

DON'I MISS...

Fake call centre targeting NRIs busted

In a significant crackdown, the Telangana Cyber Security Bureau (TGCSB) has dismantled a major cyber fraud operation at Patrika Nagar in Hi-Tech City here on Thursday. The operation involved 63 employees, mainly from North Eastern states, engaged in cybercrimes targeting non-resident Indians (NRIs) and US citizens. The TGCSB's swift action led to the apprehension of suspects. Investigations in underway. Operating under the guise of Exito Solutions, the fraudulent call centre impersonated PayPal customer service ...

'Linguistic equality is not chauvinism'

-PAGE: 3

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK President M K Stalin on Thursday said demanding linguistic equality is not chauvinism and alleged that the "true chauvinists and anti-nationals are the Hindi zealots" who believe their entitlement is natural but resistance is treason. Stalin, in a social media post said: "When you are accustomed to privilege, equality feels like oppression. I am reminded of this famous quote when some entitled bigots brand us chauvinists and anti-nationals for the 'crime' of ...



Tariffs, defence surge loom over EU meet

The impact of a potential trade war with the United States and massive increases in European defence spending and government borrowing loom over a policy meeting Thursday at the European Central Bank, which is exne

MEETING AGAINST DELI **Future City to come** up on 30,000 acres

Cabinet approves Future City Development Authority

PNS HYDERABAD

The Telangana Cabinet approved several important policy decisions focusing on social justice, urban development, women's empowerment and governance reforms at its meeting held on Thursday chaired by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. The Cabinet decided to establish the Future City Development Authority (FCDA) to oversee the development of a 30,000-acre urban hub between Nagarjunasagar Highway and Srisailam Highway. The new urban zone will consist of seven mandals and 56 villages, with 36 of the villages transferred from the HMDA to the FCDA.

The government sanctioned 90 posts for FCDA, which will include both regular and outsourced posts. The Hyderabad Metropolitan

Development Authority's (HMDA) limits have been expanded up to the Regional Ring Road (RRR), bringing 11 districts, 104 mandals and 1,355 villages under it. With the draft Bill on SC categorisation

AICC LEADERS TO FINALISE MLC CANDIDATES CM Revanth to visit Delhi today





Ministers Ponuguleti Srinivasa Reddy and Ponnam Prabhakar briefing the media about the Cabinet decisions

this expansion, an additional 332 as per the recommendations of the revenue villages have been includ-Justice ed in HMDA's purview. The Cabinet approved the Indira

Mahila Shakti Mission 2025, aimed at empowering one crore women across Telangana. The Cabinet gave its approval for

SLBC tunnel rescue ops

Disaster Management Authority inundated with water and debris,

Pratap Singh visited the SLBC tunnel informed that the rescue teams were

Shamim Akhtar Commission. The Commission, which submitted its second report on March 2, upheld the recommendations given in its first report on February 3 without any modifications **Continued on Page 2**



Vijayashanthi trying for MLC seat in MLA quota

KOLISHETTY VENKATESHWARLU venkat.k.warlu@gmail.com HYDERABAD

Former MP Vijayashanthi is try-ing hard for the MLA quota MLC ticket in the women's BC quota. It is learnt that Vijayashanthi met AICC President Mallikarjuna Kharge on Thursday in New Delhi

Later, Vijayashanthi floated the Thalli Telangana Party, which was later merged with the TRS and she

became silent even though the Congress is in power. She silently began trying for a MLA quota MLC ticket later.

Continued on Page 2

Cadaver dogs roped in for TG's Nandini wins Gold in National Athletics

PNS HYDERABAD

Agasara Nandini, a student from the Telangana Social Welfare Residential Degree College in Budhera, Sangareddy district, has secured a gold medal in the Heptathlon event at the 38th National Sports Championship held in Dehradun, Uttara hand from February 8 to 1 Nandini, a final-year Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) student, showcased exceptional athletic prowess by outperforming competitors from across the country.

LAGACHERLA INDUSTRIAL PARK

TG High Court stays land acquisition

PNS HYDERABAD

The Telangana High Court has quashed the state government's land acquisition notification for the establishment of a multipurpose industrial park in Lagacharla and Hakimpet villages under Kodangal constituency of Vikarabad district. The court has issued an immediate stay on the acquisition and adjourned the next hearing to the

7th of next month. The bench objected to the acquisition of 8 acres mentioned in the

government's notification, raising concerns about the land acquisition process in Lagacharla and Hakimpet villages. The ruling comes as a setback to the Telangana government's industrial expansion plans in the region.

Despite the legal hurdle, the Telangana government had earlier issued two notifications on November 30 and December 1 to acquire land for the multipurpose industrial park. The Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TSIIC) had initiated the process for acquiring 1,177 acres across multiple villages, including Lagacharla, Polepally, Hakimpet, Pulicharlakunta Thanda, and Rotibanda Thanda in Dudyal mandal. Out of this, 534 acres belong to

> New Tehri - covering multiple Olympic sports, including athletics,

the government, while 643 acres are

privately owned patta lands. Vikarabad Collector Pratik Jain

had earlier assured landowners

compensation of Rs. 20 lakh per

acre, along with a 150-yard plot, job

opportunities for each household,

and Indiramma houses for the

While many villagers agreed to

the land acquisition after compen-

sation assurances, farmers in

Polepally, Hakimpet, Lagacharla,

and Pulicharlakunta Thandas had

opposed the survey process. Some

farmers in Rotibanda Thanda even

prevented officials from surveying

17 acres of government land, rais-

ing concerns over potential displace-

ment and transparency in the acqui-

With the High Court's stay on

acquisition, the future of the indus-

trial park project remains uncertain,

and all eyes are now on the next

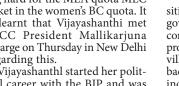
hearing scheduled for next month.

landless.

sition process.

shooting, wrestling, swimming, hockey, boxing, badminton, weightlifting, football, tennis, and table tennis.

With only 10 athletes qualifying for the Heptathlon finals, Nandini demonstrated outstanding skill and determination securir



regarding this. Vijayashanthl started her political career with the BJP and was part of the first BJP government.

was elected as MP from Medak. She later left the TRS and joined the Congress. She later joined the BJP but joined the Congress before the 2024 Parliament elections. Vijayashanthi, who was active all these years suddenly

cut interest rates by a quarter percentage point. Analysts are widely expecting a cut in the European Central Bank's (ECB) benchmark deposit rate to 2.50 per cent, a step to lower borrowing costs for consumers and businesses in an economy that's struggling to get ... -PAGE: 8



Dashing New Zealand opener Rachin Ravindra feels adapting to the conditions will be key to succeed on an "unknown" Dubai surface in the Champions Trophy (CT) final against India on Sunday. Except the group match against India in Dubai. New Zealand have played all their games in Pakistan The Kiwis had also played two games in Lahore during the preceding tri-series involving Pakistan and South Africa. India. on the other, have played all their matches in Dubai and are familiar with the conditions... -SPORTS

PNS HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy is set to visit Delhi on Friday to hold crucial discussions with AICC leaders regarding the MLC elec-tions under the MLA quota. The visit is expected to bring clarity on candidate selection within the next two to three days.

During his stay in Delhi, the Chief Minister will engage in consultations with party leaders on finalizing the names of MLC candidates. Sources indicate that Revanth Reddy will submit a report to the AICC leadership, outlining the political considerations and preferences for the MLC polls.

Among the aspirants are Md Azharuddin, Vem Narender Reddy, Shabbir Ali, Madhu Yashki Goud, Jagga Reddy, Anjan Kumar Yadav, Sama Ram Mohan Reddy, Mahesh Konagala, Charan Kaushik Yadav, Jeevan Reddy, Addanki Dayakar, Sampath Kumar, Sunita Rao among others

evening to review the ongoing rescue operations on the thirteenth day of efforts.

Ministry of Home Affairs National

(NDMA) Secretary Colonel Kirti

PNS 📕 DOMALAPENTA

State Disaster Management Secretary Aravind Kumar briefed him on the current situation inside the tunnel and the progress of the rescue efforts. He explained that a rockfall had damaged nearly 150 meters of the

cautiously cutting through the TBM to reach the trapped workers.

tunnel boring machine (TBM) at the

13.650-kilometer mark, trapping eight workers inside. The area had been

complicating rescue efforts. He

To aid the search, cadaver dogs were brought in from Kerala, and a conveyor belt system had been activated to remove debris, which was expected to expedite the rescue operations.

Continued on Page 2

The national-level event witnessed the participation of nearly 10,000 athletes and officials repre-

HIKE IN QUOTA FOR BCs

Kavitha demands 3 Bills

PNS HYDERABAD

The Telangana Government must introduce three separate bills to increase reservations for Backward Classes (BCs) in education, employment and local governing bodies, BRS MLC Kavitha said. She asserted that if the govern-

ment is committed to the welfare of BCs, it must take concrete legislative action instead of making hollow promises. 'The Telangana Government

acknowledges that BCs constitute 46% of the state's population. If

Continued on Page 2



tice. I demand the introduction of three separate bills - one for education, one for employment and

one for reservation in local governing bodies," Kavitha said, challenging the Congress Government to they are serious about social jus- prove its commitment to Backward

Class empowerment.

Kavitha emphasised that while education and employment reservations involve legal complexities, local governing body reservations are within the state's jurisdiction. Citing Article 243G of the Constitution, she asserted that there are no legal hurdles in providing reservations for BCs at the local level.

"Rahul Gandhi speaks about OBC right. Will the Congress walk their talk? If they stand for BCs, they should act now," she remarked

PNS HYDERABAD

Transport and BC Welfare Minister

Ponnam Prabhakar slammed

BJP MP Bandi Sanjay

Kumar over his remarks

on the Ramzan gift

scheme, calling them a

reflection of his lack of

political awareness. He

said that elections

always have victors and

losers, but the BJP's

obsession with the

Congress shows its insecurities.

them bring funds and projects from

the Centre instead of making baseless

comments. Why hasn't the BJP

launched the construction of an eight-

lane road from Ramagundam to

Continued on Page 2



senting 38 teams from various

states. Competitions were held

across six cities - Haridwar, Nainital,

Haldwani, Rudrapur, Shivpuri, and

spot. The Heptathlon consists of seven challenging events: 100 meters hurdles, high jump, shot put, 200 meters sprint, javelin throw, long jump and 800 meters race. By excelling in all seven events, Nandini clinched first place, earning a gold medal for Telangana.

Harish slams TG govt for falling tax revenues

PNS HYDERABAD

BRS MLA Harish Rao criticised the Revanth Reddy Telangana Government, stating that the state's economy is in a downward spiral with tax collections declining sharply.

Contradicting claims of Telangana's prosperity, he asserted that economic indicators paint a grim picture of stagnation and mismanagement.



"Mr Chief Minister, it's not Harish said, pointing to the slump Telangana rising, but rather in the GST growth rate. Telangana's tax collections falling,"

Continued on Page 2

BJP-BRS nexus exposed in **BJP** emerging as alternative to Cong: Kishan

PNS HYDERABAD

Union Minister Telangana BJP President G. Kishan Reddy celebrated the party's victory in MLC elections, stating that the results reflect the growing public support for the BJP in Telangana.

Addressing party workers at the BJP headquarters in Hyderabad, he declared that people have begun rejecting the Congress Government and that the BJP would intensify its efforts to hold the ruling party accountable.

Kishan asserted that the BJP's electoral gains were a victory for Telangana's teachers, graduates and intellectuals, who are disillusioned with the Congress government's performance. "This success increases our responsibility. The BJP will challenge the Congress government at all steps and ensure that public issues are addressed," he stated.



elections, when the BRS indirectly

Kishan asserted that the BJP's electoral gains were a victory for Telangana's teachers, graduates and intellectuals, who are disillusioned with the Congress government's performance

The Union Minister also accused claimed.

the BRS of indirectly aiding BJP's victory, pointing out that the party chose not to field a candidate despite having 22 MLAs in the region. He alleged that the BRS and the

Congress have been working togeth-er, with secret political agreements Telangana. He criticised the ruling party for benefiting both parties. "This is not the first time. Their hid alliance was evident even in the last parliament

Emphasizing the BJP's growing strength, Kishan stated that 37% of voters backed the party, making it clear that BJP is emerging as the only alternative to the Congress in

failing to fulfil its pre-election promises despite being in power for over 14 months. "Instead of implementing their commitments, they are helped the BJP win eight seats," he engaging in blame games and diver-

sion tactics. But the people are watching," he remarked.

Kishan also questioned the lack of major Central projects for Hyderabad under Union Minister Kishan Reddy's previous tenure in tourism and archaeology and asked why Congress had not taken proactive steps to secure investments and infrastructure projects. He insisted that the Modi government would deliver what Congress failed to

strengthening its grassroots net-work and will soon launch statewide campaigns to address key issues, including teachers' concerns in employment and failures. "We are not just celebrating a win; we are preparing for a bigger fight. Telangana needs a strong alternative, ple in every struggle," he said.

Continued on Page 2

MLC elections, says Ponnam Hyderabad?" Ponnam asked. He accused the BJP and the BRS of working together to defeat the Congress, claiming that their political understanding was clear in the recent Graduate MLC elections

'The BJP and the BRS joined hands to stop the Congress. If MLC elections were held in districts represent-ed by KCR, KTR, and Harish Rao, why didn't BRS "If BJP leaders have real strength, let field a candidate? Instead, they chose

to side with the BJP," he pointed out. Criticizing Bandi Sanjay's statements, the minister remarked, "As a Union Minister, he should focus on Telangana's development instead of

making immature comments. What did Hyderabad's own MP Kishan Reddy achieve when he was the Minister for Tourism and Archaeology? Can he list any major projects he brought to Hyderabad?"

Ponnam also questioned why BJP MPs haven't worked for Telangana's key projects and why KCR, KTR, and Harish Rao haven't disclosed where they cast their votes in the MLC elections. "BJP is celebrating an election where they barely scraped through. They didn't even get a proper major-ity—so why all the arrogance?" he remarked

Acknowledging the Congress candidate's narrow loss, Ponnam assured that a review would be conducted but maintained that this defeat would have no impact on the party's future.

achieve in Telangana. He revealed that the BJP is

and the BJP will stand with the peo-



MDCL launches toll-free grievance helpline

PNS HYDERABAD

The Telangana Mineral Development Corporation Limited (TGMDCL) has introduced a toll-free number, 155242, to streamline grievance redressal concerning sand loading and transportation across the state. The 24/7 helpline aims to enhance transparency and accountability in the corporation's operations by providing citi-zens a direct channel to report issues.

Once a grievance is registered, it is assigned a unique internal tracking number and reviewed by department officials. Complaints that fall out-side TGMDCL's jurisdiction olution.

Jagga Reddy heads to Delhi to meet Rahul Gandhi, denies seeking MLC seat

PNS HYDERABAD

Senior Congress leader Jagga Reddy has dismissed speculation about his interest in an MLC seat, asserting that he has no intention of seeking the position. Speaking to the media before leaving for Delhi, he clarified that his visit was solely to meet Rahul Gandhi and discuss his contributions to the 2017 Sangareddy public meeting organized for the Congress leader. "I want to make it very

clear-I am not asking for an MLC seat. I have already contested with a ticket given by the party, but circumstances did not favor me. I have served as an MLA three times, and I am not someone who begs for positions," Jagga Reddy stated,

are forwarded to the relevant

district or departmental authorities for resolution. Citizens can report grievances from any sand reach areas operated by TGMDCL, ensuring that concerns are addressed efficiently.

Officials review complaints daily, taking necessary action based on the nature of the grievance. Additionally, the toll-free number is available on the TGMDCL-SSMMS website, making it easier for citizens to access the helpline.

The initiative is expected to improve public confidence in the corporation's operations by offering a transparent mechanism for complaint res-

NITI Aayog praises TASK, **KTR** welcomes recognition

PNS HYDERABAD

The Telangana Academy of Skill and Knowledge (TASK), established by the previous BRS government, has received praise from NITI Aayog for its significant contribution to skill development and employment generation. Reacting to the recognition, BRS Working President KTR expressed his satisfaction, calling it a testament to the government's efforts in providing employ-ment and livelihood opportu-

EPFO is temple

for workers, says

The Union Minister for Labour

and Employment, Mansukh

Mandaviya, said that the

Employees' Provident Fund

Organisation (EPFO) is a tem-

ple for workers, emphasising its

crucial role in addressing their

Inaugurating the new EPFO Zonal Office in Begumpet on

Thursday, he outlined the gov-

ernment's efforts to enhance

digital services and streamline

claim settlements to benefit

Mandaviya highlighted that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership,

the government has taken

proactive measures to ensure

the well-being of workers. He pointed out that EPFO

is one of the largest financial

institutions in the country,

and urged officials to expedite

claim processing and grievance

resolution.

workers across the country.

Mandaviya

PNS HYDERABAD

concerns.



nities to the youth of Telangana.

report on social media, KTR highlighted the benefits TASK has brought to students and job seekers in the state. He recalled that TASK was launched in 2014 under the leadership of then Chief Minister KCR, with a vision to bridge the gap a vision to bridge the gap between industry, academia, and government. He noted that the initiative played a key role in developing a skilled workforce through structured training magazine training programs.

ly 80 industrial organizations, helping more than 35,000 students and young professionals secure jobs and livelihood Expressing his appreciation for NITI Aayog's acknowledg-Referring to NITI Aayog's opportunities. SCCL to hike female workforce participation: Kishan Reddy

PNS HYDERABAD

Union Minister for Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy emphasized the growing role of women in the mining sector and other industries, stating that their participation is essential for India's progress. essential for India's progress. Speaking at an event on Women's Participation in Mining, held at Taj Vivanta, Hyderabad, ahead of International Women's Day, the minister lauded the contributions of women in nationbuilding and called for greater inclusion in various fields. He emphasized that women in mining and private industries were also breaking barriers, with night shifts now becoming a reality. "We are witnessing a historic shift, with women playing a key role in mining. Singareni Collieries is actively working to increase female workforce participation," he added.

Kishan Reddy announced that the Coal India Jyoti Women Leadership Program would train women in leadership roles within the industry. Additionally, he stated that

ground mines, they are prov-ing that no field is beyond their remarked.

Recalling his tenure as Minister of State for Home Affairs, Kishan Reddy noted that he had personally witnessed women in Border Security Forces guarding the Jaisalmer border in 50-degree heat and patrolling Kashmir in freezing sub-zero temperatures.

ment, KTR said that TASK's

success is a reflection of the

BRS government's commit-

ment to empowering

Telangana's youth. Over the

past decade, TASK has trained

students from 761 colleges,

benefiting over 9.84 lakh stu-

dents and 18,650 faculty mem-

bers. The initiative also facili-tated partnerships with near-

"Indian women have played the role of Durga to protect the nation, Lakshmi to drive the economy, and Saraswati to spread knowledge. From ancient philosophers like Maitreyi to warrior queens like Rani Rudrama Devi, women have shaped India's history," he

hyderabad 02

We gave several gifts to BJP and soon we will give them another: Sridhar Babu

PNS HYDERABAD

er one."

Minister Sridhar Babu hit back at BJP MP Bandi Sanjay over his remarks on the Ramzan gift scheme, questioning whether the BJP and BRS had jointly given the gift to each other. Speaking at Gandhi Bhavan, the minister took a sharp dig at the BJP, stating, "We have already given several gifts to BJP, and soon, we will give them anoth-

than ever. "Everyone saw how both parties worked together to strengthen their hidden alliance," he remarked.

Sridhar Babu accused the BJP and BRS of having a secret pact, which, he claimed, Questioning BRS's role in the election, Sridhar Babu asked why the party did not field its own candidate and what the final vote count for BRS senior leader Ravinder Singh was. "Ravinder Singh worked tirelessly in the elec-

days.

Govt releases Rs 33 crore for strengthening PESA

PNS HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has taken a significant step towards strengthening the implementation of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) by releasing Rs. 33 crore for the salaries of PESA coordinators, mobilizers, and other operational activities. The funds were sanctioned following the intervention of Tribal Welfare Minister

The PESA Act, aimed at promoting the development of agency areas, will be actively implemented to safeguard the rights and welfare of tribal communities. PESA coordinators and mobilizers will play a

> CM Revanth to visit ...

crucial role in spreading awareness about tribal rights

and development opportuni-

Triba

Agencies

Continued from page 1

While Telangana maintained a consistent GST growth rate of over 6% in the last six years -barring the pandemic period under

In a rare display of camaraderie beyond political rivalries, leaders from BRS, BJP, and Congress came together to attend weddings, proving that weddings have no party lines in

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy attended the wedding of BRS Dubbaka MLA Kotha Prabhakar Reddy's daughter Keerthi and Nithish. One of the functions among the wedding events had previously been at the center of controversy. It was related to the same wedding Revan eremonies

cluded. Politics takes a backseat as BRS,

BJP, Cong leaders attend weddings

PNS HYDERABAD

Telangana politics.

about the challenges he faced while organizing the 2017 Sangareddy meeting. "I have long wanted to explain to Rahul Gandhi how that meeting was planned and executed under difficult circumstances. Now, I am heading to Delhi with that purpose," he said.

urging media outlets not to

spread speculative reports

regarding his political ambi-

tions. He revealed that for the

past six months, he had been

planning to visit Delhi to per-

sonally inform Rahul Gandhi

Jagga Reddy added that upon reaching Delhi, he would seek an appointment with Rahul Gandhi. "If I get the appointment, I will discuss everything with him," he con-

The minister stressed the importance of digital transfor-Harish Rao. He said when mation, stating that efforts are SLBC tunnel incident hapunderway to eliminate the need for physical visits to

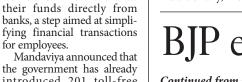
went to attend one of the func-

pened, Harish had travel to Dubai. Harish said that he

tion of Keerthi's weddingturning a family occasion into a political talking point. Interestingly, BRS and Congress MLAs reciprocated by attending the wedding of BJP MLC Malka Komaraiah's

EPFO offices. He revealed that workers can now withdraw

son Yashashvi. Adding to the cross-party interactions, BRS leaders KTR and Harish Rao attended both weddings, proving once again that while politics may be fierce in public, relationsh persona



Mandaviya announced that the government has already introduced 201 toll-free helpline to assist workers and is now planning to launch a 301 service to offer even more support. He also said that through the Universal Account Number (UAN), workers can cess banking and financia

been revised from 4.28

TMCs to 1.41 TMCs to mit-

igate flooding risks in sur-

healthcare infrastructure,

5.15 acres in Peddagolkonda

of Shamshabad mandal was

allocated for a 100-bed ESI

Recognising sporting excellence, the Cabinet

approved a government job

for Paralympics 2024 bronze

The government also

sanctioned 361 new posts for

revenue divisions and 495

posts (330 regular and 165

outsourcing) for the Telangana Residential

medallist Deepthi Jivanji.

In a move to improve the

rounding villages.

hospital.

reach," he said.

appointed for the mining industry

He expressed pride in celebrating the event among women shaping the future of India's mining industry. "Women are leading the nation in various sectors, and their role in achieving the Vision 2047 of a Developed India is historic. From space to under-

BJP emerging as alternative...

Continued from page 1

Dismissing Congress's claims of a referendum, Kishan Reddy said the ruling party must introspect instead of making excuses. "The public has already begun

ernment's performance. "This success increases our responsibility. The BJP will challenge the Congress government at all steps and ensure that public issues are addressed," he stated. The Union Minister also

the BRS of indirectly

archaeology and asked why Congress had not taken proactive steps to secure investments and infrastructure projects. He insisted that the Modi governwould ment

Minister Kishan Reddy's previ-

ous tenure in tourism and

Seethakka.

became evident in the recent Graduate MLC elections. "We respect the verdict of the voters and thank every individual who voted for Narender Reddy. I also extend my gratitude to the dedicated Congress workers who

tion," he said. The minister alleged that BJP and BRS conspired to

himself admitted that he had the full support of the BRS. This only confirms that BRS was standing with BJP throughout," he stated. The minister reiterated that the Congress would soon respond to BJP in its own way,

hinting at a strong political counter-move in the coming

defeat the Congress candidate and that their "Fevicol bond" had become clearer

ties in scheduled areas. Under the supervision of Integrated Development Agencies (ITDAs) and Project Officers, PESA coordinators and mobilizers will work towards ensuring that tribal communities benefit from the provisions of the Act. Their role will be instrumental in facilitating grassroots-level governance and driving agency area devel-

opment. The government's move is seen as a major step in ensuring the protection and empowerment of tribals while advancing the overall development of scheduled areas.



The Congress high command is likely to take a final call after reviewing the recommen cial announcement expected soon. The CM is scheduled to stay in Delhi for the next two days, holding a series of meetings with senior leaders before returning to Hyderabad.



Reddy had taken a swipe at transcend party affiliations.

BJP MP Tejasvi ties knot

PNS BENGALURU

Bengaluru South MP and Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha national president Tejasvi Surya tied the knot with Carnatic classical singer Sivasri Skandaprasad in a traditional ceremony here on Thursday.

The wedding was held amid the chanting of Vedic hymns.

Several top BJP leaders including party's state president B Y Vijayendra, Union ministers V Somanna and Arjun Ram Meghwal, as well as BJP MPs and MLAs attended the ceremony and blessed the couple.

TODAY	
ALMANAC	
Month & Paksham:	Sukla Paksha
Tithi:	
Ashtami:	Mar 06 10:51 AM
	to Mar 07 09:18 AM
Navami:	Mar 07 09:18 AM
	to Mar 08 08:16 AM
Nakshatram:	
Mrigashirsha:	Mar 07 12:05 AM
	to Mar 07 11:32 PM
Ardra:	Mar 07 11:32 PM
	to Mar 08 11:28 PM
Rahukalam:	10:58 AM to 12:27 PM
Yamagandam:	3:24 PM to 4:52 PM
Varjyam:	07:54 AM to 09:30 AM
Gulika:	8:02 AM to 9:30 AM
Amritakalam:	02:56 PM to 04:30 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham:	12:03 PM to 12:50 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Partly Cloudy Temp: 36°° Humidity: 61% Sunrise: 6:21 AM Sunset: 6:16 PM

Updated: March 6, 2025 5:00 PM

services seamlessly

for employees.

Future City to come up ...

Continued from page 1

been approved, focusing on After reviewing 71 repredeveloping 27 special sentations from various tourism zones and attracting investments of Rs 15,000 groups, the Cabinet held discussions on the legal crore in the next five years. aspects and directed officials The policy aims to generto finalise the draft Bill after ate three lakh jobs in the consulting legal experts to tourism sector. The Miss avoid problems. World 2025 event, scheduled

The Cabinet also for May 2025, will be hostapproved increasing BC ed in Hyderabad and is reservations to 42 per cent. expected to see the partici-Two separate Bills were prepation of 140 countries. The Cabinet approved the appointment of Grama pared – one ensuring 42 per cent reservations in local self-rule bodies and anoth-Palana Officers (GPOs) in er in education and govern-10,954 villages to improve local governance. Each revment jobs.

The government decided enue village will have a desto withdraw the earlier Bill ignated GPO, with preference given to former Village approving 36 per cent reser-Revenue Assistants (VRAs) vation to avoid conflict with and Village Revenue Officers the new proposal. The mission integrates all (VROs). The capacity of Gandhamalla Reservoir has

Self-Help Groups under a unified framework, replacing the earlier system where rural SHGs operated under SERP and urban groups under MEPMA. The retirement age for

SHG members has been raised from 60 to 65 years, while the minimum joining age has been lowered from 18 to 15 years.

The government decided to establish a dedicated board for the Yadadri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple like the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Board. Amendments will be made to the Telangana Charitable and Hindu Religious Institutions and Endowments Act, 1987,

Educational Institutions The Telangana Tourism Society (TREIS).

will continue to do so. Telangana, like other states, will give them a return gift in the elections," he remarked. With the BJP securing a stronger foothold in the state, Kishan assured that the party would continue to expose Policy 2025-2030 has also the Congress government's failures and fight for the rights of Telangana's people under Prime MBJP emerging as the only alternative to the Congress led by Kishan Reddy

Union Minister and Telangana BJP President G. Kishan Reddy celebrated the party's victory in the MLC elections, stating that the results reflect the growing public support for the BJP in Telangana.

Addressing party workers at the BJP headquarters in Hyderabad, he declared that people have begun rejecting the Cong Govt, BJP to intensify efforts to hold the ruling party accountable.

Kishan asserted that the BJP's electoral gains were a victory for Telangana's teachers, graduates and intellectuals, who are disillusioned with the Congress gov-

aiding BJP's victory, pointing out that the party chose not to field a candidate despite having 22 MLAs in the region.

He said that the BRS and the Congress have been working together, with secret political agreements benefiting both parties. "This is not the first time. Their hidden alliance was evident even in the last Parliament elections, when the BRS indirectly helped the BJP win eight seats," he said.

Emphasizing the BJP's growing strength, Kishan stated that 37% of voters backed the party, making it clear that BJP is emerging as the only alternative to the Congress in Telangana.

He criticised the ruling party for failing to fulfil its pre-election promises despite being in power for over 14 months. "Instead of implementing their commitments, they are engaging in blame games and diversion tactics. But the people are watching," he remarked.

Kishan also questioned the lack of major Central projects for Hyderabad under Union

Kavitha demands...

Continued from page 1

Taking a dig at both the BJP and the Congress, Kavitha pointed out their failure to field BC candidates in the recent MLC elections. "This is not democracy. Both national parties ignored BC representation and fielded upper-caste candidates. The BRS did not contest, which altered the equation. When we called for BC unity, a BC candidate emerged and gave stiff competition. If the two national parties had supported BCs, the outcome would have been different," she asserted.

Kavitha also expressed her deep sorrow over the killing of a Telanganaite in the United States.

"This is heartbreaking. The government must act swiftly to bring the body home. The victim's family is facing unimaginable pain, and I pray for them. I also extend my support to all Indian students in the US. I am confident that the Indian Embassy and government will stand by them," she said.

Congress failed to achieve in Telangana.

He revealed that the BJP is strengthening its grassroots network and will soon launch statewide campaigns to address key issues, including teachers' concerns in employment and failures. "We are not just celebrating a win; we are preparing for a bigger fight. Telangana needs a strong alternative, and the BJP will stand with the people in every struggle," he said.

Dismissing Congress's claims of a referendum, Kishan said the ruling party must introspect instead of making excuses.

"The public has already begun rejecting the Congress, and they will continue to do so. Telangana, like other states, will give them a return gift in the elections," he remarked. With the BJP securing a stronger foothold in the state, Kishan assured that the party would continue to expose the Congress Government's failures and fight for the rights of Telangana's people under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

Continued from page 1

ticket for his wife.

taries

ticket.

Meanwhile, former MLA Rekha

Naik is trying to get an MLC tick-

et. It is learnt that Rekha Naik's hus-

band has been trying for an MLC

Rekha Naik met AICC secre-

Vishwanathan seeking an MLC

and Viswanathan face to face.

the actual situation in their con-

Vishnunath and

ment, the growth rate in February crashed to just 1%.

Continued from page 1

'This decline is not just a statistic. It signals a slowdown in economic activity, reduced consumer spending and dwindling business confidence," he warned. He said vehicle tax collections recorded negative growth between April and November 2024, indicating a weakening auto sector. Registration tax revenue slumped after August 2024, which he attributed to the government's reckless handling of HYDRAA and the Musi Project. Harish criticised the government's failure to sustain Telangana's momentum in revenue generation. "The inability to boost GST revenues, along with declining vehicle and registration tax collections, exposes the shortcomings of Revanth Reddy's economic policies," he said. He called upon the state government to acknowledge its failures, apologise to the people

Cadaver dogs roped in for ...

Continued from page 1

Later, the NDMA Secretary, along with NDRF personnel and the Kerala dog squad, entered the tunnel to assess the situation firsthand. Plans were made to deploy the cadaver dogs early Friday morning to assist in locating the trapped workers. Nagar Kurnool District Collector Badavath Santosh, SP Raghunath, Dogra Regiment Commandant Parikshit Mehra, NDRF Commandant Prasanna, and Jayaprakash Associates MD Pankaj Gaur were among those present during the visit.

Vijayashanthi trying for MLC ... stituencies, that is, inquire about the

more damage is done.

and focus on reviving

Telangana's economy before

implementation of schemes and the government's performance. The AICC members will ask for details on issues like the gap between cadres, leaders and the old and new leaders and the differences between them. The AICC team will prepare a report containing details given by leaders.

Congress leaders attended the Meanwhile, AICC Secretaries meeting of AICC secretaries one by phoned important leaders. It is one held at the Gandhi Bhavan. İt learnt that they phoned nearly 30 is learnt that the secretaries asked leaders. The leaders will meet AICC the leaders, "Are you ready for addiin-charge secretaries Vishnunath tional responsibilities in terms of the party? Do you have any other AICC members can now know options? Do you have any idea that we can do this?"

LOST

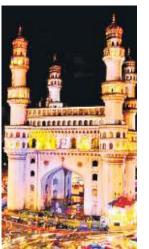
Original Share Certificates of FRONTIER SPRINGS LIMITED with Certificate No.18497, Distinctive number 1829012-1829111, No. of Shares 100, Certificate No.18493, Distinctive number 1828612-1828711, No. of Shares 100, Certificate No.18496, Distinctive number 1828912 1829011, No. of Shares 100, Certificate No.18495, Distinctive number 1828812-1828911, No. of Shares 100, Certificate No.18494, Distinctive number 1828712-1828811, No. of Shares 100. belonging to VALETI GOPICHAND, S/o VALETI VENKATESHWARLU, R/o Plot No.40, Flat No.101, Saadhana Residency Power Nagar, Moosapet, Hyderabad, Telangana 500018, while during house shifting. Finders may send certificate to the address mentioned above.

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City Pioneer

he pioneer

HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | MARCH 7, 2025

Lenskart lays foundation for Rs 1,500 cr

eyewear manufacturing facility

Information Technology Minister Sridharbabu said that the

plant will create nearly 20,000 jobs

SaveLife Foundation to enhance trauma care centre in Nizambad

PNS HYDERABAD

SaveLife Foundation, in partnership with Mercedes-Benz India Private Limited, is improving trauma care in Nizamabad district, under its Zero Fatality Corridor Program. This initiative, part of Mercedes-Benz India's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts, aims to make high-risk highways safer through crash data analysis, community engagement, bet-ter trauma care, and capacity building.

A special event at Area Hospital in Armoor marked the handover of advanced trauma care equipment to enhance emergency response. These upgrades will enable life-saving interventions, reduce delays, and improve survival rates



R Pushpendra Kaushik from SaveLife Foundation, Dr Amruthram Reddy, RMO amd Dr. Ravi Kumar at SaveLife Foundation

Indian Consulate in Chicago mourns TG student's death

PNS HYDERABAD

The Consulate General of India in Chicago has expressed deep sorrow over the tragic demise of Praveen Kumar Gampa, an Indian student from Telangana, who was pursuing postgraduate studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA. In a statement shared on

social media platform X, the Consulate said, "We are saddened by the untimely death of Praveen Kumar Gampa, a postgraduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwauk The Consulate is in contact with Praveen's family and the university, helping them with all possi-ble support. Our heartfelt condolences and prayers are with his family and friends of the departed. The Consulate has assured full assistance to Gampa's family and is coordinating with the university to provide necessary support. However, the cause of his death has not been disclosed. The tragic incident has sent shockwaves through the Indian student community in the US, with many urging authorities to ensure a smooth repatriation process for Gampa's remains.

before patients are transferred to higher medical centers.

The Medical Superinte ndent, Dr Ravi Kumar highndent, Dr Ravi Kumar high-lighted the impact of these improvements, stating that upgraded emergency services will enhance survival rates and empower healthcare profes-sionals. He noted that this facility now includes resuscitafacility now includes resuscitation tools, respiratory support, hemorrhage control, and orthopedic instruments for trauma stabilisation.

Meanwhile, Piyush Tewari, CEO of SaveLIFE Foundation, emphasized that specialised emergency care is crucial in reducing road crash fatalities. This initiative reinforces the Foundation's commitment to safer highways and improved emergency response across India

Equality and Empowerment

was held on Thursday at The Marvel Hall in T-Hub in

The Women Empowerment

Committee of The Federation

Madhapur here.

to industrial growth and job creation. He announced that production will start within two years, with full operations in four years. He noted that the Telangana government and Lenskart signed an MoU for this project on December 8 last year. The facility will manufacture eyewear for export to Japan, Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, Indonesia, the

PNS HYDERABAD

Information Technology Minister

D Sridhar Babu laid the foundation

stone for Lenskart's manufacturing

facility in Tukkuguda's Non-SEŽ

General Park. The project, with an investment of Rs 1,500 crore, is

expected to create nearly 2,000

Speaking on Thursday, Sridhar

Babu said Telangana is committed

ronment and welcomed investors to join "Telangana Rising." He also assured that local talent would

globally.

benefit from job opportunities. He added that while Lenskart has a unit in Rajasthan, this new facility will be the largest of its kind

The event was attended by Telangana Government Chief Whip Patnam Mahender Reddy, TSIIC Managing Director Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, Ranga Reddy

District Collector Narayana Reddy, Lenskart representatives Choudhary and Sumit, former MLA Kichannagari Lakshma Reddy.



Fake call centre targeting NRIs, US citizens busted: 63 held

PNS HYDERABAD

03

In a significant crackdown, the Telangana Cyber Security Bureau (TGCSB) has disman-Cyber Security Bureau (TGCSB) has disman-tled a major cyber fraud operation at Patrika Nagar in Hi-Tech City here on Thursday. The operation involved 63 employees, mainly from North Eastern states, engaged in cyber-crimes targeting non-resident Indians (NRIs) and US citizens. The TGCSB's swift action led to the apprehension of suspects. Investigations in underway in underway.

Operating under the guise of Exito Solutions, the fraudulent call centre imperson-ated PayPal customer service agents using sophisticated software like EYEBEAM and X-LITE.

Their modus operandi included placing deceptive calls and sending phishing emails to PayPal customers in the US, falsely claiming unauthorised transactions. Victims were coerced into divulging sensitive banking information under the guise of resolving fraudulent activities or securing refunds, said Shikha Goel, Director, Telangana Cyber Security Bureau. In some instances, victims were deceived into transferring funds to purportedly secure accounts. The masterminds behind this operation, including Kaivan Patel Rupesh Kumar alias Jaddhu or Jadu Bhai from Gujarat, coordinated with his brother in Dubai and another associate, Ajad. They orchestrated the theft of PayPal customer data and set up mule accounts in the USA to launder illgotten gains through cryptocurrency, making tracking difficult.

Recruits were hired via social media platforms like LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook, promising salaries of Rs 30,000 for call cen-ter work. Once on board, they were trained in fraudulent tactics. During the raid, authorities seized 52 mobile phones, 63 laptops, and 27 Exito Solutions ID cards used in these criminal activities

No country can progress by neglecting half of its population: Shikha Goel PNS HYDERABAD half of its population is left A half-day programme "EmpowerHer: Accelerating

behind. Empowerment cannot occur in a vacuum. It requires an ecosystem.

Speaking further, she said Telangana Police are leading in India in various initiatives. She cited a few initiatives such as SheTeam, Bharosa, etc and others. SHE teams were created to provide good safety and secu-

of Telangana Chambers of rity to women, she said. For Commerce and Industry this, we create general aware-ness using technology integra-(FTCCI) organised it to mark and celebrate Women's Day. Shikha Goel, Director General tion, she added. of Police, Women Safety Wing,

Bharosa support centrr works on a holistic convergence approach where a victim in diswas the chief guest. Speaking on the occasion, addressing at the meeting, Shikha Goel said empowertress is getting all the help and support at one place, away ment is not about fairness and from the police. The India's But it is about deve he Supreme Court courf opment and nation building. appreciated the Bharosa model, she shared. about women's rights partici-The nation cannot advance if pated.

"T Safe" is another promising initiative representing a significant stride towards creating a safer and more secure environment for all citizens. It was launched by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, to prioritise safety and security, Travel Safe (T-Safe) is a ride-monitoring service for women introduced by Telangana police, she added.

R Ravi Kumar, Senior Vice President of FTCCI said every day is a women's day. And there is no need for a special day and a celebration of Women's day.

Over 300 women professionals, Entrepreneurs, Aspiring Business Women, Students, Young Women, HR and Organisational Leaders and duals who are passionate

CSSH launches 'He Healthy Spine'

PNS HYDERABAD

The Centre for Spine and Sports Health (CSSH) launched 'Her Healthy Spine', India's first preventive health programme focused on women's spinal health, using advanced musculoskeletal (MSK) health technology at the Kotak Pullela Gopichand

Badminton Academy. On the eve of International Women's Day 2025, CSSH held a panel dis-cussion highlighting spinal health challenges faced by women. The event, moderated by Dr Sushmitha Sundar, atured experts from various fields. Kiranmai Pendyala from Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) India noted that women often neglect spinal health due to family and work priorities. She emphasised awareness campaigns to address posture issues and lifestyle risks.



Hydraa Commissioner AV Ranganath visiting lakes in Khajaguda and Ibrahim Bhag in Hyderabad on Thursda

'Beautification works of Khajaguda, Ibrahim Bagh lakes will be taken up'

PNS HYDERABAD Hyderabad Disaster Response

raised concerns about develop-ment challenges at Khajaguda conservation efforts. He urged for speedy completion of the ssed solutions Local authorities and resiwith Irrigation Department officials, instructing them to dents Commissioner that floodwater divert sewage water from the lake through proper channelifrom Durgam Cheruvu, sation. Khajaguda Lake, Malkam The Commissioner stressed Lake, and Film Nagar Lake the need to develop the lake flows into Ibrahim Bagh Lake. surroundings into a tourism-Due to rapid urbanisation, friendly environment and these water bodies and their the Tourism feeder channels are getting urged Development Corporation to polluted with sewage and participate in the initiative. waste, leading to mosquito During his visit, he suggested infestations and an unpleasant to Tourism AGM Varaprasad environment. that steps be taken to enhance Ranganath assured residents that necessary steps would be the lake's appeal. He noted that recent taken to divert wastewater, encroachments at Ibrahim protect the lake, and improve Bagh Lake had been removed water quality. He also disand several organigations had cussed the potential for further already adopted the lake for development of the 88-acre.

informed the



IT Minister D Sridhar Babu laying the foundation stone for Lenskart's manufacturing facility at Tukkuguda on Thursday

Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia. The Minister emphasised Telangana's business-friendly envi-



Director General of Police, Women Safety Wing Shikha Goel at the 'EmpowerHer: Accelerating Equality and Empowerment programme in Hyderabad on Thursday

Nagalapalli

Naga Raju is

new EFLU VC

of Prof Nagalapalli Naga Raju

as the new Vice-Chancellor of

The English and Foreign

Languages University

In an official communica-

tion from the Department of

Higher Education, the

appointment was confirmed

under Statute 2 (1) and (2) of

The English and Foreign

rently serves as the Vice-

Chancellor of Gangadhar

Meher University, Odisha. Prof Naga Raju will hold

office for a tenure of five years

from the date he assumes

charge or until he attains the

age of 70 years, whichever comes earlier. His service

terms will be governed by the

Act, Statutes, and Ordinances

of EFLU.

(EFLU), Hyderabad.

Sangeetha Rani Gummi from iCatch Communications discussed media industry stress, urging routine spine assessments. Vedha Sampath from

Healthcare Tech Investor called for early spinal health awareness, stressing good posture and regular checkups.

Ponnam praises city police for maintaining peace

and Assets Protection Agency (HYDRAA) Commissioner AV Ranganath visited Khajaguda and Ibrahim Bagh Lakes and said that beautification works would continue

without any hinderance. During his inspection of Khajaguda Pedda Cheruvu and Ibrahim Bagh Lake in Neknampur on Thursday, Commissioner Ranganath highlighted the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributions from corporate entities and urged local residents, especially affluent communities, to support these initiatives.

Representatives from NSL Infra and Divyasree Infra

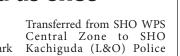
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY Four women police officers posted as SHOs

PNS HYDERABAD

In a significant move to mark International Women's Day on March 8, CV Anand, city Police Commissioner, has transferred four women inspectors as Station House Officers (SHOs).

Speaking on the occasion, Anand said that there is growing role of women in law enforcement, stating that women are excelling in all fields and should showcase their leadership as SHOs. He congratulated the officers and handed over their transfer orders.

Jyotsna Talloju



The Government of India's Ministry of Education has announced the appointment

SHO WPS Central Zone.

from Task Force Admin to SHO Secretariat (Lake) Police Station

Venkat Laxmi is Transferred from CCC to SHO Traffic Police Statiopm Nampally.

Chandra Kumar Kagitha is transferred from SHO Kachiguda Police Station to is Main PCR

City Police Commissioner C V Anand

PNS HYDERABAD

Station Domata Debora is Transferred from Main PCR to

Chitti Bura is transferred

Among other key transfers

Languages University Act, 2006, President of India in her capacity as the Visitor of EFLU, approved the selection of Prof Naga Raju, who cur-

PNS HYDERABAD

Backward Classes Welfare and Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar inaugurated the new Deputy Commissioner of Police East Zone office building at Amberpet here on Thursday. He inspected the building and praised the efforts of those involved in its construction.

The Minister stated that if government land is provided for a fire station, registration office, or MRO office, they are ready to allocate it. He commended the police for maintaining law and order and building good relations with the public, which enhances Hyderabad's reputation. He urged the police to be strict with criminals and ensure justice for victims.

He also emphasised that Hyderabad, being a cos-mopolitan city, is developing in tourism and IT. CCTV cameras have made it easier to catch criminals. He encouraged police to support those



Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar inaugurating the new DCP East Zone office at Amberpet in city on Thursday

seeking help. He also congratulated Balaswamy, DCP East

Zone. Meanwhile, Hyderabad Police Commissioner CV Anand expressed happiness over the inauguration. He noted that the DCP East Zone was established in 1982 but strengthen law enforcement and control crime. He highlighted that ensuring law and public protection attracts

investments and boosts the economy

Anand promised that police stations are being upgraded, and victims should feel safe filing complaints. Night patrols have significantly reduced crime. Several new police stations will open soon. Traffic management efforts, including Operation Rope to remove footpath encroachments and improved signal timing, aim to ease congestion. He reaffirmed the Hyderabad City Police's commitment to serving the public

Fake 2 BHK housing scam busted, 4 arrested

PNS HYDERABAD

The Commissioner's Task Force, South Zone Team, in coordination with Chatrinaka Police, busted a cheating gang involved in a fake double-bedroom housing allotment scam. Four individuals, including a repeat offender, were arrested for deceiving the public by issuing fake allotment letters for government-provided 2BHK houses and collecting money from unsuspecting victims. The accused were identified

as M Jyothi (49), a social

worker from Chatrinaka; P

Sunil Singh (43), also a social

worker from Chatrinaka, G

Ramesh (43), a kirana shop

and L Nitin Kumar (23), a

Chatrinaka. Police seized Rs 1

letters from them. According to officials, Jyothi

and Sunil Singh used their

connections in government

Rapido

driver

from

offices to gain the trust of peole, promising them doublebedroom houses. They collected Rs 10,000 to Rs 20,000 per applicant, claiming to expedite the allotment process. The duo even took applicants to government offices such as the MRO Office, GHMC Office, Collector's Office, and the Secretariat to build credibility. They engaged Ramesh to source applicants and Nitin Kumar to handle office work and collect documents such as Aadhaar cards and family group photos. The gang had been operat-

ing for two years, and when pressure mounted from applicants demanding allotments, they created fake housing owner from Santosh Nagar; allotment orders using counterfeit government rubber stamps. The fabricated documents falsely promised houslakh in cash, multiple fake rub-ber stamps, a Canon color printer, a Dell laptop, and over 200 fabricated allotment es in locations such as Hi-Tech City, Tatti Annaram, and Kollur.

Notably, prime accused Jyothi had been previously arrested in 2020 for a similar fraud case registered at Jubilee Hills Police Station.

lacked a dedicated office in Amberpet. The government sanctioned the new building to order, women's safety, and

lelangana he pioneer 04



Customers staging protest at the bank at Rayaparti in Warangal district on Thursday

Bank imposing extra charge on pledged gold: Customers

PNS WARANGAL

Customers at the SBI branch at Rayaparti in Warangal district staged a protest over the bank allegedly imposing extra charges on pledged gold ornaments.

Around 496 affected individuals claimed they had pledged gold to take loans, but when they paid back the money, the bank officials were imposing extra charges under the pretext of "depreciation" and not returning their gold. Last November, thieves had broken into the bank and stolen 19 kilograms of gold, but some of it was recovered. They stated that for the past three months, they had been going around the bank but the officials were not providing any clear answers.

The customers insisted that they want ed back the exact amount of gold they had pledged. Tensions escalated when they entered the bank and argued with the offi-cials, causing a minor confrontation inside.

PNS KARIMNAGAR

HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | MARCH 7, 2025

Salinity in groundwater sparks concern among farmers

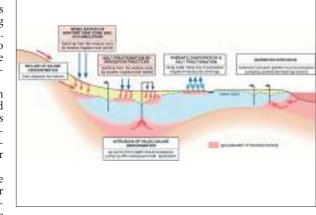
PNS NIRMAL

The salinity of groundwaters has been on the rise causing concern among the farmers. It has been attributed to excessive application of the chemical fertilisers and pesticides.

The chemicals have been percolating into the ground polluting the ground waters making them unfit for drinking, according to tests conducted on the ground water samples by officials.

According to a conservative estimate, there are over 70,000 borewells in the district. Thousands of acres are being irrigated under these borewells. Excessive application of fertilisers and pesticides have been turning the ground waters into harmful for human consumption.

The groundwater has been losing its natural freshness and turning into saline waters. The nitrate content among the groundwater is



found to be at alarmingly high. Officials predict that the use of the groundwater for irrigation would lead to decreased crop yield and increase the susceptibility of the crops getting attacked by various pests.

often contracting diseases, losing their immunity.

Because of the threat of groundwater turning increasingly saline, the Groundwater Department and Agriculture Departments have been conducting awareness pro-Humans eating the agricul-tural products cultivated using chemical fertilisers are granmes jointly for the ben-efit of the farmers on how to prevent the groundwater

becoming saline. The officials of the two departments have been touring villages with a small mobile laboratory. In front of the farmers, the offi-cials have been testing the samples of groundwater and explaining the situation to them.

They have been advising the farmers to reduce the application of fertilisers and pesticides on their crops gradually. Further, they advise the farmers to reduce the application of ground waters to cultivate crops and use rain water, tank water, canal water and water from check-dams to cultivate crops. The officials have been

sensitising the farmers on increasing salinity and nitrates in the ground water touring the selected villages on a laboratory-fitted vehicle. The farmers have been advised to reduce the application of chemical fertilisers on crops and asked to use surface water for irrigation purposes.



CCTV footage showing an alleged kidnapper whisking away the boy from the government hospital premises in Nalgonda

Three-year-old boy kidnapped in Nalgonda

PNS NALGONDA

A three-year-old boy's kidnapping has caused a stir at the government hospital in Nalgonda town. The boy, Abu, who was playing on the hospital premises, was abducted by an unidentified person.

This incident happened on Tuesday afternoon. In the evening, when the boy's parents could not find him after searching the hospital premises, they sought help from the police on Wednesday. A case was registered, and an investigation was initiated.

The hospital's CCTV footage showed an unknown individual speaking on the phone and leading the boy away. It was identified that the boy was taken in the direction of the railway station. However, there was no footage of the abductor appearing in the CCTV at any point in the vicini-ty. The police also searched the bus station area, but no footage was found of the boy being taken. As a result, the police suspect that the boy has been nidden somewhere in Nalgonda town. In response, the police have formed four teams to search for the abductor. It is noteworthy that the victim's family, Shah Munni Sabegam and Ahmed, have been living on the hospital premises with their son Abu for the past three years, but the hospital

staff did not recognise them.



Information Technology Minister D Sridhar Babu and Government Chief Whip Patnam Mahender Reddy at Maheswaram DCP office in Rangareddy district on Thursday

Developmental works worth Rs130 cr launched in Maheshwaram

PNS RANGAREDDY

Information Technology and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu and Telangana Government Chief Whip Patnam Mahender Reddy performed a puja at the Maheshwaram DCP office building complex under the Rachakonda Commissionerate.

Rachakonda Commissioner Sudheer Babu, District Collector Narayana and DCF Sunitha v

at the event. Following the ceremony, Minister Sridhar Babu, Mahender Reddy, and Collector Narayana Reddy launched various developmental projects in the Maheshwaram constituency, with a total investment of Rs 130 crore.

The initiatives aim to boost infrastructure and public services in the region, furthering the Telangana government's commitment to development in

Congress Party's Karimnagar Parliament Constituency incharge Velichala Rajender Rao on Thursday accused the BRS and BJP of having a secret pact in the Graduate MLC elections.

He claimed that former chief minister K Chandrashekar Rao Velichala Rajender Rao (KCR) supported the BJP because of being framed in cases. He alleged that the BJP

'BRS, BJP colluded to defeat

Cong candidate in MLC polls'

the MLC elections and stated that the party's popularity is gradually declining as people no longer trust them. Rajender Rao also questioned what the BJP had done for unemployed people in the past 10 years and criticised the party leaders for

misleading the public. He said that Modi was only telling fairy tales while failing to provide job opportunities for graduates and the unemployed. He challenged BJP leaders to

PNS KARIMNAGAR

The Kothapalli-Manoharabad railway line has been a long-cherished dream of people of the undivided Karimnagar and Medak districts and efforts are on to complete its construction and make it opera-

The residents of Karimnagar district, who have been waiting for a long time, are excited as the railway works on the Kothapalli-Manoharabad route are nearing completion. The construction of the key Kothapalli Railway Station has almost been completed. It is likely to be opended soon. With the inauguration of this station, the long-awaited dream of the district residents is expected to come true, and they are expressing their hap-

New Kothapalli railway station to be ready soon

tional as soon as possible.

districts by September this year. The Central government had approved the 151.36 km Kothapallilanoharabad new railway line in July 2016 with an estimated cost of Rs 1,160.48 crore. However, the project faced significant delays due to issues related to land acquisition. The revised estimate for the railway line's completion now stands at Rs 2,780.78 crore, with Rs 1,444.17 ore already spent acquii

the agreement, the State government is expected to contribute one-third of the total project cost. So far 76.135 km of the total 151.36 km has been completed, leaving over 75 km of work still pending. In the 2024-25 budget, Rs 350 crore has been sanctioned, of which Rs 262.93 crore has already been spent. The target is to complete over 30 km of the railway line in the Siddipet and Rajanna Sircilla

The Minister also pointed out that the State government is responsible for land acquisition under the agreement. Delays in acquiring land had previously slowed down the project's progress. However, 90 per cent of land acquisition issues have now been resolved, with 199 acres out of the required 2,830 acres

cious intent to prevent the Congress candidate from winning in the MLC elections.

had come together w

had won the elections with

money power by spending

Speaking to the media, Rajender Rao lashed out at

KCR for entering into a secret agreement with the BJP, He was

scared of Prime Minister

Narendra Modi and extended

support to the BJP. He men-

tioned that the BRS and BJP

crores of rupees.

Rajender Rao alleged that KCR enacted a drama to escape from the cases and stated that the wrongdoings cannot go unpunished. He further stated that KCR's support to the BJP was out of fear of Modi causing trouble for his family.

He accused the BJP leaders of spending crores of rupees in

disclose how many jobs their government at the Centre had created.

Rajender Rao also acknowledged the efforts of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, PCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud, District In-charge Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy, along with other Ministers and leaders, for their hard work in securing Narendra Reddy's vic-

One dead. several injured as truck

overturns

PNS WARANGAL

Cries of anguish filled the air as one labourer died and several others were injured when a truck carrying them overturned in Chennaraopet mandal on Thursday. The labourer, who were on their way to Itukulapally under Narasmpet mandal to pick chillies.

They hailed from Jeedigadda Thanda. The accident happened on the

outskirts of Konapuram under Chennaraopet mandal in the district. The deceased was identified as Bhanouth Sukya (55), from Jeedigadda Thanda, who died at the scene. He is survived by his wife, Shanthi, and two children, Mohan

and Sunitha. The two critically injured labourers, Irya and Dangli, were taken along with Sukya's body to Warangal MGM Hospital. The other twenty injured labourers were transferred to Narsampet Government Hospital for treatment.

Locals at the scene claimed that the trolley was transporting 50 labourers

on a goods vehicle, which is against the regulations. Due to a shortage of labourers, farmers often bring in workers from other areas and provide transportation. However, these vehicles, typically designed for goods, are often overloaded and unfit for transporting passengers, which has led to several similar accidents in the past.

Centre approves elevated corridor on Srisailam highway

PNS NAGARKURNOOL

The Central government has finally given the green signal for the construction of the elevator corridor, which is proposed to be built at a height of 30 feet through the forests. With this approval, the construction of the elevator corridor, which will cover a distance of 62 kilometres from Brahmanapally under Achampet mandal in Nagarkurnool district to Srisailam, will be undertaken with an estimated budget of Rs 7,700 crore.

As part of the elevator corridor construction, engineering experts have designed an iconic bridge to be built in the Srisailam region as a special attraction. The process of land acquisition for the construction of the elevator corridor, which requires nearly 370 acres of land, will soon take shape.

In the construction of the corridor, authorities have designed plans to ensure that wildlife is not disturbed, and there is no harm to the forest wealth. Since night travel is restricted in the Nallamala forest region, if the elevator corridor is built, this restriction will be lifted,



Model elevated corridor

allowing 24-hour vehicle Srisailam region will develop as a transportation and movement. The elevator corridor will be constructed at a tourist hub, and people from height of 30 feet, passing the region are expressing their joy. To facilitate transover hills, ridges, and streams in the forest, and authorities portation and export-import suggest that there will be activities from different dischances of wild animals tricts and states to the being exposed to danger on Srisailam area, which curthe roads due to vehicle rently only relies on road movement. travel due to the absence of

Once the project is comsea transport, railways, or air pleted, it is expected that the facilities, the construction of

the elevator corridor will make it much easier for vehicles to move in and out of the area. As part of the project, road widening on both sides will allow for 24-hour heavy vehicle movement.

The forest department has set regulations regarding the flyover construction on the elevator corridor, stating that ramps for vehicles to get on and off the flyover should not be built in the middle. To prevent disturbances to wildlife during the night, the forest department has also requested that lighting on the elevator corridor be kept minimal, with dim lights being used instead of fluorescent lights.

Since the elevator corridor will be constructed entirely through the Nallamala forest area, spanning 62 kilometers, the government has directed that the construction work be carried out according to the guidelines of the central wildlife directors. Once the construction is complete, it is expected that travel time and distance from Hyderabad to Srisailam, as well as to Andhra Pradesh, will be significantly reduced, and local people are optimistic about the benefits of this project.



Warangal District Collector Satya Sharada and Kakatiya University Vice-Chancellor Acharya K Pratap Reddy and others at Women's Day celebration in Warangal on Thursday

Collector asks women to be brave, dynamic

customs.

PNS WARANGAL

On Wednesday, Kakatiya University's Women's Engineering College organised a pre-event at the university auditorium to mark International Women's Day. Satya Sharada, Warangal District Collector, and Acharya K Pratap Reddy, Vice-Chancellor of Kakatiya University, attended the event.

In his address, Vice-Chancellor Pratap Reddy emphasised that women can excel in management roles. Satya Sharada highlighted

the multi-tasking abilities of women and urged them to be brave and dynamic. She stressed the importance of perseverance, stating that there are no shortcuts to success. Furthermore, she advised the youth to use their intelligence wisely and asked them to respect Indian traditions and

The Collector also stated that Indian youth have the potential to make an impact on the global stage and that success is ultimately a state of mind. B Rama, a governing council member emphasised the importance of mental stability for women and the need for caution in the development

of technology. Professor K Vidmehi from the Department of Telugu acknowledged the historical struggles of women. She also urged women to strengthen their ability to question and challenge norms. The pro-gramme, which was organised by Assistant Professor T Swapna, saw active participation from faculty members, non-teaching staff, researchers, and female students, all coming together to celebrate women's achievements and empower future generations.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION NIT No.: 18/EE-28/SB2/GHWC2024-25 Date: 05-03-202 Name of the Work: Trash Collector, Operator, Shifting from one lake to another lake Date: 05-03-2029 Qty: HourMonth/Each; Bid Submission Start date & Time / Bid Submission of Closing Date & Time: 05-03-2025 & 11.30 am / 10-03-2025 & 11.30 am, Name & Address officer Cell No.: Executive Engineer, 9154796465, 7331189186. For further letails can be sent at e-procurement @ http://www.tender.telangana.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engl Division No. 28, GHMC

R.O.No: 11026-PPICLIA0VT112824-25, Dr. 86-03-2825



with an undivided share of 25.00 sq yards land in the total land 611.00 sq yards or 610.79 sq mts ir Sy No 1318 relating to RR Enclave in pramises of H-No-3-7-662 and 3-7-693 situated a vanilatipatly locality of Karimnagar Within the limits of Municipal corporation Karimnagar under the urisdiction of sub district and district registration Karimnagar. Boundaries of land Norft: Pot of others, South:30-0" Wide Road, East House of Chandu and Devid, West: House of Hameed and Ahmed. Boundaries of Flat:North: Joint wall and Flat No.302, South: Lift and Open to sky East: 51 "Wide Corridor West: Open to Sky.

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Encumbrances on property	Mortgaged to INDIAN BANK
Reserve Price	Rs.17.11 Lakhs (Rupees Seventeen
	Lakhs and eleven thousand rupees only)
END Amount	Rs.1.71Lakhs
	(Rupees One Lakh Seventy One Thousand Rupees only)
Bid incremental amount	Rs.0.10 Lakhs (Rupees Ten thousand only)
Date and time of e-auction	26.03.2025 10.00 AM TO 05.00PM
Property ID No	ID(B0504344738680
provider PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd. to par 8291220220. For Registratio support baanknet@peballiance.com menfioned above while searching R	ebsite (https://baanknet.com) of our e auction service toipate in online bid. For Tachnical Assistance, please call n status and EMD status, please email to Biddess are advised to use Property ID Number or the property in the website with https://baanknet.com. scalable in the website (https://baanknet.com)
Place: KARIMNAGAR, Date:03.03.202	S Sd-Authorised Officer, Indian Bank



Nation 05

ACROSS THE STATES



BSF recovers gold dust worth Rs 49 lakh from man at Petrapole

old dust worth over Rs 49 lakh was found concealed Ginside the anal cavity of a man by BSF personnel at Petrapole, near the Indo-Bangladesh border, the paramilitary force said in a statement on Thursday. Jawans from the 145th Battalion of South Bengal Frontier apprehended the man-who claimed to be a fashion designer based out of Dubai-after discovering 564 grams of gold dust wrapped in polythene and hidden in his anal cavity on Wednesday, the statement said. The seized gold dust has an estimated market value of Rs 49,13,624, it added. The man, attempting to cross into India from Bangladesh, identified himself as a Mumbai resident. "Driven by greed and the lure of quick money, he devised a plan to smuggle gold from Dubai to India via Bangladesh. However, his plan was foiled due to the vigilance and alertness of BSF jawans, leading to his arrest," the statement added. The accused has been handed over to relevant authorities along with the seized gold dust.



WAI signs pact with J&K govt to boost river cruise tourism

he Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) on Thursday signed an agreement with the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) government to boost river cruise tourism on three national waterways in the Union Territory, according to an official statement. The agreement aims to further bolster tourism generate employment, boost economic growth and provide a new mode of leisure/budget tourism on local rivers. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on the sidelines of Chintan Shivir being held in Srinagar in the presence of Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal. Of the 111 national waterways in the country, the Union Territory has three declared national waterways, i.e., River Chenab (NW-26), River Jhelum (NW-49) and River Ravi (NW-84). As part of the pact, IWAI, which is under the Union Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, will provide waterside infrastructure, i.e., ten floating jetties and landside infrastructure comprising of waiting hall and other amenities for cruise passengers.

Trump's multipolarity move suits India: Jaishankar

HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | MARCH 7, 2025

PNS LONDON

The US administration under President Donald Trump is moving towards multipolarity, which suits India's interests, and the two nations have agreed on the need for a bilateral trade pact, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said. India's role in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, the trajectory of the BRICS grouping of nations and relations with China were among the other major foreign policy

issues touched upon during a session titled 'India's rise and role in the world' at the Chatham House think-tank here Wednesday evening. "We have been one of the

few countries who have been regularly talking to both Moscow and Kyiv at various levels... Wherever there's been a sense that India can do something, we have always been open-minded about it. Our consistent position has been that they need to do

direct negotiations," he said. Jaishankar was asked about his thoughts on the first few weeks of the new US government and, specifically, about Trump's reciprocal tariffs.

'We see a president and an administration which, in our parlance, is moving towards

and DMK President M K

demanding linguistic equality

is not chauvinism and alleged

that the "true chauvinists and

PNS CHENNAI

tance is treason.



multipolarity and that is something that suits India," said Jaishankar, who is on a six-day visit to the UK and Ireland.

"From President Trump's perspective, the one big shared enterprise that we have is the Quad, which is an understanding where everybody pays their fair share... There are no free riders involved. So that's a good model which works," he said. The Quad alliance consists of the US, India, Australia and Japan.

On the specific issue of tar-iffs, the minister noted that Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal is currently in Washington to discuss a bilateral trade pact, following discussions between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Trump at the White House last month.

Demanding linguistic equality

"We had a very open conversation about it (tariffs) and the result of that conversation was that we agreed on the need for a bilateral trade agreement," he said. During the exchange with

Chatham House Director Bronwen Maddox, he covered a broad spectrum of issues, including his "cautious optimism" over the India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations after his ministerial discussions over the past few

days. "It's a very complicated process. So, given the complexity, it's natural that it would take time... from my discussions with Prime Minister (Keir) Starmer, Foreign Secretary David Lammy and [Business] Secretary Jonathan Reynolds, I got a consistent message that the British side is also interested in moving forward.

I had a few points to convey on behalf of my concerned colleagues as well. So, I'm cautiously optimistic and hope that it doesn't take that long," he said.

On China, Jaishankar noted some positive movement since October 2024, including the opening of the Mount Kailash

pilgrimage route in Tibet. "We have a very, very unique relationship with China as the only two billion plus populat-od countries in the world ed countries in the world... we want a relationship where our interests are respected, sensitivities are recognised and works for both of us," he said.

Responding to an audience question on "solving" issues in Kashmir, the EAM stated: "On Kashmir, actually we have done, I think, a good job solving most of it.

Removing Article 370 was step number one, restoring growth and economic activity and social justice in Kashmir was step number two, and holding elections with a very high turnout was step number three.

"I think the part we are waiting for is the return of the stolen part of Kashmir which is under illegal Pakistani occupation; when that is done, I assure you Kashmir will be solved."

UK condemns Jaishankar security breach in London

PNS LONDON

evening.

Commonwealth

spokesperson said.

Metropolitan Police acted

The UK on Thursday strongly condemned the security breach involving a pro-Khalistan extremist rushing towards External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's convoy, saying such attempts to "intimidate, threaten, or disrupt" public events are "completely unacceptable".

It came after the Ministry of

External Affairs (MEA) had



called on the UK to "live up to swiftly to address the situation, their diplomatic obligations" after a man from a small group of protesters chanting and we remain fully committed to ensuring the security of all our diplomatic visitors, in pro-Khalistan slogans and waving separatist flags attempted to breach the seculine with our international obligations," the spokesperson said.

It follows Jaishankar's talks with UK Foreign Secretary rity perimeter as Jaishankar left the Chatham House think David Lammy at Chevening tank in London on Wednesday House over Tuesday and The protester was swiftly Wednesday, when both leaders covered the "entire gamut taken aside by officers of the Metropolitan Police, with no of bilateral ties", including the arrests being confirmed so relaunched Free Trade far. "We strongly condemn Agreement (FTA) negotiations, regional and global

the incident that took place outside Chatham House yesissues. terday (Wednesday) during The protesters opposite the the External Affairs Minister's Royal Institute of International visit to the UK," a Foreign, Affairs, commonly known as Chatham House, had been and Development Office (FCDO) barricaded and monitored by a significant police presence "While the UK upholds the outside the venue. Officers right to peaceful protest, any attempts to intimidate, threatrushed to restrain the man as he ran past the barricade in an en, or disrupt public events are attempt to block the path of the minister's car while pulling completely unacceptable. The

at an Indian flag.

Ashwini Vaishnaw launches IndiaAl compute portal

PNS NEW DELHI

Marking a year of the IndiaAI Mission, Union IT minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday launched the IndiaAI compute portal and dataset platform AIKosha, among a slew of other initiatives under the IndiaAI Mission, aimed at improving access to AI and fostering innovation. The compute portal will provide access to compute more than 18,000 GPUs, cloud storage and other AI services to students, startups, researchers, academia, and government departments.

The platform aims to streamline access to high-qual-ity non-personal datasets for AI innovation.

The Minister for Electronics and IT also launched AIKosha an all-in-one data providing resources, tools, and

expert mentorship to help transform potential ideas into industry solutions. Datasets

will be available for model builders and developers to work with and launch India-

The compute portal will be

used to develop India's own

foundational model, Vaishnaw

said, adding that the prepared-

ness for India's own foundation

model is progressing well and

as many as 67 applications have

Citing India's mission to

the moon, he said the mission

was conducted at a fraction of

the cost of other countries'

moon missions and the same

model will be followed for the

foundational model and India

specific AI models.

been received.



anti-nationals are the Hindi zealots" who believe their entiideology have the audacity to question the patriotism of tlement is natural but resis-DMK and its government that Stalin, in a social media contributed the highest post said: "When you are amount of funds during the accustomed to privilege, equal-Chinese aggression, Bangladesh liberation war, and ity feels like oppression. I am reminded of this famous quote Kargil war, while their ideologwhen some entitled bigots ical forefather is the one who assassinated 'Bapu' Gandhi."

brand us chauvinists and antinationals for the 'crime' of demanding Tamil's rightful Also, he said: "Demanding Linguistic equality is not chauplace in Tamil Nadu." vinism. Do you want to know Further, he said: "The verv what Chauvinism looks like? Chauvinism is naming the people who glorify Godse's

is not chauvinism, says TN CM three criminal laws that govern 140 crore citizens in a language that Tamils cannot even pronounce or comprehend by reading. Chauvinism is treating the state that contributes the most to the nation as second-class citizens and denying its fair share for refusing to swallow the poison called

#NEP. Imposition of anything breeds enmity. Enmity threatens unity. Hence, the true chauvinists and anti-nationals are the Hindi zealots who believe their entitlement is natural but our resistance is treason.

Separately, writing to party workers flaying Hindi imposi-tion, he said the people of Pakistan and Bangladesh, though united by religion are different by language.

Engineering student found dead in hostel washroom

PNS DHANBAD(JHARKHAND)

A third-year engineering stu-dent of IIT-Indian School of Mines (ISM), Dhanbad, was found dead in the washroom of his hostel on Thursday morning, police said.

He was identified as Tanmay Prajapati (21) from Indoor in Madhya Pradesh, they added. IÍT-ISM security officer

Ram Manohar said that Prajapati was living in the ninth floor of the institute's Aquamarine Hostel.

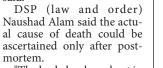
"Around 9.45am, his washroom was found locked from inside. When it was broken, Prajapati was found lying unconscious on the floor. He was taken to a private hospital where doctors declared him brought dead," Manohar added.



"The body has been kept in the hospital's mortuary. It will be sent for post-mortem only after the arrival of family members from Indoor," he



said.





JU protests enter 4th day, officiating VC still in hospital

rotests at Jadavpur University continued for the fourth Consecutive day on Thursday as protesters from the Students' Federation of India (SFI), All India Democratic Students' Organisation (AIDSO) and ultra-left outfits held rallies inside the campus and staged a sit-in before the administrative building. They demanded action against the alleged assault on their peers and legal proceedings against West Bengal education minister Bratya Basu in connection with the March 1 incident where two students were injured after the minister's car allegedly grazed past them. The protesting students also demanded that senior university officials, including the pro-vice chancellor, registrar, comptroller of examinations and deans immediately engage in discussions with them to resolve the impasse and take concrete steps to restore confidence in the administration following the incident. Members of SFI, the student wing of CPI(M), beat drums and played 'dafli' (hand-held tambourines) while chanting slogans such as "dhikkar" (condemnation) and "hok kolorob" (let there be a roar of protests) outside the administrative building

Court gives Rs 10 lakh to rape survivor; convict gets lifer

PNS NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has sentenced a man to life-term imprisonment in a case of kidnapping and rape of a minor in 2021 and said a clear message had to be sent out that violators of POCSO law will be held accountable.

Additional sessions judge Susheel Bala Dagar heard the case against the 31-year-old convict punished under Section 6 (aggravated penetra-tive sexual assault) of the POCSO Act and IPC for the offences of rape, kidnapping and criminal intimidation.

On the compensation scheme for POCSO survivors, the court said a survivor's suffering had no price tag. "In any beneficial scheme or

legislation, there cannot be a concept of maximum. How can there be a price tag on the suffering of the survivor? No



amount of compensation can undo the trauma. The least that can be done to help the survivor is to get his/her life back on track," the court said. The court awarded a Rs 10.5 lakh compensation, saving it would assist in the survivor's rehabilitation.

Additional public prosecutor Yogita Kaushik Dahiya argued the convict deserved no leniency for the reprehensible and despicable act as he kidnapped the girl on by luring her with eatables on July 26, 2021.

Dahiya argued the convict raped the minor while threatening her with a knife.

Babulal Marandi appointed BJPLP leader in Jharkhand Assembly

PNS RANCHI

The BJP on Thursday appointed Dhanwar MLA Babulal Marandi as its legislative party leader in the Jharkhand Assembly. During a meeting here,

Marandi, also the party's state president, was unanimously chosen as the BJP legislative party leader.

board on Wednesday announced two central observers -- Union Forest and Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav and the party's OBC Morcha national president K Laxman -- for the election of the leader of the BJP legislative party in the Jharkhand Assembly.

Yadav said senior MLAs such as Naveen Jaiswal, Neera minister Marandi thanked Yadav, Raj Sinha and Prakash Prime Minister Narendra Ram proposed the name of Modi, Union Home Minister Marandi as the leader of the Amit Shah and the party's



'Under the leadership of

Marandi in the state assembly,

legislators will be working for

its people," he told reporters.

Former Jharkhand chief

for the responsibility he was given "I will be working 24x7 with

full dedication to strengthening the organisation and will make all efforts to take everyone together inside and outside the assembly," he said.

He alleged that the Speaker had deliberately delayed the matter of the leader of the opposition in the previous assembly, despite the name being recommended by the party "But our legislators kept

will build it at a fraction of cost fighting the government both of what other countries are inside and outside the assemdoing it. bly," he said.

Marandi said they would continue the fight for the interest of the state and its people. 'We will also look to address the flaws which resulted in the

defeat of the party (in the assembly elections last year),' he said.



'Trump, Modi displaying 'far-right' characteristics'

India also allied with the US to

includes Japan and Australia,

whose sole purpose was to act

He warned that as the US

"more and more aggressive

PNS KOLLAM (KERALA)

CPI(M) Politburo coordinator Prakash Karat on Thursday attacked the Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre and US President Donald Trump, accusing them both of displaying "far-right" characteristics.

Speaking on the first day of the four-day long state party conference held here, Karat termed Trump as an imperialist, whose focus was on establishing American hegemony in the world and expanding its territorial sovereignty, and the Modi government as a "Hindutva Corporate regime" which was displaying "neo-fascist" characteristics.

This is the last state conference of the party in the coun-



China".

its

try ahead of its 24th CPI(M) congress scheduled from April 2 to 6 in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. Karat further said that due to

the close association with America, India was standing with the oppressors as it had exported arms to Israel and also supported it, during its war with Palestine. Karat claimed that path", India, being allied with it, will be cut off and isolated from the developing nations.

So, the path this government is taking and its external policies are a reflection of its character, which we in our political resolution have termed as a Hindutva Corporate regime that is displaying neo-fascist characteristics," he contended. Karat also lashed out at the

opposition Congress in Kerala for criticising the CPI(M) for constitute the quadrilateral using the term neo-fascist to describe the BJP and RSS. The veteran CPI(M) leader alleged alliance or Quad, which also that the Congress was "distortas a "security alliance against ing" the Left party's efforts to fight against the neo-fascist trends and accused it of playing 'cheap politics". under Trump goes forward on

'We do not need a certificate

from the Congress leadership here on how to fight the BJP and the RSS," he said. He further said that the number of CPI(M) workers allegedly killed at the hands of RSS activists over the years in the state shows who was fighting the BJP in

Kerala. He said that CPI(M) used the neo-fascist term, for the first time in its draft political resolution, as it is not the same phenomenon as classical fascism seen in the past. "It is modified, has elements of the old fascism, but has incorporated other features like neo-liberalism, and in India, the Hindutva ideology of the RSS is a distinctive feature. That is why we use the term neo-fascism instead of fascism, he said

UP aims to nurture 10 lakh young entrepreneurs: Yogi

PNS GORAKHPUR

Emphasising the role of youth in India's growth, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday said that efforts are underway to prepare 10 lakh young entrepreneurs in the state. "India is moving in a new direction under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. Over the past ten years, the country has emerged as a global economic powerhouse, with the youth playing a key role in making India the world's fifthlargest economy. In the next two years, India will become the third-largest economy, and

young entrepreneurs will drive this growth," the CM said while addressing a gathering at Baba Gambhirnath auditorium here. According to an official statement, Adityanath distributed loans worth Rs 100 crore to 2,500 beneficiaries from Gorakhpur and Basti divisions under the CM Yuva scheme and toolkits under the One District One Product (ODOP) to 2,100 people at the event.

At the event, the CM said that the CM Yuva scheme, also known as Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyami Yojana, received over 2.54 lakh applications in just over a month of its launch, far

exceeding the target of one lakh entrepreneurs for the entire year. So far, one lakh applications have been sent to banks, with Rs 931 crore loans sanctioned for 24,000 beneficiaries and Rs 410 crore already distributed to 10,500 applicants, he

informed the gathering. We will prepare 10 lakh young entrepreneurs in Uttar Pradesh, and a campaign is underway for that, Adityanath said. He said that initiatives like Startup India, Stand Up India, and Make in India have been promoted, enabling the youth to drive the vision of a selfreliant India.

The BJP parliamentary legislative party during the meeting, and it was unanimously approved by all.

the benefit of Jharkhand and

HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | MARCH 7, 2025

he pioneer

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A game changer

The strengthening of EU-India ties offers a promising path towards stability, prosperity and technological advancement

he European Union's outreach to India has gained significant momentum, marking a new chapter in their strategic relationship. In the wake of global disruptions, including the shifting stance of the United States under Donald Trump-characterised by tariffs, the withdrawal of support for Ukraine, and disengagement from Gaza-the strengthening of EU-India ties emerges as a stabilising force in global geopolitics. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen's recent visit to India underscores the EU's commitment to deepening ties with New Delhi. Meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Hyderabad House, von der Leyen expressed the EU's high regard for India as a partner. She emphasised that as the two enter the third decade of their strategic partnership, "the best is yet to come." This sentiment reflects the EU's vision of India as a key player in shaping global economic and political landscapes. A focal point of their discussions was the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), a crucial initia-



tive aimed at boosting connectivity, trade and energy cooperation. Given the evolving geopolitical dynamics, this corri-

dor could serve as a counterbalance to China's Belt and Road Initiative, ensuring a more diversified and resilient global supply chain. A significant highlight of the India-EU partnership is its deepening engagement in digital and technological arenas. With India emerging as a technological powerhouse and the EU striving for digital sovereignty, collaboration in these areas can create a formidable synergy. The EU's focus on clean energy aligns with India's ambitious renewable energy goals. Such initiatives can help India and the

EU lead the global transition towards a sustainable future. Beyond technology and energy, trade remains a cornerstone of EU-India ties. Both sides are actively negotiating a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that could unlock significant economic potential. The EU is India's second-largest trading partner and a comprehensive trade agreement would not only boost exports but also enhance supply chain resilience, particularly in a world grappling with economic volatility. With Trump's protectionist policies disrupting global trade, an EU-India trade pact could serve as a counterweight, ensuring that both economies remain competitive and open to global commerce. The collaboration on supply chain resilience will also be crucial in mitigating risks associated with overdependence on specific markets. With Trump's policies creating uncertainty in trans-Atlantic relations and global trade, the EU's pivot towards India reflects a strategic recalibration. The EU recognises India's growing role as a stabilising force in global affairs-both as a democratic counterweight to authoritarian regimes and as a crucial player in maintaining a rules-based international order. The EU-India partnership stands at a defining moment. With digital collaboration, green energy initiatives, and robust trade negotiations at the forefront, this relationship could reshape global economic and political alignments.



When no solution is the only solution



pinion 06

Whether due to ego or rivalry, certain disputes become intractable, spanning generations. The irony is that winning does not always make one a winner

ne of the bigger challenges in life is to find an answer to a question dealing with life itself. The glib belief is that every problem has a solution. A wisecrack has rightly commented that every problem has a solution but the solution creates a problem of its own. If it were a simple, straightforward dimension, such as that, there would be nothing to worry about because problems and solutions would be in a dyadic relationship.

The problem arises when a problem is not solvable because vo sides want a solution on their terms or indeed have no solution at all. This need not necessarily be an act of mischief, but it may be a simple case of jealousy/envy or indeed a bitter competitiveness that brooks no solution at all. The first exposure to such an intractable jungle-like situation today is that the two parties concerned themselves do not see a solution worth pursuing. This may be because of many reasons, one of them being that the person concerned may genuinely believe he has an upper hand and that he is not going to lose that advantage. Very often, this gets intertwined with ego, worth, or dislike.

If there are stakeholders beyond this, of a variety which see an advantage in the contending parties being maintained as contending parties, or there is a personal dislike between the two people concerned, then also a solution becomes well-nigh impossible. Thus, it is that certain problems have subsisted beyond generations and led to devastating wars which ultimately wiped out both parties, and there was nothing for the winner to take away at all.

near impossible. To expect divine grace to is a telltale story of the winners sort out the situation may be the only route forward. gain, at least for the generation Other factors prevent a in play. In more recent times, meaningful resolution of a World War I and World War II conflict, one being a gender did not produce any obvious dimension and another as winners, and the world went sibling rivalry. Be that as it

THUS, IT IS THAT CERTAIN PROBLEMS forward. HAVE SUBSISTED BEYOND GENERATIONS

AND LED TO DEVASTATING WARS WHICH ULTIMATELY WIPED OUT BOTH PARTIES AND THERE WAS

may, it is necessary to recognise that no conflict can be eternal either. While it is true that generations have transferred the conflict from one to another, the nature of the conflict itself became an impediment to solutions, and if nothing else, the ego factor may become a primary determinant of the way Under such circumstances,

the generational transformation of the rivals involved alters the nature of the solution that is feasible. Indeed, no solution is feasible unless it is doable and sustainable. People often align together because of their own needs and then find arguments to sustain to enjoy in becoming a wintheir position. In many ner. It is therefore important cases, logic gives way to to realise, in many cases, that

flowing out of the conflict was not met. Under such circumstances, it may be useful to suspend the conflict and learn to live with it rather than solve the problem. Avoiding a problem or indeed learning to live with it may at times be a solution. This can follow many routes including not letting the problem escalate.

The enigmatic context is that very often, as the needs of the combatants change, the search for solutions also becomes elusive. This is because one has no use for "the solutions".

The times have changed, and the solutions are passive because there is nothing left simple impulses and a non- a solution is only a solution thinking solution takes hold if it makes winners of all management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal)



back to a full circle. The better-known cases of history have similar dots on a lesser scale and indeed, this can be true also in personal lives.

The long and short of it is,

it takes more than a 'win' to

become a winner. At a differ-

ent scale altogether, person-

al dislikes and prejudices

can be so large that one adopts an attitude where

one concludes that, irre-

spective of the nuances, one

will simply not work towards

a solution. Here again, the

resolution of the conflict

becomes difficult. Hence, it

is a fortunate situation where

both sides want a situation of

solution and therefore are

open to it. This is so often a

given in this set of circum-

stances that to pray for it

would be to hope for the

ultimately having nothing to

The story of the Mah

NOTHING FOR THE WINNER TO TAKE AWAY AT ALL

of the operationally power-ful. The operationally pow-erful impose their solution, and the predictable hap-(*The writer is a well-known*) pens.

The flawed solution is subverted by the party whose basic need for advantage

An Indian myna perches on a red silk-cotton tree (Bombax ceiba), in Nadia

A parent's reflection on society and the next generation



SANJAY CHANDRA

I was raised with the values of respect, resilience and financial prudence principles. yet, I sometimes wonder if these values still carry the same significance

was born in a middle-class family 66 years back, less than 12 years after independence. My father was an engineer in a state government department. I came across my mother's diary a few years back. She had spent her life painstakingly balancing a low government income against the rising expenses of bringing up three children. My parents inculcated in us the value of money.

Another value that was deeply ingrained into our psyche by them was to respect everyone. I was taught that relationships were more important. A look of reproach from my mother was enough for me to realise my mistake if I was disrespectful.

This is what I tried to pass on to my children. I often look at them with pride. Having lived a better part of my life trying to hold on to these values, now find myself at crossroads. Rapid urbanisation has resulted in concentration of bigger population in apartments. Technology has evolved like never before to provide faster modes of communication. Society WhatsApp group is unfortunately used by a few people at the expense of har-



them if their actions are

The condominium seems to

be mirroring the happenings

beyond the residential com-

plex. I am left wondering that

derogatory.

monious relationships. Recently, I found myself at the receiving end of a vitriolic diatribe. My fault was that I had taken the initiative of organising a cultural and literature festival

I sincerely believe that our politics and religion, the two youngsters need more expofactors that should create a sure to the arts to navigate an unified society, are used to increasingly fast-paced and divide. more stressful world than It is at times like these that I what we grew up in. The lanstart doubting the values guage used by a few of these inculcated by my parents, persons, who have claimed to be my good friends and and that in turn, I expect my children to follow. I talked to neighbours over the past eight many other residents working years, left me nonplussed at best and painfully hurt at with me for the festival. They were also indignant and sad worst. It should not have surabout the way things were prised me. These very people turning out to be. have been habitually doing They had their own stories to the same followed by profuse narrate. One lady was rudely apologies as it suits them. It told to curb her flair for takjust seems expedient to them ing good initiative. Another lady was left with only four

other friends when it was time to pitch in. The majority suffers in silence at the hands of the minority. It made me rethink if our parents were wrong in turning us what many may call timid to suffer mental anguish. I also debated if we passed the right values to our children. We were unanimous in our

shared belief. I derived strength as I looked around, and talked to these parents, many of whom were younger. We have been right in teaching our children to be better humans

Our children are better than us. They are putting the same technology to better use. #Me Too, Girls' Right to Education, Let's Talk, Good Touch Bad Touch are only a few of the initiatives that they are pursuing with single-minded devotion to make this a better world. I am confident that they will set better examples for the next generations to raise their voices and not suffer in silence against the bullies

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)

LETT

BLUE ECONOMY NEEDS PROTECTION

Madam — Kudos for 'Balancing growth and conservation' (March 6) for highlighting the most sensitive issue of conservation at Kerala's Quilon fish bank. This is only one of the several aspects of conservation, and its ignorance has a massive, devastating effect on the blue economy and fishing community. Fiftysix percent of our coastal population is directly and indirectly dependent on the blue economy. The conservation aspect of sustainable growth and development has long been ignored by the policymakers. The political ecosystem is insensitive to conservation. In fact, extensive conservation projects need to be conceived and implemented on all river fronts, particularly in the hilly areas. In the absence of geological studies and research and conservation, mass destruction of life and property in hills is caused by torrential rains and floods.

Several rivers are disappearing fast, causing mass annihilation of flora and fauna as well as cultivation. The Geological Survey of India should carry out wideranging and widespread surveys and research in hills, riverbeds, and coastal regions to ascertain and fetch fresh data. The Archaeological Survey of India should engage conservation architects for carrying out conservation of excavation sites, historic places and buildings, ancient temples, river fronts, and coastal regions. Against all beliefs and perceptions, the conservation projects are potential employers and sources of revenue. Unfortunately, our engineering colleges are producing fewer conservation architects. Urban development is incomplete without conservation. Oceanic studies and research institutions should be established in all potential regions for sustainable growth and development. Vinod Johri | Delhi

US IMPOSES HEAVY TARIFF

Madam— US President Trump launched trade war against America's three biggest trade partners, drawing immediate retal-



he recent visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the inauguration of Vantara – Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre in Gujarat's Jamnagar has hit the headlines with heart warming pictures of the PM spending happy moments with the animals there. Spread over 3,000 acres, Vantara- a brain child of Anant Ambani of the Reliance group is all set to become the world's largest zoo and

iation from Mexico, Canada and China. Trump's government has imposed 25 per cent tariffs on Mexican and Canadian imports though Trump limited the levy to 10 per cent on Canadian energy. He also doubled the tariffs he slapped last month on Chinese products to 20 per cent. China retaliated with tariffs of upto 15 per cent on a wide array of US farm exports. It has also expanded the number of US companies subject to export controls and other restrictions by about two dozens. Canadian PM has said that his country would plaster tariffs on more than 100 billion dollars of American goods over the course of 21 days.

Mexican President has said that Mexico would respond to the new taxes with its own retaliatory tariffs. Trump has said that tariffs are intended to address drug trafficking and illegal immigration. He has also announced that the tariffs will come down only if the US trade deficit narrows. China has filed complaint with the WTO against US in response to Trump's tariff hikes on Chinese goods. Canada also had initiated disruptive

Modi inaugurates Vantara rehabilitation centre. The world class

rehabilitation centre is equipped with modern veterinary technology, including ICU, MRI, CT scan, X-ray, dialysis, ultrasound and endoscopy units, besides research institutions and academic hubs.

Vantara which received the prestigious 'Prani Mitra' national award focusses on rescue, rehabilitation and protection of animals globally. The facility has through its various operations rescued abused, injured and endangered animals from different parts of the globe. The rehabilitation center has been designed to recreate a natural and nurturing environment akin to the lush habitats from which the rescued animals hail from.

M Pradyu | Kannur

proceedings against US at the WTO on the additional tariffs. Trump's new tariff Imposition will certainly rattle financial markets, raising concern about renewal inflation and business uncertainty in US and abroad.

P Victor Selvaraj | Tirunelveli

CONG LEADER COURTS CONTROVERSY

Madam - Congress spokesperson Sharma Mohamed stirred controversy by calling Rohit Sharma "fat for a sportsman" and the "most unimpressive" captain India has had. Congress is already losing deposits and the recent debacle at Delhi elections proved their worth and the high command must have decent control over the cadres by teaching them how to talk on a public platform. In a historic achievement, India captain Rohit has become the first captain to lead his team to the final in all four major Men's ICC tournaments

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | MARCH 7, 2025

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FIRSTCOLUMN

THE RISE OF EU-INDIA **DIGITAL COOPERATION**

The EU and India are strengthening ties in digital governance, AI and semiconductor resilience



KUMARDEEP BANERJEEE

ven as President Trump of the USA was busy being the world's most popular content creator, the global forces were turning the gears of a strategic realignment. After the televised, admonishment of Ukrainian President Zelensky by US President Trump and his VP JD Vance, the former was seen with several leaders of the European Union. As the case may be European leaders didn't have much to offer to Ukraine, except a subtle message to make peace with the US President. It may be a matter of time, before, Ukrainian President Zelensky has to evacuate his bunker office in Kyiv and perhaps make way for a more, current US head of state worldview representative. The message for the world was clear, the US would no longer be happy to bankroll, what it considers vague political narratives, potentially considered to be the hallmark of a free liberal world order.

This world order, incidentally a post-World War creation, by the US, ensured free fair open markets, meant for the prosperity of all. What this free world order has achieved in the past many decades can be debated, however, it has ensured the US retains its supremacy in the economic prosperity index and so have many of the aligned nations including India (since the 1990s). Just before the US and Ukraine visible splat, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen led a large delegation of senior ministers to Delhi to re-establish the highlevel EU India Trade and Technology Council conversations. Given the current geo-political landscape, one of the major focus areas was Digital Economy and Governance.

The European Union (EU) and India reaffirmed their commitment to deepening digital cooperation, emphasising shared values through their Working Group 1 on Strategic Technologies, Digital Governance, and Digital Connectivity. Both sides pledged to accelerate human-centric



digital transformation and advance key technologies, including AI, semiconductors, High-Performance Computing and 6G, to benefit both economies and societies. The two parties agreed to enhance research and innovation to improve competitiveness and economic security while promoting a cyber-secure global digital ecosystem. They also stressed the importance of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in fostering inclusive digital economies. Both sides committed to ensuring interoperability between their respective DPIs, safeguarding human rights, and protecting personal data and intellectual property. They also discussed mutual recognition of e-signatures to facilitate cross-border digital transactions On semiconductor collaboration, the EU and India focused on strengthening the resilience of supply chains and expanding joint research in areas such as chip design and sustainable technologies. The two sides underscored their shared commitment to the responsible development of AI, agreeing to further cooperation through joint projects and the development of frameworks for ethical AI. They also plan to enhance cooperation on large language models and AI applications in sectors like climate change and bioinformatics. They also committed to implementing the Global Digital Compact, which was endorsed at the UN General Assembly in September 2024, and ensuring continued global support for multi-stakeholder internet governance at the upcoming World Summit on Information Society +20. It may be the right click for both the EU and India. The EU and India are seizing the opportunity to strengthen their digital and technological ties. Their renewed partnership signals a commitment to fostering a resilient, secure, and inclusive digital future, underpinned by shared values and mutual economic interests. As old alliances shift, new partnerships may define the contours of the evolving world order.

Namaste at Oscars: Indian cinema has arrived



analys \$ 07

Indian storytelling captivates and inspire audiences worldwide. With the right strategy, this moment can shape the future of Indian cinema



he Namaste at the Oscars 2025 has reinforced the idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: "The world is one family," a vision that transcends borders yet thrives on respect, mutual interdepen-dence and a shared spirit of creativity. This symbolic gesture was not merely a greeting but a powerful moment of inclusivi-ty, reflecting cinema's unique ability to bring together artists, audiences and cre-ators from across the globe.

This moment at the Academy Awards highlights how soft power is no longer confined to diplomacy alone; it now permeates events, institutions, and cultural exchanges. Cinema, often regarded as the perfect brand platform for fostering relationships, stood at the centre of this phenomenon.

The Namaste was a gateway, introducing

Millionaire (2008) swept the Academy Awards, yet these narratives were largely shaped by Western filmmakers. The paradigm began to shift with R (2022), which not only won an Oscar for Naatu Naatu but also forced global audiences to acknowledge the

A SIMPLE, WELL-TIMED NAMASTE al audiences to acknowledge the unapologetic, high-energy story-telling of Indian filmmakers. This shift was further cemented when Payal Kapadia's All We Imagine as Light (2024) won the Imagine as Light (2024) won the HAS GIVEN Grand Prix at Cannes, a rare hon-

INCREDIBLE INDIA A Village Rockstars (2017), and DENEWED RENEWED Nandita Das's Manto (2018) have like WAVES, the country's film India. Now, Indian cinema must been steadily breaking barriers export initiative WAVES has the GLOBAL proving that Indian cinema is no longer defined by stereotypes but IDENTITY, by diverse, powerful narratives. TRANSFORMING The power of this Namaste must be harnessed beyond the Oscars. ITS As India gears up for Cannes PARTICIPATION 2025, this moment should serve as a launching pad for stronger positioning. India's representation at global film festivals must be IN WORLD CINEMA FROM strategic; ensuring that films sent to these platforms reflect the OCCASIONAL depth, diversity, and dynamism of RECOGNITION Indian storytelling. The Cannes Film Festival has TO STRATEGIC already been a crucial stepping INFLUENCE. stone for Indian cinema. From Neecha Nagar (1946) winning the Palme d'Or to Masaan (2015) winning the Un Certain Regard prize, India's legacy at Cannes has been long-standing. However, now is the time to transition from isolated wins to sustained influence.

came close, and Slumdog not just participating but active- a land of fantasy to a nation of ly shaping the conversation. One action. It is no longer a question powerful example of how such moments create ripples is Life of Pi (2012). When director Ang Lee won the Oscar for Best Director, he greeted the audience with a Namaste, acknowledging the deep Indian cultural influence on the film.

That moment reinforced India's storytelling traditions, but the Namaste at the Oscars 2025 is even more significant; it wasn't just about one film, it was about

of whether Indian films will win the Oscar; it is now a matter of when and how often. India is no longer a guest at the global film table-it is a host, a creator, and an influencer.

The Namaste was not just a greeting; it was an invitation for the world to recognise Indian cinema's true potential. The time to capitalise on this moment is now. With the right vision and action, this could be the defining decade when Indian cinema not only participates in global storytelling but leads it.

The world has acknowledged ensure that every frame, every story, and every festival presence echoes the power of that Namaste. The Namaste at the Oscars 2025 was more than a greeting-it was a defining moment for Indian cinema on the global stage. It symbolised India's growing influence in storytelling, marking a shift from sporadic recognition to strategic presence. To sustain this momentum, India must leverage platforms like WAVES, push for global collaborations, and ensure strong representation at festivals. The world has acknowledged India's cinematic potential; now, it is time for Indian cinema to lead. With the right strategy, this moment can shape the future, ensuring that Indian storytelling continues to captivate and inspire audiences worldwide.

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

the legacy of Indian storytelling to a diverse global audience and reinforcing the deep cultural interconnect between nations through the lens of cinema. Beyond its immediate impact, this gesture

has set the stage for the future of the Oscars and similar global platforms. It paves the way for cultural ethos to play a larger role in how nations and their creative industries collaborate and connect. A simple, well-timed Namaste has given Incredible India a renewed global identity, transforming its participation in world cinema from occasional recognition to strategic influence.

Conan O'Brien's decision to open the Oscars with Namaste was not accidental. It was a statement, an acknowledgement that Indian cinema is no longer at the periphery of global storytelling. This was not a token mention of India, nor was it a cursory reference to its billion-strong audience.

This was a recognition of India's growing cinematic legacy and influence. India has long been part of Oscar history, but often through an external gaze. Films like Gandhi (1982) won big, Lagaan (2001)

The government and industry stakeholders must work together to ensure that Indian cinema is

potential to push Indian cinema into untapped markets, ensuring that films from independent, regional, and mainstream creators reach wider international audiences.

By riding the wave of this Namaste moment, WAVES can position Indian cinema not just as entertainment, but as a formidable cultural force. Strategic collaborations, international distribution networks, and dedicated Oscar campaigns must now be

part of the plan. If South Korea could orchestrate a global push for Parasite (2019), resulting in its historic Oscar win, India must now do the same, systematically pushing its best films into the international awards circuit. This is not just about recognition; it's about claiming a rightful place in world cinema. The Namaste at

the Oscars 2025 should serve as a wake-up call, a reminder that Indian cinema has evolved from

(The writer is former civil servant writes on cinema and strategic communication. Inputs provided by Zoya Ahmad and Vaishnavi Srinivasan)

Ganges dolphin resurfaces in Charikadia river after 25 years

Prime

The conservation of the Gangetic dolphin is not just about protecting a single species; it is intrinsically linked to keeping the Ganga clean

he recent sighting of the endangered Ganges dolphin (Platanista gangetica) in Assam's Charikadia River at Dhakuakhana, Lakhimpur district, has sparked immense interest. Locally known as Sihu, this marks the first recorded presence of the species in the river since 1998, ending a 25-year absence. The prolonged disappearance of the Ganges dolphin from this waterway had fueled concerns over its dwindling numbers and possible extinction.

The disappearance of the species from the Charikadia River has been attributed to several factors, including hunting, habitat destruction, and depletion of food sources. tems. The Ganges dolphin is a Historically, Ganges dolphins unique freshwater species that 4,400 square meters and aims thrived across major river sys is functionally blind and relies to conduct in-depth research



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

tems in India, Nepal, and taken steps to protect the Bangladesh, including the Ganges dolphin. The National Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna Dolphin Research Centre and Karnaphuli-Sangu river (NDRC), the country's first systems. However, their popdedicated research facility for ulation has now become fragthis species, was inaugurated mented, with significant numon March 4, 2024, in Patna, bers surviving only in isolated Bihar. Located on the Patna sections of these river sys-University campus, near the Ganges River, the center spans

ments.

on echolocation to hunt. on dolphin behavior, survival, Despite its remarkable adaptaand threats tions, the species faces severe

It also provides training to fishthreats, primarily due to habiermen, equipping them with conservation techniques to tat degradation from largescale development projects, protect dolphins during fishincluding dam construction, ing activities. Despite conservadrainage works, and embanktion efforts, human infrastructure projects continue to pose Pollution further exacerbates significant challenges. The colthe risks to their survival. lapse of a four-lane bridge Recognizing the urgent need under construction over the for conservation, India has Ganga River at Sultanganj-Agwani in Bihar for the third time has drawn attention to the environmental impact of such developments. In 1990, the Bihar government declared a 60-km stretch of the Ganga River from Sultanganj to Kahalgaon as the Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary, aiming to protect the species while promoting eco-tourism. Recognizing the ecological



significance of the Ganges dolphin, the Government of India designated it as the national aquatic animal in October 2009 during the inaugural meeting of the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA), chaired by then-Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. The Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary currently hosts approximately 250 dolphins, frequently observed between Shankar Talkies and

Manik Sarkar Ghat. While government agencies have made efforts to protect the species, conservationists emphasize that illegal sand mining must be curbed to ensure its survival. Large-scale sand extraction disrupts river ecosystems by altering water flow and destroying the dolphins' habitat and food sources, such as small fish. Mechanized sand mining further exacerbates environmental damage, creating deep trenches that negatively impact

river health. Experts warn that unless illegal activities are controlled, the already fragile dolphin population will continue to decline. On a more optimistic note, Union Water Resources Minister C.R. Patil has stated that the Namami Gange Mission-a large-scale initiative aimed at rejuvenating the Ganga-has contributed to a rise in the dolphin population. Experts view this as an encouraging sign of improving environmental conditions. According to the Wildlife Institute of India, approximately 4,000 Gangetic dolphins currently inhabit the Ganga and its tributaries, with nearly 2,000 residing in Uttar Pradesh alone. In response, the Uttar Pradesh government has introduced a tourism policy designating a dolphin sanctu-

ary within the Chambal Sanctuary to bolster conservation efforts.Prime Minister Narendra Modi's launch of Project Dolphin has significantly increased public awareness of the species. This initiative strengthens conservation measures while promoting the ecological health of the Ganga River. Further emphasizing its commitment to protecting the species, the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife has designated October 5 as National Dolphin Day. With increasing awareness and conservation initiatives, there is renewed hope that these remarkable creatures will continue to thrive in their natural habitat.

(The writer is a senior jour*nalist; views are personal)*



Money 08

IN BRIEF



Five officials settle regulatory violation case with Sebi

A smany as five current and former officials of Add-Shop E-Retail Ltd (ASERL) and White Organic Agro Ltd (WOAL) on Thursday settled a case with Sebi pertaining violation of regulatory norms and made a payment of Rs 95.55 lakh towards the settlement amount. ASERL is into the business of manufacturing, marketing and distribution of Ayurveda products and WOAL is engaged in the business of organic food items. The case was settled by Dadhania Vivek Gopalbhai, audit committee member of ASERL; Nirajkumar K Malaviya, company secretary and compliance officer of ASER; Jigna V Thakkar, audit committee member of WOAL; Dharmesh Bhanushali, audit committee chairman of WOAL; and Chandresh Regulations, former audit committee chairman of WOAL, each contributed to the settlement amount. Sebi said in its order Of the total payment, Malaviya paid Rs 40.95 lakh, while the other four remitted Rs 13.65 lakh each.



Turkiye's central bank lowers interest rate as inflation slows

Turkiye's central bank lowered its key interest rate by a further 2.5 percentage points on Thursday, days after official figures indicated a slowdown in inflation that has eroded households' purchasing power. The bank's Monetary Policy Committee said it was reducing its benchmark one-week repo rate from 45 per cent to 42.5 per cent. It was the bank's third rate cut in a row and came after official data indicated that annual inflation has dipped to below 40 per cent for the first time in nearly two years. In a statement released after the committee meeting, the bank said, however, it would review inflation trends and adjust rates cautiously in upcoming policy meetings. "While inflation expectations and pricing behaviour tend to improve, they continue to pose risks to the disinflation process," the bank said. "Monetary policy tools will be used effectively in case a significant and persistent deterioration in inflation is foreseen." Annual nflation in Turkive slowed to 39.05 per cent in February

HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | MARCH 7, 2025

Federal Bank Welcomes Vidya Balan as its first brand ambassador

• This association marks a pion Federal Bank. She is versignificant milestone in the satile, appeals across demo-Bank's brand evolution jourgraphics and gender, has a pan-India fan following, and is ney multi-faceted. An actor's actor,

• A balanced approach by the Bank to cut across geogra-phies, genders and generations camera while continuing to

PNS MUMBAI

preparation, desire to under-Federal Bank, one of India's stand nuances, and considerleading private sector banks ation of various scenarios all with an impressive legacy over the years, today announced contribute to her ability to

the appointment of acclaimed actress, Vidya Balan, as its first-ever brand ambassador. The announcement was made during a special ceremony in Mumbai, where Ms. Balan was presented with a commemorative memento by

Mr. K.V.S. Manian, Managing Director & CEO of Federal Bank

This association is an important milestone in the brand's journey as it continues to enhance its market position. The Bank's senior team in a recent analyst meet had laid out clear directional path for the Bank, and brand transformation was one of the significant themes.

M V S Murthy, Chief Marketing Officer of the Bank, said that Ms. Balan was a very strategic choice to capture the attention across geographies, genders and generations. He said, "We are super-stoked to have Ms. Vidya Balan chamteams



she becomes the character on

charm us in her interperson-

al interactions off-screen. Her

bring out the essence of every role she plays. We have experienced this as we sought to bring her on board. At Federal Bank, too, empathy is our segue to understanding and servicing our customers. It's a universal trait that transcends geographies, generations, and customer demographics. Our NPS scores and Peer Comparison in the Nielsen studies, clearly indicate the stripes we have earned by being a Human at The Core, Digital at The Fore[™] Franchise. Much like Vidva, we too make light of our chores and celebrate the wins created through the collective effort of our

Trump, tariffs, defence surge loom over EU Central Bank meet

PNS FRANKFURT

The impact of a potential trade war with the United States and massive increases in European defence spending and government borrowing loom over a policy meeting Thursday at the European Central Bank, which is expected to cut interest rates by a quarter percent-

age point. Analysts are widely expect-ing a cut in the European Central Bank's (ECB) benchmark deposit rate to 2.50 per cent, a step to lower borrowing costs for consumers and businesses in an economy that's struggling to get out of first gear.

The bank's monetary policy statement and post-meeting news conference by President Christine Lagarde will be scrutinised for hints about how far the bank will cut rates amid concerns about weak growth. The bank has already reduced the benchmark rate by 1.25 percentage points since June. Meanwhile new concerns that would massively reshuffle

months

spending.

PNS MUMBAI

the economic picture are likely to intrude: the potential impact of new tariffs on European imports from US President Trump, which could slow growth, and plans for massive new defence spending and borrowing, which could mean more growth but also more inflation. Those two forces could push

the ECB in opposite directions: a hit to growth would call for



lower rates, while more persishurting growth in an exporttent inflation would argue for dependent economy.

The 20 countries that use keeping rates higher in coming the Euro currency and for which the ECB determines Growth estimates for interest rate policy stagnated Germany, the eurozone's largest economy, shot up in the last three months of the overnight and long-term interyear, showing zero growth. est rates rose following an Consumers burned by an earagreement by the two parties lier outbreak of inflation that will form the country's remain cautious, while businext government to loosen nesses have been unsettled by constitutional limits on borconcerns about what Trump rowing and exempt defense

may do. "Christine Lagarde will most certainly be asked about how the ECB intends to That is a major turnaround in German budget policy and opens the way for a trillion or more in new borrowing and respond to these moves and the support that the central spending over the next decade. bank may provide to the bloc," said Julien Lafargue, chief market strategist at Barclays Private Bank.

HT Media & NewsReach Present:

Crafting Bharat Awards 2025

Also in the mix are concerns that Trump will impose new tariffs on European goods,

at the ITC Grand Central, Mumbai, the event brought together entrepreneurs, innovators, and industry leaders for a night of recognition, meaningful conversations, and insights.

Held on 21st February 2025

It wasn't just another startup awards event-it went beyond traditional categories to celebrate those shaping



Traders struggling due to poor infra, says Delhi CM

PNS NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday said that traders and business owners across the city have expressed frustration over inadequate infrastructure, poor sanitation and lack of development, adding that they have been troubled by mismanagement and impractical policies of the previous aovernment Speaking on the sidelines of an event related to the upcoming Delhi Budget 2025-26, Gupta said her government has received valuable suggestions from traders and industrialists and assured them of concrete action.

"For years, traders and business owners have been suffering due to impractical policies, bureaucratic hurdles and negligence by the last government. There has been no real development -- roads and drainage systems remain in poor condition, and even basic civic amenities like washrooms are lacking in major markets," she told reporters. She highlighted issues faced by both small and large commercial hubs such as Chandni Chowk, Karol Bagh and Lajpat Nagar, which are reeling from inadequate sewer systems, poor road conditions and overall neglect of infrastructure.

Pvt capex unlikely to pick up despite near decadal-high profitability: Crisil

PNS MUMBAI

Private sector capital expenditure is unlikely to pick up in a sustained way despite India Inc's profitability being near decadal high, domestic ratings agency Crisil said on Thursday.

The profitability of India Inc is set to increase for the third year in a row in FY26 on the back of soft commodity prices, the agency said.

An analysis of 800 companies excluding ones in the banking and finance and oil and gas sectors revealed that the pre-tax profit margins are set to widen to up to 20 per It can be noted that the government is leading the investments in the economy for the last few years, and there have been calls for a revival in the corporate capex as well. However, rather than investing to create new capacities, India Inc has deployed money to retire debt and other measures rather than investing it even though the capacity utilisation levels are high.



PNS NEW DELHI

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has expressed its interest to the government to be part of the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme whereby youth can be offered opportunities in vari-ous areas of accounting and finance.

The scheme, being implemented by the corporate affairs ministry, was launched on October 3, 2024 and aims to provide internship opportunities to 1.25 lakh youth in the the areas of accounting and ethics, sustainability and social urrent financia An ICAI official on The scheme, announced in Thursday said the institute the 2024-25 Budget, aims to has written to the ministry provide internship opportuniseeking to be part of the ties to 1 crore youth in top 500 scheme. companies in 5 years. After getting the ministry's Meanwhile, IĆAI President in-principle approval, the ICAI Charanjot Singh Nanda on Central Council will discuss on Thursday said 'VISHWASthe modalities related to par-NIYA' will be the vision stateticipating in the scheme, the ment for the 2025-26 council official said and added that the year. The current council year aim is to provide internship will end on February 11, 2026. opportunities for the youth at It will focus on the vision for Viksit Bharat, integrity and chartered accountant firms in

India has become the world's third-largest startup ecosys-tem, with over 1.6 lakh DPIITregistered startups driving innovation, creating jobs, and transforming industries. These startups are not just businesses—they're shaping the coun-try's future by solving real-world problems and supporting initiatives like

42.12 per cent in the previous month, according to the Turkish Statistical Institute



ED arrests man for extorting money by impersonation

he Enforcement Directorate Thursday said it has arrested a Gurugram-based man for "impersonating" as a senior officer of the federal probe agency and "extorting" money from people. Raviraj Kumar, a "conman", was taken into custody under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the agency said in a statement. He was involved in "extorting money by cheating, fraud and impersonating himself as a senior officer of the ED", it said. A Gurugram court sent him to ED custody for five days on Wednesday. He was earlier arrested by the Haryana Police after a case was registered at Sector 10 police station in Gurugram on these charges and the ED took cognisance of this FIR to book him under the antimoney laundering law. "Raviraj is a habitual offender and has been involved in extortion of money for many years," the ED said.

and leadership development, and wellness and work-life balance.

Other aspects that will be in focus are accelerating digital transformation, stakeholder engagement, nation-first approach, innovation and entrepreneurship, youth and women-led development, accountability, trust and transparency,

ICAI has more than four lakh members.

startup space.

harat Awar

Recognizing Real Impact The HT Media Crafting Bharat Awards 2025, an initiative by NewsReach (Vyomeen Media Pvt Ltd) and curated by Fever Network, was all about celebrating people and organizations driving change. What started as the Crafting Bharat Podcast, a platform to share startup journeys, has grown into a space that not only tells these stories but also acknowledges the work behind them.

Bharat in different ways. From founders and technocrats to artists, scientists, and social impact leaders, the awards highlighted individuals making a real difference in India's growth story. With leaders from diverse sectors in the room, the event became more than just a ceremony-it reflected how far India's startup ecosystem has come and where it's headed next.

'Packaging meet to discuss sustainable solutions'

PNS NEW DELHI

More than 400 industry stakeholders from over 20 countries are participating in the international packaging industry summit here to discuss sustainable solutions, waste automation to increase the reduction and recycling and productivity and to reduce the wastage," IÍP Chairman Sunil other industry-related issues, a statement said on Thursday. Jain said.

Around 50 foreign partici-Minister of State for Road, pants from over 20 countries Transport and Highways are taking part in the three day Harsh Malhotra who was preevent which started on sent at the inauguration urged Thursday with a focus on packaging companies to learn sustainability and consumer about best practices and the safety, organiser Indian latest innovations that improve Institute of Packaging (IIP) product safety and longevity.

"The main objective of the summit is to highlight the latest trends and technologies of various packaging materials, conversion technologies and packaging machineries with

said in the statement.



said that Indian packaging industry is growing at an annual 15 per cent growth against global growth of nearly 4 per cent and is on course to emerge as the third-largest industry in the country. Packaging industry has

been aiding to boost the coun-

try's exports through innovative solutions, he said at the the 5th International Summit for Packaging Industry here. He said that participants

will deliberate on ways to reduce waste generation, recycling of packaging material and steps to make circular economy

APEDA-sponsored export packaging solutions which reinforces the commitment to innovation and quality in packaging for agricultural exports were also launched at the event. The solutions have been developed by IIP students

Sensex rallies 610 points to end above 74K on buying in RIL

PNS MUMBAI

Place 3

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Benchmark Sensex rallied nearly 610 points to reclaim the 74,000 mark while Nifty closed above 22,500 on Thursday foliffs.

lowing heavy buying in Reliance on easing crude oil prices and firm global trends after US President Donald Trump softened stand on tar-



Fear of work-life row holds back women from leadership roles

of visible role models (7 per cent) were

The repot was based on responses

PNS MUMBAI

A significant percentage of women feel encouraged to pursue leadership roles, however, fear over work-life imbalance holds them back from actively pursuing their goal, a report said on Thursday.

According to Naukri's "The Unfiltered Truth: What Women Professionals Really Want" report, over 66 per cent of women feel encouraged to pursue leadership roles, challenging perceptions about professional ambition.

However, 44 per cent of women ultimately hold back, citing concerns about work-life balance, which indicates a complex decision-making



process beyond simple career progression, said the report.

some other roadblocks holding back Struggle with unclear or biased prowomen from pursuing leadership roles, it added. motions (35 per cent), limited leadership programs (14 per cent) and lack

from 70,000 women across 50 cities. Further, the report found that 34 per cent of women professionals rank menstrual leave as their number one workplace policy request - surpassing traditional equal pay discussions. Nearly half of early-career profes-

sionals consider it non-negotiable, yet 75 per cent report their workplaces still don't support such policies, it added. While 75 per cent of early-career professionals (between 0-2 years) push for equal leadership representation, nearly a third of senior professionals (over 15 years) prioritise pay transparency, the report noted.

The report stated that the perception of pay disparity intensifies as women advance in their careers.

While only 11 per cent of women earning Rs 2-5 lakh per annum (LPA) perceive a gender pay gap, this increased to 26 per cent among those earning between Rs 50 LPA and Rs 1 crore -- suggesting more complex dynamics at higher salary levels, it said. According to the report, the gap is the widest in cities like Mumbai (28 per cent), Bangalore (27 per cent) and Delhi (24 per cent), and in sectors like BFSI (28 per cent), FMCG (27 per cent) and IT (24 per cent).

"This report is our way of ensuring their voices are heard. From menstrual leave becoming a top priority to the evolving expectations from leadership, the insights challenge some common assumptions.

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Friday March 7, 2025

BREAKING BARRIERS & BLENDING GENRES WITH NIKHIL-SIDDHESH'S BOLD SOUNDSCAPE

In an exclusive conversation with *The Pioneer*, the composer duo **Nikhil-Siddhesh** takes us through their journey, the challenges of staying true to their sound, and their creative process. Their latest track, Front Seat Honsla, is an energetic anthem of resilience, blending humor and motivation with a punk-rock edge

TEJAL SINHA tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

rom composing for theater to creating viral singles, the Mumbai-based composer duo Nikhil-Siddhesh have carved out a unique space in the indie music scene. Known for their energetic blend of punk rock and Indian sensibilities, the duo recently released Front Seat Honsla—a track that encapsulates perseverance, humor, and motivation in the face of life's struggles. In an exclusive chat with The Pioneer, the duo reflects on their journey, their signature sound, and the defining moments that have shaped them. Speaking about Front Seat Honsla, Siddhesh

Speaking about Front Seat Honsla, Siddhesh explains, "This song is very personal to us. As composers, we've faced our share of struggles—tracks we believed in not landing as expected, rejections that made us question ourselves. Front Seat Honsla is our way of saying, 'Keep going, don't over-

think, and just embrace the ride. The song carries that mix of frustration, humor, and determination that we've experienced firsthand."

The duo wanted to keep the track relatable, which is why the lyrics draw inspiration from everyday life. "We wanted listeners to feel like they're in the middle of their own chaotic yet hopeful journey whether that's chasing a dream, dealing with setbacks, or just navigating daily struggles," adds Nikhil.

One of the most distinctive aspects of their music is its ability to fuse high-energy punk rock with deeply rooted Indian sensibilities. How do they strike that balance?

"We never set out to stick to a particular genre," Nikhil shares. "Instead, we focus on storytelling and let the music shape itself naturally. Growing up, we were exposed to everything from Indian folk and ghazals to rock and pop. That diversity is something we carry into our music."

Siddhesh adds, "Our compositions are about capturing emotions. Sometimes, that needs the raw energy of punk rock; other times, it needs the depth of Indian classical influences. Our goal is always to make the music relatable and honest."

The song's artwork is as dynamic as its sound, featuring two contrasting characters. Siddhesh breaks down the visual concept: "From the start, we knew the track had

two distinct personalities—one that's anxious and hesitant, and another that's fearless and ready to take on anything. That's why we brought in two vocalists to represent them."

Nikhil elaborates, "The artwork visually captures the internal battle between fear and courage. It ties back to the song's core message: 'Honsle ko front seat de, dar ko back seat'—which means, give courage the front seat and let fear sit in the back. The design reflects that push and pull we all feel in life."

The duo has worked with some of the biggest names in the industry, from Mahesh Bhatt to impactful campaigns like Jaago Grahak Jaago. Reflecting on those experiences, Siddhesh says, "Each project had its own challenges and learnings. Working with legends taught us to adapt while staying true to our sound."

These experiences shaped us as independent artists," Nikhil adds. "They opened our minds, made us more fearless in our approach, and taught us that music isn't just about creating a tune—it's about crafting an emotion that connects with people."

tune—its about crafting an emotion that connects with people." The EP explores themes of empowerment and freedom, particularly through the lens of the emotional and societal chal-

lenges women face. "We want this project to be more than just music—it's a statement," Nikhil shares. "It's about breaking free and finding your voice. We're blending rock with Indian classical, electronic, and even drum & bass to create something truly unique." Siddhesh adds, "We're

Siddhesh adds, "We're collaborating with incredible vocalists like Rupali Moghe and Ayesha Mukherjee. Their voices bring a powerful emotional depth to the songs. This EP is about pushing creative boundaries while telling a story that resonates."

For a duo that started composing for theater, moved into advertising, and then into film and independent music, pinpointing one defining moment is difficult.

Siddhesh reflects, "Rather than a single moment, our journey itself has been the biggest highlight. The decision to start composing together was the first step that set everything in motion. From working on background scores for plays at the Indian National Theatre to composing for the award-winning short film Obscured, every phase has been a stepping stone." Nikhil agrees, "Each project has brought new opportunities and challenges, shaping us into who we are today. The growth and the learning never ston"

Having known each other since nursery school, their bond goes beyond just music.

their bond goes beyond just music. "We've grown up together—same school, same college, same music institute," says Nikhil. "That shared history plays a huge role in our collaboration. It's like we instinctively know what the other is thinking musically."

tion. Its like we instituctively know what the other is thinking musically." Siddhesh adds, "Our influences are also deeply connected. We both admire artists like Hans Zimmer and A.R. Rahman—composers who redefine themselves with every project. That's something we aspire to do in our own work as well."

we aspire to do in our own work as well." For those trying to break into the music industry, the duo offers simple yet powerful advice. "Stay true to your sound," Siddhesh emphasizes.

"Stay true to your sound," Siddhesh emphasizes. "It's easy to get lost in trends or compare yourself to others, but what sets you apart is your authenticity." Nikhil adds, "Be open to learning. Every project, every rejection, every challenge is a lesson. And don't underestimate collaboration—it's where unexpected magic happens. The journey isn't always easy, but if you truly love music and stay patient, the rewards will be worth it."

With Front Seat Honsla setting the tone for their bold and energetic storytelling, and an upcoming EP that promises to push boundaries, Nikhil-Siddhesh are poised to make an even bigger impact in the indie music scene. Their journey is a testament to perseverance, evolution, and the power of music to inspire.



s we celebrate International Women's Day, it is important to reflect not only on the progress women have made in various spheres of life but also on how the years, Indian television and cinema have witwomen are portrayed. From being confined to stereotypical roles of dutiful wives and mothers, women are now being shown as complex, powerful, and multifaceted figures who occupy spaces previously dominated by men. From taking on cop roles in shown like Candy, Dahaad and Delhi Crime to navigating grey areas in shows like Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar and Aarya and leading drug cartels in Saas, Bahu Aur Flamingo and Dabba Cartel, there are increasing female characters who defy traditional stereotypes and reflect the evolving representation of women in the entertainment industry. This showcases the broader trend of women moving beyond passive or secondary roles, highlighting their agency, strength, and complexity. The portrayal of female gangsters and criminals is one facet of a much larger movement where women are presented in diverse roles that demonstrate their multifaceted nature-be it as leaders, survivors, or powerful figures who assert control in traditionally male-dominated spaces.

Women in Male-Stereotyped Roles

The changing landscape of females is visible in roles traditionally dominated by men. Shows like JioHotstar's Candy feature Richa Chadha as a fierce, independent female cop, demonstrating that women are just as capable of leading in law enforcement roles. Similarly, in Delhi Crime on Netflix, Shefali Shah's portrayal of DCP Vartika Chaturvedi presents a female police officer leading an intense investigation, breaking the mold of male-dominated crime dramas. In The Trial on JioHotstar, Kajol's character, a strong-willed lawyer navigating the complexities of the legal world, adds another layer to this evolution, showing women excelling in professions once predominantly occupied by men. These roles not only defy traditional stereotypes but also provide nuanced portrayals of women who are not limited by gender expectations, further reflecting the broader cultural shift toward female empowerment.

lenge the one-dimensional tropes often associated with women characters- vulnerable, sidelined, or simply sidekicks to male antiheroes. Instead, Dabba Cartel showcases their strength, ruthlessness, and determination, revealing the emotional and psychological toll that a life of crime can take on women.

Complex Female Characters in Crime Dramas



n today's rapidly evolving business environment, achieving sustainable growth is a formidable





Female-Led Cartels and Criminal Empires

A significant shift in Indian crime dramas has been the portrayal of women as leaders of criminal enterprises. Shows like Saas, Bahu Aur Flamingo, on JioHotstar, are pushing boundaries by placing women at the centre of high-stakes crime. The narrative of Saas, Bahu Aur Flamingo follows a group of women from diverse backgrounds who come together to run a criminal empire. Each character is complex, driven by their ambitions, personal struggles, and unique ways of exercising power within both their families and their illicit businesses. These women are not secondary characters or accessories



to male-dominated plots—they are the masterminds, making crucial decisions, managing power dynamics, and controlling a complex world of crime.

The show presents a stark departure from the traditional portrayal of women in crime, who were often depicted as passive victims or moral anchors in contrast to their male counterparts. Instead, these women are proactive, resilient, and strategic, willing to take the risks necessary to maintain control. Saas, Bahu Aur Flamingo encapsulates the new wave of female characters who break free from conventional boundaries and emerge as powerful figures with agency and autonomy. Similarly, Netflix's Dabba Cartel explores the rise of

Similarly, Netflix's Dabba Cartel explores the rise of women in the drug cartel business, focusing on their leadership and dominance in this high-pressure environment. The show highlights a group of women who run the operations, navigate personal rivalries, and manage the intricate dealings of the business. Rather than presenting them merely as participants in a maledriven world, Dabba Cartel gives these women the agency to shape their own destiny, making them powerful forces within the narrative. These portrayals chalAmong the notable shows to explore female gangster narratives is Aarya (JioHotstar), a gripping crime drama starring Sushmita Sen. Aarya is the story of a woman who, after her husband's sudden death, is thrust into the brutal world of organized crime. What makes Aarya particularly compelling is the emotional depth and internal conflict of its central character. Initially, Aarya is a loving wife and mother, unaware of her husband's criminal dealings. However, upon his death, she must step into his shoes, protect her family, and take over his illicit empire. Aarya's transformation from a grieving widow to a calculated and powerful figure is central to the show.

Another show that has made waves in portraying powerful female characters in crime is Mirzapur on Amazon Prime Video. In Mirzapur, Rasika Dugal plays the role of Beena, a pivotal figure who defies conventional expectations of women in the gangster world. Initially introduced as a quiet and seemingly passive character, Rasika undergoes a dramatic transformation as she rises to prominence in the violent, chaotic world of Mirzapur. Her character does not conform to the traditional trope of being subjugated by men or dependent on them. Instead, Rasika's ambition and resilience propel her to take control and navigate the treacherous landscape of crime with calculated decisions and strategic maneuvers.

Redefining stereotypical roles

In addition to taking on roles in traditionally maledominated spaces, women on screen are also challenging the stereotypical roles that have long been associated with femininity, particularly those of the dutiful housewife or supportive spouse. In Mrs. on Zee5, the protagonist, played by Sanya Malhotra, begins as a typical housewife but takes charge of her life as she uncovers deeper secrets and embraces her own strength and independence. Similarly, in Killer Soup on Netflix, the central character also evolves from a seemingly passive figure into someone who takes control of her circumstances, challenging the notion that women must stay within the boundaries of conventional roles.

The Power of Moral Ambiguity in Female Characters

What makes these roles so intriguing is the moral ambiguity they present. Unlike traditional heroes and villains, the female characters in these shows are neither entirely good nor bad. Instead, they exist in a complex gray area where right and wrong are often blurred. These women make difficult choices driven by survival, ambition, and the protection of their families, all while operating in a morally compromised world.

This shift towards portraying morally ambiguous female characters is significant because it challenges the long-standing notion that women must always be virtuous and self-sacrificing. The complexities of these characters reflect a broader cultural shift in how women are represented in media. It shows that women can be multifaceted individuals, capable of navigating power, morality, and survival in ways that do not conform to traditional stereotypes. This evolution in storytelling allows for more realistic, nuanced portrayals of women and highlights the diversity of experiences they can embody. Challenge. Companies that successfully integrate strategic investment, relentless innovation, and financial prudence can build resilience, enhance market leadership, and create sustained value for stakeholders. However, striking this balance is often complex, particularly in industries where technological advancements and market fluctuations create unpredictable shifts.

Strategic Investment: The Foundation of Growth

Investment is the cornerstone of any growth strategy, but indiscriminate spending without a clear roadmap can erode profitability. A wellplanned investment strategy involves allocating capital to areas that yield high returns while maintaining financial discipline. For industrial businesses like Roto Pumps, capital expenditure in technology, infrastructure, and talent acquisition is critical. Investing in advanced manufacturing capabilities, automation, and digital transformation ensures operational efficiency and cost optimisation. Additionally, expanding into highgrowth markets through strategic partnerships or acquisitions provides a competitive edge. The key lies in aligning investment decisions with long-term business goals while maintaining financial prudence. Businesses must also balance shortterm capital expenditure with long-term strategic investments. While immediate gains are essential to maintain investor confidence, long-term investments in sustainability, digital transformation, and workforce development lay the foundation for future profitability.

Innovation: A Catalyst for Competitive Advantage

Innovation is the driving force behind long-term sustainability. In a rapidly evolving technological landscape, businesses must prioritize R&D to stay ahead. At Roto Pumps, our focus on innovation has been instrumental in creating energy-efficient, cost-effective, and high-performance pump solutions, strengthening our market position and delivering value to customers. Embracing continuous innovation helps businesses stand out and build brand loyalty. Innovation extends beyond products to include process improvements like lean manufacturing and supply chain optimization, which boost efficiency and reduce costs. Additionally, digital innovations such as AI, machine learning, and IoT enhance production, predictive maintenance, and customer experiences, helping businesses stay competitive in the age of Industry 4.0.

Profitability: Ensuring Financial Sustainability

While investment and innovation drive growth, profitability defines success. Businesses must

balance reinvestment with strong financial metrics. Cost management is critical to sustaining profitability. Data-driven decisions, resource optimization, and economies of scale—ensures efficiency without sacrificing quality. Customercentric pricing, after-sales services, and highmargin segments further contribute to a robust bottom line.

Financial resilience is key. Managing liquidity, debt, and risks helps sustain stability amid market uncertainties, attracting long-term investors. Beyond cost control, revenue diversification is vital. Expanding markets, subscription models, and aftermarket services boost earnings, while a strong customer experience enhances retention and longterm profitability.

Achieving the Right Balance

Balancing investment, innovation, and profitability requires a strategic mindset and an adaptable approach. Businesses must assess their financial health, set clear priorities, and continuously evaluate the impact of their initiatives. At Roto Pumps, we believe that sustainable growth is not about short-term gains but about building a legacy of excellence. Smart investments, innovation, and financial discipline create a resilient business model. Leaders must also recognize that achieving this balance is an orgoing process. Regular audits, market research, and data-driven insights help businesses stay agile, responsive, and competitive.

Sustainability: The Fourth Pillar of Growth

As industries evolve, companies that balance investment, innovation, and profitability will drive financial success while advancing economic, technological, and environmental progress. In today's ESG-focused world, integrating sustainable practices—such as resource efficiency, renewable energy, and responsible sourcing-offers both risk mitigation and a competitive edge. Roto Pumps' experience in sustainable growth highlights the importance of financial prudence, customerdriven innovation, and responsible business strategies. Our deep understanding of market demands, operational efficiencies, and technology adoption has enabled us to navigate challenges while consistently delivering value.

(The author, Pradeep Jain, is the CFO, at Roto Pumps Ltd.)



what's brewing?

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Osteoarthritis on the Rise, Expert Warns

nce considered an age-related condition, osteoarthritis is now increasingly affecting young adults aged 25-40, with women being slightly more prone due to hormonal and structural factors. This degenerative joint disease occurs when the protective cartilage that cushions the bones wears down over time, primarily impacting the hands, knees, hips, and spine. Dr. Balaji Patel Kola, Senior Interventional Radiologist at Maven Medical Center, Hyderabad, warns that sedentary lifestyles, prolonged sitting, poor posture, and lack of physical activity are driving this alarming trend. Additional risk factors such as obesity, unhealthy diets, repetitive joint stress from high-intensity sports or physically demanding work, and even mental stress-induced inflammation are accelerating joint degeneration. However, modern medical advancements offer effective nonsurgical solutions. Minimally invasive treatments like Genicular Artery Embolization (GAE) and Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) therapy are revolutionizing osteoarthritis care by reducing pain, improving mobility, and eliminating the need for surgery.

Empowering Women in STEM

n International Women's Day, vivo India launched Project vivo KanyaGyaan, a nationwide initiative aimed at empowering young women from a nationwide initiative aimed at empowering young women norm underserved communities to pursue careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). Addressing the gender gap in these fields, the program goes beyond scholarships, offering mentorship, skill development, and industry exposure. So far, it has positively impacted 150 women, with over 60% coming from families earning less than ?1 lakh annually and 15% raised by single parents. By supporting first-generation graduates and breaking financial and societal barriers, vivo is not only transforming individual lives but also contributing to a more diverse and inclusive STEM workforce. To further amplify this message, vivo has launched a digital campaign showcasing the inspiring journeys of young women overcoming challenges to succeed in STEM, reinforcing the need for a more inclusive and diverse future in technology.

Coromandel International Limited, one of India's leading agri-solutions providers, has inaugurated its second Sulphur manufacturing plant at its Visakhapatnam facility in Andhra Pradesh. site is the company's wholly backward integrated unit and produces approximately 12 LMT of

complex fertilisers along with Phosphoric acid and Sulphuric acid. The site also hosts a Sulphur Fertiliser plant with 25000 MT production capacity. With the inauguration of this new plant, the company's Sulphur fertiliser capacity is doubled, ensuring a steady supply of highquality bentonite Sulphur fertilisers to the farmers



Healthy Smiles

A aintaining good oral hygiene is essential for overall well-being, as

poor dental health has been

linked to conditions like heart

disease and diabetes. On this

Dentist's Day, Dr. Sonia Datta,

dentistry expert with over 27

years of experience, shares

to ensure long-term dental

importance of a structured

expert-recommended practices

wellness. She emphasizes the

daily routine, which includes

brushing twice a day with a

Dabur Red Paste to remove

mouthwash with Ayurvedic

ingredients such as pudina

and clove helps combat oral

bacteria and maintain fresh

breath. Staying hydrated is also crucial, as drinking water

throughout the day washes

supports saliva production.

which naturally protects teeth

away food particles and

While brushing is the

Using an antibacterial

plaque and strengthen enamel

a renowned public health

foundation of oral hygiene, incorrect techniques can lead to plaque buildup or enamel damage. Dentists recommend using a soft-bristled toothbrush to prevent gum irritation, brushing for at least two minutes to cover all tooth surfaces—including the tongue-and replacing the toothbrush every 2-3 months for optimal effectiveness. By incorporating these simple yet effective practices, one can maintain a healthy smile and reduce the risk of long-term dental complications

clinically tested toothpaste like



Mahila Dakshata Samithi (MDS) Educational Institutions in Gangaram, Chandanagar, Hyderabad, hosted a captivating lecture on the Kumbh Mela, exploring the intersection of science and spirituality. The event witnessed the presence of distinguished guests, Anju Poddar, an eminent speaker and author, Sheel Kumar Jain, President of Hindi Arts College and Smt. Vimala Badruka, Trustee of Rogi Sahayata Trust







In celebration of International Women's Day. Airtel Payments Bank honored the outstanding contributions of women business correspondents (BCs) from Telangana, recognizing their vital role in driving financial inclusion. During a special event in Hyderabad, the Bank acknowledged the dedication and impact of these women, who serve as a crucial bridge between banking services and marginalized populations. The event was attended by retired IAS officer Chiranjeevulu Togarla.

Bindu Priya, a native of Armoor District, Nizamabad,

and currently a corporate leader in London, has been

crowned Mrs. India Telangana 2025 in the NRI

category. She will now represent Telangana on the

national stage at Mrs. India in September 2025. A

multifaceted and dynamic personality, Bindu Priya is



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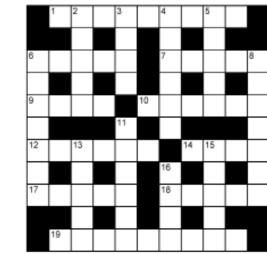






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CROSSWORD



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 An exact copy 	
6 Someone who	
decides who won	
7 Tiny bread scrap	
9 Young woman	
10 Shout this to attract	
attention (3-3)	
12 A frozen drip	
14 Went quickly	
17 Dirt	
18 Sea	
19 Tried	
DOWN	
2 Beneath	



SOLUTION

5 Hard to chew

11 An arm cover 13 Very foolish person

15 Fragment 16 Use this when

washing

6 Slow running for exercise 8 Make wider

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tollywood

'I GOT 50 OFFERS AFTER CINEMABANDI, BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO DO SAME KIND OF ROLE'

SURESH KAVIRAYANI sureshkaviravani@gmail.com

ag Mayur is a name that has been making waves in Telugu cinema. From his recent hit web series Sivarapalli, which has remained in the top 10 even after seven weeks, to his acclaimed roles in Gandhi Tatha Chettu and Veeranjaneyula Vihara Yatra, the young actor is proving his mettle with every project. His versatility has left a lasting impression, lead-ing many to believe that he has the potential to excel in a variety of roles if given the right opportunities. "I want to explore all shades—

positive, negative, or grey. But my only condition is that each role should be different from my previous ones. That's why I am selective about my projects," says Rag Mayur.

Rag Mayur's journey from a boy growing up in Hyderabad's RTC **Cross Roads to** becoming a sought-after actor in Telugu cinema is nothing short of inspiring. **Known for his** versatility and ability to take on unconventional roles, he has carved a niche for himself in the industrv

Rag Mayur completed his degree in Computer Science from Osmania University. Growing up near RTC Cross Roads, a hub for cinema enthusiasts, he was constantly surrounded by the magic of movies. "Every day, I used to see the theaters—Sandhya, Sudarshan, Devi, Odeon—and watch films of Chiranjeevi and Shah Rukh Khan. Maybe that's what ignited my passion for cinema," he shares. Despite being a bright student, the allure of films remained strong in his mind.

After earning his degree, he moved to the USA for his Master's but soon realized he wasn't happy there. "I missed home, so I lished returned to Hyderabad and startactors ed working," he recalls. Around 2014, he began his professional journey in Bengaluru as an IT employee. With weekends free, he joined a theater group and started writing about films for a web-

site. He also

experi-

mented

with film-

making

direct

ing and

Born and raised in Hyderabad, acting in short films. One of his are brought in. But producers Rai projects, Rama Kanavemira, went & DK insisted that the original cast viral in 2016, garnering over a mil-lion views. That success reinforced his decision to focus solely on acting, prompting him to send portfolios and attend auditions.

His big break came when director Praveen Kandregula cast him in a demo film for Cinemabandi. 'Usually, demo films are made to pitch the concept to production houses, and

when a pro-

ject gets

approved,

estab-

remain intact. That's how Cinemabandi became my debut, and it turned out to be a major success, staying at the top for two

small and big films. However, he was careful not to get typecast. "Many wanted me to play similar village-based roles, but repeating the same character is the fastest way to fade out in the industry. So, I made a conscious decision to be selective," he explains.

One of his standout performances came in Keedaa Cola, directed by Tharun Bhascker, where he played a unique role that earned him critical acclaim. His next project, the web film Veeranjanevula Vihara Yatra, released on ETV Win, was both commercially and critically suc-cessful. "I played a serious role in this film. Interestingly, the director had seen my short film

remembered me for this part," he His latest hit, Sivarapalli, stream-

ing on Amazon, is an adaptation of the Hindi series Panchayat, but with a fresh take in Telugu. "I weeks," says Rag Mayur. Following Cinemabandi, he received nearly 50 offers from both sure not to copy the acting. Bringing my own interpretation was a big challenge, but I'm grate-ful for the appreciation," he shares.

A standout aspect of Rag Mayur's journey is his ability to master regional accents. In Cinemabandi, he perfected the Rayalaseema dialect, in Keedaa Cola, he adopted a Telangana accent, and for his upcoming film Garividi Lakshmi, he trained rigorously for 40 days to nail the challenging Srikakulam dialect. "I play a Burrakatha artist in this one," he reveals.

Stepping into villainous territory, Rag Mayur took on a negative role in Gandhi Tatha Chettu, directed by Padmavathi. "Initially, they wanted a 50-year-old actor, but the director felt I could do it. The team had doubts, but after seeing my audition, they were con-vinced," he shares.

He is meticulous in preparing for his roles, maintaining a notebook where he jots down details about each character. "I don't consider myself a spontaneous actor. I prepare thoroughly, consult with directors, and adapt as needed. That preparation allows me to years ago and make last-minute changes effortlessly," he explains. With roots in both Vijayawada

and Hyderabad, Rag Mayur attributes his ease with different accents to his family background. "My grandparents are from Andhra, which might be why I can adapt to different regional tones easily," he

Looking ahead, he plays Anupama Parameswaran's love interest in Paradha, directed by Praveen Kandregula. He has also signed a film with Geetha Arts 2. "It's a completely different role from anything I've done before, and I'm excited for audiences to see it," he concludes.

With his dedication to craft, keen script selection, and ability to bring diverse characters to life, Rag Mayur is undoubtedly a rising star to watch in Telugu cinema.



MAKERS CLARIFY Janhvi's b'day post isn't her film look

sually, when an actor or actress celebrates their birthday, the makers release a glimpse of their look from an upcoming film. However, on Thursday, as Bollywood actress Janhvi Kapoor celebrated her birthday, there was no such reveal from her highly anticipated film alongside Ram Charan, directed by Buchi Babu. Despite the film's shooting having begun weeks ago, with a schedule completed in Mysore featuring both Ram Charan and Janhyi, the makers chose not to unveil her look. Instead, they shared a casual picture of Janhvi on the film's set. Apart from her Hindi films,

Janhvi Kapoor has now entered

Telugu cinema with her debut film Devara opposite Jr NTR. She is already in high demand and has signed her second Telugu film, this time opposite Ram Charan. On her birthday, the makers shared a picture from the set to extend their wishes, which led to speculation that it was her look from the film. However, they clarified that the image was not her official look but a candid shot taken during the first schedule in Mysore.

Janhvi took part in the first schedule in Mysore in November 2024 and will soon be joining the ongoing shoot in Hyderabad, which began on Thursday. This 12day schedule will focus on filming crucial sequences.

Raa Raja is an



experimental film: **Shiva Prasad**

set to introduce a unique cinematic experience with his experimental film Raa Raja, in which the actors' faces are never shown—a concept rarely explored in mainstream cinema. "These days, content-driven films are doing well, and audiences are supporting them. So, I decided to make a story-driven film without showing the actors' faces," said Shiva Prasad.

Initially a producer, Shiva Prasad started his career with Maathru. However, while working on that project, he conceived the idea for Raa Raja and decided to direct it himself. "That's when I chose to take on this project as both producer and direc-

irector B. Shiva Prasad is tor," he shared. Despite not revealing the actors' faces, the film aims to capture all kinds of emotions. "Audiences will still experience love, comedy, horror, and every other emotion. The film will keep them engaged and entertained until the end," he assured. He further added, "We made this film to offer a unique theatrical experience. Even though the actors' faces aren't shown, the film won't feel incomplete. I hope audiences support this experimental project."

Raa Raja is set to release on Friday, March 7. The filmmaker also revealed that he has several projects lined up, including one with veteran actress Suhasini Maniratnam.



usic director-turned-actor GV Prakash Kumar is gearing up for the release of Kingston, which hits screens on March 7 in Tamil and Telugu. The film stars Divya <u>Bharathi as the female lead.</u> Having played a small role in Maharaja, a film that turned out to be a massive success, she is now reuniting with GV Prakash after their previous collaboration in Bachelor. "Compared to Bachelor, Kingston is completely different. It's India's first sea adventure thriller. I am also excited that this is GV Prakash Kumar's first film as a producer. He has put in immense effort, and I'm really happy to be a part of this project," said Divya Bharathi. The actress also performed action sequences for the first time. "Doing action scenes was a thrilling experience. I even performed rope sequences, and that's when I realized how tough action scenes can be! I've already watched the film, and I'm really happy with the final result," she

said Playing a village girl in the film, she revealed that Kingston is set to become a franchise. "Yes! My character will continue in the upcoming sequels," she confirmed.

Divya Bharathi has also ventured into Telugu cinema with GOAT opposite Sudigali Sudheer and is improving her Telugu-speaking skills. "My assistant is Telugu-speaking, so I practice with him. That's how I'm learning the language," she shared. The actress further revealed that she has completed two Tamil films and is currently in talks for two Telugu projects. She ended on an enthusiastic note, expressing her admiration for Power Star Pawan Kalyan. "I'm a huge fan of Khushi! And, of course, I love Pushpa Raj, Allu Arjun," she said.

Telangana **Speaker Supports** Mr. Reddy Team at Teaser Launch

T. Narasimha Rao (TNR), popularly known as Gold Man Raja, is mak-ing his acting debut in Mr. Reddy, a film that he is also producing. The teaser was launched by Telangana Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad, who extended his best wishes to the team. Lead actor TNR expressed his grati-tude to the Speaker and other dignitaries at the event. "We have all worked hard

on this film, and I hope everyone sup-ports our efforts," he said, adding that the release date will be announced soon. Directed by debutant Venkat

Voladhri, the film brings together a team of fresh talents. "Most of us are newcomers, and we have put in our best efforts to make this film a success," the director shared.

Several politicians, including Patnam Sunitha Reddy and Nalgonda Gaddar, praised the team's dedication. The film also stars Anupama Prakash, Mahadev, Deepti, and Bhaskar in key roles.

sports 12



We will play according to situation: Ravindra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LAHORE

ashing New Zealand opener Ravindra Rachin feels adapting to the conditions will be key to succeed on an "unknown" Dubai surface in the Champions Trophy (CT) final against India on Sunday. Except the group match against India in Dubai, New Zealand have played all their Zealand have prayed an then games in Pakistan. The Kiwis had also played two games in Lahore during the preceding tri-series involving Pakistan and South Africa.

India, on the other, have played all their matches in Dubai and are familiar with the conditions.

"We do not quite know what the Dubai pitch is. We saw in our (group) game against India the ball turning but the other day didn't turn so much. We found ourselves adapting and playing according to situations, which we will need to do on Sunday again.

"We will see in the next couple of days and hopefully it's a good cricket wicket," said



time and continue to play well Ravindra after an emphatic 50-run win over South Africa for my team," he said. in the semifinal here on He is also aware about the Wednesday. expectations from the side in

Ravindra scored only six any big ICC event. against India in the group, falling to Hardik Pandya "Whenever you approach a tournament, you expect hopefully to be among the top while going for an upper cut, but the left-hander hopes for four teams and lucky enough we have been consistently

a better outing in the final. "You get out pretty much every time you bat. Hopefully good over a period of time. We are happy with our I can bat for a longer period of preparation, coming here

early, we can see we are cooking reasonably well. Trust and ability around the group is great."

Ravindra (108) smashed his second century of the tournament on Wednesday and together with Kane Williamson (102) starred in New Zealand's win.

Senior middle-order batter Daryl Mitchell, who made 49 off 37 balls in the semifinal,

said the loss to India in the group stage is a thing of the past not and the final will be a new day.

"The final is a new day and really excited to stuck into that challenge and adapt to whatever conditions and surfaces we get on the day and find ways to win moments throughout that game. "Hopefully, we can put some pressure on them and walk

away with white jacket," he said. said. Mitchell is not interested in poking his nose in the talks surrounding an unfair advantage to India because of playing all their matches at

one venue. "Just really happy with winning the game today and moving onto the final, it's an

exciting Mitchell said. opportunity,"

"That's the nature of international cricket. We do a lot of travelling and we are used to that. It's not for me to decided how the tournament should be planned. I am just excited to be in an ICC final and looking forward to play

in national championship PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI As many as 300 pugilists will compete for glory at the 8th Elite Women's National Boxing Championship in Greater Noida from March 21-27.

Organised in association with the UP Boxing Association, the tournament returns to the venue that hosted its last edition in 2023.

Held under the World Boxing and Boxing Federation of India (BFI) competition guidelines, the championship is open to boxers born between January 1, 1984, and December 31, 2005.

Each state unit can field a maximum of 10 boxers, with entries by numbers closing on March 10 and final name confirmation due by March 15. The action officially begins on March 20 with the arrivals, draw, and technical meeting. The opening rounds will take place from March 21 to 24, followed by the quarter-finals

on March 25 and the semifinals on March 26, leading up to the finals on March 27. The tournament will follow a three-round format, with each bout consisting of three-minute rounds with a oneminute rest period. The tenpoint must-scoring system will be in place, and all matches will adhere to World

300 women boxers to compete

Boxing Technical & Competition Rules. Boxers will also be required to undergo a daily weigh-in throughout the competition. Beyond the 300 competing boxers, the championship will

also bring together over 100 coaches and support staff, along with 60 technical officials, ensuring a top-tier spectacle.

Defending champions Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) will be looking to retain their title after a dominant performance in the previous edition, where they clinched five gold medals, one silver, and two bronzes.

RSPB nudged Haryana by eight points, the latter finishing second with seven medals, including three golds, three silvers, and a bronze.

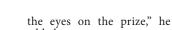


We are still evolving as a team: Rob Walter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LAHORE

 $\begin{array}{c} Y^{\text{et another knockout stage}}_{\text{heartbreak at yet another ICC event. But perennial bridesmaid}} \\ \begin{array}{c} \text{South} & \text{Africa} \end{array}$ remains on the right track two years before the ODI World Cup at home, feels the team's head coach Rob Walter after its semifinal exit from the Champions Trophy here.

Having topped their group, South Africa came up short in the second semifinal against New Zealand here on Wednesday night and went down by 50 runs in a chase of 362. Walter said there are enough positives to take back



added. The 2027 ODI World Cup will co-hosted by South Africa,

Zimbabwe and Namibia. Walter was expectedly asked about South Africa going down in a knockout game of another global event. Last year, the Proteas lost the T20 World Cup final to India from a commanding position. "I don't think it was any one

particular thing that resulted in the loss, probably a couple. We could have handled the last 10 overs (while bowling) a little bit better. They got away from us a little bit. "There was a period sort of in the middle of the innings



run rate to seal their spot in the final.

It seems like things are falling in place at last for the Giants, In the rive-team points table. On Friday, the second-ranked Giants, with six points in as many games, will have the perfect opportunity to put their recent ascent to test who showed determination against all odds to beat RCB in a low-scoring thriller, with skipper Ashleigh Gardner (58 not out) and Phoebe Litchfield (30 not out) taking against a formidable Delhi Capitals, who sit atop the the side over the line.

The Giants then demolished Delhi Capitals, who have already booked a place in the playoffs, would be keen to UP Warriorz by 81 runs in their previous outing, riding on Beth Mooney's stunning record a win and take their 96 not out and a collective tally to 12 points and, in the show from their bowlers to

process, also better their net run rate to seal their spot in mere 105 in pursuit of 187. The huge win not only lifted the Giants from the last spot but also improved their NRR to 0.357 from -0.450, better than the third-placed Mumbai Indians (0.166) with whom they are tied on six

points. Additionally, with MI having three more games left, the Giants will be keen to keep their fate in their hands and not depend on the outcomes of other games.

Giants' pacers, in particular, exploited the new ball and

conditions to good effect, blowing away UP Warriorz's batting after Mooney missed recording the first-ever ton by any player in this WPL.

Their recent performances would surely fuel their fire but the Giants will have to be wary of the all-round strength of the Delhi Capitals, who too would be keen for a win, for it would help them finish at the top and qualify directly for **PSG** lose to Liverpool the final.

Currently, Delhi Capitals hold the top spot with 10 points from seven matches. They are in pole position to finish first, which would ensure direct entry into the title round. The teams finishing second and third will face off in the

Eliminator next week. Meg Lanning has blown hot and cold this season but still

remains dangerous, while India batter Shafali Verma French team in a 1-0 loss to (260 runs) has lit up the tournament with her Liverpool in the first leg of the aggressive stroke-play. Jess Jonassen has made all-round contributions for Delhi with 128 runs and joint secondhighest nine wickets

Champions League round of 16. Harvey Elliott's late goal on Wednesday punished PSG at Parc des Princes. It was only Liverpool's second attempt on target compared to a

PARIS

in Champions League PRESS TRUST OF INDIA scored with a brilliant curling shot from the right of the penalty area in the 20th minute but the Georgia star's Paris Saint-Germain's (PSG) wasteful finishing effort was ruled out for a came back to haunt the

razor-thin offside following a video review. VAR went in Liverpool's favour a second time minutes later, when referee Davide Massa checked for a red card check to see whether Ibrahima Konaté had pushed Barcola in the back. But no

midfielder

counterattack

foul was given. Kvaratskhelia went close with whopping 28 for PSG. Kvaratskhelia went close with Wasted chances galore a free kick early in the second half and had another low shot hampered PSG during the half and had another low shot group stage — where it lost to saved. Arsenal, Atletico Madrid and Bayern Munich, scoring just one goal in those three games. But coach Luis Enrique's side Former England captain David Beckham was among the crowd at Parc des Princes. He played half a season for PSG after joining in 2013 during the start of the club's had turned the corner in fine style with 40 goals scored in 10 straight wins before this Galactico era and then game. PSG had 12 attempts on goal retired. It was turning into a night of frustration for this PSG side. in the first half alone where Liverpool could not cope with A corner almost went in, until PSG's pace, movement and constant positional switches on a night where Liverpool's Liverpool Dominik Szoboszlai stuck a leg out on the line. 30-goal top scorer Mohamed Salah was kept quiet. Then, with the clock ticking, Alisson made the save of the Luckily goalkeeper Alisson was at his defiant best, night when he somehow got both hands at full stretch to however, making nine saves substitute Désiré Doué's bending shot from 20 meters. overall. The imposing Brazilian twice denied Khvicha Kvaratskhelia Luis Enrique said before the game that Liverpool were and kept out attempts from Europe's Bradley Barcola and Ousmane Dembélé. There specialists and he was proved right. The return leg is on next Tuesday at Anfield and the were also bad misses from Barcola and midfielder João Neves, who both shot over winner faces either Aston from good positions. Kvaratskhelia thought he had Villa or Club Brugge in the

India have 'real clarity' on how they

in a few days time."

home notwithstanding а tough loss.

You know, in the wins, we managed to put some significant partnerships together. We had guys contributing significantly with the bat. From a bowling point of view, I think our point of view, I think our biggest development was our accuracy. We were able to be very accurate as a seam unit," said Walter in the post-match press conference.

"And that's something that we have been working really hard nave been working really hard on. Every game we play is a learning opportunity. We just keep trying to take the little lessons. Today is a hard lesson, you feel it a little bit more, because it's the end of a campaign.

"But we certainly continue to keep learning from things, little bits here and there, that we can do better. We're still

where Kane (Wiiliamson) and Rachin (Ravindra) started to

were just starting to get going and that partnership got broken and really slowed us down in the middle and obviously we saw Dave (Miller) play unbelievably well in the end to get a hundred...You know you're from doing something special," said Walter. With Williamson and

Ravindra easily manipulating the bowlers, it seemed South Africa ran out of ideas. However, Walter did not

scored over local Nguyen Thai

Dai Van to reach a fifty percent

score while David Navara of

Czech Republic played out a draw with Vincent Keymer of

Aravindh on five and Pragg on 4.5 are now followed by Wei

4.5 are now followed by well Yi, Ediz, Keymer and Shankland on 3.5 points each and these four are a half point

adrift of the trio of Giri, Navara and Le.Dai Van is

Germany.

agree to that. "No, I don't think that's entirely accurate. We certainly tried to change it up, we tried we can do better. We're still evolving as a team; there's no doubt in my mind. Two and a half years to 2027 and that's so the ball kept sliding on."

want to operate in Dubai: Williamson PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LAHORE New Zealand batting mainstay Kane Williamson reckons India have "real clarity" on how they want to operate in Dubai, having played all their Champions Trophy (CT) games at the same venue but his team will also be reasonably wellprepared for the tournament finale due to its limited past familiarity with conditions. Williamson did not specifically say that India had an advantage of playing at one venue, choosing to compare it to New Zealand's understanding of conditions in

Lahore, where they beat South Africa on Wednesday to set up a final clash against the Rohit Sharma-led side in Dubai on Sunday. New Źealand had played two games in Lahore during the preceding tri-series involving Pakistan and South Africa.

table with 10 points.

"I suppose having played there on a number of occasions; there's real clarity in how they want to operate," said Williamson when asked if India go into the final with an advantage of knowing the



conditions.

"A little bit like our opportunity here, having played a number of times at this venue as well and I think that's part and parcel in cricket," he added.

Having scored a hundred in the semifinal, Williamson is high on confidence and looking forward to the final. "It is what it is (India play all games in

Dubai). Our focus is the next match, the location of that match, the opposition,

they're all factors. Obviously, we played India once there," he said.

The conditions are different, so it's important that we try and take away some of those positives and be nice and clear in how we're trying to operate come two or three-days' time in the final," he said referring to New Zealand's loss to India in the group stage. Both Williamson and Rachin Ravindra

struck hundreds to fashion New Zealand's emphatic win.

Williamson called Ravindra, who has score two hundreds in three games, a special talent.

"It's a final, so it's exciting. If we go back to Rachin, an incredibly special talent. It's always great to bat with him. He goes out and he puts the team first and he plays with that freedom.

"When we were out there batting together, there were moments where there were some good spells and it was a little bit challenging. We tried to feed off each other and keep each other focused on the job," Williamson said.

quarterfinals.

Aravindh defeats Giri in Prague Masters Mushfiqur Rahim retires from ODIs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA PRAGUE

Grandmaster Aravindh Chithambaram crashed through the defenses of supersolid Anish Giri to jump in to sole lead after the end of the seventh round of Prague Masters chess tournament now underway here.

It was Aravindh all the way while R Praggnanandhaa played out a draw with preevent rating favourite Wei Yi of China. Aravindh took his tally to five points out of a possible seven and now enjoys a half point lead over Praggnanandhaa who needs to catch up.

With just two rounds to come, Sam Shankland of United States defeated Quang Leim Le of Vietnam. Interestingly, both Quang Leim and Giri had drawn the first six games and the axe fell on them at the



battle lines are drawn between the two Indians only.

Aravindh is a cool customer in normal positions with a deep eye for tactical complexities and a rare chance against Giri provided him to dismantle the king side and enter record

books. There are as many as five Indians in top 15 live world rankings and Viswanathan Anand stands at number 15. Aravindh at 14, entered the same time. In the other decisive game 16-2.5 points in his kitty. The ver. It was a Queen's gambit

declined wherein Giri overestimated his chances and pushed his king side pawns in trying to secure a space advantage. Aravindh came up with a shocker on his 24th turn when he put his knight in front of a pawn and it was a one-way tide thereon. Black's attack was soon impossible to handle and Aravindh won in 39 moves.

Praggnanandhaa started with the English opening against Wei Yi and the game took shape in a Tarrasch defense wherein the Chinese was under some pressure but never really out of the game.

The Indian won a pawn to reach a rook and pawns endgame and despite having a passed pawn deep outside the position was technically drawn. The game lasted 61 moves.

In the challengers' section, Jonas Buhl Bjerre added to the woes of lone Indian Divya Deshmukh who remained at

the last spot on 1.5 points from seven games. The lead in this section is shared by Bjerre and Nodirbek Yakubboev of Uzbekistan on 5.5 points each.

5.5 points each. Results round 6: Quang Leim Le (Vie, 3) lost to Sam Shankland (Usa, 2.5); R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 4.5) drew with Wei Yi (Chn, 3.5); Anish Giri (Ned, 3) lost to Aravindh Chithambaram Aravindh Chithambaram (Ind, 5); Gurel Ediz (Tur, 3.5) beat Nguyen Thai Dai Van (Cze, 2.5); David Navara (Cze,

3) drew with Vincent Keymer (Ger, 3.5). Challengers: Richard Stalmach

Jonas Buhl Bjerre (Den, 5.5); Nodirbek Yakubboev (Uzb, (5.5) beat Ivan Salgado Lopez (Esp, 3.5); Marc`andria Maurizzi (Fra, 4) beat Nemec Jychym (Cze, 2); Ma Qun

Kourkoulous-Arditis (Gre, 3).

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA DHAKA

Bangladesh **7**eteran V wicket-keeper batter Mushfiqur Rahim has retired from ODI cricket with immediate effect.

The 37-year-old was part of Bangladesh's squad that exited the Champions Trophy (CT) from the group stage.

He made the announcement on social media.

"I am announcing my retirement from the ODI format as of today. Alhamdulillah (Thank God) for everything. While our achivements may have been limited on a global level, one thing is certain: whenever I stepped onto the field for my country, I gave more than 100 per cent with dedication and honesty," Rahim wrote on his official Facebook page. "The last few weeks have



been very challenging for scored more ODI runs than me, and I have come to him for Bangladesh. realise that this is my destiny. "Lastly, I would like to deeply thank my family, friends and my fans for whom I have played cricket for the last 19 years," he added.

Rahim made his ODI debut Rahim made his ODI debut almost 20 years ago and ended up representing the country in 274 ODIs, aggregating 7795 runs at an average of 36.42. Only Tamim Iqbal (8357 runs) has Tests.

He has also played 94 Tests and 102 T20s.

In the team's disappointing Champions Trophy campaign, Rahim failed to score against India before

Rahim has already retired from the shortest format but in the longest format, he is on course to become first from his country to play 100

(Cze, 3) drew with Finel Vaclav (Cze, 3); Divya Deshmukh (Ind, 1.5) lost to

(Chn, 4) drew with Stamatis

