

# the pioneer

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QUOTE OF THE DAY  
The pioneer

**BRS leaders can now purchase land costing Rs 100 crore an acre, but the poor remained poor in the state. Why is the government not revealing the names of the companies who purchased lands in Kokapet and Budvel? The reason is that it is BRS leaders and KCR's proxies who purchased lands there. BRS leaders enacted a wonderful drama to create an artificial real estate boom in the state**

- Revanth Reddy, TPCC president

P4

**'Debroy's article doesn't reflect govt or EAC-PM views'**

**INDIA ON CUSP OF NEW ERA OF ECONOMIC PROSPERITY: MODI**

**Navdeep gets RGV's SUPPORT**

**DON'T MISS...**

**YSRCP leader Yarlagadda...**

YSRCP leader, who unsuccessfully contested the Assembly elections from the Gannavaram constituency in the 2019 general elections is likely to switch sides and join the opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP). He's learnt to have been trying to bring along his loyal supporters who have been with him for the past four years from YSRCP to TDP. After holding a meeting with YSRCP leaders, supporters, and members in Gannavaram, Yarlagadda Venkata Rao decided to leave the YSRCP. Barely six days later, his supporters within YSRCP...

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**Chaurasia, Kumudini Lakhia among...**

Iconic flautist Hariprasad Chaurasia, Kathak exponent Kumudini Lakhia, painter Gulam Mohammed Sheikh and actor-director Rudraprasad Sengupta will receive the 'Legends of India Lifetime Achievement Award 2022'. The award, which recognises living legends 'for igniting young minds with the rich heritage of Indian arts', will be presented to the artists at a ceremony in September, the organisers said. Organised by NGO Legends of India, the award recognises...

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**India becoming global investment...**

With the Centre's focus on development and infrastructure, the country has gained the trust of many countries, which have come forward to invest in India, Minister of State for Road Transport, Highways and Civil Aviation Gen V K Singh, said on Friday. The kind of environment being created in India has made the country an ideal global investment destination, he said and appealed to youngsters to utilise the opportunity and come up in life. "About 162 countries have invested in 62..."

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**Bumrah shines in comeback as...**

India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah and Prasidh Krishna shone bright on their return but Barry McCarthy's unbeaten fifty took Ireland to a competitive 139 for seven in the opening T20I of the three-match series, here on Friday. Bumrah, who spent 11 months away from the game due to a lower-back stress fracture, picked up 2/24, while Prasadhi, who was nursing a lower-back injury, scalped 2/32. Ravi Bishnoi (2/23) and Arshdeep Singh (1/35) also were among wickets after Bumrah opted to...

-SPORTS

## Jagan a bizman, not politico: PK

Says the YSRCP chief is employing a 'divide and conquer' approach to stifle Opposition



PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Jana Sena Chief K Pawan Kalyan has launched a scathing attack on Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, calling him a 'businessman' rather than a politician.

Addressing a press conference here on Friday, Pawan Kalyan alleged that Jagan Mohan Reddy is actively involved in 'real-estate' and 'mining business'.

He said that Jagan Mohan Reddy's focus lies more in business ventures than political leadership, accusing him of employing a 'divide and conquer' approach to stifle opposition.

Citing a rise in criminal activities in the State, Pawan Kalyan said that criminality has seemingly become institutionalised. He made a stark comparison, suggesting that the crime rate in Andhra Pradesh has surged to the extent that even Bihar seems more favourable in terms of public safety.

The Jana Sena chief further underscored the elevated crime rate within Visakhapatnam and Tadepalli, the Chief Minister's residence. Expressing concern, he

■ Citing a rise in criminal activities in the State, Pawan Kalyan said that criminality has seemingly become institutionalised.

■ The Jana Sena chief further underscored the elevated crime rate within Visakhapatnam and Tadepalli, the Chief Minister's residence.

■ He expressed his commitment to a decision that prevents vote division in upcoming elections, highlighting the potential alliance's ultimate aim of unseating the YSRCP.

labelled Andhra Pradesh as a hub for criminal endeavours, citing recent incidents like a violent road rage case and multiple murders in a local bar.

Drawing attention to the alleged mismanagement of resources, Pawan Kalyan accused YSRCP leaders of rampant plundering of natural assets.

## Yarlagadda to quit YSRCP today



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Krishna District Cooperative Central Bank (KDCCB) former chairman Yarlagadda Venkata Rao has said that he will resign from the YSRCP on August 19 (Saturday). He strongly believes that the Gannavaram people will support him in the 2024 elections.

After meeting his followers and supporters in the YSRCP in Vijayawada on Friday, Yarlagadda

**Anna Jagan, you will win from the Pulivendula and I will win from the Gannavaram. You and I will meet in the Assembly where we both shall discuss the problems of the people of the State**

Venkata Rao addressed the media and expressed concern over the statement of YSRCP general secretary and Government Advisor Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy.

"To date, I have been waiting for the invitation from the YSRCP. But, Sajjala's comments caused me great pain. So I have decided to leave the party. The YSRCP leadership decided that I am not suitable for the KDCCB Chairman post. So, they removed me from it," he said.

## Vikram Lander sends first pics of Moon

PNS ■ BENGALURU

ISRO on Friday released a set of visuals of the Moon captured by cameras positioned on the Lander Module of Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft. The images, captured after the separation of the Lander Module from the Propulsion Module of the spacecraft on Thursday, showed the craters on the Moon's surface that were marked on the photographs released by ISRO as 'Fabry', 'Giordano Bruno' and 'Harkhebi J'.

The country's space agency shared on X (formerly Twitter) the images captured by the Lander Position Detection Camera (LPDC) on August 15, and visuals from the Lander Imager (LI) Camera-1 on August 17 -- just after the separation of the Lander Module from



the Propulsion Module. The Lander Module comprising the lander (Vikram) and the rover (Pragyan) will on Friday be lowered to an orbit that takes it closer to the Moon's surface for the soft landing on the Lunar south pole on August 23.

CHANDRAYAAN-3 HEADED FOR SOFT MOON-LANDING ON AUG 23

India's Chandrayaan-3 mission on Thursday achieved a major milestone when its Lander Module carrying the rover inside successfully separated from the Propulsion Module to be on course for an unprecedented soft-landing on the moon's south pole planned on August 23.

The Lander Module comprising the lander Vikram and rover Pragyan is now ready to be lowered to an orbit that takes it closer to the moon's surface. The soft landing on the lunar south pole is scheduled at 5.47 pm next Wednesday.

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**Garapati made BJP State general secretary**



PNS ■ ELURU

Garapati Sitaramanjey Chowdhary was appointed the State general secretary of the BJP by State president Daggubati Purandeswari on Friday. District BJP leaders hailed the decision of Purandeswari in appointing Garapati as State general secretary, stating that he had accomplished every responsibility given to him.

Chowdhary worked as BJP 'Praja Poru' Godavari Zonal In-charge, Modi 9-Year Governance Campaign Committee Godavari Zonal In-charge, State Working Committee Member and Eluru District Party Convener. Chowdhary thanked Daggubati Purandeswari for appointing him as state general secretary and vowed to work hard to bolster the BJP in the state.

## 'Naidu lost his utility for State'

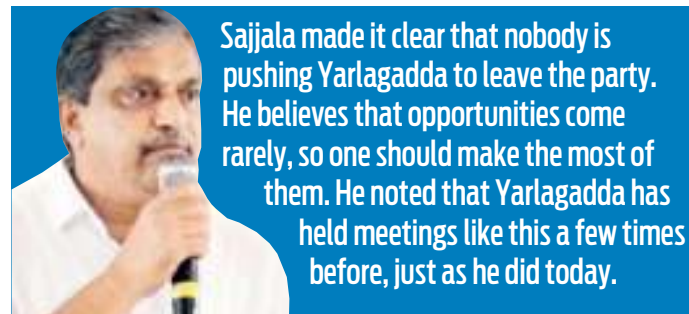
PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP general secretary and Government Advisor (Public Affairs), Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy, has commented that Opposition leader N Chandrababu Naidu will be of no use to the State anymore. This is clear from the way he talks about things like Vision 2047 recently, he said.

Addressing a press conference on Friday, Sajjala said that Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan seems to be blindly following Naidu's instructions. He also said that Naidu and Pawan Kalyan are working together and aiming their efforts against Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

He mentioned that Pawan Kalyan had previously said he would team up with anyone to defeat Jagan Mohan Reddy.

According to Sajjala, Naidu suffered a big loss in the 2019 elections due to problems during TDP's rule. He said that the crime rate had gone up during that time, but now things



**Sajjala made it clear that nobody is pushing Yarlagadda to leave the party. He believes that opportunities come rarely, so one should make the most of them. He noted that Yarlagadda has held meetings like this a few times before, just as he did today.**

are better. He accused Naidu and Pawan Kalyan of spreading false information that goes against making Visakhapatnam the capital of Andhra Pradesh.

Talking about Yarlagadda Venkata Rao leaving the party, Sajjala said it looks like Yarlagadda had already decided to leave, and his recent speeches show that. Sajjala mentioned that if there are issues within the party, it's better to discuss and solve them internally instead of talking about them publicly.

Sajjala said that in a democracy,

everyone has their own freedom, and those who work hard for the party will be recognised in YSRCP. He added that YSRCP is a strong party, and many people have high hopes for its future, so there's some pressure.

Sajjala made it clear that nobody is pushing Yarlagadda to leave the party. He believes that opportunities come rarely, so one should make the most of them. He noted that Yarlagadda has held meetings like this a few times before, just as he did today.

## Govt schemes not applicable for child marriages, says CS

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Secretary KS Jawahar Reddy has announced that no government scheme will be extended to those involved in marriages below 18 years of age. Emphasising the need for robust actions to curb child marriages, Chief Secretary Reddy called for a comprehensive effort to raise awareness among citizens, particularly parents. He said that families facilitating child marriages would not benefit from any government assistance.

The Chief Secretary convened a meeting at the Secretariat on Friday to review an inter-departmental strategy in collaboration with officials from various departments to combat child marriage.

The Chief Secretary underscored the stringent enforcement of the AP Prohibition of Child Marriages Rules-2012 and 2023 as an important step in controlling child marriages in the State.

To ensure effective implementation, departments such as women and child welfare, SERP, education, and medical health have been directed to work in unison. In



adherence to the new regulations, Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs) will be designated at different levels, vested with specific duties and authority to prevent child marriages within their jurisdiction.

Chief Secretary Reddy said that any failure to prevent child marriages would result in consequences for these officers.

At the grass roots level, child marriage control monitoring committees are to be established in villages and wards, chaired by the Sarpanch or Ward Councillor.

## 5 girls reported missing over 2 days in Chittoor

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a disturbing development, five young girls have gone missing in a span of just two days in the combined Chittoor district. The girls, all minors, have disappeared from various locations within Chittoor, including Piler, Kuppam, KV Palle, and Ojili.

Alarmed by their sudden disappearance, family members lodged complaints with the local authorities, prompting an immediate search operation by the police to locate the missing girls.

Amidst the ongoing search efforts, sources close to the investigation revealed that three of the girls, aged approximately 17 years, seemingly left their homes voluntarily due to personal reasons. Law enforcement officials said that these cases are being treated as missing persons reports and not instances of trafficking.

## Raids on Margadarsi branches continue

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

For the second day on Friday, the Andhra Pradesh Crime Investigation Department (AP CID) officials, along with Stamps and Registrations officials, conducted raids at various branches of Margadarsi Chits Pvt Ltd across the state. During the raids the officials found that none of the Margadarsi chit fund branches had funds pertaining to that branch and all the funds were diverted to the Margadarsi main branch vio-

lating the rules of Chit Fund, according to the officials.

The raid on the second day was carried out at 37 branches of Margadarsi Chit Fund across Andhra Pradesh by CID and Stamps and Registrations officials. During the raids, the officials seized key documents pertaining to Margadarsi chits. On Thursday too, the officials conducted raids and found many irregularities in the transaction which were against chit fund rules.



## AI-model could tell age from chest X-ray

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A newly developed artificial intelligence (AI) model could estimate one's age from their chest X-ray, new research published in The Lancet Healthy Longevity journal said.

The model can also signal chronic diseases such as hypertension and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease from the difference between estimated and chronological age, the research from Osaka Metropolitan University, Japan, said.

The findings marked a leap in medical imaging and paved the way for improved early disease detection and intervention, the researchers said in their study. As the global population ages, aging and longevity research is gaining importance.

Aging, a complex change associated with several diseases, has varied effects across individuals, they said. "Chronological age is one of the most critical factors in medicine. Our results suggest that chest radiography-based apparent age may accurately reflect health conditions beyond chronological age," said lead researcher Yasuhiro Mitsuyama.

For age estimation, the AI model was trained using around 67,100 chest radiographs of 36,051 healthy individuals who underwent health check-ups between 2008 and 2021.

The model showed a strong correlation between the AI-estimated age and the chronological age of the individuals, the researchers found.

It was then trained to analyse the link between the AI-estimated

Chronological age is one of the most critical factors in medicine. Our results suggest that chest radiography-based apparent age may accurately reflect health conditions beyond chronological age.



We aim to further develop this research and apply it to estimate the severity of chronic diseases, to predict life expectancy, and to forecast possible surgical complications.

age and each disease on additional 34,197 chest radiographs compiled from as many patients with known diseases. In all, the model was trained on

roughly 1,01,300 chest X-rays obtained from 70,248 participants across five institutions in Japan. The difference between the individual's AI-estimated age and

their chronological age was found to be strongly associated with chronic diseases such as hypertension, hyperuricemia (high uric acid levels in blood), and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

This meant, the researchers said, that higher the age the AI estimated, higher the likelihood of these individuals to have the aforementioned diseases. Chest X-rays could thus be useful as a biomarker of aging and longevity, they said, because they can show not only the shape of features within the body, but also details of internal organs and bones.

"We aim to further develop this research and apply it to estimate the severity of chronic diseases, to predict life expectancy, and to forecast possible surgical complications," said Mitsuyama.

# Conned by an equal opportunity betrayer

We are an 'Equal Opportunity Employer'. One sees this poster in every company in the United States (US). The statement means that the company does not discriminate against its employees or potential employees on grounds of race, creed, colour, religion, age, gender, pregnancy, disability etc.

A similar statement, 'Equal Opportunity Betrayer', best sums up the BRS leadership's attitude towards the people of Telangana. The CM's nine-year rule shows that the Chief Minister has shown no discrimination while betraying every section of society. The only exception to the rule is his family.

While equal opportunity employment applies only to working-age adults, the BRS' equal opportunity betrayal, on the other hand, extends to every section of the popula-

tion. One's caste, religion, region, gender, age, profession, education, employment or financial status is immaterial. The betrayal is so universal that even existence - whether one is already born or is yet to come into the world - does not matter.

Let's take the case of caste. The very first to be betrayed by the Chief Minister were the Dalits. His very oath-taking as CM was an act of betrayal towards them. He had earlier promised that the first Chief Minister of Telangana would be a Dalit (SC). After political opportunity, it was the turn of promised economic opportunities, be it the three acres promised to every Dalit family with an agricultural background or Rs 10 lakh under the Dalit Bandhu scheme.

The BRS did not treat the Scheduled Tribes (STs) any differently. Be it the promise

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of a 12% reservation or the commitment to provide of three acres of agricultural land, betrayal was uniform. Even when they turned the ST 'thandas' and 'gudems' into panchayats the change was only in name and they were denied even basic infrastructure.

The story of the Other Backward Castes (OBCs) is no different. One example is enough to prove the point. While the government allocated Rs 2,500 crore to the MBC (Most Backward Castes)

Corporation, it spent only Rs 7 crore from 2017 to 2021. While portraying the BRS as the dearest friend of minorities, especially Muslims, the Chief Minister actively curtailed opportunities for them. The BRS did not just renege on promises made, like an exclusive industrial estate and information technology (IT) corridor for Muslims, he actively curtailed developmental projects like the Metro Rail from reaching the Old City, a predominantly Muslim area of Hyderabad.



KISHORE POREDDY

Women had it even worse. The first Cabinet was all-male. After much criticism, when the CM appointed two women ministers in his second Cabinet, he ensured they had no real power. Even students, like those of IIIT Basara, understood this and wanted to talk only to someone with decision-making

power, that is, the CM or his son, the IT Minister. The same goes for the lone Muslim in the Cabinet, a Home Minister, without any control over law and order. Similarly, the BRS did not discriminate regarding age. The CM promised school-going kids the same quality of food that his grandson has at home, but they had to eat sub-standard mid-day meals that put thousands of them in hospitals. The budget allocation for education was slashed from 10.89% in 2014-15 to 6.57% in the latest 2023-24 budget, threatening our next generations' ability to succeed in an ever-competitive world.

The youth, considering their critical role in the Telangana statehood agitation, were no exception. 'Niyamakalu' (jobs) drove the youth's participation during the agitation. The CM

ignored both - the Universities, which were the hotbeds of the Telangana agitation and the filling up of vacant government posts - which the Biswal Committee had put at 1.91 lakhs. The unemployed remained unemployed and the CM denied them even the dole of Rs 3,016 he had promised. The employed suffered too. For the first time, people no longer believe a government job means financial security. From the housemaid to the milk delivery person, no one knows when a Telangana 'Sir-Car' babu will get his salary so that they will get paid. While the education budget's evisceration robbed children's futures, the stoppage of Arogya Sri-Ayushman Bharat treatments by effectively stopping payments to private hospitals has put senior citizens in dire straits.

The poorest of the poor, who did not even have a good shelter, faced the worst betrayal. The BRS actively stoked their hopes by promising them a double-bedroom house. After building a few and distributing even fewer, he shattered their hopes claiming that there was no land with the government to build houses. The betrayal appears to be driven by contempt for the poor, considering the CM continues to raise thousands of crores by selling government lands to mostly real-estate companies building posh villas and apartments for the rich. It's time Telangana ends the equal opportunity betrayal and fills it with equal opportunity development. Only voters have the power to do so.

(The author is BJP TS spokesperson)

## Confusion continues over AP Opposition alliance

C PRADEEP KUMAR  
VIJAYAWADA

The opposition camp finds itself ensnared in an ongoing web of uncertainty regarding their potential alliance, as statements from JanaSena's leader continue to sow confusion. Despite the imminent Andhra Pradesh assembly elections, an air of uncertainty persists within the potential alliance involving the Telugu Desam Party, Jana Sena Party, and Bharatiya Janata Party.

On Friday, Jana Sena Party's leader, Pawan Kalyan, further exacerbated the prevailing uncertainty. He acknowledged the lack of clarity surrounding the alliance's formation before the elections. "Discussions are still underway regarding the alliance formation. The contours of the next government, whether it will be a Jana Sena-



BJP alliance or a more comprehensive Jana Sena-BJP-TDP alliance, remain uncertain until alliance negotiations are concluded," Pawan Kalyan conveyed to media representatives in Visakhapatnam.

Nevertheless, he affirmed that the alliance's strategic design would be aimed at reshaping the state's destiny by unseating the YSRCP government led by Chief Minister

YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. Pawan Kalyan reiterated his willingness to assume the role of chief minister under suitable circumstances. "My intentions regarding the chief ministerial position are already explicit. However, the possibility of this role depends solely on the electorate's mandate," he asserted. The final determination of the chief ministerial role, he elaborated, would

be made in alignment with the preferences of the elected MLAs post-election. "Our current emphasis is firmly set on dismantling the YSRCP's hold and fortifying leadership within the state," Pawan Kalyan asserted. He reaffirmed his long-standing commitment to critiquing any incumbent political party's performance in the state if it deviated from the path of good governance.

Reflecting on the matter, Pawan Kalyan voiced, "Had the YSRCP government secured a resounding mandate of 151 seats, their governance could have been exemplary, and my concerns might not have surfaced. However, in contrast, I find the TDP's governance more favorable when measured against the performance of the YSRCP government."

## Govt schemes not applicable for...

Continued from Page 1

These committees will include ward secretaries, village and ward revenue officers, ANMs, women police officers, Self Help Group members, local school teachers or headmasters, and representatives from local NGOs.

Chief Secretary Reddy stressed the need for stringent action, highlighting the accountability of village and ward secretaries should a child marriage occur in their areas.

The Chief Secretary mandated the formation of district-level committees, presided over by District Collectors, which will convene regularly to assess and oversee the implementation of the Child Marriage Control Act. This concerted effort seeks to firmly curb the prevalence of child marriages across the State.

## TTD Chairman receives devotees from Tamil Nadu

PNS ■ TIRUMALA

TTD Chairman Bhumana Karunakara Reddy said on Friday that Srivaru always took care of his true devotees.

Earlier, he received hundreds of devotees who came on foot from Gopasandram of Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu at Srinivasa Mangapuram on their way to Srivari Mettu.

Speaking on the occasion, the TTD Chairman said the Padayatra was one such path chosen by the devotees to showcase their true devotion towards Venkateswara.

He said many ardent devotees like Sri Purandaradasa,



Tallapaka Annamacharya, Vyasaraya and emperor Krishnadevaraya had trekked Tirumala and got salvation.

JEO Sri Veerabrahmam, Temple Special Grade DyEO Varalakshmi, AEO Gopinath, Superintendent Changanalrayulu, Dakshina Tirupati Temple Chairman Narayana Swami and hundreds of devotees from Tamil Nadu were present.

## Jagan a...

Continued from Page 1

Specifically, he highlighted the controversial bauxite mining activities taking place in a northern district of Andhra Pradesh, with an estimated Rs 15,000 crore worth of bauxite reportedly extracted and shifted to a cement factory in Kadapa.

Voicing concern over missing women cases, Pawan Kalyan shed light on the unsettling disappearance of several women in Chittoor. He said that many victims refrain from reporting such incidents due to societal stigma, lamenting that law enforcement often does not treat the matter with the requisite seriousness.

In the realm of political strategy, Pawan Kalyan revealed ongoing discussions regarding an alliance with the TDP. He expressed his commitment to a decision that prevents vote division in upcoming elections, highlighting the potential alliance's ultimate aim of unseating the YSRCP.

Pawan Kalyan reiterated his readiness to assume the role of Chief Minister, though it is dependent on election results. The Jana Sena chief maintained that a definitive decision would only be made the post-election declaration.

## New MLCs call on CM



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

K Padmasri and Dr K Ravi Babu, newly appointed MLCs under Governor's quota, called on Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy at the Camp

Office here on Friday.

The two members, who took oath as MLCs, conveyed their gratitude to the Chief Minister. The MLCs were accompanied by their family members.

## Poverty haunting Gutti Koya tribal people in Telangana

PNS ■ BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

About 100 Gutti Koya families migrated to the villages under Penagadapa Gram Panchayat limits in Bhadradi Kothagudem District from Chhattisgarh. They live in small groups in Palavagu, Jaggaram, Gattigutta, and Marrigudem villages. They earn a living through animal husbandry. They practise Podu farming of shifting cultivation.

After leaving their native State and migrating to Telangana, the Gutti Koya people do not have a roof over their heads. These habitations are located at a distance of 20 km from the district headquarters.

## APERC camp office inaugurated in Vizag

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (APERC) camp office was inaugurated by APERC Chairman Justice CV Nagarjuna Reddy on Friday. APERC members Thakur Ram Singh, P Venkatrama Reddy and APEPDCL CMD Prithvithej Immedi took part in the programme.

On the occasion, Chairman Justice CV Nagarjuna Reddy said that the camp office of Andhra Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Board had been set up to ensure that the electricity consumers of Uttaraandhra and both Godavari districts avail of the services. He also mentioned that along with enquiries related to the commission, necessary meetings would



also be held in this camp office to take appropriate measures to solve the problems of consumers. As a part of this, APERC will hold an enquiry programme in the camp office

on Saturday morning, on the fifth and sixth control period related to the Resource and Investment Plan submitted by APTransco and AP Discoms.

**TODAY**  
**ALMANAC**  
Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha  
Tithi: Tritiya: Aug 18 08:01 PM to Aug 19 10:19 PM  
Chaturthi: Aug 19 10:19 PM to Aug 21 12:22 AM  
Ukshatram: Aug 18 10:57 PM to Aug 20 01:47 AM  
Hasta: Aug 20 01:47 AM to Aug 21 04:22 AM  
Rahukalam: 9:11 AM to 10:45 AM  
Yamagandam: 1:53 PM to 3:27 PM  
Varjyam: 11:05 AM to 12:52 PM  
Gulika: 6:03 AM to 7:37 AM  
Amritakalam: 05:44 PM to 07:31 PM  
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:54 AM to 12:44 PM  
**VIJAYAWADA WEATHER**  
Forecast: Partly Cloudy  
Temp: 32°  
Humidity: 70%  
Sunrise: 5:52 AM  
Sunset: 6:30 PM  
Updated: August 18, 2023 5:00 PM

## Vikram Lander...

Continued from Page 1

"Thanks for the ride, mate!" said the Lander Module (LM). LM is successfully separated from the Propulsion Module (PM). LM is set to descend to a slightly lower orbit upon a deboosting planned for tomorrow around 1600 Hrs IST," the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said in a post on X (formerly Twitter). The estimated Rs 600 crore Chandrayaan-3 mission was launched on July 14, a far more complicated 41-day voyage to reach the lunar south pole. After Thursday's separation, the lander is expected to undergo a "deboost" (the process of slowing down) to place it in an orbit, where the Perilune (the orbit's closest point to the Moon) is 30 km and Apolune (farthest point from the Moon) is 100 km, from where the soft landing on the south polar region of the Moon will be attempted, an ISRO official said. The Propulsion Module will continue its journey in the current orbit for months/years, the ISRO said.

"Now really the match starts. These are the final overs we are talking about," Chandrayaan-

I Project Director M Annadurai told. Chandrayaan-3 is a follow-on mission to Chandrayaan-2 and its objectives are to demonstrate safe and soft landing on the lunar surface, roving on the moon, and to conduct in-situ scientific experiments. Chandrayaan-2 had failed in its lunar phase when its lander 'Vikram' crashed into the surface of the moon following anomalies in the braking system in the lander while attempting a soft landing on September 7, 2019. Chandrayaan's maiden mission was in 2008. The lander has the capability to soft land at a specified lunar site and deploy the rover that will carry out in-situ chemical analysis of the moon's surface during the course of its mobility. The lander and the rover have scientific payloads to carry out experiments on the lunar surface. If the Chandrayaan-3 mission succeeds in landing a robotic lunar rover in ISRO's second attempt in four years, India will become the fourth country to master the technology of soft-landing on the moon's surface after the US, China and the former Soviet Union.

## AP, TS have maximum no. of billionaire MPs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are the top two States with the highest percentage of billionaire MPs. Around five (45%) of the 11 MPs from Andhra Pradesh and three (43%) of the seven MPs from Telangana have declared assets worth around Rs 100 crore. The total assets of the seven MPs analysed from Telangana is Rs 5,596 crore, followed by 11 MPs from Andhra Pradesh with Rs 3,823 crore. 30 MPs analysed from Uttar Pradesh have assets worth Rs 1,941 crore. The total assets of the 85 BJP MPs analysed is Rs 2,579 crore, and that of the 30 INC MPs analysed is Rs 1,549 crore. The nine YSRCP MPs

analysed have Rs 3,561 crore, and seven TRS MPs analysed have Rs 5,596 crore. The 10 AAP MPs have assets worth Rs 1,316 crore. The top three Rajya Sabha MPs with high assets is Dr Bandi Partha Saradhi with Rs 5,300 crore, followed by Alla Ayodhya Rami Reddy with Rs 2,577 crore and Jaya Amitabh Bachchan with Rs 1,001 crore. The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and the National Election Watch (NEW) analysed the criminal, financial and other background details of 225 of 233 Rajya Sabha MPs. In the current Rajya Sabha one seat is vacant. Three MPs have not been analysed as their affidavits were unavailable and four seats of Jammu and Kashmir are undefined.

## 5 girls reported missing...

Continued from Page 1

In a separate incident, a glimmer of hope emerged for two girls who had gone missing from a Tribal school hostel in Piler, situated within the former Chittoor district. Swift action by the police led to the identification of the missing girls, ensuring their safety as they were found at their grandparents' residence. According to police reports, the two girls, both 10 years old and enrolled at the tribal school in Piler, had departed from the hostel premises without informing the warden during the early hours of Friday. The concerned warden promptly alerted the police, who embarked on a determined mission to locate the youngsters. Subsequent investigations unveiled that the girls had managed to reach their grandparents' home in Piler. Upon receiving this crucial information, law enforcement officers swiftly intervened, reuniting the girls with the relieved hostel warden.

**GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH PANCHAYAT RAJ DEPARTMENT**  
**TENDER NOTICE** Date: 14-08-2023  
Online tenders are invited from various consultancies for preparing structural designs, drawings and to conduct soil test for construction of a community hall in Pamidipadu village of Narasaraopeta Mandal under the limits of Guntur with 40% DMS grants and an estimated cost of Rs 0.50/50.00 lakh. The last date for submission of tenders: At 3.00 pm on 29-08-2023. For further details, contact the following office. Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Panchayat Raj Circle, Guntur  
R.O.No: 1816/CLAD/VIJ/2023-22 Dt: 18.08.2023

# Yarlagadda likely to Join TDP

DASARI SRINIVASA RAO  
■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP leader, who unsuccessfully contested the Assembly elections from the Gannavaram constituency in the 2019 general elections is likely to switch sides and join the opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP). He's learnt to have been trying to bring along his loyal supporters who have been with him for the past four years from YSRCP to TDP.

After holding a meeting with YSRCP leaders, supporters, and members in Gannavaram, Yarlagadda Venkata Rao decided to leave the YSRCP. Barely six days later, his supporters within YSRCP pushed him to leave the party and find a new political home. They promised to stand by him no matter which party he chose.

In a follow-up meeting with his YSRCP supporters and cadre, Yarlagadda Venkata Rao announced his decision to leave YSRCP and expressed his interest in joining TDP. He also reached out to TDP leader N Chandrababu Naidu, requesting an



appointment to discuss his switch to the TDP. He's even looking to contest the Gannavaram constituency seat in the upcoming elections on TDP ticket.

Back in the 2019 general elections, Yarlagadda Venkata Rao ran for the Gannavaram seat as a YSRCP candidate but lost to TDP's Vallabhaneni Vamsi

Mohan. However, Vamsi Mohan later left TDP and joined YSRCP, causing speculation that he might run for the same seat with YSRCP's support in the next elections. Venkata Rao tried to clarify his position with YSRCP's leadership but didn't get a satisfactory response, which led him to consider

joining TDP.

Yarlagadda Venkata Rao, who had a passion for politics despite having an American Green Card, has decided that TDP is a better fit for him. He expressed his determination to win if given the chance to contest.

## Yarlagadda to TDP on Aug 22?

Yarlagadda Venkata Rao is planning to join the TDP on August 22, according to his followers. It's expected that he will officially join TDP in the presence of the party's general secretary and former minister Nara Lokesh during the 'Yuvagalam Padayatra' event. Before this, he will meet Nara Lokesh on August 19 in Vijayawada when the Padayatra reaches the city. Yarlagadda Venkata Rao is preparing to welcome Lokesh to this meeting.

Furthermore, there are plans for a significant gathering of YSRCP supporters and followers during a public meeting in Gannavaram. It's during this event that Yarlagadda Venkata Rao is anticipated to officially become a member of TDP.

# CM inaugurates four-star hotel in Vijayawada city

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Friday formally inaugurated a four-star hotel in the city. The event was marked by the unveiling of the hotel's commemorative plaque.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister underscored the State government's proactive approach in implementing a dynamic tourism policy aimed at attracting noted hotel brands to showcase Andhra Pradesh on the global tourism stage. He reiterated the Government's commitment to fostering a favourable environment for investors within the hospitality sector and expressed the readiness to provide comprehensive support.

Highlighting the noteworthy strides in this endeavour, the



Chief Minister noted, "Our efforts have led to the establishment of 11 prominent hotel brands, including the prestigious Oberoi, within our State. We anticipate the proliferation of more hotels across all key cities in the State and pledge our unwavering cooperation to facilitate this growth." He extended his heartfelt congratulations to the Hyatt Place Group for their accomplishment.

In gratitude, Hyatt Place

Chairman R. Veeraswamy conveyed his appreciation to the Chief Minister for his support in the realisation of the hotel project in Vijayawada, which marks its 45th location in the country.

Tourism Minister RK Roja, Housing Minister J Ramesh, Education Minister B Satyanarayana, Home Minister T Vanitha, Special CS Rajit Bhargava (Tourism), and others participated.

# Rain forecast in Coastal AP

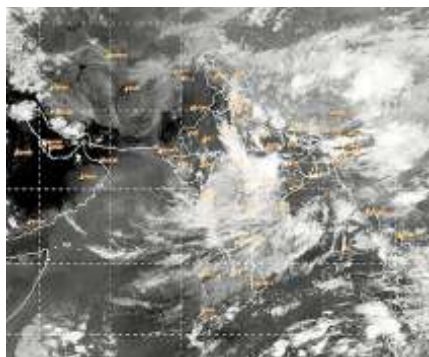
PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Meteorological Centre has forecasted the likelihood of heavy rainfall in select areas of North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and South Coastal Andhra Pradesh within the upcoming 24 hours.

In its latest daily weather report, the center indicated that thunderstorms accompanied by lightning are expected in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh over the next five days. Furthermore, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema should brace for these conditions within the next 24 hours.

The forecast also suggests the possibility of strong winds reaching speeds of 30-40 kmph in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh over the following three days. Similarly, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh should expect these winds within the next 24 hours.

In the upcoming week, North Coastal Andhra Pradesh, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Rayalaseema may experience light to moderate rain or thundershowers. These con-



ditions are likely to manifest in many areas, or even just one or two locations.

On the preceding Thursday, maximum temperatures soared 3 to 4 degrees Celsius above the norm in isolated pockets of Rayalaseema. Over the past 24 hours, rain showers were observed in numerous locations across Coastal Andhra Pradesh, with a few instances in Rayalaseema, according to the report.

## PERFECT PERCH



A crow sits on a Sivalingam at Manginapudi beach in Krishna district, presenting a splendid spectacle on the occasion of World Photography Day on Friday. Pic by Ch Vijaya Bhaskar

# Time for intellectuals to respond to 'atrocious' rule in AP: Naidu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu has clarified that the opinion of intellectuals like doctors, engineers and lawyers was only to utilise their experiences for the progress of the State. Speaking at a seminar, he said, "I have made five proposals in the Vision-2047 in which the most important issue is the solar-wind pumped energy hybrid model, which will be a game-changer," the former chief minister felt.

The loss in the power supply can be controlled following enough power can be supplied for the domestic and industrial sector, he said.

Listing out the other proposals in the Vision-2047 like water policy, he said that Andhra Pradesh has maximum water availability and this can be utilised for various purposes. "This is the reason I started the Polavaram project linking the rivers," he recalled. The highways were once in a very bad condition and foundation has been laid for improving the roads with the Build, Operate and Transfer

(BOT) system, he said.

Chandrababu felt that if it properly managed India will grow to the level of leading the whole world by 2047. Stating that Global thinking is his last proposal in Vision-2047, the TDP chief noted that in the coming days work-from-home should be the policy. "Opportunities should be created to earn working from home and my vision is that everyone should grow as a global leader," he said.

Pointing out that he has also announced certain schemes in the name of Super Six, Chandrababu Naidu said that what is the most important in this is to form a poverty-free society. If people, power and private partnership (P-4) are strictly adopted every family can be brought out of poverty, the former chief minister explained.

Observing that he has shared his ideas with those present at the seminar, the TDP chief called upon them to share their views with him. Keeping their views in mind, the TDP will formulate the future programme for the progress of the State.

# VMC Commissioner Swapnil inspects door-to-door survey

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Commissioner Swapnil Dinakar Pundkar inspected the door-to-door voter survey along with the supervisors and officials in 28th Division, Satyanarayanapuram Railway Quarter Area, Polling Stations 144 and 145 and other areas.



He said that the Booth Level Officers (BLO) should carry out the survey in connection with the Special Summary Revision-2024 voter list, specially prepared by the State Election Commission, and warned that strict action would be taken if they were negligent in their duties. He directed the supervisory officers to monitor the survey more responsibly.

Swapnil Pundkar said that those with more votes in the same door number, those with zero door number, and those with junk characters should be specially examined during the survey. He instructed the officials that the age-proof documents of voters above 100 years should be examined. In case of any problem anywhere in the BLO app, they were asked to immediately contact the staff of the election department of the city administration.

The VMC Commissioner stated that BLOs should participate in the survey by wearing the identity cards provided by the city administration.

# RGUKT CSE Dept holds industry-expert meet

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Department of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) at the Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge and Technology (RGUKT) campus, popularly known as the Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), at Nuzvid organised an industry expert session at the SAC Auditorium on Friday.

CSE and ECE students participated in the session. Senior QA Consultant, Chaitanya Bhargava of ThoughtWorks was invited as a resource person for the expert talk.

Speaking to the group, Bhargava stated that modern technology had transformed the world into a global village, with com-



puters and the internet playing a significant role. Thus, computer science and engineering have gained a lot of popular-

ity and good potential, she said.

Further, she emphasised industry demands and awareness creation about the key functions played by various software professionals, including business analysts, project managers, data analysts, quality analysts, and developers.

She said students who wanted to become software engineers should be well-versed in technology, industry, and soft skills. After that, she interacted with students and answered their questions.

CSE HoD Dr S Chiranjeevi, ECE HoD P Shyam, Dean of Academics Dr B Lakshmana Rao, Administrative Officer P Pradeep Kumar, and other faculty of the CSE and ECE Departments participated in the programme.

# Polycet-2023: Seats allotted

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

AP Commissioner of Technical Education Department and Polycet-2023 Convener Ch Nagarani has said that seats were allotted to the students on Friday in connection with Polycet admissions. She said a total of 34,624 students have selected the options and 34,122 have been allotted seats.

She added that 10,456 seats in 88 government polytechnics and 23,666 seats in 181 private polytechnics had been filled.

Nagarani clarified that all the students who have been allotted seats should report personally in the respective colleges before August 23.

# Sale of fruits, veggies by footpath vendors stalled

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In the wake of wild animal movements at different areas along the footpaths, TTD has issued some guidelines and instructions to the shopkeepers there.

A meeting was held at the Conference Hall in TTD administrative building in Tirupati on Friday evening headed by TTD EO AV Dharma Reddy with TTD, forest, police officials and shopkeepers of the footpath.

It has been decided to stall the sale of fruits and vegetables along the footpath route. Henceforth the sale of fruits and vegetables will not be allowed as the pedestrian pilgrims are purchasing them



and feeding the monkeys, deer etc. This in turn is resulting in the intrusion of wild beasts which are posing a threat to the lives of trekkers.

To avoid such man-wild animal conflict, TTD has completely banned the sale of fruits and vegetables.

Similarly, all the 100-plus footpath shopkeepers along

the Alipiri route are instructed to keep the premises clean and dump the waste in twin bins segregating dry and wet wastes. Everyday nearly two to three tonnes of garbage is being piled up along the footpath route and removed by the Health Department of TTD regularly.

If the footpath vendors come

across the movement of wild beasts, they should immediately inform the Forest or TTD officials and the respective phone numbers to be displayed at the footpath route.

Very soon CC cameras will be installed all along the footpath.

If any shopkeeper finds violating the above guidelines, serious action will be initiated against such violators, EO maintained.

JEO Veerabrahmam, CE Nageswara Rao, CCF Nageswara Rao, SE2 Jagadeeshwar Reddy, Deputy CF of TTD Srinivas, Health Officer Dr Sridevi, VGOs Bales Reddy, Giridhar Rao, Estates Wing Special Officer Mallikharjuna and others were also present.

# Officials told to check yet-to-be enrolled list

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Education Department Principal Secretary Praveen Prakash has said that the child who is born between September 1, 2005 and August 31, 2018 is not reflected in Student Info Portal for many reasons. He stated that non-reflection of the name because of the transfer certificate is one area, which is totally under the control of the Mandal Education Officer, District Vocational Education Officer, and District Education Officer.

The Principal Secretary, on Friday, said that there was a need for Mandal Education Officer, District Vocational Education Officer, and District Education Officer to examine the yet-to-be enrolled list, which is maintained by Village and Ward Secretariat and should classify the reason why his/her name was not reflected in the portal. Mandal Education Officers need to do this analysis at the mandal level, and District Education Officer and District Vocational Education Officer at the district level.

The Principal Secretary requested Prasanna Kumar, Mission Director, Gross Enrollment Ratio 100, to help the Mandal Education Officer, District Vocational Education Officer, and District Education Officer to access the list. The Mission Director should also coordinate with the Commissioner of the School Education Office and Commissioner of the Village and Ward Secretariat Office.

# Oil palm plantation drive in Chintampalli

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Government of India launched 'Mega Oil Palm Plantation Drive' under the National Mission on Edible Oils - Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) across the country. The objective was to further encourage and increase oil palm cultivation in sync with the objective of making our country self-reliant in the production of edible oils. To support the cause, Godrej Agrovet Ltd. (GAVL), a diversified agri-business company, on Friday organised an oil palm plantation drive in Chintampalli, Andhra Pradesh.



Farmers Welfare, Government of India; Kothagiri Sridhar, Member of Parliament, Eluru, Andhra Pradesh; Dr K Suresh, Director, ICAR - Indian Institute of Oil Palm Research (IIOPR) and Sougata Niyogi,

CEO-Oil Palm Business, GAVL. India is the world's largest importer and the 2nd largest consumer of Palm Oil. With the local production of 300,000 tons, the country currently imports 7,500,000 tons.

Commenting on the nationwide Mega Oil Palm Plantation Drive, Dr PK Singh, Agriculture Commissioner, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India said, "The plantation drive which coincided with the rainy season has received encouraging response from the oil palm processing companies and farmers. Covering approximately 3500 ha. of the area and planting more than 5.00 lakh planting material during the drive, this will further assist us in achieving the target of bringing an additional area of 6.5 lakh ha. under oil palm production by 2025-26. Collaborating with players like Godrej, we are confident of enhancing productivity and creating sustainable income sources for the oil palm farmers."

# Vijayawada Railway Division observes 'Sadbhavana Diwas'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The South Central Railway, Vijayawada Division, observed Sadbhavana Diwas to mark the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on Friday. Narendra A Patil, Divisional Railway Manager, said that August 20 was observed as Sadbhavana Diwas to promote national integration and communal harmony among people of all religions and languages. He explained that since August 20 was Sunday, the Sadbhavana pledge was taken today.

Narendra Patil administered the Sadbhavana Diwas pledge to all branch officers and staff at the Divisional Office. M



Srikanth, ADRM, Operations; D Srinivasa Rao, ADRM, Infrastructure; and branch officers took part in the event. The staff took the oath to work for emotional oneness, eschew violence and promote goodwill among people regardless of their caste, religion or ethnicity.

Narendra Patil has appealed to the gathering to resolve all the differences through dialogue and constitutional means without resorting to violence and work towards the common goal of peace and prosperity for all.

# All set for sarpanch, ward members election: Collector

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

Collector P Prashanthi has said that all arrangements have been made for the conduct of elections for a sarpanch post and 10 panchayat ward members.

In a statement here on Friday, the Collector said elections for the sarpanch post and 10 ward members would be held on Saturday. All needed arrangements were made to conduct the election in a peaceful atmosphere on Saturday, she said.

"Polling for the post of one sarpanch and 10 ward members will be held on Saturday from 7:00 am to 1:00 pm and the counting of votes will be held from 2 pm," she said, adding that the elections would be conducted to Kavalipuram village sarpanch post and Veerasaram mandal Matsyapuri, Palakodera mandal Gollalakeru, Penugonda mandal Dongaravipalem, Iragavaram mandal Goteru, Penumantra mandal Marteru, Tanuku mandal Thetali, Palakollu mandal Gorintada, Chintapparru, Pentapadu



## SECTION 144 IMPOSED AT POLLING STATIONS: SP

**ELURU:** Superintendent of Police Mary Prashanthi has said that all arrangements have been made for panchayat elections on Saturday in the Eluru district. She said that except voters, others would not be allowed to the polling stations. No election campaign is allowed near polling stations. All security arrangements were made to ensure that the voters exercise their franchise in a peaceful atmosphere. The polling will begin at 7 am and ends at 1 pm. The counting of votes will be taken up at 2 pm, the SP said. Section 144 clamped at the polling stations, she said, adding that special security arrangements were made at sensitive and most sensitive polling stations.

mandal Kasapa Pentapadu, Ganapavaram mandal Ganapavaram ward members. The Collector said that the total voters are 14,735, adding that two candidates are contesting for the post of Sarpanch

post and 23 candidates for the posts of 10 ward members. Collector Prashanthi said that 20 polling stations have been set up for the conduct of elections, adding that 120 staff have been assigned election duties.

Meanwhile, addressing the grievance day, the Collector said that the grievance day would help the employees to work in a free environment. She participated in the grievance government employee's grievance day programme in the Collector's office on Friday. She took representations from the employees on various issues.

Speaking on the occasion, on this occasion, the District Collector said that if the service problems of the employees were resolved, it would help them to work in a freer environment, adding that appeals on employee service matters, pension issues, financial issues, disciplinary cases and medical reimbursement issues can be submitted in the employee grievances held on the third Friday of every month and the issues resolved.

The Collector asked the district officials to pay special attention to this matter and work to resolve the problems of the employees of the respective departments. Joint Collector S Ram Sundar Reddy was also present.



## Bear captured at Srisailem

PNS ■ KURNOOL

A bear, which had been scaring the people in the area for the last few days, was finally captured on Friday at Shikareswar near the hill shrine Srisailem.

A bear had been roaming around the hill shrine for the last few days and the movements of the bear scarred the devotees. The forest officials set up three cages in three places.

The bear entered into one of the cages and got trapped. Deputy Director of Forest Alag Chang Teran said that keeping in view the incident that took place in Tirumala in which a leopard killed a girl, all needed arrangements were made to capture the bear. The captured bear would be released in dense forest, he added.

# Take steps for 'Gruhapravesam' in Jagananna colonies: Collector

PNS ■ ONGOLE

District Collector AS Dinesh Kumar directed the officials concerned to make arrangements to organize house-warming programmes in a festive atmosphere in the Jagananna colonies.

The Collector on Friday visited the Jagananna colonies at KV Palem at Cheemakurti and saw the progress of works. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that the state government has decided to organize 'Gruha Pravasa' programmes for 5 lakh houses across the state in Jagananna colonies on August 30 th.

As part of this, in the presence of public representatives at the district level, it has been decided to undertake the programme in KV Palem Jagananna Colony in Chimakurthy. A total of 576 beneficiaries were granted houses in this layout, he added.

Collector Dinesh Kumar said out of 576 beneficiaries, 282 have completed construction of their houses. The Collector ordered the officials to complete the other pending infrastructure works in the layout before the end of this month and to monitor the construction of other houses

as well. He said that the work of the arch should be completed for the colony and water and electricity should be provided on a permanent basis.

The Collector told the officials that the government would give financial assistance to the beneficiaries of the houses and asked them to make beneficiaries aware that a sump pit should be dug in for rainwater harvesting in every house. Housing PD Peralai, Public Health EE Ali, Cheemakurthy Municipal Commissioner Fazulullah, Tehsildar Madhusudan, and officials of various departments were present.



## CRIME BEAT

# Teenager drowned in Polavaram canal

PARENTS SAY THEIR SON COMMITTED SUICIDE UNABLE TO BEAR HARASSMENT BY A TEACHER

PNS ■ ELURU

A 14-year-old boy drowned in the Polavaram right canal at Koppaka village in Pedavegi mandal on Friday but the parents and relatives of the boy alleged that he committed suicide unable to bear the harassment of a teacher.

Police said that the deceased Pamarti Pradip (14) was studying 10 the class. He went to the Polavaram right canal at around 8:30 am. He was found drown-



ing in the canal. The police and fire brigade searched for the body and later they fished out the body. The police registered

a case and shifted the body to the GGH for postmortem.

However, the father of the boy Pamarti Rambabu alleged that he committed suicide by jumping into the canal as the teacher rebuked him. The relatives of the deceased boy staged a dharna with the body at Koppaka high school. DEO and other officials rushed to the school. Former MLA and TDP leader Chintamaneni Prabhakar consoled the bereaved family members.

## Woman murdered, husband's hand suspected

PNS ■ ELURU

A woman was brutally murdered at Chillaboinapalli village in Musunuru mandal on the night of Thursday.

Police here on Friday said that Oleti Nagamani (35) was found dead in a pool of blood in her house. Injuries were found on her head.

Family members suspected Ravindra, the husband of the deceased woman, killed her. DSP Ashok Kumar Goud, rural CI R Ankababu, and SI Kutumba Rao visited the scene of the offence. The police pressed the dog squad to get clues. An extramarital affair might have led to the murder, the DSP said.

The police registered a case and shifted the body to the GGH for postmortem.



# MAN ARRESTED FOR SEXUALLY EXPLOITING MINOR GIRL

PNS ■ ONGOLE

The police arrested a teacher for luring a minor girl in the name of love and marriage and for sexually exploiting her.

DSP V Narayana Swamy Reddy told the media that the accused Jagannatham Sunil Kumar was arrested at Mangamuru Road here for sexually exploiting a minor girl.

The accused Sunil Kumar worked as a teacher and the victim used to go to him for tuition. He befriended the minor girl and maintained intimacy.

Later he took selfie photos with the girl. He also took a



ring from her. The parents of the accused also cooperate with him, the DSP said.

The victim lodged a complaint about the sexual exploitation by the accused on August 16. The police registered cases under various sections including POCSO

against the accused. CI Bakthavatsalam under the directions of DSP Narayana Swamy Reddy arrested the accused today. The DSP asked the parents to bring to the notice of the police if they face any problems regarding their minor daughters.

## Man, his daughter killed as bike rams lorry

PNS ■ NARASARAOPET

In a tragic road accident, a man and his teenage daughter were killed when the motorcycle they were riding ramed a stationary lorry at Brahmanapalli village in Pigururalla mandal on Friday. The deceased were identified as Yanamala Narasimha Rao (39) and his daughter Y Srinidhi (16). both were killed instantaneously. The police registered a case and shifted the bodies to the GGH for postmortem.

## Motorcyclist killed in road mishap

**KAKINADA:** A tragic incident occurred in the early hours of Friday in the Madhuramgokulam area, as a motorcyclist, while returning home at high speed, tragically lost control. The motorcyclist collided with a roadside temple wall and was rendered unconscious by the impact. Despite prompt medical attention, the motorcyclist, identified as Anupouju Aravind Kumar (22) and a resident of Jajala Kalva area in Cheediga of Kakina rural mandal, could not survive his injuries and passed away before the ambulance reached the scene. The local law enforcement, represented by the Two Town police, swiftly registered a case related to the incident. The body of the deceased has been transferred to the Government General Hospital for post-mortem procedures. Authorities are actively pursuing further investigations into this unfortunate incident.

# 'Eligible journalists will be given house sites'

PNS ■ ONGOLE

YSRCP MLA and former Minister Balineni Srinivasa Reddy assured of allocating house sites to all eligible journalists in the district.

A programme was organized here on Friday on the occasion of 'World Photography Day' by the Democratic Journalist Forum, Ongole division DJF secretary G Shivaji presided over the programme. Balineni Srinivasa Reddy attended the programme as chief guest.

Speaking on the occasion



Balineni Srinivasa Reddy said that the role of digital media has increased in today's competitive world. He regretted

that fake news is being spread more than real news in this sector. Balineni Srinivasa Reddy suggested that the journalists should crosscheck the news before sending it.

He assured of giving house sites to all the eligible journalists soon. He also assured of extending all help to the DJF. Mayor Gangada Sujata, Ongole DSP V Narayanaswamy Reddy, Chadalavada DD Dr.B Ravi also spoke. Some photojournalists were felicitated in the programme and certificates were given away.

# Banned Maoist party leader Raji Reddy dead

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Malla Raja Reddy, one of the top leaders of the banned Communist Party of India-Maoist, known as the Moist party, died in the deep forest of Dandakaranya on Friday. The Moist group released a video confirming the death of Raji Reddy, alias Sagram. He died due to illness.

The Moist leader rose through the ranks to the top position in the party. Different State governments announced cash rewards for any informa-

tion on Raji Reddy. He carried a reward of Rs 1 crore on his head. The Moist group, in a video message, said that Raji Reddy, who was suffered from illness for long, died on Friday. He hailed from Mutharam village in Peddipalli district. He worked with Kondpalli Seetharamaiah, Satyamurthy and Ganpathi. He worked as party in-charge in Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat. Criminal cases were registered against him across the country.

He was one of the accused in the murder of former Assembly D Sripada Rao in 2008. He was arrested in Kerala in 2008. He was later brought to Karimnagar on a transit warrant and produced before the Mepally court. He spent two and a half years in jail. He was one of the accused in the murder of former Speaker D Sripada Rao.

He was one of the four persons charged with the murder of four persons in Talapalpur village in the undivided Adilabad district. The other accused in the case was Kondpalli Seetharamaiah.



## CI calls on SP after taking charge

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Circle Inspector P Bakhtavatsala Reddy, who was transferred from Narasaraopet Rural, here on Friday met Superintendent of Police Malika Garg.

CI Bakhtavatsala Reddy was transferred from Narasaraopet Rural police station to Ongole Taluk police station. After reporting for duty in the Taluka police station, he called on the SP.

## NEWLY-WED COUPLE



Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrababhu Naidu attended the marriage of the son of prominent film actor Brahmanandam and blessed the newly-wed couple in Hyderabad on Friday.

## 5K run in Nalgonda district to be held on Aug 19

PNS ■ NALGONDA

District Collector RV Karnan on Friday said that a 5K run would be held in the town on August 19 to sensitise all those who are over 18 years of age to register as voters and to create awareness among them on exercising their right to franchise and so on.

The 5K run would be held in Nalgonda, Miryalaguda, Devarakonda, Nakrekal, Nagarjunasagar, and Munugode constituencies with the slogan "I vote for sure", he said.

# Names of KCR's agents in govt depts will go into 'Red Book'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Declaring that there were sycophants of KCR in all government departments, TPCC President Revanth Reddy made it clear that they will certainly write their names in the party's 'Red Book' and will take action against them after coming to power.

"We will not let go officials who filed false cases against Congress leaders to please the BRS government," Revanth warned. He said that he was speaking about officials like Prabhakar Rao, Radha Kishan Rao, Bhujanga Rao, Narsing

Rao and others.

During a chat with journalists on Friday at the Gandhi Bhavan, Revanth said that he would always respect officials who work for the people.

"How can we remain silent regarding officials who issue statements saying that KCR will win the next election? What connection has these officials with politics?" he said.

Criticising the BRS government for speaking about schemes in a hurry, Revanth asked how the government which failed to complete projects in the last 10 years will



complete them in the next two months.

He said that BRS leaders can now purchase land costing Rs 100 crore an acre, but the poor remained poor in the state. Why is the government not revealing the names of companies who purchased lands in

Kokapet and Budvel, he asked and added that it was BRS leaders and KCR's proxies who purchased lands in Kokapet and Budvel.

He said that BRS leaders enacted a wonderful drama to create an artificial real estate boom in the state.

Responding to the removal of his security cover, Revanth said that the BRS government is not providing security even after the High Court directed the government to do so.

"I am an MP and the state president of a national party. How can the government remove my security cover? We

provided full security to KCR when the Congress was in power. I am a public person and I don't need security. I will move anywhere without security. Can KCR visit Osmania or Kakatiya University without security?" he asked.

Revanth said that KCR used the police to defeat him. "I am not afraid regarding security cover. The lakhs of Congress activists are my security guards," he said.

He said that the Congress will not allow any difference between the majority and minority. Many minority leaders in the Congress are occu-

pying big posts. But the BRS did nothing for minorities. Not even one per cent of double-bedroom houses were given to minorities, he said.

The TPCC President said that the BRS' 'Car' has changed to 'Lotus' after the 'Car' reached New Delhi. He said that voting for the BRS is voting for the BJP. All minorities are looking towards the Congress as the BRS and the BJP are not different.

He said that he is ready to tell people in temples, mosques and churches that the Congress is the only party fighting the BJP.

# Ward health secretaries stage protest seeking promotions

PNS ■ KAKINADA

In a show of solidarity, health secretaries from ward secretariats, affiliated with the United Medical and Health Employees' Union, held a peaceful protest in front of the Dr Ambedkar Statue Centre on Friday. Their primary demand is for enhanced promotional opportunities for those who have dedicated three years of service.

The protesters lent their support for several other crucial issues. These include advocating for the appointment of one Auxiliary Nurse Midwife

(ANM) for every three thousand people in the population, urging officials to schedule meetings exclusively during working hours, and requesting exemptions for field-level ANMs from the requirement of Biometric attendance.

Furthermore, they are also urging the equitable payment of wages for health secretaries, equivalent to regular ANMs under the 2022 Pay Revision Commission (PRC). Additionally, they are seeking extended leaves and improved facilities in line with ANMs' standards.

INDIA CORNER

### LS Privilege panel to hear Adhir's version on suspension at next meet on Aug 30

The Privileges Committee of Lok Sabha on Friday decided to ask Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury to appear before it at its next meeting to hear his side on his suspension from the House for 'misconduct'. The committee, chaired by BJP member Sunil Kumar Singh, also appeared to favour recommending to Speaker Om Birla to revoke Chowdhury's suspension after formally hearing his side at its meeting on August 30, Parliament sources said. Chowdhury was named by Speaker Om Birla for "unruly conduct" on August 11, the last day of the Monsoon session and was suspended from the membership of Lok Sabha pending a report from the Privileges Committee. At the meeting on Friday, several members were of the view that Chowdhury has been punished for his conduct by Lok Sabha and there was no further need to examine his behaviour by a parliamentary panel.



### Coal scam: Delhi court convicts former Ministry of Steel official

Delhi court on Friday convicted a former official of the Ministry of Steel in a coal scam case related to alleged irregularities in the allocation of a coal block in Chhattisgarh. In the 14th conviction in the coal scam, Special Judge Arun Bhardwaj held Gautam Kumar Basak, former Executive Secretary, JPC (Joint Plant Committee), Ministry of Steel, guilty of corruption in the allocation of Vijay Central Coal Block. The judge will hear arguments on the quantum of sentence to be handed out to Basak on August 19. Basak can be sentenced to a maximum of seven years in jail. According to the prosecution, an allegation was made against Prakash Industries Ltd., which had applied for the coal block in January 2007, that it had furnished false information about its capacity.



### SC junks plea seeking contempt action against its officials for not listing case

The Supreme Court on Friday came down heavily on a lawyer for filing a contempt petition against its officials for not listing a matter despite the court's direction, calling it an attempt to "browbeat" the registry and an "abuse of the process of law". A bench of Justices B R Gavai and Prashant Kumar Mishra said merely because a matter has not been listed on a date fixed by the court cannot be a ground to initiate contempt proceedings against the Secretary General and the Registrar (Listing). "The present contempt petition is nothing else but an abuse of the process of law... There are certain difficulties on account of which matters cannot be listed, even if the court directs the matter to be listed on a particular date. Filing of a contempt petition for not listing such a matter is an attempt to browbeat the registry, such an attempt is highly deprecated," the bench said while dismissing the plea.



## We must be ready to prevent next health emergency: Modi

PNS ■ GANDHINAGAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday urged G20 nations to facilitate equitable availability of technology and also appealed to them to open innovations for public good.

Addressing the G20 Health Ministers' meet in Gujarat capital Gandhinagar via video link, he called upon everyone to be ready to prevent, prepare and respond to the next health emergency.

Digital solutions and innovations are useful means to make our efforts equitable and inclusive, Modi said.

"Global initiatives on global health will bring together various digital health initiatives on a common platform. Let's open our innovations for public good. Let us avoid duplication of funding," the prime minister said.

"Let us facilitate equitable availability of technology. This initiative will allow countries in the global south to close the gap in healthcare delivery. It will take us one step closer to our goal of achieving universal health coverage (UHC)," he added.

He informed the G20 members that India will eradicate tuberculosis (TB) well before the global deadline with the help of people's participation.



**"Global initiatives on global health will bring together various digital health initiatives on a common platform. Let's open our innovations for public good. Let us avoid duplication of funding," the prime minister said.**

Yadav became a part of the banned organisation in 2018 and worked as a courier for the supply of daily-use items for Naxalites after his elder brother Bhubendra Yadav was jailed in a Naxal-related case.

He then joined Regional Eastern Bureau senior Naxalite cadre Navin Yadav and was involved in several Naxalite incidents for three years, including the firing on three CRPF jawans in 2020 and planting improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to target security forces.

In 2021, Yadav left the Naxal outfit and went underground. The official said he was found to be living with his family in a rented house in Bhagalpur village of Jashpur district.

He was produced in a court which sent him to jail, the official added.

### Chhattisgarh: Naxalite carrying reward of Rs 8 lakh arrested

PNS ■ BALRAMPUR

A Naxalite who carried a reward of Rs 8 lakh and was allegedly involved in many incidents of Maoist violence has been arrested in Jashpur district of Chhattisgarh, the police said on Friday.

Sarjun Yadav, alias Putna, was apprehended on Thursday from Bhagalpur village by a team of the Special Intelligence Branch and the district police following a tip, an official said.

Between 2018 and 2020, Yadav was active as a "Military Platoon" member of the outlawed outfit. He carried a bounty of Rs 8 lakh on his head, the official said.

He was involved in firing on three Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawans in a forest near Jaljali village under the Samripath police station limits in Balrampur district in 2020 in which one



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Iconic flautist Hariprasad Chaurasia, Kathak exponent Kumudini Lakhia, painter Gulam Mohammed Sheikh and actor-director Rudraprasad Sengupta will receive the 'Legends of India Lifetime Achievement Award 2022'.

The award, which recognises living legends "for igniting young minds with the rich heritage of Indian arts", will be presented to the artists at a ceremony in September, the

organisers said. Organised by NGO Legends of India, the award recognises accomplished artists for their contribution to preserving and promoting traditional Indian art forms and comes with a cash prize of Rs 51,000 and a plaque.

Founder Dipayan Mazumdar said that the organisation has been connecting the younger generations with classical music and other traditional art forms of the country since 1999 through regular perform-



mances and discourses in the country and abroad. "All of us need to do much more for the sustenance of the

### Security preparations for G20 meet in full swing: Delhi Police

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Friday said they are coordinating with security agencies and are fully prepared for the upcoming G20 summit which is going to be held next month.

Police have also worked on the soft skills of the staff which will be deployed during the summit, they said.

Delhi Police spokesperson Suman Nalwa said that the city police is working for last several months to prepare for the programme.

"Delhi Police has been working for G20 for several months. The initial planning in connection with this started long back and now it is in the last phase as less than a month is left. We are prepared and are coordinating with other security agencies."

"We are very focused on the training of the staff which will be deployed. First of all, they were trained on soft skills so that whenever they interact with a dignitary, tourist or media person, they should know what to keep in mind as people are coming from culturally different places," Nalwa said.

They have also been trained about specific duty points, she said.

"Our commando team is

all set. Adequate arrangements have been made at the airport, arcade, place of stay, venue, or wherever they (dignitaries) will travel.

Several units of Delhi Police, including training, traffic, law and order, armed battalions, Special Cell etc are working with other agencies," she said.

According to police, 19 women commandos of the Delhi Police trained as "markswomen."

They have taken a one-month training from the Indo Tibetan Border Police Force, Madhya Pradesh.

Commandos and VIP security duty personnel from various CAPFs like the CRPF, ITBP, BSE, CISF and the SSB have been called to Delhi from their various field formations to render "protocol and protection" duties during the G20 Leaders' Summit to be held here on September 9-10 at the Bharat Mandapam convention centre, earlier Pragati Maidan, and some other vital locations.

These special units, including that of the Delhi Police, will function under the central command of the Ministry of Home Affairs till the G20 meet gets over and all the premiers and dignitaries have left for their destinations.

## India's first state-of-the-art 3D-printed post office opens

PNS ■ BENGALURU

India's first 3D-printed post office built with a robotic printer using 3D printing technology that deposits concrete layer-by-layer in accordance with computerised 3D model drawing input was inaugurated in the city on Friday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the effort in a tweet saying that it represents the spirit of a self-reliant India.

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), the Prime Minister said: "Every Indian would be proud to see India's first 3D printed Post Office at Cambridge Layout, Bengaluru. A testament to our nation's

innovation and progress, it also embodies the spirit of a self-reliant India."

Officials said the 3D-printed post office with a built-up area of 1,021 square feet involved a process requiring a delicate balance of concrete properties, including flowability, quick hardening for load-bearing capacity and sufficient strength to ensure successful printing.

Inaugurating the brand new post office at the residential Cambridge Layout here, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, who holds the Railways, Communications, Electronics and IT portfolios, said the building demonstrated "the



spirit of development, the spirit of developing our own technology, the spirit of doing something which was considered impossible in the earlier times."

That is the defining feature of these times, the minister said.

According to postal officials, the post office building was constructed by construction company Larsen & Toubro Limited while IIT Madras provided technical guidance.

The entire construction activity was completed in a period of 45 days as compared to about six to eight months taken by the conventional method.

Cost and time savings make 3D-concrete printing technology a viable alternative to conventional building practices, the officials said.

The office will be functional following the inauguration, a Department of Posts official added.

### 'Debroy's article doesn't reflect govt or EAC-PM views'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) has distanced itself from its chairman Bibek Debroy's article suggesting embracing a new constitution, and said the article in no way reflects the views of EAC-PM or Government of India.

"The recent article by Dr @bibekdebroy was in his personal capacity. In no way do they reflect the views of EAC-PM or the Government of India," EAC-PM tweeted on Thursday.



body constituted to give advice on economic and related issues to Government of India, specifically to Prime Minister. Debroy is the chairman of the Council.

Although the tweet did not mention which article it was referring to, Debroy had earlier this week authored an article in Mint titled 'There is a case for 'we the people' to embrace a new Constitution' and termed the present Constitution a 'colonial legacy'.

"Much of what we debate begins and ends with the Constitution. A few amendments won't do. We should go back to the drawing board and start from first principles, asking what these words in the Preamble mean now: socialist, secular, democratic, justice, liberty and

equality. We the People have to give ourselves a new Constitution," Debroy wrote.

The online edition of the article published on August 14 too has a disclaimer which read: "These are the author's personal views."

In no way do they reflect the views of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister or Government of India."

EAC-PM has two full time members -- Sanjeev Sanyal and Shamika Ravi. Its part-time members include Neelkant Mishra, Poonam Gupta and TT Ram Mohan.

## Journalist shot dead in Bihar; CM expresses concern, opposition flays govt

PNS ■ ARARIA/PATNA

A journalist was shot dead by unidentified people in Araria district of Bihar early on Friday, police said.

Vimal Kumar Yadav (35), who worked for a Hindi daily, was killed at his residence in Premnagar village.

The assailants knocked at the gates of Yadav's house around 5.30 am and opened fire as soon as he opened the gates," the Bihar Police tweeted.

Yadav died on the spot, where the district police chief and the SHO of Raniganj, the police station concerned, rushed upon hearing the news.

"The body has been sent for post-mortem examination. An investigation is underway. Forensic experts and the dog squad have been called in. The deceased was said to be involved in an old dispute with a neighbour. All angles are being probed into," said Ashok Kumar Singh, the Superintendent of Police for Araria. When journalists approached Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in Patna with queries about the incident, he said, "I felt really sad and

immediately asked officials concerned to look into the incident."

"The matter is being probed and the culprits will be brought to book," asserted the CM.

However, the opposition lashed out at the government and claimed the incident showed "democracy is in danger in Bihar".

"Criminals are roaming freely while innocent citizens, including journalists, and even police personnel are being killed in Bihar," alleged state BJP president Samrat Choudhary.

"What has happened in Araria is, indeed, tragic. But such incidents have become the norm since the 'ghamandia' (arrogant)

Mahagathbandhan led by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and RJD supremo Lalu Prasad formed the government in the state," said the BJP leader whose party shared power in the stage till a year ago. Former Lok Janshakti Party president Chirag Paswan, who has realigned with the BJP-led NDA, said, "Nitish Kumar and his allies keep shouting that democracy is under attack in Bihar.

## MP: Two killed, six injured as man opens fire after argument over pet dogs

PNS ■ INDORE

A man and his brother-in-law were killed and six others, including a pregnant woman, were injured when a person who works as a bank security guard opened fire on them from his double-barrel gun after an altercation over pet dogs in Indore city of Madhya Pradesh, police said on Friday.

The incident occurred late Thursday night, after which the accused security guard, his son and nephew were arrested, a police official said.

"Rajpal Singh Rajawat posted as a security guard at a local branch of Bank of Baroda, opened fire with his licensed gun in a colony located under Khajrana police station limits following an argument over pet dogs," Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police Amrendra Singh said.

Rahul Verma (28) and his brother-in-law Vimal Amcha (35) were killed in the firing, while six others who were injured in the incident are undergoing treatment at a hospital, he said.

"The incident occurred after Rajawat took his pet dog out for a walk in Krishnabagh Colony.

His dog started barking at the neighbour's pet dog. This triggered an argument between Rajawat and Amcha's family members," Singh said.

Their argument escalated to such a level that Rajawat went to his house, took out his gun and fired two rounds in the air from the terrace. After that, he opened fire on the people standing on the road below, the official said.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Man-made tragedy

### Unbridled construction on riverbeds is behind the catastrophic floods in Himachal Pradesh

Amid the ongoing monsoon season, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana are grappling with a dire catastrophe that has cost these states a fortune. The relentless downpour has transformed serene rivers into roaring torrents, causing widespread devastation and loss of life and property. This situation, however, is not solely the result of nature's fury; it is the consequence of unchecked human actions that have disrupted the delicate balance between progress and environmental responsibility. The disturbing trend of constructing hotels and resorts on riverbeds, oblivious to the potential consequences, has emerged as a prominent contributor to the ongoing tragedy. The allure of scenic waterfront properties has driven a reckless pursuit of profit, often overshadowing prudent considerations for the environment and local communities. As these structures sprawl across the riverbanks, they impair the natural flow of water, causing disastrous consequences during heavy rainfall. The repercussions of this short-sighted development approach are now on full display.



Thousands of residents have been forced to abandon their homes, a direct result of the man-made encroachments that obstructed the rivers' natural paths. The scale of destruction is staggering, with homes reduced to rubble and livelihoods swept away. Moreover, the human toll extends beyond material losses, with health issues exacerbating the already dire situation. More than 100 lives have been lost in Himachal alone, while thousands of crores have been washed away. This indeed is a direct consequence of greed and unbridled desire to choke nature to the maximum.

The nexus among the builders, politicians and bureaucrats has played havoc in the state. The illegal construction goes full steam while the administration looks the other way.

Incessant rain has triggered flash floods, landslides and other calamities, compounding the crisis. The toll on lives and agriculture is heart-wrenching, with both states witnessing substantial financial losses. Haryana and Punjab have suffered estimated losses of hundreds of crores, while Himachal Pradesh's losses are estimated at a staggering Rs 8000 crores. The unchecked expansion of human settlements onto riverbeds must be met with strict regulations and responsible land use practices. The consequences of prioritising short-term financial gains over long-term environmental sustainability have become painfully clear. The lessons from this disaster should serve as a stern reminder that our actions have profound repercussions on the environment and the local population we share it with. It is imperative that accountability is assigned not just for immediate relief efforts, but also for the regulatory oversights that allowed such reckless construction to thrive. These floods must become a turning point in our approach to development. Only through responsible planning and a renewed commitment to environmental stewardship can we hope to prevent such disasters from recurring.

## PICTALK



An artist gives finishing touches to an idol of Lord Ganesha, ahead of the Ganesh Utsav, Mumbai

# Unwarranted and indecorous linkages

## Politicians should leave the armed forces alone and not use them to score brownie points, else politicisation of forces is not far away



BHOPIINDER SINGH

When the national convener of the IT cell of a national party makes a wholly partisan accusation at members of his rival party, he is entitled to be suggestive, provocative, and in the lamentable context of our politics, even 'economizing' with the truth. But the creativity can get unwarranted and indecorous when it is tantamount to questioning the sacred and inviolable tenets of constitutional governance e.g., the principle of civilian control over military affairs.

The Armed Forces of India have coercive and kinetic abilities that allow them to undertake violence on behalf of the Sovereign (externally or internally), as ordered by the legitimate government of the day. A professional soldier is expected to respect and abide by the constitutional wiring of 'civil-military relations' in a non-partisan and non-prejudiced manner (all pros and cons of undertaking or refraining from an order are left to the competent authorities who are expected to nuance the civilian thinking, optimally) – but the soldiers on the ground simply take 'orders' and failing to do so, is a dereliction of duty. This discipline is critical to maintaining the apolitical nature of the 'sword arm of the nation' and for it to serve the sovereign, regardless of the party in power.

But the incorrigibly partisan politicians can sometimes disregard this nonpartisan ideal and either try to usurp and appropriate the 'muscular' imagery of Indian Soldiers towards their utility or like recently, drag the combatants (whilst in service) into ascribing 'intent' onto their actions, while in 'Uniform'. It is dangerous and unacceptable, either way. Beyond the operational imperatives, the Armed Forces do not act on their own volition but do so, at the behest of the government. Only enemy nations and forces inimical to constitutional India would suggest that the operational action of a soldier is owing to his/her thinking.

India's history post-independence has been complex and



painful with many insurgent movements necessitating the invocation of Armed Forces onto its citizenry (as policing forces routinely fail). It is neither a desirable nor strictly speaking, the mandated task of the Armed Forces, to take up internal sorting, but as the sovereign's 'last resort', they do so. It is especially concerning as most of the hardy soldiers hail from the rural/hinterlands of the sensitive border states e.g., Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan, Northeastern States etc. But because the profession of arms was typically afforded the respectful 'distance' from political passions and suggestions, these soldiers were able to tide over dark periods of insurgency in Punjab, J&K, Northeast etc., professionally without getting ascribed any personal 'intent', in the conduct of their combat duties.

Recently, one such painful incident from the past i.e., air raids in Mizoram, was regrettably invoked in a completely political moment (no-confidence motion) to score political points – the issue was further escalated by the over-enthusiasm of a party convener when he attacked a rival's father (Air Force officer) of "flying the Indian Air Force planes that bombed Aizawl"! Not only was this statement a

lie as rebutted by the politician/son of the late Air Force Officer, "You have the wrong dates, wrong facts... Yes, as an IAF pilot did drop bombs. But that was on the erstwhile East Pakistan during the 1971 Indo-Pak war and not as you claim, on Mizoram on the 5th March 1966"... who added for good measure, "He was commissioned into the IAF only on 29th October 1966!". A far more consequential concern of dragging the apolitical institution and that of its fraternity in 'Uniform' towards political decisions, was recklessly suggested.

All political parties have someone or the other in terms of Veterans in their ranks – which is usually a matter of pride and necessity to have a cross-section of perspective, especially from the security realm. But to link their prior participation in any militaristic act with the implicit 'intent' besetting their act then is fraught with frightening consequences for the apolitical institution. Whereas, to question the dispensation of the day then (in this case, the rival opposition party today), may be par for the course, as could be said of other latter-day actions e.g., 1984 Operation Blue Star etc., – but questioning the individual 'intent' of Soldiers who merely undertook orders then, is unwarrant-

ed and indecorous (that it was also an abjectly false statement, is far less in terms of impropriety). It sadly demonstrates, that matters about the hallowed 'Uniform' are not free from political taint or absorption.

Ironically, some of the most illustrious Veterans in the political domain did repose faith in the party flag of the said convener, after hanging their boots, and rightfully their conduct or participation in any earlier combat operation, insurgency, or war remained beyond the remit of their personal 'intent', as it should be. The increasing trend to blur the hard lines of necessary 'distance' between the Armed Forces and Politics, is a sad reality, and Robert Frost's insistence that 'good fences make good neighbours' applies to the sensitive civilian-military relations, too. Just across the Line-of-Control (LOC), their Armed Forces do indeed have an independent 'intent' akin to a 'State-within-a-State' (unlike India), and they are infinitely poorer as a nation, for that. If speaking the truth in politics is a luxury by itself, at least spare the 'Uniform' from discourse and linkages.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)



ALL POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE SOMEONE OR THE OTHER IN TERMS OF VETERANS IN THEIR RANKS – WHICH IS USUALLY A MATTER OF PRIDE AND NECESSITY TO HAVE A CROSS-SECTION OF PERSPECTIVE, ESPECIALLY FROM THE SECURITY REALM

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### 'Selective remission' on SC radar



In a recent development, the Supreme Court directed pointed questions toward the Gujarat government and the Central authority regarding the 'selective' implementation of a remission policy for convicts associated with the gang rape and murder during the 2002 post-Godhra riots. This issue was raised by Justice B V Nagarithana, leading a bench that examined pleas challenging the remission granted to 11 convicts in the case. Justice Nagarithana questioned why the remission

policy was applied selectively and emphasized the importance of reintegration and reform for all eligible convicts, rather than a chosen few. Representing Gujarat, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) SV Raju argued that the state was bound by a 2022 Supreme Court ruling, enforcing the remission policy according to the state where the crime occurred. Raju highlighted the state's adherence to the 1992 remission policy before granting clemency to 11 convicts. The court queried the preference for the opinion of the Godhra judge over that of the Maharashtra trial court judge, and Raju clarified that the latter's opinion was not based on the case's merits, rendering it irrelevant in light of the 1992 policy. In pursuit of justice, the court demanded the submission of data on the implementation of the remission policy.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

## Vector borne diseases can be fought with food

### You can boost immunity against mosquito-borne diseases with nutrient-packed dietary habits which are free from side effects and cost effective

Mosquitoes are carriers of diseases such as malaria, dengue, and chikungunya, which collectively affect millions of people worldwide. According to the World Malaria Report 2021, India stands out as the primary contributor to malaria cases, accounting for a significant 82.5% of the total burden within the Southeast Asia region. While using insect repellents and mosquito nets are essential preventive measures, paying heed to our diet and consuming nutrient-dense foods can also play a significant role in strengthening our immune system against these illnesses.

**Vitamin C-Rich Foods**  
Vitamin C is renowned for its immune-boosting properties. Foods such as citrus fruits (oranges, lemons, grapefruits), strawberries, kiwi, and bell peppers are excellent sources of vitamin C. This powerful antioxidant helps neutralize harmful free radicals, reduce inflammation, and enhance the body's ability to fight infections.



**Zinc-Containing Foods**  
Zinc is crucial for a robust immune system. Foods like lean meats, poultry, legumes, nuts, and seeds are abundant in zinc. This mineral supports the production of immune cells and antibodies, enabling the body to mount an effective defence against mosquito-borne pathogens.

**Omega-3 Fatty Acids**  
Found in fatty fish (salmon, mackerel, sardines), flaxseeds, and walnuts, omega-3 fatty acids possess anti-inflammatory properties that aid in reducing the severity of immune responses. They also contribute to the overall health of cell membranes, improving immune cell function.

**Antioxidant-Rich Foods**  
Antioxidants, found in fruits (berries, grapes) and vegetables (spinach, kale, broccoli), help protect cells from damage caused by oxidative stress. By supporting the body's immune cells, antioxidants play a critical role in defending against infections.

**Garlic and Turmeric**  
Garlic and turmeric are natural immune-boosting foods. Garlic has antiviral and antibacterial properties, while turmeric contains curcumin, a compound with potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects.

**Hydration**  
Staying hydrated is essential for maintaining optimal immune function. Adequate water intake, along with replenishing electrolytes through foods like bananas, coconut water, and yoghurt, helps support the body's immune responses and maintain overall health.

**Vitamin D Sources**  
Vitamin D plays a key role in modulating the immune system's response to infections. While sunlight is a natural source of vitamin D, fatty fish, fortified dairy products, and egg yolks are dietary sources that can contribute to maintaining adequate levels.

**B Vitamins**  
B vitamins, including B6, B9 (folate), and B12, are essential for immune cell development and function. Whole grains, leafy greens, beans, and lean meats are good dietary sources of these important nutrients.

**Summing up**  
A well-balanced and nutrient-dense diet is a powerful tool in fortifying our immune system against mosquito-borne illnesses. While it is crucial to employ physical protection, our dietary choices can significantly impact our body's ability to combat these diseases. By incorporating foods abundant in vitamin C, zinc, omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants, and immune-boosting spices like garlic and turmeric, we can build a vigorous defence mechanism that guards against infections. With proper hydration and the inclusion of vitamin D and B vitamins, we can equip our bodies with the resources needed to repel the threats posed by mosquitoes.

Informed food choices aid to reduce the burden of mosquito-borne illnesses. (The writer is nutritionist, at Nupuur Patil Fitness)



NUPUUR PATIL

### GRIEF OF PET LOSS

Sir — The profound impact of pet loss on pet parents cannot be underestimated. Pets, offering laughter and stress relief, seamlessly integrate into their owners' lives, creating an inseparable bond. The void left by the departure of a beloved pet is often impossible for others to fill.

Coping with the loss of a pet presents challenges, as mishandling it can result in profound distress. Although society tends to overlook the pain of losing a pet, the anguish is comparable to losing a human family member. This societal disparity underlines the lack of acceptance for pet loss. Heartless taunts from bystanders, branding grieving individuals as "crazy," demonstrate an inability to comprehend the depth of this pain. The complexities intensify as rituals for the passing of animals remain largely unknown. The grief stemming from losing a pet is overwhelming, but finding solace in support groups composed of those who understand the love and grief for a companion animal is invaluable. Surrounding those grieving with emotional support is crucial, without resorting to labeling them as irrational. Instead of advising a replacement pet or diversion, encouraging open expression of their grief is essential. To aid individuals in coping with pet loss, initiatives like Blue Cross, Goodbye Tails, and Bridging Rainbows should expand their reach to various cities.

Gourja Soni | Delhi

### TRANSFORMING EDUCATION POLICY

Sir — Karnataka's role as a pioneering state in implementing the National Education Policy (NEP) has taken a new direction. While it initially embraced the NEP, the state is now charting a course to phase it out for higher education. This decision will nullify the applicability of NEP's Undergraduate (UG) and Postgraduate (PG) norms in colleges and universities across Karnataka from the next academic year.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah affirmed that a specialized committee, uniting rep-

representatives from school and higher education departments, will sculpt a bespoke state education policy. This measured shift reflects the state's assertion to prioritize its educational landscape over a uniform national approach. Siddaramaiah acknowledged that while discarding NEP is a significant move, proper preparation must precede such decisions. He also pointed out the policy's divisive reception, citing widespread opposition among students, educators, and parents. Challenges highlighted by university vice-chancellors include the shortage of qualified faculty for NEP's multidisciplinary courses.

This transformation entails shifting from NEP's restructured UG and PG norms, heralding a comprehensive shift in higher education philosophy. As institutes evolve, graded autonomy will empower institutions, ensuring their autonomy in academic, administrative, and financial matters. While Karnataka's departure from NEP sets a precedent, its implications are far-reaching, with potential cascading effects on the country's education.

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandarhar

### ERADICATING MENACE OF RAGGING

Sir — The tragic incident at Jadavpur University serves as a stark reminder of the rampant menace of ragging that permeates India's educational institutions. Though legal safeguards exist, the efficacy of measures hinges on resolute implementation, public awareness campaigns, and a no-tolerance stance. The redefinition of ragging's scope is pivotal to ensure accountability under the law. Addressing this crisis requires united efforts from the government, educational institutions, and society. Viewing ragging as more than exuberance is essential; its detrimental effects on individuals and communities must be acknowledged. By nurturing an atmosphere of respect and support, students can flourish unburdened by fear. A collective action against this deeply ingrained problem is required to make educational environment free from all aberrations.

Amarjeet Kumar | Hazaribagh

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



## FIRST COLUMN

## BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING

We need to teach our girls that there is no limit to a woman's strength



SAKSHI SETHI

Our world is a better place when all people are accepted for their talent, skills and abilities regardless of their gender. For ages, women have been a victim of the glass ceiling. Glass ceiling is a metaphor that is used to depict invisible barriers given to women to prevent them from rising beyond the system. The barrier exists due to a pre-conception of gender roles, age, colour, wages and many more. The roadmap to success doesn't even exist for women. In one of the researches, it was found that the ratio of women in executive positions is massively unequal, especially in Asia and the Pacific region. Simultaneously, in developed countries too, the situation is not too gloomy.

The status quo has always been a boy's club and women have never been considered taking leadership roles.

In the words of Sudha Murthy, "women of today play a critical role in the success of entrepreneurs." She explains the importance of dedication, sacrifice and strength that goes into building remarkable ventures. Success is not merely achieving milestones, but breaking down barriers that pave the way for others. With inspiring numbers, women of today are inspiring and guiding others, especially igniting the hearts of future generations.

Inspiring Indian women such as Indra Nooyi (Former CEO of PepsiCo); Kiran Mazumdar Shaw (Founder and CEO of Biocon); Smriti Irani (Minister of Women and Child Development in India); Akshata Murty (Director of Catamaran Ventures) and many more show that with determination and perseverance, women can break glass ceilings and achieve their goals. Every one of them has been a trailblazer and has been recognised fully in their work. Not only this but from Nirmala Sitharaman, becoming the 1st full-time finance minister of India to PV Sindhu being the Badminton World Championship, women have always proved themselves to be equally at par with their male counterparts. Furthermore, personalities such as Hekani Jakhlu and Salhoutuonuo Kruse also became the first women to be elected to the 60-member Nagaland Assembly since the State came into being in 1963.



In the corporate world, the term "glass ceiling" is still very much a part of today as it was years ago. As stated before, glass ceilings are still found in the workplaces, not only in the discrimination of pay scales but also marked by sexual harassment, exploitation at work and a feeling of insecurity in women due to conduct of the opposite sex. Since ages, the time a woman takes birth, they have been considered to be a liability and to break this stereotype thinking, it becomes the need of the hour to educate the men of today in this respect thereby, giving equal opportunities and encouragement to break the barrier to gender equality.

Remember, one should never doubt themselves, there are plenty of people who will do that. Behind every great woman, there will be another woman whispering, "you've got this" in her ear. There are always going to be people who don't believe a woman can stand on her two feet and create something of her own but the fact is she can and she is doing it.

We need to teach our daughters and sisters that there is no limit to a woman's strength and ambition. They should also be taught to worry less about fitting into the glass slippers and more about shattering glass ceilings, thereby uplifting each other while at the same time embracing femininity, as there is beauty in it. Every revolution needs a soundtrack.

(The writer is an educator)

# Religion is a matter of choice, not force



BISWAJEET BANERJEE



LUBNA JERAR NAQVI

Forced conversions spark concerns in India and Pakistan. The well-being and rights of all individuals, regardless of their faith, must be ensured

Forced conversions of women have emerged as a pressing issue in both India and Pakistan, casting a shadow over the principles of individual freedom, religious choice, and societal harmony. As the spotlight intensifies on these disconcerting practices, civil society activists, legal experts, and concerned citizens are grappling with the complexities surrounding this contentious matter.

In India, the focal point of concern revolves around the conversion of women from the majority community, stirring restiveness among various segments of the population. Activists, while recognizing the sacrosanct right of individuals to alter their faith, invoke the provisions of the Special Marriage Act, which legally sanctions interfaith unions. Indian courts have generally upheld the rights of couples choosing diverse religious paths. However, across the border in Pakistan, the scenario is marred by a polarizing debate over the legitimacy of conversions.

Pakistan witnesses a parallel but distinct narrative. Here, activists and lawyers are increasingly raising their voices against the conversion of women hailing from minority communities. These women, often hailing from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, find themselves with limited agency in these life-altering decisions. The dilemma faced by courts in Pakistan is rooted in the absence of pertinent legal frameworks and the paradox of converted women claiming contentment when produced in court.

Civil society activists in both countries underscore the bewildering disarray caused by the relatively small number of interfaith unions and conversions. The stark numerical disparities further highlight the disproportionate social turmoil emanating from these cases. Pakistan's demographic composition portrays a mere three per cent representation of Hindus and Christians, while in India, Muslims account for 15 per cent of the populace. Astonishingly, despite their numerical insignificance, these conversions incite significant societal disruptions.

The paradox is striking. India has seen the emergence of controversial "anti-love jihad" statutes and laws aimed at criminalizing the conversion of Hindu women to Islam and their subsequent marriages with Muslim men. Meanwhile, in Pakistan, the discourse predominantly revolves around the conversion of women from Hindu and Christian minorities. Astonishingly, instances involving Hindu men converting to marry Muslim women, or vice versa, remain virtually non-existent in both countries.

The legal frameworks governing these issues also diverge. In India, the Special Marriage Act offers a legal avenue for couples to retain their respective faiths while solemnizing their unions, safeguarding the bedrock of personal freedom and choice. On the contrary, Pakistan's legal landscape remains devoid of comparable legislation, rendering converted women with limited legal recourse.

M. Shoaib Ashraf, a human rights activist and advocate at the Pakistan Supreme Court, emphasizes that authentic religious conversion must emanate from sincere belief, untainted by ulterior motives.

A watershed moment in India came through the historic ruling delivered by Chief Justice of Indian Supreme Court Justice DY Chandrachud, unequivocally



affirming the indomitable prerogative of individuals to select life partners, irrespective of religious affiliations. This judgment underscored the impervious realm of personal privacy and the Constitution's unwavering defence of religious liberty.

Similarly, the Lahore High Court in Pakistan acknowledged religion as a deeply personal conviction, refraining from overstepping into these matters.

Despite this, both countries have, unfortunately, witnessed instances of subterfuge and deceit in the context of forced conversions, often culminating in tragic consequences.

Recent developments in India have ushered in the Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance in Uttar Pradesh. This legislative initiative has culminated in numerous arrests, with a predominant number of cases involving Muslim individuals, who are accused of luring and coercing women into conversion.

The most recent legislative addition making waves is the Uttarakhand Freedom of Religion (Amendment Act), 2022. This freshly minted legal framework, duly passed by the Uttarakhand assembly, introduces significant revisions to the preexisting Freedom of Religion Act of 2018. The crux of this amendment lies in its stance against coercive or deceptive conversion practices.

Under the new amendments, any individual found attempting to induce religious conversion through methods involving "misrepresentation, force, undue influence, coercion, allurement, or fraudulent means" could face a hefty penalty of Rs. 50,000. This legal stride is accompanied by the categorization of such actions as both cognizable and non-bailable offences. If proven guilty, the offender could be sentenced to a minimum of 3 years in prison, with a potential extension of

up to 10 years. Moreover, the amendment introduces the requirement for the convicted individual to provide compensation of Rs. 5 lakhs to the aggrieved party, adding a financial dimension to the consequences.

Contrastingly, the Jharkhand Freedom of Religion Act, 2017, takes a distinct approach. It levies a milder penalty for converting adults from upper castes, encompassing a three-year imprisonment term or a fine of Rs. 50,000, or potentially both. Conversely, conversion involving individuals from Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), women, or minors is met with more stringent punishment, carrying a four-year prison sentence and a fine of Rs. 1 lakh, or both.

Similarly, the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance, 2020, underscores a focus on heightened penalties. It places an emphasis on safeguarding lower castes, Adivasis, minors, and women from undue influence, enacting penalties of greater severity for those involved in their conversion.

The first anti-Conversion bill that was passed by the Odisha government in 1967, Cynthia Stephen in her EPW paper Anti-Conversion legislation in Karnataka notes when the state passed the bill, the Christian population of the state was around 2 lakhs, 1.1% of the population in comparison to 1.7 crores Hindus. Madhya Pradesh also followed the Odisha line and in 1968, passed its first Freedom of Religion bill. Notably, as per the 2011 census the Christian population in Madhya Pradesh stands at 0.29%.

In essence, these recent legislative moves reflect a commitment to curbing undesirable religious conversion practices, while simultaneously aiming to maintain a balance between religious freedom and the prevention of coercive or deceptive tactics.

Pakistan, grappling with the absence of a specialized legal framework against forced conversions, has compelled affected families to resort to existing laws about abduction, forced marriages, child marriages, and the rape of minors to seek justice. Activists underline the misleading nature of a victim's proclamation of voluntary conversion and stress the necessity of nuanced consideration in such intricate situations.

Jibran Nasir, an advocate, and lead campaigner, accentuates the intricate nature of consent in such cases, contending that apparent satisfaction may belie underlying coercion. Data emanating from the Center for Social Justice in Pakistan unveils the highest reported instances of alleged forced conversions in Punjab (52%) and Sindh (44%) between the years 2013 and 2020.

Regrettably, despite the clarion directives emanating from the Supreme Court of Pakistan, endeavours to enact comprehensive legislation against forced conversions have faltered repeatedly at both the provincial and national levels. Frustratingly, even in cases where legislative frameworks have been drafted, their passage has been hamstrung, despite unambiguous directives from the apex court.

In Pakistan, a provision allowing courts to provide victims with a respite in "darul aman" (places of safety) has been incorporated to facilitate contemplation in such circumstances. However, the overarching absence of well-rounded legal measures continues to loom large over addressing this intricate matter, intertwining the fundamental tenets of freedom, consent, and justice. As India and Pakistan grapple with these weighty issues, it remains imperative for societies to engage in a thoughtful and nuanced discourse to ensure the well-being and rights of all individuals, regardless of their faith.



DESPIE THE CLARION DIRECTIVES EMANATING FROM THE SUPREME COURT OF PAKISTAN, ENDEAVOURS TO ENACT COMPREHENSIVE LEGISLATION AGAINST FORCED CONVERSIONS HAVE FALTERED REPEATEDLY

(Banerjee is Political Editor, The Pioneer Lucknow, while Lubna is a senior journalist based in Karachi)

# Natural dye-substitutes are an excellent choice

Standardisation of natural dyeing for textiles will pave the way for a sustainable tomorrow

Ever since the world became a global village with the advent of the internet and new-age technology, businesses all over the world have seen all-around growth in the past few decades. However, with an increase in opportunity came the responsibility of selling and buying genuine products tested against well-defined standards across industries.

The textile industry is also no exception when it comes to manufacturing standardised products that are tested for their quality through a series of certification protocols. The testing and certification of the products are not only in the interest of the buyer but also help brands become synonymous



YAWER ALI SHAH

(The writer is a member of the BIS committee & group leader of the natural dyes mark and ISO standard and co-founder of AMA Herbal)

with authenticity and trust. Until a few years ago, it was difficult to decipher if a certain textile product was coloured using synthetic or natural dyes.

Textile colourants (natural and synthetic) have added value to the desires of consumers. In ancient times, the processing of dyeing was done using colours from natural sources until synthetic dyes were introduced into commercial practice and started being used widely by textile dyers. Almost all synthetic colourants are synthesised using petrochemical sources and pose a grave threat to the environment. Hence, the growing consciousness of preferring eco-friendly products has renewed the interest of consumers and manufacturers in the use of eco-friendly natural dyes. Following the increase in demand and awareness, commercial dyers and textile export businesses have started re-looking at using natural dyes for dyeing a variety of textiles and enhancing the market for eco-friendly colourants.

Not only do natural dyes prevent environmental hazards, but they also produce soft shades that are skin-friendly compared to synthetic dyes, which are available at an economical price but often cause skin allergies.

The extraction of colour components from the source in natural dyeing is an important step to optimise the colour yield. The impediments in creating trust in the

global markets towards natural dyes have been a gradual process that has been through the journey of formulating certification protocols for natural dyes that are indigenous to India.

Any standardisation in our country cannot be called foolproof unless it has achieved the parameters set under the Bureau of Indian Standards, which is the apex body for setting up standard protocols for all consumer products. A special panel was also set up to prepare certification protocols for indigenous dye products by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). The journey started as early as 2007-08 when we roped in IIT Kanpur to develop standards for testing natural dyes. This is the first project

in the world under which a certification protocol has been developed for natural dye products.

My association with the Textile Specialty Chemicals and Dyestuffs Sectional Committee, TxD 07, BIS Committee of the Textiles Department for the last 7 years has resulted in achieving significant milestones as a nation. After extensive work, the committee has been successful in formulating three benchmarks on natural colours, which include Standards on Natural Indigo, Rubia Madar, Katha, Lac, Punica Granatum, Rheum Emody, Canna Indica, Gulmehandi, Teak, and Arjun Bark.

India, being a project leader in the standardisa-

tion of natural materials for textiles, has also developed three ISO standards on natural dyes. These include the standards for Madder, Catechu, lac, and Punica Granatum. The demand for natural dyes has increased tremendously over the past decades. This has created a need for standardisation as there is a vast pool of players and products in the market. The presence of the ECO logo along with the ISI Mark on a product dye indicates that it offers the best quality requirements as specified in the relevant Indian Standard and is eco-friendly, which consumes less water and energy in its making.

It is due to hard work and determination that the textile industry in India has started

paying special attention to the use of natural dyes in place of chemical dyes. Our country is taking giant leaps in propagating the wide use of natural dyes, in line with the intention of the Indian government. When we use synthetic dye, 5.6 kg of carbon footprints are generated by dyeing 10 kg of cotton fabric.

Currently, we have numerous natural options available for natural dye substitutes. Among many things, a lot of money will be required to reduce the carbon footprint during the production process. It has also been proven in life cycle analysis (LCA) reports that the use of natural dyes can reduce the carbon footprint manifold as compared to synthetic dyes.

MONEY MATTERS

### AICTE partners with Jio for faculty development programme

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has partnered with Jio Institute for a faculty development programme on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Science, according to a release. Jio Institute, known for its AI and DS programme, will serve as the host institution for the five-day residential faculty development programme. AICTE has collaborated with Jio Institute to introduce a faculty development programme on AI and data science, the release said, adding AICTE Chairman TG Sitharam will inaugurate the programme on August 21, 2023. The initiative will offer academic leaders and senior faculty members a deep understanding of AI and Data Science while also emphasising the ethical considerations of utilising AI tools for immersive learning. The programme will provide intensive training to 40 selected AICTE members, including faculty. With a wide range of topics, including Data Visualization, Natural Language Processing, Time Series and Optimisation, Applications, Generative AI and Large Language Models.



### Rupee falls 1 paise to close at all-time low of 83.10 against US \$

The rupee edged lower by 1 paise to settle at an all-time low of 83.10 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday, weighed down by a negative trend in domestic equities and foreign fund outflows. Forex traders said the rupee is likely to trade with a negative bias on risk aversion in global markets and a rising US dollar. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 83.03 against the dollar and moved in a range of 83.02 to 83.13 in the day trade. It finally ended the day at 83.10 (provisional), registering a fall of 1 paise from its previous close. On Thursday, the rupee settled lower by 1 paise at a record low of 83.09 against the US dollar. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.11 per cent to 103.46. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, declined 0.32 per cent to USD 83.85 per barrel.



### 250 exhibitors to showcase solutions Machine Tool Expo

Over 250 exhibitors are expected to participate and display their technology solutions at Delhi Machine Tool Expo (DMTX 2023) to be held here next week, according to a statement. The fourth edition of the Delhi Machine Tool Expo (DMTX 2023) organised by the Indian Machine Tool Manufacturers' Association (IMTMA), will be held at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi from August 24-27, 2023, the statement said. Both Indian and foreign exhibitors are expected to participate and connect with more than 15,000 visitors that are expected to attend the expo. The previous edition of the show held in Pragati Maidan in 2017 had evoked a good response from the manufacturing industry. Machine tool manufacturers who participated in the show were able to expand their range, IMTMA President Ravi Raghavan said, adding that he expects DMTX 2023 would help them build on to their earlier success and reach out to many more industries in the northern region of India.



## RBI to banks: Give fixed rate option on EMI-based loans

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The RBI on Friday directed banks to allow individual borrowers paying loans through EMIs to opt for fixed interest rate system or extension of loan tenor, a move aimed at preventing loanees from falling into the trap of negative amortisation, in wake of rising interest rate.

The interest rates have moved northward since May 2022 after the central bank started raising the benchmark lending rate (repo) in a bid to check inflation following the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war.

As a result of 250 basis points increase in the repo rate, a large number of borrowers faced negative amortisation, wherein the Equated Monthly Instalment (EMI) works out to be less than the interest obligation, resulting in persistent increase of the principal amount.

RBI said that at the time of sanction of EMI-based floating



rate personal loans, banks and NBFCs should take into account the repayment capacity of borrowers to ensure that adequate headroom is available for elongation of tenor and/or increase in EMI, if interest rate rises. Home, auto and other personal loans are linked to external benchmark rates, like repo rate.

RBI said several consumer grievances have been received in relation to elongation of loan tenor or increase in EMI amount with regard to EMI-

based floating rate personal loans, without proper communication or consent of the borrowers.

"At the time of reset of interest rates, REs shall provide the option to the borrowers to switch over to a fixed rate as per their Board-approved policy. The policy...may also specify the number of times a borrower will be allowed to switch during the tenor of the loan," RBI said in a circular to banks and NBFCs, including housing finance companies.

### RBI bars banks from levying penal interest

MUMBAI: Concerned over the practice of banks and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) using penal interest as a revenue enhancement tool, the Reserve Bank on Friday came out with modified norms, under which lenders will be able to levy only "reasonable" penal charges in case of default in repayment of loans. The banks and other lending institutions will not be allowed to levy penal interest with effect from January 1, 2024, the RBI said in its notification on 'Fair Lending Practice-Penal Charges in Loan Accounts'. "Penalty, if charged, for non-compliance of material terms and conditions of loan contract by the borrower shall be treated as 'penal charges' and shall not be levied in the form of 'penal interest' that is added to the rate of interest charged on the advances," RBI said.

## India on cusp of new era of economic prosperity: Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday India is making remarkable progress towards achieving equitable and collective prosperity as he cited some reports to assert the country stands at the cusp of a new era of economic progress and is on course to become developed by 2047.

In a post on LinkedIn, Modi said he recently came across two insightful research pieces which would interest all those passionate about India's economy: one from SBI Research and another by journalist Anil Padmanabhan. "These analyses shed light on something that should make us

very happy - that India is making remarkable progress on achieving equitable and collective prosperity," he said.

Sharing highlights from these reports, he said the SBI Research has pointed out (based on ITR returns) that the weighted mean income has made a commendable leap over the last nine years, from Rs 4.4 lakh in AY (assessment year) 14 to Rs 13 lakh in FY (financial year) 23.

Posting several data points from the two reports, he said these findings not only reflect India's collective efforts but also reiterate its potential as a nation. "Growing prosperity augurs well for national



progress. Undoubtedly, we are standing at the cusp of a new era of economic prosperity and are on course towards fulfilling our dream 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047," he said.

The prime minister had in

his 2022 Independence Day speech unveiled five resolves and making India a developed country by 2047 -- when the country would celebrate 100 years of Independence -- was one of them.

Since then, he has repeatedly framed his government's various measures around this goal while calling for removing ills like corruption and dynastic politics. In his post, the prime minister said Padmanabhan's study of ITR data suggests a widening tax base across income brackets and each of them has seen a minimum threefold increase in tax filings, some even achieving a nearly fourfold surge.

### Info Edge to invest Rs 10 cr in SaaS subsidiary Zwayam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Naukri.com parent Info Edge (India) Ltd on Friday said it will invest Rs 10 crore in its wholly-owned subsidiary Zwayam Digital Pvt Ltd.

The investment is being done to meet the working capital requirement of Zwayam, Info Edge said in a statement. Incorporated in 2015, Zwayam provides SaaS-based sourcing and screening recruitment solutions. Info Edge acquired the company in June. Zwayam had a turnover of Rs 38.53 crore and a net profit of Rs 2.55 crore in the last fiscal.

"The Company has agreed to acquire 1,000,000-0.0001% Compulsorily Convertible Debentures ("CCDs") having face value of Rs. 100/- each. Post this investment, Zwayam remains the wholly-owned subsidiary of the Company," Info Edge said.

## Sensex falls below 65k; IT, metal stocks weigh on weak global trend

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark index Sensex buckled under selling pressure for the second straight session to close below the 65k mark on Friday, as investors offloaded IT, tech and metal energy stocks amid a bearish global trend.

Besides, fresh foreign fund outflows also hit investor sentiments, traders said. In a volatile trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 202.36 points or 0.31 per cent to settle at 64,948.66. During the day, it fell by 396.3 points or 0.60 per cent to 64,754.72.

The NSE Nifty dipped 55.10 points or 0.28 per cent to end at 19,310.15. "Concerns regarding inflation and shifts in investor preferences towards safer assets dampened overall market sentiment for domestic equities. Fears of a Fed rate



hike, coupled with a decline in global equities, exerted additional downward pressure, specifically on IT stocks.

"Higher US bond yields and default risk in China are poised to prompt FIIs to adopt a more prudent stance when considering investments in emerging markets," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. Tata Consultancy Services

was the biggest laggard in the Sensex list, falling 2.14 per cent, followed by Tech Mahindra & Mahindra, Infosys, Power Grid, Wipro, Bajaj Finserv and Bajaj Finance.

In contrast, Reliance Industries, Maruti, Nestle, Axis Bank, Hindustan Unilever and Tata Motors were among the gainers. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended in the negative territory.

European markets were trading down. The US markets ended lower on Thursday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.46 per cent to USD 83.73 a barrel.

### M&M gets Rs 14.3L penalty notice

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd on Friday said it has been imposed a penalty of over Rs 14.3 lakh for incorrect input tax credit availed during the transition from the excise regime to the GST regime by erstwhile Mahindra Vehicle Manufacturers Ltd, which has since been merged into it.

In a regulatory filing, the company said, based on its assessment, prevailing law and the advice of the counsel, it is hopeful of a favourable outcome at the appellate level.

"The company has received an order from Joint Commissioner, CGST & Central Excise, Pune-I Commissionerate imposing a penalty of Rs 14,31,571 under applicable provisions of the CGST Act, 2017 in relation to erstwhile Mahindra Vehicle Manufacturers Ltd (MVML)," the filing said.

It further said, "The order has been passed on the basis that incorrect input tax credit (ITC) has been availed during the transition from excise regime to GST regime by MVML, and the authority has ordered for recovery of the same along with interest."

The order dated July 20, 2023 was received by the company on August 17, 2023, it added.

## RBI issues revised guidelines for IDF-NBFCs

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Infrastructure Debt Fund-NBFCs (IDF-NBFCs) will now be required to have a net owned fund (NOF) of at least Rs 300 crore, said the Reserve Bank's revised norms for such entities issued on Friday.

Besides, they should have a capital-to-risk weighted assets ratio (CRAR) of minimum 15 per cent (with minimum Tier 1 capital of 10 per cent).

RBI said a review of the guidelines applicable to IDF-NBFCs has been undertaken in

order to enable them play a greater role in financing of the infrastructure sector and to harmonise the regulations governing financing of infrastructure sector by NBFCs. The review has been undertaken in consultation with Government of India.

An IDF-NBFC is a company registered as NBFC to facilitate the flow of long-term debt into infrastructure projects. It raises resources through issue of rupee or dollar-denominated bonds of minimum 5-year maturity. Only Infrastructure Finance

Companies (IFC) can sponsor IDF-NBFCs. "IDF-NBFC shall raise funds through issue of either rupee or dollar-denominated bonds of minimum five-year maturity," said the revised regulatory framework for IDF-NBFCs.

With a view to facilitating better asset-liability management (ALM), IDF-NBFCs can raise funds through shorter tenor bonds and commercial papers (CPs) from the domestic market to the extent of up to 10 per cent of their total outstanding borrowings, it added.

## India becoming global investment destination: V K Singh

PNS ■ CHENNAI

With the Centre's focus on development and infrastructure, the country has gained the trust of many countries, which have come forward to invest in India, Minister of State for Road Transport, Highways and Civil Aviation Gen V K Singh, said on Friday.

The kind of environment being created in India has made the country an ideal global investment destination, he said and appealed to youngsters to utilise the opportunity and come up in life.

"About 162 countries have invested in 62 different sectors in 31 states and union territo-



ries in India. This reflects the growing trust these countries place on India," he said speaking at the 38th annual convocation of Vellore Institute of

Technology (VIT), near here. "So, you should work harder to garner (sic) the opportunity coming in," he said and recalled the Centre's efforts in

providing a conducive atmosphere for StartUps. "There's no shortcut to success, though it is written in books. It all depends on how committed, hardworking and knowledgeable you are," the minister, who represents the Ghaziabad constituency in Parliament, said.

He advised the graduates not to stick to one solution for all problems but seek solutions in a pragmatic way.

"Education is what you gather as part of the environment in the institution. This adds to your personality. Education is what you have learnt and how you will apply it, how you develop an open mind and analyse things," Singh said.

## Reliance's financial unit to list on bourses on Aug 21

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Jio Financial Services, the demerged financial services unit of Reliance Industries, will be listed on bourses on August 21, according to an exchange notification.

Jio Financial Services Ltd (JFSL) demerged from Reliance last month and is currently listed under a dummy ticker after its price discovery at Rs 261.85 but there is no trading happening in the scrip.

The listing on BSE and NSE has been scheduled a day before FTSE Russell plans to drop

JFSL from its indices. The index services provider said it took the decision as the stock was yet to start trading on bourses.

"Trading Members of the Exchange are hereby informed that effective from Monday, August 21, 2023, the equity shares of Jio Financial Services Ltd (formerly known as Reliance Strategic Investments Limited) shall be listed and admitted to dealings on the Exchange in the list of T Group of Securities," BSE said in a notice.

The scrip, which will be abbreviated JIOFIN, will be in the Trade-for-Trade segment

for 10 trading days, it said.

Reliance Industries demerged its financial services undertaking into RSIL (Reliance Strategic Investments Ltd), which was renamed as JFSL (Jio Financial Services Ltd). Shareholders got one JFSL share for each Reliance share they held.

The shares of JFSL were credited to the Demat account of shareholders last week.

JFSL will offer a broad range of financial services solutions and has plans to expand operations into insurance, digital payment and asset management verticals.

## Gadkari expresses dismay over inadequate response to CAG

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari has expressed dismay over the inadequate response to questions raised by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) which resulted in controversy over the cost of construction of Dwarka Expressway in Delhi.

According to ministry sources, Gadkari has conveyed his displeasure with the lopsided attitude adopted by certain officials responsible for responding to queries raised by the CAG with regard to the cost of construction of the Dwarka Expressway at a high-level review meeting on

Thursday. The source said that the minister also directed to fix the responsibility of this lapse on the part of senior concerned officials.

Earlier in the month, a political row erupted on the CAG report which flagged the high cost of construction of the Dwarka Expressway.

Earlier the ministry sources had said that in the absence of an adequate response from the ministry and the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI), the CAG adopted an incorrect methodology for computing the cost of Dwarka Expressway.

They also explained that the CAG has simply divided the total cost of construction of Rs



91,000 crore (expenditure) under National Corridor Efficiency Programme with the project's entire length of 5,000 kilometres under development.

They had said the CAG has itself noted that the cost of con-

struction of Rs 18.2 crore per kilometre does not include the cost norms for flyovers, ring roads, etc.

They were of the view that the expressway in question has elevated roads, underpasses, tunnels and other components

which were not part of the project. The cost of Rs 91,000 crore for 5,000 km under Bharatmala Phase-I project was finalised by the ministry on August 10, 2016, for the year 2016-17 to the extent possible.

The ministry sources had claimed that the government saved over 12 per cent in construction cost against estimates in awarding contracts for the expressway. They pointed out that the CAG findings that the cost was exorbitant are misplaced as the auditor did not factor in the actual cost.

According to reports, the CAG had found that the NHAI decision to go for an elevated carriageway on the Haryana portion of the Dwarka

Expressway pushed up the construction cost to Rs 251 crore per kilometre from Rs 18.2 crore per km estimated earlier.

The audit report on the implementation of Phase-I of the 'Bharatmala Pariyojana' highway projects, triggered a political row with the opposition parties alleging corruption in the process of awarding the project.

The ministry sources had explained that all four packages of Dwarka Expressway were put for tender at an average civil cost of Rs 206.39 crore per kilometre but the contracts were finally awarded at a lower rate of Rs 181.94 crore per km.

## NLC India inks pact to supply 300 MW solar power to Rajasthan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned NLC India (NLCIL) has inked a pact to supply 300 MW of solar power for 25 years to Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam under the CPSU scheme.

NLCIL is presently having 1,421 MW of Renewable Energy Capacity. As per its corporate plan, it contemplates establishing 6,031 MW capacity by 2030, a statement said. NLC India has entered into a long-term power usage agreement with Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam Limited to supply 300 MW of solar power under the CPSU Scheme in Rajasthan, it added.

The company has secured 510 MW solar project capacity in the CPSU Scheme Phase-II



Tranche-III, floated by Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) through competitive bidding.

The 300 MW solar project capacity is under execution at Barsingsar, Bikaner District, Rajasthan. The EPC (engineering procurement construction) contract for the project has been awarded to TATA power solar systems through competitive bidding.



# IF STORY APPEALS TO ME, I'M HAPPY TO BE A DAMSEL IN DISTRESS

Nushratt Bharuccha believes in picking up scripts that resonate with her and the actor says she is not averse to playing a "damsel in distress" if it is backed by a good story.

The actor, known for her roles in films such as *Pyaar Ka Punchnama*, *Aakash Vaani*, *Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweeti*, *Chhorri* and *Dream Girl*, said there are films and stories where somebody comes to save the girl and they are equally interesting.

"I find that journey and that story of how she gets saved by someone also very interesting. It's just about the story... If the story appeals to me, I'm happy to be a damsel in distress and (wait for) a hero coming and saving me. It's absolutely fine," the actor told *PTI* in an interview.

In her upcoming *Akelli*, Bharuccha plays Jyoti, a woman who gets stuck in war-torn Iraq and attempts to make her way back to India to reunite with her family. The story is about a woman's fight for survival in an extremely difficult situation, which instantly hooked the actor.

"How she is stuck, where she's stuck and how she's trying to go back to her loved ones in India... In such situations, somebody would've given up. They would have said it is daunting and too big a thing. But she fought for it. So her entire story was very interesting to do," Bharuccha said.

Scheduled to be released in theatres on August 25, *Akelli* is directed by first-time filmmaker Pranay Meshram.

Bharuccha said the film was narrated to her three years ago but she declined the offer as she felt it was not the "kind of film I want to do right now".

But the team stuck around and approached her casting director Vicky Sidana to convince the actor.

"I think what happened was the whole team came together with the right intention of wanting to make a good film and telling this story as honestly and truthfully as possible. When I met them a couple of times, I was like, 'These are a bunch of good guys who want to make a good film.' Very rarely you see actors taking that leap of faith when there is

a new director, new producer and new team," Bharuccha said.

*Akelli* is her third film as the main lead after *Chhorri* (2021) and *Janhit Mein Jaari* (2022).

Bharuccha said her confidence in carrying a film on her shoulders has definitely grown but she believes an actor can only do so much.

"Maybe the confidence has gone up where I know that I will deliver the performance and the story that I've been given. But that's actually all an actor can do. If the director, producer or the person selling the film don't know their jobs, I can't correct that," she added.

The person who is the face of the film has a very small role to play in its success, according to Bharuccha.

"There's a lot of other machinery and parts that are working in cohesion for that whole thing to happen and get the right result. If one thing or another goes up or down, it will all fall on my face. But that's the truth of it. I can only do so much," she said.

Going forward, the actor said she will continue to take up projects that will appeal to her, otherwise she will say no to them.

"As actors, we are accustomed to hearing a no, that 'you don't fit into this part', 'hi, we've cast somebody else', or 'you just don't work for this part anymore'. But they should be open to hearing a no from us as well. So if I don't like it, I'm saying no," Bharuccha added.

*Akelli* is produced by Dashami Studioz' Nitin Vaidya, Ninad Vaidya, Aparna Padgaonkar along with Vicky Sidana and Shashant Shah.

Israeli actors Tsahi Halevi and Amir Boutrous, best known for featuring in the series *Fauda*, are making their Indian film debut with the project.



# what's brewing?

## Britney Spears to continue work on new album amid ongoing divorce

Britney Spears has now decided to continue working on her new album amid her ongoing divorce battle with her estranged husband Sam Asghari, with whom things have not been going well in the past seven years of their relationship.

According to *Page Six*, "She has an upcoming writers camp and is getting songs from some big artistes".

Another source reported that Britney is currently "focused" on her highly anticipated memoir/tell-all, *The Woman in Me*. The book will hit shelves on October 24, 2023.

"Ideally, she would love to do a record and maybe a song for the book release." As such, while solely paying attention to her upcoming book and new

album, it is very unlikely that the 41-year old could record and release an LP which can coincide with the book's release.

Nonetheless, recording a new song or two might be more feasible and is more likely than not a very big possibility.

It is also unclear if Britney will be sticking to her original release date because her memoir will definitely have some problems, due to her now defunct marriage.

Also, since it's a Tell-All, there will be additional references of her relationship, marriage and eventually split with Sam, leading her to do several redactions and rewrites.

Page Six also found out that the pop star had begun talking about "recording again and has gotten plenty of offers, some of which she's turned down", one which includes a collaboration with Beyonce.

"The beauty of Britney being free again is that she gets to call the shots for the first time in a very long time, and she'll do it at her own pace," the source added.

In the divorce battle, Sam has accused Britney of cheating on him, as well as being uncouth, rude, malicious and violent, leading him to eventually moving out of the house.

### SAM ASGHARI ACCUSES BRITNEY OF PHYSICAL ABUSE, CHEATING WITH HOUSE STAFF MEMBER

After Sam Asghari filed for divorce from singer Britney Spears, it has been reported that the fitness trainer has accused his estranged wife of physical abuse and cheating with a house staff member.

According to sources with direct knowledge, the model frequently complained about the pop star getting physical with him during their six years together.

The sources tell *TMZ* there

have been numerous fights where security has had to step in, but in one instance there was no security in sight, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.

There was allegedly one occasion where the singer gave Sam a black eye while he was sleeping. She reportedly flew off the handle and began punching him. Despite the alleged shocking attack, Sam reportedly did not strike back, but was stunned as his wife pummeled him.

The alleged incident went down early this year, around the time Sam was photographed with a black eye and bite marks on his forearm. When paparazzi noticed the bruising and asked him about it, he tried to play it down and asked photographers not to shoot him. As for the cheating allegation, Sam reportedly believes that Britney hooked up with at least one male staff member at her house. The 29-year-old allegedly learned about the infidelity because he found footage of the staffer and the 41-year-old singer together in a compromising position.

Sam additionally claims Britney asked one staffer to shoot video of her naked.

*TMZ* further reports that the "Womanizer" songstress is in a fragile and hyper-sexualised state, which has contributed to her dangerous decision-making, making her a risk to her own safety.

While Sam has been acting as Britney's support system for a long time, her recent conduct reportedly was the last straw, leading him to file for divorce.

In his first statement since the split news, Sam wrote on his Instagram Story: "After 6 years of love and commitment to each other my wife and I have decided to end our journey together. We will hold onto the love and respect we have for each other and I wish her the best always."

He added, "S\*\*T happens." His representative Brandon Cohen, meanwhile, has denied claims that he challenged the prenup.

"There are many claims that Sam is challenging the prenup and threatening to exploit his ex-wife with videos," the rep said in a statement issued to *The Hollywood Report*. "However, all these claims are false, as no negative intention has ever been directed towards her and never will be. Sam has always and will always support her."

## FUN

### ARCHIE



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### GARFIELD



### NANCY



### GINGER MEGGS



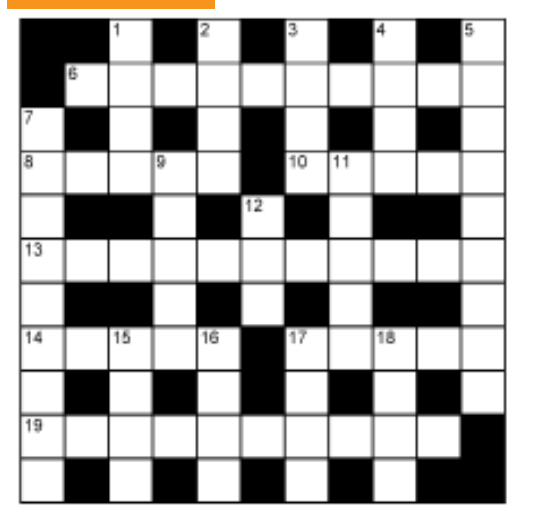
### REALITY CHECK



### SPEED BUMP



### CROSSWORD



#### ACROSS

- 6 Below
- 8 Frequently
- 10 Water vapour
- 13 Snapshots
- 14 Words that name
- 17 An item of furniture
- 19 A surge performs these

#### DOWN

- 9 Devoured
- 11 Give a lesson
- 12 How old someone is
- 15 Second-hand
- 16 The line where two pieces of cloth join together
- 17 A metal piece of money
- 18 A female relative



### SUDOKU

9	8							
7		4		1				9
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#### Yesterday's solution

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

- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
- The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

## ASMITA MARWA

# I am extremely glad about my South Indian heritage

ASMITA MARWA, IS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR FASHION DESIGNERS FROM HYDERABAD. IN THIS WEEK'S HYDERABAD COLUMN, SHE SPOKE ABOUT ROOTS NODDING TO HYDERABAD, AMONG OTHERS.

SHIKHA DUGGAL

She clearly thinks of fashion as something that evolves, so the popular designer from Hyderabad, ASMITA MARWA, is a great deal in the world of fashion in our city, especially. And sharing the shaggy-dog story about roots nodding to Hyderabad, we had a great time speaking to her.

"My love for the city grows each day. I am extremely proud of my South Indian heritage. I have had the opportunity to live in many places, but Hyderabad is where my heart belongs," says the designer, who believes in fusing the traditional with the global.

The pioneer in KALAMKARI, which really did take the fashion world by storm, chats more: "Hyderabad has always been very supportive, and I have built a business that is recognised and loved by all. Famous for its biryani and haleem, which I feel taste better when cooked at home rather than in a restaurant, I am so disappointed at the way the city is growing with no concern for the historical monuments or the rocks that have been there for over a billion years. I really hope there is some organisation or a body that can focus on the preservation of the same." So you can figure out how she's a lover of justice and finds it so difficult to

turn a blind eye to prejudice of any type.

Besides, she added, "I have spent a lot of time living in Goa, Mumbai, and even abroad in Germany. But I guess it is my roots, which are sown so deep that I can only call Hyderabad my home. Another aspect of it could be that it has seen a lot of successful designers. But unfortunately, very few are into sustainability at its core, which today is one of the most important aspects to look into in our fashion industry."

Marwa began designing clothes in Hyderabad in the 1990s! She was the first Hyderabad designer to enter the Telugu film industry. Numerous actors, including Nagarjuna, Balakrishna, Shriya, Mahesh Babu, Tabu, Asin, Charmy, and Anushka, have worn her clothes in films. So she goes on to share her fondest memory with us: "When I was young, I used to picnic at the secret lake, which is Durgam Cheruvu now. I dreamed of building a beautiful home close to the lake. And I guess I manifested it. The city has given me the opportunity to work at my own pace and have my atelier and studio at home, which is not something that is feasible in other fast-growing metropolitan cities. This lets me invest more time in my label and produce something creative."

Admitting that the city is ever-growing and has seen varied cultures, she spills the beans: "It still has to evolve to be more open and experimental and have acceptance when it comes to trends and fashion on a daily basis rather than just for an occasion."

And she very well knows how Hyderabad used to be a city of lakes, but the development has taken a toll on its beauty. And the lakes started disappearing into concrete jungles, which she's so critical about.



## 'Kiraak Hyderabad' redefines arm-wrestling by amalgamating his passion for rap & music

TEJAL SINHA

Looking at the sports scenario around the world, India has been on the verge of becoming a champion nation. Well, recently, India emerged as a double winner in cricket and hockey. In fact, even in football at the SAFF championship. As we talk of sports, another sport that's making it big is arm wrestling, and so yes, we can just not forget to thank championships like the Pro Panja League for bringing the sport to notice. Today, we have Hyderabad arm wrestler, Ahmed Faizan, who is making it big in the sport with his skills. Talking of table arm wrestling, a 'Pucca Hyderabad' that he is, he recalls properly starting doing it towards the end of 2018. "My brother has a school, IAS International School, and I had gone to a printing shop to get a banner printed for the school. On the adjacent computer, the Telangana Arm Wrestling Championship poster was being edited. I saw it and thought, 'Oh, is this a thing? There are arm wrestling championships?' But then I forgot about it. I was busy with my work. In the morning, I was jogging near a function hall when I saw the same poster again. I simply went inside and registered my name. I was like, 'Anyways, I am wrestle here and there.' I also used to be number 1 at arm wrestling in school." So there he was, registered his name, and was playing in the 80kg category. He then won the bronze medal, which not only gave him confidence but also gave him the thought that if this is an actual sport, then he can make something of himself here, and he joined an Arm Busters Club in Ramkoti, King Kothi. He began practising there, playing local tournaments and club matches. The second big match he played was the 2022 National in Hyderabad.

Faizan had also dreamt of becoming a football player but faced a setback due to an unfortunate accident during a club game in 2017. Battling depression, he decided to take control of his life by focusing on his fitness and embarking on an extensive workout programme at the gym. To date, football isn't just a game for him; it's his life. "Back then, it was like if I didn't touch football, I could neither eat nor digest food. I was very involved, but I never got the right guidance to go ahead. We had normal practise and improvisation in the game, but I never got a platform for it. Plus, there was also the matter of injuries. I mean, injuries are a part of normal practise. It was like every field had its own name and its own team. I used to play for the Nizam College side, Nizam College versus LB Stadium or Lal Bahadur Stadium versus Darulshifa. This is how the matches would take place. One time, there was a Nizam versus LB Stadium match. I was playing for the Nizam College team, and on the other side of the field, they were conducting practise for long jump. Parkour is a type of game where participants perform front flips, back flips, jumps on buildings, etc. I had that craziness in me. I was seventy kilograms at the time. In that game, I scored a goal and, in my excitement, did a front flip. My body was on the left side, and I landed straight on my legs, which led to a ligament injury. It was actually a severe injury, but I didn't take it seriously. I took a break for a day, and the next day I went to play. Which is why the injury kept getting severe." Back then, he wasn't very aware of the injuries. Well, he was just 19 years old back then. He had no in-depth knowledge about sports, and this injury took up a lot of his time. Initially, there were Sheru classes that started in Mumbai in 2019. At that point in time, Faizan hadn't learned much from arm wrestling. The local associations used to take people to Sheru classes for the Pro Panja league. However, he skipped it because he neither had the support of his family nor was financially stable. Seeing the videos where people had performed on stage made him feel pretty dejected. However, he started appreciating the Pro Panja League since he had never seen this level of arm wrestling before. The stage, the audience, the round table, the appreciation, and the entries made him feel like, "Can a palm be such a thing?" He then goes on, "I became serious about the game. I also write and rap, and I had written four raps at the time for my YouTube channel. I was just sitting one day when it occurred to me that I should write a song

on the 'Panja'. As I was sitting there, I caught a rhythm, got a book and a pen, and made a song. I wrote the anthem for the 'Pro Panja League'. It was only in the writing; it hadn't even been composed yet when I directly messaged Parvin sir on Instagram. He saw the message and asked me to send the song; he said he'd listen to it. I had sent the same message to three people. Another person also asked me to send it. It was like he was waiting. Then I properly started working on it. It took nearly four months for the song to be ready. But before that happened, the 2022 nationals had arrived in Hyderabad. There I met Parvin Dabas sir on the second or third day. I was sitting in the front; I was managing everything back then. I met him, spoke about the song, and reminded him that we'd spoken before. He was like, "Oh, is that you?" So actually, I had rapped there, on the national stage. Everybody enjoyed it a lot. "Impressive, isn't it?" "Then I went to Gwalior. Before I went, I had sent my song to Parvin Dabas, sir. As the date approached, I received tickets from Pro Panja, and I went to Gwalior. This Gwalior event was the first Pro Panja event I attended, and it was an incredible experience. The refereeship and the game were very clean. There, I achieved the eighth rank in the hundred-plus category. Before I went there, the song was ready. It was a promo song, and I got a call from Parvin sir saying, "Don't release the song. We'll launch it there, in Gwalior." And when I went there the first day, they opened it with the song. So I feel very grateful about this thing. I'm very thankful to Parvin, sir. I'm thankful to Allah, and I'm thankful for my hard work. Then the matches took place, and I came eighth in the 100+ category. After the final match, I got a chance to sing, and the federation enjoyed it. And this is my journey — how I started in Pro Panja. And you know, the first experience is the best experience. If you have a bad

Today, we have Hyderabad arm wrestler, Ahmed Faizan, who is making it big in the sport with his skills. He speaks about his journey, wrestling scene in India and more.

first experience, it leaves an impression in your mind. It makes you feel like this thing is bad and nothing worthwhile will come out of it. But when I came to Pro Panja, I felt like, Here, I can do something. I realised there that Pro Panja could rightly give back to the hard work that goes into arm wrestling."

He began his journey in arm wrestling at a time when there was not much awareness about it. In this regard, he considers himself special because he says, "Ever since I've started arm wrestling, I've never even once thought that this sport would take me nowhere. All the events I have attended so far have given me positive returns. You could say I've gotten fame, a name, an audience, and everything else. For instance, Parvin Dabas sir was paying me for the song, but I was like, No, this is for Pro Panja. I like making music. Parvin Dabas, sir, gave me such a big stage. I've gotten recognition here; no return could be bigger than that. So the whole thing with money, at least for now, I'm keeping aside. I am more inclined towards recognition. I want my name to be known so people can recognise me. Currently, money is not my intention."

Faizan feels grateful to be a part of Kiraak Hyderabad and shared that, though the members of the team are more experienced compared to him, they've always been a huge support to him. "Hyderabad has many players, many good players," he shares, adding, "If they come to the forefront, all the popular names will go down. I want people to come ahead. I will bring them ahead. There is some division because of federation disputes, but I want everyone to get a good, big platform. I was lucky. I got on such a big stage with relatively little hard work. And I'm very grateful for this. I am grateful to my parents and my elder brother, who supports me a lot. Hyderabad has a lot of good players, but they've left arm wrestling because they don't get any returns. They go to state tournaments, national tournaments, and open tournaments, but everywhere they have to spend their own money for accommodation, food, etc., and all they come back with is a medal. No footage at all. No recognition, no platform, nothing for the player's game, his passion. But now with Pro Panja, people, and even kids, are getting to know about it. The craze is increasing. You could say a new generation is getting involved in the game. The people who used to go for wrestling, the people who wanted to go for proper body building, have started shifting towards arm wrestling."

## Hidden clues in your gum colour for good health

When it comes to oral health, we often focus our attention on our teeth, their whiteness, and their alignment. However, there's a crucial player in the oral health game that often goes unnoticed: our gums. Beyond being a mere backdrop to our pearly whites, the colour of our gums can provide valuable insights into our overall health. Let's embark on a journey to understand the hidden clues that lie in the hues of your gum tissue.

### HEALTHY GUMS: THE IDEAL COLOUR PALETTE

Before we dive into the various gum colours and their implications, let's first establish what healthy gums should look like. Ideally, healthy gums should be pale pink. They should feel firm to the touch and fit snugly around each tooth, forming a protective barrier against bacteria and potential infection.

### READING THE COLOURS: WHAT YOUR GUMS SAY

**Pale pink:** As mentioned, a pale pink hue is the hallmark of healthy gums. This colour indicates good blood circulation and proper oxygen supply to the gum tissue. If your gums fall within this spectrum, your oral health is on the right track.

**Bright red:** If your gums are vibrant red, it might be a sign of inflammation, possibly due to gingivitis or gum disease. Redness often accompanies swelling and tenderness. If left untreated, this could progress to more serious periodontal issues.

**Bluish-purple:** Gums that appear bluish or purple may suggest poor circulation or an insufficient oxygen supply. This could be due to various factors, including respiratory problems, heart conditions, or even cold weather. If you notice persistent discoloration, it's essential to consult a healthcare professional.

**White spots:** White spots on the gums could indicate leukoplakia, which is a condition often caused by irritation, such as ill-fitting dentures or tobacco use. While not always harmful, it's crucial to have any unusual spots examined by a dentist.

**Brown or black spots:** The presence of dark spots on the gums could be attributed to melanin, which is a pigment responsible for the colouration of our skin. The majority of the time, this disease is risk-free and prevalent in those with darker skin tones. However, it is advised to have them checked by a dental expert if you observe any anomalies or changes in the look of these spots.

**Pale or whitish gums:** Extremely pale or whitish gums might be a sign of anaemia or a weakened immune system. These conditions can affect the body's ability to transport oxygen and fight infections effectively.

### MAINTAINING HEALTHY GUMS: YOUR ROLE

It's important to remember that gum colour is just one piece of the puzzle. Regular oral hygiene practises, such as brushing, flossing, and routine dental check-ups, play a vital role in keeping your gums and teeth healthy. If you notice any sudden or persistent changes in your gum colour, consult a dental professional to rule out any underlying issues.

In conclusion, your gums are not only the supporting cast for your teeth but also a window into your overall health. Their colour can reveal a wealth of information, from inflammation to potential systemic health concerns. By paying attention to your gum colour and promptly addressing any changes, you can take a proactive approach to your oral and overall well-being. Remember, a radiant smile starts with healthy gums!

(The author, Dr. Parampreet Kohli (MDS), is an aesthetic dentist, smile designing expert, and founder of Smile Couture Dental Clinic, Mumbai)



# Bumrah shines in comeback as India restricts Ireland to 139/7

PTI ■ DUBLIN

India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah and Prasidh Krishna shone bright on their return but Barry McCarthy's unbeaten fifty took Ireland to a competitive 139 for seven in the opening T20I of the three-match series, here on Friday.

Bumrah, who spent 11 months away from the game due to a lower-back stress fracture, picked up 2/24, while Prasidh, who also was nursing a lower-back injury, scalped 2/32.

Ravi Bishnoi (2/23) and Arshdeep Singh (1/35) also were among wickets after Bumrah opted to field.

Things looked bleak for the hosts after they were down 59/6 in the 11th over but a seventh wicket 57-run partnership between Curtis Campher (39) and McCarthy staged Ireland's recovery.

McCarthy was the stand out batter for the hosts as he reached his maiden half-century with a last-ball six off Arshdeep. His innings was laced with four boundaries and as many sixes.

Bumrah started with a four but came back to rattle the off-stump of opener Andrew Balbirnie (4).

An over-ambitious Lorcan Tucker (0) then brought out the ramp shot, only to be caught by keeper Sanju Samson as Bumrah bagged his second wicket.

After four overs, Prasidh, who made his T20I debut, was handed the ball and he ended the struggle of Harry Tector (9) with the batter giving a simple catch to Tilak Varma while looking for a ramp shot.

The wily Bishnoi then bamboozled skipper Paul Stirling (11) with a googly as Ireland slumped to 27/4 in the powerplay.

The hosts continued to pay the price for poor execution as Prasidh had George Dockrell (3) caught by Rituraj Gaikwad at cover with a back-of-a-length delivery.

Campher hit a welcome boundary with a



reverse sweep, while Mark Adair (16) picked up two fours to take Ireland to 50 for 5 in 9 overs.

However, Bishnoi came back to remove Adair after winning a video referral for an LBW decision. The batter danced down the track and looked to play a slog shot only to be hit on the pads by a ball turing in from outside.

McCarthy brought up Ireland's first maximum when he deposited Bishnoi over long on in the 13th over.

Campher ramped one over short fine, while McCarthy clubbed one across the mid-wicket boundary as the two kept Ireland ticking.

When Bumrah returned, Campher sent a low full toss across extra cover before smoking the India pacer for a maximum.

Prasidh was next in line as McCarthy slammed him across the point region before depositing the next on over long-on. He ended the over with another four as 15 runs came of it.

Bumrah bowled a brilliant penultimate over but Arshdeep went for 22 runs in the last with McCarthy going hammers and tongs with two sixes and a four.

## Shastri, Patil back Varma to be included in India's middle-order

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former stars Ravi Shastri and Sandeep Patil on Friday backed for the inclusion of the talented Tilak Varma in India's middle-order for the upcoming ICC ODI World Cup 2023.

The mega event will be held in India from October 5 to November 19.

Shastri said the 20-year-old Varma is at an advantageous position because he is a left-hander.

Speaking on Star Sports, Shastri said, "I'm very impressed with Tilak Varma. Very, very impressed. And I want a left-hander. So, if I'm looking for a left-hander in the middle order, like Yuvraj Singh and before that was Suresh Raina at five, I would really look in that direction (of Varma)."

"Sandy (Sandip) and MSK (Prasad) have been selectors, and if I was a selector along with my panel, I would be looking at that current form, looking at how he's getting his runs."

"So, when I look at the way he has got his runs over the last three months, whether it was for Mumbai Indians, for India, whether it was handling pressure, opposition, or different sit-



uations of the game, he has ticked all the boxes for someone so young," said Shastri.

Varma impressed everyone with his fine performances during his debut international series against the West Indies recently, scoring well in all the three T20I matches.

"When it comes to shot selection, when it comes to the range of shots, the ability to be unorthodox, he (Varma) has everything."

"So I'll be looking at him very closely because he is hot at the moment, his mindset, his confidence, he understands situations, which is for me the most important thing," the former India coach added.

Shastri's 1983 World Cup-

winning teammate Patil, who turned 67 this day, spoke highly about Varma, also bringing Suryakumar Yadav into the equation.

"100 per cent (India should hand ODI debut to Tilak Varma) I will go with Tilak Varma and Suryakumar Yadav," Patil said.

"Who will be in the playing XI can be decided after looking at the balance and the opposition. But Tilak Varma and Suryakumar Yadav will both be in my team," he added.

On Wednesday, Shastri had said he would include three left-handed batters in the top seven to bolster India's middle-order ahead of the Asia Cup and the subsequent World Cup.



## Bazball left Aus scratching their head during Ashes: Ponting

PTI ■ HOBART

Legendary Australian cricketer Ricky Ponting said England's 'Bazball' approach had left the Australians a befuddled group during the Ashes, which saw the Englishmen making a remarkable comeback from 0-2 down.

Australia led the series 2-0 after the first two Tests at Edgbaston and Lord's but England bounced back to make the series scoreline 2-2 with wins in the third Test at Headingley and in the fifth Test at the Oval.

The rain-marred fourth Test

at Manchester ended in a draw.

Though the Aussies managed to retain the Ashes urn, former captain Ponting said the home side gave them a tough ride. Australia are yet to win a Test series in England since 2001. Talking to SEN Radio, Ponting explained, "The two contrasting styles of play were great to sit back and watch. There was a lot of talk about Bazball and how England would approach it, and would that style stand up against the quality of the Australian attack."

"It probably had some of the Australian players, coaches and the captain at different times scratching their heads as to how they were going to combat it." Ponting was all praise for the quality of cricket played during the Ashes.

"I think the 2-2 result, albeit probably slightly biased with a bit of controversy in that last Test with the ball changed, the way that it was, that gifted England some conditions they probably shouldn't have got. I think the level of cricket played across the series, the 2-2 result was probably fair," he added.

## SL Cricket accepts Thirimanne's retirement



PTI ■ COLOMBO

Left-hand batter Lahiru Thirimanne's retirement from international cricket has been accepted, the country's cricket board said in a statement on Friday.

Having made his international debut in January 2010, the 34-year-old Thirimanne had called time on his international career in July during an announcement made on social media.

"Sri Lanka Cricket's Executive Committee accepted the resignation of Lahiru Thirimanne from playing all forms of international cricket," Sri Lanka Cricket said.

Thirimanne's last appear-

ance for the island nation was in March 2022, when he played against India in the Bengaluru Test in March 2022.

In 44 Tests, he averaged a mere 26.43 with three centuries - two against Bangladesh and one versus England - and 10 fifties, making an overall 2,088 runs. Thirimanne played 127 ODIs and scored 3,194 runs with four tons and 21 fifties at 34.71.

However, Thirimanne's career failed to take off in T20Is - he managed just 291 runs in 26 outings at 16.16. He was, though, a member of the 2014 World T20 winning Sri Lankan side which beat India in the final.

"It has been an absolute honour to represent my country for past few years. This game that has given me so much over the years. But, with a lot of mixed feelings, I am here to announce my retirement from international cricket with an immediate effect," the batter said while announcing his retirement.

Thirimanne hinted he was taking the call 'unwillingly'.

"It was a difficult decision to make, but I cannot mention here the many unexpected reasons that influenced me to take this decision willingly or unwillingly," he added.

# GANGULY BACKS TILAK TO BE INDIA'S NO 4



PTI ■ KOLKATA

Former India captain Sourav Ganguly on Friday said promising left-hander Tilak Varma should be India's choice for No 4 batsman at the ICC World Cup 2023 if a front-line player like Shreyas Iyer is not available.

Shreyas has been recuperating at the NCA after a surgery on his injured back. But Ganguly said India has several options for the crucial No 4 slot.

"Who said we don't have a

No. 4? We have so many (batsmen) who can bat at that spot. I think differently; my mindset is different. This is a fantastic side," Ganguly said on the sidelines of a Denver event where he was announced as the 'Brand Face.'

"I see Tilak Varma as an option, being a left-hander," Ganguly said, highlighting Varma's adaptability and fearless approach to the game.

The 20-year-old left-hander made an impressive 22-ball 39 on his T20I debut against the

West Indies, followed by scores of 51 and 49 not out in his next two outings.

Ganguly further mentioned that the left-handed trio of Yashasvi Jaiswal (back-up opener), Ishan Kishan (wicketkeeper-batter), and Varma can play fearless cricket and they should be picked when selectors announce India's World Cup squad before the September 5 deadline.

"He (Tilak) is a very good young player, not with much experience, but it does not mat-

ter. I also want to see the young left-hander (Jaiswal) in the side at the top of the order. He has enormous ability and he's fearless. So, this is a great side," said Ganguly.

Ganguly said the Indian team should be a mix of experienced players and fresh faces.

"It has to be a team of experience and people who don't have any scars - like Jaiswal, Varma, Ishan Kishan. They can go and play fearless cricket. Rahul (Dravid), Rohit and the selectors have plenty of choices;

they just have to identify and pick the best XI," he said.

Pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah made a return to national side after a long injury lay-off and Ganguly termed it as a welcome development.

Bumrah is currently leading India against Ireland in a three-match T20I series at Dublin.

"I've spoken to some players at the NCA, and they said he's at his best...Bumrah was bowling at almost 90 miles per hour the other day. That's great news for Indian cricket," he added.

## Rahul underlines return to fitness

PTI ■ BENGALURU

India received a boost ahead of the Asia Cup and the ODI World Cup as KL Rahul on Friday underlined his readiness to return to international cricket while batting and wicket-keeping for an extended period during the match simulation at the NCA.

In this scenario, Rahul will, in all probability, travel to Sri Lanka for the Asia Cup and the India team for the tournament will be selected on August 21.

"(KL) Rahul showed impressive fitness levels over the match simulation programme (at the NCA) while batting and doing the wicketkeeping duties for an extended period (today)."

"He has started batting from earlier this week and has now added wicketkeeping as well," a source close to the



development told PTI. While Rahul's return to top-flight cricket seems imminent, Shreyas Iyer, who also has been recuperating at the NCA, might just have to wait a bit longer.

Shreyas too has been undergoing a match simulation process at the NCA and the

middle-order batsman has shown marked improvement in fitness. However, a final call on Shreyas could only be taken over the next couple of days.

The return of Rahul will spare the Indian team management a major headache as they can seal one spot in the middle-

order. Rahul has a fine record at No 4 in ODIs, making 241 runs from 7 innings at an average of 40.17 with a hundred.

At the No 5 position, Rahul has amassed 742 runs, including a hundred and seven fifties, from 18 innings at an average of 53. In the absence of Rahul, the Indian think tank has experimented with Suryakumar Yadav and Sanju Samson in the middle-order but none of them could produce consistent performances.

Rahul last played for India in an ODI against Australia on March 22 at Chennai.

He was ruled out of action following a thigh injury that he suffered during Lucknow Super Giants' match against Royal Challengers Bangalore in the IPL 2023. Later he underwent a surgery before entering the rehabilitation phase.

England, India, Pakistan and New Zealand," he said. With Rishabh Pant still recovering from an accident, Ganguly said Kishan could be the choice for wicketkeeper batsman.

"Pant is the best wicketkeeper in the country, but you can see Ishan Kishan, KL Rahul (depending on his fitness); these two will be right up in Rohit's and Rahul's minds. I like Ishan Kishan because he just opens up the game for any team. I am sure Dravid will keep him in his plans," he signed off.

### INDIA AMONG GANGULY'S TOP FIVE

Ganguly said India will be a favorite in the World Cup as he picked the hosts alongside Australia, England, Pakistan and New Zealand in his top five.

"I presume Australia will be one; England, Pakistan, don't rule New Zealand out; and then there's South Africa..."

"But if you ask my best five at the moment, it's Australia,

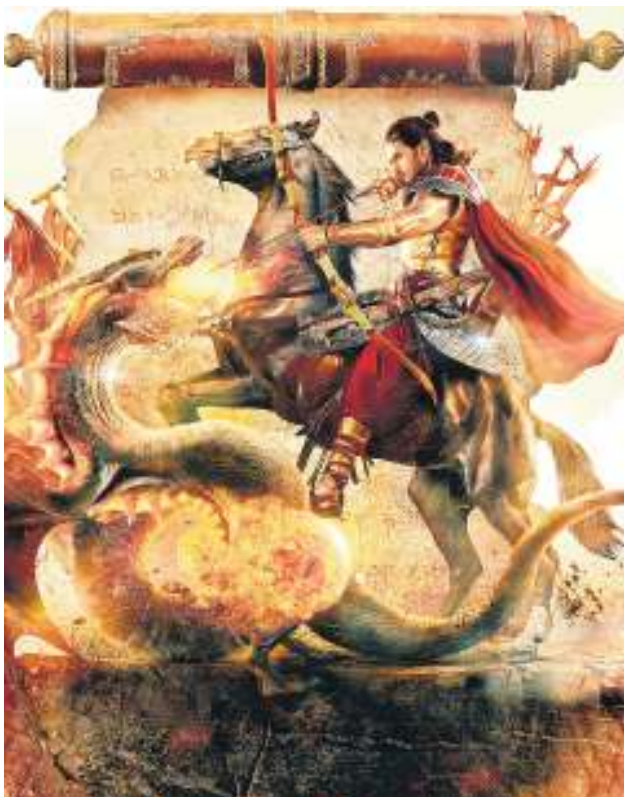
## Nikhil's *Swayambhu* launched

Hero Nikhil who gained nationwide fame with *Karthikeya 2* will be joining forces with director Bharat Krishnamachari for his milestone 20th movie. Titled *Swayambhu*, Bhuvan and Sreekar will produce the movie under Pixel Studios with Tagore Madhu presenting it. While the title *Swayambhu* alone generated lots of curiosity, the title poster that showed the sacred Sengol made everyone inquisitive to know more about the project. Then, the first-look poster that presented Nikhil as a ferocious warrior received an overwhelming response.

The makers chose an auspicious occasion of Shrawana Shukravaram to hold a grand launching ceremony. The opening has been organised in a majestic manner in the presence of the film's entire team and special guests. Dil Raju switched on

the camera, while Allu Aravind sounded the clapboard. Lyricist Ramajogayya Sastry directed the first shot. Chadalavada Srinivas Rao handed over the script to the makers. Producers Abhishek Agarwal, Sithara Naga Vamsi, and Damodar Prasad too attended the event.

The regular shoot of the movie also commenced on Friday. The announcement has been made through this stupefying poster where Nikhil as a warrior is seen aiming an arrow at a dragon while riding the horse. From his get-up to his costumes, this is a new Nikhil which we haven't seen before. Like the first-look poster, this new poster too is out-of-this-world. Samyuktha Menon is the female lead opposite Nikhil in the movie which is going to be the most expensive one in the actor's career.



## Vaishnav Tej, Sreeleela's *Aadikeshava* postponed

Sithara Entertainments in association with Fortune Four Cinemas have been coming up with solid and sensational content oriented films. They have announced an action spectacle with Panja Vaishnav Tej. The young actor has been growing in stature in Telugu Cinema and he is looking to prove his versatility with different genre films. After *Uppena*, his sensational debut blockbuster, the actor is coming up with a huge action entertainer with *Aadikeshava*.

The movie is being written and directed by Srikanth N Reddy. The debutant director is aiming to impress mass movie and action lovers of Telugu Cinema in a huge way with this one. Already, action glimpse of the film, has presented Panja Vaishnav Tej in a new dynamic avatar like never before. *Aadikeshava* cast also includes young sensation Sreeleela in leading lady role as Chitra. The glimpse released for her birthday has showcased her in a chirpy and fun angle. Along with her movie cast includes National Award winning Malayalam actor Joju George and Aparna Das in important roles.

Now, *Aadikeshava* team has announced that they have postponed the release date of the film from August 18 to November 10. Recently, *Aadikeshava* team has completed shoot in Paris and the movie is in the last leg of its shoot.



*Aadikeshava* team has also announced that they will release the first single composed by National Award winning music composer, GV Prakash Kumar, soon.

## VISHNU MANCHU ANNOUNCES HIS DREAM PROJECT "KANNAPPA - A TRUE EPIC INDIAN TALE"

*Kannappa - A True Epic Indian Tale* is billed to be a cinematic masterpiece that has been a labor of love, carefully nurtured over several years. The profound narrative of *Kannappa* holds a special place in the hearts of cinephiles for generations. The timeless saga of *Kannappa*, an unwavering devotee of Lord Shiva, has commanded deep reverence throughout the ages.

And Vishnu Manchu feels elated to announce this project which also involves his father. "This movie stands as a testament to my unyielding passion. It has been meticulously crafted to unfold on a grand scale, featuring distinguished actors from various Indian film industries. This positions it as one of the most eagerly anticipated endeavors in Indian cinema. What's equally thrilling is the



involvement of my father, the esteemed Dr. Mohan Babu garu, who will be producing the movie under banners of 24 Frames Factory and AVA Entertainment," he said. *Kannappa* emerges as a narrative of extraordinary stature, casting a spotlight on

the magnificence of unwavering devotion. At its core lies the awe-inspiring transformation of *Kannappa*, an erstwhile atheist who underwent a profound metamorphosis into an unflinching devotee of Lord Shiva. A hallmark of the project's

grandeur lies in the contribution of the stalwart writers Paruchuri Gopalakrishna, Thota Prasad, Thotapalli Sainath, Burra Sai Madhav, who have masterfully developed the story. The music, composed by Manisharma and Stephen Devassay, will undoubtedly add depth to the narrative, while the cinematography by Sheldon Shau will capture the essence of the story in breath-taking visuals. The intricate set designs by Art Director Chinna will transport the audience to the world of *Kannappa*.

Nupur Sanon plays the female lead in the movie that is directed by Mukesh Kumar Singh, celebrated for his exceptional directorial prowess in bringing the Mahabharat series to life on the Starplus platform.



## Adah Sharma's next is a psychological horror thriller

Adah Sharma who scored the biggest hit of her career with *The Kerala Story* is coming up with yet another intriguing project *C.D* (Criminal Or Devil). The title alone hints at the genre and premise of the movie. The first look poster of this female-centric psychological horror thriller directed by Krishna Annam and produced by SSCM Productions has



been unveiled. Adah Sharma appears in a red dress with a weird expression in her face and there's a key to a chain that she wore. We can also observe some creepy hands coming out of the photo frame. The first look poster looks petrifying and it generates interest for the project. Viswanth plays the male lead in the movie which also stars Rohini (Jabardasth), Bharani Shankar, Ramana Bhargava, and Mahesh Vitta in key roles. A.Mudda Krishna provided the story and dialogues for the movie, while Satish Mutyala handles cinematography and RR Dhruvan renders soundtracks. Satya Giduturi is the editor and Rama Krishna supervises fights. Giridhar is the executive producer. The film *C.D* is in the last phase of post-production. The makers who kick-started the promotions with the first-look poster are planning to come up with regular updates. They will announce the film's release date soon.



## Sound Party teaser out now

Big Boss Telugu 5 title winner VJ Sunny's upcoming movie titled 'Sound Party' is up for theatrical release. Starring Hritika Srinivas as the heroine, the film is Full Moon Media Productions' maiden venture. Sanjay Sheri, a talented writer, is making his debut as a director. Producers Ravi Polishetty, Mahendra Gajendra, and Sri Shyam Gajendra have joined hands with presenter Jaya Shankar. The film's teaser launch event was held at Prasad Labs in

the presence of director Sampath Nandi. Speaking on the occasion, Sampath Nandi said, "I have been a presenter of some films. Like me, Jaya Shankar is acting as the presenter of this film. I want this practice to be continued. The teaser of *Sound Party* is so good. Also, the music by Mohit is so awesome. If you look at the teaser, you will understand that this movie is going to be another *Jathi Ratnalu*. Everyone walks around holding a cell phone and a cigarette. But Jayashankar walks

around holding a book. I liked this quality of his. That's why I asked him to direct *Paper Boy*. I hope *Sound Party* becomes a resounding hit."

Hero VJ Sunny said, "We made this film enjoying a great deal. Sanjay has shaped a solid movie with Jayashankar's support. Shivannarayana and I acted as a father and a son. It was a thorough experience. Mohit gave amazing music. I want everyone to watch this film with their families."

## An emotional drama with a fair dose of humour and a good message

### PLOT

Syed Sohel Ryan's character, Gautham, is a tattoo artist. Roopa Koduvayur's character, Mahi, admires Gautham, and the duo eventually fall in love. When they decide to get married, Gautham puts forward the condition that they never have kids in their lives, and Mahi agrees (not heartily, but because she madly loves Gautham). But Mahi becomes pregnant, and Gautham makes the impulsive decision to carry the child inside his body like a woman who is expecting. The story continues with an explanation of Gautham's motivation, his challenges, how he deals with society and family, and the message he wishes to spread.

### PERFORMANCES

Sohel deserves a special appreciation for playing a very challenging role in this film. His role in the movie had many chances to draw a lot of flak; however, he played it very neatly, and

his overall performance was very impressive. He was adept at conveying both humour and feelings. He gave his best performance in this movie. Roopa Koduvayur, on the other hand, puts on a strong display. She was able to leave a mark on the movie with her part. Suhasini Maniratnam, Harsha Chermudu, and Brahmaji give the plot greater complexity. On the other hand, Raja Ravindra and Ali were underutilised.

### ANALYSIS

The movie features a distinctive theme, which is undoubtedly new to the Telugu audience. This story's message, which the creators attempted to convey, was excellent. The director was good at drawing the lines between borders to not go overboard in any scene, as this is one such sensitive topic that is made into a movie. One can relate to many scenes in the



movie, especially if you are a woman. It had just the right amount of humour and sentiment to hold the audience's interest.

The dialogue, especially in the climax, was touchy. That being said, the narration had more scope to be racy. But, overall, the director was successful in getting his point across to his audience and giving viewers a three-hour emotional ride. Technically speaking, the cinematography is excellent, and the music transports you emotionally; however, the editing could've been crisper in the first half. The producers once again proved that content is king with this movie.

### CONCLUSION

Overall, *Mr. Pregnant* is an emotional drama with a fair dose of humour, a worthwhile lesson to learn, and a lot of feelings. A new story will draw viewers to the film, which is guaranteed.

**MOVIE:** Mr. Pregnant

**CAST:** Syed Sohel, Roopa Koduvayur, Suhasini Maniratnam, Raja Ravindra, Brahmaji, Ali, Harsha, Abhishek Reddy Bobbala, and Swapnika

**DIRECTOR:** Srinivas Vinjanampati

**PRODUCERS:** Appi Reddy, Ravi Reddy Sajjala, and Venkat Annareddy

**MUSIC:** Shraavan Bharadwaj

**CINEMATOGRAPHER:** Nizar Shafi

**EDITOR:** Pravin Pudi