

# Carnegie Mellon University School of Computer Science

# SRM AP, AMARAVATI LANDMARK COLLABORATION WITH CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY'S SCHOOL OF COMPUTER SCIENCE, USA FOR AI RESEARCH LAB

A collaboration to drive novel AI research, innovation and education to shape future AI leaders and redefine the technological landscape





# ADVANCED AI RESEARCH LAB

Establishing a state - of - the - art Al lab incorporating the latest advancements in Al and emerging technologies for pioneering research and innovation, inspired by CMU SCS's cutting-edge research ecosystem.



# DEEPER FACULTY ENGAGEMENT

Faculty engage with CMU SCS's Al academia and research environment, redefining acadmic programs and advancing Al education at SRM AP.



## DISTINCTIVE RESEARCH INTERNSHIPS

SRM AP Students intern at CMU SCS's Al labs in the United States gaining hands-on experience and working alongside world-class Al experts on real-world challenges.

# Shaping the Future of AI - Together!

SRM AP, Amaravati: Neerukonda, Mangalagiri Mandal, Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh 522240

CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY - SCS: 5000 Forbes Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, USA



# 'Expedite verification of Indiramma **Housing applications at Gram Sabhas'**

**PNS** ■ HYDERABAD

Revenue, Housing, and Information Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy has directed officials to immediately verify applications received during the Indiramma Housing Gram Sabhas held in January and proceed with the selection of beneficiaries. The Minister issued these instructions during a review meeting on Indiramma Housing held at the Secretariat on Monday.

The meeting was attended by Housing Special Secretary Jyothi Budd Prakash and Housing Corporation MD VP Gautam.

During the review, Ponguleti emphasised that the experiences and challenges faced during the selection of beneficiaries in 562 model villages on January 26 should be evaluat-

ed. He instructed officials to take stock of the difficulties encountered so far and ensure a meticulous and foolproof process for finalizing beneficia-

"The selection process must be carried out with absolute diligence, ensuring that only eligible beneficiaries receive houses. Technology should be used wherever possible to prevent ineligible applicants from getting approvals. Even if con-struction has already started, any ineligible allotments will be canceled," he warned.

The Minister insisted that officials must assess eligibility at the application stage itself, ensuring that only genuine beneficiaries make it to the final list. This will save time and ensure fairness in housing

"The government's primary

objective is to provide houses to every deserving family. If there are complaints about eligible beneficiaries being left out, field inspections must be conducted to rectify such cases immediately. The poorest of the poor should be given top priority in the housing scheme," Ponguleti asserted.

With thousands of poor families across the state waiting for Indiramma houses, he urged officials to work in a transparent and accountable manner to ensure that the final list includes only the most deserving candidates.
"There should never be a sit-

uation where houses are allotted to ineligible persons," he reiterated, emphasising the government's commitment to fairness and social justice in the implementation of the Indiramma Housing Scheme.

**Chief Secy reviews preparations** for Assembly session

Kavitha demands white paper on

PNS HYDERABAD

Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari held a meeting with senior officials on Monday to review preparations for the Assembly session commencing on March 12. She directed officials to coordinate closely with the Assembly authorities to ensure timely and comprehensive responses to all the queries of MLAs and

Legislative Council Members. Emphasising the importance of accuracy in legislative proceedings, Santhi Kumari said the concerned secretaries must be present throughout the budget session to provide

borrowed by the government in the last 15 months, reveal-

ing where the funds had been

Addressing the media at the Telangana Bhavan, Kavitha said that Chief Minister

Revanth Reddy's administra-

tion had completely neglected the public while ensuring

timely payments to contrac-

tors.
"Women were promised Rs

2,500 per month. Brides were

promised 10 grams of gold.

Young women expected elec-

utilized.

precise information.

She also stressed the need to appoint nodal officers for each department to streamline coordination. "The demands of all departments will come up for discussion in the coming days, and officials should be fully prepared with details," she added.

The meeting was attended by Special Chief Secretaries Vikas Raj, Jayesh Ranjan, and Ravi Gupta, along with Principal Secretaries Sandeep Kumar Sultania, Shailaja Ramaiyar, Sanjay Kumar, Dana Kishore, Sridhar, and SAM Rizvi. Secretaries Yogita Rana, Lokesh Kumar, Christina Z. Chongthu.

Rajasthan were a direct reference to Revanth," KTR said. Citing a post-budget meeting between Revanth and

PNS HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy

accusing him of being a 'covert operative' of the BJP and for

'betraying' Telangana's inter-

BRSLP office, KTR said that

Revanth's actions over the last

15 months indicate a hidden

agenda aligned with the BJP

and pointed to Congress leader

Addressing the media at the

Prime Minister Modi, KTR questioned the secrecy sur-BRS Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) lashed out at rounding their talks.

Revanth is BJP's covert

agent, betrayed TG: KTR

'What did CM discuss with PM in private'

"Revanth met Modi with 11 proposals, but what was the real agenda? Why was Minister Sridhar Babu asked to step out? Telangana's people want to know that," he demanded.

He accused Revanth of fail-

ing to secure any tangible benefits for Telangana despite his

frequent trips to New Delhi.
Confirming that BRS chief
K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR)
would attend the next Rahul Gandhi's recent remarks about "BJP agents" within his Assembly session, KTR disparty. "Rahul's comments in missed Revanth Reddy's stature in comparison. "KCR operates on a different level. Revanth isn't even a fraction of him," he quipped, reaffirming BRS's vations.

commitment to fighting for Telangana's interests both within and outside the Assembly.

Challenging the Chief Minister's commitment to BC reservations, KTR demanded that he take concrete action instead of making empty promises.

"If Revanth genuinely cares for BCs, let him launch an indefinite hunger strike in Delhi for 42% reservations Telangana's BC youth will ensure he doesn't back out," he declared.

KTR accused both the Congress and the BJP of using BCs as vote banks while delib erately avoiding Constitutional amendments to increase reser-

## Organisations engaged in similar ops must be under one umbrella: Tummala

Saving standing crops

govt's first priority: Uttam

ed areas.

PNS HYDERABAD

Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao said that corporations set up as per the circumstances that existed in the past can survive only if they function according to the changing priorities of farmers and the government. Similarly, all institutions undertaking the same operations must be brought under one umbrella, he added.

He said that a decision will be taken regarding the strengthening or merger of all the said institutions in the coming years as soon as a report is received on operations carried out by them and the financial status of the

PNS HYDERABAD

Safeguarding standing crops is

of utmost priority for the gov-

ernment, said Irrigation and

Civil Supplies Minister Capt.

He emphasised that all con-

cerned departments must

closely coordinate to ensure

that farmers do not suffer

losses due to water scarcity or

Uttam directed officials to

nges faced by farme

be proactive and address any

during the crucial final phase

11 nominations ...

Chief Minister Revanth

Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister

Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka,

Ministers Komatireddy

Venkat Reddy, N. Uttam

Kumar Reddy, D. Sridhar

Babu and many MLAs attend-

ed the filing of nominations by

CPI Secretary K. Narayana,

Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao

and others also attended for

their candidate Nellikanti

Secretary

Congress candidates.

Sathyam's nomination.

CPI State

Continued from page 3

of the rabi crop season.

power supply disruptions.

N. Uttam Kumar Reddy.

Ultimately, the objective of the government or government-affiliated institutions is to provide efficient services to farmers, Tummala said.

The Agriculture Minister was reviewing the progress of TG AGROs, HACA, TGRIC, TG Cooperative Union and TG Warehouse Corporations

on Monday at the secretariat.
Agriculture Secretary
Raghunandan Rao IAS, Managing Director Chandrasekhar Reddy IAS, Managing Director Dr K. Lakshmi IAS, Chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao, Ramulu, Annapurna, and other officials attended the review meeting.

He pointed out that misin-

formation was being spread

regarding irrigation water

availability and called upon

officials to counter such lies by

personally visiting the affect-

On Monday, Uttam Kumar

Reddy, along with Agriculture

Minister Tummala Nageswara

Rao, Chief Secretary Santhi

Kumari, Agriculture Secretary

Raghunandan Rao and

TSSPDCL CMD Musharraf,

held a video conference with

officials and electricity officers

However, BRS Working

President KT Rama Rao and

some others attended the

nomination filing function of

BRS candidate Dr Dasoju

The candidates submitted

their nomination papers to

Returning Officer Ch.

The scrutiny of nomina-

tions will take place on

Tuesday and withdrawal will

be on March 13. Elections will

be held on March 20.

However, only five nomina-

tions are likely to pass scruti-

ny as the other nominations

do not have proposers.

all over the state.

Sravan Kumar.

Upender Reddy.

SPs agriculture

# Kishan walking in Sanjay's footsteps, says Kiran

PNS HYDERABAD

The Congress's Bhongir MP, Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, said that the Telangana BJP President, G. Kishan Reddy, is walking in the footsteps of Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, and that Kishan should stop spreading lies.

"Kishan, if you look at yourself as a Union Cabinet Minister, you seem to be following in the footsteps of your fellow Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, acting like him and speaking in his style. You are spreading lies like the TG government is not interested in India winning a cricket match and criticising the action taken by the police to control law and order in the Dilsukhnagar area. We found that you are spreading lies against the Congress although you are holding a responsible post," he said.

# PNS HYDERABAD

Kavitha launched a scathing attack on the Congress-led Telangana Government, accusing it of pushing the state into a financial crisis with reckless borrowing while failing to deliver on electoral promises. She demanded a white paper on the Rs 1.52 lakh crore

# 'Fifteen flights received hoax bomb threats in 2025'

At least 15 flights of various airlines have received hoax bomb threats this year, taking the total tally of such threats to 833 since 2020, according to official data.

A total of 833 hoax bomb threats have been received by airline operators since 2020, Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol told the Rajya Sabha on Monday citing data from the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS).

This year, there have been 15 hoax bomb threats to flights -- IndiGo (7), Air India (4), Lufthansa (2), Malindo (1) and American Airlines (1), the data



tric scooters. Farmers were assured loan waivers and bonuses. But not even a single promise has been implemented. The only people benefiting from the policies of this government are the big contractors while commoners are left waiting," she said.

Dismissing the Chief Minister's claims that the state is facing a financial crisis, Kavitha presented data showing that Telangana is financial-

# Harish accuses govt of mismanaging irrigation facilities, triggering drought

PNS HYDERABAD

Senior BRS MLS Harish Rao launched a blistering attack on the Congress Government, accusing Chief Minister Revanth Reddy of failing Telangana's farmers by mismanaging irrigation resources and making excuses instead of delivering solutions.

Addressing the media at the Jangaon MLA camp office, Harish asserted that the agricultural crisis was not caused by a natural drought but a crisis created by the Congress Government's inefficiency.

He criticised the Chief Minister's remarks that crop losses were due to heat waves, questioning why similar conditions under the BRS government had not led to such widespread damage.

"Even during peak summer, under KCR's leadership, water

and reservoirs. Not a single acre went dry. Now, crops are withering across Warangal district because of the Congress Government's failure," Harish said.

He accused the government of neglecting irrigation projects, particularly the Devadula Phase 3 scheme, which he claimed could have saved lakhs of acres from drought if its motors had been operational.

"The contractor of Devadula's Operation and Maintenance (O&M) has not been paid Rs 7,000 crore, resulting in motors being shut down for 33 days. Had they been running, reservoirs would have been full, and irrigation water would have reached the fields," he said.

# 'Congress is full of BJP agents'

The BRS has announced a year-long silver jubilee celebration marking 14 years of struggle and 10 years of governance, with a grand event set to take place in Warangal on April 27

BRS MLA Harish Rao, after inspecting the venue and reviewing arrangements, emphasised that Warangal has a historic connection to the Telangana Movement, making it the ideal location to begin celebrations. "These celebrations will be an opportunity for the Telangana people to hear KCR again and reflect on his leadership," he said.

# PM says his visit to Mauritius will open 'new and bright' chapter in ties

PNS NEW DELHI

As he embarks on a two-day trip to Mauritius, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the visit will open a "new and bright" chap-

Modi is visiting Mauritius on March 11 and 12 at the invitation of Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam primarily to grace the island nation's national day celebra-

In his departure statement, the prime minister said he was looking forward to engaging with the leadership of

nership in all its facets and strengthen our enduring friendship for the progress and prosperity of our peoples".

A contingent of Indian armed forces will participate in warship of the Indian Navy and the Akash Ganga skydiving team of the Indian Air

"Mauritius is a close maritime neighbour, a key partner in the Indian Ocean, and a gateway to the African Continent. We are connected by history, geography and cul-

ture," Modi said. "Deep mutual trust, a shared

AAP will go it alone in Goa, Gujarat elections: Atishi

Gujarat alone without opting for

an alliance with Congress. The

former Delhi chief minister was

on a day-long visit to the coastal

state to inaugurate the party's

office in Margao.

Mauritius to elevate "our part- belief in the values of democracy, and celebration of our diversity are our strengths," he

> The prime minister said the close and historical people-topeople connection between shared pride.

> "I am confident that this visit will build on the foundations of the past and open a new and bright chapter in the India and Mauritius relationship," he

> The prime minister noted people centric initiatives

Talking to reporters, Atishi said, "We are getting ready to

contest the elections (Goa and

Gujarat) on our own. Till now,

there are no talks of an

that "significant strides" have been made in the past 10 years between the two sides with

# Seethakka hits back at Harish over SHG loan interest claims

PNS HYDERABAD

The Minister for Women and Child Welfare, Seethakka, lashed out at BRS MLA Harish Rao for claiming that the Congress Government failed to pay interest on loans taken by women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

Responding strongly, Seethakka accused Harish of spreading lies due to frustration after the massive success of the women's public meeting held at the Parade Grounds.

Dismissing Harish's accusations, she stated that women's groups were neglected under the BRS admin, with nothing being done to provide interest-free loans. "Women were pushed into debt. Now Harish is shedding crocodile tears. The truth is, your government's record on women's welfare is shameful," she said.

She pointed out that during BRS rule only KCR's daughter Kavitha flourished while the problems of ordinary women were sidelined.

"Whether Bathukamma celebrations, BC movements or women's rights Kavitha hijacked everything. The BRS agenda was simple, that is, no woman should come up except Kavitha," she said.

Seethakka said that during Harish's tenure as Finance Minister, the government was supposed to pay Rs 3,485 crore as interest dues to women's SHGs but paid only Rs 409 crore.

"During the last three years, your government did not pay a single paisa towards women's interest dues. You robbed lakhs of women and left them to struggle," she said, accusing the BRS of diverting crores from the Abhaya Hastham scheme, which women had contributed rupee by rupee over the years.

She said that the Congress Government had cleared all pending dues for the previous financial year and was in the process of releasing this year's payments.

### TODAY **ALMANAC** Month & Paksham Sukla Paksha Dwadashi: Mar 10 07:45 AM to Mar 11 08:14 AM Trayodashi Mar 11 08:14 AM to Mar 12 09:11 AM Nakshatram Ashlesha: Magha: Mar 12 02:15 AM to Mar 13 04:05 AM 03:23 PM to 04:52 PM Rahukalam 09:28 AM to 10:57 AM 03:10 PM to 04:53 PM Varjyam: 12:26 PM to 01:55 PM Gulika: 12:33 AM to 02:15 AM Amritakalam: Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:02 PM to 12:49 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Updated: March 10, 2025 5:00 PM

Forecast: Sunny

**Humidity: 35%** 

Sunrise: 6:30 AM

Sunset: 6:21 PM

**Temp:** 34<sup>∞</sup>

### 'BRS borrowed ...

Continued from page 3

that the Paleru Reservoir is fully replenished with Godavari water.

The ministers instructed officials to review the canal networks from Baswapur to Singur in the Godavari basin and Yedula to Vattam in erstwhile Mahbubnagar district. With the Dindi Lift Irrigation Scheme reaching its final

stages, officials were asked to ensure speedy completion of the remaining works. The ministers stressed that the next financial year's focus should be on land acquisition, maintenance of old projects, and capital works under various irrigation schemes. They also underscored the need for the modernisation of irrigation projects and the lining of canals, stat-

ing that such measures would extend project lifespans and enhance water utilization efficiency. Taking a swipe at the BRS administration, the ministers said the KCR government focused solely on the Kaleshwaram Project, neglecting older irrigation projects, which have now fallen into a state of disrepair. They emphasized the need for regular maintenance of old projects while simultaneously exploring Central funding

options for irrigation schemes. The ministers directed officials to establish a special legal team to resolve land disputes connected to irrigation projects and ensure the completion of gate repairs for all medium and minor projects. Strengthening canal networks was also listed as a key priority.

# 'CAG report ... Continued from page 3 Union Minister Kishan Reddy

Senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)

leader Atishi on Monday said

that the party would contest the

2027 elections in Goa and

has been stating that he brought Metro Rail. However, Kishan should tell where is his Metro? Former Union Minister, the late S. Jaipal Reddy, brought the Metro

train to the state, he said. Criticising Kishan for not attending the all-party meeting, Revanth said that Kishan did not attend the all-party meeting as he was afraid of KCR. The CM said they are asking Kishan to bring funds as Kishan has been saying that he brought the Metro.

"Is it not Eatala Rajender who is blocking land acquisition for National Highways? Kishan should discuss with us as they are saying that land acquisition is the responsibility of the state government. Why did Kishan not attend the review meetings of his fellow Ministers? Why did he not

attend Union Urban Development Minister Manohar Lala Khattar's review meeting? Why is the Centre not sanctioning projects to Telangana? KTR and Kishan Reddy are roaming together," the CM said.

"We are thinking of spreading the development of Hyderabad to other regions. However, the BRS thinks that Central funds should not be provided to Telangana. Kishan should come for a debate on Central funds. I and Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka will attend the debate. We will felicitate Kishan if he proves that the Centre gave more funds to Telangana," the CM said.

The CM said that he would go to New Delhi 99 times for the funds. If the need arises I will stage a dharna in New Delhi for funds, the CM said. He said that there are limited allocations for projects. So we are asking the Centre for

### KTR accuses ...

Continued from page 3 His associates are quietly securing TDRs while the government prepares to impose new FSI restrictions. This is a multi-thousand-crore scam in the making," KTR said.

He called for an immediate investigation by Central agencies like the CBI and the ED into the matter.

He challenged Revanth Reddy to prove his innocence by releasing a white paper detailing current TDR ownership and recent transactions in Hyderabad. "If there is nothing to hide, why not make these details public?" he asked.

He demanded clarity on who had been purchasing TDRs in bulk and where they were being consolidated. "The people of Telangana deserve answers. If this scam goes unchecked, it will be one of the biggest frauds in the state's history," he warned.

He dismissed Revanth's expected justification that FSI restrictions were necessary to regulate Hyderabad's growth. 'This is not about urban planning. It's about pocketing massive profits by manipulating land policies," KTR said.

Providing historical context, KTR pointed out that past Congress governments, including that of YS Rajasekhara Reddy, had promoted unrestricted FSI to encourage development. "Now, Revanth is suddenly reversing that policy, but not for public welfare. He is doing it to ensure that his associates can cash in on skyrocketing TDR values," KTR said.

He emphasised that TDR policies were originally meant to help the government acquire land for public infrastructure without financial strain. "Through TDRs, the GHMC acquired 400 acres of prime land worth thousands of crores for road widening and public projects.

### 42 Telugus ... Continued from page 3

one such cyber scam centre. His plight gained media attention, prompting immediate action from the Union Minister. Upon learning of the situation, Sanjay Kumar directly appealed to the Indian Ministry of External Affairs and alerted Indian diplomatic missions in Myanmar and Thailand.

The Myanmar government deployed its army to raid the cyber scam centres, successfully rescuing the trapped Indians. With diplomatic coordination, arrangements were made for their return to India, facilitated by the Indian government's emergency response efforts.

As the first batch lands in Delhi, the nation watches closely as the remaining victims prepare to return home safely on Tuesday.

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before esponding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of laim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.

Printed and published by B Krishna Prasad for and on behalf of CMYK Printech Ltd., Phone: 040-23322341, Hyderabad Office: F-502, Diamond Block, Lumbini Rockdale, Somajiguda, Hyderabad - 500 082. Telangana. Printed at Sree Seshasai Enterprises, Plot No.19, IDA Balanagar , Hyderbad-500037, Medchal -Malkajgiri District, Telangana. Editor-in-Chief: Shobori Ganguli. Resident Editor: B Krishna Prasad, AIR SURCHARGE of Rs 2.00.

www.dailypioneer.com

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



**'WHAT WORKS** ON STAGE ISN'T THE SAME AS WHAT WORKS ON SCREEN'

Sankalp Reddy of *Ghazi* fame joins hands with Gopichand for a period **DRAMA** 



The pioneer Revanth criticised the Rs 46 crore Formula E event, calling it a waste of money. But now, he is spending Rs 200 crore on the Miss World event. If Formula E was corruption, then what is this? What benefits will Miss World bring to Telangana? At least Formula E generated massive investments and created jobs. What will the Miss World event bring? If he thinks that the Rs 46 crore spent on Formula E was corruption, how will he arrange Rs 1 lakh crore for the Olympics?

QUOTE OF THE DAY

- KT Rama Rao, BRS MLA

# Teen has fatal fall into quarry pit

A tragic incident unfolded at Malkaram Gutta in Jawahar Nagar on Sunday evening when a college student drowned in a quarry pit while attempting to take a selfie. The deceased, CG Ethin Naidu, was accompanied by his younger brother and friends, all Intermediate students. The group had visited the location after seeing reels on Instagram. Ethin, the only one among them pursuing graduation, accidentally slipped into the pit and drowned. The Jawahar Nagar Police, in a statement, confirmed, "Ethin Naidu, who went ..

# **CCTV** cameras will help control crime

The CCTV cameras will play a crucial role in controlling crimes and identify the offenders, said District Superintendent of Police Ravula Giridhar. The district SF inaugurated the CCTV cameras and control points set up by the police department at the Sri Rangapur Police Station. Speaking on the occasion, he mentioned that with the changing times, modern technology, including CCTV cameras, is becoming available, and installing them in every village will be key to creating a crime-free ...

# Massive AI talent gap looms in India

India is poised to become a global Al talent hub, but a looming skill gap threatens to hinder its progress with a new study by Bain & Company revealing that the country's Al sector could face a professionals by 2027. The report highlighted the urgent need for India to reskill and upskill its workforce to meet the growing demand for AI expertise. "India has a unique opportunity to position itself as a global Al talent hub. However, by 2027, the job openings in Al are...

-PAGE: 8

# 'I am not retiring from ODI format'

India skipper Rohit Sharma has dismissed the speculations about his career after winning the ICC Champions Trophy (CT), saying that he is not quitting the ODI format anytime soon. Since the tour of Australia, speculations were rife about Rohit's future in the team as well as his position as captain but a match-winning 76 in the final against New Zealand on Sunday has given him a new lease of life. "I am not going to retire from this (ODI) format. Going forward please don't spread rumours," Rohit said...

# Centre rules out Ramagundam airport

### Cites terrain, airspace restrictions

PNS HYDERABAD

The Union Ministry of Civil Aviation has ruled out the possibility of constructing a domestic airport at Ramagundam in Peddapalli district due to terrain constraints and the restricted airspace used by the Indian Air Force (IAF).

In a response to Lok Sabha MP Vamsi Krishna Gaddam, Civil Aviation Minister Rammohan Naidu Kinjarapu said that the existing Basanthnagar Airport is nonoperational, lacking infrastructure apart from a small helipad.

Pointing out the discrimination, Peddapalli MP Vamshi Krishna Gaddam asked why a once operational,

heavily used airport is now suddenly considered unfeasible. The Minister said the Techno-Economic Feasibility Report (TEFR) on the potential of Basanthnagar

Airport indicated that the project may not be viable. Telangana Gove "The airport is surrounded by port developer.

The Telangana Government is com-

priority to complete irrigation proj-

ects while ensuring the maintenance

Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu

and Irrigation Minister Uttam

remarks during a pre-budget meet-

ing of Irrigation and Civil Supplies

departments held at the secretariat

The ministers made these

Deputy Chie

high hills, which pose obstacles in aircraft approach. It falls within restricted IAF airspace, which is extensively used for training operations. Any clearance for airport construction would require prior approval from the Union Ministry of Defence," the letter stated.

The Greenfield Airports (GFA) Policy, 2008, provides a framework for the establishment of airports,

including stateled initiatives. As per the policy, any airport developer or the state govern-ment interested in building an airport must identify a suitable site for the project, conduct a pre-feasibility study for air-

port construction Civil Aviation Minister Rammohan Naidu and submit a formal proposal to the Centre for site clearance and inprinciple approval.

However, the ministry clarified that no proposal for a greenfield airport (GFA) at Ramagundam has been received from either the Telangana Government or any air-

'BRS borrowed funds at 10% interest

while Congress cut it to 8%'

On the state's financial situation,

they blamed the BRS government

dening the state. "The KCR admin-

# 'CAG report will reveal everything'

Loans taken during KCR's regime and its misdeeds to come out: CM

'KTR is not afraid of cases as he is a criminal' Minister Jagan to Pragathi Bhavan, fat but nothing. Who is KTR to KOLISHETTY VENKATESHWARLU

venkat.k.warlu@gmail.com ■ HYDERABAD to the Rayalaseema Lift Irrigation Scheme," the CM said. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said

that former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has not done anything except take loans and commit misdeeds in the last 10 • If the need arises, I will stage dharna in

The CM said that KCR showed wrong data regarding the debts he had run up. The debts contracted by KCR and his misdeeds will be exposed in the CAG report tabled in the Assembly, the CM added.

"If KCR had completed all irrigation projects, there would have been no problem with Andhra Pradesh now. Who ate the prawn soup prepared by Roja? If KCR had completed the projects, these headaches would not have happened. Who called former AP Chief

 KCR has no stature to come to the Assembly as KTR said

**Delhi for funds** I will go to Delhi 99 times for funds

 If KCR had completed irrigation projects there would have been no problem with AP: Revanth

Responding to another question, the KTR." CM said, "I am the CM. KCR is a former CM and what is his stature? I defeated KCR and made him a zero in the Parliament elections. KCR and KTR have

offered him food and gave permission talk about my stature? KTR is a wasted fellow. Is being caught in a drug party stature? KCR does

> the assembly as KTR said." Speaking during a chit-chat with journalists at the CLP office on Monday, the CM said, "Criminals do not fear cases. If they have fear, they will

not engage in crime. That is why KTR is saying that he is not afraid of cases. It is a waste of time speaking about

Responding another question, the CM said that Continued on Page 2



# **HONOUR KILLING** Court hands death penalty to second accused, life

# imprisonment for six others

istration borrowed funds at an

interest rate of 10%, while the cur-

rent government has successfully

During discussions, officials were

directed to treat the SLBC Project as

installation of the fifth pump under

AMRP (Alimineti Madhava Reddy

for a detailed study of the Sitarama

Project in erstwhile Khammam dis-

They also emphasised the need

Continued on Page 2

reduced it to 8%," they stated.

Srisailam Left Bank Canal).

top priority and

trict to ensure

## 25 killed as boat capsizes in Congo; many of them soccer players PNS KINSHASA

A boat has capsized in southwestern Congo and killed 25 people, many of them soccer players, authorities said Monday. The players were returning from a match in Mushie city in Maï-Ndombe province on Sunday night when the vessel capsized on the Kwa River, said Alexis Mputu, the provincial spokesman. Mputu suggested that the poor visibility at night may have been a factor.

At least 30 other people survived said Renacle Kwatiba, the local administrator of Mushie territory. Deadly boat accidents are com-

mon in the central African country, where late-night travels and blamed. Authorities have struggled to enforce maritime regulations.

Congo's rivers are a major means of transport for its more than 100 million people, especially in remote areas where infrastructure is poor or nonexistent.

# TSBIE awards full marks for ambiguous question

**PNS** ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Board of Intermediate Education administered the IPE March 2025 examinations for second-year students, focusing on English Paper-II. According to official figures released by the board, a total of 446,992 candidates were registered for the examination. Out of

them, 433,963 students were present at their respective examination centres, while 13,029 were absent, constituting approximately 2.91 per cent of the total regis-

tered candidates. There was concern regarding ne question 7 and TSRI note of the concerns raised by some students regarding the clarity of lines in the question related to the pie chart in Question 7 of the English Second Year question paper in Monday's Intermediate public examination.

Following this, a thorough discussion was held with subject experts to assess the issue. In the interest of fairness and ensuring that students are not at a disadvantage due to printing inconsistencies, the Board has decided to award full marks for the respective question to all students who attempted to

answer it. This decision has been made to uphold student welfare and ensure a just evaluation process. The Board remains committed to conducting transparent

examinations. The examination was conducted under stringent

supervision, marked by a notable were reported as nil across all examination centres. Observers deployed by the board to various districts including Nizamabad, Warangal, Siricilla, Karimnagar, and Hyderabad confirmed that the exams proceeded smoothly.

# KTR accuses CM of engineering massive TDR scam

mitted to allocating funds based on for taking high-interest loans, bur-

PNS HYDERABAD

PNS HYDERABAD

Kumar Reddy.

BRS Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) has accused Chief Minister Revanth Reddy of masterminding a massive scam involving Transferable Development Rights (TDR), potentially worth thousands of crores.

Addressing the media, KTR said that Revanth and four real estate brokers closely associated with him were orchestrating a scheme to manipulate TDR markets in Hyderabad. He said that these

brokers have been aggressively acquiring TDRs at low prices, anticipating policy changes that would restrict the Floor Space Index (FSI) in Hyderabad.

He claimed that the Congress Government headed by Revanth Reddy intends to impose these limitations to artificially inflate TDR demand, allowing

select individuals to profit by selling cquired rights at exorbitant rates. "Revanth is setting

the stage for an insider trading-style operation. **Continued on Page 2** 

Former MP Vijayashanthi said the Congress high command would decide on whether to take her into the TG Cabinet or not. However, she said she would work as per the deci-

Vijayashanthi said that she had quit the BJP as the BJP and the BRS have a secret pact. She said that BJP leaders had invited her to join the BJP assuring that they would defeat KCR. However, the BJP had a secret pact and so she

# Vijayashanthi on Cabinet berth

Congress High Command will decide

PNS HYDERABAD

sions of the high command.

said she quit the BJP. Speaking to the media after filing nomination papers for MLA quota



residence on Monday night

MLC elections on Monday at the Telangana Assembly, Vijayashanthi

said the Congress recognised the need for her as a BC woman and so the party had allotted her an MLC seat.

'We are Telangana activists. The Congress gave me priority as a Telangana activist. We are not beggars like BRS leaders to beg for seats and posts. I thank the Congress high command for giving me an MLC ticket. I will fulfil all the responsibilities entrusted to me. This is an honour given to Telangana activists," she said.

# 11 nominations filed

PNS HYDERABAD

Congress candidates Vijayashanthi, Addanki Dayakar, Shankar Naik, CPI candidate Nellikanti Sathyam and BRS candidate Dr Dasoju Sravan Kumar filed their nominations for MLA quota MLC elections on Monday on Assembly premises. However, four Independent candidates and two Shramajeevi Party candidates also filed nominations taking the number of nominations to 11.

The Independents are Kante Sayanna (Independent) and Chandra Sekhar Chalika (Independent). The Sramajeevi Party's candidates are Jajula Bhaskar (Shramajeevi Party), Bhoojraj Koylkar (Shramajeevi Boga Party), Boga IIIIII. (Independent), Srikanth Siliveru (Independent).

# **42 Telugus rescued from** cyber slavery in Thailand

PNS HYDERABAD

Hundreds of young Indians, lured by the promise of lucrative jobs abroad, found themselves trapped in cyber scam centres in Thailand. Thanks to the intervention of Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, the Indian government has successfully arranged for their rescue and repatriation.

A total of 540 individuals were identified as captives in these cyber fraud operations, of which 42 belong to Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The Indian authorities have now initiated special repatriation flights, each carrying 270 people.

was moved to Myawaddy district in Myanmar under Army protection before being transported to Mae Sot in Thailand. They were then put on

a special flight to Delhi on Monday. The second flight carrying the remaining 270 victims is scheduled to arrive in India on Tuesday. Investigations have revealed that

these victims were deceived by local agents promising jobs in Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar. Upon arrival, they were sold to cyber scam centres, where they were forced to participate in online fraud operations. Those who refused to comply were subjected to brutal torture, including electric shocks. The victims were forced to engage in financial scams and online fraud under the threat of violence.

A harrowing case that brought The first group of rescued victims attention to the issue involved Madhukar Reddy, a young man from Rangapet village, Manakondur mandal, Karimnagar district, who was trapped in Continued on Page 2

# Special teams set up to study tax admin, boost collections

In a move to revamp the Commercial Taxes Department, newly appointed Commissioner K. Haritha has set up multiple special teams to conduct a comprehensive study on various aspects of tax administration. These teams have been asked to submit detailed reports which are expected to contribute to increasing tax revenues.

The Telangana Commercial Taxes Department plays a crucial role in generating revenue for the government, collecting over Rs 80,000 crore annually through GST and VAT. Focusing on strengthening the department, Haritha has ordered special attention on restructuring operations, resolving employee grievances, facilitating promotions,

enhancing additional revenue streams, evaluating current audit mechanisms and strengthening the tax research unit. The Commissioner also asked

officials to curb fraudulent registra-



tions, analyse e-way bill generation, monitor dashboards, provide training sessions for employees, ensure professional tax collection, recover pending dues, address court cases impact.

Haritha has set up specialised teams to examine 25 key areas, with a deadline of March 15 to submit their findings to streamline these efforts.

Commercial Taxes Department has observed a shortfall in GST revenues for February, prompting an investigation into the causes. Despite high business activity, the decline in IGST revenue is attributed to a higher outflow of goods from Telangana to other states than the inflow. Officials are now assessing which goods are being exported, the economic benefits accruing to other states, the volume of goods entering Telangana and the corresponding revenue

# Duplicate voter card numbers a legacy issue: EC sources

PNS NEW DELHI

Amid opposition allegations of manipulation of electoral rolls, sources in the Election Commission Monday said the matter related to duplicate voter identity card numbers is a "legacy issue" with such cards being issued even between 2008 and 2013 when the BJP-led

NDA was not in power. The EC had in the past during annual electoral roll updation also been directing states to remove all discrepancies in elector photo identity card (EPIC).

The poll body had recently clarified that irrespective of EPIC number, an elector can cast a vote only at their designated polling station.

To allay any apprehensions, all cases of duplicate EPIC number will be resolved within three months

number to the existing electors having duplicate EPIC number and for future electors as well, the EC The issue of duplicate numbers found echo in Parliament on Monday with Leader of Opposition

in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi

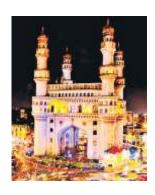
demanding a discussion in the

time by ensuring a unique EPIC

House on the issue of voter lists on which several political parties have raised certain questions. Raising the issue during Zero Hour, Gandhi said the entire opposition has been demanding a discus-

sion on voter lists. Trinamool Congress member Kalyan Banerjee demanded action against the EC and alleged that the poll body had "failed" to conduct fair

and transparent elections over the past few years.



**Madapally United** 

Malayalam Movie Lamakaan March 11, (7:30 pm)

### Live Telugu Musical Orchestra

By Rasamayi Cultural Organisation Sri Thyagaraja Gana

### **Tuesday Night**

March 11, (5:30 pm)

With DJ Hak

Venue Sounds & Spirits March 11, (8 pm)

### **Tuesday Night**

With DJ Salman

Venue 36 Downtown Brew Pub (Vapour)

March 11, (8 pm)

### **Tuesday Open**

Mic Comedy

Trailing Ivy Cafe March 11, (8 pm

# SURPRISE VISIT TO WOMEN'S HELPLINE

## Minister Seethakka assures support for abuse victim

PNS HYDERABAD

Women and Child Welfare Minister Seethakka made a surprise visit to the Dial 181 Women's Helpline call centre attending a distress call from a woman in Devarakonda who was facing domestic abuse. The helpline, set up under the Women and Child Welfare Department, received a call from a young woman named Lalitha, who tearfully narrated her ordeal. She told the Mnister that her husband was harassing her for additional dowry and had thrown her and her two children out of their home.

Listening to her plight, Seethakka assured immediate assistance and instructed officials to provide necessary support. "Do not worry, we are with you. No woman should suffer in silence," she reassured Lalitha, promising that her department would take neces-

sary action. The Minister directed officials to arrange counselling for the husband and warned that if the abuse continued, strict legal action would be taken.

She further informed Lalitha that Women and Child Welfare officers would reach out to her and take necessary steps for her safety and wellbeing. The complaint was immediately forwarded to the local Sakhi centre for followup, as per the Minister's instructions

The Dial 181 helpline, established by the State government to support women in distress, has been playing a crucial role in addressing complaints related to domestic violence, harassment and other issues.

The helpline receives at least 100 calls daily, with trained staff promptly alerting local authorities, including the Women and Child Welfare Department, Sakhi centres, and police, depending on the

nature of the complaint. Minister Seethakka also highlighted the Congress gov-ernment's commitment to empowering women, noting that the helpline centre has set an example by employing dif-ferently-abled individuals, providing them with stable jobs and an opportunity to serve

# City Pioneer



**HMWSSB** launches

'Med Flash' App for staff health services

To ensure quick and hassle-free healthcare

services for its employees, the Hyderabad

Metropolitan Water Supply & Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) has launched a dedicat-

ed mobile application named 'Med Flash'.

The app, designed for employees holding

health cards, aims to simplify access to med-

ical facilities and emergency healthcare ser-

vices. Managing Director Ashok Reddy

inaugurated the app at the board's headquar

ters in Khairatabad on Monday.

Speaking at the launch, Ashok Reddy

expressed satisfaction over the initiative, stat-

ing that the app would significantly enhance

the efficiency of health services for

HMWSSB employees. He urged all eligible

employees to make use of the new platform

and suggested organizing a one-day training program for division-level health service

personnel to ensure effective implementa-

medical assistance, particularly in emergen-

cies. Employees can register their health

details, after which the system immediate-

ly alerts service providers. The app also helps in identifying the best hospitals for specif-

ic treatments and, if required, facilitates ambulance services to the employee's resi-

In a first-of-its-kind initiative in India, the

app offers a cashless healthcare service exclusively for government employees.

Currently, 6,685 employees, pensioners and family pensioners under HMWSSB are cov-

ered under the health card system, and their

dependents can also avail up to Rs 3 lakh

worth of free medical services annually

The 'Med Flash' app provides real-time

PNS HYDERABAD

HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | MARCH 11, 2025

# **63 COMPLAINTS FILED WITH HYDRAA PRAJAVANI**

# Fake passbooks used to encroach old layouts

PNS HYDERABAD

Disaster Hyderabad Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA) has received 63 complaints in the Prajavani programme on Monday. The petitions were regarding the encroachment of old layouts by individuals who allegedly created land passbooks in their names, despite their fathers having previously sold the land. These encroachers are erasing old layouts and converting them into agricultural fields.

The allegations include encroachment of roads within layouts, merging of parks into private properties and misuse of power by former municipal councillors and ward members.

Several complainants have reported that local authorities have failed to take action despite repeated complaints, said HYDRAA in a release.

The residents of Avenue Nagar-2 complained that a wall built across the stormwater drainage leading



The complainants submitting their petitions to HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath

to Turkayamjal Lake has caused severe flooding in their colony during rains.

In Ghatkesar mandal, Pratap Singaram, a layout with 390 plots across 25.17 acres established in 1989, has witnessed encroachment on 88 plots, covering 6.14

The complainants claim that encroachers fraudulently created land passbooks through Dharani and took

complained that a wall built across the stormwater drainage leading to Turkayamjal Lake has caused severe flooding in their colony during rains

The residents of

**Avenue Nagar-2** 

plots. In some cases, individuals whose fathers had sold

the land have now claimed ownership and even received benefits under the Rythu Bandhu scheme. Although authorities have ordered the repayment of Rythu Bandhu funds, the encroachers have not vacated the land, leaving original plot owners frus-

A complaint from Medipally mandal, Boduppal Municipal Corporation,

alleged the illegal occupation of 1,200 square yards of government land in Devender Nagar Colony.

Local representatives have requested that the land be allocated to the adjacent government school, which could be developed into a playground.

In Sri Rangapuram, Ward 24, Turkayamjal Municipality (Rangareddy District), a former public representative has allegedly encroached on a 1,050-square-yard park, said

# **Teen has fatal fall** into quarry pit while taking selfie in city

**DEEPIKA PASHAM** deepikapasham2015@gmail.cor

A tragic incident unfolded at Malkaram Gutta in Jawahar Nagar on Sunday evening when a college student drowned in a quarry pit while attempting to take a selfie.

The deceased, CG Ethin Naidu, was accompanied by his younger brother and friends, Intermediate stu-

The group had visited the location after seeing reels on Instagram. Ethin, the only one among them pursuing graduation, accidentally slipped into the pit and drowned.

The Jawahar Nagar Police, in a statement, confirmed, "Ethin Naidu, who went missing at the quarry in Malkaram Gutta, was traced on Monday during a joint operation by the Disaster Response Force (DRF) personnel and Jawahar Nagar Police."

Following a complaint from the victim's mother, Geetha, a case has been registered, and an investigation is underway. Police urged parents to be cautious when their children visit unknown locations.

The victim's family, gathered at the Jawahar Nagar police station, urged authorities to expedite the process of handing over the body. "Our

Tirumalgherry. While taking a selfie, he fell into the pit. He knew swimming but still drowned," they

They alleged that despite raising an alarm, authorities refused to conduct a search operation at night, delaying the recovery until the next morning. "We alerted the locals and rushed to the site, but the DRF did not begin the search overnight. By morn-ing, our child was already dead," a fam-

ily member said. Srinivas, DFO, Cherlapally, told The Pioneer that the location falls under Dammaiguda in Kapra mandal. "We received a distress call at 6 pm on Sunday. The quarry pit is filled with rocks, making it risky for night operations. Unless it's an emergency, search teams do not operate at night," he explained.

He added that the Fire Service and Disaster Response Force (DRF) teams arrived at the location and recovered the body by 8 am on Monday.

"Thé victim's mother insisted on searching for herself, claiming she knew swimming, but our team stopped her for safety reasons," he

The body was sent to Gandhi Hospital for post-mortem.

# Self-employed training begins at Special Prison for Women

**PNS** ■ HYDERABAD

through the app.

A Self-Employed Training Programme was inaugurated at Special Prison for Women, Hyderabad under

Women, Hyderabad under the Sankalp Scheme.

The chief guests on this occasion were Sanjay Kumar, Special Chief Secretary to the Government, Labour Employment, Training and Proceedings and Dr. Sourmer Factories and Dr Soumya Mishra, Director General of Prisons and Correctiona Services, Telangana.

Sanjay Kumar, addressed the inmates regarding the commitment of the Government of Telangana to create a skilled and employable workforce by strengthening the State's skill development ecosystem in organising training programmes with market needs and boost employability.

During her message, Dr Soumya Mishra, DG Prisons, motivated and



programme

Sanjay Kumar said it was to create a skilled and employable workforce by strengthening the State's skill development

encouraged the inmates to upgrade their skills by undergoing training for a better future and livelihood so that the inmates can lead a self-reliant life.

N Murali Babu, Inspector General of Prisons, Telangana, started the programme with his welcome address and advised the inmates to utilise the best from this opportunity.

# TGPSC releases Group-I mains marks, opens recounting window

PNS HYDERABAD

The Telangana Public Service Commission (TGPSC) has released the paper-wise marks of candidates who appeared for the Group-I Mains examinations conducted between October 21 and October 27, 2024. The marks have been made

available in the respective candidates' logins from March 10 to March 16, 2025,

Aspirants can access their scores by entering their TGP-SCID, Mains hall ticket number, date of birth, and an OTP sent to their registered mobile number through the Commission's official web-

Candidates have been advised to download and preserve their Mains marks memorandum until the completion of the recruitment process. TGPSC has also announced that candidates



can apply for a recounting of marks from March 10 to March 24, 2025, with a fee of Rs 1,000 per paper.

Applications for recounting will only be accepted online, and no offline requests will be entertained at any stage.

As per Para 15 of

Notification No.

02/2024, disqualified, ineligible, or rejected candidates will not be issued marks memoranda, and any fees paid by such candidates will be forfeited.

TSPSC has clarified that requests for revaluation will not be entertained under any

(ix) (d) of the Commission's Rules of Procedure. Following the recounting

process, the total marks of all candidates will be hosted on the Commission's website. Candidates shortlisted based on the final General Ranking List (GRL) will be called for certificate verification. The Commission has urged candidates to keep all original documents ready as specified Group-I Services Notification No. 02/2024.

The marks of candidates who were admitted to the Mains examination based on court directions have not been displayed, in compliance with the High Court's

For technical assistance, candidates can contact the TSPSC Help Desk at 040-23542185 or 040-23542187 helpdesk@tspsc.gov.in.

# GMR Hyd Intl Airport wins ACI World's Best Airport Award

PNS HYDERABAD

Hyderabad International Airport has been recognized as the 'Best Airport in the 15 to 25 Million Passengers Per Annum (MPPA)' category in the Asia-Pacific region at the prestigious Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Awards 2024, presented by Airports Council International (ACI) World. The award reinforces Hyderabad Airport's commitment to delivering an exceptional passenger experience and maintaining high operational standards.

The ASQ programme, considered the global benchmark for measuring airport passenger satisfaction, evaluates over 30 key performance indicators based on real-time traveller feedback. More than 400 airports worldwide participated in the 2024 survey, with over 7,00,000 responses collected.

Expressing gratitude for the recognition, GMR Hyderabad International Airport Ltd. (GHIAL) CEO Pradeep Panicker said, "We are honoured that travellers consistently rate their experience at our airport so highly. Our investments in advanced technology and innovative solutions aim to make every jour-



Congratulating the airport on its success, ACI World Director General Justin Erbacci remarked, "GMR

Hyderabad International Airport has set a new standard for excellence. This award is a reflection of the dedication and hard work put into making every passenger's journey special. Your commitment to exceeding expectations is inspiring airports worldwide." Hyderabad Airport has

consistently ranked among

the best in global service

excellence. It was placed

among the Top 3 Global

Airports for nine consecutive years (2009-2017) and achieved the World No. 1 ranking four times (2009, 2010, 2016, and 2017) in the 5-15 MPPA category of the ACI-ASQ Awards. The airport was also recognized as the 'Best Airport by Size and Region' in the Asia-Pacific region for 2019 and 2020 and continued this streak in 2022 and 2023 in the 15-25 MPPA ACI World, the global body

representing airports, works to enhance industry standards and facilitate knowledge-sharing among aviation stakeholders. The ASQ Awards, based entirely on passenger feedback, celebrate top-performing airports and drive continuous improvements in service quality and customer satisfaction.

# Mayor Vijayalakshmi launches Shakti Canteen

PNS HYDERABAD

gramme,

The Telangana government is implementing various welfare programmes aimed at ensuring women's financial independence, stated Hyderabad Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi. On Monday, she, along with Deputy Mayor Mothe Srilatha Shobhan Reddy, inaugurated the Indira Mahila Shakti Canteen at the GHMC headquarters. The Mayor congratulated the members of the Šneha Self-Help Group for setting up the canteen. Speaking at the pro-

for women but also provide

affordable, high-quality and

delicious meals to the city's

residents.

Vijayalakshmi said that the State government is not only introducing welfare schemes erty rights. to help women achieve financial self-sufficiency but also encouraging them to become entrepreneurs. As part of this effort, the Indira Mahila Shakti scheme has been introduced, enabling women from self-help groups to establish al market expansion. canteens and become selfreliant. She noted that these canteens not only create employment opportunities

# Call for global treaties for market expansion

PNS HYDERABAD

The office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks (CGPDTM), in collaboration with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), organized a one-day international seminar on the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) and the Madrid System at Dr MCR HRD Institute. The event, held in association with the Pharmaceutical Export Promotion Council of India, brought together industry leaders, start-ups, researchers and policymakers to discuss the evolving landscape of patents and intellectual prop-

The seminar provided a platform for meaningful discussions on intellectual property rights, with experts stressing the need for businesses and start-ups to leverage international treaties for glob-

Speaking at the inaugural function, Dr Shashank Goel, Director General of Dr MCR HRD Institute and EO Special Chief Secretary to the Government of Telangana, highlighted the importance of intellectual property in a



knowledge-driven economy. He emphasised that the platform would help innovators and businesses understand the strategic advantages of filing patents through the PCT route. "Intellectual property is the backbone of innovation and India's rapid rise in patent filings reflects its growing focus on research and development," he noted.

Dr Goel also commended the efforts of the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) under the CGPDTM in making the patent filing process more efficient and accessible. "With initiatives like digitization, expedited examination for start-ups and reduced filing fees for MSMEs, India is strengthening its intellectual property framework," he said. David Muls, Senior

Director of the Madrid

Registry at WIPO, Geneva, acknowledged India's growing role in the global innovation landscape. "India ranks 39th in the 2024 Global Innovation Index and leads in Central and Southern Asia. Over the past decade, patent applications have more than doubled, trademark filings have increased 2.5 times, and design filings have grown threefold," he said, attributing this surge to India's commitment to fostering innovation.

Other distinguished speakers at the seminar included Hanna Kang and Roberto Perez Gomes from WIPO, N Ram Chander, Joint Controller of Patents and Designs, Dr Pawan Kumar Pandey, Deputy Registrar of Trademarks and Geographical Indications, and Dr Gayathri, Deputy Director of Pharmexcil.





HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | MARCH 11, 2025



Chikram Lalithya

# Tribal girl dies in ashram school hostel; sparks protest

PNS ADILABAD

Class 9 girl student Chikram Lalithya, studying at the local Tribal Ashram School in Ichoda mandal of Adilabad district died under suspicious circumstances

Her body was shifted to the Boath

Government Hospital for postmortem. Upon learning of the incident, local Boath MLA Anil Jadhav rushed to the Boath Government Hospital and consoled the family members. Later, the MLA stated that the negligence of the government led to the death of another tribal child, Chikram Lalithya. When the MLA questioned the officials concerned, they were unresponsive. The MLA demanded that a thorough investigation be conducted and justice be delivered to the victim's family. Additionally, the MLA provided immediate financial assistance of Rs 10,000 for the funeral expenses.

Lalithya hailed from Morkandi village in Bazarhathnoor mandal. Officials claimed that the girl had a history of

The school's staff informed her parents that she was found dead in her hostel and

asked them to come and collect the body. Upon arriving at the school, the girl's parents expressed doubts on the girl's death. They confronted the headmaster, accusing him of negligence and claiming that it led to their daughter's death. They demanded strict action against those responsible.

# **Bird flu crisis: Poultry farmers** hesitant to make new investments

PNS GADWAL

Poultry farmers in the region are grappling with a difficult decision due to widespread rumours of a bird flu outbreak. These fears have not only made it harder to sell poultry but have also led to a significant drop in chicken prices. With sales declining, farmers are uncertain whether to invest in new chicks or delay purchases altogether.

In the district, over 300 poultry farmers are raising more than 20 lakh chicks. The combined total across Gadwal and Wanaparthy districts reaches around 40 lakh chicks across 600

The ongoing bird flu concerns have severely impacted the poultry industry, affecting not only farmers but also traders and transport workers.

In response to the rumours, poultry farmers and compa-



nies have launched a campaign to disinfect their poultry sheds. Authorities have assured the people that high temperatures exceeding 40°C would kill any potential virus. District Veterinary Officer Venkateswarlu has also con-

firmed that there have been no

cases of bird flu in the area. Despite this reassurance, chicken sales have dropped dramat-

There are about 2,000 stalls selling chicken in the district, many of which are facing financial strain due to the lack of customer demand. This downturn is making it increasingly difficult for poultry farmers to cover essential costs, such as electricity bills and labor wages.

For some farmers who rely on poultry as a secondary source of income alongside traditional farming, the financial chal-lenges have been particularly tough. While poultry farming is typically a profitable venture, the rumors have significantly reduced their earnings from each batch of birds.

Despite the widespread fear of bird flu, Venkateswarlu clarified that the poultry birds in the district are not affected by the virus. The symptoms some birds are displaying are similar to those of bird flu but are not caused by the virus itself. To combat these fears, chicken stalls have organised awareness programmes and "chicken melas" to educate the public on the safety of consum-

# imprisonment for six others Maruti Rao, who opposed his daughter's marriage to Pranay Kumar, had conspired with other accused to eliminate his son-in-law.

**HONOUR KILLING** 

Court hands death penalty

to second accused, life

PNS NALGONDA

A court in Nalgonda district of

Telangana on Monday handed out

the death penalty to one of the

accused in the sensational honour killing of a Dalit man in 2018. The Second Additional District

Judge cum special court for the trial

of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled

Tribes cases awarded capital punishment to the second accused,

Subhash Kumar Sharma from

Bihar, while sentencing six other

The special court Judge, N Roja

Ramani, also fined all convicts Rs

15,000 each under Sections 302 and

109 of the IPC and other provision

of the Scheduled Castes and

Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of

They were found guilty under relevant sections of IPC, SC/ST

(POA) Act 1989 and Indian Arms

Act-1959. According to the prose-

cution, on September 14, 2018, Pranay Kumar (23), was brutally

murdered in Miryalguda town of Nalgonda district.

On September 18, 2018, eight

people, including the woman's

father Maruti Rao and uncle were

arrested, in what turned out to be

a case of contract killing of Rs 1

Atrocities) Act.

accused to life imprisonment.

Maruti Rao had allegedly died by suicide at a lodge here in 2020.

The arrested included two men, who were acquitted in the murder of former Gujarat home minister Haren Pandya. Pranay and the woman got mar-

ried in January 2018. She had accused her father Maruti Rao of being behind her husband's murder. Meanwhile, Pranay's parents told the media on Monday that the verdict in the case should be an eyeopener to all those who have castebased idiosyncrasies and resort to violence.

After the court order was passed, the woman's cousin, broke down on the court premises, claiming that her father was innocent. She was asked by the police to leave the premises. Pranay's father Perumal Balaswami said that the verdict delivered in Nalgonda should make the criminals realise the gravity of their actions. The killing of Pranay Kumar, who married an upper caste woman, had sparked outrage in the

"We fought for Justice for Pranay. After this murder, many honour killings have taken place, and the verdict should make a dif-ference for all of them."

thanked Deputy He Superintendent of Police Srinivas for presenting full-pledged evidence which led to the conviction of those guilty of murder.

# Awareness seminar on LRS held in Khammam

PNS KHAMMAM

In Khammam district, the Layout Regularisation Scheme (LRS) awareness seminar was successfully concluded, said District Registrar M Ravinder Rao here on Monday.

The seminar was conducted on Monday at the Zilla

During the event, the District Registrar mentioned that, following the instruc-tions from higher authorities, the awareness seminar on LRS was organised.

Representatives from construction firms, landowners, document writers, members Parishad meeting hall in of the Real Estate Association,

Registration Department staff and others attended in large numbers, gaining awareness about the government's LRS initiative.

He further explained that the various doubts raised by the participants regarding were fully addressed, and the LRS module, registration process instructions, and cials, and others.

guidelines were thoroughly explained.

Additionally, a help desk has been set up at the District Registrar's office for LRS-related inquiries related inquiries.

The event was attended by Sub-Registrar T. Sampath Kumar, Joint Sub-Registrar S. Rama Kishore Reddy, offi-



PNS WANAPARTHY

The CCTV cameras will play a crucial role in controlling crimes and identify the offendsaid District Superintendent of Police Ravula Giridhar.

The district SP inaugurated the CCTV cameras and control points set up by the police department at the Sri Rangapur Police Station.

Speaking on the occasion, he changing times, modern technology, including CCTV cameras, is becoming available, and installing them in every village will be key to creating a crimefree society. He added that many cases have been solved, and culprits identified, through CCTV footage in cases of thefts. He urged people to support the installation of CĈTV cameras in every village as it will not only help control crimes in rural areas but also prevent anti-social activities



and create a peaceful environ- CCTV cameras, leading to the ment. Additionally, he pointed out that CCTV cameras will also help identify vehicles in hit-and-run cases.

He appealed to the people's representatives in the Sri Rangapur mandal to cooperate with the police in installing CCTV cameras in every vil-

Rangapur Ramakrishna was appreciated for his special efforts in raising awareness among the villagers about the importance of

e seen in @ tender.telangana.gov.in.

R.O.Mo: 11141-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2034-25, Date: 19-63-2025

active participation of the peo-Later, the SP honoured the

donors who assisted with financial support for the installation of the CCTV cameras with a shawl. The event was attended by

Kotakota Circle Inspecto Rambabu, Sri Rangapur Sub-Inspector Ramakrishna, Sneh Foundation Rameshwar Reddy, Congress Party district president Rajendra Prasad Yadav, and others.

Sdí- Municipal Commissione

# stabbed in **Siddipet dist** PNS SIDDIPET

**Woman fatally** 

In the early hours of Monday, a man fatally attacked a woman with a sharp weapon at Rimmanaguda under Gaiwel mandal.

The deceased was identified as Asra (32). When her to intervene, he was also attacked by the perpetrator.

Fortunately, Sadath sustained only minor injuries as the assailant fled the scene.

The police are actively working to apprehend and identify the suspect. The community is in shock following this event. A case has been filed, and an investigation is underway. The body has been transported to the government hospital in Gajwel for an autopsy.

# Kishan urged to help sanction road between Pedda Golkonda and Midjil The proposed road is

PNS RANGAREDDY

BJP Rangareddy district unit president Bokka Narasimha Reddy has submitted a memorandum to Union Minister G Kishan Reddy to help sanction an alternative road from Pedda Golkonda to Midjil, running parallel Srisailam Highway and Bangalore Highway.

According Narasimha Reddy, a road from Pedda Golkonda to Kalvakolu has already been constructed as per previous proposals.

If the remaining stretch from Kalvakolu to Midjil is completed, it will greatly benefit farmers and the general public across Rangareddy, Nagarkurnool, Mahabubnagar, Wanaparthy districts.



BJP Rangareddy district unit president Bokka Narasimha Reddy presenting a mémorandum to Union Minister G Kishan Reddy in Hyderabad on Monday

Additionally, it will signif- tion on both the Srisailam and icantly reduce travel conges-Bangalore Highways.

expedite the construction of the road.

BJP state executive member Gogi Reddy Lachi Reddy was also present during the discussion.The Union Minister responded positively and promised to take the issue to the attention of the Union Minister concerned.

expected to ease the travel

burden for those commuting

between Hyderabad and

Tirupati, cutting down the journey distance by 130 km.

Being adjacent to the Outer

Ring Road. It will provide con-

venient access for travelers

In response, Union Minister

Kishan Reddy assured him

that he would take up the mat-

ter with the Union Ministry

concerned and make efforts to

# SCCL management forms committees to address workers' demands

**PNS** ■ SRIRAMPUR

The management of SCCL has urged company employees to work with greater dedication for the company's bright future. N. Balaram, the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of SCCL, made this statement during the 38th constructive meeting between the management and recognized trade union leaders.

During the meeting, the CMD responded positively to several of the workers' demands and established committees to assess the feasibili-

ty of implementing them. One of the key issues discussed was the exemption of employee allowances from income tax, which, according to the CMD, would impose a financial burden of approximately Rs 91 crore on the company. However, the management has, in principle, appointed a committee to examine this demand. Tax exemptions on allowances are currently implemented for officials in both

Coal India Limited and SCCL. Additionally, for retired SCCL employees residing in Hyderabad, medicines will be made available at Singareni Bhavan. Retired employees seeking treatment at SCCL-run hospitals will receive a 40% discount on fees.

The management has also decided to revise the designations of electricians, fitters, and general mazdoors to increase their societal respect. Badili workers will now be referred to as general assistant

Furthermore, dismissed workers will be given another chance to be reinstated based on a Lok Adalat ruling, provided they have completed 100

musters over a five-year peri-

In response to the workers' demand for 250 square yards of land and an interest-free loan of Rs 25 lakh, a committee has been set up to finalize the details. Vasireddy Sitaramaiah, the

president of the SCCL-recognized trade union, stated that the workers' demands were noted by the SCCL Director (P&A) at the meeting. The union plans to apply pressure on the management to ensure that the agreed-upon issues are implemented.

# Sunpreet Singh takes charge as Warangal Police Commissioner

PNS WARANGAL

"We will be available 24/7 for the people," said Warangal Police Commissioner Sunpreet Singh. Sunpreet Singh assumed office as Warangal Police Commissioner on Monday.

new Police

Commissioner was welcomed by the Deputy Commissioners of Police (DCPs) and Additional Deputy Commissioners of Police (ADCPs) when he arrived Commissionerate office. After receiving the Guard of Honor from the Armed Police, he took charge from

Amber Kishor Jha. At a media interaction held later, the new Police Commissioner stated that he would ensure 100 per cent peace and security in the limits of Warangal Police Commissionerate, working 24/7 to build trust with peo-

former Police Commissioner

He emphasised the need to focus on crime control, traffic regulation, and combating the current challenges faced by the police, such as cybercrimes and drug-relat-



Sunpreet Singh

ed issues. He assured the people that strict action would be taken against those involved in drug abuse and trafficking.

The new Commissioner also highlighted a special focus on women's safety and announced plans to strengthen the Warangal Police Commissionerate in the coming days.

Later, the new Police Commissioner Sunpreet Singh was warmly greeted by DCPs Shake Salima, Rajamahendra Nayak, Ankit Kumar, ASP Chaitanya, Additional DCPs Ravi, Suresh Kumar, as well as ACPs, Inspectors, RIs, RSIs, and other police officials and staff from the Warangal Police Commissionerate.

### Indian Bank Srinagar Colony Branch 127, Tormoyee Aportments Srinagar Colony Hyderabad – 500673 Ptr:046-2374525 VEHICLE AUCTION SALE NOTICE REGISTRATION RESERVE END PRICE (Rs.) PRICE (Rs.) No. & ADDRESS Model:Eicher Pro 5035 Type of Body: Tanker TS-06-UE-8848 Engine No., Type of Fuet Diesel Colour: NP Colour CDJM256326 Chasts No. MC2TSDRC0LIM TS-09-UC-3083 4.93 lakins Type of Body, Tanker Engine No. E624CDJM2556 Chasis No. 013841 TS-10-US-8830 4.25 M/s.GKRK Model Eicher PRO 5035 Type of Body: Timker Type of Fuel Diesel Engine No., E624COJM2561 Colour: New Dezzling MC2T5DROUM 013740

TENDER NOTICE Date: 10.03.202: 1) NIT No. 20/TUF IDC:Unit-UKodad/infrastructural Development Works/2024-25(2nd call)

Dt: 07.03.2025. 2) No of Works: 01 Works. 3) Name of work: Koded Municipality "Construction of Office Building for Koded Municipality and Market Complex, Developmen of Khammam Cross Road Junction, Construction of Welcome Arches at Hyderstad Rose and Vijayawada Road in Kodad Municipality and Construction of Major Outfall drain from

Chenuru kata Bezer to Anarthagiri Road in Kodad Municipality -Package-II" under TUFIDO Loan Assistance (2nd call). 4) Total Value of work: Rs.1200.00 Lakhs. 5) Download of

tender document and submission of bid document: 11.03.2025 @ 10:30 AM to 28.03.2025

@ 04:30 PM., 6) Technical bid opening date: 28:03:2025 @ 04:31 PM., Further details can

Ipon Auction will be conducted for participants who deposits as above, manifored EMD, on or bulb

Copin Autors will be conducted by participants are deposits as above instrument End on a surprise 27.93.2025, 2.00 PM by DDPay order to Indian Bank,SRINAGAR COLONY Branch, Hyderabar Date & Time of Auction 27.03.2025, between 4.00 PM to 5.00PM For further distalls, Terms & Conditions, contact: K Mahandra Chief Manager E-mail setnagareolony@indianbank.co.in . Successful bidder should NEFT/ RTGSI Bank of on the sam day. The vehicle shall be auctioned on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS' condition. For further details, lerms and conditions, the interveled bidders can Contact Indian Beris, SIRNANGAR COUCHY Branch. Th Authorised Officer may acception rout the audion without assigning any Reason thereof.

# PNS HANAMKONDA

Hanamkonda District Collector P Pravinya said that action would be taken to swiftly resolve the grievances regarding various issues at requesting solutions to their the Prajavani programme. The Prajavani program was conducted at the conference officials to address their hall of the Hanamkonda grievances. The Collector District Collectorate on directed the officials con-Monday. Officials from var- cerned to promptly resolve the event.

the District Collector and

ious departments were present at the programme. the public during the During the event, people Prajavani programme submitted 114 petitions to the District Collector Pravinya and Additional submitted by the people Collector Venkat Reddy, problems. The citizens urged

Collector assures prompt resolution of grievances

the grievances submitted by regarding various issues.

District Revenue Officer

YV Ganesh, District Rural Development Officer Main Srinu, Hanamkonda, and Parakal RDOs Rathod Ramesh, Dr. K. Narayana, along with several district officials and numerous Tahsildars participated in



P Pravinya interacting with people at Prajavani programme in Hanamkonda on Monday





# Veni, Vidi, Vici...

Team India lifts Champion's trophy after its convincing win over New Zealand

n a moment of glory that will be etched in the annals of cricketing history, Team India triumphed over New Zealand by four wickets to claim the prestigious ICC Champions Trophy in Dubai. It was a victory built on sheer determination, extraordinary skill, and unwavering composure under pressure. The win not only solidifies India's dominance in the white-ball game but also reaffirms cricket's role as a unifying force in the country.

From the very first match of the tournament, India exuded an aura of invincibility. The final against New Zealand was no exception. Restricting the Kiwis to a manageable 251-7, the Indian bowling attack—led by the mesmerising spin quartet of Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakravarthy, Axar Patel, and Ravindra Jadeja—choked the opposition with relentless precision. Their 38 overs were a masterclass in control, stifling the run flow and forcing mistakes from the New Zealand batters.

Despite an early setback with Virat Kohli's dismissal, Rohit Sharma took charge, setting the tone with a swashbuckling 76. His aggression ensured that India never fell behind the asking rate. KL Rahul, displaying nerves of steel, finished the chase with calculated precision, epitomizing India's new-found ability to remain composed in high-pressure situations.

Cricket in India is more than just a sport—it is a cultural phenomenon that binds people across diverse backgrounds. From the bustling streets of Mumbai to the remote villages of Jharkhand, the game ignites passion, fosters a shared national identity, and transcends all barriers of class, religion, and language.

This Champions Trophy victory serves as yet another reminder of the unifying power of cricket. The entire nation erupted in celebration, as millions came together to revel in the team's success. This win is not just about silverware-it is about inspiring a generation, bringing people together in collective joy, and reinforcing the sport's unparalleled significance in the Indian ethos.

Winning an ICC event is always a morale booster, and this triumph will serve as a catalyst for greater success. For Team India, it instills belief and momentum as they gear up for future global tournaments. Rohit Sharma's leadership, the resurgence of spin dominance, and the depth in both batting and bowling ensure that India will remain a formidable force in world cricket.

Beyond the current squad, this victory will inspire countless young cricketers who dream of donning the blue jersey. Seeing their heroes lift the Champions Trophy will fuel aspirations across the country, encouraging budding cricketers to work harder and aim for the grandest stages.

Accolades pours from all quarters on team India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the Indian cricket team and said they have played wonderfully through the tournament. Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said India's run in the Champions Trophy was marked by brilliant individual performances. Former Delhi CM and AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal also extended his congratulations to the Indian

This Champions Trophy triumph is a testament to India's cricketing excellence and a harbinger of more success to come. The synergy between experienced stalwarts and young stars showcases a team that is built for sustained dominance.

As India basks in the glory of yet another ICC triumph, one thing is certain-this victory is not just about cricket, but about a nation united by its love for the game, standing tall on the world stage, and looking ahead to an even brighter future.

Massive. You can't even sell anything in India... They have

agreed, by the way, they want to cut their tariffs way down

now because somebody is finally exposing them for what

DONALD J TRUMP. PRESIDENT OF THE USA

Leaderspeak

India charges us massive tariffs.

they have done.

# India Braces for Impact as Trump's Reciprocal Tariffs Take Effect on April 2

With key sectors like pharmaceuticals and automobiles at risk, India could face an annual trade loss of up to \$7 billion. There is an urgent need to find a diplomatic solution before it escalates into a full-fledged trade war

S President Donald Trump's announcement of reciprocal tariffs on India, set to take effect on April 2, has caused serious concern in New Delhi. India's high import taxes on American goods have long been a contentious issue, now straining trade relations further.

This move is not without consequences. It puts key exports such as jewelry and pharmaceuticals at risk, potentially leading to a significant annual loss of up to \$7 billion for India. The looming question is: How much will this trade war cost India? Can New Delhi negotiate a way out before the damage is done? This million-dollar question keeps policymakers and trade experts on edge, underscoring the gravity of the situation.

India currently imposes much higher import taxes on US products than the US does on Indian goods, with a gap exceeding 10 percentage points. If the US lowers these tariffs, India's exports to the US could decline by \$2 Billion to \$7 Billion in the financial year 2025-26, according to India Ratings and Research.

India maintains a trade surplus of over \$36 Billion with the United States. The share of Indian exports to the US rose from 16.9 per cent in 2019-20 to 17.7 per cent in 2023-24, which may have prompted tariff actions by the Trump administration.

During his campaign, Trump criticised Indian tariffs on several US exports and suggested the possibility of imposing reciprocal taxes on Indian goods.

He believes it is time for the US to use tariffs to establish fairer trade. "Under the Trump administration, you will pay a tariff, and in some cases, the cost will be passed on to consumers," he stated, insisting that the US will no longer tolerate unfair trading practices.

India imposes tariffs as high as 100 per cent on certain US products, creating what the Trump administration views as an unfair trade system. On April 2, reciprocal tariffs will take effect, meaning that any tariffs imposed by India will be matched by the

Additionally, if India uses non-monetary barriers to limit US market access, the US. will implement similar restrictions.

A report by Crisil Intelligence warns that



these reciprocal tariffs could significantly harm India's exports, which contribute about 22 per cent of the country's GDP. Coupled with the challenges posed by slowing global trade growth and rising economic uncertainties, this situation could further strain India's economy. In response, the Commerce and Industry Ministry has initiated stakeholder consultations to assess the potential impact of increased US tar-

According to a recent Crisil Intelligence report, India's wide tariff gap with the US could have serious consequences if the US moves to equalise tariffs. Bloomberg economists echo this concern, noting that India's economy may face significant set-

Industry and trade experts in India argue that certain top exports-such as automobile parts, electronics, textiles, diamonds, jewelry, chemicals, and pharmaceuticalscould be severely affected if the US imposes restrictions. The most vulnerable sectors include chemicals, metal products, and jewelry, followed by automobiles, pharmaceuticals, and food products. Furthermore, if

President Trump penalises US. companies employing imported talent, India's outsourcing and IT services industry could face significant constraints.

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal began his US visit on Monday to meet with the new US Trade Representative, Jamieson Greer, who is overseeing the implementation of Trump's tariff plan. Greer was also part of Trump's first administration, which targeted China and, in doing so, opened export opportunities for India, particularly in the electron

Despite these tariff disputes, the United States remains India's largest trading partner, with bilateral trade reaching \$118.2 Billion in the 2024 fiscal year. India maintained a trade surplus of \$36.8 Billion during this period. Trump has criticised India for imposing 100 per cent tariffs on automobiles, claiming such trade imbalances have allowed foreign countries to take advantage of the US for decades.

Like with other trade partners, the Trump administration intends to use tariffs as leverage to expand market access for American goods in India.

New Delhi must act quickly to address this challenge. One option is to engage in negotiations and lower tariffs. Both sides aim to increase market access, reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers, and deepen supply chain integration.

India should focus on bilateral negotiations to lower tariffs and diversify its export mar-

This strategy could help India navigate the impending trade challenges more effectively. A balanced, give-and-take approach will be key to overcoming this situation.

(The author is a popular columnist. Views expressed are

# The Unmatched Multitasking Skills of Women

### SECOND **Opinion**

ccelerate Action, the theme of this year's International Women's Day is both timely and vital. It is of the utmost importance to take a moment to contemplate the unique skills that women possess, which even the most advanced AIdriven robots cannot replicate. Even though artificial intelligence (AI) has revolutionised sectors by simplifying jobs and increasing productivity, it

is still incapable of matching the nuanced and deeply human multitasking talents that women easily demonstrate daily. Women can accomplish several tasks with empathy, emotional intelligence, and adaptability, which are attributes that no algorithm can completely replicate. Women can perform

multiple tasks simultaneously. Multitasking encompasses not only the simultaneous execution of many tasks but also the capacity to manage diverse jobs with effortless proficiency. In both professional and domestic settings, women manage multiple tasks, including swift decision-making, emotional acumen, and innovative problem-solving. In the professional environment, women frequently lead high-stakes projects, coach peers, and manage team relationships while also addressing personal obligations. Within the household, they effortlessly transition between roles as carers, financial strategists, educators, and providers of emotional support. Their capacity



understand, much less to implement. One of the defining strengths of women's multitasking abilities is their agility in decision-making, even in the most unpredictable situations. AI operates within predefined parameters and algorithms, excelling in structured environments where data is abundant. However, real life is often chaotic, requiring decisions to be made with incomplete information, intuition, and adaptabilityqualities that women exhibit daily.

Consider a nurse in a hospital emergency room who is simultaneously monitoring multiple patients, making split-second decisions, and comforting distressed families. Her ability to assess a patient's condition, liaise with doctors, and offer emotional support all at once goes beyond mere task execution—it embodies human instinct, prioritisation, and care. No AI-driven robot can truly replace such intricate decision-making layered with empathy. While AI can enhance efficiency, automate routine tasks, and provide datadriven insights, it lacks the human touch that is central to multitasking.

AI-driven robots may be able to perform designated tasks in controlled environments, but they do not possess the depth of human interaction, compassion, or intuition required in complex, real-world situations. Women's multitasking is not just about efficiency but also about the ability to connect, empathise, and inspire—traits that no AI can

to sustain equilibrium in these intersecting replicate. While we are moving further into an era driven the multitasking abilities of women; rather, it should be to improve such abilities with technology while ensuring that their human strengths continue to be prioritised. India offers countless examples of women who exemplify unparalleled multitasking abilities in varied fields.

To cite a few, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, the founder of Biocon. Chanda Kochhar, the former CEO of ICICI Bank, Dr N . Kalaiselvi, Secretary, DSIR and Director General, CSIR, Dr. Tessy Thomas, the first woman to lead an Indian missile project and hundreds of others. As we celebrate International Women's Day 2025, it is essential to recognise that while AI can augment specific tasks, it can never replicate the intricate multitasking abilities of women. Women's ability to think, feel, and act simultaneously with an unparalleled blend of intuition, intelligence, and empathy remains their superpower—one that even the most advanced robots cannot

'Accelerate Action' should not be about replacing human capabilities with AI but about leveraging technology to enhance and support women's indispensable contributions to society. The future of progress lies not in automation alone but in the harmonious coexistence of human intelligence and technology, with women leading the way in shaping a world that values both efficiency and empathy.

(The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies; views are personal)

# Letters to the Editor

### Freebies or political bribes?

Madam — The newly formed Delhi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government approved the Mahila Samridhi Yojana on Women's Day, providing ₹2,500 to women from economically weaker sections. With a budget allocation of ₹5100 Crores, women earning up to ₹2.5 Lakh annually and aged 18-60 years are eligible. But one thing I am unable to understand is what crime those women have done who are above 60 years or those who earn more than ₹2.5 Lakhs. Why didn't you specify these conditions in the manifesto? Didn't you know it was a ploy to garner votes that would-

n't be fulfilled after you win the elections? Though we should not forget that PM Modi started this 'revadi' war of free LPG, free PDS, free housing, free MODI care, and free "Samman" of ₹6000 to Kissans. Actually, the freebie culture is the biggest drain on taxpayers' money. It is open bribery. The politicians are feeding parasites, which will harm the country. There will be no funds for development. Why not the Election Commission (EC) stop this malpractice for free and fair elections? Whatsoever, when the opposition distributes freebies, it's called 'loot' in the name of the Gandhi-Nehru family, but when the BJP distributes freebies, it's called 'seva'. In reality, all governments are going back, but how will the country progress? We will never be a developed nation as people make the nation, and our people vote for a five kg ration and ₹2500. BIDYUT KUMAR CHATTERJEE | FARIDABAD

### **India wins Champions Trophy**

Madam- Apropos to "Champions bring the trophy home! Jai Ho," published on March 10, 2025. India clinched a thrilling four-wicket win over New Zealand to clinch the marquee ICC event for a record-breaking third time. Under Rohit Sharma's captaincy, Team India has now won the Asia Cup, ICC T20 World Cup and ICC Champions Trophy and overall this is the seventh ICC white ball trophy for Team India.

When pace sensation Bumrah was ruled out for the Champions Trophy, it was believed that it was going to be a huge setback for Team India, but without him and only Shami to spearhead the pace attack, our fast bowling arsenal looked really thin, but our spin quartet bowled like a well-oiled machine, turning the screws on opposition batsmen with relentless precision.

Our batting line-up was versatile and reliable, and everyone chipped in to the tournament with four allrounders; our team's balance was perfect. And just to remember that players like Pant, Jaiswal and Arshdeep could not even get a game in the tournament goes to show the depth of our talent pool. The Indian team is now second place in the ICC Trophies

list behind Australia, with only the ICC WTC trophy missing from the cabinet. The men in blue have once again proved that they have what it takes to win! BAL GOVIND | NOIDA

### **Conflict in Syria**

Madam — At a time when Muslims around the world are observing the holy month of Ramadan, Syria has witnessed another wave of violence that has claimed hundreds of lives in just the last two days. The humanitarian situation remains critical with widespread displacement, heavily damaged infrastructure and nearly 15 million people in need of humanitarian support

Dead bodies lying in streets are suggesting a danse macabre in the coastal region of the country, particularly in Latakia and Tartus provinces. This is the deadliest sectarian conflict since the overthrow of Bashar al-Assad in December 2024. Though the interim government has blamed the killing of two Syrian defence personnel in an ambush in Latakia province by Assad militia remnants for triggering the violence, the deep involvement of the army in violent retaliation against Alawites and Christians, who largely support Assad, proves that this violence has been engineered by the interim government led by Ahmed al-Sharaa itself.

Besides this escalated violence being a serious jolt to peace efforts in the country, the way all ethnic groups are reluctant to shun violence, the future of stability and peace appears to be bleak in the country. Partitioning Syria into two separate nations based on the Sunni and Shiite populations holds the key to the solution to this problem. MANOJ PARASHAR I GHAZIABAD

**OPPOSITION CRITICISES GOVERNMENT** 

The main opposition party, Congress, on Tuesday questioned the government's decisions and accused it of putting the economy in crisis. They said that the economy is being overtaken by a crisis created by the government. Congress launched a scathing attack on the government by targeting the increasing prevalence of gold loans in the country. Congress general secretary and communication in-charge Jairam Ramesh, citing the Reserve Bank of India's February data, said that a massive jump of 71.3 per cent has been seen in gold loans. Ramesh also said on X. "India's economy is caught in a crisis created by the government. The macroeconomic slowdown that continues till 2024 has led to a 300 percent jump in gold loans in the last five years. The gold loan figure has crossed the level of ₹1 Lakh Crore for the first time.

Bank loans have slowed down in every sector from housing to cars, but crisis loans like gold loans are at their peak. Not only this, the report of Niti Aayog shows that gold loans account for 40 per cent of all loans issued to

women. The number of women taking loans by pledging gold has increased by more than 22 percent in the last five

years. Should it be considered that the Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme, launched with great fanfare by the Narendra Modi government, has proved to be a 'complete failure' like demonetisation and the 'Make in India' initiative? Rising prices, falling private investment, and rising unemployment issues are badly affecting the common people. Perhaps due to these reasons. gold loans have become a big failure.

The gold kept in homes is taken out only in case of emergency. This is not just an allegation of the opposition, but RBI also seems to be unhappy and concerned with this trend. That is why RBI is planning to implement a strict underwriting process for gold loans, to ensure ethical business practices and financial stability. This includes better background checks of borrowers and monitoring of the end use of funds to prevent irregularities found in recent

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

# Spiralling food subsidy: The urgent need for reform

FIRST Olumn

India's food subsidy bill continues to rise despite budget projections suggesting otherwise. Without structural reforms in procurement and distribution, the financial strain on the exchequer is set to escalate, raising concerns about the long-term sustainability of India's food security programmes

n the Union Budget for 2025-26, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has allocated ₹203,420 Crore for food subsidy which is a marginal three per cent increase from the revised estimate (RE) for the current financial year (FY) at ₹197,000 Crore. The RE for FY 2024-25 by itself is lower than the budget estimate (BE) of ₹205,250 Crore she had fixed while presenting that budget on July 23, 2024.

Food subsidy payments during FY 2023-24 and FY 2022-23 were ₹211,394 Crores and ₹287,000 Crore respectively. From these numbers, one gets a sense that since FY 2022-23, food subsidies have been on a downward trajectory. This may not reveal the true picture.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), the Centre asks the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and other state agencies to procure food and organize its distribution to around 820 Million people for free. The entire cost i.e. MSP (minimum support price) paid to farmers plus handling and distribution cost (HDC) is reimbursed to the FCI or other state agencies as a subsidy. The money comes from the Union Budget's allocation for 'food subsidy'.

While, the PMGKAY has been in force since

While, the PMGKAY has been in force since January 1, 2023, before that, the Centre was giving food to 820 Million persons (seven kg of cereals per person per month to 120 Million poorest of the poor persons covered under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana or AAY families and five kg of cereals per person per month to the remaining 700 million) at a heavily subsidized price of ₹2/3/1 per kg for wheat/rice/coarse cereals under the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

In addition, since April 2020, it has been giving five kg of food per person per month for "free" to all 820 Million beneficiaries under PMGKAY to mitigate the consequences of Covid-19 pandemic. From January 1, 2023, it merged the free part of PMGKAY with the regular food security schemes under NFSA. This arrangement will continue for five years till the end of CY 2028 as per the announcement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in November 2023. Against this backdrop, FY 2022-23 was an unusual year as 700 Million beneficiaries got five kg of cereals each per month for free under the PMGKAY. In addition, during April - December 2022, they got five kg of cereals each at a throwaway price of ₹3/kg and ₹2/kg for rice and wheat, respectively under the NFSA.

Likewise, beneficiaries under the AAY received five kg each per month under PMGKAY throughout the FY plus seven kg a month at ₹3/2/kg for rice/wheat during April - December 2022 under the NFSA. It was a doubling of the quantity supplied at throwaway/zero price during nine months of the FY that contributed to an unusually high subsidy outgo of ₹287,000 Crore. During FY 2023-24, the 'double quantity' effect was not present as



five kg a month supplies to all beneficiaries at ₹3/2 per kg under the NFSA were withdrawn. This should have led to a massive reduction in subsidy outgo from the FY 2022-23 level. But, that didn't happen. The payments during FY 2023-24 were substantial at ₹211,394 Crores. A hike in MSP of all 14 Kharif crops by 5-10 per cent announced in June 2023, besides an increase in HDC, led to higher subsidy payment.

Look at things from another angle. While, presenting the budget for FY 2023-24, Sitharaman had kept the BE for food subsidy at ₹197,000 Crore. Against this, RE turned out to be ₹14,394 Crore more indicating that the potential savings in subsidy due to dissipation of 'double quantity' effect were partially offset by increase in MSP and other costs associated with distribution of food.

Coming to FY 2024-25, the FM has put the RE for the year at ₹197,000 Crore which is even lower than the BE of ₹205,250 Crore. This is anomalous. Only a month before the presentation of the bud-



vailing situation was pointing towards a slippage of around ₹20,000 Crore from the BE. The higher subsidy requirement of about ₹225,000 Crore was expected primarily due to the rising costs of holding on to a huge stockpile of rice, besides the increase in MSP of wheat and rice.

Then, as part of the cen-

get for FY 2025-26, the pre-

Then, as part of the central pool stock, the FCI was holding around 50 Million ton including 34 Million ton of rice and 16 Million ton of wheat (this stock excluded 34 Million ton of rice receivable from millers). The stock was against the buffer of 21.41 Million ton for January 1. Put simply, the stock holding was four times what was required.

At a fundamental level, the problem lies in the government using state agencies not just to meet

food requirements under the PMGKAY but also to extend price support to farmers. Under what has come to be known as 'open-ended' procurement, it buys from farmers unlimited quantities at MSP. For the last many years, the FCI has been procuring over 50 Million tons of rice every year even while supplying around 36 - 38 Million tons under PMGKAY to the states.

This mismatch has inevitably led to a huge pileup of stocks and associated high carrying costs which bloats the subsidy bill. The Centre has pinned its hope of trimming subsidy (as per RE) on liquidating its burgeoning stocks. But, given the situation on the ground, this seems unlikely. Till about a month back, response to the open market sale of rice by FCI from its stocks was poor with only 0.7 million tons of rice sold at the subsidised rate of ₹28/kg (during 2023-24 also, the agency could sell only 0.1 million tons).

A recent order from the food ministry let state governments and their corporations purchase up to 1.2 million tons of rice, and ethanol distilleries

buy up to 2.4 million tons at a reduced rate of ₹22.55/kg - a 20 per cent discount from the earlier price of ₹28/kg - won't make any dent on the mammoth stocks.

The actual subsidy outgo during FY 2024-25 will be close to ₹225,000 Crore instead of ₹197,000 Crore being the RE given in the budget. Considering that the agencies will be saddled with high stocks even during FY 2025-26 and further annual increase in the MSP and HDC (in the past, MSP of paddy and wheat has been increasing 6 - 7 per cent in kharif and rabi seasons annually and the stocks of the standard st ally and this trend is expected to continue), it is unlikely that subsidy payments will be contained within the budgeted level of ₹203,420 Crore. Far from a declining trend that the figures mentioned in the budget would seem to suggest, food sub-sidy has actually been on a rising trajectory and this trend will continue in the future as well. How the Scheme has been crafted, an escalating trend is inevitable. The coverage of PMGKAY is 'universal' (820 Million beneficiaries and at least 100 Million waiting to be included), assurance of giving them 'free' food eternally, purchase of 'unlimited' quantum of food from farmers at MSP resulting in high stocks with FCI and agencies and associated high carrying cost, reimbursement of handling and distribution cost to them on 'actual' basis and pilferage of subsidised food.

### Conclusion

The trajectory of food subsidy in India is not on a downward slope, as the budget figures might suggest, but rather on a continuous rise due to the structural inefficiencies within the system. The universal coverage of PMGKAY, along with the open-ended procurement of food grains at MSP, has resulted in excessive stock accumulation, driving up costs related to storage, handling, and distribution

Despite attempts to trim the subsidy bill through stock liquidation, market demand has remained weak, making a significant reduction in expenditure unlikely.

Moreover, factors such as annual increases in MSP and handling costs, as well as the Supreme Court's directive to include an additional 100 million beneficiaries under food security programs, will only exacerbate the financial burden.

While the budgeted estimate for FY 2025-26 has been set at ₹203,420 Crore, the actual expenditure is expected to exceed this projection, just as it has in previous years.

Unless the government undertakes fundamental reforms, such as rationalising procurement, improving targeting mechanisms, and curbing inefficiencies, food subsidy will continue to spiral upwards.

(The author a policy analyst. The views expressed

# Trump's reciprocal tariffs and the US trade deficit: A deeper look

uring a recent meeting, US President Donald Trump praised Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, calling him "a great leader." However, in the same breath, Trump announced reciprocal tariffs on India, labelling the country as the "tariff king" and "a hard place to do business." He blamed India's high tariffs for the growing trade deficit between the two nations.

Trump's proposed reciprocal tariff policy means that the US will impose equivalent tariffs on countries that charge higher tariffs on American exports. He argues that the US trade deficit stems from high tariffs imposed by other countries on US goods. The US exports goods worth approximately \$2 Trillion globally while importing around \$3.3 Trillion, leading to a trade deficit of about \$1 Trillion. The US has a trade deficit with 57 countries, a trade surplus with 39, and negligible trade with 122. But is high tariffs the primary cause of this deficit?

# US Trade Deficit with Major Countries

The United States has significant trade deficits with several countries, with China leading the list at a deficit of \$300 Billion, resulting from \$148 Billion in exports and \$448 Billion in imports. Mexico follows with a trade deficit of \$157 Billion, as the US exports \$323 Billion while importing \$480 Billion. Vietnam ranks third, with a deficit of \$109 Billion, based on \$10 Billion in exports and \$119 Billion in imports. Other major trade deficit partners include Germany (\$86 Billion), Canada (\$78 Billion), Japan (\$75 Billion), and Ireland (\$66 Billion). South Korea (\$55 Billion), Taiwan (\$50 Billion), and India (\$47 Billion) also contribute to the overall trade imbalance. Additional countries with notable trade deficits include Italy (\$46 Billion), Thailand (\$43 Billion), Malaysia (\$28 Billion), Switzerland (\$25 Billion), and Indonesia (\$18 Billion). The remaining nations on the list are Austria and France, each with a \$14 Billion deficit, Cambodia (\$12 Billion), Sweden (\$10 Billion), and Slovakia (\$8 Billion). These figures highlight the countries where the US imports significantly more than it exports, contributing to its overall trade deficit.

# Is High Tariff the Reason for the US Trade Deficit?

China, the country with which the US has the highest trade deficit, has an effective tariff of just 3.07 per cent and a Most Favored Nation (MFN) tariff of 3.09 per cent. Despite accusations of unfair trade practices and currency manipulation, China has successfully positioned itself as the "factory of the world," offering competitively priced goods.

Mexico, the second-largest contributor to the US trade deficit, is deeply integrated with the US economy. Under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), most US products enter Mexico duty-free, provided they meet rules-of-origin requirements.

Despite this tariff-free access, the US still records a \$157 Billion trade deficit with Mexico, showing that tariffs are not the root cause.

Vietnam has emerged as a manufacturing powerhouse, with its exports tripling from \$124 Billion in 2012 to \$384 Billion in 2022. Yet,

ANANT SWARUP

its effective tariff rate stands at just 1.07 per cent, with an MFN rate of 4.98 per cent. The growth of Vietnam's exports is primarily due to low labour costs, streamlined supply chains, and favourable trade agreements rather than high

Similarly, Germany, which exports and imports roughly \$1.6 orth of goods annually, has an effectof 1.44 per cent, almost the same as

Trillion worth of goods annually, has an effective tariff of 1.44 per cent, almost the same as the US's 1.54 per cent. Despite these comparable rates, the US still has an \$86 Billion trade deficit with Germany.

This raises the question: if high tariffs were the primary cause of trade deficits, why does the US have such a significant gap with Germany? Among the 20 countries with which the US has the highest trade deficits, only South Korea (8.88 per cent effective tariff) and India (11.36 per cent effective tariff) impose relatively higher tariffs. However, many of these countries themselves have global trade deficits, meaning other nations successfully export to them-even when the US struggles.

# The Real Cause of the US Trade Deficit

The primary reason for the US trade deficit is not high tariffs abroad, but rather the changing structure of the US economy. Over time, the US has shifted away from low-cost, labour-intensive manufacturing, outsourcing these industries to other countries while focusing on high-tech and specialised production.

Moreover, many US multinational corporations manufacture abroad and re-import goods, which increases the trade deficit. However, the royalties and profits earned by these companies are not factored into trade deficit calculations.

Additionally, the US services trade is often overlooked. In 2022, the US exported \$900 Billion worth of services while importing \$671

Billion, resulting in a \$200 Billion services trade surplus-which offsets part of the goods deficit. Economic research has shown that imposing high tariffs does not necessarily boost manufacturing or enhance economic integration.

While it may be a politically attractive move, trade wars often lead to long-term economic damage. Trump's decision to escalate tariffs will shape global trade dynamics in the coming years, and its real impact remains to be seen.

### Conclusion

The US trade deficit is a complex issue influenced by multiple factors beyond high tariffs. While President Trump has targeted countries like India for their tariff policies, data shows that the largest trade imbalances exist even with nations that have low tariffs, such as China, Mexico, and Germany.

This suggests that tariffs are not the primary cause of the deficit. Instead, the shift in the US economy toward high-tech industries, outsourcing of manufacturing, and global supply chain strategies play a more significant role.

Additionally, US multinational corporations manufacture goods abroad and re-import them, further widening the trade gap.

The services sector, which generates a trade surplus for the US, is often overlooked in trade deficit discussions. Economic research suggests that imposing high tariffs does not necessarily revive domestic manufacturing but can lead to broader economic consequences.

As Trump's tariff policies unfold, their longterm impact on global trade and the US economy remains uncertain.

In 2023, the US-India bilateral trade in goods and services stood at \$190.08 Billion (\$123.89 Billion in goods and \$66.19 Billion in services trade). That year, India's merchandise exports to the US stood at \$83.77 Billion, while imports were \$40.12 Billion, leaving a trade gap of \$43.65 Billion in favour of India.

The country's services export to America was \$36.33 Billion in 2023, while imports were aggregated at \$29.86 Billion. The trade gap (difference between imports and exports) was \$6.47 Billion in favour of New Delhi.

During 2021-24, America was the largest trading partner of India. The US is one of the few countries with which India has a trade surplus. India has received \$67.8 Billion in foreign direct investments from America during April 2000 and September 2024.

Thus India will have to diversify its export basket and reduce its American-centric approach to tide over the loses that might result from the Trump imposed tariffs.

(The author is former Additional Secreatry, Department of Commerce; views are personal)

# Holistic approach to overcoming addiction

VALLURI

arilal Gandhi was addicted to alcohol. He tried in vain to give up drinking but could never kick the habit and eventually succumbed to the lethal disease called alcoholism. He became a quotidian smoker.

Gandhiji's son was also said to have committed adultery and for a brief turned an apostate as he got converted to Islam to be known as Abdullah Gandhi

Abdullah Gandhi.

Tobacco and excessive consumption of alcohol lead to severe physical and psychological disorders. It has a deleterious

and debilitating effect on the human body. Any individual can be addicted to sex, substance, food (bulimia), cinema, television, or even social media. Such addictions weaken our resolve diminish our aura and deplete our physical and mental energy.

Addiction is a compulsive, chronic, physiological, or psychological need for a habit-forming substance, behaviour, or activity having harmful physical, psychological, or social effects and typically causing well-

defined symptoms (such as anxiety, irritability, tremors, or nausea) upon withdrawal or abstinence.

Talking of smoking, some lawmakers came up with outlandish theories stating that there is inadequate Indian evidence to correlate tobacco and

WHO estimates that tobacco caused 8.5 Million deaths in 2024 and over 100 million deaths over the 20th century. Similarly, the United States Centres for Disease Control and Prevention describes tobacco as "the single most important preventable risk to human health in developed countries and important cause of premature death worldwide."

Smoking is a major risk factor for heart attacks, strokes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) including emphysema and chronic bronchitis and cancer (particularly lung cancer, cancers of the larynx and mouth, and pancreatic cancer).

Cigarettes sold in underdeveloped countries tend to have higher tar content and are less likely to be filtered, potentially increasing vulnerability to tobacco smoking-related diseases in these regions.

Given this grim scenario, how does one quit smoking and or those addicted to Bacchus, give up drinking? It is recommended to take up courses in the Art of Living to combat these addictions.

We need to breathe properly to increase our Prana level to combat these addictions. The pivot of the Art of Living Courses is the unique breathing technique called the Sudarshan Kriya.

Sudarshan Kriya harmonises the rhythms of the body and emotions and puts them back in tune with the rhythms of nature.

Being in sync, we feel positive about ourselves, love flows naturally in all relationships (say what was lacking between Gandhiji and his son Harilal Gandhi).

Sudarshan Kriya's technique enables us to skillfully use the breath to feel positive about ourselves and our lives and start having control over our

emotions. It reinforces the default rhythm within an individual and negative emotions of discontent and unhappiness get

Regular practice of Sudarshan Kriya, pranayama, yoga, and meditation brings about a 360-degree change in the personality of an addict or a person who is only looking back in anger.

A renowned cardiologist from Hyderabad, Dr Ramachandra of Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals recommends Sudarshan Kriya to all his patients for a quick rehab. Further, he opines this breathing technique is almost akin to

hyperventilation and relaxes an individual tremendously. Regular practice of this breathing technique infuses energy, prana, and optimism and puts a person in an auto mode (default mode of nature).

We are cannonaded with almost 60,000 thousand thoughts a day. Most of them are negative in nature. Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar says breath is like a string and your mind is like a kite. Proper breathing ensures you float and do not crash land in the journey of your life.

# So let us breathe our problems away. **Conclusion**

In a world where addiction to substances and behaviors can erode physical and mental wellbeing, finding effective ways to reclaim control is essential. Harilal Gandhi's struggles serve as a stark reminder of how unchecked dependencies can lead to suffering, not just for the individual but for their loved ones as well.

The impact of smoking, alcoholism, and other addictions is undeniable, with grave consequences on health and longevity. Yet, amidst this challenge, hope lies in adopting holistic wellness practices. Sudarshan Kriya, pranayama, yoga, and meditation offer scientifically backed methods to counter addiction and regain inner harmony.

These techniques not only cleanse the body and mind but also foster emotional resilience, allowing individuals to break free from destructive

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal) the pioneer



# **Gold falls Rs 150 to** Rs 88,750 per 10g

or the third day in a row, gold prices retreated by Rs 150 to Rs 88,750 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday amid a weak trend in the overseas markets, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had settled lower at Rs 88,900 per 10 grams on Friday. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity slipped by Rs 150 to Rs 88,350 per 10 grams from the previous close of Rs 88,500 per 10 grams. Silver prices also declined by Rs 250 to Rs 99,250 per kg, snapping the four-day winning run. Comex gold futures for April delivery fell 0.32 per cent to USD 2,904.80 per ounce in the international markets. Meanwhile, spot gold also fell 0.13 per cent to USD 2,905.31 per ounce. "Gold and silver saw profit-taking from recent highs due to a rebound in US bond yields. The US administration's decision to delay Mexico tariffs by a month added to the cautious sentiment. However, a weakening dollar, which fell to a five-month low and recorded its worst weekly decline since November 2022, provided tailwinds for gold and silver," Rahul Kalantri, VP Commodities, Mehta Equities Ltd, said. Silver futures for May delivery traded lower at USD 32.80 per ounce.



# **Al Express expands fleet** to 100 planes

ir India Express now has 100 planes in its fleet by inducting another Boeing 737-8 aircraft, which operated Aits first flight on Bengaluru-Hindon route. In a release on Monday, the airline said it will be operating over 500 daily flights by the end of this month across a fast-expanding network of 54 destinations across India, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. From a fleet of 26 Boeing 737 NGs and 28 A320 aircraft in January 2022, when the airline was taken over by the Tata Group, the carrier's has almost doubled its fleet to 100 aircraft, according to the release. The 100th aircraft, featuring 'Chittara' tail art inspired by Karnataka's traditional mural painting, was flagged off by the airline's Managing Director Aloke Singh at Bengaluru's Kempegowda



# **Infosys Finacle modernises Chola's operations**

nfosys Finacle on Monday announced the successful migration of Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company's operations to the Finacle treasury solution. According to a release, the move will centralise treasury management on a unified web-based platform for Chola. It however, did not divulge the financial details of the contract. Infosys Finacle is part of EdgeVerve Systems, a wholly-owned product subsidiary of Infosys. "This cloud-based transformation emphasises Chola's commitment to creating future-ready, digital-first treasury offerings that streamline treasury operations, enhance automation and effectively manage risks and compliance while ensuring financial prudence and stability, the release said. With Finacle Treasury, Chola now has end-toend coverage for operations across the entire treasury lifecycle, managing various liabilities and investment portfolios. This includes a diverse range of borrowing and funding sources. The non-banking financial company has also streamlined its fund transfer process, allowing faster and more efficient management of loans, market borrowings, securitisation, and interest and tax adjustments

# Will push for comprehensive trade partnership with India

# New Zealand PM ahead of visit

PNS NEW DELHI

Ahead of his trip to India, New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon has said that he will push for a comprehensive economic partnership with New Delhi and will explore ways to

strengthen bilateral security ties. Luxon is visiting India from March 16 to 20 in what will be his first trip to the country as the prime minister.

He will be accompanied by one of the largest delegations a New Zealand prime minister has ever travelled with. The delegation will comprise

ministers, senior business lead-

ers, a community delegation of prominent Kiwi Indians and several parliamentarians. 'We're going to do everything

we can to push trade really, really hard," Luxon told New Żealand media on Sunday.

"What I'm looking for is just a much more comprehensive economic partnership and how we'd move that forward," he said, adding, "I am determined that we are going to change the trading relationships with India big time."

In New Delhi, Luxon will hold wide-ranging talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to explore areas of cooperation, deepen political and security ties and strengthen the economic

"India is an important power in the Indo-Pacific and I will discuss with Prime Minister Modi what more we can do together to maintain peace and prosper-

ity in our region," the New Zealand PM said. Luxon said travelling with a senior business delegation will help increase trade and business opportunities and promote New Zealand as an investment desti-

"The large and growing Indian diaspora make significant contributions to New Zealand. I am pleased to be travelling with a first-of-its-kind community delegation, to highlight the importance of the people to people links we share, and to profile the best and brightest among Kiwi-Indians," he said.

Luxon will deliver the inaugural address at the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi on

"New Zealand's relationship with India is more important than ever at this time of geopolitical uncertainty. I am confident my visit will achieve a step change in our engagement, as we continue to strengthen our mutual security and prosperity," Luxon said.

The New Zealand PM said strengthening ties with India is a key priority for him. "Since coming into office, I have signalled that strengthening our relationship with India is a key

priority for my government."
"We've already made incredible progress over the last year as we invest in building a broadbased, sustainable relationship with India, the world's fastestgrowing major economy, and the place from which six per cent of New Zealand's population claim their heritage," he said.

The New Zealand PM hoped his visit will further strengthen the close links between the two

Luxon will also visit Mumbai from March 19 to 20 before returning to Wellington. The Ministry of External

Affairs (MEA) on Monday said Prime Minister Modi will host a lunch in honour of the visiting dignitary. Luxon will also call on President Droupadi Murmu.

Luxon's visit underscores the longstanding and enduring ties between India and New Zealand, the MEA said.

"It reaffirms the continued commitment of both countries to further strengthen the bilateral relationship across all sectors and deepen our close people-to-



Money 08

# Govt to set up SPV for making aircraft in India. says Union Min

The government is in the process of setting a special purpose vehicle for making regional transport aircraft, Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu said on Monday as he asserted that necessary policies are in place for India to manufacture planes and

Replying to questions in the Rajya Sabha, the minister highlighted the steps taken by the government to promote aircraft component manufacturing and MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul) activities, including having a uniform IGST rate.

India is one of the world's fastest growing civil aviation markets and domestic carriers have placed orders for more than 1,500 planes as they expand their fleets to meet ris-

ing air traffic demand.
"We have changed the thought process that we have when it comes to manufacturing of aircraft. We are saying that India is at the stage right now

where we can manufacture, we can design and we can maintain an aircraft," Naidu said.

Elaborating about the way forward, the minister said the government has adopted a holistic approach and is in the process of setting a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for manufacturing regional transport

"We have a plan to create an SPV for five years, which is going to bring in all the necessary stakeholders... study the existing picture in the country and create a road map...," he said and added that the idea is to make the aircraft in five years.

As the government pushes ahead with the Make In India initiatives, the TDP leader also emphasised that states are the key players.

While stressing that skilling is also important, Naidu mentioned that there are 38 working FTOs (Flying Training Organisations) and the focus is to create an ecosystem for manufacturing aircraft com-

# Assam presents Rs 2.63 lakh cr budget

Offers sops to youths, tea garden workers



The Assam government on Monday presented a Rs 2.63 lakh crore budget for the 2025-26 fiscal, offering sops to jobless graduates and tea garden workers while suggesting to exempt professional tax on a section of the salaried class in the state where assembly polls are due

With a deficit of Rs 620.27 crore, this is the last full Budget of the Himanta Biswa Sarma-led second BJP government.

Finance Minister Ajanta Neog tabled a Rs 2.63 lakh crore Budget for the next financial year that proposed no new tax for the general public but gave additional relief to nearly 1.5 lakh salaried people.

Neog announced extending tax holiday for green tea leaves for two more years to alleviate the challenges faced by the industry, while offering a onetime cash benefit of Rs 5,000 to 6.8 lakh garden workers.

Assembly elections in Assam are likely to take place during March-April next year.

Neog announced a flagship scheme 'Chief Minister's Jibon Prerana' to financially support the graduates for one year during their job search period.

This initiative is not an unemployment allowance, but motivational support (Prerana) to help them prepare for competitive exams, interviews and entrepreneurial pursuits. I am

month to the graduates passing out in 2025 from government universities/colleges of Assam, she added.

Under the same scheme, the government seeks to provide a one-time Rs 25,000 grant to the research scholars of state and central government universities. This assistance will be Rs 50,000 for 'divyang' (people with disabilities) research scholars, Neog said. The government will launch the scheme in October 2025, around six months before the state goes to polls, and allocated Rs 25 crore for its implementation.

Emphasising that no additional tax is imposed on the public, Neog said the budget proposes exemption on professional tax for individuals earning up to Rs 15,000 per month.

"This will benefit more than 1.43 lakh taxpayers/families and boost their purchasing capacity," she said

Neog also proposed to slash the electricity rate by Re 1 per unit for Jeevan Dhara and domestic consumers up to 120 units in a month, giving relief to 48 lakh consumers out of the total 68 lakh.

Massive AI talent gap looms in India

Report predicts shortfall of over a million workers

# Budget: Aim is to create one crore 'Lakhpati Didis', says CM Fadnavis

PNS MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday said his government will focus on the 'Lakhpati Didi' scheme to ensure creation of one crore beneficiaries. The scheme was launched by

the Union government in 2023 and recognises women members of SHGs, who have an annual income of at least Rs 1 lakh from agriculture, animal husbandry, and small industries, as 'Lakhpati will focus on women empowerment through the Lakhpati Didi scheme. We aim to create one crore women beneficiaries with annual income of Rs 1 lakh. This lakh this year," he said.



dence for women and foster a circular economy. Over 23 lakh women have benefitted so far, with plans to add another 24

women beneficiaries earning Rs 8,000- Rs10,000 monthly, creating a robust network of selfreliance, the CM added.

Incidentally, on Saturday,

Prime Minister Narendra Modi took part in the 'Lakhpati Didi Sammelan' in Navsari in Gujarat where he spoke on the success of the scheme and exuded confidence that the target of five crore beneficiaries nationwide would be achieved in the time to

Speaking to reporters after the state budget was presented in the assembly, the CM also underscored the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in agriculture. "AI can revolutionize farming.

testing to flower stages. It can reduce costs and improve productivity. We have introduced schemes to facilitate this transformation" Fadnavis

# Sitharaman presents Manipur budget envisaging Rs 35,104 cr expenditure

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The total receipts

ending March 2025.

According to documents, the

capital outlay has been increased

by 19 per cent to Rs 7,773 crore

over the current financial year

Manipur's budget provides for

over Rs 2,000 crore under

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday tabled in the Lok Sabha the Manipur budget for 2025-26, envisaging an expenditure of Rs 35,103.90 crore, up

from Rs 32,656.81 crore in the current financial year. Manipur is cur-

2024-25.

rently under the President's Rule. have been pegged at Rs 35,368.19 crore, up from Rs 32,471.90 crore in

"We shall provide Rs 300 crore targeted subsidy this year. If the Assam Power Distribution Company Limited (APDCL) continues to show the positive trend of revenue, I shall consider further reduction in tariff," she Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) and Rs 9,520 crore for social sector

For relief and rehabilitation for internally displaced persons, Rs 15 crore has been provided for temporary shelter to them; Rs 35

crore towards housing for displaced people, Rs 100 crore for relief operation, and Rs 7 crore for compensa-

A budgetary allocation of Rs 2,866 crore for 2025-26 has been made towards incentives for police personnel posted in sensitive areas.

Sitharaman tabled the supple-

mentary demands for grants in respect of Manipur for the year

# Prices of veg, non-veg thali decline 5 pc in Feb: Crisil

PNS NEW DELHI

The cost of vegetarian and nonvegetarian thali declined by 5 per cent on-month in February due to lower vegetable and broiler prices, an arm of domestic rating agency Crisil said on Monday. Onion, potato and tomato prices were down 7 per cent, 17 per cent and 25 per cent on-month, respectively, amid fresh arrivals, said Crisil Market Intelligence and Analysis in its monthly 'Roti Rice Rate report.

Also, broiler prices declined by an estimated 5 per cent onmonth because of lower demand amid bird flu scare in Southern India, it said.

"For the vegetarian thali, the decline was driven by lower vegetable prices, particularly of onions, tomatoes and potatoes, while for a non-vegetarian thali, the cost eased with a decrease in broiler prices," said Pushan Sharma, Director- Research, Crisil Intelligence.



On an annual basis, the cost of a home-cooked vegetarian thali declined 1 per cent in February, while that of a non-vegetarian thali grew by about 6 per cent, the report said.

The on-year decline in the cost of a vegetarian thali was because of a fall in prices of tomato and liquid petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders, the report said.

Tomato price declined 28 per cent on-year to Rs 23/kg in the month, from Rs 32/kg a year ago, owing to a 20 per cent increase in arrivals on-year.

The increase in the cost of a nonvegetarian thali was driven by an estimated 15 per cent on-year rise in the price of broiler.

### PNS NEW DELHI

India is poised to become a global AI talent hub, but a looming skill gap threatens to hinder its progress, with a new study by Bain & Company revealing that the country's AI sector could face a shortfall of over a million skilled profes-

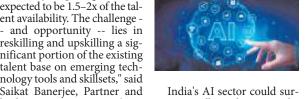
sionals by 2027. The report highlighted the urgent need for India to reskill and upskill its workforce to meet the growing demand for AI expertise.

"India has a unique opportunity to position itself as a global AI talent hub. However, by



leader in Bain & Company's AI,

Insights, and Solutions practice



India's AI sector could surpass 2.3 million job openings by 2027 while the AI talent pool is expected to grow to around 1.2

million, presenting an opportunity to reskill more than 1 million workers, according to the

Since 2019, AI-related job postings have exploded, increasing by 21 per cent annually, while compensation for these roles has risen by 11 per cent each year.

Despite this surge in demand and attractive salaries, the sup-

ply of qualified AI professionals has not kept pace, creating a widening talent gap that risks slowing down AI adoption across industries.

Globally, executives surveyed cited a lack of in-house AI expertise as a major obstacle to implementing generative AI technologies. This shortage is projected to persist through at least 2027, with varying degrees

of impact across global markets. Addressing the AI talent shortage requires a multipronged approach -- companies must move beyond traditional hiring practices and prioritise continuous upskilling initiatives to cultivate internal talent.

"The AI talent shortage is a significant challenge, but not invincible. Addressing it requires a fundamental shift in how businesses attract, develop, and retain AI talent. Companies need to move beyond traditional hiring approaches, prioritise continuous upskilling, and foster an innovation-driven ecosystem," Banerjee said.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
RENESSINGHEMMADES NOTIFICATION Date: 18-03-2825
Tenders are being invited for the supply of drugs, sergicals 5 consumeties, lab chemicals 5
magests, ortho-implants, cath dai implants for a period of two years to the Government General
Heapthal, Kharmann. The slightle agencies can obtain the lander forms from 12-03-2025 and 20-93-2025 from 10.39 am to 5.00 pm. A demonal staff (DC) benker's chequel for Rs 19.000-(Rapeaster thousand only) drawn in tayour of The Medical Superintendent, Government General Hospital, Khammam, to obtain the tender forms. The tender forms should be submitted by 5.00 pm on 11-64-2025 to the Superintendent, the Government General Hospital, Khammam. R.C.No: 11199-PPICLIADVT110304-25, Date: 19-83-2925 Government General Hospital, Kharen

# GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA IRRIGATION & CAD DEPARTMENT E-PROCUREMENT SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Tender Notice & Date: 15/2024-25 (1st Call) Name of the Work: I&CADD - Minor Irrigation- Warangal District- Excavation and loading of silt in Bhadrakali Tank for Block No.4 & 5, Estimated Cost Value: Rs. 610.95 Lakhs Tender Documents Available: From 11.03.2025 at 11.00 AM onwards. For more details and for downloading: https://tender.telangana.gov.in tender documents please visit Office Email ID: seic.wgl@gmail.com, Contact No(s): 9490669434(SE,IC,WGL). 9701578925 (AEE,IC, WGL). Sdf- Superintending Engineer, ISCADD. Irrigation Circle, K.C.Colony, Warangal

# HVCLETADACI The pioneer Dacie of the pioneer Dacie

Follow us on

@TheDailyPioneer

facebook.com/ dailypioneer

Tuesday March 11, 2025

# 'What works on stage isn't the same as what works on screen'

**FATIMA HASAN** hasanfatimafax@gmail.com

dream becoming journalists, possess the traits required for the profession. This is what banker-turned-

actor Danish Husain, as he goes by his screen name, reflected upon in his latest series Crime Beat.

In an exclusive conversation with The Pioneer, Husain traces his journey in Crime Beat and shares what drew him to the project. "When the director told me about the story and the novel that inspired the series—The Price You Pay it immediately caught my attention," he says. Husain was particularly drawn to the depiction of journalism in the series, especially the role of the editor and the character of Abhishek Sinha. "I liked the way journalism was portrayed, the editor's role, and how Abhishek's character was written. That, along with my experience of interacting with journalist friends, played a big part in my decision to take up the role. I admire the professionalism the job demands—the objectivity and authenticity required. All of these factors made me want to do the series." Playing the chief editor of a newspaper was a challenging experience for Husain. "Maintaining objectivity while getting the news, understanding what the real news is and then presenting it properly—these are the key responsibilities of an editor. I think that's a huge

He adds, "The script also delves into how an editor decides which stories make it to the front page and how to differentiate those stories from how other newspapers treat them. It's not just about professionalism-it's also about the emotional side of the job, which I had to bring into my performance.

To prepare for the role, he relied on the expertise of Jairaj Singh, a seasoned journalist who served as a consultant on the series. "Jairaj's guidance was invaluable. His observations were extremely relevant and helped me shape my character. He helped me understand how an editor operates—how they carry themselves, the fast-paced nature of their work, and the perspective they bring to news." Interestingly, he did not model his performance on any specific real-life journalist or detective. Instead, he focused entirely on the inputs from Jairaj, the director, and conversations with other actors. "I did not base my performance on any real-life journalist. I simply worked with the insights and feedback I received," he emphasises.

One of the most compelling aspects of Crime Beat is how it navigates the fine line between entertainment and responsible journalism. When asked about this balance, he responds with a thought-provoking counter-question: "Who decides how much is entertainment and how much is responsibility? What one person sees as responsible storytelling might seem irresponsible to another, and vice versa."

He acknowledges that making a series for a platform involves a significant entertainment component. "At the same time, you want the series to be credible. It shouldn't be so implausible or outlandish that it loses touch with reality, especially when it's set in a very real socio-political landscape," he explains.

Quoting a dialogue from the series—"As it becomes more and more corrupt and democratic, the world that you are living in becomes harder and harder"—Husain raises critical questions: "Can we really do meaningful crime journalism today? What happens when journalists expose big corruption and scams? What happens to whistleblowers?"

He points out that crime journalists are increasingly at risk. "When they bring major scams to light, they become targets. Many have even lost their lives for it," he notes. "Journalists are constantly threatened. So, in such an atmosphere, how can crime journalism continue to evolve?"

Having worked in theater and film for over two decades, he has gained a deep understanding of how different mediums shape storytelling. "What works on stage isn't the same as what works on screen, and that's different from how a story is told in a book. Each medium has its limitations and advantages. Understanding how to adapt a story to the medium is crucial.'

He elaborates, "If I have a story, I need to know how to make it compelling for the screen. If it's for the stage, I need to understand how it can be adapted theatrically. The medium dictates how the story

is told." As for his future projects, Husain remains tight-lipped but assures fans that exciting work is on the horizon. "There are a handful of series I'm currently working on, including a Netflix series. Some of my projects are in the production stage, waiting to be released by the producers," he concludes.

In an exclusive conversation with *The Pioneer*, Danish **Husain** delves into his role as a chief editor in Crime Beat and the broader themes of journalism, integrity and truth-seeking. He also discusses how his performance was shaped by real newsroom dynamics



# **NEUROSCIENCE IN EARLY EDUCATION**

n recent years, our understanding of how young brains develop has been significantly enhanced by advances in neuroscience. This knowledge offers powerful insights into early education, allowing us to design interventions that can positively shape cognitive development during the most formative years of a child's life. Early childhood represents a critical window of opportunity and we must leverage neuroscience to optimise learning experiences that fos-ter intellectual, social and emotional growth.

Neuroscientific research has demonstrated that the first five years of a child's life are crucial for brain development. During this period, the brain is highly malleable, forming over a million new neural con-nections every second. This rapid growth lays the foundation for cognitive functions, emotional regulation and even personality traits that will continue to evolve. However, the quality of experiences during this phase plays an essential role in either reinforcing or hindering this development.

What we now understand is that targeted educational interventions can significantly influence this process. High-quality early education environments, rich in cognitive stimuli, can help children reach their full potential by enhancing neural pathways associated with problem-solving, language acquisition and executive function skills.

Implementing neuroscience-informed interventions in early education is not about making learning more complicated; rather, it's about being intentional with the kinds of stimuli and experiences we provide to young learners. Here are some key areas where neuroscience has provided valuable insights:

Language acquisition and bilingualism: Neuroscience shows that early exposure to multi-

ple languages can enhance brain plasticity and improve cognitive flexibility. Bilingual children often exhibit stronger skills in attention and problem-solving. Incorporating multiple languages in early education fosters not only language skills but also critical cognitive functions.

**Executive function development:** Executive functions like working memory, flexible thinking and self-control are foundational skills that are nurtured during early childhood. Neuroscience suggests that playful, structured activities that challenge children to think critically and plan can improve executive functions. These are skills that predict future academic success.

Social-emotional learning (SEL): Neuroscientific evidence strongly supports the importance of

emotional regulation in learning. Emotions are deeply intertwined with cognitive processes. Therefore, early education that incorporates SEL—teaching children to manage their emotions, empathise with others, and build healthy relationships—can lead to stronger academic outcomes and improved well-being throughout life.

Motor skill development and cognitive growth:
Physical movement has a direct impact on cognitive development.

Neuroscientists have found

that motor skills and cognitive development are closely linked. Activities that promote coordination, balance and fine motor skills can enhance neural networks responsible for spatial awareness and mathematical reasoning. Movement-based learning can be especially beneficial in early education

Resilience, the ability to bounce back from stress and adversity, is a quality that can be nur-tured from early childhood. Neuroscience has shown that chil-

settings.

dren who develop resilience have stronger neural connections in areas of the brain associated with emotional regulation. Early interventions that focus on building resilience through supportive relationships, exposure to manageable challenges, and teaching coping mechanisms—can shape more adaptive and stress-resistant individuals.

As educators, it's important to understand that the goal is not to shield children from all difficulties but to equip them with the emotional tools they need to navigate challenges. This nurturing approach aligns with the brain's natural developmental trajectory and helps children build the neural architecture for handling adversity.

Educators are key to translating neuroscience into practice. Understanding how the brain works can inform teaching methods, curriculum design and classroom interactions. Teachers who are trained in brain-based strategies can create learning environments that are stimulating and supportive, promoting both intellectual and emotional development.

By fostering curiosity, encouraging problem-

solving, and creating a positive emotional climate, educators can facilitate the kind of deep, sustained learning that neuroscience shows is possible during these critical early years. The impact of these efforts is profound, shaping not only a child's academic trajectory but also their lifelong capacity for learning, creativity and

(The author, Manish Rastogi, is the CEO of Zee Learn Ltd.)

# New era in healthcare, inspired by Ratan Tata

PNS|HYDERABAD

rom seeing a family's heartbreaking struggle to pay for life-saving medications to creating a pharmaceutical empire that is revolutionising the industry, Arjun Deshpande's journey is one of ingenuity, passion and purpose. Come along as we explore the history of Generic Aadhaar!

You started working to address a basic problem in India's pharmaceutical industry when you were just sixteen years old. What was the most difficult thing you had to do as a teenager?

Disrupting the conventional pharmaceutical distribution system, which relied heavily on middlemen, was the most difficult task. When I was sixteen, I noticed a serious problem with India's pharmaceutical sector: the exorbitant cost of medications because of several intermediaries. Knowing that this needed to change, I went to 200–300 pharmacies in an attempt to persuade them to use my direct-to-consumer business strategy. Most were doubtful at first. However, I was not taken seriously. "How can a 16-year-old change an industry that has worked this way for decades?" They found it incomprehensible that a teenager would question a long-standing system. I struggled for two to three months before I was able to persuade one pharmacy. As a result of that success, more retailers began to support the idea over time. Breaking the retailers' deeply rooted attitude was the most difficult task. However, perseverance, conviction and a distinct vision transformed suspicion into trust. And that "yes" was only the first step.

Have you encountered opposition from bigger pharmaceutical firms? If yes, how have you handled it?

Indeed, large corporations that rely on aggressive marketing, med-

ical referrals and branding have historically controlled the pharmaceutical sector. Established businesses resisted when I proposed the Generic Aadhaar business model. which cuts out middlemen to lower the cost of medications. I addressed this, though, by emphasising openness, quality control and public knowledge. My strategy was to inform patients and customers about the effectiveness and affordability of generic medications. It increased public trust and expanded access to affordable healthcare.

Have you had to put forth more effort to build credibil-

ity, or has your young allowed you to disrupt the industry?

In a field as well-established as pharmaceuticals, being young presented both opportunities and difficulties. On the one hand, it gave me the freedom to think creatively and unconventionally without being constrained by social standards. However, at first, credibility was a barrier since many people doubted that someone so young could have

a significant influence. I created an ecosystem with it that allows consumers to obtain the same premium medications at reasonable costs from the same producers who supply global corporations. By cutting out needless intermediaries and lowering exorbitant prices, I guarantee that important medications will always be accessible to the average person.

Do you view yourself as spear-heading a new social entrepreneurship movement in light of India's employment crisis?

By producing micro-entrepreneurs, the concept not only lowers the cost of medications but also gives people more control. One of the most rewarding parts of my journey has been this! Allowing people to operate their own pharmacy with no financial outlay has significantly improved their lives, especially in light of India's employment issues. I'm most surprised by the initiative's overwhelming impact, which includes witnessing entire towns gain access to inexpensive



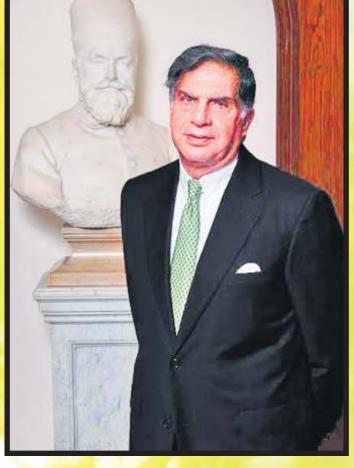
healthcare, young entrepreneurs become financially independent and families improve their standard of living. This strengthens my conviction that companies can contribute to society while still being

What measures have you done to guarantee that people trust your medications?

Despite scientific proof that generic medications are just as effective as branded ones, many continue to be skeptical because of ignorance and false beliefs about their quality. I have addressed these issues in a number of ways. Through awareness efforts, I also concentrate on educating consumers, pointing them that generic medications are far less expensive than branded ones while still containing the same active components.

Have you discussed healthcare changes with legislators?
Affordable healthcare is a crucial

topic that is frequently debated in policy circles, but when efforts are put into practice, genuine change occurs. Businesses like Generic Aadhaar, in my opinion, have the power to bring about systemic change in areas where governments struggle to implement policies. Our goal is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji's ambition to make medications accessible and inexpensive for all citizens, includinexpensive for all citizens, including those living in remote areas. Recognising the need for creative solutions that close the gap between affordable and high-quality healthcare, government agencies have taken the initiative to promote this cause. Droupadi Murmu madam, the President of India, commended Generic Aadhaar for its substantial role in ensuring that life-saving medications are accessible to the general public at notably reduced costs. She recognised our efforts to provide millions of families with access to necessary medications without sacrificing quality and to lessen the financial burden of



healthcare. We are demonstrating that access to affordable healthcare is not only a dream but a reality that we are constructing daily, changing lives all throughout the nation, by collaborating with the government and utilising innovative business

What is the most important thing you've learned from Ratan Tata, your mentor?
Among the most important

things I've learnt from Ratan Tata sir is that business is about more than simply making money; it's about

actually changing the world. His dedication to moral leadership and creativity has served as an inspiration to me. My first TEDx talk, which focused on my goal of lowering the cost of medications by cutting out intermediaries, went viral, marking a significant turning point in my journey with Generic Aadhaar. When Ratan Tata sir saw it, he was moved by the reason I was working. My life changed when I got a call shortly after that saying he wanted to meet me. More significantly, his mentorship influenced my leadership style, but his faith in future.

my mission also gave me confidence. He has always dreamed of a healthcare system in which the exorbitant cost of necessary medications does not prevent anyone from accessing them. Under his direction, I am using Generic Aadhaar to make this goal a reality and provide everyone with access to reasonably priced healthcare. I'm determined to uphold his legacy of moral business practices and social impact as I develop further, making sure that high-quality healthcare reaches the people who need it most.

You saw an old man who was having trouble paying for cancer treatment, so you began Generic Aadhaar. Do you ever think back on that moment now that you have thousands of consumers?

That was a pivotal event in my life. I came to the realisation that affordability should not be a privilege but rather a right after witnessing someone who was having dif-ficulty paying for life-saving medications. Since then, my goals have expanded to include changing healthcare accessible more broadly as well as creating a profitable company. I feel even more obligated to advance now that it is growing quickly and enabling micro-entrepreneurs. I now see this as a movement to transform healthcare in India and abroad, not just a company.

Do you anticipate growing internationally as you scale further, especially in nations like the U.S. where the cost of medications

is similarly high?
Indeed, growing internationally is undoubtedly a goal of ours. The high cost of medications is a problem in many nations, including the US, and my strategy of lowering the cost of high-quality generic medications can have a big worldwide impact. We are now working to fortify our position in India, but I envision it helping to lower the cost of medications globally in the



# what's brewing?























Hyderabad City Police and HCSC celebrated with a 5K and 2K run, bringing the community together for a day of fitness and fun. During the event, NCD Chairman V. Srinivasa Rao and Director Yeshwanth were honored with a memento by Minister Seethakka and Commissioner C.V. Anand in recognition of their continuous support.



Wonderchef, the premium kitchen appliance brand co-founded by Chef Sanieev Kapoor and Ravi Saxena, has announced plans to double the number of its exclusive stores by next year, with a particular focus on expanding in southern India. This strategic focus was highlighted during a successful meet and greet event held at its Hyderabad Exclusive Brand Outlet (EBO).



Conceiva Fertility has announced a state-of-the-art fertility hospital dedicated to providing advanced, ethical, and compassionate reproductive. Conceiva Fertility follows a patient-first approach, ensuring the highest standards of care and the best possible success







The Global Education Fair 2025, organised by premier abroad education consultant Global Tree, showcased an impressive array of international educational opportunities, enabling attendees to connect, learn, and thrive as they pursue their aspirations for overseas studies. Held at Hyatt Place, Hyderabad, this one-day event was attended by the esteemed Gareth Wynn Owen, British Deputy High Commissioner.





Raunag Yar Khan, the 9th Nizam of The Asaf Jahi Dynasty, attended a significant Women's Day celebration hosted by the Sahaaya Foundation at Taj Deccan Hotel in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad. The event marked the presence of notable dignitaries, including popular film artists Poonam Kaur, Suman, and Shyamala, wife of esteemed actor Krishnam Raju. Other distinguished attendees included Vundavalli Sridevi, Chairperson of the AP SC Corporation, as well as government representatives from the Backward Classes Department, and the former lady principal of Osmania Medical College





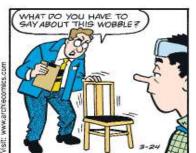






### **ARCHIE**







**CALVIN AND HOBBES** 





and Slay with a variety of

activities that brought the

golden era back to life.



## **GARFIELD**

NANCY

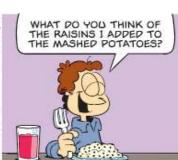


TRY OUR NEW ARTISAN IZZAS

HO

'ARTISAN

PIZZAS"?

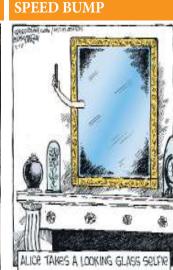


SHALL WE GO IN AND HAVE RAPHAELOR MICHELANGELO MAKE OUR PIZZA WITH A SIDE OF BONATELLO HOT WINGS?









### **SUDOKU**

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

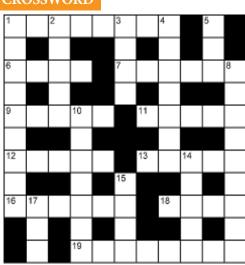
		7	9	8					Yesterday's solution				
		-	3	O		_			284931567				
	5	4						7	637485192				
3					1		5		9 1 5 6 2 7 4 3 8				
<u> </u>			-			_	J		456378219				
	9	5			6		7		372149856				
$\overline{}$	_	_			_		· ·	_	891256743				
2								5	729513684				
	7		1			9	2		168794325				
	4		2					~	5 4 3 8 6 2 9 7 1				
	- 1		3					8	Rules				
8						3	6		<ul> <li>Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9)</li> </ul>				
				4	0				exactly once.				
				4	O	5			The sum of all numbers in				

DIFFICULTY RATING: \*\*

1	uics			
•	Each ro contain exactly	each	numb	

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

## **CROSSWORD**



### ACROSS

- 1 Expecting a baby
- 6 Scraps of material 7 Weigh yourself with these
- 9 Frequently
- 11 A row of metal rings fastened together
- 12 Jumble together (3,2)
- 13 Sneak
- 16 Baby's toy

2 An octagon's number of sides 3 As well

4 Instructor

- 18 A stinging insect

### 19 A newspaper employee DOWN 1 Actor or singer



5 Use your eyes

with this

8 Rub wood smooth

10 An imaginary line

of the Earth

17 A chopping tool

14 Precise

15 Jump

around the middle

# **GINGER MEGGS** BENNY! LET'S GO







ARE WE TALKING ARTISANS

# tollywood

# Sankalp Reddy of *Ghazi* fame joins hands with Gopichand for a period drama



irector Sankalp Reddy, known for his National Award-winning film *Ghazi* (2017), is set to begin shooting his new film with Gopichand. The film was officially launched on Monday with a puja ceremony, and production will commence soon.

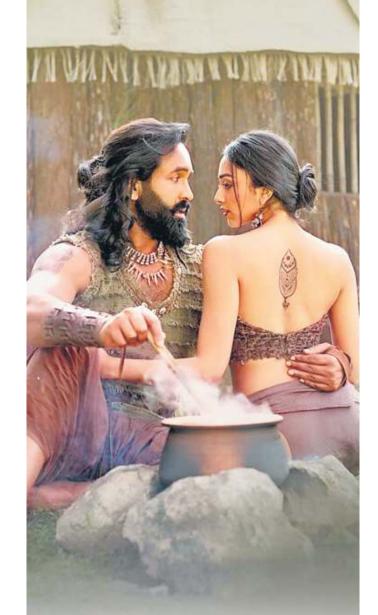
Like his previous films, Sankalp is crafting this project as a period drama. He made a mark with *Ghazi*, a war film set in the sea, followed by *Antariksham* (2018), a space-based drama, and IB71, a Hindi spy thriller based on the 1971 Indian Airlines hijacking. His projects are known for their distinct and unconventional narratives.

This untitled film, produced by Chittoori Srinivas, aims to bring to life a forgotten chapter of Indian history. Set in the 7th century, the film explores an untold historical event with rich cultural depth and period-accurate details.

untold historical event with rich cultural depth and period-accurate details.

Gopichand will be seen in a neverbefore-seen role, showcasing his versatility as an actor. Sankalp, known for his technical brilliance, is assembling a skilled team to ensure high-quality visuals and production value.

"The shoot will start in Hyderabad, followed by a schedule in Kashmir," Sankalp Reddy confirmed. The female lead is yet to be finalised, with casting expected to take place in May.



# VISHNU MANCHU'S KANNAPPA GENERATES POSITIVE BUZZ AHEAD OF RELEASE

vishnu Manchu's highly anticipated film *Kannappa* is gaining positive response from various quarters. The actor plays the titular role, while Preeti Mukundhan stars as his love interest.

As part of the film's promotional strategy, the makers release new content every Monday. This week, they unveiled a romantic song, featuring Vishnu and Preeti, choreographed by Prabhu Deva.

graphed by Prabhu Deva.

According to sources, the makers recently held a private screening for industry insiders, who gave rave reviews.

"The last half-hour of the film is a visual spectacle and will leave audiences spellbound," a source

Directed by Mukesh Kumar to expectations.

Singh, the film was primarily shot in New Zealand, with key sequences involving Prabhas and other actors filmed in India.

The film boasts an ensemble cast, including Prabhas, Mohanlal, and Akshay Kumar. Akshay plays Lord Shiva, while Prabhas appears as Rudra. Vishnu has previously stated that Prabhas did the film without charging any fee, as a gesture of friendship.

Scheduled for release on April 25, *Kannappa* will hit screens in multiple languages, including Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam.

Vishnu has already kick-started nationwide promotions, expressing confidence that the film will live up



# Actress Abhinaya gets engaged to her longtime beau

Popular Telugu and Tamil actress
Abhinaya has announced her engagement to her longtime boyfriend. She took to Instagram on Sunday, sharing a picture of their intertwined hands with the caption:
"Ring the bells, count the blessings – forever starts today!"

She did not reveal her fiancé's name or photo. Rumours previously linked Abhinaya to actor Vishal, but she consistently denied them. Despite being hearing and speech impaired, she has delivered outstanding performances in films like Seethamma Vakitlo Sirimalle Chettu, Dhruva and Raju Gari Gadhi 2. In interviews, Abhinaya had mentioned that she was in a long-term relationship with her childhood friend. Now, with this official announcement, all speculation has been put to rest.





espite implementing sure agreed in sures, leaks continue to emerge from the sets of SS Rajamouli and Mahesh Babu's upcoming untitled film. The team is currently shooting in Koraput forest, Odisha, where a video from the set recently surfaced online. The leaked footage has been widely circulated on social media and television channels, leaving

the filmmakers frustrated.
Since the film's launch,
Rajamouli has ensured tight
security at the shooting locations, preventing unauthorized access. Even cast and
crew members have been
required to sign non-disclosure agreements (NDAs), barring them from revealing any
details. Despite these precautions, information has still
found its way into the public

While the production team remains tight-lipped, reports suggest that Priyanka Chopra plays a key role alongside Mahesh Babu and Malayalam star Prithviraj Sukumaran is also part of the cast. According

to a source, Tamil superstar Chiyaan Vikram is also rumored to have an important

role in the film. The leak has infuriated Rajamouli, who has demanded answers from his team regarding how the video was recorded and released. In response, the crew has now intensified security protocols, reportedly banning mobile phones on set to prevent further leaks. The team is currently working to remove the leaked footage from online platforms. Meanwhile, Rajamouli remains determined to maintain secrecv around the project, ensuring no further disruptions in the film's production.



# POOJA HEGDE STUNS RETRO TEAM WITH HER TAMIL DUBBING SKILLS

audiences with a new milestone in her career—dubbing in her own voice for her character in director Karthik Subbaraj's highly anticipated action film, Retro. Starring Suriya in the lead role, the film has already created a buzz among fans, and this latest update has only added to the excitement.

excitement.
The film, produced by Stone Bench Films in collaboration with Suriya's 2D Entertainment, has been building anticipation through a series of comic strips featuring behind-the-scenes moments. On Monday, the production house released its fifth comic strip titled "EP1005: Vaazhga Tamizh! Challenge Accepted! Pooja Hegde Dubs for Herself" on its X (formerly Twitter) timeline, revealing the actress's dedication to perfecting her Tamil dialogue delivery. The journey of casting Pooja Hegde for *Retro* was not a straightforward one.

According to the production house, several names were considered for the female lead, but it was Pooja who ultimately stood out. "When director Karthik Subbara was searching for a heroine, multiple names were suggested. But when Pandiyaa saw Pooja Hegde, he immediately confirmed. 'This is the girl we've been looking for!' The only concern was whether she could deliver dialogues fluently in Tamil. But Pooia. known for taking on challenges childhood, confidently assured the team that she

would overcome this hurdle as well," the production team revealed.

Once finalised for the role, Pooja underwent intense Tamil language training to perfect her dialogue

Pooja underwent intense
Tamil language training
to perfect her dialogue
delivery. Her dedication
was evident, as she
managed to flawlessly
deliver even lengthy
monologues,
impressing the entire
team.

While Pooja ci Hegde has oo been part st of several W South Indian films, st Retro marks a significant first in her st career—dubbing in her own voice for a a regional film.

"After an impressive look test, she

began her daily Tamil training and surprised everyone by delivering even lengthy monologue sequences flawlessly. There were plenty of fun moments on set, with the team challenging her with tougher Tamil words," the production house shared. This announcement has thrilled her fans, who are eager to witness her authentic and natural performance on the big screen. Apart from Suriva and Pooia Heade. Retro boasts a powerful ensemble cast, including Malayalam actors Joju George and Jayaram, as well as Tamil actor Karunakaran. The film promises a thrilling cinematic experience, packed with highoctane action sequences choreographed by stunt master Kecha Khamphakdee. With Karthik Subbaraj's signature storytelling, powerful performances, and stunning visuals, Retro is shaping up to be a must-watch action spectacle. The film is set for a grand theatrical release on Mav 1. 2025

# I am not retiring from ODI format: Rohit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Dubai

ndia skipper Rohit Sharma has dismissed the speculations about his career after winning the ICC Champions Trophy (CT), saying that he is not quitting the ODI format anytime soon. Since the tour of Australia, speculations were rife about Rohit's future in the team as well as his position as captain but a match-winning 76 in the final against New Zealand on Sunday has given him a new lease of life.

"I am not going to retire from this (ODI) format. Going forward please don't spread rumours," Rohit said at the post-match press conference after India beat New Zealand by four wickets to clinch the trophy. He was expectedly quizzed about his future plans and he said that things will remain as it is.

"No future plans. Jo ho raha hain, woh chalta jayega (Whatever is happening will keep continuing)," Rohit added.

Rohit said his aggressive approach in the Power Play segment was a decision taken with a specific aim in mind.

The Mumbai man flew off the blocks in the first 10 overs making 49 before eventually getting out for a 83-ball 76.

"I haven't done anything different today as I have been doing in the last 3-4 matches. I know how important it is to make runs



when the field spreads and spinners come." The nature of the Dubai pitch too played its part in him adopting a quick fire

approach to batting.
"It becomes tough also because the pitch is already slow. So, it is very important for you to take chances from the top.

"I pick the bowler and where I can charge him and where I can play the shot. In that, you may not see that many big runs. Today after that 10 overs, I changed my game a bit. I had to play for a long time," he added.

However, Rohit admitted that conin Power Play because we have seen that tributing to the team's win as a batter was after 10 overs, it becomes very difficult a very satisfying experience. "You get a lot

of happiness when you win a match and you make a contribution in it, it feels even better. I made a lot of contributions in the 2019 World Cup, but we did not win.

"So, there was no fun in it. Even if you make a sudden run and win the match, you get more satisfaction and happiness. So, I think it was very important for me to do something and contribute and keep the team in a winning position," he noted.

The demotion of KL Rahul to No. 6 has

been discussed threadbare in recent times, but Rohit said the management is delighted to see the wicketkeeper batter making consistent efforts in his new role.

"It is very important for everyone to

contribute in their own way. When we discussed KL's batting position, we discussed quite deeply about how calm he is when he is batting. The pressure doesn't get to

"We wanted that calmness in the middle order. Also, we wanted to use a lefthander (Axar Patel) in the middle. That actually worked out in both ways for us," he said. Rohit said Rahul's contributions have been important for the team despite not scoring any big knocks.

"KL has been doing a lot of challenging work for the team for so many years now. I am very happy with how he managed to pull through this tournament and bat it in the pressure situation — both in the semifinals and this game as well.

'The contribution may not be 70-80, but those 30-40s are very important for the team. When you are chasing, it can get tough. But with KL being there, we know that he has got that mind where he keeps himself calm and keeps the dressing room also very calm," he explained.

The 37-year-old also praised Shreyas Iyer for playing significant knocks from No. 4. "He is very, very important in that middle phase for us. The partnerships with all the batters who were batting with him...That semifinal against Australia, his alliance with Virat was very important. Even against Pakistan and New Zealand, the league game that we played

# We learned from past defeats in ICC knock-out games: Kohli

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Dubai

uperstar Virat Kohli says lessons learned from tough defeats in past ICC knock-out games have the paved the way for India's second major title in less than 12 months.

India won the T20 World Cup in June last year and on Sunday, they lifted the Champions Trophy for the third time.

It was a total team effort from Rohit Sharma's men over the course of their campaign in the UAE.

"It's been a long time since we've had a Champions Trophy, and the format is really good. This was our aim. After a tough tour of Australia, we came here and won a big tournament, which has once again boosted our confidence as a team," Kohli told the host broadcaster.

'Throughout the tournament, different players stepped up in different matches. There were moments in past tournaments where we weren't able to finish games or capitalise on crucial situations. But this time, we learned from those experiences."

The experience of Rohit and K L Rahul towards the end got India over the line in the final against New Zealand.

'That's why you back experienced players - they have faced these moments before, and when you apply those learn-

ings and work hard, you get a chance to turn things around," Kohli said.

"The way KL (Rahul) finished in the last two matches is a testament to that experience. When you've been in those situations before and couldn't cross the line, there's always a desire to get another opportunity and overcome it. And that's exactly what we did."

India were by far the best team in the combination. They picked as many as five spinners and that worked well for them on the slow wickets of Dubai. In the playing eleven, India had four spin options.

One thing we kept emphasising throughout the tournament was focusing on our skills - how good we are, not how good the opposition is. Despite all the challenges, this is why you play the game - for these big tournaments.

# **Manchester United draws 1-1 with Arsenal**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Manchester

stunning double save from David Raya denied Bruno Fernandes a dramatic late winner for Manchester United against Arsenal in the Premier

Raya's heroics salvaged a 1-1 draw for Arsenal at Old Trafford but its Premier League title looks all but out of reach with runaway leader Liverpool 15 points clear at the top of the standings.

"I don't want to say that, but today the frustration is that we haven't won our game. We know the urgency and we are obligated to win every single match," Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta said after watching his team drop points for a third straight

league game. And it could have been worse for second-placed Arsenal if not for Raya's brilliance. In added time the goalkeeper flung himself in front of Fernandes' effort from close range and then leapt to his feet to claw the spinning ball away just before it crossed the line.

Chelsea moved up to fourth in the standings after a 1-0 win against Leicester and Tottenham battled back from two goals down to draw 2-2 with Bournemouth.

# United fight

After fan protests in the street, United's players produced one of their most spirit- it finished in eighth place. It is currently ed performances of the season to draw with

Arsenal. Thousands of United supporters marched in unity to protest the club's ownership before kickoff. But on the field Ruben Amorim's team produced a unified display of its own.

Fernandes fired home a free kick from around 20 yards in first-half added time and only a slew of missed chances stopped United from extending its lead after the break, with Joshua Zirkzee and Noussair Mazraoui forcing saves from Raya.

Arsenal leveled through Declan Rice in the 74th, but needed Raya again to prevent Fernandes late on.

Amorim accepted that United, which vas forced to cede possession for much of the game, will have to be more adventurous if he is to achieve his goal of returning the 20-time champion to the summit of English and European soccer.

And he believes there's another way to ring the good times back to Old Trafford. What I can say is we need more Brunos, that is clear," the United head coach

"Not just the quality and the character, he makes some mistakes, but in this league the availability is so important and is so decisive with and without the ball."

The draw moved United up to 14th in the 20-team standings on 34 points. Last season the once dominant United endured its worst league campaign in 34 years when eight points off 10th-placed Fulham.

### Chelsea rises

Marc Cucurella struck a 60th-minute winner against Leicester at Stamford Bridge after Cole Palmer's first-half penalty was

Victory boosted Chelsea's chances of a return to the Champions League next season, moving it ahead of four-time defending champion Manchester City, which lost -0 to Nottingham Forest a day earlier.

The 2021 Champions League winner has not qualified for European club soccer's top

competition for the last two years. But Enzo Maresca's team took full advantage of City's latest loss by edging out relegation-fighting Leicester and climbing into the top four.

Cucurella's long-range effort was drilled low into the corner to beat Leicester goalkeeper Mads Hermansen.

Earlier, Hermansen had been the visitors' hero when diving low to save Palmer's penalty in the 22nd. It was the first time Palmer had failed to score from the spot in the league in 13 attempts. His 100% record from his previous 12 was a league record, according to the competition's stats provider Opta.

### **Spurs fightback**

Son Heung-min's late penalty completed an unlikely comeback after Champions League-chasing Bournemouth had dominated the chances at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

# Rohit exceptional knock took the match away from us, says Mitchell Santner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Dubai

ew Zealand skipper Mitchell Santner admitted that his Indian counterpart Rohit Sharma's exceptional knock was the difference between the two teams in the Champions Trophy final, and termed the four-wicket defeat as a "bittersweet end."

Rohit made a fluent 76 off 83 balls as India chased down 252 in a close finish here on Sunday.

"I think the way Rohit Sharma played kind of took it away from us, I think, obviously, India here understood the conditions in Dubai perfectly and played some good cricket. Yeah I guess it's kind of bittersweet at the end," said Santner in the post-match press conference.

Santner said he was "proud" of his side despite the surrender in the title clash.

"Î think we came up against a good side in the final. We challenged at times throughout this game, which was pleasing and I think there were probably a couple of small moments where we let it get away from us.

"But yeah, incredibly proud of this group the way we've kind of gone about it throughout this tournament," he added.

Santner said the Kiwis were prepared to tackle the DICS pitch and conditions, which were vastly different from Lahore,



the venue of their semifinal win over South Africa. "I guess we just keep coming up against India, which is always a challenge. We knew the conditions were going to be slightly different again from the semifinal, but we were ready for that.

"I thought we still put in a pretty good performance, and we took India deep. But guess there's always a few moments in every game, let alone every final, where you can potentially look back at," he said. Santner also conceded that they missed

Matt Henry after he was ruled out of the

Pacer Henry was the highest wickettaker in the event with 10 scalps.

"He's an outstanding bowler. We've seen he seems to be able to nip it on wickets that don't look like they should nip so I guess we missed that today.

"I feel for Matty - he's a massive team man and he looked pretty distraught. You know, we just kind of said, like, let's do it for him. He tried everything he could to be ready for this game and unfortunately for us he wasn't quite there," he noted.

# It required lot of preparation: KI Rahul after excelling in new role



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Dubai

L Rahul is delighted after successfully migrating to No. 6 batting slot, and termed it as a result of his unrelenting "preparation" and improving his

game constantly. Rahul, who usually bat No. 5, was pushed down a position lower in the Champions Trophy, and made 140 runs in four innings here.

"It's really pleasing for me. The work that I'm putting in to different roles requires a lot of preparation, work outside the cricket field, thinking about how I need to take each game and how I need to perform in different situations and watch some of the players that bat at 5, 6 and how they've been successful," said Rahul following India's Champions Trophy triumph on Sunday.

Rahul said he was happy to take up that new responsibility for the team.

"I've been taught from a very early age by my coaches that cricket is a team game and whatever the team requires of you, you need to be able to accept that and find a way to put in performances for the team and understand what your role is, understand what the responsibility is, understand what it takes to be successful batting in different positions," he added. True to those words, Rahul adapted well to the situation in the semifinal against Australia and in the final against New Zealand, producing small yet significant knocks.

The Bengaluru man made an unbeaten 42 against the Aussies while his collected 32 not out helped India come out of a it worked," he added.

tight chase against the Kiwis successfully. Overall, he made just 140 runs but he made it at a strike-rate of 98, indicating the impact those runs had on the course of the game.

Skipper Rohit Sharma indicated as much. "The pressure doesn't get to him with that calmness, we wanted that calmness in the middle. I'm very, very happy with how he managed to pull this tournament and batted in the pressure situation, both in semifinals and this game as well. "The contribution may not be 70-80, but those 30-40s are a very, very important one," said Rohit. Now, Rahul has a Champions Trophy to show for his efforts, and he was pleased as punch. "I'm very happy at the moment, ICC victories are not so easy to get. It's my first run so I'm very happy over the moon and really happy with the way we've played this entire tournament and it's been a complete team effort," he noted. Rahul was an assured presence behind the stumps as well, pulling off important stumping and catches. The 32-year-old was chuffed because 'keeping was not an easy task in these con-

ditions where spinners dominated. "It's not something very new and the role of a wicketkeeper batsman that I'm doing here in the Indian team, I think from 2019 or 2020. I do wicket keeping in IPL as well. "But I think this is the most challenging place that I've kept wickets in. I worked really hard and I have to mention our fielding coach Dilip sir also, he worked very hard with me...his tips and whatever he noticed about my keeping, so

# Pakistan miffed at no representation at closing ceremony of Champions Trophy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Karachi

→he ICC's failure to invite a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) official on stage for the closing ceremony of the Champions Trophy has not gone down well with the tournament host.

A source said that the PCB's chief executive officer Sumair Ahmed, who was also the director of the tournament, was present at the venue but was not invited for the ceremony. Pakistan hosted an ICC event after 29 years with all India games scheduled in Dubai as part of the competition's hybrid model.

"PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi didn't go to Dubai because of prior commitments as federal minister for interior but the PCB CEO was sent to represent Pakistan at the

said. He said for some reason or misunderstanding, the PCB official was not called on the podium, from where ICC chairman Jay Shah, BCCI president Roger Binny and secretary Devajit Saikia gave away the medals, trophies, and jackets to the players.

The source added that perhaps the CEO might not have been able to communicate properly to the ICC people responsible for organising the final ceremony and was left out. Pakistan as hosts of the Champions Trophy, thus, didn't have any representative on the podium.

The PCB is expected to take up the matter with the ICC as to why its CEO was not invited on stage for the closing ceremony. Meanwhile, former fast bowler Shoaib

final and closing presentation," the source Akhtar also questioned the absence of PCB officials from the post-match presentation ceremony after the final of the tournament. "India has won the Champions Trophy

but I noticed there was no representative from the PCB after the final. Pakistan was hosting the Champions Trophy. I do not understand it," Akhtar said in a video posted on social 'X'.

"Why was nobody (from PCB) there to present the trophy? It is beyond me. It is something to think about. This is the world stage, you should have been here. Feeling very down to see that," Akhtar added. BCCI president Binny presented the white jackets to India and the medals to match officials, while ICC chairman Shah handed the trophy to Rohit Sharma and gave the medals to the Indian players.

# **Government asks** IPL to ban tobacco, alcohol advertising

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

he Health Ministry has instructed the Indian Premier League to ban all forms of tobacco and alcohol promotions, including surrogate advertisements, during the tournament beginning March 22. In a letter to IPL chairman Arun Dhumal, Director General of Health Services Atul Goel said cricket players, who are role models to the youth of India, should not be directly or indirectly connected to any form of

tobacco or alcohol advertising. "IPL should strictly implement the regulations banning all forms of tobacco/alcohol advertising, including surrogate advertisements, within the stadium promises where the games and related IPL games/events are held as well as during telecast sessions on national tele-

vision," Goel wrote. 'The sale of tobacco/alcohol products in all affiliated events and sports facilities.

"Discourage promotion of sportspersons (including commentators) who directly or indirectly endorse products directly or indirectly linked to alcohol or tobacco," the letter stated.

Majority of the Indian population is glued to television sets when the IPL is on, making the tournament a darling of the advertisers. "India is experiencing a sig-nificant burden of Non Communicable disease Cardiovascular diseases, Cancer, Chronic Lung Disease, Diabetes, Hypertension etc. Which accounts for more than 70 per cent deaths annually.

'Tobacco and alcohol use are key risk factors for NCDs. We rank second in tobacco-related deaths worldwide; with nearly 14 lakh annual deaths while alcohol is the most common psychoactive substance used by Indians," Goel said fur-

He added that cricketers have a moral obligation to promote public health.

"Cricket players are role models for the youngsters for promoting a healthy, active lifestyle, IPL being the largest sports platform in the country, has a social and moral obligation to promote public health and support health initiatives of the government," added Goel.

# Harry Brook pulls out of IPL deal with DC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA London

ngland batter Harry Brook faces a two-year ban from the IPL after **⊿**pulling out of his deal with Delhi Capitals ahead of the tournament beginning March 22. Brook, who has made himself unavailable for the second straight season, apologised "unreservedly" to the franchise and its supporters. "I have made the very difficult decision to pull out of the upcoming IPL. I apologise unreservedly to the Delhi Capitals and their supporters," Brook wrote on social media. 'Ît is a really important time for

mit to preparing for the upcoming series. "In order to do this, I need time to recharge after the busiest period in my career to date. I know not everyone will understand, and I don't expect them to, but I have to do what I believe is right and playing for my country remains my priority and focus." England will play India in a home Test series in June, which will be followed by the much-anticipated

England cricket and I want to fully com-

Ashes from November to January. The 26-year-old Brook had earlier withdrawn from the 2024 edition of IPL



following the death of his grandmother. picked at the auction, makes himself Any foreign player who missed the IPL after getting picked at the auction faces two-year ban from the IPL unless he is injured. "Any (overseas) player who reg-

unavailable before the start of the season will get banned from participating in the IPL/IPL auction for two seasons," as per the BCCI document shared with isters for (an) auction and, after getting teams last year.