizamabad MP Dharmapuri Arvind addressing the media at State BJP office on Wednesday

# CPI asks CM to give one MLA quota MLC seat

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

CPI leaders met Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Wednesday seeking an MLA quota MLC seat. However, the Chief Minister told the CPI leaders that he would reveal his party's decision only after discussing it with the high command.

CPI leaders Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao, Chada Venkat Reddy, Palla Venkat Reddy, and others met the Chief Minister at the CM's residence and appealed to him to give one MLA quota MLC seat as per the agreement between them.

Later, speaking to the media, Sambasiva said that they had asked the CM to give an MLA quota MLC seat as per the agreement between the CPI and the Congress made in 2023.

# CM made a big mistake by suspending me: Mallanna

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress MLC Theenmar Mallanna who was suspended from the party, said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy had made a big mistake by suspending him from the Congress. He said that he would see why the BCs did not get state power.

"If I am suspended, Revanth should come out of the illusion that the BC movement will stop. The CM does not want people like me around. The results of the caste census were shown wrongly so that there would not be any problem with the EWS quota. If a caste census is conducted after 90 years, no one will even applaud. I am ready to discuss the caste census with the CM. Revanth forced the TPCC president to suspend me. I joined the Congress due to Rahul Gandhi's promise that he would give 42 per cent reservation to BCs. Revanth wants leaders who will be slaves. The caste census conducted by Revanth is just a scrap of paper. Even his ministers do not remember the CM's name," Mallanna said.

Addressing the media on Wednesday, Mallanna said, "I did the same thing that Rahul Gandhi did in 2011. Didn't Rahul tear up an ordinance issued by Manmohan Singh? Is justice for the Komatireddy brothers different from the justice for Mallanna? Internal democra-

cy is available in the Congress only for the upper castes. The Chief Minister and ministers took part negligently in the caste census. Upper castes were shown more and BCs were trampled down. The caste survey was certainly a Jana Reddy survey. Revanth was caught repeatedly making mistakes," he added.

He said the CM is trying to destroy the Congress according to plan and that the CM and Prime Minister Modi are closely cooperating with each other. Mallanna accused Revanth of helping the BJP win Malkajgiri, Chevella and Mahbubnagar LS seats and asked where the CM was when he fought KCR.

He said that Revanth defeated Vamsichand Reddy in the Mahbubnagar LS seat and asked whether Revanth, who could not win the Mahbubnagar and Malkajgiri LS seats, had made him victorious. Mallanna said that he too had a hand in making Revanth sit on the CM's chair.

"The Congress came to power with difficulty. I too had a role in the Congress coming to power. During KCR's dictatorial rule, my news office became Gandhi Bhavan for Congress leaders. The Congress won 42 out of the 45 Assembly constituencies where I campaigned. Even if Revanth doesn't like it, a BC Chief Minister is certain in 2028.

# Seethakka wants to resign Adilabad district in-charge post

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Minister for panchayati raj and rural development, rural water supply, women and child welfare, Seethakka, said that she wants to give up the responsibility of being the in-charge minister of Adilabad district.

She said that she had decided to quit the in-charge minister post due to the attitude of the in-charges of Assembly constituencies in Adilabad district.

After a review meeting of the Adilabad Parliament constituency on Wednesday at the Gandhi Bhavan she said that she would meet the Chief Minister soon, explain the situation and resign the Adilabad in-charge minister post.

Meanwhile, the AICC TG in-charge, Meenakshi Natarajan, has proposed to appoint a political affairs committee for the Adilabad district to ensure coordination between the party and the government.

# Victory of youth and teachers: Kishan

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP President G. Kishan Reddy said the BJP won two of the three MLC seats, Karimnagar-Nizamabad-Adilabad-Medak (Graduates) and Medak-Karimnagar-Adilabad-Nizamabad (Teachers), with a commanding margin.

This triumph is a victory of our youth and teachers who decisively rejected the Congress, its failed governance and its failure to address their concerns.

Despite Congress fielding all its ministers, MLAs, MPs and spending heavily, they could not win the Karimnagar graduate seat. This sends a strong message to the Congress,

which came to power by making false promises to the people.

With elections spanning 13 districts, 43 Assemblies, six Parliament seats and 270 mandals, the victory reflects the growing strength of the BJP in Telangana. The party is emerging as a powerful force in the state, he said.

"I express my sincere gratitude to the people of Telangana, especially teachers and youth, for reposing faith in the BJP and in the leadership of Modi (@narendramodi). I also acknowledge our karyakartas, the backbone of our party. Their dedication continues to strengthen the BJP in Telangana," Kishan said.

# BJP won Champions ...

Continued from page 1

former president Botsa Satyanarayana, former mayor Sunil Rao and others celebrated by flashing the "Victory" symbol.

Speaking to the media, Sanjay said, "Hats off to all workers who worked tirelessly for the BJP's victory. I bow my head and salute the voters who voted for BJP candidates in teachers and graduate elections. This is the fourth victory under Kishan Reddy. Along with 8 MPs and 8 MLAs, we won the Teachers MLC and Graduate MLC seats."

"I am very happy that Modi's ethics, honest governance, the funds allocated by the Centre for Telangana, as well as the struggles of its activists brought about a wonderful victory. We remembered the struggles of our activists as teachers, the unemployed and the people. We remembered the beatings and the incidents of jailings. The Modi Government has implemented many welfare programs including giving tax concessions of up to Rs 12 lakh to employees. We

remembered all of them. I am happy that you stood by our side," Sanjay added.

Even though the Congress and the BRS conspired to defeat BJP, even though they distributed moneybags and Rs 5,000 per vote, their conspiracies did not work. We did not spend a single paisa. Our workers went door to door. It was only because of their hard work, Modi's rule and the grace of our mother that the verdict was given in our favour today. The Congress and the BRS slapped us.

Actually, we thought that the BSP candidate would come second. When BRS leaders supported him and gave him money, the people, observing all that, limited that candidate to the 3rd place.

The BJP seemed like a compass to the people who wanted change. Whatever elections are held from now on, the BJP will continue to win. The BJP will also win the next Gram Panchayat elections. Because the central government is funding the development of the Gram Panchayats in the state. If the money belongs to the centre, the state government is taking

the blame. "The people are watching all this. People are ready to make the BJP win in the local body elections. They remembered our struggles, prisons, and the beatings they suffered.

Remembering the incidents and sacrifices where our activists' heads were cracked and blood was shed, the voters voted and blessed them.

"We will uphold their trust. In the coming days, we are preparing to fight against the anti-people policies of the Congress. The Congress should come down at least now. Voters in 42 Assembly constituencies in the state have given a verdict expressing their opposition to the state government's rule. 6 guaranteees should be implemented immediately. Similarly, 2 lakh jobs should be filled immediately. As promised, an unemployment allowance of Rs 4,000 should be given. Similarly, PRC should be implemented for employees and teachers. Five pending DAs, retirement benefits, GPF dues should be paid immediately. Along with these, all promises made to farmers and women would be implemented," he said.

# Gold worth Rs 14.62 cr seized from Kannada actress Ranya Rao: DRI

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Gold bars worth Rs 12.56 crore were seized from Kannada actress Ranya Rao at Kempegowda International Airport, following which searches were conducted at her residence and gold jewellery worth Rs 2.06 crore and Indian currency amounting to Rs 2.67 crore were also recovered, DRI said on Wednesday.

Rao is the stepdaughter of senior IPS officer Ramachandra Rao, a senior police official said. The DGP-rank officer is currently serving as the Chairman and Managing Director of the Karnataka State Police Housing and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd, he added.

The total seizure in the case stood at Rs 17.29 crore, including assets worth Rs 4.73 crore, marking a significant blow to organised gold smuggling networks. According to DRI (Directorate of Revenue Intelligence) officials, the 14.2 kg haul is one of the largest gold seizures at Bengaluru airport in recent times.

In a statement, the Ministry of Finance said the DRI successfully intercepted a passenger carrying foreign-origin gold bars worth Rs 12.56 crore at Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru.

"Acting on specific intelligence, DRI officers intercepted an Indian woman, aged around 33, who had arrived from Dubai to Bengaluru on an Emirates flight on March 3. Upon examination, gold bars weighing 14.2 kg were found ingeniously concealed on her person," the statement read.

The DRI operates under the Ministry of Finance.

According to the Ministry, the contraband, valued at Rs 12.56 crore, was seized under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962.

"Following the interception, DRI officers searched her residence on Lavelle Road, Bengaluru, where she lives with her husband. The search led to the seizure of gold jewellery worth Rs 2.06 crore and Indian currency amounting to Rs 2.67 crore," the statement added.



# Harish slams ...

Continued from page 1

He accused the BJP of backing Chandrababu's conspiracies at the Centre while Chief Minister Revanth remained a mute spectator.

Harish emphasized that only the BRS had consistently fought for Telangana's water rights and challenged Chandrababu to prove his sincerity by writing to the Centre that Andhra Pradesh had no objections to Telangana's irrigation projects.

He accused Chandrababu of misleading people by claiming he had no objections to the Kaleshwaram Project while simultaneously working to block it. He presented letters sent in 2018 in which Chandrababu had objected to the project.

He said that Andhra Pradesh was over-utilizing Krishna water by drawing 655 TMCs instead of its allocated 512 TMCs, while Telangana received only 220 TMCs out of its rightful share of 343 TMCs. He accused the BJP and Chandrababu of using their influence in New Delhi to sabotage Telangana's water demands.

He also criticised the diversion of Krishna water through the Nagarjuna Sagar, causing a severe drinking water shortage and irrigation crisis in Telangana, affecting projects like Kalwakurthy, Nettekoppa, Koil Sagar and Bheema.

He said that Chandrababu should immediately withdraw objections to Telangana's pending projects like the Sitamma Sagar, Sammakka Sagar, Varada and the third phase of the Kaleshwaram Project.

# Premier Energies ,,,

Continued from page 1

the 4 GW Solar PV TOPCon Module manufacturing line will continue to be based in Telangana as per the initial plan.

Premier Energies has secured a total of 269.71 acres at the new Andhra Pradesh site through the Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation. Of this, 169.71 acres have already been allotted, with an additional 100 acres granted in principle. The site will accommodate the relocated four GW Solar PV Cell TopCon unit along with a newly planned 5 GW silicon ingot and wafer manufacturing facility.

The company has earmarked Rs 1,621 million for land acquisition, which will be financed using unutilized funds from the proceeds of its public offering. The total investment in the revised project remains unchanged, with the only variation being the reallocation of funds towards land procurement.

Company officials stated that the move will streamline operations by integrating the ingot and wafer production with PV cell manufacturing, enhancing efficiency and supply chain security. The relocation is subject to shareholder approval through postal ballot as per regulatory requirements.

The board also approved the reappointment of Uday Pilani Sudhir as an independent director for a second term of five years.

# TG showcases...

Continued from page 1

Addressing the gathering, Ramesh Reddy highlighted Telangana's commitment to boosting tourism under the leadership of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and the guidance of Tourism Minister Jupally Krishna Rao. He announced that a new tourism policy for 2025-2030 would soon be introduced, aimed at attracting investments, offering incentives and fostering cooperation in the sector.

He underscored Telangana's rich heritage, historical significance and natural beauty, positioning the State as a premier tourist destination. "Telangana is home to the UNESCO-recognized Ramappa temple, the Buddha Park at Nagarjuna Sagar, the Amrabad and Qawal Tiger Reserves, and Hyderabad - the City of Pearls - famed for its heritage sites such as Golconda Fort, Charminar and Qutub Shahi Tombs," he said. He also emphasized the global popularity of Hyderabad's iconic Dum Biryani and the state's growing appeal in temple tourism, medical tourism, and eco-tourism.

The Berlin ITB Conference, featuring over 400 international experts, 200 sessions and 17 themed tracks, focused on key trends such as digital transformation, sustainable development, artificial intelligence, and tourism market strategies.

**TODAY**

**ALMANAC**

Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha

Tithi: Mar 05 12:51 PM to Mar 06 10:51 AM

Saptami: Mar 06 10:51 AM to Mar 07 09:18 AM

Ashtami: Mar 07 09:18 AM to Mar 08 07:45 AM

Nakshatram: Rohini: Mar 06 01:08 AM to Mar 07 12:05 AM

Mrigashirsha: Mar 07 12:05 AM to Mar 08 11:32 PM

Rahukalam: 1:55 PM to 3:24 PM

Yamagandam: 6:34 AM to 8:02 AM

Varjyam: 05:33 AM to 07:07 AM

Gulika: 9:31 AM to 10:59 AM

Amritakalam: 09:01 PM to 10:33 PM

Ahijit Muhurtham: 12:03 PM to 12:50 PM

**HYDERABAD WEATHER**

Forecast: Mostly Sunny

Temp: 33°

Humidity: 28%

Sunrise: 6:31 AM

Sunset: 6:24 PM

Updated: March 5, 2025 5:00 PM

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# City Pioneer

the pioneer

HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | MARCH 6, 2025

03



## CITY EVENTS

### Cultural Programmes

Sri Rama Cultural Organization

#### Venue

Ravindra Bharathi  
March 6, (6 pm)

### Love and Hate In Times of Crisis

Ecology, Climate Change, Politics And Poetry

#### Venue

Lamakaan  
March 6, (7:30 pm)

### Special Photo Exhibition

On Goddess Ganga

#### Venue

Saljung (Museum)  
March 6, (11 am)

### Live Musical Orchestra

By Ragamayi Cultural Organisation

#### Venue

Sri Thyagaraja Gana Sabha  
March 6, (4 pm)



## Accidental overdose of sleeping pills, not suicide attempt: Singer Kalpana

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A day after being admitted to a hospital here by the police in an 'unconscious' state, popular Tamil-Telugu singer Kalpana Raghavendar on Wednesday clarified that she did not attempt suicide, but had lost consciousness due to an overdose of sleeping pills at her home.

Doctors treating the singer confirmed that her condition is now 'stable.'

After regaining consciousness, Kalpana informed the police that she had not attempted suicide, but had taken an excessive dose of sleeping pills as she was struggling to sleep.

According to a police statement, the singer had a 'disagreement' with her daughter, who refused to move to Hyderabad for her studies despite her mother's suggestion.

Kalpana stated that she had travelled to Hyderabad from Ernakulam on March 4. Unable to sleep, she initially took eight sleeping pills and later consumed an additional 10, which caused her to lose consciousness.

When Kalpana's husband was unable to reach her over the phone, he alerted members of the Colony Welfare Association, who in turn informed the police on Tuesday. The police found Kalpana in an 'unconscious' state and immediately shifted her to a hospital.

Meanwhile, on Wednesday, the singer's daughter also denied reports that her mother had attempted suicide.

Speaking to the press, she explained that her mother had accidentally taken an excessive dose of sleeping pills prescribed by a doctor for her insomnia.

"This is not a suicide attempt. Our family is perfectly fine. My mom will be back in a few days. That's all I have to say - this was not a suicide attempt, just a slight overdose of insomnia medication prescribed by a doctor," she said.

## TELEGRAM 'CIRCULATING' CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE MATERIAL

# SHE Cyber Lab identifies 185 leads in 13 states

DEEPIKA PASHAM  
deepikapasham2015@gmail.com  
■ HYDERABAD

One of the communication channels, Telegram, has become notorious for individuals sharing Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM). The investigation officers of SHE Cyber Lab used Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) to join these Telegram channels. They engaged in conversations with individuals and traced the links back to the original senders.

It has identified 185 leads related to CSAM and shared 65 intelligence reports with police departments across 13 states in India.

Director General, Women Safety Wing Shikha Goel said that SHE Cyber Lab used advanced Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) tools and intensified cyber patrolling to track and dismantle networks distributing CSAM. These efforts have resulted in 20 FIRs and the arrest of 23 individuals involved in child exploitation.

Officers had revealed that Telegram has become a major plat-



SHE Cyber Lab of Women Safety Wing

form for CSAM distribution, acting as a dark web alternative due to its low-profile visibility. Several Telegram channels with 10,000 to 20,000 members are actively involved in circulating illegal content.

A recent intelligence report led to a breakthrough in West Bengal, where Panrui police station arrested an accused in possession of over 1,000 CSAM videos. Investigators also uncovered a network of 46 individuals involved in CSAM purchases, further aiding efforts to dismantle the syndicate. The crackdown on CSAM

has been widespread, with the highest number of arrests in Telangana (14), followed by West Bengal (2), Rajasthan (2), Delhi (1), Maharashtra (1) and Tamil Nadu (1). The total number of accused arrested across different states stands at 23.

With 305 profiles analyzed under cyber patrolling, including cases related to child exploitation, human trafficking, cybercrime and domestic violence, SHE Cyber Lab continues its mission to combat online crimes against children added Shikha Goel.

## OGH completes 100 sessions of infection prevention protocols

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Osmania General Hospital has completed 100 sessions of its Hospital Infection Prevention and Control Committee (HICC) meetings to enhance patient safety and quality care.

The team highlighted the impact of increased awareness and adherence to infection prevention protocols, resulting in improved patient outcomes and a safer healthcare environment.

The initiatives of HICC include Development of checklists to calculate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) such as CAUTI, CLAPSI, VAP, and SSI, daily audits conducted by exclusive ICN Nursing Officers to improve patient

safety, prescription audits and collection of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) data by Clinical Pharmacology and increased frequency of cleaning and disinfection in high-risk areas. Air sampling to monitor environmental safety within operating rooms and regular cleaning of water tanks workshops and departmental trainings on HICC activities to all the employees, including students.

The HICC consists of a multi-disciplinary team of experts Dr Rakesh Kumar Sahay, Superintendent, as Chairperson, Dr Jaya Krishna, CS A RMO-I as a Convener, Dr Shankar Venkatesan as a secretary and Dr Siddique among others.



Hospital Infection Prevention and Control Committee (HICC) holding a meeting

## 496,899 first year students appear for Inter public exam on 1st day

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Intermediate exams began on Wednesday (March 5) as 496,899 first year students appeared for second language examinations. Two malpractice cases were reported in Hanamkonda and Warangal.

The parents were seeking permission for permitting wall clocks as students will be tensed up to look at time while writing exams and the Board of Intermediate said that there are bells to alert students for every 30 minutes.

Total first year candidates registered were 514,184 and candidates present were 496,899. Candidates absent were 17,010. The percentage of absentees was 3.42 per cent and malpractice cases reported were in Hanamkonda and Warangal, said Board of Intermediate officials.

Observers were deployed at Siddipet, Peddapally, Mahabubnagar, Wanaparthy, Khammam, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Warangal, Hanamkonda, Hyderabad and RangaReddy districts.

According to reports from the board, the examinations were conducted without any untoward incidents, ensuring a smooth and fair process for all candidates.



## TG among top 5 in women self-monitoring their credit

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana ranked among the top 5 states in women actively self-monitoring their credit health in CY 2024, according to a TransUnion CIBIL report, in collaboration with NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) and MicroSave Consulting.

The report, From Borrowers to Builders: Women's Role in India's Financial Growth Story, highlights a growing trend of women in India seeking credit and monitoring their credit scores.

It also reveals that more women borrowers from non-metro areas are actively tracking their credit compared to those in metro regions. While metro areas saw a 30% year-on-year (YoY) growth in self-monitoring women, non-metro areas experienced a 48% increase.

In 2024, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Telangana accounted for 49% of all self-monitoring women. The southern region led with 10.2 million self-monitoring women and recorded 46% growth from December 2023 to December 2024.

BVR Subrahmanyam, CEO of NITI Aayog, emphasised the importance of financial access in empowering women entrepreneurs. He stressed the need for inclusive financial products and policies to remove barriers. He noted that under WEP, the Financing Women Collaborative (FWC) has been formed to support this goal.

Meanwhile, Principal Economic Advisor at NITI Aayog, Anna Roy, stated that promoting women's entrepreneurship can create 150-170 million jobs and boost economic growth.

## Task Force seizes banned e-cigarettes worth Rs 2.52 L

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The South-East Zone Task Force, in coordination with Kalapathar Police, apprehended a man selling banned electronic cigarettes and seized e-cigarettes worth Rs 2.52 lakh.

The accused is identified as Mohammed Waqaruddin (20) resident of Kalapathar, Hyderabad.

The Task Force arrested Mohammed Waqaruddin, who was found in possession of multiple banned e-cigarette brands, including I-Moment, Elfbar, Olive Bar and IGel, with varying puff counts.

The investigations revealed that Waqaruddin, along with his friend Laksh Goel (alias Skylab) from Hussaini Alam, sourced the e-cigarettes from a supplier named Rahul in Delhi via an e-cart courier service. The duo was selling the products at inflated prices for illegal profits.



## Book on AI in tourism, hospitality launched

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The book 'Harmonizing Human Touch and AI in Tourism and Hospitality' was launched on Wednesday by Dr Suborno Bose, Chairman of the International Institute of Hotel Management (IIHM). It follows an A-to-Z approach, where each letter represents a key process, demonstrating how AI enhances hospitality while maintaining its human essence. Inspired by industry professionals successfully integrating AI, the book highlights real-world applications.

The book explores AI's role in guest satisfaction, sustainability and efficiency, covering predictive maintenance, sentiment analysis and zero-waste initiatives.

Dr Bose emphasised that AI is not just about technology but also about humanity. He stressed the need for AI integration in hospitality education, ensuring it enhances, not replaces, human interaction.



Author and Chairman of IIHM Dr Suborno Bose at the book launch event in Hyderabad on Wednesday

He announced NamAiste IIHM HospitalityGPT, the world's first AI knowledge engine for hospitality, currently in alpha testing. It will be formally launched by Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on April 24, 2025, International Hospitality Day. A short video was screened for guests.

A roundtable discussion was held featuring NSN Mohan (SKAL), Rupa Sree Bhuptapty (Google India), MV Ganesh (Manjeera Hospitality), Chef Dharmender Lamba, and Sujay Gupta (IIHM).

## MetLife Hack4Job 2025 Hackathon on March 22-23

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

MetLife Hack4Job 2025, an in-person hackathon focused on AI, data and cloud-native solutions, will take place on March 22 and 23 at HICC Novotel.

This event gives tech professionals a chance to showcase their skills, solve real-world challenges and fast-track their careers with MetLife.

With 2,800 registrations so far, the hackathon welcomes professionals in Full Stack Engineering, AI, Data Engineering, DevSecOps, SDET, Agile Coaching and other tech fields. Open to participants worldwide, it

offers job opportunities in Hyderabad. Teams will develop innovative solutions, compete for top tech gadgets and some will earn direct interview opportunities with MetLife's Global Technology team on March 23.

Ashish Srivastava, Chairman and Managing Director of MetLife Global Operations Service Centre, emphasised MetLife's commitment to AI, data, and cloud innovation in financial services. He noted that Hack4Job 2025 is a chance for top tech talent to showcase their skills, network and explore career opportunities. Registration is open until March 12.



## Hyd Titans Round Table builds four classrooms worth Rs 37 L

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Titans Round Table 303 (HTRT 303) constructed and inaugurated four classrooms in two government schools near Shankarpally on Wednesday. The project, costing Rs 37 lakh, was funded through donations.

HTRT 303, a local chapter of Round Table India, built three classrooms at Mandal Praja Parishad Primary School Boys (MPPS), Shankarpally. The Rs 30 lakh project was funded by ZF India Pvt. Ltd. through its CSR initiative and will benefit



250 students. The inauguration was attended by Krishnaswamy Jambunathan, Vice-President of ZF Tech Centre India, along with other officials and school staff.

Krishnaswamy emphasised that quality classrooms improve student engagement and academic success. Tabler Harshit highlighted that HTRT 303 has built 50 classrooms, benefiting 2,500 children. Headmistress Udaya Sri appreciated their efforts, stating that the government alone cannot meet all infrastructure needs.

Another classroom, costing Rs 7 lakh, was built at MPUPS Chandippra with support from Jaladanki Venkata Krishna.

Founded in 1962, Round Table India is a network of young professionals engaged in community service. Since adopting Freedom Through Education in 1998, it has constructed 6,600 classrooms, averaging one per day. Being a zero-overhead organisation, all CSR donations directly fund projects. Authorities expect enrollment to double to 450 students within two years due to these improvements.

## GHMC notice to developers for land encroachment

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has issued a show cause notice to Praneeth Pranav Knightwoods (M/s Venkata Praneeth Developers) following allegations of unauthorised construction and land encroachment in Patancheru.

This action comes after multiple complaints from local farmers and landowners, who accused the developers of violating urban planning laws and illegally occupying buffer zones.

Investigations revealed that the developers encroached 3



meters into the nala and 9 meters into the buffer zone, posing risks to public safety and drainage infrastructure.

The GHMC and the Irrigation department found that the developers had maintained only a 12-meter distance

from the nala instead of the legally required 24 meters.

The violations were documented under Sections 451(1) & 461(1) of the GHMC Act, 1955, impacting multiple survey numbers, including 351, 347, 466/P, 346, 350, 352, 467,

348, 349, 145, 344/P, and 468.

The developers failed to provide a satisfactory response. As a result, the GHMC issued a Speaking Order on March 1, 2025, reiterating the violations and the urgency of compliance.

The GHMC has directed Venkata Praneeth Developers to immediately halt all construction activities and submit a written explanation within seven days. Failure to comply could result in prosecution under urban planning laws, heavy financial penalties, sealing of unauthorised properties and demolition orders for illegal structures.

## Hyd sees rise in new launch sales

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad saw a significant rise in new launch sales, reaching 43% of approximately 58,540 units sold in 2024 up from 28% of around 16,590 units in 2019. Investors are increasingly looking for affordable entry points, especially in Bengaluru and Chennai.

The Latest Anarock data

shows that over 42% of the 4.60 lakh homes sold in 2024 were from new projects, a sharp increase from 26% of 2.61 lakh homes in 2019. Large and listed developers dominate the new housing supply in major cities, leading homebuyers to prefer newly launched projects. With rising confidence, buyers are choosing lower prices and higher returns over ready-to-move

homes. Vice-Chairman of Anarock Group, Santhosh Kumar, highlighted that branded developers now dominate the market, attracting investors. He noted that Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai have seen major growth in new launches. Developers are launching projects that align with market demand, focusing on prime locations, ideal unit

sizes and configurations. The overall share of new launches in total sales has steadily increased from 2020: 28% of 1.38 lakh units, 2021: 34% of 2.37 lakh units, 2022: 36% of 3.65 lakh units, 2023: 40% of 4.77 lakh units. Anarock reported 133 land deals in 2024, covering over 2,515 acres, with 1,948 acres designated for residential projects.

PNS ■ MULUGU

In the Venkatapuram mandal of Mulugu district, four vehicles that were illegally transporting animals were seized and taken to the Venkatapuram Police Station. Eight people were arrested, and the four vehicles were confiscated. The police transferred 42 animals to a cow shelter. The police warned that strict action would be taken against anyone involved in the illegal transportation of animals.



### Tragedy: TG student shot dead in US

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

A tragic incident has shaken Keshampeta mandal under Shadnagar constituency as 27-year-old Gampa Praveen, who had gone to the United States for higher studies, was reportedly shot dead in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

According to family members, Praveen, a second-year MS student, was also working part-time at a store to support himself. In the early hours of Wednesday, he was allegedly shot near a beach close to his residence. The exact circumstances surrounding the incident remain unclear, and further details are awaited.

His family in Keshampeta is devastated by the news, urging authorities to investigate the matter and bring the guilty justice. Officials are coordinating with the Indian Embassy to facilitate further procedures regarding his remains.

## Education, healthcare top priority of Cong govt: Minister Komatireddy

This is the first Glaucoma centre in the State

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Roads and Buildings Minister Komatireddy Venkata Reddy on Wednesday inaugurated the state's Glaucoma Centre at the Primary Health Centre (PHC) at Kanagal in Nalgonda district. This is the first times that such a centre was opened at PHC. It is a pilot project. The centre has been set up with an investment of Rs 1.56 crore. During the inauguration, the Minister emphasised the importance of health awareness and cautioned that neglecting eye health could lead to severe problems. Similar centres would be opened in the district. He said that education and healthcare are top priorities of the Congress government.

The newly established Glaucoma Centre will offer diagnostic services for eye diseases, especially for those over 40 years old.

The centre will help detect glaucoma early, which could prevent vision loss if treated promptly. The Minister highlighted that this is the first such initiative in the district, aiming to provide the necessary care and protect people's eyesight.

Venkat Reddy also announced plans to convert one Primary Health Centre



Roads and Buildings Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy watching while doctor examining a patient at the newly inaugurated Glaucoma Centres at Kanagal in Nalgonda district on Wednesday

into a model PHC in each Assembly constituency across Nalgonda district within the next two months. These upgraded centres will be equipped with all necessary facilities, including facilities for normal deliveries and minor surgeries. Additionally, the government is planning to organise mega medical camps during the summer months across the district.

In terms of infrastructure, the Minister revealed that tenders have been called for a road project connect-

ing Kanagal to Nagarjunasagar highway, with a budget of Rs 15 crore. Moreover, Rs 60 crore has been sanctioned for road development in Kanagal Mandal.

New junior colleges have been approved for Kanagal and Tipparti mandals, and plans are in place to run them in rented buildings until new structures are built.

The Minister also mentioned the completion of water supply projects to all tanks in Nalgonda constituency

through Brahmin Vellemlas and expressed concern over the unfortunate incident, but assured that the SLBC tunnel project would be completed soon.

District Collector Ila Tripathi appreciated the establishment of advanced auto-claves and digital wave machines at the Kanagal PHC and thanked the Minister for support in the project. She explained that early detection of glaucoma could significantly help in managing the condition, as there is no cure for it, but early intervention can prevent damage.

In the coming days, every Assembly constituency will have one Primary Health Centre upgraded to a model PHC, as part of the government's ongoing efforts to improve healthcare. The Collector encouraged the poor to make full use of government healthcare services available at these facilities.

District Medical Health Officer Dr Putla Srinivas, Dr Suparna Mahendra, Deputy DMHVOs Vengopal Reddy, Dr. Kalyan Chakravarthy, TGIDCE Executive Engineer Jaipal Reddy, RDO Ashok Reddy, DSP Shivashankar Reddy, Kanagal PHC Medical Officer Ramakrishna, and Panchayat Raj Executive Engineer were also present at the event.

## Cybercriminals target MLA with nude call, demand money

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Cybercriminals have once run amok, this time targeting an MLA. They made a nude video call to the MLA and threatened him. During the video call, they recorded a few seconds of the screen and sent the video to him. Later, they demanded money from him.

According to the details, the cybercriminals made a video call to



Nakrekal Congress MLA Vemula Veeresham. When he answered the call, the person on the other side appeared naked and spoke. During this time, the criminals recorded the phone screen. They then sent the video to the MLA and threatened him, demanding money. However, when the MLA did not respond, the video was sent to some Congress leaders and activists.

Upon receiving calls, Veeresham

was shaken. He then filed a complaint with the police, urging them to identify the culprits and take strict action. The police have registered a case and started an investigation. Veeresham mentioned that he was talking to the MLA and threatened him, demanding money. However, when the MLA did not respond, the video was sent to some Congress leaders and activists.

He appealed to the public to be cautious about such cybercrimes and urged them to report any suspicious calls to the local police station immediately.

The MLA also mentioned that the call he received was from Madhya Pradesh and asked for a thorough investigation into the matter. The Cybercrime police have registered the case and are continuing the investigation. He further said that he had filed a case with the police to encourage people to approach police if they also received such calls.

## Fake pesticide racket busted

PNS ■ WARANGAL

A five-member gang allegedly involved in cheating farmers by selling a large quantity of fake pesticides has been arrested jointly by the Task Force and Mattevada police. The officials from the Agriculture Department coordinated with the police in the investigation which led to the arrest of the gang. The police seized spurious pesticides worth around Rs 34 lakh. The police seized two cars, five mobile phones, and fake pesticide labels from them, according to Warangal Police Commissioner Amber Kishor Jha.

The arrested are Pillala Nagavenkata Rangarao (41), Kushaiyiguda, Hyderabad, Muddangula Aditya (32), Lakshikapool, Hyderabad, Katttragouda Bhaskar Reddy

(34), Kurugodu, Ballari District, Karnataka State, Pitla Naveen (30), Hyderabad and Dudhimeta Sridhar (30), Indiramma Colony, Miryalaguda.

Warangal Police Commissioner Amber Kishor Jha revealed that while the task force and Mattevada police were conducting vehicle inspections at Gopalaswamy temple area here in coordination with the officials of the Agriculture Department, a car was flagged down and when checked, packets of counterfeit pesticides were found.

During the interrogation, the accused, Katttragouda Bhaskar Reddy, admitted to selling fake pesticides. Following this, the Mattevada police registered a case and yesterday, based on the information provid-

ed by the accused, a joint raid was conducted by the task force and Mattevada police at the warehouse of the accused located in the Chintalapalli area of Hyderabad. They seized counterfeit pesticides and herbicides bearing the names of several companies including Bayer, Tata, and Corvea, along with four other companies. During the interrogation, the accused admitted to preparing fake pesticides and herbicides using raw materials purchased from various suppliers, thereby deceiving farmers, leading to their arrest. The police confiscated the fake pesticides, herbicides, and labels. The Police Commissioner warned that strict action would be taken against those who attempted to deceive farmers by selling fake pesticides and spurious seeds.

## Students, parents demand transfer of teacher

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI

Students of Government High School at Nituru under Peddapalli mandal, staged a protest in front of their school, demanding the suspension of a teacher, named Shankaraiah.

The students, accompanied by their parents, locked the school gates as part of their protest. They called for action against Shankaraiah, accusing him of disrupting the peaceful atmosphere at the school and causing difficulties for other teachers, which affected the quality of education.

According to the students, Shankaraiah was allegedly bribing them to spread false information about other teachers and falsely claiming that the teachers were using caste-based insults.

## Farmers assured of water

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

Congress MP from Bhongir Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy on Wednesday inspected the Tapasweli reservoir under Komuravelli mandal in Siddipet district and assured the farmers that the irrigation problems would be solved by getting tanks and ponds filled during summer.

Addressing the gathering, the MP said that the water level in the reservoir touched the rock bottom on account of not releasing water into the



reservoir. As a result, tanks and ponds have gone dry and ground water receded further. The government would release water from Dharmasagar and Bommakuru reservoirs and save the standing crops.

Union Bank Narketpally Branch (Sol Id: 11922) Mahabubnagar Region

Contact Mobile : 9959198004  
Email Id: ubin0911925@unionbankofindia.Bank

Ref:11922/SARFAESI/Demand Notice/610611289/2024-25 Date: 13-02-2025

**DEMAND NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002**

To: Applicant: Mr. Bhashapaka Venkateshwarlu, D/o Bhashapaka Narasimha, Address: H.No.7-1-124, Panagal, Nalgonda Post and District, Telangana-508001, Mobile No. 9010784164.

Guarantor: Mrs. Gantekampu Jyothi @ Bhashapaka Jyothi W/o Bhashapaka Hari Krishna, Address: H.No.5-11-48, Sri Venkateswara Apartments, Shanthi Nagar, Nalgonda Post and District, Telangana-508001, Mobile No. 7013026414.

Sir/Madam, SUB: Enforcement of Security Interest Action Notice - In connection with the credit facilities enjoyed by you with us - Classified as NPA.

We have to inform you that your account Mr. Bhashapaka Venkateshwarlu (Borrower), D/o Bhashapaka Narasimha & Mrs. Gantekampu Jyothi @ Bhashapaka Jyothi (Guarantor), W/o Bhashapaka Hari Krishna with Narketpally Branch (Sol Id: 11922), has been classified as NPA account on 12.02.2025 pursuant to your default in making repayment of dues/interest /instalment. As on date a sum of Rs. 30,21,557/- (Rupees Thirty Lacs Twenty One Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty Seven Only) + Interest +Other Charges till date is outstanding in your accounts as shown below

Nature of Limit	Limit Amount in Rs.	Applicable Rate of Interest (% p.a.)	Outstanding Amount (in Rs)
RAO13-119226050000072	35,00,000	11.30	Rs.30,21,557/- + Interest and other charges till date

In spite of our repeated demands you have not paid any amount towards the amount outstanding in your account/ you have not discharged your liabilities.

We do hereby call upon you in terms of section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, to pay a sum of Rs.30,21,557/- (Rupees Thirty Lacs Twenty One Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty Seven Only) + Interest +Other Charges till date together with contractual rate of interest as stated above from 12.02.2025 with monthly rest as per the terms and conditions of loan documents executed by you and discharge your liabilities in full within 60 days from the date of receipt of this notice, failing which, we shall be constrained to enforce the following securities created by you in favour of the bank, by exercising any or all of the rights given under the said Act.

Primary Security: Hypothecation of Live Stock, equipment and Machinery

Collateral Security:

**SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTY**

All that the Residential Open house Plot Survey No. 83/AA, admeasuring 300.0 Sq yards = 250.84 Sq. mtrs, situated at Ward No.5, Block No. 11 inside residential zone, situated at Shanthi Nagar, Nalgonda Town and District, Telangana-508001, belonging to Mrs. Gantekampu Jyothi @ Bhashapaka Jyothi (Guarantor), W/o Bhashapaka Hari Krishna bounded as follows: East : 30.0' Feed wide Road, West: Plot of Bhashapaka Hari Krishna, North: Plot of others, South: Plot of Kathula Renuka. The above mentioned said property is mortgaged to Loan A/c No. 119226050000072, Name of the A/c : Mr. BASHAPAKA VENKATESHWARLU.

1) Please note that if you fail to remit the dues with in 60 days and if Bank exercises all its rights under this Act and if the dues are not fully satisfied with the sale of proceeds of the secured assets, we shall be constrained to take appropriate legal action against you in a court of law/Debt Recovery Tribunal for recovery of the balance amount from you.

2) You are requested to note that as per Section 13(13) of the Act, on receipt of this notice you are restrained from disposing of or dealing with the above securities except in the usual course of business without the consent of the Bank. Please note any violation of this section entails serious consequences.

3) Please note that as per Section 13(8) of the said Act, you may redeem the secured assets by remitting the amount demanded above together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred up to any time before the date of publication of notice for public auction or inviting quotations or tenders from public or private treaty for transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale of the secured assets.

Sd/- Chief Manager & Authorised officer  
NARKETPALLY BRANCH (SOL ID:11922)  
Union Bank of India

Union Bank Narketpally Branch (Sol Id: 11922) Mahabubnagar Region

Contact Mobile : 9959198004  
Email Id: ubin0911925@unionbankofindia.Bank

Ref:11922/SARFAESI/Demand Notice/610611289/2024-25 Date: 13-02-2025

**DEMAND NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002**

To: Applicant: Mr. Bhashapaka Venkateshwarlu, D/o Bhashapaka Narasimha, Address: H.No.7-1-124, Panagal, Nalgonda Post and District, Telangana-508001, Mobile No. 9010784164.

Guarantor: Mrs. Gantekampu Jyothi @ Bhashapaka Jyothi W/o Bhashapaka Hari Krishna, Address: H.No.5-11-48, Sri Venkateswara Apartments, Shanthi Nagar, Nalgonda Post and District, Telangana-508001, Mobile No. 7013026414.

Sir/Madam, SUB: Enforcement of Security Interest Action Notice - In connection with the credit facilities enjoyed by you with us - Classified as NPA.

We have to inform you that your account Mr. Bhashapaka Venkateshwarlu (Borrower), D/o Bhashapaka Narasimha & Mrs. Gantekampu Jyothi @ Bhashapaka Jyothi (Guarantor), W/o Bhashapaka Hari Krishna with Narketpally Branch (Sol Id: 11922), has been classified as NPA account on 12.02.2025 pursuant to your default in making repayment of dues/interest /instalment. As on date a sum of Rs. 30,21,557/- (Rupees Thirty Lacs Twenty One Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty Seven Only) + Interest +Other Charges till date is outstanding in your accounts as shown below

Nature of Limit	Limit Amount in Rs.	Applicable Rate of Interest (% p.a.)	Outstanding Amount (in Rs)
RAO13-119226050000072	35,00,000	11.30	Rs.30,21,557/- + Interest and other charges till date

In spite of our repeated demands you have not paid any amount towards the amount outstanding in your account/ you have not discharged your liabilities.

We do hereby call upon you in terms of section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, to pay a sum of Rs.30,21,557/- (Rupees Thirty Lacs Twenty One Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty Seven Only) + Interest +Other Charges till date together with contractual rate of interest as stated above from 12.02.2025 with monthly rest as per the terms and conditions of loan documents executed by you and discharge your liabilities in full within 60 days from the date of receipt of this notice, failing which, we shall be constrained to enforce the following securities created by you in favour of the bank, by exercising any or all of the rights given under the said Act.

Primary Security: Hypothecation of Live Stock, equipment and Machinery

Collateral Security:

**SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTY**

All that the Residential Open house Plot Survey No. 83/AA, admeasuring 300.0 Sq yards = 250.84 Sq. mtrs, situated at Ward No.5, Block No. 11 inside residential zone, situated at Shanthi Nagar, Nalgonda Town and District, Telangana-508001, belonging to Mrs. Gantekampu Jyothi @ Bhashapaka Jyothi (Guarantor), W/o Bhashapaka Hari Krishna bounded as follows: East : 30.0' Feed wide Road, West: Plot of Bhashapaka Hari Krishna, North: Plot of others, South: Plot of Kathula Renuka. The above mentioned said property is mortgaged to Loan A/c No. 119226050000072, Name of the A/c : Mr. BASHAPAKA HARSHAVARDHINI.

1) Please note that if you fail to remit the dues with in 60 days and if Bank exercises all its rights under this Act and if the dues are not fully satisfied with the sale of proceeds of the secured assets, we shall be constrained to take appropriate legal action against you in a court of law/Debt Recovery Tribunal for recovery of the balance amount from you.

2) You are requested to note that as per Section 13(13) of the Act, on receipt of this notice you are restrained from disposing of or dealing with the above securities except in the usual course of business without the consent of the Bank. Please note any violation of this section entails serious consequences.

3) Please note that as per Section 13(8) of the said Act, you may redeem the secured assets by remitting the amount demanded above together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred up to any time before the date of publication of notice for public auction or inviting quotations or tenders from public or private treaty for transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale of the secured assets.

Sd/- Chief Manager & Authorised officer  
NARKETPALLY BRANCH (SOL ID:11922)  
Union Bank of India

**FORM VI (See Sub-rule (1) of rule-19) and Section - 11(1) of the Act-30(2013) GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA REVENUE (LA) DEPARTMENT**

Collector/Joint Collector (Special Collector (LA) / SDC (LA))

**PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION.**

No. G/190/2025  
No: FI 770 (2025)  
Gazette No 11/2025

Dated: 01.03.2025  
Dated: 28.02.2025  
Dated: 01.03.2025

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana Collector that a total of Ac. 8.19 gts (land is required in the Jagapur Village, Narayanpet Mandal, Narayanpet District for public purpose namely for construction and formation of Pressure main under Narayanpet Kodangal Lift Irrigation Scheme Jagapur Village of Narayanpet Mandal.

Therefore it is notified that for the above said project in the Jagapur village of Narayanpet Mandal, Narayanpet District land measuring more or less Ac. 8.19 gts of standard measurement, whose detail description is as following, is proposed for acquisition.

S. No.	Ser No	Type of Land	Area of Land (Acres)	Name of person interested	North	East	West	South	Variety	Tree	Struc. (Type)	Area (Sq. Yards)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	301	Peta Dry	0.02	Bhella Venkateswara S/o Hanumanth	301	301	301	301	-	-	-	-
2	301	Peta Dry	0.07	Bhella Kankappa S/o Gopanna	301	301	301	301	-	-	-	-
3	301	Peta Dry	0.02	Kola Venkateswara S/o Sayanna	301	301	301	301	-	-	-	-
4	301	Peta Dry	0.04	Narasimma S/o Tanna	301	301	301	301	-	-	-	-
5	301	Peta Dry	0.05	Kola Hanumanth S/o Ramulu	301	301	301	301	-	-	-	-
6	301	Peta Dry	0.04	Bhella Ramulu S/o Hanumanth	301	301	301	301	-	-	-	-
7	301	Peta Dry	0.06	Sugtha S/o Venkatesh	301	301	301	301	-	-	-	-
8	301	Peta Dry	0.06	Pudla Ramappa S/o Balappa	291	291	291	291	-	-	-	-
9	281	Peta Dry	0.01	Malyayagan Ananthamma S/o Kattappa	291	291	291	291	-	-	-	-
10	281	Peta Dry	0.30	Jyothi W/o Srihar Reddy	290	290	290	290	-	-	-	-
11	281	Peta Dry	0.10	Belagani Ananthamma W/o Shiva Renuka	290	290	290	290	Shani	1	-	-
12	281	Peta Dry	0.02	Bhella Ramulu S/o Hanumanth	289	289	289	289	-	-	-	-
13	281	Peta Dry	0.09	Kola Ashanna S/o Balappa	289	289	289	289	-	-	-	-
14	281	Peta Dry	0.02	Belagani Venkateswara S/o Hanumanth	289	289	289	289	-	-	-	-
15	281	Peta Dry	0.10	Dasari Sarveshwaranna S/o Subbarao	288	288	288	288	-	-	-	-
16	-	Cent	0.11	Stream	288	288	288	288	-	-	-	-
17	321	Peta Dry	0.08	Kola Venkateswara S/o Theerthanna	321	321	321	321	-	-	-	-
18	321	Peta Dry	0.04	Belagani Narasappa S/o Yellappa	321	321	321	321	-	-	-	-
19	321	Peta Dry	0.08	Belagani Lakshanna W/o Theerthanna	323	323	323	323	-	-	-	-
20	324	Peta Dry	0.04	Belagani Thirumalaiah S/o Theerthanna	323	323	323	323	-	-	-	-
21	303	Peta Dry	0.06	Kolavakki Sathanna W/o Sandappa	303	303	303	303	-	-	-	-
22	303	Peta Dry	0.06	Kola Monamma W/o Kola Venkateswara	303	303	303	303	-	-	-	-

Total Ac. 8.19 gts

This notification is made under the provisions of Section 11(1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act 2013 (Central Act No. 30/2013).

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the Revenue Working Officer & Land Acquisition Officer, Narayanpet on any working day during the working hours. The Government of Telangana/Collector-cum-Appropriate Government is pleased to authorize Revenue Divisional Officer & L&AD and his staff Deputy Inspector of Surveyor to enter upon and survey land, take levels of any land, dig or bore into the sub-soil and do any other acts required for the proper execution of their work as provided and specified in section-12 of the said Act.

Under section 11(4) of the Act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of land i.e sale / purchase, etc or create any encumbrances on such land from the date of publication of such notification without prior approval of the Collector.

Objections to the acquisition if any, and claims from all the persons interested/affected for settlement by negotiation of the compensation, may be filed by the person interested in the land within 60(sixty) days from the date of publication of this notification as provided under section 15 of the Act before District Collector, Authorised officer.

Sd/- Addl. Collector (Revenue)  
Sd/- Revenue Divisional Officer & Land Acquisition Officer  
Sd/- District Collector

Narayanpet  
Narayanpet  
Narayanpet

DIPR No.742/LA/PP-Pub/2024-25

## ACROSS THE STATES



### Annual Amarnath Yatra to start in J-K from July 3

The 38-day annual pilgrimage to 3,880 metres high holy cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir will commence on July 3, an official spokesperson said on Wednesday. The decision to this effect was taken at the 48th board meeting of Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board (SASB) under the chairmanship of Lt Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan, he said. "This year, the yatra will commence on July 3, simultaneously from both the routes – the Pahalgam track in Anantnag district and Baltal in Ganderbal district, and it will culminate on August 9 on Raksha Bandhan," the spokesperson said. He said the meeting was attended by members of the shrine board which proposed various measures and interventions to further improve the facilities and services for the devotees. Considering the likely increased inflow of pilgrims for the Amarnath Yatra, the meeting discussed measures for the enhancement of lodgement capacity at centres in Jammu, Srinagar and other locations, operationalization of yatri facilitation centres for e-KYC, issuance of RFID cards, on-spot registration of pilgrims at number of locations including Nowgam and Katra railway stations, the spokesperson said.



### 'Language a reflection of nation's cultural identity'

Union minister Nityanand Rai on Wednesday stressed the role of language as the reflection of a nation's cultural identity, while emphasising the importance of Hindi both as an official language and a "unifying force in India's diverse linguistic landscape". He was speaking at the Joint Regional Official Language Conference and Award Distribution Ceremony for the East and Northeast regions, organised by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs, at Sonapur, on the outskirts of Guwahati. The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs highlighted the significance of the conference as a platform for encouraging the use of Hindi across government departments, offices and banks, an official statement said. He said that government schemes and initiatives must be effectively communicated to all citizens, ensuring equal access and benefits, and underscored the importance of fostering a strong connection between the government and the public through the use of familiar languages, reinforcing Hindi's role in this endeavour.



### Centre, Kerala govt clash over ASHA workers' funds

The Centre and the Kerala government on Tuesday continued to dispute claims over the provision of funds for disbursing incentives to ASHA workers in the state. While state Finance Minister K N Balagopal accused the Centre of not providing funds on time, Union Minister George Kurian refuted the claim, stating that those who hear such allegations will start respecting Narendra Modi once they properly investigate the matter. Talking to reporters in Kollam, Balagopal said that the Centre had yet to release Rs 100 crore in pending payments. He urged the Centre to increase the honoraria for scheme workers, including Accredited Social Health Activist workers. Balagopal said that Kerala had been raising this matter during the pre-budget meetings convened by the Union Finance Minister for the past two years. "In Jaisalmer, I also reiterated our demand that the rate of honoraria for Anganwadi workers, ASHA workers, and other scheme workers needs to be appropriately enhanced," the Kerala finance minister said. Earlier, the office of State Health Minister Veena George stated that the claim that the Centre had allocated the full amount due to Kerala for centrally-sponsored health schemes in the last financial year was incorrect.

# Day not far when India will be USD 5 trillion economy: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said that the day is not far when India will turn a USD 5 trillion economy as he urged all stakeholders to invest in people, economy, and innovation to create jobs and boost growth. Speaking in a post-Budget webinar on employment, Modi said the government has provided skill training to 3 crore youth since 2014 and decided to upgrade 1,000 ITIs and set up five centres of excellence.



**Modi also talked about the government's decision to give infrastructure status to the tourism sector, saying that it will generate jobs for youth. He urged industry to invest in the healthcare sector and also talked about the potential of medical tourism to create jobs**

Referring to an IMF report of February 2025, Modi noted that between 2015 and 2025, India grew by 66 per cent, making the country a USD 3.8 trillion economy.

Observing that the country's growth surpassed that of several major economies, he said "the day is not far when India will become a USD 5 trillion economy." He also stressed the importance of making right investments in the right direction to continue expanding the economy.

Modi underlined the critical role of implementing budget announcements in achieving this vision and acknowledged the significant contributions of all stakeholders.

He stated that capacity

building and talent nurturing act as the foundation stone for national development and in the next phase of growth, greater investment in these sectors is essential.

"The vision of investment in people stands on three pillars -- education, healthcare, and skill development," he said adding that today, India's education system is undergoing a transformation.

He said this year's Budget serves as a blueprint for India's future, and that investments have been prioritized equally across infrastructure, industries, people, economy, and innovation. Modi highlighted the PM Internship Scheme that was launched to provide new opportunities and practical skills to youth.

"We must ensure that businesses at every scale actively

participate in this scheme. In this year's Budget, we announced 10,000 additional medical seats, with a target of adding 75,000 seats in the medical field over the next 5 years."

Modi also talked about the government's decision to give infrastructure status to the tourism sector, saying that it will generate jobs for youth.

He urged industry to invest in the healthcare sector and also talked about the potential of medical tourism to create jobs. Modi also emphasized the establishment of daycare cancer centres and the development of digital healthcare infrastructure to ensure quality healthcare reaches the last mile.

Modi highlighted that the tourism sector has the potential to contribute up to 10 per

cent to India's GDP and create employment opportunities for crores of youth.

"50 destinations across the country will be developed with a focus on tourism," said the Prime Minister adding that granting infrastructure status to hotels in these destinations will enhance ease of tourism and boost local employment. Highlighting the expansion of the Mudra Yojana to support homestays, Modi also stressed on initiatives like 'Heal in India' and 'Land of the Buddha' to attract global tourists. "Efforts are being made to establish India as a global tourism and wellness hub."

"To cater to a larger population, planned urbanisation is essential. We have decided to allocate Rs 1 lakh crore to the Urban Challenge Fund.

### BJP questions the way Naxalites surrendered in Karnataka

PNS ■ BENGALURU

The opposition BJP in Karnataka on Wednesday questioned the way the Naxalites (Maoists) surrendered in the state, wondering how the members of the outlawed unit turned up soon after Chief Minister Siddaramaiah appealed to them on 'X' to give up arms and join the mainstream of the nation.

During the discussion on the Governor's speech, BJP MLA V Sunil Kumar said Naxalites killed several people. People living in the Malnad and coastal region live in fear. Policemen carried out several combing operations, but they could not locate the Naxalites. Several warnings could not deter them and made them surrender, the former minister said.

But soon after a tweet by the chief minister, Naxalites surrendered and the state was declared Naxal-free.

### UP bans gutkha, pan masala; Rs 1,000 fine for violators

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Assembly Speaker Satish Mahana on Wednesday announced a ban on gutkha and pan masala within the Assembly premises.

The announcement came a day after Mahana expressed his displeasure over an incident where a member was caught on camera spitting pan masala inside the Assembly premises during the House proceedings on Tuesday morning. The speaker had reportedly asked staff members to clean the mess. Mahana, however, had not named the MLA but said he knew who it was.

Expressing strong disapproval, the speaker had reminded all members of their responsibility towards cleanliness as lawmakers elected by the public.

After the Question Hour on Wednesday, Mahana announced, "With immediate effect, the use of pan masala and gutkha is banned inside the Assembly premises."



"Anyone, including employees, officials or any other individuals, found consuming gutkha or pan masala within the Assembly premises will be fined Rs 1,000. Necessary action will be taken in accordance with the rules," he added.

Some members present in the Assembly suggested that the fine amount should be increased due to inflation. Responding in a light-hearted manner, Mahana quipped, "Note down the names of those honourable members demanding a higher fine. If they are caught spitting, we will charge them extra."

His remarks sparked laughter among the Assembly members.

# Your 'mangalsutra' remarks have come true

**Congress chief Kharge slams PM**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi over rise in gold loans and said his remarks during the Lok Sabha polls campaign about 'stealing of mangalsutras' have come true with women forced to mortgage their gold ornaments under his rule.

Citing media reports, Kharge claimed that between 2019 and 2024, four crore women mortgaged their gold and took a loan of Rs 4.7 lakh crore.

In 2024, 38 per cent of the total loans taken by women are from gold loans, he said.

In February 2025, RBI data showed that gold loans increased by a whopping 71.3 per cent in a year, the Congress chief said.

"Narendra Modi ji, you had talked about 'stealing of man-



galsutras'. That has now come true. In your rule, women have been forced to mortgage their gold ornaments. First you made women's 'sri-dhan' disappear by implementing demonetization, now due to inflation and falling household savings, they are forced to mortgage their most valuable thing -- their jewelry," Kharge said in his post in Hindi on X.

During the Lok Sabha polls campaign last year, Modi had alleged that the Congress will take away 'mangalsutras' and redistribute the wealth of the people. Kharge alleged that the

Modi government has worsened the condition of the economy so much that middle class families who buy two-wheelers are now unable to repay their loans. In view of rising loan defaults, two-wheeler financiers are cutting down on lending for the first time since 2019, he claimed.

He said 75 per cent of people buy two-wheelers on loan so that they can repay it slowly, but the financial crunch is so severe that as compared to last year, loans worth about Rs 2 lakh crore are still outstanding till September 2024, which has increased by Rs 40,000 crore in a year.

Two-wheeler sales have declined by 6 per cent in February 2025, Kharge added. "Recession, financial crunch and reduction in spending capacity - this is the essence of the economy you run," Kharge said, hitting out at the prime minister.

# Don't allow anyone to dictate your course of action

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Wednesday advised students not to allow anyone to dictate their course of action, asking them not to be afraid of failure.

Dhankhar made these remarks while addressing a convocation ceremony of Jan Nayak Chaudhary Devi Lal Vidyapeeth (JCD) in Sirsa. Haryana minister Ranbir Gangwa, Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) leader Abhay Singh Chautala, who is president of the Devi Lal Memorial Trust; and INLD MLA Arjun Chautala, who is chairman of

### V-P Dhankhar advises students



JCD Vidyapeeth, were among others present.

At the beginning of his convocation address, Dhankhar told the gathering to always put the nation first, saying, "There can be no interest higher than the national interest. Personal

and political interests are insignificant."

Dhankhar called upon the students to choose a career in life according to their interests and aptitudes.

"Allow your life to go like a river and not like a canal... there was a time when a child was born and parents used to decide what career their child has to choose," he said.

The vice president told them that India today offers numerous opportunities to the youth and they must take advantage of it.

"If you look around, boys and girls, your basket of opportunities is ever enlarging, it is there in the blue economy, it is there in the space economy. You are in Bharat at a time when no nation in the last decade has grown as fast and as large as Bharat.

"Be it economic upsurge, phenomenal infrastructure growth, digitalisation... Per capita internet consumption of Bharat is more than that of China and USA taken together," he said. About digital transactions, he said these are four times more than the combined transactions of the USA, UK, France and Germany.

## CULTURE-FESTIVAL-RB

# Cultural fest at Rashtrapati Bhawan with focus on South India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

An annual cultural festival that celebrates India's diverse heritage by showcasing the unique traditions of different regions is set to be held on the premises of the Rashtrapati Bhawan from March 6-9, the government said on Wednesday.

The event -- 'Vividhata ka Amrit Mahotsav' -- is being inaugurated by President Droupadi Murmu on March 5 and this year the focus is on South India, according to the Culture Ministry. It will be open to the public

from March 6-9 from 10 AM to 8 PM daily, the ministry said in a statement.

Key highlights of this edition include over 500 artisans and weavers showcasing traditional handicrafts and handlooms, including Kanjeevaram and Kasavu sarees, Pochampally ikat, Mysore silk, and intricate brass and wooden crafts, officials said.

More than 400 artistes will present folk and classical dance and music, bringing South India's cultural essence to life, they said. "Authentic cuisines will fea-



ture signature South Indian delicacies such as Bisi Bele Bath, Kerala Sadya, Chettinad specialties and Andhra's fiery flavours," it said.

"The first edition, held last year, focused on north-east India and received an overwhelming response with 1.3 lakh visitors and over Rs 1 crore in sales for artisans.

"Following this success, the second edition highlights south India, featuring the five states of Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh, along with Lakshadweep and Puducherry,"

it said.

The festival aims to make the Rashtrapati Bhawan a hub for cultural exchange, bringing India's vibrant heritage closer to its citizens, the ministry said.

A Youth Engagement Zone with interactive workshops, storytelling, and cultural activities to inspire the younger generation is also a key attraction.

"This festival has been made possible through the support of the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Textiles, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Ministry of Tourism, and all the participating states and Union Territories

which have played a crucial role in preserving and promoting India's diverse heritage," it added.

The entry to the venue is from gate no. 35 of the Rashtrapati Bhawan.

The festival serves as a platform to connect people with their roots while empowering artisans and performers. This Mahotsav is not just a celebration but a reaffirmation of India's unity in diversity, strengthening cultural bonds and fostering pride in our collective heritage, the ministry said.

## LS DELIMITATION

# TN CM Stalin moots Joint Action Committee of MPs

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Stepping up the pressure on Centre, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Wednesday proposed that the 1971 Census be the basis for delimitation of Parliamentary constituencies for 30 years starting 2026 and favoured a Joint Action Committee (JAC) involving all southern states to press for related demands.

At an all-party meeting on delimitation here that was attended by main opposition AIADMK among others, Stalin, moving a resolution, said that in the event of increase in the number of seats in Parliament, the 1971 Census should be the basis for it and that appropriate Constitutional amendment should be done.

Also, the 1971 population data should be the basis for delimitation of LS seats for 30 years from 2026 and Prime Minister Narendra Modi should make an assurance in the Parliament, he asserted.

The JAC is to take forward such demands and create awareness among the people and the meet unanimously opposed delimitation exercise based on population, which will be a "threat to federalism and the rights of southern states to political representation."

Tamil Nadu's present representational percentage in Parliament, which is 7.18, should not be changed under any circumstances. Resolutions, supported by



parties including the Edappadi K Palaniswami-led AIADMK, were passed in the meeting to urge the Centre to accept the demands of Tamil Nadu on the issue. One of the key points underscored in the meeting was that there shall not be any reduction in the number of LS seats.

The meet underscored that Tamil Nadu is not against delimitation of Parliamentary constituencies. However, the proposed exercise must not become a punishment for implementing well the socio-economic welfare measures during the past 50 years.

The Centre declined to heed to the voice of the state, which has 39 Lok Sabha MPs. In case this number was reduced, it would become a big injustice for the state.

The CM said that the all-party meeting is for understanding that the state has been pushed to a corner on the issue of delimitation, thereby prompting it to take up a struggle movement to secure its rights. "The delimitation sword is hanging over the head of south India and Tamil Nadu will be severely affected," Stalin alleged.



### Beginning of a trade war

What began as a threat by Trump is now a full blown trade war as Canada, China and Mexico retaliate the US tariffs

The trade war initiated by President Trump against China, Canada, and Mexico has set off a chain reaction of retaliatory measures, creating uncertainty in global markets and posing risks to economic stability. While the administration aims to address specific national concerns through these tariffs, the broader implications suggest potential harm to both the US and global economies. As the situation evolves, careful consideration of the long-term consequences is essential to mitigate adverse effects on world trade. As promised by him in his campaign President Donald Trump launched a bold series of tariffs aimed at imports from China, Canada, and Mexico, a move that significantly escalated global trade tensions and set off a swift chain reaction of retaliatory measures. The president signed executive orders that imposed a 25% tariff on all goods from Mexico and Canada, and a 10% tariff on Chinese imports. The administration argued that these measures were necessary to tackle issues related to illegal immigration and drug trafficking to protect American industries. In an effort to minimize any disruptive effects, an additional 10% tariff was applied to Canadian energy exports, including electricity, natural gas, and oil.



The response from the targeted countries was swift and forceful. Beijing retaliated by announcing tariffs of up to 15% on key U.S. agricultural products such as chicken, pork, soy, and beef, while also expanding restrictions on U.S. businesses. In Canada, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau countered with 25% tariffs on \$155 billion worth of American goods. Similarly, Mexico's President Claudia Sheinbaum imposed retaliatory tariffs against the United States, criticizing the unilateral decision and warning of its adverse effects on both national and foreign companies operating in Mexico. Analysts have warned that the tariffs could significantly hinder economic growth, with projections suggesting a contraction of 2.8% in U.S. GDP. The increased tariffs were also expected to drive up consumer prices, adding to existing inflationary pressures and potentially prolonging periods of high interest rates. Global markets reacted negatively, with major U.S. stock indexes and shares in the automotive sector experiencing notable declines. Industries reliant on international supply chains, particularly the automotive sector, braced for production delays and increased costs as a result of these disruptions. The Trump administration maintained that these tariffs were a necessary tool to pressure foreign nations into addressing issues like drug trafficking and to incentivize domestic production. But the reality is different. The tariffs could ultimately have a net negative effect on the U.S. economy by driving up prices, reducing output, and dampening employment growth. In the unfolding saga of international trade, while the US administration's objective remains focused on addressing pressing national concerns, the broader consequences of this trade war hint at potential long-term harm for both the U.S. and the global economy.

### Large-scale dredging and resource extraction projects at Kerala's Quilon Fish Bank have sparked concerns over marine biodiversity loss and ecological stability

India's ambitious Blue Economy vision is reshaping the way the country engages with its vast marine resources. At the heart of this transformation is Kerala, with the Quilon Fish Bank emerging as a crucial player in sustainable fisheries. However, recent concerns over large-scale dredging, resource extraction, and the long-term impact on marine biodiversity have raised important questions about balancing economic growth with ecological stability.

The Quilon Fish Bank, known for its rich biodiversity and high productivity, is among India's most significant fishing grounds. Spread across Kollam and Alappuzha districts, this region is a vital breeding ground for numerous fish species and shrimp. Kerala's fisherfolk have long depended on these waters for their livelihood, making sustainable fisheries management crucial for the state's economy and food security.



However, recent developments, such as the planned dredging of 242 square kilometres of the seabed in Kollam, have sparked widespread concern. Reports indicate that India's Geological Survey has identified 7.45 billion tonnes of sand in Kerala's coastal and offshore areas. While the government sees this as an opportunity for economic development, local communities fear it may lead to habitat destruction, loss of fish stocks, and increased coastal erosion. The controversial dredging project is part of a larger Blue Economy initiative aimed at tapping into the ocean's resources for economic growth.

While this approach has potential, questions remain about its long-term sustainability and impact on Kerala's delicate marine ecosystem. The Blue Economy concept emphasizes responsible and sustainable use of marine resources to drive economic progress. India, with its vast coastline and rich maritime heritage, has identified the Blue Economy as a critical driver of growth in the 21st century. The government's policy framework seeks to integrate economic growth with environmental conservation.

While large-scale resource extraction, such as sand mining and deep-sea fishing, forms part of this vision, efforts are also being made to minimize ecological disruption. Scientific research, eco-friendly technologies, and strict regulations are being implemented to ensure sustainability.

One of the key objectives of India's Blue Economy plan is to modernize the fisheries



sector. Investments in advanced fishing infrastructure, cold storage facilities, and alternative livelihood programs, such as seaweed farming and mariculture, are providing fishermen with new income opportunities. These initiatives aim to reduce dependence on overfished species and promote a more balanced marine ecosystem. Despite the promising aspects of the Blue Economy, concerns remain about its impact on marine biodiversity.

ing not just marine species but also the livelihoods of thousands of fishing families. Experts warn that Kerala's geographical location-between the Arabian Sea and the Western Ghats-makes it particularly vulnerable to environmental degradation.

To address these concerns, the government has been expanding Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to safeguard critical habitats. These conservation zones play a vital role

India refine its own Blue Economy strategy. Kerala's government has also taken steps to enhance coastal resilience. Large-scale coastal protection projects, such as artificial reefs and mangrove restoration, are being undertaken to mitigate the impact of erosion and habitat loss. However, these efforts need stronger support from the central government to ensure long-term effectiveness. The future of the Quilon Fish Bank and Kerala's fisheries sector hinges on finding a middle ground between economic growth and environmental sustainability. While resource extraction and development projects are necessary for progress, they must be undertaken with strict environmental safeguards.

A multi-stakeholder approach involving the government, local fishing communities, environmentalists, and global experts is essential. Policymakers must prioritize scientific research and ecological impact assessments before approving large-scale marine projects. Empowering local communities with alternative livelihood options, enhancing conservation efforts, and enforcing stricter regulations on resource extraction can help ensure a sustainable future for Kerala's fisheries. India's Blue Economy vision holds immense promise, but its success will ultimately depend on how well it balances development with ecological responsibility.

(The writer is associate professor at Centre For South Asian Studies; views are personal)

THE QUILON FISH BANK IS A PRIME EXAMPLE OF THIS DILEMMA. DREDGING AND SAND MINING, WHILE ECONOMICALLY LUCRATIVE, HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO DISRUPT FISH BREEDING CYCLES, ALTER OCEAN CURRENTS, AND INCREASE VULNERABILITY TO COASTAL EROSION

The Quilon Fish Bank is a prime example of this dilemma. Dredging and sand mining, while economically lucrative, have the potential to disrupt fish breeding cycles, alter ocean currents, and increase vulnerability to coastal erosion. The fragile balance of Kerala's coastal ecosystem is already under stress due to climate change and unregulated fishing practices.

Further extraction of marine resources could push it to a tipping point, endanger-

in replenishing fish stocks and maintaining biodiversity. Additionally, advanced monitoring systems are being introduced to track fish migration patterns and regulate fishing activities, ensuring long-term marine health.

Countries like Norway, Japan, and Australia have successfully implemented sustainable fisheries policies that balance economic interests with conservation. Learning from these models can help

### PIC TALK



A squirrel perches on a branch of red-silk cotton tree while feeding on flowers in New Delhi. PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

## When yesterday's children return as tomorrow's hope

SECOND



Time flies. A whole lifetime can sometimes feel like a fleeting frame in the vast reel of existence. Few things make me more aware of this than watching children grow. I have no children of my own to mark the passing years with each birthday they celebrate, but as a mentor and educator, I have been surrounded by young minds in various stages of becoming. I have watched them transition from wide-eyed learners to self-assured adults, carving out their place in the world. Yesterday, one of my earliest students visited me with his fiancée and parents, carrying wedding invitations, gifts, and a bouquet of memories from a time when he was just a six-year-old in shorts and tees. His visit felt like the culmination of a week steeped in nostalgia—a week in which I found myself thinking of all my past students, reaching out to some to check on their progress and well-being.

I was astonished at how they had grown—some still scaling academic heights with degrees and doctorates, others, like the one who visited me, embracing both career and companionship, settling into the rhythms of love and domestication. Not all seem set to become super achievers. Some were slow starters who gained momentum in the later years, some who were primed to blaze the trail, falling short in the end game. As I sat across from my former student, now a confident young professional with clear eyes and measured words, I found

### The rise in youth crime in Kerala is a stark reminder of the challenges this generation faces. Where did we go wrong, and how can we build resilience alongside success?

myself reflecting on the delicate threads that connect our journeys to the broader tapestry of societal evolution.

They carry with them innovative solutions to problems we have long considered intractable. They approach challenges with a fluidity and adaptability that my generation often struggles to comprehend. Their apparent detachment from traditional structures is not apathy, but rather a reconfiguration of priorities, a reshaping of engagement that might prove transformative for our world. Yet this hopeful vision is not without



its shadows. The recent surge in youth-involved drug cases and violent crimes in Kerala sends tremors through our collective conscience. Young people, barely past adolescence, find themselves entangled in webs of addiction, exploitation, and criminality that threaten to define their entire existence. The

juxtaposition is jarring—young minds full of promise alongside peers whose potential is squandered in the pursuit of momentary escape or misguided power. This stark contrast forces us to confront uncomfortable questions about the environments we create, the values we embody, and the support systems we provide for our youth. Where exactly have we faltered? Perhaps in our haste to prepare children for success, we have neglected to equip them for struggle.

In our eagerness to protect them from hardship, we may have inadvertently shielded them from the very experiences that build resilience. In our focus on academic achievement, we might have overlooked the cultivation of emotional intelligence and moral courage. It's hard to put a finger on the fault lines that have caused the fractures. In the face of these complex challenges, I find solace in the knowledge that those who have passed through my classroom have largely become contributors to society rather than detractors from it. This is not entirely to my credit. Countless factors shape a person's trajectory, but I take quiet pride in having played some role in their formation. To have contributed, even modestly, to the development of honest, thoughtful, and capable individuals is perhaps the greatest measure of success in a mentor's life. Our purpose in this world is not measured by personal achievements or accolades, but by the lives we touch, the potential we help nurture, and the humanity we help foster.

(The author is a Dubai-based columnist and children's writing coach. She has published six books. Views are personal)

## Letters to the Editor

### Textile industry needs support

Madam — Apropos of the article 'Export Potentials of Punjab ...' (March 5), presents an interesting reading. But the trend in the country remains different. Only slogans galore and solutions are nil. The second largest provider of employment is the cotton industry in India. The direct employment it provides is around 40 million. Besides this, there are micro units and allied feeding industries providing employment to many more millions. The cotton business has been suffering for years due to various internal as well as external factors. In the same way, the spinning mills also feel suffocating due to various factors. Declining exports, unviable cotton prices, growing costs of manufacturing, and a number of such factors are quoted to be disturbing the functioning of mills. It is a pity that a good number of mills are closing their operations, throwing millions of workers out of their jobs, besides their due negative impacts on export earnings.

The industry, with debt-funded capex, finds it too difficult to manage the show anymore. Actually, in most of the mills, the number of permanent workers availing themselves of employee-related benefits is too low, and the vast section of the workforce is made up of contract, outsourced, casual, contingent, and barrack segments, who are paid too little and do not avail themselves of any benefits meant for permanent workers. In spite of such huge savings from the labour component, the mills are closing down due to various reasons that the governments

can alone resolve. For example, the cost of power is felt to be unviable. Export subsidies need to be provided. In the absence of required intervention from the state or the Union governments, a good number of mills are already closed, and many are nearing closure. It is said even banks are not inclined to advance these industries anymore. It is time to attend to this segment as a priority, as slogans are not a solution.

A G RAJMOHAN | ANANTAPUR

### Lasting peace in Manipur

Madam— Apropos of the editorial 'A fresh start or fleeting relief?' (March 4), it is very apparent that the Union Government's efforts and monitoring of Manipur ethnic violence for quite a long time are bearing fruit and steadily succeeding for normalcy. Unless the roots of the ethnic violence and secessionist underground activities are identified and addressed, the violence may erupt again. Drug trafficking, opium cultivation, missionaries' separatist activities, and foreign intervention from across the border must be handled iron-handedly.

The arms and ammunition snatched by warring outfits from the police and paramilitary forces should be recovered, and no mercy should be shown to those who attacked police and armed forces. The Parliament should approve the extension of the President's rule, and rather, Manipur should be directly ruled by the Centre as a Union Territory until complete normalcy is restored. The neighbouring states of Manipur should not feel the heat and face the consequences

of ethnic violence in Manipur. The opposition parties should work in unison with the Union Government in resolving Manipur violence and restoring peace.

VISHAL MAYUR | TUMAKURU

### Supreme Court warns influencers

Madam — The Supreme Court's call for regulating digital content to uphold morality while protecting free speech is crucial. The rise of social media influencers like Ranveer Allahbadia has raised serious concerns about the unchecked spread of vulgarity under the guise of free expression. His content, deemed obscene by many, is a clear example of why stricter guidelines are necessary. While free speech is a fundamental right, it does not give anyone a license to propagate content that corrupts young minds and disrespects societal values.

The court's decision to allow Allahbadia to resume his show was not well received. Although it imposed moral restrictions on incoming content, individuals engaging in vulgarity should be banned for at least a year. This would make them aware of the mistakes they have made in reality shows, ensuring that they feel the consequences of their actions. Such punishment should serve as a lesson for future generations to refrain from committing similar acts. The influence of such YouTubers extends to millions, and their impact on impressionable audiences cannot be ignored. The government must implement robust regulations to ensure that digital platforms maintain ethical standards.

VINOD JOHRI | DELHI

### INDIA BEATS AUSTRALIA



The other back-to-back victory of Team India in the ICC Champions Trophy semifinals against Australia has filled Indians with extreme aspiration of becoming champions. We are just a step away from the dream of becoming champions. The last time Team India lifted the Champions trophy was in 2013. Despite Australia giving a challenging chaser score of 264 runs to India, the partnership by the batting order, bowling, and fielding has made India win by four wickets. Now that India has made a glittering entry to the finals of the ICC Champions Trophy for the third time, let us all make figures crossed for the victory of

India in the finals as well. Now that the Indian cricket team has done their hat trick of three successive entries in the finals, let's pray that India will lift the trophy by naming the third title to her name as Champions.

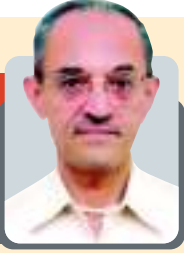
It's time for all eyes to be on Dubai International Stadium for the thrilling final match. We really wish to see Rohit Sharma's squad turn champions. Cricket fever will be in full swing on the upcoming Sunday to thrill the whole world of cricket lovers. We are hopeful for India to make the podium finishes with the trophy in hand and joy in the eyes.

KIRTI WADHAWAN | KANPUR



## FIRST COLUMN

AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI



### Understanding God and the Guru

A true guru recognises his limitations, serving only as a guide who connects disciples to the divine



We must understand the distinction between these fundamental entities in our lives. First, let me enumerate some commonly known qualities of God. He is omnipotent. This word is defined as having unlimited power. Only God fits this description. Is He not the Creator of innumerable galaxies? Similarly, God is omniscient. This word is defined as knowing everything. Who else except God fits this description? How much can a mere mortal know?

Albert Einstein famously said, "The more I learn, the more I realize how much I don't know." Then, God is omnipresent too. This word is defined as being present everywhere at the same time. And God is one and we are many. Lord Krishna states, "An eternal soul is My part only" (The Bhagavad-Geeta 15.7). Let us see how a genuine guru fares in these characteristics. He knows that whatever he has learnt in terms of spiritual knowledge, oratory skills, etc., is due to God's empowerment. God is much pleased by preaching amongst devotees. A genuine guru realizes that the source of his knowledge is God only. As regards omnipresence, a genuine guru humbly accepts that he is severely limited in being present with his disciples. Additionally, a genuine guru never claims any similarity with God except being part of God. Because God is completely different from us.

A genuine guru knows this fact more than others, who are not so knowledgeable. Being an incarnation of God never crosses his mind, because he knows that God incarnates for specific purposes. A guru's role is extremely limited. It is just to help get his disciples connected with God. And he strictly avoids attracting them to himself personally. Adi Shankaracharya is the role model for him, who preached "bhaja govindam." Now I will take up the famous verse, which is, "guru brahma, guru vishnu, guru dev maheshvara, guru sakshat parambrahma tasmai shri gururue namah."

Can any mere mortal claim to be Brahma or Vishnu or Mahadeva, never mind all three of them? It is ludicrous to even imagine. These are manifestations of God, not some ordinary entities; they are eternal, whereas we are subject to repeated birth and death till liberated. So what is the meaning of this verse? It is simply that whatever a guru speaks has sanction from God; he is not deviating from His instructions. He is simply conveying the essence of His teachings.

That is how he represents God. A genuine guru ensures that he protects his disciples from any harm by his inappropriate actions. He does not promise anything more than helping them to establish a good connection with God. He tries to become a role model for taking shelter from God because that is how all can benefit. He knows that he cannot give anything more.

20He is aware of his severe limitations in this regard. He guides his disciples to get connected to God such that they can get what all God can give. (9.25)The conclusion is to seek help from a genuine guru, who can help in progressing in our eternal journey. And we should never get side-tracked by hopes of easy gains, because there are none. We have to deserve all that we hope to get including liberation by our efforts, not someone else's.

A genuine guru knows this fact and never leaves any doubt in the minds of those who trust him. He thus gets respect from his disciples, which he richly deserves. Additionally, some disciples may serve him personally and some may donate so that the guru can maintain himself.

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

## A model of stability from China

While Western democracies struggle with internal gridlock, economic and stagnation, China's governance model continues to chart a course of long-term strategic vision



The Financial Times recently published an article on the question of who will succeed Xi Jinping. But perhaps the real question is not one of succession but of continuity—of how a governance model rooted in long-term vision, pragmatic adaptability, and national rejuvenation sustains itself beyond the tenure of any single leader. Unlike Western portrayals, often laden with exaggerated spectres from 'debt traps' to 'authoritarianism', there are profound lessons to be drawn from China's trajectory—especially as Western democracies now find themselves gasping for air in the suffocating embrace of their contradictions. "Democracy is a failed joke," Ai Weiwei, the Chinese contemporary artist, remarked in a recent interview with The Independent—and perhaps never has this assertion been more starkly evident than in the shambolic decline of the liberal order. Governance, once regarded as the solemn responsibility of those entrusted with the future of their nations, has in the West deteriorated into little more than a revolving spectacle of populist theatre, corporate capture, and institutional paralysis. It is within this continuum that China now prepares to convene its most pivotal political gathering of the year—the Two Sessions.

The third session of the 14th National People's Congress (NPC) and the third session of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), scheduled to commence on 4 and 5 March respectively, are not mere ritualistic formalities but the very engine of governance in a system defined by strategic foresight rather than short-term electoral expedience. The Western world, entrapped in the myopia of its dysfunction, looks upon this grand assembly with bewilderment, unable to comprehend a system where efficiency supersedes obstruction and where governance is an instrument of civilisation rather than a battleground of perpetual paralysis.

As Beijing convenes these pivotal sessions, it does so with a purpose that far surpasses the partisan gridlock that has crippled Washington under Trump and reduced Brussels, under Ursula von der Leyen's leadership, to a stage of waning relevance. History does not bestow hegemony upon the indolent. It is earned through foresight, discipline, and a genuine commitment to civilisation's progress. The Western model, long heralded as the apex of governance, is now fraying



NILANTHA ILANGAMUWA

at the seams, consumed by internal strife, economic stagnation, and an ever-widening gulf between the governed and their rulers. Meanwhile, the Chinese model, grounded in the philosophical profundity of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, marches forward with unparalleled resolve. "The path of socialism with Chinese characteristics is the only correct path for building a modern socialist country," Xi Jinping declared in his report at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in October 2017. What have the last few decades illuminated since China's opening up? "Reform and opening up is the key

definitive proclamation for a new global paradigm—one where dialogue supplants discord and where stability is not held hostage to the whims of declining empires. The very existence of Western diplomacy has been predicated upon coercion, economic subjugation, and military adventurism. China, by contrast, has demonstrated that genuine global leadership lies not in the proliferation of conflict, but in its resolution. This year's Two Sessions will reaffirm Beijing's role as an indispensable mediator of international crises, bringing adversaries to the negotiating table in a manner that the West, mired in its moral hypocrisy, has repeatedly failed to achieve. Consider the diplomatic masterstroke that saw China facilitate a rapprochement between Iran and Saudi Arabia—two historical adversaries long ensnared in the machinations of Western interventionism. This ethos extends to the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, where China,

to the Western penchant for war profiteering. While NATO expands its influence under the guise of security, China constructs bridges of diplomacy, demonstrating that true global leadership lies not in fuelling divisions but in fostering dialogue. But China's vision does not stop at terrestrial affairs. This year's Two Sessions will be held as the next frontier of human progress—space—becomes a new high-tech battlefield. While Western nations hoard technological advancements for geopolitical leverage, China has advanced an inclusive vision of cosmic exploration. The construction of the Tiangong space station, the pioneering lunar projects, and the Mars exploration programme are not mere scientific endeavours; they are emblematic of a civilisation that aspires not merely for national greatness but for the collective progress of humanity.

The essence of the Two Sessions lies in the articulation of a governing philosophy rooted in long-term vision, adaptability, and the pursuit of collective progress. It is not governance dictated by ephemeral political cycles but by a civilisation's deeper consciousness—one that understands its historical responsibility not only to itself but to the broader trajectory of human development. In an era where artificial intelligence and artificial general intelligence are reshaping economies, governance, and even social structures, China does not see these advancements as instruments of control or geopolitical leverage but as elements of a broader mission: ensuring that technological evolution remains a force for human cohesion rather than fragmentation. What China has proven is that reform is not an event; it is the flow of history recognising its potential. Simultaneously, the shifting currents of global trade, exacerbated by protectionist measures and economic fragmentation, have reinforced the necessity of an alternative economic logic—one not shackled to the fluctuations of political expediency but rooted in the principle of enduring equilibrium. True strength is not found in dominance, but in resilience—the ability to absorb, adapt, and outlast. This defines China's approach to trade tensions: rather than engaging in tit-for-tat economic skirmishes, the focus is on structural reinforcement—building self-sufficiency in critical sectors while ensuring that economic interdependence remains a mechanism of stability rather than vulnerability.

(The writer is a journalist and a policy analyst. Views expressed are personal)

WHILE WESTERN ECONOMIES DROWN IN INFLATIONARY QUAGMIRES AND INSTITUTIONAL CRISES, CHINA HAS CHARTED A PATH OF ECONOMIC REJUVENATION THROUGH INDUSTRIAL UPGRADING, AND THE INDOMITABLE PURSUIT OF TECHNOLOGICAL SELF-RELIANCE

choice that determines the fate of contemporary China," Deng Xiaoping once asserted. This ethos continues to guide China, as the nation refines its developmental trajectory with an adaptability that the West, bound by ideological rigidity, can scarcely fathom. China is not merely asserting its presence but reshaping the very contours of the global order. The Two Sessions have highlighted the profundity of China's economic strategy—one that is not predicated on the ephemeral illusions of speculative capitalism but on tangible infrastructural and technological advancement. While Western economies drown in inflationary quagmires and institutional crises, China has charted a path of economic rejuvenation through high-quality development, industrial upgrading, and the indomitable pursuit of technological self-reliance.

Yet the significance of the Two Sessions transcends economic imperatives. It is also a

in defiance of Western inertia, has actively pursued dialogue among Palestinian factions. The hypocrisy of the liberal order is laid bare when the so-called torchbearers of democracy selectively disregard the suffering of those who do not fit within their geopolitical calculus. Beijing, undeterred by such duplicity, has asserted itself as an honest broker of peace, proving that a multipolar world is not an abstraction but an unfolding reality. Even in the maelstrom of the Ukraine conflict, where Western powers have inflamed tensions rather than defused them, China's peace proposal has emerged as the only substantive roadmap towards de-escalation. President Xi Jinping has consistently emphasised that "confrontation, sanctions, and pressure will not solve the problem... what is needed is a mindset of common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security," resonating ever more powerfully in contrast

## Healthcare divide: How tier-II and III cities are transforming medical

Investments in advanced medical technology and government initiatives like Ayushman Bharat are making healthcare more accessible in tier II and III cities

Healthcare facilities in tier-II and III cities have long struggled with the disparity between affordability and accessibility of quality healthcare services. These cities often lack well-equipped medical centres, forcing patients to travel to nearby metropolitan areas for advanced treatment. The shortage of trained medical professionals further exacerbates the problem.

The doctor-to-patient ratio in these cities remains significantly below the WHO-recommended standard of 1:1,000, often reaching alarming ratios such as 1:25,000. One of the major factors behind this situation is the concentration of healthcare resources in metropolitan areas. Government hospitals in smaller cities often grapple with overcrowding, long waiting lines, and outdated infrastructure. Meanwhile, private hospitals that offer advanced treatments are often unaffordable for the majority of the population. This leaves patients with limited options, pushing them to seek care in distant metro cities.

However, in recent years, several hospitals in tier-II cities have made significant strides in bridging this gap. The emergence of well-equipped hospitals outside major metropolitan areas is proving to be a game-changer for patients who previously had to travel long distances for treatment. Health Institutions like Subharti Hospital in Meerut exemplify how tier-II cities are evolving to provide comprehensive and affordable healthcare not only under



KRISHNAMURTHY

the Ayushman Bharat Mission but also for uninsured patients, reducing dependence on metropolitan hospitals.

### Ayushman Bharat and Affordability

One of the biggest challenges in tier-II and III cities is making advanced healthcare both available and affordable.

Many private hospitals offer high-end treatment facilities, but their pricing structures make them inaccessible to a significant portion of the population.

To address this issue, some hospitals are designing cost-effective treatment models that prioritize patient affordability without compromising on quality. Additionally, government schemes and insurance programs such as Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY need to be further expanded and better implemented in these regions. Many eligible patients are unaware of their entitlements under schemes like PMJAY, leading to underutilization of available resources. Increased awareness and streamlined implementation of such initiatives can make a significant difference in ensuring financial accessibility to quality healthcare.

Advancements in Medical Technology Traditionally, hospitals in non-metro areas have



been perceived as lacking advanced infrastructure and specialized treatment options. However, this perception is gradually changing.

Many healthcare institutions such as Subharti Hospital in Meerut are now investing in cutting-edge medical technology, including advanced imaging facilities such as digital PET scans, high-resolution MRI and CT scans, and modern oncology treatment options like chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

The availability of these services locally is significantly reducing the burden on patients who would otherwise have to commute to larger cities.

A breakthrough in Meerut is the introduction of comprehensive treatment centres, particularly in fields like oncology. Cancer patients, for example, often face logistical and financial challenges when forced to visit different hospitals for diagnosis, surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy.

The integration of these services under one roof in tier-II cities is improving patient outcomes and reducing treatment delays. Subharti Hospital, for instance, has emerged as a reliable healthcare provider in Western Uttar Pradesh, offering a full spectrum of oncology services in a single location, saving patients valuable time and resources.

### The Road Ahead

Ensuring quality healthcare in tier-II and III cities requires a multi-pronged approach that includes expanding medical infrastructure, ensuring equitable resource distribution, increasing investment in medical education to address the shortage of trained professionals, and encouraging partnerships to enhance healthcare accessibility. As healthcare in India evolves, tier-II and III cities are poised to play a crucial role in expanding medical access beyond metropolitan areas.

Continuous efforts are needed to overcome existing challenges and create a healthcare system that is truly inclusive and accessible to all. With a focused approach towards affordability, accessibility, and technological advancements, the future of healthcare in non-metro regions holds immense potential. By addressing these challenges head-on, tier-II and III cities can become the next frontier in India's healthcare transformation.

(The writer is the Deputy Medical Superintendent of Subharti Hospital, Meerut. Views expressed are personal)

IN BRIEF



Volvo to launch electric SUV EX30 in India: Official

Swedish luxury car maker Volvo is planning to launch its fully electric small SUV EX30 in India this year as part of plans to launch one electric model in the country every year in line with its global ambition of achieving 90-100 per cent sales from electrified cars by 2030, according to a senior company official. Besides, Volvo Car India is also looking at bringing the new XC60 SUV in India this year, its Managing Director Jyoti Malhotra said.

India looks at ways to navigate Trump's reciprocal tariff

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With US President Donald Trump's threat of reciprocal tariff stoking fears of a global trade war, India is looking at finding an amicable solution to the challenge under the broader framework of a trade deal with Washington.

In his latest salvo, the US president, while addressing a joint session of the Congress on Tuesday, mentioned India alongside the European Union, China and Canada for charging higher tariffs on American products.

In line with his "America First" policy, Trump announced during the speech reciprocal tariffs from April 2 on numerous trading partners and nations that impose higher levies on imports from the United States.

He said other countries have used tariffs against the US for decades and now, it is "our turn" to start using them



against those nations. "On average, the European Union, China, Brazil, India, Mexico and Canada -- have you heard of them? And countless other nations charge us tremendously higher tariffs than we charge them," Trump said.

He added: "It is very unfair. India charges us auto tariffs higher than 100 per cent

in Washington DC.

At the meeting, the two sides agreed to negotiate a mega trade deal by the end of this year and set an ambitious target of USD 500 billion in annual trade by 2030 to narrow the trade deficit.

"Recognising that this level of ambition would require new, fair-trade terms, the leaders announced plans to negotiate the first tranche of a mutually beneficial, multi-sector Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) by fall of 2025," a joint statement on the Modi-Trump talks said.

To advance this innovative, wide-ranging BTA, the US and India will take an integrated approach to strengthen and deepen the bilateral trade across the goods and services sector, and work towards increasing market access, reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers, and deepening supply-chain integration, it said. Both sides made firm com-

'Govt to walk the talk on 70pc women in workforce by 2047'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government will walk the talk on Viksit Bharat by 2047 with 70 per cent women in the workforce, Union Labour Secretary Sumita Dawra said on Wednesday as she highlighted the importance of mentorship for women entrepreneurs.

Addressing a CII conference on women in the services sector, she also said looking ahead there are sectors which hold great potential for women to participate further. She suggested enhancing education for them under National Education Policy.

For women entrepreneurs and startups she called for increasing venture capital support.

"For women entrepreneurs, it (venture capital support) is very critical. Mentorship for women to be in leadership and decision-making roles. While we have provision, we also must

have mentorship for women where it is needed," she said.

About challenges faced by women in the services sector, she said there could be biases which prevent their entry in the workforce. There could be wage disparities, even in the leadership roles, job security concerns and issues like balancing domestic and professional responsibility.

Data shows that about 45 per cent women cite childcare and domestic commitments as reasons for not participating in the workforce, she noted adding that in the last six years, there is an enhanced engagement of women in economic activities.

There is an upward trend of educated women joining the workforce and also a steady increase in earnings despite some challenges in wage disparity. Today she said, "we see women excelling in services sector, technology, finance and also in manufacturing. The

Meghalaya CM presents Rs 1,970 cr deficit budget

PNS ■ SHILLONG

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Wednesday tabled a Rs 1,970 crore deficit budget for the financial year 2025-26, announcing a Rs 6,000 scholarship for all post-matric students of the state.

The Rs 1,970 crore budget is around 2.96 per cent of the projected Rs 66,645 crore GSDP, in line with the targeted USD 10 billion economy by 2028.

According to the budget document, the total receipts for 2025-26 are estimated at Rs 30,415 crore, of which revenue receipts are Rs 25,591 crore and capital receipts Rs 14,324 crore. Excluding borrowings of Rs 24,788 crore, the total receipts are estimated to be 225,627 crore.

Estimating the total expenditure to be Rs 30,003 crore, Sangma said the rev-

enue expenditure is estimated to be Rs 20,556 crore and capital expenditure at Rs 9,447 crore. Excluding repayment of loans of Rs 2,406 crore, the estimated total expenditure is Rs 27,597 crore.

The interest payment for the current fiscal is estimated at Rs 1,347 crore and pension payments at Rs 1,824 crore, he said.

"I am, therefore, presenting the budget for 2015-26 with a fiscal deficit of Rs 1,970 crore, which is around 2.96 per cent of the GSDP. I am delighted to highlight that the fiscal deficit has been maintained below the permissible limit of 3.5 per cent," the CM said, tabling the budget.

Sangma announced a Rs 6,000 scholarship for all post-matric students which would cover 80,000 youths from the next financial year.

Hike in deposit insurance limit beyond Rs 5 L to hit banks' 'profits'

PNS ■ MUMBAI

A hike in insurance limit on bank deposits above Rs 5 lakh is expected to have a "marginal but notable" impact on lenders' profit, rating agency Icria said on Wednesday.

At present, deposits up to Rs 5 lakh by an individual customer is covered by the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC), which collects premiums from banks for protecting customers' money in case a lender goes down.

Department of Financial Services Secretary M Nagaraju has recently said that the government is "actively considering" raising the deposit insurance limit beyond the current Rs 5 lakh.

"The point about increasing insurance... that is under active consideration. As and when the government approves, we will notify it," Nagaraju told reporters on February 17 at a press conference in the presence of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Nagaraju's comments came on the heels of a scam in the New India Co-operative Bank, which triggered RBI measures prohibiting the bank from issuing new loans, suspending deposit withdrawals and superseding

the lender's board.

The rating agency on Wednesday said the recent failure of New India Cooperative Bank may have prompted the deliberations, but added that such a move could drill a hole of up to Rs 12,000 crore on banks' profit.

"...the potential increase in deposit insurance limits, which has come under focus given the recent failure of a cooperative bank, is expected to have a marginal but notable impact on banks' profitability," Icria's head for financial sector ratings Sachin Sachdeva said.

The agency recalled that the limits were last hiked to Rs 5 lakh from the earlier Rs 1 lakh in February 2020 in the aftermath of the PMC Bank crisis.

As of March 2024, 97.8 per cent of the bank accounts were fully covered because the sums credited in them were within the Rs 5 lakh limit, it said, adding that going by value of deposits, the insured deposit ratio (IDR) was 43.1 per cent as of March 31, 2024.

Noting that the exact quantum of the hike in deposit insurance is not known, it said the change in IDR adversely impacts banks' profits as they have to shell out more money as premiums.

Proximus to have GCC in Bengaluru

Belgian telco Proximus is set to open a global capability centre in Bengaluru soon, a top official said on Wednesday. The state-run company's chairman Stefan De Clerck said it had a long experience of working with Indian entities or Indians for over two decades, and it is the trust in talent, and its quality, which makes India the ideal place to have such a facility. "We trust Indian talent, we saw the Indian talent. So, it is the beginning of the consideration (of having a GCC) saying ok, that is the country we have to go to," Clerck told reporters here. Speaking at the headquarters of Route Mobile, which is majority owned by Proximus, Clerck said the group which employs over 13,000 people at present has decided to have the facility at Bengaluru. He said the company has had a long-standing relationship with Bengaluru-based Infosys and the Indian IT services major is also helping it in the process of setting up the GCC. Moreover, Bengaluru is also the hub for a slew of GCCs in the country which makes it an ideal place to be in, Clerck said.

Sensex jumps 740 pts, Nifty breaks losing streak

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark BSE Sensex surged by 740 points while Nifty snapped its 10-day losing streak on Wednesday following value buying in utilities and power shares and a strong trend in global markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex surged by 740.30 points or 1.01 per cent to close at 73,730.23. The index jumped 943.87 points or 1.29 per cent to hit an intra-day high of 73,933.80.

Cutting short its record 10-day falling streak, the broader Nifty of NSE rebounded by 254.65 points or 1.15 per cent to settle at 22,337.30. During the day, it appreciated by 312.25 points or 1.41 per cent to a high of 22,394.90.

Broader markets also closed higher with the BSE smallcap gauge climbing 2.80 per cent and midcap index advancing 2.66 per cent.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms appreciated by Rs 7,97,247.7 crore to Rs 3,93,04,041.75 crore (USD 4.51 trillion).

From the Sensex pack, Adani

Ports, Tata Steel, Power Grid, Mahindra & Mahindra, NTPC, Tech Mahindra, Tata Motors, ITC, Nestle India, HCL Technologies, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, Asian Paints and Kotak Mahindra Bank were the gainers.

Bajaj Finance, IndusInd Bank, HDFC Bank, and Zomato were the laggards.

India's services sector activity witnessed a sharp uptick in February boosted by improving domestic and international demand, which resulted in a quicker expansion in output and a substantial increase in employment, a monthly survey said on Wednesday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Services PMI Business Activity Index rose from January's 26-month low of 56.5 to 59.0 in February, indicating a sharp rate of expansion.

All the sectoral BSE indices ended higher, with Utilities surging 4.40 per cent, Power by 3.67 per cent, Services by 3.64 per cent, metal by 3.52 per cent, Telecommunication by 3.36 per cent, Commodities by 2.88 per cent and Oil & Gas by 2.46 per cent.



FORM VI (See Sub-rule (1) of rule-19) and Section - 11(1) of the Act-30(2013) GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA REVENUE (LA) DEPARTMENT. PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION. Collector/Joint Collector / Special Collector (LA) / SDC (LA) No. G/183/2025. Dated: 27.02.2025. Where it appears to the Government of Telangana/Collector that a total of Ac 2.11 gts land is required in the Tekulapally Village, Makthal Mandal, Narayanpet District for public purpose...

Union Bank of India DEMAND NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. To, Borrower/Applicant: Ms. Annamalla Laxmi Prasanna, W/o A Deepak, Address-1: # H.No. 5-12-65/2, Near Govt. ITI, Durga Colony, Miyalaguda Road, Nalgonda, Telangana - 509001; Address-2: # Opposite to Mahtri Complex, Near Pragathi Junior College, Nalgonda, Telangana - 509001; Mob. No.: 9849636653; e-Mail: akshayasri@rediffmail.com; Co-Applicant: Mr. Annamalla Deepak, Co-Applicant, Address-1: # H.No.5-12-65/2, Near Govt. ITI, Durga Colony, Miyalaguda Road, Nalgonda, Telangana - 509001; Address-2: # Opposite to Mahtri Complex, Near Pragathi Junior College, Nalgonda, Telangana - 509001; Mob.No.: 9493993450. Sir/Madam, SUB: Enforcement of Security Interest Action Notice - In connection with the credit facilities enjoyed by Ms. Annamalla Laxmi Prasanna (Borrower), W/o A Deepak & Mr. Annamalla Deepak (Co-Applicant), S/o Annamalla Lingaiah with our bank classified as NPA on 18.02.2025...

SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF T.G LIMITED TENDER NOTICE NO.09/2024-25 Sealed tenders are invited from various contractors having experiences for the work of Open Area mtng to (1) SEC 581(11Kv) & (2) SEC 586(11Kv) to M/s Garrison Engineer in Lalbazar Sec 1 of Lalbazar SD of Sec Div (2) Rep of dmped UG cable of Eswar Vimal Fdr which involves stringing of 0.7 km 11kV 185 Sqmm AB cable (4) Replacement of wiring & providing 2X2' LED Light at ERO/Bowampally, Secunderabad etc. The details can be viewed from the website of www.tgsouthernpower.org.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION 'E' PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE Nil No. 30EEGHMCDIV-21/2024-25 Date: 04-03-2025 Tenders are called vide No. 30EEGHMCDIV-21/2024-25 (Item No. 01) Dt: 04.03.2025. Through 'e' procurement for (01) work with an estimated cost of Rs.48.40 Lakhs. The sale of bids is open on the website 'e' procurement market place from 4.00 PM on 06.03.2025 onwards. Last date for submission of bids is 13.03.2025 at 4.00 PM. Sale of bids closes one hour before the submission time. Further details can be seen on the website https://tender.telanganagov.in.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION 'E' - Div. 15, Sec-2nd Zone, GHMC. dt: 04.03.2025 Name of the work: GHMC-SBZ Supply and Delivery of Black Colour LDPE Linear Low Density Polythene garbage bags of size 35"(w)x45"(l) with 120 neelons. For upcoming Raavan festival-2025 use in various circles of Secunderabad Zone, GHMC. (Rs. 11.17 lacs). Start Date & Time of Bid: 03.03.2025 at 06:00 PM. Last Date & Time of Bid: 12.03.2025 at 02:00 PM. Sr. S. Srivastava, Executive Engineer, Division-15, Circle-15 Mashaarabad, Sec 2nd Zone, GHMC. Call: 979496422. Address of the Concerned: Executive Engineer, Div-15, SBZ, GHMC Abies, Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation. Further details can be seen at E-Procurement website: tender.telanganagov.in

Union Bank UMFY Yengonda Branch (Sol Id: 15241) Mahabubnagar Region, Contact Mobile: 9052241428, Email Id: ubin0815241@unionbankofindia.com. Ref:15241/SARFAE/IDemand Notice/49274853-12024-25 Date: 03-02-2025 DEMAND NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. To Borrower/Applicant: Mrs. G Bharathamma, D/o Balakistiah Gandla Address: MIG-I-512, Housing Board Colony, Near SVS Hospital, Appanapalli, Mahabubnagar, Telangana-509001, Mobile No.9493994824. Co-Applicant: Mr. Sale Sudhakar, S/o Sale Nagappa Address: H.No.7-22, BC Colony, Dhanur, Mahabubnagar, Telangana-509001, Mobile No.9701421041. Co-Obligatee: Mrs. G Padmamma, W/o G Venkat Goud Address: H.No.1-22, Madgidda, Mahabubnagar, Telangana-509382, Mobile No.9491484314. Sir/Madam, SUB: Enforcement of Security Interest Action Notice - In connection with the credit facilities enjoyed by you with us - Classified as NPA on 29.01.2025. We have to inform you that your accounts Mrs. G Bharathamma (Borrower), D/o Balakistiah Gandla, Mr. Sale Sudhakar (Co-Applicant), S/o Sale Nagappa & Mrs. G Padmamma (Guarantor), W/o G Venkat Goud with UMFY Yengonda Branch (Sol Id: 15241), has been classified as NPA account on 29.01.2025 pursuant to your default in making repayment of dues/ interest / instalment. As on date a sum of Rs.5,72,552/- (Rupees Five Lacs Seventy Two Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty Two Only) + Interest + Other Charges till date is outstanding in your accounts as shown below.



## How NGOs can drive lasting change in rural areas

A few years ago, if you had walked into a Gram Sabha meeting in Rajpur block of Madhya Pradesh, you might have seen mostly empty rooms and a handful of Panchayat officials conducting the Gram Sabha. People—especially women—rarely participated in the Gram Sabhas and the idea of village development felt distant, controlled by Panchayat representatives and bureaucrats. But things changed over the years. Today, those same Gram Sabha meetings see more than 85% community participation and women's voices leading the discussions. Local women, once side-lined, are now Sarpanches and Ward Members, shaping the future of their villages through participatory and comprehensive Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP). So, what sparked this transformation?

It wasn't just because of another external intervention. It was mostly due to a shift in approach—empowered communities driving their own development. In 2017, Transform Rural India (TRI) introduced the Localisation Model, a new way of doing rural development. The model created a locality compact—coordination mechanism between Panchayat, Community and local administration—to address the existing gaps in the community-led development approaches. Going beyond planning, the localization model created environment for local community to translate plans into reality, demand better services, and hold local leaders accountable. The Localisation Model approach in Rajpur—with improved governance and service delivery—demonstrate the critical need to include design solutions and community-led development approach for real and lasting rural change.

### Role of NGOs in rural transformation

The NGO sector in India has come a long way. In the post-independence era (1950s-70s), NGOs primarily acted as service providers, stepping in where government programs failed to reach. In the 1980s-90s, as rural India grappled with unemployment, social inequalities, and environmental issues, NGOs transitioned into community mobilizers—organizations like MYRADA and PRADAN pioneered Self-Help Groups (SHGs), microfinance and watershed programs, developing local leadership and accelerating economic gains. The 2000s saw NGOs partnering with the government on large-scale rural schemes like MGNREGS, NRHM and NRLM. However, with digital governance and CSR funding changing the landscape, the role of NGOs must now shift from implementers to enablers. To ensure sustainable rural transformation, NGOs must focus on strengthening local governance and developing community ownership. Instead of focusing on delivering services, they should empower rural communities to take ownership of their development, ensuring long-term, systemic change.

### Power of design thinking in rural development

Rural development isn't just about building infrastructure or providing development services. More than funding or government schemes, rural India needs solutions that actually work for people. Too often, well-intended programs fail because they don't consider the real needs, behaviours and aspirations of rural communities. That's where design thinking comes in. Instead of imposing pre-decided solutions, design thinking encourages communities to co-create, prototype, and refine ideas that truly fit their context. It's about making development people-centered, practical and sustainable. Design workshops have helped Self-Help Group (SHG) women, youth and local Panchayat representatives rethink solutions for economic growth, leading to initiatives like Mini Gramaen Marts, high-value agriculture and digital tools for

financial management. Similarly, IDEO has also championed design thinking in rural development, particularly in Africa and Latin America. The "Human-Centered Design for Social Innovation" projects have effectively tackled issues like sanitation, financial inclusion and healthcare by working directly with communities to design and test solutions before scaling them up. This reinforces the importance of grassroots participation in designing solutions that truly work.

### Importance of grassroots activism in sustaining change

Real change seldom comes from top-down policies or big budgets—it happens when people take charge of their own development. That's why grassroots activism is so important. When rural communities actively participate, they push for better program implementation, demand accountability and make sure development efforts actually work for them. A strong grassroots movement creates local leaders who step up, solve problems and keep progress going long after NGOs or government programs leave.

As discussed above, the community-led development in Rajpur Block in Madhya Pradesh turned passive communities into active changemakers. In just a few years, Gram Sabha participation improved to 85%, 600+ SHG women contested elections, 531 got elected and 31 became Sarpanches. The model didn't just improve governance—it enhanced leadership skills among community, integrated community plans with Panchayat plans, and made sure public funds were used effectively. Grassroots activism is the backbone of sustainable rural development. The Localisation Model in Rajpur provides evidence that when communities organize, demand, and participate in governance, development becomes more effective and sustainable. Therefore, NGOs today need to reposition from being direct implementers and instead invest in grassroots leadership, advocacy, and participatory governance.

### Synergy between design & activism for lasting impact

Rural areas, with their intricate social, economic and environmental interdependencies, are dynamic and capable of evolving in response to internal and external stimuli. Therefore, NGOs looking to bring rural transformation need to bring design thinking and grassroots activism in their work. On their own, each has its strengths—design thinking brings structure, creativity and problem-solving methods, while grassroots activism mobilises people, builds momentum and ensures long-term accountability. But when we combine the two, we get something even more powerful: solutions that are not just well-designed but also deeply rooted in community ownership. Design thinking gives NGOs the tools to build solutions that actually work. Instead of jumping to conclusions, it helps them break down problems, test ideas, and refine solutions based on real feedback. But even the best-designed solutions won't create change unless people actually use and sustain them. That's where grassroots activism comes in—it ensures that these solutions don't just remain ideas but are scaled, adopted, and championed by the community itself.

NGOs today can play a crucial role as bridge-builders. They can connect design experts who understand problem-solving frameworks with local leaders who know the realities on the ground. This synergy is what makes models like the Localisation Model in Rajpur and Prosperous Many model in Jonha successful. When NGOs empower communities with both the structured thinking of design knowledge and the mobilizing force of grassroots activism, we can truly think of rural transformation.

PNS|HYDERABAD

### EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW:

These days, luxury encompasses more than just extravagance; it also includes exclusivity, customisation and life-changing events. What does luxury mean to you?

Luxury is more than just extravagance; it's about meaningful, personal and intimate experiences that help visitors connect with wellness, culture and the natural world. At the remote Ananta Spa & Resort in Ajabgarh, architecture and nature coexist together. The resort, which is encircled by the magnificent Aravalli Hills, offers private villas that are elegant and secluded and are inspired by the elements of fire, earth, bamboo and water! Visitors can tour Sariska Tiger Reserve and Pratapgah Fort, or they can just relax in wellness activities surrounded by nature. The spiritual energy of Pushkar, a town renowned for its fragrant rose gardens and holy lake, is embodied by Ananta Spa & Resort, Pushkar. The resort blends centuries-old customs with contemporary luxury to create a location for introspection and relaxation with its beautiful grounds, modern cottages and wellness programs. With its individual plunge pools, Balinese-style villas and ecological design, the 98-acre Ananta Udaipur redefines eco-luxury. Every feature, from private dining under the stars to solar-powered equipment, is designed to create a unique and restorative haven in the middle of the Aravalli Hills.

The contemporary tourist looks for both luxury and authenticity. How can you strike a balance between the upscale amenities and standards of upscale hospitality and immersive, culturally rich experiences? True luxury, in my opinion, is found in genuine experiences that are expertly paired with top-notch comfort. Every one of my hotels is made to provide a close relationship with the environment while

## Redefining beauty beyond the crown

Breaking away from traditional beauty norms, **Marvelous Mrs. India** is not just about glamour—it's about self-discovery, empowerment and proving that aspirations don't have an expiration date. In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, Dr. Aditi Govitrikar opens up about her mission to redefine beauty pageants through **Marvelous Mrs. India**, a platform dedicated to empowering women beyond societal labels

TEJAL SINHA  
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In a world where marriage is often seen as a turning point that shifts a woman's focus solely to family responsibilities, **Marvelous Mrs. India** emerges as a beacon of change. Founded by Dr. Aditi Govitrikar, the platform challenges the long-held belief that personal aspirations must take a backseat after marriage. With a vision to celebrate and empower women—regardless of their marital status—Aditi has redefined the essence of beauty pageants, making them about confidence, individuality and self-discovery rather than just appearance. For decades, beauty pageants have been seen as platforms for celebration and recognition, but they have also faced criticism for being selective and exclusionary. As India's first and only Mrs. World (2001), Aditi experienced firsthand the power of representation and the need for greater inclusivity in the industry.



Determined to change the narrative, she created **Marvelous Mrs. India**, a pageant that goes beyond conventional beauty standards to truly embrace empowerment and self-expression. Through this initiative, she is helping women break barriers, rewrite their narratives, and step into their power with grace and purpose.

"There wasn't a single defining moment that led me to create this platform. It was a realisation that built over time. The beauty industry often talks about inclusivity, but historically, pageants have been selective, making many women feel undeserving. I wanted to change that." With **Marvelous Mrs. India**, the *Thammudu* fame has created a space where married, divorced and widowed women are celebrated for who they are—beyond societal labels. "This isn't just about crowning a winner; it's about empowering women to rediscover themselves," she emphasises.

The essence of **Marvelous Mrs. India** lies in its ability to go beyond traditional pageantry and create meaningful change in the lives of participants. She recalls her own journey of winning Mrs. World in 2001, a moment that shattered the notion that marriage limits a woman's aspirations. "That victory was groundbreaking because it proved that married women could still dream big. But **Marvelous Mrs. India** goes a step further—it's about empowering all women who've been conditioned to believe that personal ambitions must take a backseat," she explains.

The competition helps women rediscover their confidence, redefine their identities and embrace new opportunities. It serves as a reminder that marriage and personal responsibilities should never mean sacrificing one's dreams. Many women hesitate to step into the limelight after marriage due to societal expectations. **Marvelous Mrs. India** is designed to challenge those norms.

"That's exactly why this platform exists," Aditi asserts. "Marriage comes with responsibilities, but it shouldn't mean giving up on personal aspirations. Many women hesitate because they feel that pursuing dreams after marriage is frowned upon. **Marvelous Mrs. India** acts as an icebreaker, showing them that it's normal—and necessary—to have ambitions beyond family life."

The transformation she has witnessed in participants is proof of the competition's impact. "The biggest change is personal. Many women enter feeling hesitant and unsure of their worth, but they leave with newfound confidence. They become more vocal about their needs, value their independence and embrace self-expression. This mental transformation fuels success in every other aspect of their lives." Inclusivity is at the heart of **Marvelous Mrs. India**. Unlike traditional pageants that often adhere to rigid beauty standards, this platform celebrates individuality. "We don't judge participants based on outdated beauty norms. Instead, we focus on confidence, personality, and personal journeys. Every contestant is assessed based on her unique strengths, ensuring fairness while maintaining our commitment to inclusivity."

She also challenges the conventional definition of glamour. "Glamour isn't just about physical appearance—it's about personality, kindness and how one carries herself. At **Marvelous Mrs. India**, we redefine glamour to include grace, empathy, and self-growth," she explains. The real sense of community, she adds, comes from mutual respect and shared experiences. "Success is not just about individual achievement but uplifting others along the way."

The impact of **Marvelous Mrs. India** extends far beyond the competition itself. Many winners and participants have gone on to become content creators, motivational speakers and social advocates. Aditi finds immense joy in seeing them use their newfound confidence to inspire others. "Knowing that **Marvelous Mrs. India** played a small role in their transformation is what makes this journey so rewarding," says the *Mismatched* actress.

However, building the platform was not without challenges. "The biggest challenge was convincing people that this pageant was truly inclusive and not just a token gesture. Changing mindsets takes time, but through consistent effort, transparency and leading by example, we've built a credible and respected space where women genuinely feel empowered. Once that trust was established, there was no looking back."

Initiatives like **Marvelous Mrs. India** are gradually shifting societal perceptions of married women and their potential. Aditi firmly believes that marriage should never define or limit a woman's ambitions. "Marriage is simply a relationship status—it doesn't mean a woman has to give up on her dreams. Responsibilities are important, but so are aspirations. Slowly but surely, we're seeing a shift, with more acceptance of the idea that women can have fulfilling personal and professional lives post-marriage."

As someone who has successfully balanced multiple roles—doctor, model, actress, and mentor—she knows firsthand that it is possible to pursue dreams while fulfilling responsibilities. Her message to women who feel torn between the two is simple: You don't have to choose. "Balance is the key. Every woman's journey is different, and the way she manages her responsibilities and dreams will be unique to her. But one thing is universal: you can do both. Never let self-doubt hold you back. Chase your dreams, fulfill your duties and know that efforts driven by passion and purpose never go in vain."

THIS ISN'T JUST ABOUT CROWNING A WINNER; IT'S ABOUT EMPOWERING WOMEN TO REDISCOVER THEMSELVES

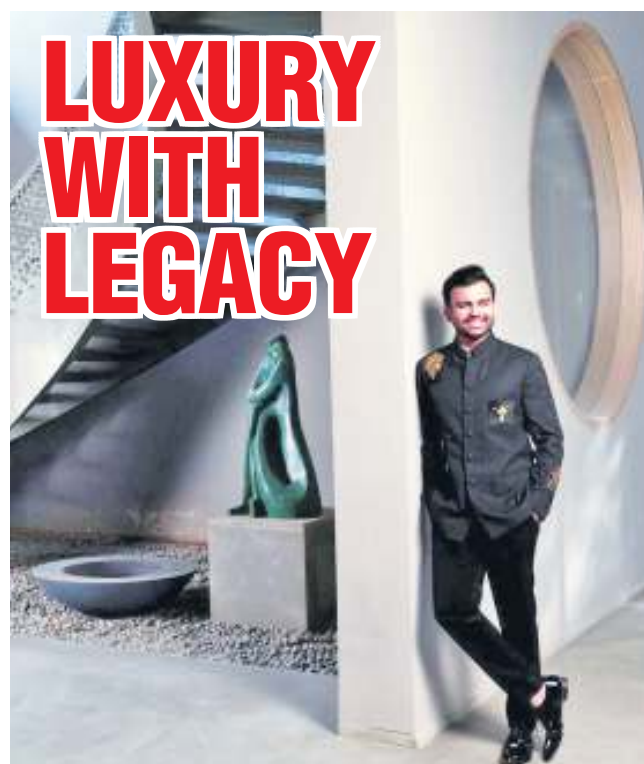
Consider hospitality that creates an immersive tapestry that goes above the norm by fusing luxury, cultural diversity and sustainability. Welcome to Ashutosh Goyal's vision! He is a dynamic leader who is changing the face of Ananta Hotels & Resorts. He is leading a new era of development, creativity and cross-cultural interaction with a forward-thinking approach, making sure that each visit is unforgettable. His leadership is evidenced from the introduction of exciting events like the Soul Festival, which skillfully combines wellness, culture and entertainment, to developing a more polished online presence and building closer industry relationships. Ashutosh has another reason to rejoice, personally, since he got married, a happy event that has greatly enhanced his life. With love, family and friends by his side, he is excited and full of gratitude as he starts this new chapter. We wish him a lifetime of happiness and success and know that this new journey will infuse his professional activities with new vigour and motivation!



upholding the highest standards of hospitality. Guests are taken to the center of Rajasthan's unspoiled splendour. Every activity, whether it's touring the ancient Pratapgah Fort, interacting with regional craftspeople, or taking in the abundant wildlife of Sariska Tiger Reserve, is designed to offer a genuine cultural immersion. However, exclusive luxury homes and excellent dining combine this rustic appeal, guaranteeing that visitors never have to sacrifice comfort! While enjoying a sumptuous getaway, visitors can interact with the town's spiritual and cultural legacy at Pushkar. Visitors can tour Pushkar Lake's colorful bazaars, observe the religious rites there, or partake in a wellness treatment filled with roses, which pays homage to the town's well-known rose gardens. In the meanwhile, my resort offers a tranquil haven from the outer world with its vast vistas, well decorated villas and fine dining options.

Luxury and sustainability are sometimes seen to be mutually exclusive, but the most progressive hotels are showing that this is not the case. In what ways does your offering include sustainability into your guest offerings without sacrificing elegance?

Sustainability is not an afterthought, it is a fundamental component of my opulent experience. My mission is to provide environmentally friendly accommodation that complements the destinations' natural beauty rather than detracts from it! Sustainability is ingrained in the design and management. The resort in Ajabgarh reduces its environmental effect while improving its aesthetic appeal by using natural stone materials, energy-efficient buildings and native landscaping. Because of its closeness to Sariska Tiger Reserve, conservation initiatives have been sparked, guaranteeing that visitors enjoy nature in a responsible manner. Using locally sourced materials, water-saving methods and



ecological eating practices, Pushkar resort adheres to a low-impact design concept. The resort promotes the use of local, organic foods in its food and places a strong emphasis on wellness programs that honour natural healing customs. It demonstrates through efforts that luxury and sustainability can coexist harmoniously!

The Soul Festival combines entertainment, culture and wellness. What motivated its development?

The increasing desire for intense, life-changing travel experiences served as the impetus for Soul Festival. Today's visitors want more than just luxury; they want

meaningful interaction, cultural enrichment and well-being. By combining mindful experiences, local art, music and wellness retreats, the festival enables visitors to form a close bond with their environment. Travel is being redefined by this transition from passive luxury to experiential hospitality, which combines leisure, cultural immersion and personal development into a single, seamless experience. It is setting the standard for creating unique, soul-satisfying vacations by fusing thoughtful luxury with entertainment and culture!

Luxurious suites, opulent lobbies and stunning views have long been

characteristics of luxury accommodation. However, these days, having a strong online presence is as important. In what ways are you rethinking online experience? I am aware that a flawless online experience is equally as crucial as a luxurious in-person encounter. Using cutting-edge booking systems, AI-powered concierge services and interactive virtual tours, we aim to improve guest convenience, personalisation and engagement. To highlight the distinctive experiences at our locations, we make use of digital storytelling, influencer partnerships and social media. We make sure visitors feel a connection to it both before and after their stay by using technology-driven personalisation, loyalty programs and immersive digital content.

Nowadays, a lot of upscale tourists are looking for "transformational travel"—experiences that alter viewpoints and leave a lasting impression on the individual. What actions are you taking to provide accommodations that are more than just comfortable and genuinely connect with visitors on a deeper level?

We design experiences that stimulate the senses, encourage self-improvement and provide enduring memories. Our facilities provide nature-based experiences that promote strong bonds, carefully planned wellness retreats and immersive cultural outings. For example, visitors can explore historic ruins, unspoiled landscapes and conservation initiatives at Ajabgarh, while Pushkar provides spiritual experiences interwoven with age-old customs. The Udaipur property blends solitude, sustainability and wellness to make sure that each visit is about more than just luxury—it's about self-discovery and rejuvenation.

Food plays a crucial role in luxury travel, from experiential dining to hyper-local

culinary storytelling. How do you design its culinary offerings to satisfy a changing, pickier global base?

The culinary concept ensures a dining experience that is both sophisticated and grounded in tradition by fusing local authenticity with global elegance. Using seasonal, organic and sustainably sourced foods, our chefs create dishes that highlight local flavours and provide a more sophisticated farm-to-table experience. From Pushkar's rose-infused treats to Udaipur's stargazing private dining, we craft unique, unforgettable and engrossing culinary experiences. Every meal tells a story, making food an essential component of every visitor's trip, whether it's fine dining with global influences or hyper-local tasting menus.

In the world of luxury hospitality, tradition and modernisation frequently clash. What difficulties have you encountered?

The idea is based on striking a balance between contemporary luxury and traditional authenticity. With fort-inspired designs and natural stone accents, Ajabgarh embraces Rajasthan's architectural legacy while providing private villas, spa centers and modern dining that meets current standards. In addition to immersing visitors in the town's spiritual legacy, Pushkar enhances the experience with carefully planned cultural walks and indigenous flora. We make certain that visitors may enjoy the unadulterated splendour of nature without upsetting nearby ecosystems at our wildlife-focused resorts, like Baagh Ananta Elite in Ranthambore and Jagira Ananta Elite in Gir. In addition to offering luxurious lodging, fine dining and expertly led safaris by naturalists, lodges are built with ecological materials and blend in with their surroundings. This equilibrium guarantees the harmonious coexistence of luxury, tradition and conservation.

# what's brewing?



Mercy For Animals India Foundation has launched a new public awareness campaign to promote plant-based living, featuring popular Telugu film actor and model Daksha Nagarkar. Known for her roles in Hora Hori, Husharu, and Zombie Reddy, Daksha aims to educate and inspire individuals to embrace a compassionate, plant-based lifestyle. The campaign seeks to raise awareness about the benefits of plant-based living and encourage people to make more conscious, ethical choices in their daily lives.

● Daksha Nagarkar



Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL) has announced the launch of Aakash Invictus, a groundbreaking and first-of-its-kind advanced program for JEE preparation. This AI-driven initiative aims to provide a result-oriented approach tailored specifically for students preparing for IITs or prestigious universities abroad.

Gokaraju Rangaraju Engineering College in Hyderabad celebrated its 28th Annual Day, honouring student achievements and highlighting the importance of skill development. The event featured prominent speakers, including Prof. Sriram Venkatesh, Secretary of the Telangana Council of Higher Education, Sirisha, Senior Manager at Logic Pursuit and the Merit certificates were awarded by Chief Manager Shri DSN Raju from the Bank of Baroda.



Casagrand unveiled its strategic growth plans to strengthen its presence in the Hyderabad market at a press conference held in the city. As part of this initiative, the company announced the addition of 2.74 million square feet of residential communities, which will be developed across key locations such as Mankhal, Attapur, Gowdavalli, and Kompally.



## PARTY



Regency College of Culinary Arts and Hotel Management celebrated National Cold Cuts Day with an impressive display of culinary skills by 70 students from the 6th semester of the BHMCT program. The students showcased their creativity through a hands-on activity titled The Castle Deli Delights, which was part of their curriculum.



## PHOTOS BY SV CHARY



Chef Sanjeev Kumar has joined HarvestPlus Solutions' Nutri School initiative, which has already served over 2.5 million bio-enriched meals, making a significant impact on childhood nutrition. Nutri School, an initiative by HarvestPlus Solutions (HPS), aims to improve school meals by incorporating bio-enriched foods like iron-rich pearl millet and zinc-enriched wheat, addressing childhood malnutrition at its root.



In the midst of an escalating national debate on the adoption of biotechnologically enhanced crops, including genetically modified (GM) crops, farmers from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh have voiced their demand for a science-based approach to policy making. Speaking at a press meet organized by the National Farmers Empowerment Initiative, progressive farmers emphasized the importance of allowing access to modern biotechnology.



Barbeque Nation, India's leading casual dining restaurant chain, proudly presents the Lazeez-e-Gosht food festival, exclusively available across its outlets in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. This exciting festival offers an exceptional mutton experience, perfect for dinner. Guests can indulge in a variety of delights, starting with Mutton Marag Soup, followed by starters such as Kheema Kaleji, Mutton Kheema Pav, Galouti Kebab, Mutton Shekhawati Seekh and Mutton Raan. The main course is equally impressive, featuring mildly spiced Hyderabadi Mutton Haleem, Nihari Gosht, Shahi Mutton Korma, and Hyderabadi Zafrani Mutton Dum Biryani.

## FUN

### ARCHIE



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



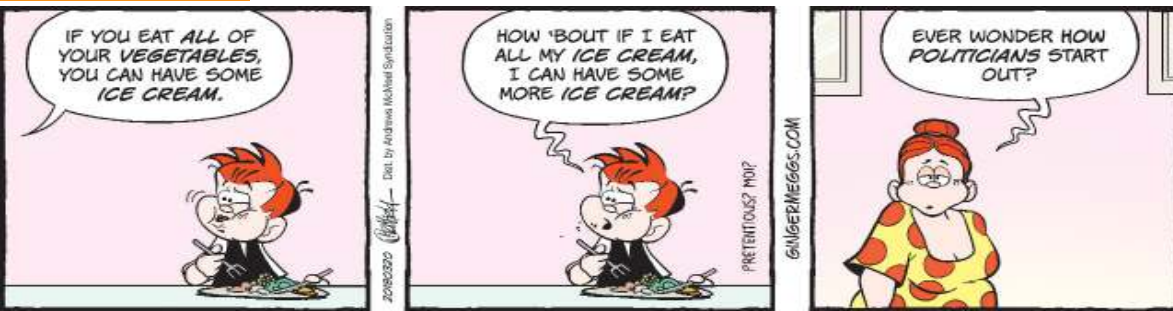
### GARFIELD



### NANCY



### GINGER MEGGS



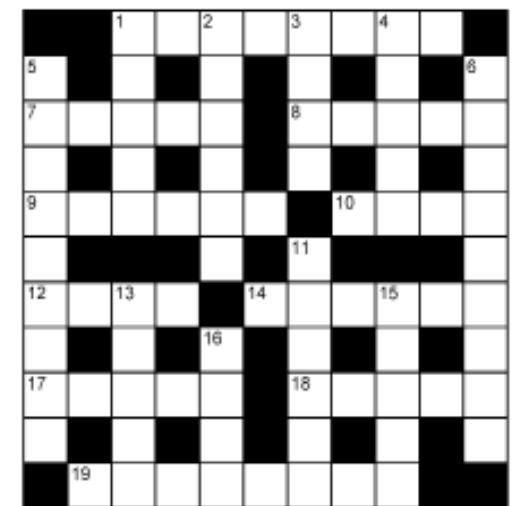
### REALITY CHECK



### SPEED BUMP



### CROSSWORD



### SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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

- Use these for cutting paper and jury in here
- A smelly vegetable
- Rest and take it easy
- Stop working because you are too old or ill
- A curved support
- Hurry
- Not working; out of order
- A keyboard instrument
- A female relation
- An offer of marriage
- You will find a judge and jury in here
- Swapped
- Machines for lifting things
- A sweetener
- Rest on your knees
- Break in two

### DOWN

- Move
- Take no notice of
- Painful to touch
- Measuring stick

SOLUTION

L	A	N	G	H	T	E	R	S
A	N	I	E	U				
H	I	C	K	D	E	A	N	S
B	L	I	P					
S	P	I	C	K	L	I	T	R
L	N	O	V	E	C			
I	L	L	O	C	R	E	A	
D	T	C	L	E	A			
E	I	G	H	T	L	A	S	T
C	E	A	R	O				
E	S	T	R	E	A	M	E	R



### ARTISTE TO IMPRESS AS A NEW PSYCHO-THRILLER: DIRECTOR RATAN RISHI

Another small film, *Artiste*, is hitting the screens on March 21. Directed by Ratan Rishi and produced by James Watt Kommu, the trailer for this psychological thriller was released on Tuesday. "This is a psycho-thriller that blends elements of suspense, fear, comedy and romance. The story carries a lot of emotion and the last 20 minutes of the movie are especially intense," said director Ratan Rishi. He added that the audience will definitely feel good about the film after leaving the theater. "Suresh Bobbili has composed a new background score that perfectly matches the emotional tone of the story," the director said. He also noted that the film doesn't contain much violence, as the trailer may suggest. "In typical psycho-thrillers, the plot revolves around finding the killer after a murder, but in our film, we build suspense by revealing the villain early on," he explained. "Making a film and bringing it to release is not an easy task; it requires a lot of hard work. I've traveled back and forth from the USA for this film, and my goal is to provide opportunities to new talent and encourage them," said producer James Watt Kommu. This is his second film and he worked mostly with newcomers. He added that Mythri Movie Distributors is handling the film's release. "We've made a film with strong content and I hope the audience enjoys it," he said.



tollywood

### Vikranth and Chandini Chowdhary explore a new take on parenthood in *Santhana Prapthirasthu*

Vikranth and Chandini Chowdhary play the lead roles in the film *Santhana Prapthirasthu*. Produced by Madhura Sreedhar Reddy and Hariprasad Reddy, the film is directed by Sanjeev Reddy, who previously directed *ABCD* starring Allu Sirish and the web series *Aha Na Pellanta* with Raj Tarun in the lead. The teaser of the film was recently launched by director Sandeep Reddy Vanga, who expressed his admiration: "The teaser looks promising. This film seems like a great entertainer, and I wish the movie great success." While a few films in Hindi have tackled the topic of infertility, *Santhana Prapthirasthu* is the first attempt in Telugu to explore this theme. Vikranth plays a software engineer dealing with work pressure while trying to build a life. He falls in love with Chandini Chowdhary and marries her, but their happiness is short-lived as her father disapproves of their marriage. The couple's struggles grow when Vikranth discovers his low sperm count, which prevents them from conceiving. Determined to become parents, Vikranth embarks on a 100-day journey to increase his sperm count, following medical advice and a strict regimen. The makers describe the film as a blend of humour, emotion and fun. The chemistry between Vikranth and Chandini Chowdhary is expected to be a highlight. The screenplay, written by Sheikh Dawood G (known for his work on films like *Venkatadri Express*, *Express Raja* and *Ek Mini Katha*), adds depth to the story. *Santhana Prapthirasthu* is a youth-driven family entertainer, set for a grand theatrical release soon.



### Mahesh Babu and Rajamouli's film shifts to Odisha for new schedule

Mahesh Babu and Rajamouli's much-anticipated film is currently in the spotlight. Although the makers have kept tight-lipped about updates or the shooting schedule, videos circulating on social media show Mahesh Babu leaving for Odisha, hinting at the next phase of filming. The film had recently been shot in Hyderabad at the Aluminium Factory, with Priyanka Chopra also participating. Now, the team has shifted to Odisha, where they are shooting in the Koraput forest area.

Rajamouli, known for his love for adventure settings, had visited Koraput a few months ago to select this location. The film, set in an adventure backdrop similar to Indiana Jones, will feature a story that draws inspiration from this thrilling environment. Though no official cast details have been confirmed, reports suggest that Malayalam star Prithviraj Sukumaran and Tamil actor Chiyen Vikram will be part of the film. The film is produced on a grand scale by KL Narayana, with the story penned by Rajamouli's father, Vijayendra Prasad.



### Shiva Rajkumar joins Ram Charan's film, *RC16*

Ram Charan's film with director Buchi Babu Sana is currently underway. This marks Buchi Babu's second project after his successful debut with Uppena a few years ago. Janhvi Kapoor is playing the female lead, and the makers have already roped in Jagapathi Babu for a key role. Now, Kannada star Shiva Rajkumar, also known as Shivanna, has been cast for a pivotal role. Recently, the team completed Shivanna's look test for the film, and he will be joining the shoot soon.

Tentatively titled *RC16*, the film has already completed two shooting schedules. Shivanna, known for his commanding screen presence, is expected to bring his unique aura and majesty to his role. This will be the first time Shivanna and Ram Charan share the screen together. Along with Shivanna and Jagapathi Babu, Bollywood actor Divyendu, known for his role in *Mirzapur*, is also part of the cast. The film features music by AR Rahman, cinematography by Ratnavelu, and production design by Avinash Kolla.

### Mrunal shares BTS from *Dacoit* shoot

Actress Mrunal Thakur took to social media to give a sneak peek into her ongoing shoot for the upcoming film *Dacoit* in Hyderabad. Taking to her Instagram handle, the Jersey actress shared behind-the-scenes moments from the set. She posted a couple of photos and tagged Adivi Sesh and producer Supriya Yarlagadda. The photos depict two hands making a heart pose. Recently, Mrunal Thakur has been sharing behind-the-scenes moments from her shoot on Instagram. Just yesterday, she posted a fun video of herself singing along to Dhanush's hit song *Why This Kolaveri Di* while cruising in her car. She explained that she and her team decided to groove to the track since they missed out on doing their usual pack-up dance. Mrunal also shared a couple of photos featuring her head draped in a stunning organza dupatta. In the pictures, she was seen showcasing her green bangles while applying her makeup. Another photo featured a close-up portrait of Thakur, highlighting her expressive eyes and calm demeanor. She was



partially veiled with the delicate, sheer dupatta, adding a touch of elegance and tradition to the shot. "Channelling my inner *swarg se utri kokil kanthi apsara*," Mrunal Thakur captioned the post. Directed by Shaneil Deo, the film is produced by Supriya Yarlagadda, co-produced by Suniel Narang, and presented by Annapurna Studios. *Dacoit* follows the story of an enraged convict bent on taking revenge against his ex-girlfriend, who has betrayed him. As he devises a dangerous plan to ensnare her, the narrative unfolds into a gripping and emotionally charged journey of love, betrayal, and vengeance.

### Is this the reason for *Robinhood* delay?

The film *Robinhood*, starring Nithiin and Sreeleela, is set to hit screens on March 28. Directed by Venky Kudumula and produced by Mythri Movie Makers, the film was originally scheduled for release in December last year but was postponed to March. According to a source, the delay occurred because the makers were not satisfied with the film's output and decided to rework it before its release. Although the makers initially announced December 25 as the release date and began promoting the film, they unexpectedly chose to postpone it without offering an official reason. They were under pressure to release the film by Sankranthi in January but

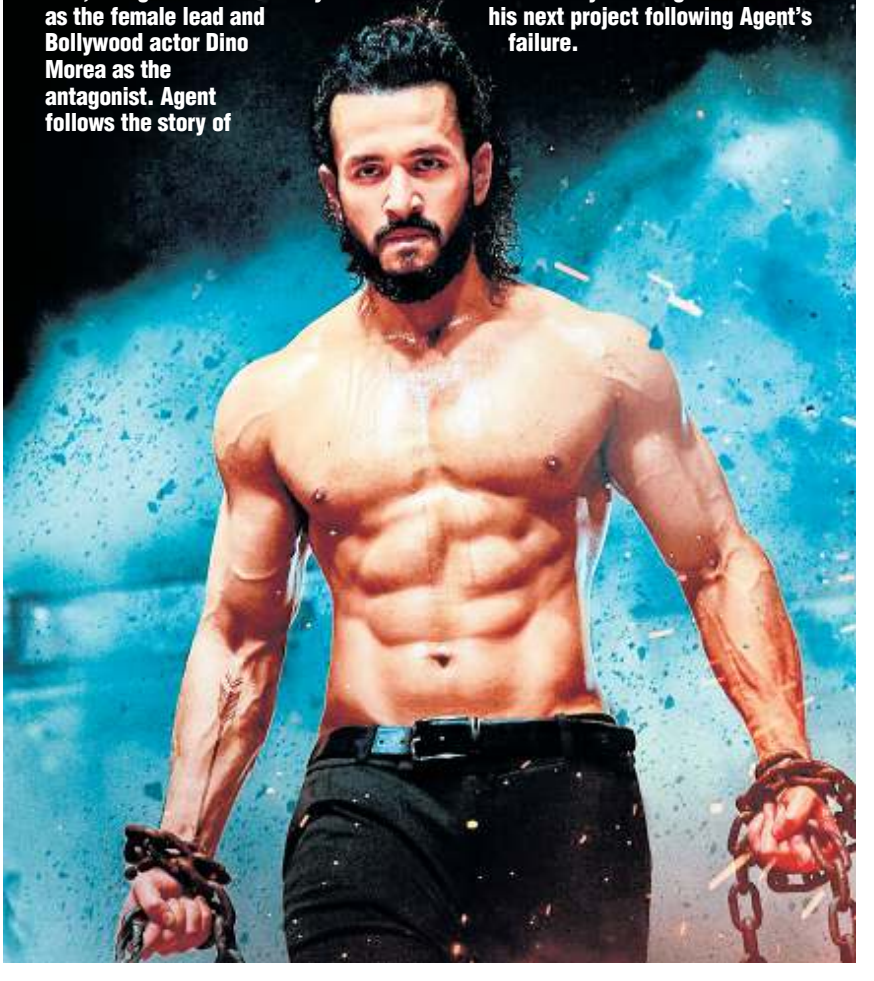
opted against it due to the heavy competition from other films. The delay has reportedly been caused by concerns over the film's content, leading to some patch-work and reshoots in the last couple of months. Sreeleela plays the female lead in *Robinhood* and this film is expected to provide a significant break for her, especially as many of her earlier films did not perform well at the box office.



### Finally, Akhil Akkineni's *Agent* Is Streaming on OTT

Akhil Akkineni's *Agent* has finally set its OTT release date after almost two years. Sony Liv announced that the spy-action film will premiere on March 14. Directed by Surender Reddy, *Agent* was released in 2023 but failed at the box office, disappointing many, including producer Anil Sunkara, who had high expectations for the film. The film also features Malayalam superstar Mammooty in an important role, along with Sakshi Vaidya as the female lead and Bollywood actor Dino Morea as the antagonist. *Agent* follows the story of

an ambitious RAW agent, Rickey (Akhil Akkineni), assigned a mission by RAW chief Colonel Mahadev (Mammooty) to track down a former agent, Dharma (Dino Morea), who has a dangerous plan to destroy India. The film promises an adrenaline-pumping action ride. The story was written by Vakkantham Vamsi, with the project jointly produced by Rambrahmam Sunkara, Ajay Sunkara and Deepa Reddy. Akhil Akkineni has yet to begin work on his next project following *Agent*'s failure.



## Smith announces retirement from ODI cricket

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ DUBAI

Australia's stand-in skipper Steve Smith on Wednesday announced his retirement from ODI cricket following his team's four-wicket loss to India in the Champions Trophy (CT) semifinal here but the star batter will continue to play Tests and T20 Internationals. The 35-year-old, who was leading the world champion side in the absence of an injured Pat Cummins, informed his teammates after the match that he would be stepping away from the 50-over format with immediate effect.

Reflecting on his decision, Smith said it was the right time to step aside as Australia builds itself for the 2027 ODI World Cup. "It has been a great ride, and I have loved every minute of it," Smith said.

"There have been so many amazing times and wonderful memories. Winning two World Cups was a great highlight along with the many fantastic team-mates who shared the journey," he added



in a media release shared by Cricket Australia. A key member of Australia's victorious 2015 and 2023 ICC World Cup-winning teams, Smith was named Australia's men's ODI Player of the Year in 2015 and 2021 and earned a place in the ICC men's ODI Team of the Year in 2015. He took over the ODI captaincy in 2015 and, fittingly, led the side one last time in his final match. "Now is a great opportunity

for people to start preparing for the 2027 World Cup so it feels like the right time to make way," he said. The veteran of 170 ODIs said Test cricket remains a priority and he is looking forward to the World Test Championship Final in June. "I feel I still have a lot to contribute on that stage," he said. "Now is a great opportunity for people to start preparing for the 2027 World Cup, so it

feels like the right time to make way," he added. Smith leaves behind a stellar ODI legacy built over a period of more than 15 years, since making his debut as a leg-spinning all-rounder against the West Indies in 2010. Over the years, he transformed into one of Australia's most dependable batters, accumulating 5,800 runs at an average of 43.28, including 12 centuries and 35 half-centuries. He also

chipped in with 28 wickets at 34.67.

Tributes pour in from CA. Tributes poured in for the star with CA chief executive Todd Greenberg and chairman of selectors George Bailey hailing Smith's immense contribution to Australian cricket.

"Congratulations to Steve on an amazing One Day International career during which he has made a vast contribution to Australia's performances in the 50-over format," stated Greenberg.

"Right up until his final ODI innings Steve exhibited an incredible ability to accumulate runs in all conditions and his astute leadership has been crucial in the team's ongoing success including the 2015 and 2023 ICC World Cup victories. "We're fortunate Steve still has much to offer in the Test and T20 arenas and I look forward to witnessing the next stage of one of cricket's great careers," Greenberg added.

Bailey echoed the sentiment. "We fully understand and support Steve's decision to retire from One Day International cricket.

## We still have not played perfect game: Gambhir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ DUBAI

Not the one to be easily pleased, India head coach Gautam Gambhir said his team is still searching for that "perfect game" despite entering the Champions Trophy (CT) final with an all-win record and he is hopeful that it would come in the summit clash on Sunday. India trounced Australia by four wickets in the first semifinal here on Tuesday, with senior batter Virat Kohli making a well-paced 84. "See, in international sport, you want to keep improving. You don't say that you've ticked all the boxes. We still haven't played a perfect game. I will never be satisfied with the performances," Gambhir said in the post-match press conference.

Gambhir hoped that India can produce that "perfect game" in the Champions Trophy title clash on March 9. "We still have one more game to go. Hopefully, we can play a perfect game. We want to keep



improving, we want to be ruthless on the cricket field but absolutely humble off the field as well," he added. India have taken some bold calls such as playing four spinners, promoting Axar Patel to No.5 and pushing down KL Rahul to No. 6 to suit the team's needs. It may look illogical from outside but for Gambhir they were minor pieces in the grand plans of keeping the players "out of the comfort zone" to extract the best out of them.

"I think cricket is all about being out of your comfort zone, and that is how you grow. If everyone is in their comfort zone, then there is stagnation. So, I believe, and you've seen the results. I know you guys will keep going back to 3-1 in Australia. "But everyone in the dressing room is staying out of the comfort zone be it the coaching staff, be it the players and hopefully we continue to do what is important for Indian cricket," he said.



## Praggnanandhaa draws with Shankland in Prague Masters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ PRAGUE

Grandmasters R Praggnanandhaa and Aravindh Chithambaram continued to remain in joint lead after drawing their sixth-round games in the Prague Masters Chess tournament here.

Praggnanandhaa was held to a draw by Sam Shankland of the United States, while Aravindh split the point with Quang Leim Le of Vietnam to be on four points out of a possible six, on a day when all the games were drawn for the first time in the tournament. Praggnanandhaa and Aravindh continued to be followed by top seed Wei Yi of China, Anish Giri of Holland, Vincent Keymer of Germany and Quang Leim, all of whom are on three points apiece.

Another half-point behind are the Czech duo of Nguyen Thai Dai Van and David Navara, Gurel Ediz of Turkey and Shankland. With three more rounds to come, Praggnanandhaa holds the edge over Aravindh as he is set to play the next two games with white pieces. Aravindh, on the other hand, has only one game with white left.

The seventh round will be crucial for Praggnanandhaa as he takes on Wei Yi, while Aravindh will meet Anish, who has drawn all his games so far.

Praggnanandhaa was under pressure for some time in the middle game against his American opponent, who played white. The opening featured a regular Italian game and Shankland threw

open the position with a knight sacrifice on the king side. Soon after, Praggnanandhaa had to part with one of his rooks for a minor piece, and what resulted was a very complex position. Navigating between better and equal thereon, the Indian allowed Shankland to go for a forced repetition and the game was drawn after 43 moves.

Playing white, Aravindh faced the Queen's gambit declined – one of the most classical setup for decades now – and had his forces around the centre right from the word go. However, as the game progressed, Quang Leim remained impregnable, and by the 19th move itself the players had exchanged as many as three minor pieces and two pawns.

The pawn structure took a small turn when Aravindh decided to part with his last bishop for a knight but black had nothing to worry about. The players soon arrived at a rook-and-pawns endgame where the draw was a just result after 32 moves. In the Challengers section, the fortunes of Divya Deshmukh did not change as she suffered another defeat and was pushed to the sole last spot among 10 players. Vaclav Finel defeated Divya in a rook-and-minor-piece endgame leaving the Indian on 1.5 points.

Jonas Buhl Bjerre of Denmark regained the joint lead by beating Marc'Andria Maurizzi of France. The Dane shares the top spot with Nodirbek Yakubboev of Uzbekistan.

## Sreesanth backs India to win Champions Trophy final

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ DUBAI

Team India simply looks unstoppable, exuding confidence, energy and dominance and World Cup-winning former India pacer Sreesanth feels no side can stand in their way in the Champions Trophy final on Sunday.

The Rohit Sharma-led side trounced reigning world champions Australia by four wickets in the first semifinal here on Tuesday to make it four wins out of four in the ICC showpiece.

They now await the winners of New Zealand and South Africa for the Sunday's summit clash. "Doesn't matter who the opponents are in the final – India are going to win," the 2007 T20 World Cup and 2011 ODI World Cup winner told PTI Video.

"There is so much positive energy. They are playing some wonderful cricket. The way



Virat Kohli anchoring the chase, the way Shreyas Iyer has stepped up – let's just keep our fingers crossed." Sreesanth also emphasised the importance of staying grounded.

"Let's be humble in our process. That's what Mahi bhai (MS Dhoni) used to say – one of the best captains I've played with.

"Even Sourav Ganguly used to say the same. Dada always used to say, let's be humble and trust the process. That's exactly what the Indian team

marked his last appearance before the injury layoff.

"Shami 'one of the biggest fighters. I remember seeing him bowl at the nets. I used to tell him, 'Shami, you will go a long way', and I like it a lot because of the way he has upgraded himself.

"Playing for the country, forgetting the past, looking ahead, even after coming back from injury and doing well, getting the wicket in the first over..."

Sreesanth also believes India's domination in world cricket has well and truly arrived.

"Absolutely, there's no doubt that India will dominate world cricket for years to come. The talent pipeline is incredible – from domestic cricket to Under-19 tournaments to women's cricket, the system is flourishing. We have to thank the BCCI and Jay Shah for building such a strong foundation. The support system, the sponsorships, the structure – India are well ahead of the rest of the world."

Mohammad Shami, returning after a 14-month injury layoff, has once again emerged as India's leading wicket-taker in a world tournament, claiming eight wickets. He shares the top spot with New Zealand's Matt Henry, both having taken eight wickets.

Shami was the highest wicket-taker in the 2023 World Cup, with 24 wickets, where India finished as runners-up to Australia. That tournament



## Trying to get my rhythm, says Shami

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ DUBAI

Mohammed Shami conceded that operating as India's lone front-line pacer after coming back from a lengthy injury layoff has been a heavy "responsibility" but said he is trying to regain his "rhythm" to suit the team's needs in the ongoing Champions Trophy (CT).

Throughout the ICC showpiece here, Shami has shared the new ball duties with either Harshit Rana or Hardik Pandya because of the injury-fordced absence of Jasprit Bumrah.

Rana is still learning the ropes, while Pandya is an all-rounder and delivering 10 overs in an ODI is not precisely his territory. Shami has so far picked eight wickets in the tournament.

"I am trying to get my rhythm back and contribute more for the team. It is a responsibility when there are no two proper fast bowlers and I have to shoulder more responsibility," Shami said in a mixed zone interaction after India's semifinal victory over Australia here on Tuesday night.

Shami said his workload is heavier without Bumrah steaming in at the other end but he is trying to give more than a 100 per cent to the role. "There is a load when you are the one main fast bowler and the other is an all-rounder. You have to pick wickets and lead from the front.

"I have become used to this load and am trying my best to make it easy for others and

give more than 100 per cent," he said. Shami was sidelined for over a year with an ankle injury that he picked during the 2023 ODI World Cup. The veteran said he is now ready to shoulder the responsibility of bowling long spells.

"The trust debate ends when you get selected in the team. I don't think that one should worry about his fitness too much. We just need to put in the effort and see how your body takes it. After all, we are labourers.

"I am now ready to bowl long spells. Short spells are anyways easy – 6 balls or 12 balls – and in limited-overs cricket it doesn't matter whether it's 10 or six overs," he noted.

The 34-year-old has bowled his full quota of 10 overs against Bangladesh and Australia, while he bowled just eight and four overs against Pakistan and New Zealand respectively in the earlier matches, primarily because spinners bowled nearly 35 overs in those games. Being at one venue helped me

Shami said it is an advantage for him that all of India's Champions Trophy matches are being played in Dubai.

"It has definitely helped us because we know the conditions and the behaviour of the pitch. It is a plus point that you are playing all the matches at one venue.

"The main thing is to gauge the conditions and know how the pitch behaves because you are playing at one venue and you can get to know it well," he said.

## Playing fearless cricket while remaining calm has worked for me: Rahane

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ MUMBAI

Kolkata Knight Riders captain Ajinkya Rahane has credited his success in the Indian Premier League and domestic T20s to playing "fearless cricket" while remaining calm.

The 36-year-old topped the batting charts in the previous edition of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy with 469 runs, including five half-centuries, at a strike rate of 164.56. His aggressive approach also paid off in the IPL where he was the batting mainstay for Chennai Super Kings in the last two editions.

"It was always about being an anchor and the others would play around me. (But the) last 2-3 years, it's always about playing with freedom, fearless cricket and go out and back my game," Rahane, the brand ambassador of Skillhub Online Games Federation, said here on Tuesday.

"I am trying to do that (play fearless cricket) but it's (also) about following my processes and routines and staying loyal and truthful to the game."

Rahane, who led Mumbai into playing the Ranji Trophy semifinal and scored 467 runs, said he would carry the confidence from domestic cricket into the upcoming edition of the IPL.

"For me, personally, batting-wise I am doing really well. Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy was really good for me, I had a really good domestic season. So, I am really confident about myself," he said.

"It is just about staying in the moment, staying calm and keep backing myself, not to think too much ahead and not to think about the past. It's always about improving and enjoying my game," he added.

Rahane felt that India's victory in the Champions Trophy semifinal in Dubai on Tuesday could also be attributed to the side not



dwelling into the past record against Australia in the knockouts of ICC tournaments. Before Rohit Sharma's side won the match by four wickets, India had never beaten Australia in the knockouts of ICC tournaments since the quarterfinal of the 2011 World Cup in India.

India had lost to Australia in the 2015 Cricket World Cup semifinal, the 2023 World Cup final and the 2023 World Test Championship final.

"Very happy that India has won the semifinal against Australia and have entered the final. I want to congratulate the team and I am sure they will do well in the final," Rahane said.

"What happened in the past is gone, the team must be thinking about the present and their aim was to beat Australia... To beat them in the semifinal.

"Obviously, what has happened in the past keeps playing on the mind but, as a cricketer, your

mind is always in the moment, in the present, to do well in that game to win the match," Rahane said.

Rahane, who has been appointed KKR captain ahead of the upcoming IPL season, said he would like the defending IPL champions to keep it simple.

"Our team is really good, everyone is playing really well. We had a camp in Mumbai, all the domestic players were here but international players are also playing which is really good," he said.

"We won the championship last year but again this year it is about starting from the scratch, starting from zero. T20 is a funny format and IPL is a challenging tournament.

"I am happy and humbled to be captain of the KKR team. We would like to keep it simple, take one game at a time and stay in the moment and enjoy the format," Rahane added.