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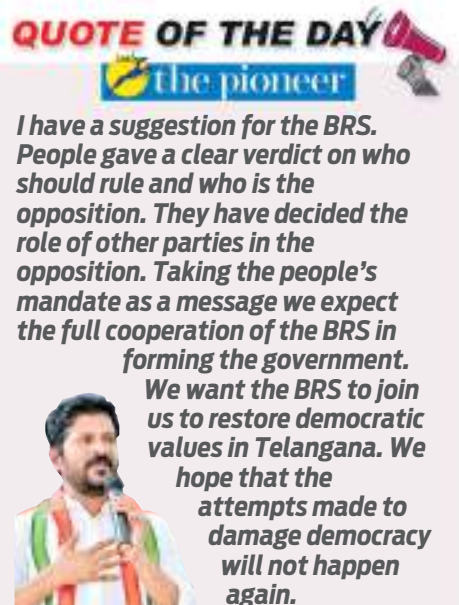


RBI TO

RETAIN 6.5 % INTEREST RATE AS
ECONOMIC GROWTH COMFORTABLE



DEBUT *DEVARA*



- A. Revanth Reddy,
TPCC president & Kodangal MLA

Wins 64 out of 119 ● KCR defeated at Kamareddy, wins at Gajwel
● United Congress steers car out of power ● Six Ministers bite the dust

2

INC 64

BRS
39

BJP
8

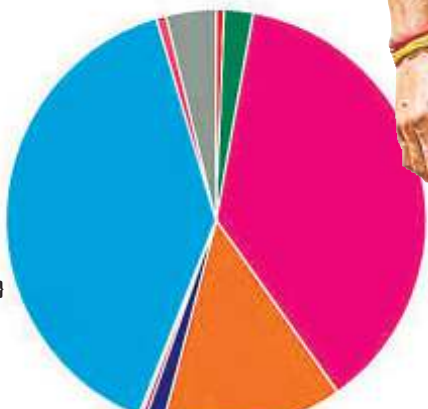
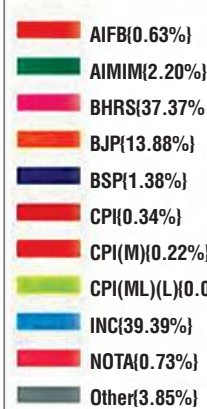
AIN

CPI

1

KVR defeats KCR and Revanth

2



Continued on Page 2

In a centralized system, only one man has to take responsibility for the eventual outcome: be it success or defeat. Now it is KCR's turn.



The vanquished icon who missed a hat-trick

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

After spearheading the sepa- rate Telangana movement and leading his party to significant victories since 2001, a third term in office eluded BRS supremo K Chandrasekhar Rao, as his party fell behind in the legislative assembly polls. The setback could derail Rao's ambi- tions to expand the BRS's influence beyond Telangana and establish a national pres- ence.

Rao, popular- ly known as KCR, rebranded his party, Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) as Bharat Rashtra Samiti (BRS) last year.

He extensively campaigned in neighboring Maharashtra to bolster the BRS's presence.

Transitioning from relative obscurity as a Congress sup- porter to becoming a symbol of Telangana pride, KCR adeptly navigated the com- plexities of state and central

politics.

He gained prominence first with the formation of Telangana in 2014, followed by consecutive triumphs in the 2014 and 2018 assembly polls.

A shrewd politician, Rao took an early initiative by announcing 115 candidates for the 119-member assembly in August this year, well ahead of the November 30 polling date.

However, this strategy seem- ingly backfired as the party candi- dates grap- pled with anti- incumbency senti- ments.

KCR often faces accusa- tions of perpetuating dynastic rule, nepotism, and corrup- tion, allegations that seem to have resonated with the elec- torate.

The 69-year-old leader, hail- ing from Chintamadaka vil- lage in Medak district, com- menced his political journey as an ordinary member of the Indian Youth Congress.

Congress may face problems in Cabinet formation



SNCN ACHARYULU ■ HYDERABAD

With several former ministers and senior Congress leaders winning in the Telangana Assembly elections, Cabinet formation may become a big headache for the Congress leadership. The total strength of the Telangana Cabinet is 17 including the Chief Minister. It is not easy for the Congress leadership to satisfy senior leaders by accommodat- ing them all in the Cabinet.

For example, from Nalgonda district, senior leaders like Komatireddy Venkat Reddy and N. Uttam Kumar Reddy

are in the race not only for Cabinet posts but also for the Chief Minister post.

From Khammam district, CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, former Minister Tummalam Nageswar Rao and former MP Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy won. CLP leader Mallu Bhatti is in the race not only for a Cabinet post but also for the Chief Minister post. TPCC President Revanth Reddy and former Minister Jupally Krishna Rao won from Mahbubnagar. There is every possibility of Revanth Reddy becoming the Chief Minister.

It may not be possible to accommodate more than one

minister from each district.

From Medak district, former Deputy Chief Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha and from Adilabad district former Minister G. Vinod and his brother G. Vivek won.

From Karimnagar, former Ministers T. Jeevan Reddy and D. Sridhar Babu won. From Ranga Reddy district former Minister G. Prasad Kumar who is a relative of G. Vivek and his brother also won.

'Time has come for defections'

As the Telangana Assembly election results are out the time has come for defections. Pre- poll and post-poll defections have become common in Indian politics. Before elections, discontented leaders jump from one party to another. There were several reasons for the discontent of these leaders. These defections were mainly between the ruling and the main opposition. After the elections, these defections will be mainly between the losing party and the winning party. Before elections defectors from the ruling party have the advantage, but after elections defections from the winning party have the advantage. During the last two

Assembly elections, after the results were announced several Congress MLAs jumped to the ruling BRS. Due to this, the Congress lost the chance of getting recognised as the opposition party in the Assembly. Many defected Congress MLAs became ministers in the BRS cabinet. Some important Congress leaders jumped into the BRS before the elections. Some of them may try to return to their party after the elections as the Congress is now in power. Whether the Congress will follow the BRS leadership's policy of attracting its MLAs to weaken that party or not will be known soon.

Hat-trick in states guarantee of hat-trick in 2024: Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday hailed BJP's big win in the assembly polls as a victory for his govern- ment's agenda of self-reliant India, asserting that its hat- trick in the states is a guaran- tee of its hat-trick of Lok Sabha poll wins in 2024.

"The results show popular support for our battle against corruption," he told a crowd of cheering supporters at the BJP headquarters here, adding that they have served a lesson to the Congress and the oppo- sition's INDIA bloc that mere collecting some dynasts on dais may make for a good pho- tograph but cannot win peo- ple's confidence.

Voters have delivered a warning to these parties involved in corruption to mend their ways or people will finish them off, he said.

No one should come in between the Centre's develop- ment and people, or the mass- es will remove them, Modi



said in a stinging attack on opposition parties.

Some people are already saying our hat-trick in the states is a guarantee of hat- trick in the Lok Sabha polls in 2024, he said. He told oppo- sition parties to not support those working against the country's interests at a time when development is taking place at a fast pace. Addressing a big gathering of BJP members, including many Union minis- ters, Modi said these results will ensure the world's belief in India and infuse more confi- dence into global investors for the country.

Stage set for stormy session of Parliament

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Buoyed by its victory in the assembly elections, an aggressive BJP will seek to corner the Congress-led Opposition in the Winter Session of Parliament beginning Monday when a report recommending TMC MP Mahua Moitra's expulsion is expected to be tabled in the Lok Sabha.

The leaders of the Opposition INDIA bloc are meeting on Monday morn- ing ostensibly to redraw their strategies to take on Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led BJP both inside the Parliament and in the electoral arena.

The Congress, which was hoping to score a big win in Madhya Pradesh and retain Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, had to taste a resounding defeat. However, the grand old party did manage to oust the BRS from Telangana.

"If the Opposition dis- rupts the Parliament, it will face worse results than what has come today (Sunday)," Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi told reporters here when asked about the Winter Session beginning Monday.

Cong MPs win Assembly race but BJP MPs lose

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress MPs who contested in the Telangana Assembly elections won, but BJP MPs of the BJP who were in the race lost.

Sitting Congress MPs Revanth Reddy (Malkajgiri), N. Uttam Kumar Reddy (Nalgonda) and Komatireddy Venkat Reddy (Bhongir) won from Kodangal, Huzurnagar and Nalgonda Assembly con- stituencies respectively.

However, BJP MPs Bandi Sanjay Kumar (Karimnagar), Dharmapuri Arvind (Nizamabad) and Soyam Bapurao (Adilabad) lost in Karimnagar, Korutla and the electoral arena.

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DK Shiva Kumar and Manikrao Thakre are speaking to MLAs to find their choice. Sources hinted that as most Congress tickets were issued as per Revanth's orders, it is likely that he is going to get the CM's post. The Congress is likely to speed up the swearing-in as they want to take control of the govern- ment quickly.

As the Congress has only a

simple majority, anything can happen especially as the main opposition is the BRS. The

BJP bags MP, Raj & Chhattisgarh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP swept Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh on Sunday inflicting a resounding defeat on the Congress to tighten its stranglehold in the Hindi heartland, in a big boost for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and setting the tone for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

In some consolation for the Congress in the face of the sa- fron wave after it lost Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, the party ousted the Bharat Rashtra Samiti(BRS) in Telangana to make it 3-1 for the Bharatiya Janata Party(BJP) in the latest round of Assembly elections billed as a semi-final before next year's poll showdown.

Counting of votes in Mizoram will be taken up on Monday.

As the BJP leadership savoured the triple victory just months after losing its lone southern citadel Karnataka, Prime Minister Modi said some people are already saying that the party's hat-trick in the states is a guarantee of hat-trick in the Lok Sabha polls.

Ruling MP for 18 years, a well entrenched BJP managed to stave off anti-incumbency in a shot in the arm for four-time chief minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan and dashing the hopes of a resurgent Congress helmed by veteran and former CM Kamal Nath.

Winning 141 seats and lead- ing in 24, the BJP got a simple majority and could get two-

thirds majority in a House of 230. Congress bagged 45 and was leading in 19.

Suspense also mounted as to who will be the BJP's chief minister in any of the three Hindi heartland states.

Clouds of gulal, shouts of Jai Shri Ram, joyful jigs and crack- ers were the sights and sounds of celebration in BJP offices with party workers and leaders unanimous in attributing the win to Modi's "guarantees".

With BJP dislodging the Congress hit by factionalism in Rajasthan, the desert state stuck to a nearly 30-year-old 'rivaz' (tradition) of not vot- ing an incumbent party back to power. The BJP got a majori- ty bagging 115 seats after vot- ing was held for 199 con-

stituencies. The Congress notched 69 seats

The Chhattisgarh outcome was a surprise for many Congress leaders who were hoping for another stint in power in the state by fending off the BJP challenge.

The day began with both parties neck and neck but, as counting continued, the BJP consolidated its lead and won or was ahead in 54 seats. The Congress won or was ahead in 35 seats in the 90-member house.

The BJP amplified its pitch around the prime minister during the Assembly polls as its manifestoes featured his guar- antees, with Modi crisscrossing the poll-bound states, except for Mizoram, to seek popular

India beat Australia by 6 runs in 5th T20I, clinch series 4-1

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Shreyas Iyer (53) scored his eighth half-century and Mukesh Kumar took three wickets as India defeated Australia by six runs to win the fifth and final T20I by and take the series 4-1.

With Australia needing 10 runs to win in the last six balls, Arshdeep Singh (2/40) produced a terrific final over including the key wick- et of the dangerous Matthew Wade (22 off 15 balls, 4x4s) to help India win.

Chasing 161 to win, Australia managed 154/8 in 20 overs with Kumar return- ing 4-0-32-3 and leg spinner Ravi Bishnoi producing a fine 4-0-29-2.

Left-arm spinner Axar Patel also produced an all- round show, taking 1/14 from his four overs before he made a vital 31 with the bat.

For Australia, Ben McDermott hit 54 (36) and Travis Head made 28 (15).

Brief scores: India 160/8 in 20 overs (Shreyas Iyer 53, Jitesh Sharma 24, Axar Patel 31; Jason Behrendorff 2/38, Ben Dwarshuis 2/30) beat Australia 154/8 in 20 overs (Ben McDermott 54; Mukesh Kumar 3/32, Ravi Bishnoi 2/29) by 6 runs.

Revanth Reddy front...

Continued from page 1

DK Shiva Kumar and Manikrao Thakre are speaking to MLAs to find their choice.

Sources hinted that as most Congress tickets were issued as per Revanth's orders, it is likely that he is going to get the CM's post. The Congress is likely to speed up the swearing-in as they want to take control of the govern- ment quickly.

As the Congress has only a

simple majority, anything can happen especially as the main opposition is the BRS. The

swearing-in of the full Cabinet will be held most probably on December 9.

Ready to form Government...

Continued from page 1

Speaking to the media after meeting the Governor, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shiva Kumar said that they handed over a list containing names of 65

Congress MLAs. "We informed the Governor that the Congress is ready to form the government. We will not disclose what the Governor said to us. However, we will come to the media after the CLP meeting at 9.30 am on Monday," he said.

Telangana repays...

Continued from page 1

Celebrations broke out at Gandhi Bhavan, the party office, where overjoyed workers were seen bursting crackers and raising 'Jai Congress' and 'Revanth Anna Zindabad' slogans.

Security was stepped up at Revanth Reddy's resi- dence and additional police personnel were deployed.

While the BRS had 101 Members in the outgoing Assembly, the AIMIM had 7, the Congress 5 and the BJP 3. The All India Forward Bloc had one leg- islator. There was one Independent and one vacancy. At least six BRS ministers lost the elections. KCR's son KT Rama Rao and nephew T. Harish Rao were among ministers who could retain their seats. Congress Legislature

Party (CLP) leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka retained his Madhira (SC) seat, while former TPCC President Uttam Kumar Reddy was elected from Huzurabad.

The Congress had an almost clean sweep in south Telangana and won a majority of the constituen- cies in north Telangana. However, the BRS contin- ued its domination in and around Hyderabad.

The BJP did well in north Telangana and won seven seats. However, the party suffered a huge setback with all its three MPs, including General Secretary Bandi Sanjay Kumar, losing the elections. Sitting MLAs Eatala Rajender and M. Raghunandan Rao also failed to retain their seats which they had won in by- elections.

Pragathi Bhawan will...

Continued from page 1

Revanth was addressing the media at the Gandhi Bhavan here on Sunday after the Congress victory.

He said that from now onwards the Secretariat will be accessible to commoners and the administration will be brought nearer to the people. Pragathi Bhawan will be renamed as Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Praja Bhavan. Pragathi Bhawan is public property and it will be put to use for them, he said.

Revanth said that the Congress will move forward in Telangana with the democ- ratic spirit it provided to governance in the country from 2004 to 2014.

He said that the govern- ment will implement the six guarantees given to the peo-

ple of Telangana and the promise given by Rahul Gandhi. He also thanked Rahul for giving moral sup- port whenever there was a problem.

Revanth said that he will use this victory to develop Telangana and help the poor and thanked KTR for congrat- ulating the Congress.

He said that he hopes that the opposition would fully cooperate in forming the new government and that all oppo- sition parties would be invit- ed to the government's swear- ing-in.

He said that Srikanthachari was martyred on December 3 and that he is dedicating the electoral verdict to him. He said that the people of Telangana have cooperated to restore democracy and that Rahul inspired us through his

Bharat Jodo Yatra.

He said that the Congress is leading the battle to 'protect' human rights and that he, CLP leader Bhatti Vikramarka and Shabbir Ali will take the party forward together.

He said that the persev- erance of the 30 lakh unem- ployed in TS is behind the Congress victory and thanked Vijayashanti for her role in the success.

He thanked Thakre for coordinating the party's inter- nal affairs. "We will move forward with the CPI and the TJS. Rahul gave us the spirit through his Bharat Jodo Yatra. The Congress achieved victory with the cooperation of all its senior leaders. We hope that the BRS will cooperate with the new government. Everyone should respect the people's verdict," he said.

Giant killer

Continued from page 1

The BJP focused on Kamareddy as KCR and Revanth Reddy were contesting there.

Venkata Ramana Reddy's name has not been heard much. But unexpectedly Ramana Reddy set a record by defeating the two.

He had established a trust in the name of his father and had executed many development projects. Apart from this, he had also donated properties to schools and colleges. After releasing their own manifesto, they went to the public telling them what they would do in which villages.

In addition to this, the fact that KCR and Revanth are non- locals turned out to be another plus point for Ramana and he romped home easily.

It may be recalled that

Chittaranjan Das became a giant killer earlier in United AP by defeating former CM, the late NT Ramarao, in the 1989 elec- tions in Kalwakurthy. However, Katipally Venkata Ramana Reddy has defeated two CM candidates. The two CM candi- dates, KCR (BRS) and Revanth Reddy (Congress) saved their faces by winning from other constituencies (Gajwel and Kodangal).

It may be recalled that at first there was talk of KCR contest- ing in Kamareddy. Everyone thought that KCR was contest- ing in Kamareddy fearing defeat in Gajwel. But KCR did not have any effect and the BRS chief was pushed to the second slot. TPCC chief Revanth Reddy had to be content with the third place. In the end, the BJP grabbed Kamareddy. Venkata Ramana Reddy won with a majority of 5,156 votes.

TS enrolls largest number of students in global edn

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana is one of the top states to enroll the largest number of students in Masters or post-graduate courses, especially in global education. GradRight, an Ed-FinTech startup has organised ShiftED 2023 Conclave on Innovation for Sustainable Global Higher Education on Sunday.

During the event, the start-up pledged to offer affordable access to the world's top 500 universities for 30,000 Indian students over the next three years. It has processed loan requests of over Rs 16,000 crore and assisted over 60,000 students to date.

The conclave brought the startup vision alive by organising panel discussions on issues including 'Challenges and Innovative Solutions in Global Higher Education' and 'Way of the Future: Can AI Transform Global Mobility in



Higher Ed'.

During a panel discussion on accessibility, affordability and inclusivity of global higher education, Dr Pramath Raj Sinha, Founder and Chairman, Harappa Education, said, "India is known as the outsourcing country in the world as the majority of students enrolled in global education, especially in the US, come from our country. About 2.65 lakh students from India enroll in global education. The main

reason why students are looking or enrolling in abroad studies is due to the lack of quality education in India. The majority of students following their graduation end up being unemployed or placed at low-paying jobs, which is not on par with their qualifications. Innovation needs to be implemented in education to solve the issues in the sector and technology improves the education quality."

Prof Bhagwan Chowdhry,

Faculty Director of I-Venture, Indian School of Business said, "Start making money when you are young. This can change your perception towards education." He emphasised students explore their practical abilities thereby earning money out of it at a young age by citing an example of launching a startup. About 20 per cent of students in India afford free education."

Aman Singh and Sasidhar Sista, Co-Founders at GradRight said, "Access to the right education at the right cost has been a singular challenge plaguing the Indian and global higher education space. At GradRight, we are building a global education highway to democratise access to higher education for the countless Indian students who would not otherwise be able to pursue their ambitions of studying at leading institutions abroad."

Popular Instagram influencers delete BRS reels

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Prior to the Telangana Legislative Assembly elections, Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) had paid some of the popular Instagram influencers - Ashu Reddy, Deepthi Sunaina and others to promote their party manifesto or achievements made by the party in the form of reels.

The influencers promoted the party to the audience in the form of dance or singing reels to lure the audience to vote for BRS.

However, with the BRS witnessing a setback in the current elections, the influencers gave up their hands by deleting the party promoting reels.



KTR terms BRS loss as a speed-breaker

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS Working President KT Rama Rao said that the results of Telangana Assembly elections are a "speed-breaker".

He held a media conference on the election results and said, "The results are surprising. If it was a wave, the whole State would have been the same. The people of Greater Hyderabad gave a one-sided verdict. It is almost unilateral in Medak district. In Karimnagar it is 40-60 per cent. It's not like a wave. The same time is not understood. After talking to our leaders and candidates, we also get to know their experiences."

He said that in Peddapalli parliamentary constituency, no one has made development as much as Balka Suman did in Chennuru. "No one has done as much good to Singareni as we have done. Blocking the



privatisation of Singareni, we gave bonus to the workers. Fulfilling the promises given by CM KCR to Singareni workers, we solved the pending problem of dependent jobs. It needs to be understood more deeply," he said.

"But I didn't get what I expected. There is some disappointment but...no pain. People have given us two chances. We owe everything to

the people of Telangana. For ten years we were given an opportunity. Scolding them for giving them a chance is not a good sign. Sobriety, poise and statesmanship are very important in politics. Our leader taught us that. What our leader says is, "Don't get excited when you win... Don't get depressed when you lose. That is what I say to our leaders and activists," KTR said.

"Being overwhelmed when you win, depressed when you lose is not a characteristic of a politician. Not the characteristic of a hero. We have seen many of these. Attempts to kill us. We have seen many attempts to finish our party. We respect people's decision. Today we lost. But, this does not happen every day. Today is Sunday. Not every day is Sunday. It should be recognized." He clarified that "we will come back strong."

Healing touch to public from 15 doctors in polls

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Assembly is going to see 15 doctors in the inside hall. The results of Assembly elections came on December 3; out of 119 Assembly constituencies, 15 doctors have won. Out of 15 doctors, 11 are from the Congress, one from the BJP and three are from the BRS.

From the Congress, Dr Ramchander Naik from Dornakal constituency, Dr Murali Naik from Mahabubabad constituency, Dr Vamshi Krishna from Achampet constituency, Kuchukulla Rajesh Reddy from Nagarkurnool constituency were elected.

Manakonduru MLA Dr Satyanayana, Medak MLA Dr Mainampally Rohith, Chennai MLA Dr Vivek Ven kataswamy, Sathupalli MLA Dr Ragamayi, Nizamabad MLA Dr Bhupathi Reddy, Dr Sanjeeva Reddy from Nara yankhed constituency and Parnika Reddy from Narayanpet of the Congress in Pinapaka.

TS to receive moderate rain till Dec 6

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Indian Meteorological Department (Hyderabad) on Sunday predicted that Telangana is likely to receive moderate rains till December 6.

The cyclonic storm developing in the Bay of Bengal seems to be the reason for the forecast. As per the forecast by the Telangana State Development Planning Society (TSDPS), the cyclone 'Michaung' is likely to affect parts of Telangana from December 4 to 6. The weather forecast department has emphasised the possibility of light to moderate rains or thundershowers occurring in Ongole-Konaseema in the east of Telangana.

However, Hyderabad is likely to receive light to moderate rains on December 5 and 6. With the prevailing easterly winds and cloudy conditions over Telangana,



minimum temperatures are expected to record 2 to 3 degrees Celsius above normal temperature during the week. While coastal districts in southern Andhra Pradesh and north Tamil Nadu are bracing for the heavy impact of Cyclone Michaung early next week, Telangana is

preparing for possible disruptions. The cyclone is expected to make landfall on the eastern coast in the early hours of Monday morning.

Meanwhile, the South Central Railways has cancelled 142 trains for the next 3-4 days in view of the cyclonic storm.

All 4 BRS MLAs of farm house poaching case lost

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

All four BRS MLAs of farm house poaching case lost elections. The infamous poaching case involved Pilot Rohit Reddy, Guvvala Balaraju, B Harshavardhan Reddy and Rega Kantha Rao who were tried to lureD by the BJP.

B Manohar Reddy from the Congress has defeated Pilot Rohith Reddy IN Tandur constituency with 6,589 vote margin. Guvvala Balaraju lost with a 49,326 votes margin against Chikkudu Vamshi Krishna of the Congress in Achampet constituency. Beeram Harshavardhan Reddy of Kollapur constituency has lost against Jupally Krishna Rao with 29,931 votes margin. Rega Kantha Rao lost with a 34,506 votes margin against Payam Vankateswarlu of the Congress in Pinapaka constituency.

Amjed Ullah Khan vows to expose rigging in Yakutpura

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Majlis Bachao Tehreek (MBT) spokesperson Amjedullah Khan on Sunday said that he would expose rigging during the elections in Yakutpura constituency.

Khan addressed the media after accepting defeat. "The reality has to be accepted." The MBT spokesperson however held that his party workers are currently investigating CCTV clippings from the polling centres in Yakutpura.

Alleging heavy bogus voting on the day of the elections, Khan accused the inspector of police, Rein Bazaar, of having misguided his team and led them to detain him amid polling.

Khan further alleged that the information slips that were meant to reach every person in the constituency were also not distributed properly.

Stating that all his allega-



tions are being verified, Amjed Ullah asserted the credibility behind AIMIM's win will be revealed in 48 hours.

After 21 rounds of the total 25, Jaffar Hussain secured 45,231 votes, whereas A Khan secured 44,883 votes. Earlier, the constituency was represented by AIMIM leader Syed Ahmed Pasha Quadri who was denied a ticket by the party this time.

Kishan Reddy says BJP will play a constructive role

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Stating that they are honouring the verdict of the people of the State, Telangana BJP president G Kishan Reddy has congratulated the candidates who won the Assembly elections. Kishan Reddy came to Kamareddy to congratulate the party candidate Katipally Venkata Ramana Reddy, who defeated Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao and TPCC president A Revanth Reddy and became a giant killer.

Speaking on this occasion, Kishan Reddy thanked Kamareddy people for ensuring the victory to BJP candidate defeating two CM candidates.

Kishan Reddy said that the BJP's vote bank increased 100 per cent even though the expected results did not come for the BJP. He said that the BJP vote bank increased from last election's 6.9 per cent to 14 per cent in these elections. He said that the party also won one seat to 8 seats in these elections.

Kishan Reddy said that they will give some time to the Congress party for the implementation of 6-guarantees and will play a constructive opposition role in the coming days. He said that they will strive hard for the development



of Telangana.

Kishan Reddy said that they will move forward to achieve majority seats in the coming Lok Sabha elections while reviewing the shortcomings in the results of Assembly elections.

Kishan Reddy said that the BJP had not experienced any loss with the alliance of Jana Sena party in the present elections.

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimen (AIMIM) retained seven of its seats in the Telangana Assembly on Sunday.

AIMI floor leader in the assembly, Akbaruddin Owaisi secured 99776 votes in Chandrayangutta defeating Muppi Seetharam Reddy of the Bharat Rashtira Samithi by 81660 votes; whereas former Hyderabad mayor and Charminar candidate, Mir Zulfeqar Ali secured 49,103 votes defeating Megha Rani Agarwal of the Bharatiya Janata Party by 22853 votes; In Yakutpura, Jaffar Hussain secured 46,153 votes defeating Amjed Ullah Khan of the Majlis Bachao Tehreek by 878 votes; In Bahadurpura Mohammed Mubeen secured 89451 votes defeating Mir Inayath Ali Baqri of the Bharat Rashtira Samithi by 67025 votes; in Nampally Moham med Majid Hussain secured 47,637 votes defeating



AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi on Sunday met candidates who won the Telangana party Assembly elections

Mohammed Feroz Khan of the Congress by 2,581 votes; in Malakpet Ahmed Bin Abdullah Balala secured 55,805 votes defeating Shaik Akbar of the Congress by 26106 votes; in Karwan, Kausar Mohiuddin secured 76,942 votes defeating Amar Singh of the Bharatiya Janata Party by 42,067 votes.

Following the results, AIMIM President Asaduddin

Owaisi met the winning candidates at the party headquarters at Darussalam.

It is to be noted that the AIMIM contested the election in nine seats including Jubilee Hills and Rajendranagar. Jubilee Hills candidate Rashed Farazuddin secured 6,145 votes whereas Rajendranagar candidate Mandagiri Swamy Yadav secured 25,670 votes.

RS Praveen loses, BSP got no seat in state

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) candidate and Sirpur MLA contestant RS Praveen Kumar has lost in the Assembly elections. He lost with 19,056 votes against Palvai Harish Babu from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). BSP got 1.38 per cent of the total vote share in the State. As for the outcome of the election result, the BSP has not opened an account in the State.

Praveen Kumar polled 44,646 votes, while his contenders Palvai Harish Babu and Koneru Konappa (BRS) got 63,702 and 60,614, respectively.

In the elections, BSP polled 3,24,474 votes, which got 1.38 per cent of the whole State, which is below than the twice of the total polled votes of NOTA.

KCR, HARISH, KTR MAJORITY DROPS

20 MLAs win with 50K margin

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

As many as 20 MLAs have won with a majority of more than 50,000. BRS Quthbullapur (45) candidate KP Vivekanand won with highest margin of 85,576 followed by Thanneeru Harish Rao with 82,308 margin in Siddipet and AIMIM Chandrayangutta (67) gave Akbaruddin Owaisi a margin of 81,660. BRS Kukatpally (46) Madhavaram Krishna Rao got 70,387 margin and INC Nakrekal (95) Vemula Veeresham secured 68,839 margin.

BRS Chevella (53) candidate Kale Yadaiah won with a very small margin of 268, followed by AIMIM Yakutpura (68) leader Jaffar

Hussain with 878.

Indian National Congress Jukkal(13) Laxmi Kantha Rao Thota secured victory with 1,152 majority while INC Devarkadra (76) Gavinolla Madhusudan Reddy got 1,392 more votes.

K Chandrasekhar Rao got a majority of 58,290 in 2018 which dropped to 45,031. Harish Rao who got a majority of 1,20,650 in 2018 got only 82,308, which is still thencecond highest.

KT Rama Rao who got about 80,000 majority in 2018, got only 29,687 majority in 2023.

Revanth Reddy got a majority of 32,532 in 2023. Among women, Uttam Padmavathi got 58,172 majority though she lost in 2018.

NOTA accounts for 0.73% votes in TS

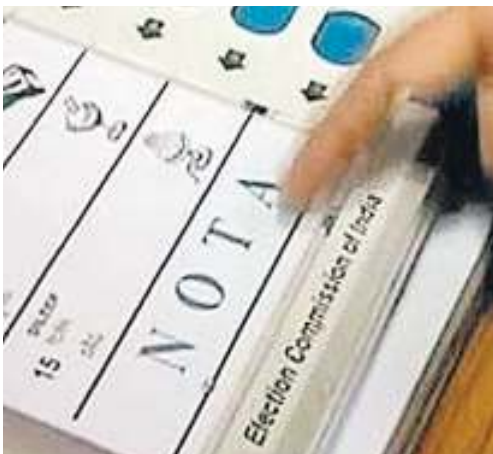
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With the results of the Telangana Legislative Assembly elections out, Congress won the elections with a total majority of 64 votes followed by Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) with a total of 39 votes and the BJP with a total of eight votes.

With regards to voting percentage, the Telangana State has recorded 70.60 per cent while Hyderabad witnessed a low voting percentage of about 39.7 per cent.

With regards to votes cast to various parties and NOTA, the None Of The Above (NOTA) category witnessed 0.73 per cent. Compared to previous Assembly elections, the percentage of NOTA decreased from 1.98 per cent in 2018 to 0.73 per cent in 2023.

In Achampet constituency, the number of votes cast to NOTA is 2,833, in Adilabad, it is 592, in Alair it is 659, Alampur - 2,013, Amberpet - 1,317, Andole - 548, Armur - 1,499, Asifabad - 1,515, Aswaraopeta - 1,363, Bahadurpura - 1,279, Balkonda - 1,162, Banswada - 1,012, Bellampalli - 2,179, Bhadrachalam - 1,672, Bhongir - 882, Bhupalpalle - 830, Boath - 2,565, Bodhan - 872, Chandrayangutta - 1,460, Charminar - 837, Chennai - 1,792, Chevella - 1,423, Choppadandi - 1,260, Devarakonda - 1,613,



Devarakadra - 1,706, Dharmapuri - 2,392, Dornakal - 1,392 and Dubbak - 2,269.

Also, in Gadwal constituency the votes cast to NOTA are 775, Ghanpur (Station) - 1,153, Goshamahall - 626, Husnabad - 1,222, Huzurabad - 1,208, Jadcherla - 1,655, Jagtial - 1,471, Jangoan - 1,467, Jukkal - 469, Kalwakurthy - 661, Kamareddy - 474,

Khairatabad - 1,194, Khammam - 1,340, Khanapur - 2,114, Kodad - 887, Kodangal - 2,002, Kollapur - 1,037, Koratla - 1,391, Kothagudem - 1,427, Kukatpally - 2,458, Madhira - 1,453, Mahabubabad - 1,932, Mahbubnagar - 1,157, Maheswaram - 2,031, Makthal - 1,896, Malkajgiri - 2,608, Manakondur - 1,998, Mancherla - 942, Manthani - 776, Medak - 1,860, Medchal - 3,737, Miryalaguda - 527, Mudhole - 1,906, Mulug - 1,937, Munugode - 849, Musheerabad - 1,332, Nagarjuna Sagar - 1,056, Nagarkurnool - 1,122 and Nakrekal - 969.

Furthermore, Narayanekhed - 861, Narayanpet - 1,517, Narsampet - 738, Narsapur - 1,386, Nirmal - 1,526, Nizamabad (Rural) - 2,268, Nizamabad (Urban) - 538, Palakurthi - 2,743, Pargi - 1,124, Parkal - 966, Peddapalle - 865, Pinapaka - 905, Quthbullapur - 4,079, Rajendranagar - 1,832, Ramagundam - 1,572, Sanathnagar - 1,040, Sangareddy - 811, Sathulpalle - 635, Secunderabad - 1,518, Secunderabad cantonment - 1,220, Shadnagar - 1,389, Siddipet - 1,300, Sircilla - 842, Sirpur - 2,196, Suryapet - 774, Tandur - 592, Thungathurthi - 1,355, Uppal - 2,536, Vemulawada - 1,280, Vicarabad - 1,412, Wanaparthy - 1,938, Waradhana - 3,612, Warangal East - 1,978, Warangal West - 2,426, Wyra - 1,230, Yakutpura - 704, Yellandu - 1418, Yellareddy - 1,300 and Zahirabad - 613.

Monday Mirchi

SECTION OF OFFICIALS SUPER EXCITED

Bureaucrats are supposed to be apolitical; for, only then they can do their duty without fear or favour, period. But the ground reality being otherwise, babus belonging to the Reddy community are extremely happy over the victory of the Congress in the just-concluded Telangana Assembly elections. Members of the Reddy community -- which has supported the Congress through its thick and thin -- are expected to get plum posts by default. Already the names doing the rounds for the new TS DGP (incumbent dropped by EC like a hot potato) have Reddy as surname. In almost a similar situation in Andhra Pradesh, Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy did not mind picking officials from the Reddy community to fill DGP and CS positions. So, 'Can things be different in Telangana if Revanth becomes CM?' they ask. Nonetheless, all eyes are on the major bureaucratic rejig in the offing.

DESPERATE ACT OF THE POLICE CHIEF

TS Police chief Anjani Kumar meeting the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee president A Revanth Reddy at the latter's house even as election results were being announced has become a hot topic of discussion in bureaucratic circles. It also proved once again that officials, uniformed or otherwise, can change their colours chameleon-like in the blink of an eye. Even though the office of the DGP had claimed that the meeting in question was about "making arrangements for the swearing-in ceremony", the EC, which had taken suo motu cognisance of the violation of the Mode Code of Conduct, recommended his suspension. Official circles inimical to the state police chief are discussing how unbecoming and shameful it was on the part of Anjani Kumar to call on Revanth Reddy, who had abused him left, right and centre. Nonetheless, it would be interesting to watch if Revanth will sympathise with Anjani by treating his job-endangering greeting as an act of self-flagellation.

POLICE ACTION AND POLITICO'S MEMORY

Politicians, when not in power, learn to take police highhandedness in their stride and may or may not forget the insulting behaviour of cops in the line of duty. BRS working president and outgoing IT Minister K T Rama Rao often banters Cyberabad Commissioner of Police Stephen Ravendra

on how the CP had once torn his shirt. Going down the memory lane on Deeksha Diwas, KTR recounted that Stephen Raveendra had torn his shirt during his arrest then. "All the buttons were gone", he added for good measure. Mortified Raveendra would say he was just doing his job and offer to send him a shirt. KTR would respond, saying: "there is more than shirt to give". Well, Stephen has not been on good terms with Revanth. Hopefully, he will have similar rapport with his new political bosses.

SOME AP OFFICIALS HAPPY OVER CONGRESS WIN IN TS

A handful of officials in Andhra Pradesh are extremely happy over the Congress' victory in the Telangana Assembly elections. These bureaucrats, known to be inclined towards the Telugu Desam Party, seem to enjoy the moment, considering that probable chief minister Revanth Reddy's roots lie with the yellow party that initially ruled residual AP post bifurcation. Those who want to shift to Hyderabad, perhaps on deputation, are sitting back and enjoying the grand old party's grand win. It would be interesting to see if the officials who are in Telangana but look longingly at AP continue in their positions.

POSITION AND DISPOSITION

During elections, politicians sweat it out for months until the day of polling and then wait with bated breath until the last result of the polls is declared. Tension heightens for bureaucrats from this point. Those who had lorded it over others as empowered minions of the ruling party will see the ground under their feet shift with a regime change. Some senior bureaucrats who had blurred the fine line of distinction between functioning as administrator and acting as party functionary will feel the scorching heat of change in the government. The irony is that politicians tend to rely more on babus who sport, overtly or covertly, the badge of loyalty to the ruling party. At the end of the day, upon regime change, only the crop of such bureaucrats are replaced with far-reaching consequences. Realising this bitter truth, a junior bureaucrat in TS, which will shortly usher in a Congress government, commented: "Bureaucrats also have to learn 'acting' if they want a good position." Position remains; what counts is their disposition!

- Yours truly

SNCN ACHARYULU

■ HYDERABAD

In the Mahabharata, for the death of Karna there are so many reasons. In the same way there are several reasons for the defeat of the BRS in the Assembly elections. Apart from other reasons for the defeat of BRS, mainly "svayamkrita-paradham" (self-inflicted blunder) only. In other words the BRS government with its acts since the last nine years has created an atmosphere where the people wanted the change. The domination of KCR family members has created negativity in the public.

The Telangana Rashtra Samithi was formed on the sentiment of Telangana. But renaming the Telangana Rashtra Samithi as Bharath Rashtra Samithi is the mistake committed by the party leadership. By removing the word Telangana from the party name hurt the sentiments of Telangana people. It has given the scope for the opposition parties that K Chandrasekhar Rao has no commitment to Telangana sentiment.

Particularly, as a Chief Minister the style of the functioning of Chandrasekhar Rao attracted the criticism from the public. While past Chief Ministers regularly used to meet the people and party MLAs and political leaders regularly, KCR distanced himself to the public and party MLAs also.

KCR completely stopped coming to the Secretariat and functioned from Pragathi Bhavan or from his farm house. This has given scope to the political parties to call him a "farm house Chief Minister." After 10 years in power, there was scope for anti-incumbency factor in the elections. At the same time, several MLAs faced severe negativity from the public.

After knowing this, KCR was not able to change the sitting



MLAs with a scare that they may jump into opposition camps. It appears that KCR was with an over-confidence that his image in the public will help for the victory of his party candidates though they are facing opposition from the people. KCR had a lot hopes on the welfare schemes implemented by his government since the last 10 years. But the same welfare schemes have played a key role in the defeat of the BRS.

The State government failed in the proper implementation of welfare schemes. Under the welfare schemes like Rythu Bandhu and Dalit Bandhu, only some people benefited and a majority was kept away. This has created negativity against the government. The inconsistency on his own opinions on various issues expressed by KCR created confusion in the party cadre and in the public also. Once he targeted the BJP and once he targeted the Congress politically.

KCR's policy was to maintain equidistance to the BJP and the Congress. But in the implementation, he failed to follow this. Before Assembly elections he targeted the BJP and when Assembly elections came suddenly, KCR shifted his focus on the Congress. Politically his strategy may be correct because in the Assembly elections the main rival of the BRS was the Congress.

When KCR slowed down his attack on the BJP he had given an impression that the BRS and the BJP have colluded against the Congress. After

renaming the TRS as BRS, KCR declared that his party is a national party, KCR also said that the BRS will emerge as a national party alternative to the BJP and the Congress. But in the election campaign, KCR commented that the national parties have become outdated in the national politics and the era of regional parties will start at national politics. With this the party cadre was confused whether the BRS is a regional party or national party. If KCR felt that the BRS is a regional party, why did he change the name of TRS to BRS.

The arrest of former Chief Minister and TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu has become a master stroke for the defeat of the BRS. Though the TDP is not active in Telangana politics it has a lot of sympathisers. The pro-TDP activists of both Telugu states strongly believed the BJP hand behind the arrest of their leader by the AP State government headed by Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. They also believed that Jagan and KCR have cordial relations. In the 2019 Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections, as a Telangana CM, KCR said that he will give a 'return gift' to Chandrababu who tried to defeat the BRS in the 2018 Assembly elections.

When YSR Congress came to power in AP in 2019 Assembly elections, KCR said that he has given the return gift to Chandrababu successfully by defeating the TDP. Keeping this in mind, Chandrababu thought of taking revenge on KCR and wanted to return his return gift in the 2023 Telangana Assembly elections. For this, Chandrababu had taken first step not to contest in the Telangana Assembly elections. It was an open secret that the AP origin people settled in Telangana and pro-TDP activists worked for the success of the Congress. In this way, Chandrababu succeeded in returning the return gift to KCR by defeating the BRS.

WARM GREETINGS



Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee president Gidugu Rudra Raju greeting Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee president A Revanth Reddy for the Congress victory in Telangana

Why BJP paid heavy price in Telangana

K VENKATESHWARLU

■ HYDERABAD

Self-inflicted attitude of the Telangana BJP paid heavy price in the state assembly elections though the BJP got recognition that it is an alternative to ruling BRS party winning

Dubbaka, Huzurabad by-poll and winning 45 corporators in Hyderabad city. However, the fell down like playing cards building to a third position with the removal of Bandi Sanjay Kumar as the president of the Telangana BJP besides non-arrest of BRS MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha in connection with Delhi liquor scam though the BJP top leaders including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and all national leader whoever comes to Telangana stated that they will take an action against the corrupt CM KCR family. The party also suddenly stopped the very successful padayatra of Bandi Sanjay Kumar without giving any reason. Everyone has stated that the BJP itself handed over its place to the Congress party by committing mistakes. Many leaders like Komatireddy Rajagopal Reddy, Vivek Venkata Swamy, Vijayashanthi and others

have left the BJP alleging that the party will not become an alternative to the BRS party. In fact, Komatireddy Rajagopal Reddy and Vivek have won the elections with a huge majority against their opponents from the BRS party.

Due to its own mistakes, the Telangana BJP leaders—Eatala Rajender lost elections from two assembly constituencies--- Huzurabad and Gajwel. The sitting MPs—Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Dharmapuri Arvind and Soyam Bapurao lost elections. Big relief for the party is that it won 8 MLAs---Once again sitting MLA T Raja Singh won the elections from Goshamahall assembly constituency.

The party contested from 111 assembly constituencies and won from 8 places—Kamareddy (Katipally Venkata Ramana Reddy), Mudhol (Ramarao Pawar), Adilabad (Payal Shankar), Armoor (Paidirakesh Reddy), Dhanapal Suryanarayana (Nizamabad Urban), Raja Singh (Goshamahall), Nirmal (Aleti Maheshwar Reddy), Palvai Harish Rao (Sirpur).

The party got 14 percent vote bank in these elections. Once again T Raja Singh created a history by winning election alone from Hyderabad.

Winning candidates of 2023 TS Assembly Polls

S.No.	Constituency	Candidate	Margin	Party
1	Chennur	Gaddam Vivekanand	37515	Congress
2	Bellampalli	Gaddam Vinod	36878	Congress
3	Mancherial	Kokkiralra Premeasagar Rao	66116	Congress
4	Khanapur	Vedma Bhoju	4702	Congress
5	Bodhan	P. Sudarshan Reddy	3062	Congress
6	Jukkal	Laxmi Kantha Rao Thota	1152	Congress
7	Yellareddy	Madan Mohan Rao. K	24001	Congress
8	NZB (Rural)	Bhoopathi Reddy R	21963	Congress
9	Dharmapuri	Adhuri Laxman Kumar	22039	Congress
10	Ramagundam	Makkan Singh Raj Thakur	56794	Congress
11	Manthani	Duddilla Sridhar Babu	31380	Congress
12	Peddapalle	Ch Vijaya Ramana Rao	55108	Congress
13	Choppadandi	Medipally Sathyam	37439	Congress
14	Vemulawada	Aadi Srinivas	14581	Congress
15	Manakondur	Dr. K Satyanarayana	32365	Congress
16	Husnabad	Ponnann Prabhakar	19344	Congress
17	Medak	Mynampally Rohith	10157	Congress
18	Narayankhed	Patolla Sanjeeva Reddy	6547	Congress
19	Andole	C. D Rajanarsimha	28193	Congress
20	Ibrahimpattam	Malreddy Ranga Reddy	36700	Congress
21	Pargi	T R Mohan Reddy	24013	Congress
22	Vicarabad	Gaddam Prasad Kumar	12893	Congress
23	Tandur	B. Manohar Reddy	6583	Congress
24	Kodangal	Anumula Revanth Reddy	32532	Congress
25	Narayanpet	Chittam Parnika Reddy	7951	Congress
26	Mahbubnagar	Yennam Srinivas Reddy	18738	Congress
27	Jadcherla	Anirudh Reddy Janampalli	15171	Congress
28	Devarkadra	G Madhusudan Reddy	1392	Congress
29	Makthal	Vakiti Srihari	17525	Congress
30	Wanaparthi	Megha Reddy Tudi	25320	Congress
31	Nagarkurnool	Dr. K Rajesh Reddy	5248	Congress
32	Achampet	C V Krishna	49326	Congress
33	Kachavurthy	N R Kasireddy	5410	Congress
34	Shadnagar	K Shankaraiah	7128	Congress
35	Kollapur	Juppally Krishna Rao	29931	Congress
36	Devarakonda	Balu Naik Nenavath	30021	Congress
37	Nagarjuna Sagar	Kunduru Jayaveer	55849	Congress
38	Miryalaguda	Bathula Laxma Reddy	44882	Congress
39	Huzurnagar	N Uttam Kumar Reddy	48788	Congress
40	Kodad	N Padmavathi Reddy	58172	Congress
41	Nalgonda	K Venkat Reddy	54332	Congress
42	Munugode	K Raj Gopal Reddy	40590	Congress
43	Bhongir	K Anil Kumar Reddy	26201	Congress
44	Nakrekal	Vernula Veeresham	68839	Congress
45	Thungathurthi	Mandula Samel	51094	Congress
46	Alair	Ilaiah Beerla	49636	Congress
47	Palakurthi	Yashaswini Mamidala	47634	Congress
48	Dornakal	Jathoth Ram Chander Naik	53131	Congress
49	Mahabubabad	Dr. Murali Naik Bhukya	50171	Congress
50	Narsampet	Donthi Madhava Reddy	18889	Congress
51	Parkal	Revuri Prakash Reddy	7941	Congress
52	Warangal West	Naini Rajender Reddy	15331	Congress
53	Warangal East	Konda Surekha	15652	Congress
54	Waradhanapet	K.R.Nagaraj.K	19458	Congress
55	Bhupalpalle	G Satyanarayana Rao	52699	Congress
56	Mulug	D Anasuya Seethakka	33700	Congress
57	Pinapak	Payam Venkateswarlu	34506	Congress
58	Yellandu	Koram Kanakaiah	57309	Congress
59	Kammam	Tummala Nageswara Rao	49381	Congress
60	Palair	Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy	56650	Congress
61	Madhira	Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu	35452	Congress
62	Wyra	Ramdas Maloth	33045	Congress
63	Sathupalle	Matta Ragamayee	19440	Congress
64	Aswarapeta	Adinarayana. Jare	28905	Congress
65	Kothagudem	K Sambasiva Rao	26547	CPI

S.No.	Constituency	Candidate	Margin	Party
1	Asifabad	Kova Laxmi	22798	BRS
2	Boath	Anil Jadhav	22800	BRS
3	Banswada	P Srinivas Reddy Parige	23464	BRS
4	Balkonda	Prashanth Reddy Vemula	4533	BRS
5	Koratla	Kalvakuntla Sanjay	10305	BRS
6	Jagtial	Dr. Sanjay	15822	BRS
7	Karimnagar	Gangula Kamalakara	3163	BRS
8	Sircilla	K T Rama Rao	29687	BRS
9	Huzurabad	Kaushik Reddy Padi	16873	BRS
10	Thanneeru	Thanneeru Harish Rao	82308	BRS
11	Narsapur	V Sunitha Laxma Reddy	8855	BRS
12	Zahirabad	Koninty Manik Rao	12790	BRS
13	Sangareddy	Chinta Prabhakar	8217	BRS
14	Patancheru	Gudem Mahipal Reddy	7091	BRS
15	Dubbak	Kotta Prabhakar Reddy	53513	BRS
16	Gajwel	K Chandrasekhar Rao	45031	BRS
17	Medchal	Chamakura Malla Reddy	33419	BRS
18	Malakajiri	Marri Rajashekar Reddy	49530	BRS
19	Quthbullapur	K.P. Vivekanand	85576	BRS
20	Kukatpalle	Madhavaram Krishna Rao	70387	BRS
21	Uppal	Bandari Lakshma Reddy	49030	BRS
22	L B Nagar	Devireddy Sudhir Reddy	22305	BRS
23	Maheswararam	P Sabitha Indra Reddy	26187	BRS
24	Rajendranagar	T. Prakash Goud	32096	BRS
25	Serilingampally	Arekapudi Gandhi	46552	BRS
26	Chevela	Kale Yadaiah	268	BRS
27	Musheerabad	Muta Gopal	37797	BRS
28	Aramberpet	Kaleru Venkatesh	24537	BRS
29	Khairatnagar	Danam Nagender	22010	BRS
30	Sanathnagar	Talasan Srinivas Yadav	41827	BRS
31	Secunderabad	Padma Rao. T	45240	BRS
32	Sec'dal Cantt.	Lasya Nanditha Sayanna	17169	BRS
33	Gadwal	B Krishna Mohan Reddy	7036	BRS
34	Alampur	Vijayudu	30573	BRS
35	Suryapet	G Jagadish Reddy	4606	BRS
36	Jangoan	Palla Rajeshwar Reddy	15783	BRS
37	Station Ghanpur	Kadiyam Srihari	7779	BRS
38	Bhadrachalam	Dr. Tellam Venkata Rao	5719	BRS
39	Jubilee Hills	Maganti Gopinath	15939	BRS

S.No.	Constituency	Candidate	Margin	Party
1	Sirpur	Dr. Palvai Harish Babu	3088	BJP
2	Adilabad	Payal Shanker	6692	BJP
3	Nirmal	Alleti Maheshwar Reddy	50703	BJP
4	Mudhole	Ram Rao Pawar	23999	BJP
5	Armoor	Paidi Rakesh Reddy	29669	BJP
6	Kamareddy	K Venkata Ramana Reddy	6741	BJP
7	NZB (Urban)	Dhanpal Suryanarayana	15387	BJP
8	Goshamahall	T. Raja Singh	21457	BJP

S.No.	Constituency	Candidate	Margin	Party
1	Malakpet	Ahmed Bin Abdullah Balala	26106	AIMIM
2	Nampally	Md Majid Hussain	2037	AIMIM
3	Charminar	Mir Zulfqar Ali	22853	AIMIM
4	Chandrayangutta	Akbar Uddin Owaisi	81660	AIMIM
5	Yakutpura	Jaffar Hussain	878	AIMIM
6	Bahadurpura	Md Mubeen	67025	AIMIM
7	Karwan	Kausar Mohiuddin	42067	AIMIM

BRS defeat puts a question mark on Council's future

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

After the defeat of the BRS in the Telangana Assembly elections, the future of the state's Legislative Council is hanging in the balance. The reason is that the Legislative Council is in the hands of the BRS even though it was defeated in the Assembly elections.

When the TDP first came to power in United AP in 1983 and the YSR Congress when it came to power in 2019 in Andhra Pradesh, they too faced the same situation in the Legislative Council which the Congress is now facing in Telangana.

Even though the BRS was defeated in the Assembly elections the Telangana Legislative Council is in its hands. In the 40-member Telangana Legislative Council, the BRS has 30 Members and its ally AIMIM has two Members. But the Congress has only three Members.

Congress MLA T. Jeevan Reddy who was elected from Jagtial will resign his MLC membership. With this, the strength of the Congress will come down to two. The Chairman and Vice Chairman also belong to the BRS. The BRS will create hurdles to the Congress government in the Legislative Council.

Legislature business will not run smoothly as the Assembly



is in the hands of the Congress and the Legislative Council is in the hands of the BRS.

In these circumstances, whether the Congress will follow the footsteps of the late Chief Minister NT Rama Rao by abolishing the Legislative Council is not clear.

In Andhra Pradesh in the beginning the Legislative Council was in the hands of the opposition TDP. While the Assembly had a YSR Congress majority, the Legislative Council was run by the TDP. Due to this, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy abolished the Legislative Council. This decision is still pending with the Central Government.

Meanwhile, the YSR Congress gained sufficient strength in the Council and at present there are no hurdles for the AP government in the Council.

In Telangana, it will take a lot of time for the Congress to attain a majority in the Council. Till that time the Congress government will have to face problems from the BRS in the Council.

When the late NTR abolished the Council in United Andhra Pradesh during the 1989 Assembly elections the Congress under the leadership of the late Marri Chennareddy declared that it would revive it. But after it came to power in 1989 the Congress government did not revive the Council.

Later, under the leadership of the late YS Rajasekhara Reddy, the Congress again assured to revive the Legislative Council during the 2004 Assembly elections. After coming to power the Congress government under the leadership of Chief Minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy revived the Council in 2007.

PM Modi says BJP's bond with TS is unbreakable

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi commented that BJP's victory in three states is historic. Speaking at the BJP headquarters in Delhi on Sunday, Modi said that the people supported the BJP in Telangana as well. "We will give a lot of attention to the care of four groups in the country. We will work for the uplift of women, youth, farmers and the poor. The promises given in the three states will be fulfilled." Prime Minister Modi said that if BJP promises, it will be implemented.

The Prime Minister also tweeted saying "My dear sisters and brothers of Telangana, Thank you for your support to the @BJP4India. Over the last few years, this support has only been increasing and this trend will continue in the times to come. Our bond with Telangana is unbreakable and we will keep working for the people. I also appreciate the industrious efforts of each and every BJP karyakarta."

Sunil Kanugolu - poll strategist behind Cong win

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Poll strategist Sunil Kanugolu has yet again proven to be the man with the Midas touch, plotting the Congress' amazing turnaround in Telangana months after being the architect of the grand old party's return to power in Karnataka.

Kanugolu was largely credited for shaping the Congress' win in Karnataka and was later accorded Cabinet rank in the Siddaramaiah government. This time, Kanugolu, along with PCC chief A Revanth Reddy, formed a formidable pair to chalk out the Congress' strategy to pull down the K Chandrashekhara Rao-led BRS government that was eying a third term in the southern State.

The Congress was headed for victory in Telangana while it was staring at crushing defeats in the Hindi heartland states of

Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan.

Kanugolu had also made forays in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh following a directive from the party's central leadership but regional satraps Ashok Gehlot and Kamal Nath reportedly were not on the same page as the poll strategist.

Ahead of the Rajasthan elections, Kanugolu had made an assessment about the winnability of probable candidates but Gehlot reportedly did not agree to his suggestions and brought in Naresh Arora's Designboxed to construct the Congress government's narrative in the run-up to the assembly polls. Sources say that the success of Kanugolu in Karnataka and Telangana was the result of the free hand given to him and allowing his team to work freely. Kanugolu, who hails from Karnataka and is in his early 40s, has been considered

largely as the brain behind the Congress' narrative in Karnataka with the 'PayCM' campaign against the BJP. In the run-up to the polls in Telangana, he highlighted the alleged corruption of the K Chandrashekhara Rao dispensation as part of Congress' campaign that seemed to have struck a chord with the people. The campaigns run by the Congress in Karnataka and Telangana have been very similar as both highlighted the alleged graft of the ruling dispensation and projected welfare guarantees that seemed to have struck an instant connection with the public.

Interestingly, Kanugolu has also been involved in several BJP poll campaigns in the past. In 2018, he worked with the BJP in Karnataka and the party managed to become the single largest party with 104 seats. He had also worked on Narendra

Modi's campaign in 2014, as well as the party's political campaigns in Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. Kanugolu, a former consultant with McKinsey, was also associated with DMK chief MK Stalin and oversaw the party's 'Namakku Naame' (we are for ourselves) campaign during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. In 2021, he also worked with AIADMK against the DMK and led the party to win 75 seats in the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections.

Kanugolu had joined the Congress last year and worked closely with the Karnataka campaign. He is also credited with strategising Rahul Gandhi's cross-country 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' from Kanyakumari to Kashmir last year. Having delivered Karnataka and Telangana to the Congress, Kanugolu is likely to be given more responsibilities by the party in the run-up to the Lok Sabha polls.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Saffron wave, again

Triumphs in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh; Cong snatches Telangana from KCR

The climax of the nail-biting suspense thriller is revealed and Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP emerge the undisputed hero in four of the five Assembly elections held recently --- the party comfortably retains Madhya Pradesh and wrests Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh from the Congress. The 'grand old party', for its part, pushes KCR out of the Chief Minister's Office in Telangana and increases footprint in the south, after forming the Government in Karnataka. But the verdict is clear --- people are favouring the BJP over all other Opposition parties in the Hindi heartland. Its win in the three major States speaks volumes about its election strategy and public mood. As political pundits analyse the results' implications, attention naturally turns towards the broader impact on the 2024 general elections. The BJP's resounding victory underscores its continuing popularity in the traditionally significant States. In Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, the BJP successfully



encashed the anti-incumbency sentiment, presented a united front and resonated with voters on key issues. In Madhya Pradesh, where the party did not project even a CM face, it managed to retain power by addressing local concerns and effectively countering the Opposition's narrative. The results highlight the importance of regional factors in influencing voters and the significance of a strong leadership in the BJP's poll strategy. The Congress' sole victory underscores its appeal to the Telangana electorate and its successful positioning on key State-specific issues.

The overall scenario serves as a reminder that Indian politics is diverse, with regional dynamics playing a crucial role in shaping outcomes. The four results, while showing the potential for regional variations as in Telangana, strengthen the BJP's position nationally. The party's ability to address regional concerns in key States like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh positions it as a formidable contender in the general elections. However, it is important to acknowledge the fluidity of Indian politics, where last-minute developments, local issues, alliances and changing dynamics can significantly impact the outcome. The Congress, buoyed by its victory in Telangana, may aim to consolidate its position in other States with a similar strategy. The results in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Telangana paint a nuanced picture of Indian politics. As the nation waits for the 2024 general elections, political parties must carefully chalk out their strategies, taking into account the diverse socio-political landscapes across States. These results serve as a crucial barometer, offering an insight into voter preferences, regional dynamics and the challenges and opportunities in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. But the General elections are still months away and that is a long time in Indian politics.

PICTALK



Disabled People participate in a tricycle race, on International Day of Persons with Disabilities, in Nadia PTI

Kissinger had counterparts in Kerala!

The uniqueness of Kissinger was his expertise in making the impossibilities a possibility

Henry Kissinger, the US State Secretary during the Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford era, who breathed his last on Wednesday at the age of 100, was a popular person in Kerala though he had nothing to do with the State and has not visited this part of the country even once in his lifetime. Kissinger, who is credited with a new style and art of diplomacy reigned supreme during the peak of the Cold War and was known as one of the architects of the US-China ties through Ping-Pong (Chinese term for the game of table tennis). The diplomatic ties between US and China got a shot in the arm with the Ping-Pong games between the two countries and this paved the way for the 1972 State visit to China by President Nixon. The former State Secretary was known for his talents to make any unfriendly countries the friends of the US. For him there were no permanent friends or enemies but only permanent interests, that was the US commercial and strategic inter-



ests. Full credit should be given to Henry Kissinger for his farsightedness and visionary-like forecasts. It was Kissinger who warned the world about the impending Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism which would upset peace in Asia and cause damage to India. While addressing the Davos Symposium on 31 January 1980, Kissinger said: "The problem of India has the component that, for India, the existence of a strong, fundamentalist, Islamic state presents problems of its own internal cohesion and may create its own incentives for war. On the

other hand, if India is worried about our policies, it must give some assurances, other than rhetoric, that it will not act in collusion with the Soviet Union and that it will not cooperate in an attack on Pakistan," said Kissinger (Henry Kissinger: For The Record). Kissinger is also known as the person who pointed out the folly behind the Non-Aligned Movement, which he termed as a means to strengthen the hegemony of the then Soviet Union. There was no denying his hatred for socialism and communism. The Kerala media, which was quick in reacting to international developments, especially in singing paens to Communism and comrades in the USSR and China portrayed Kissinger as a villain. The party cadre, despite their ignorance about the stance of Kissinger viz-a-viz the socialist countries, did not waste even a single opportunity to taunt and ridicule the Nobel laureate. When the Muslim League was split in the early 1970s, the then Congress strong-

man K Karunakaran deputised Baby John, a leader of the RSP to negotiate with the League leadership to somehow avoid the break up in the outfit. Baby John, whose RSP was an ally of the Congress, reached Parappanangadi in Malappuram district, to broker peace between the warring factions. The CPI-M which was in the opposition, wanted the Muslim League to split so that the former would get the support of the breakaway faction. Baby John's brief was to somehow prevent the split and keep the leadership in good humour. The day after Baby John landed at Malappuram, CPI-M mouthpiece had this headline as the lead news: "Kerala Kissinger in Parappanangadi to broker peace in Muslim League". But Kerala Kissinger, despite all his charming manners, failed in the mission and the League was split vertically, though only for a brief period.

(The writer is a special correspondent with the Pioneer, the views are personal)



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

ed in supporting dictators, supporting suppression and partaking hypocritical conduct. But what remains undeniable is that Kissinger served American interests (often at the cost of other stakeholders and even purported 'allies') and institutionalised the way Washington DC would conduct diplomacy, thereafter. Kissinger can claim to have singularly introduced the 19th Century German neologism of realpolitik, in diplomatic parlance and practice. If anything, it eased up the untenable stodginess of ideology or idealism, in favour of considerations based on realism, practicality and situational possibilities - which optimized the draw of hand to still deliver the most agreeable solution, given the situation. Many partook realpolitik like Zbigniew Brzezinski, Lee Kuan Yew, Deng Xiaoping to even Xi Jinping, but Kissinger is synonymous with realpolitik. To that extent, it birthed subsequent concepts like 'Strategic Ambiguity', which implied remaining deliberately ambiguous towards operational and positional policies e.g., the implied commitment of the United States towards Taiwan, despite maintaining the 'One China' position. Even the much bandied 'Strategic Independence/Autonomy' deployed by India in recent times owes itself to the foundational principle of realpolitik, as it allows the practition-

Amongst the eulogies offered to the highest priest of realpolitik i.e., Henry Kissinger, and the accompanying divide on his unique style of diplomacy, the most prescient was from the former Prime Minister of Great Britain, Tony Blair, who said, "If it is possible for diplomacy, at its highest level, to be a form of art, Henry was an artist". Admired as much for his intellectual clarity, as for his questionable morality and intent, the artist of diplomacy may have been the most famous soothsayer to many in power in the White House, but his legacy will remain deeply contested and polarising. No less than the sitting President of the United States, Joe Biden, himself conceded, "Throughout our careers, we often disagreed. And often strongly. But from that first briefing - his fierce intellect and profound strategic focus was evident". Admittedly, diplomacy is not for idealists or even the fainthearted. The names of Machiavelli to Metternich are synonymous with statecraft which naturally entails a ruthless pursuit of self-interest, that can readily compromise which publicly maintained façade of values. Even the doyen of Indian treatise on politics and statecraft i.e., Chanakya realistically noted, "There is some self-interest behind every friendship. There is no friendship with self-interests. This is a bitter truth". Naturally, the extent of moral compromises, leniencies and even suppressions done by Superpowers in their quest to assert their geopolitical agendas and interests, is even more pronounced.

As the definitive 'Cold Warrior' in the extreme freeze of the Cold War era, Kissinger personified contradictions between noble rhetoric with brutal manipulation and opportunism, to further the interests of the United States of America. Subcontinental memories are understandably rife with the wounds of deliberate indifference, uncouth behaviour, and even a clear tilt in favour of the oppressor (read, Pakistan) during the genocidal birth of Bangladesh - part of a far larger legacy of amorality that routinely manifest-

ed in supporting dictators, supporting suppression and partaking hypocritical conduct. But what remains undeniable is that Kissinger served American interests (often at the cost of other stakeholders and even purported 'allies') and institutionalised the way Washington DC would conduct diplomacy, thereafter. Kissinger can claim to have singularly introduced the 19th Century German neologism of realpolitik, in diplomatic parlance and practice. If anything, it eased up the untenable stodginess of ideology or idealism, in favour of considerations based on realism, practicality and situational possibilities - which optimized the draw of hand to still deliver the most agreeable solution, given the situation. Many partook realpolitik like Zbigniew Brzezinski, Lee Kuan Yew, Deng Xiaoping to even Xi Jinping, but Kissinger is synonymous with realpolitik. To that extent, it birthed subsequent concepts like 'Strategic Ambiguity', which implied remaining deliberately ambiguous towards operational and positional policies e.g., the implied commitment of the United States towards Taiwan, despite maintaining the 'One China' position. Even the much bandied 'Strategic Independence/Autonomy' deployed by India in recent times owes itself to the foundational principle of realpolitik, as it allows the practition-

Kissinger: Cold warrior of realpolitik

While history will judge Henry Kissinger's many accomplishments and misdemeanours, the art and science of diplomacy has lost an ace practitioner and innovator



BHOPIINDER SINGH



AS THE DEFINITIVE 'COLD WARRIOR' IN THE EXTREME FREEZE OF THE COLD WAR ERA, KISSINGER PERSONIFIED CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN NOBLE RHETORIC WITH BRUTAL MANIPULATION AND OPPORTUNISM

er to not get closeted within the linear grouping and associated puritanism of 'allies'/blocs to which a sovereign subscribed. As India's External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar, quipped on the task for Indian diplomacy which may not have been possible to state earlier, "This is a time for us to engage America, manage China, cultivate Europe, reassure Russia, bring Japan into play, draw neighbours in, extend the neighbourhood, and expand traditional constituencies of support." Contradictory at one level, given the ambition of keeping equations with America and Russia in the same breath, whilst the backdrop of the Ukraine War ensued, a clear reflection of practicality triumphing binarism, in an ode to principals of realpolitik as popularised by Kissinger. Another attributed facet of modern-day diplomacy to Henry Kissinger was the decidedly more moral role of 'back-channeler' amongst the seemingly intractable stakeholders. Kissinger had famously flown secretly to China in July 1971 to restore and repair relations with America, something he did yet again, just a few months back at the ripe age of 100 years to meet Xi Jinping. 'Back channels' is an oft-deployed tact that is frequently invoked by conflicting countries, to avoid getting the engagement getting derailed

by prying eyes, opinions and pressures that can lead to immediate cessation of thawing talks. The template was used in Track 1 and Track 2 by peaceniks in the Indo-Pak realm earlier or towards the more recent fruition of 'Abrahamic Accords' besetting Israel-Arab Sheikhdoms, all from the playbook of Kissinger's school of diplomacy. While history will judge Henry Kissinger's many accomplishments and misdemeanours at ease and with the benefit of reflection, the art and science of diplomacy (both moral and otherwise) has lost an ace practitioner and innovator, of the same. Another priceless lesson that he leaves for posterity, even though he alluded to his own country, yet applicable to all major powers is, "America has no permanent friends or enemies, only interests". As India meanders and navigates its rise in global relevance and animus simultaneously, it would do well to mull over and keep pace with the evolving nature of diplomacy. In the end, Kissinger got away with much to answer for as his fellow Jew, Senator Bernie Sanders once said, "I am proud to say that Henry Kissinger is not my friend", and so went Henry Kissinger. (The writer is a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. Views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PROTECTING THE PRIVACY

Sir — Law agencies seize digital devices like laptops, mobiles, and pen drives from the houses of the accused and even journalists in the name of investigation. These agencies even snatch away their financial, personal and professional privacy. The Supreme Court told the government that the nine-member constitution bench of this court has considered the right to privacy as a part of Article 21 (life and personal liberty) under the fundamental rights in the year 2017. The Supreme Court has asked the government to make guidelines regarding the confiscation of personal digital devices and has also stressed that the professional interests of journalists should be kept in mind. On the other hand, due to the use of AI, our privacy is being destroyed within minutes and crime is also being encouraged. Recently, a picture of an actress created with a deepfake went viral. AI is going to make a big contribution to public welfare, especially in education, health, agriculture and other production efforts, but ways will have to be found to avoid the destructive effects of its misuse. Anyway, every new technology is a double-edged sword. A conscious society avoids its ill effects and accepts it. The government will also have to keep privacy in mind while confiscating such devices.

N Ashraf | Mumbai

TAKE STRICT ACTION

Sir — A 15-year-old girl was allegedly raped by her neighbour after holding her hostage in his house in the Pataudi area with the help of his mother on November 29 but came to light on Friday when the victim's mother lodged a complaint at women's police station, Manesar. According to the complaint filed by the mother, her 15-year-old married daughter is living with her. On November 29, the girl was passing through the house of the accused when he called her inside his house, the mother said. After this, the

India's third woman grandmaster!



Vaishali, Praggananandhaa World's first brother-sister Grandmasters' duo'. We have seen siblings making their parents and country proud in games like Cricket, Tennis, Hockey, Football and Archery, like Dhyan Chand and Roop Singh, Dola Banerjee and Rahul Banerjee, Mohinder and Surinder Amarnath, Vijay and Anand Amritraj, it is the first time in Chess that a brother sister pair have achieved the title of Grandmaster. Finally R. Vaishali has come out of the shadow of his famous brother Praggananandhaa. In the process she has become India's third woman GrandMaster after Koneru Humpy and Dronavalli Harika. Kudos to their parents who gave it all despite coming from a very poor and humble background. Success story of siblings Vaishali and Praggananandhaa is true inspiration to thousands of young children in our country to take up this mind sport.

Bal Govind | Noida

accused's mother locked the main gate and he raped my daughter at night. Meanwhile, I kept searching for her the whole night. My daughter managed to escape from captivity on November 30 morning, when the accused was sleeping. She reached home and told me about her ordeal. Then I approached the police with her. This sort of accident occurs from time to time somewhere. Therefore, the police must strictly look into this kind of accident and punish such exemplary punishment so other people can get lessons.

Jahangir Shaikh | Mumbai

PRISONS REFORM

Sir — The Prisons Act, 1894 focused more on retribution and less on reform. So, the Home Ministry's finalisation of the "Model Prisons Act, 2023", is just and reasonable. The provisions of the new Act place emphasis on reform and rehabilitation. India has the third highest undertrial population in Asia. Most of the country's jails are packed with

inmates with little provision for ensuring their health and hygiene. The plight of women and children is excruciating. Delay in trials has overburdened prisons and courts. In the USA, 20% of the prisoners are undertrials compared to a whopping 60% in India. Stress on technology is the right way to go. The new Act should decongest prisons; the rest will fall in line. Segregation of prisoners based on the gravity of the crime, like first-time offence, is an excellent idea. So are the proposals to introduce parole, furlough and remission to undertrials because emotional stability can go a long way. Since legal knowledge and assistance are hard to come by, concessions and incentives to prisoners are most welcome. Special courts and increasing the lawyers-to-prisoners ratio to hasten legal aid can also be considered.

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

HOLD BACK THAT RAGING ANGER!


One needs to overcome the anxiety and fear that lead to anger



SAKSHI SETHI

Nobody likes to feel angry, but all of us experience this kind of emotion from time to time irrespective of age. In the words of Buddha, “Whoever can retain the rising anger, like holding back a moving cart, then he is called a true driver.” Anger is a secondary feeling to deeper, perhaps more vulnerable emotions. It is a normal, natural emotion that not only adults but children of all age groups especially nowadays experience at some point in time. As per recent surveys and studies, it has been found that children in the age groups of 6 to 11 years in the US and approximately 129 million children and adolescents worldwide have been diagnosed with problems of anger followed by other mental health conditions including ADHD, autism, OCD and many more. They tend to yell, scream, get physical and above all say hurtful and disturbing things. But the question arises where lies the root cause for such rising anger among the children? Are we to blame only the technology for this or is it someone else who is to be blamed for such a changed behaviour?

There is no denying the fact that anger can fuel courage, one needs to overcome the fear and protect boundaries that uphold the values. At the same time, it also prevents an individual from thinking clearly. That is why learning how to manage it consciously is vital. Also, if we are to blame only technology in this regard then no one can deny the fact that technology has become so firmly established that it is being widely used in almost all sectors of the economy. In education too, these advancements have provided children of all age groups with various resources that enable them to stay connected everywhere and anywhere with the click of a button which as a result has drifted a child and a parent to a lot many extent, so in so that if a child seems to be in trouble, he or she will prefer to take the help of technology over its parents or guardians which becomes a matter of great concern.



Adults do play a significant role in modelling nonviolent communication and behaviour. Often it is observed that when a child feels that he or she is being heard or understood, they feel safer and braver. They tend to express and experience all emotions with confidence and when such things are performed on repeat, it wires the brain for self-regulation, empathetic responses, rational thinking and even problem-solving. By listening without judgement, parents learn the real reason behind the changed behaviour of their child and the children also feel safe to release the uncomfortable and daunting emotions.

It is particularly important to stay with the child through scary emotions, take them to places of their wish, play with them, engage them in productive activities such as dancing, gymnasium, meditation and many more, problem solve with them when they are ready and then guide them back to peace. Once, everything gets to settle, then is the time to offer them better ways of expressing themselves in the future.

Remember, when a child is upset or dysregulated, they need the elders to be their support system to keep them calm. The best thing one can do for their child is to ensure they never witness anger, fear or conflict at home. Let them grow up in an environment and atmosphere of joy and love. Anger and aggressive behaviour can be a mask for anxiety. When children are overwhelmed by internal feelings, they do not know how to process them, it turns into outbursts and then melt down.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

Balochistan: An undeclared war zone-I

The war between Balochistan-Pakistan raging for years now but it is not visible in the media because there is no media in Balochistan, writes Mir Khan Baloch



The schools have been turned into carriages, villages into concentration camps. Houses-to-house search operations have become a daily routine. University and college students are harassed and intimidated on campuses. Women being raped, and female students are sexually molested. Journalists are picked up by the Pakistan army and forces, and later their mutilated dead bodies are thrown on roadsides and barren land across Balochistan. This is what Balochistan looks like today. Baloch youth are facing dire consequences not over charges of drugs or weapons but for having books which are punishable sins in occupied Balochistan. We watch the Hamas-Israel war on TV and media but the war between Balochistan and Pakistan is not visible in the media because there is hardly a single Baloch media outlet in Balochistan. Balochistan is a black hole for information. Smuggling of narcotics and weapons are easy because Pakistan supports it but writing on human rights violations and the ongoing Balochistan war is not easy, Baloch are smuggling the news and publishing them on social media. If any Baloch is found writing on Pakistan's war crimes, he/she is taken away and killed after some time. On 16 November, Pakistan's military and police opened fire on Baloch students of Lasbela Uthal Agricultural University for Water and Marine Science. Dozens of students were injured and the remaining were arrested and taken to undisclosed locations. Video footage of the incident sparked fear, and anger among the people of the area who came to protest on the streets of Lasbela. On 19 November 2023, Pakistan ISI took three Baloch hostages namely Adil, Shahjahan and Nabi Dad, tied their



BALUCH YOUTH ARE FACING DIRE CONSEQUENCES NOT OVER CHARGES OF DRUGS OR WEAPONS BUT FOR HAVING BOOKS WHICH IS PUNISHABLE SIN IN OCCUPIED BALUCHISTAN

hands with rope, put them inside an explosive-loaded vehicle and detonated the car killing all of them in the Hoshab area of Turbat. Two of them were brothers. Three of them belong to the same family who were abducted on 22 August 2023 from Turbat at 3:00 pm city by the Pakistan military during a raid on their homes. This seems a new tactic of the Pakistan army but in the past, there were numerous instances of Baloch hostages thrown out of low altitude flying helicopters. Balochistan needs world attention

It is the need of the hour that a debate on national and international levels must be resumed. The academic think tanks and institutions of friends of occupied Balochistan should involve Baloch leadership and people to participate and chalk policies towards getting closer to each other and work on unified goals. Let's break the rhetoric of Pakistan's deep state and the army about Balochistan that can't be discussed globally. After the partition of the subcontinent, we have seen India facing border infiltration from Pakistan and China. Beijing's growing aggressive policies towards India indicate that the PLA is not willing to abandon its policy of bleeding India, for the last many decades. China is leaving no stone unturned to encircle India from all fronts. Delhi is not only facing threats from the border but also is being deliberately engaged in internal conflicts where China

is providing all sorts of support to militants who are fighting against Indian national interests. The non-state actors funded by China often get diplomatic backing from Beijing even at the forums of the UN Security Council. Balochistan deserves India's attention. Many people are working tirelessly to this end. The efforts by the overseas diplomatic leadership of occupied Balochistan are bearing fruits and now there are indicators that in coming years Balochistan is heading towards taking a centre point for global powers. India should take advantage of the Balochistan uprising on global forums and lend her full diplomatic, political and other support to help the Baloch for their liberation. To chalk a long-term 100-year policy to secure India's energy needs, and stability and disperse threats to its economy, it is needed that Delhi should open an official channel with Balochistan to pave the way for future cooperation. If India supports Balochistan, it will no longer rely on oil imports from Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela because Balochistan has more oil than the gulf and Venezuela. India's 42% of liquefied natural gas (LNG) requirements were fulfilled from Qatar till 2021 but with Doha's recent court decision to sentence to 8 former Naval personnel, the import of the energy may get disrupted. At this point, India has the option to buy LNG from Balochistan as it has huge reserves of natural gas.

Balochistan is highly rich in minerals and once it is liberated, that would give a boost to India's economy, national security, defence, and global position. The issue of Balochistan is not a political issue. It is the issue of the invasion of Pakistan. We can't accept the false narrative of Pakistan that Balochistan willingly joined Pakistan. No substantial or legal evidence proves Pakistan's claim on Balochistan. I have researched and come to know that Balochistan before the withdrawal of the British from the subcontinent was ruled under the British in a similar way to India was under British occupation. When the British decided to withdraw from the subcontinent, the King of Balochistan's Kalat State announced its independence on 11 August 1947. It is a well-documented fact that Balochistan remained independent for about 7- 8 months. In this period the founder of Pakistan, Mr. M.A Jinnah kept pressurizing the Khan of Kalat Mir Amed Yar Khan that Balochistan should join Pakistan but he refused to join his country into Pakistan. Both the houses (House of Lords and House of Common) of Balochistan unanimously rejected the proposal of Jinnah to join Pakistan. (The writer is a Baloch human rights activist covering Balochistan, Central Asia and the Middle East. Views are personal)

This is the first part of a two-part series on Balochistan. To be continued...

Artificial Intelligence: Benefits outweigh the detriments

The calling has been there for the government statisticians to embrace AI albeit with caution and calibration



ROHIT BHARDWAJ



PANKAJ KP SHREYASKAR

With the advent of intuitive machine coherent processes like intelligence, recognition, enlightenment, systematic enquiry, and resolution connected with evolution in data collection, and accumulation, rational investigations, and computer processing power, AI provides occasions to companionship and addition to human intelligence and enhances how the people lead their work and life. In 2018, NITI Aayog developed a National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence namely, # AI for All. This strategy aims to ensure the safe and responsible use of AI. It also focuses on how India can leverage AI for social inclusion and economic growth. The field of AI is vast which includes Machine

Learning, Natural Language Processing, Large Language Models, Cognitive Computing, etc. The usage also is of varying kinds depending on the field in which it is applied. One of the tools of governance, the Official Statistical System is a field where the calling has been there to embrace but the handshake is yet to take place. The collection of data is one of the most important ingredients of Official Statistics. The Collection of data is done mostly through Census Surveys and as a by-product of administrative action like data generated as part of tax collection exercise. While undertaking Census and Surveys, one of the biggest problems faced is data quality and non-response which leads to missing data. With the help of AI,

the task of finding missing and problematic data and imputation i.e. task of altering incorrect values and inserting missing values can be done in a much faster manner by applying the ML models. Another possible use of AI could be the use of a Large Language model-based Chatbot in the data collection process. This Chatbot like Chat GPT would assist in providing information instantly to the enumerator from the fieldwork manual. It would save them from the trouble of going through the voluminous documents time and again which leads to drudgery and monotony in the fieldwork. Another use case in a country like ours which has more than twenty Official languages could be an AI-based utility that helps in two-way

conversation between the enumerator and the respondent which will go a long way in resolving the language barrier faced by our data warriors in the field. Further, the multimodal bots with the capacity to read images would be of great help as they would be able to give immediate clarification to the enumerator in case confusion regarding definition arises while collecting data. Another potential use of AI, especially ML could be the classification and coding of Textual Data for official statistics. In the context of the coding and classification work in statistical organisations, the given set is typically a text or narrative provided by the respondent from a survey or administrative data source.

For example, it could describe an individual's occupation or the economic activity of the company described in an administrative business register. With the increasing use of new data sources, the text data that statistical organisations might work with could also include product descriptions scraped from the internet or text posts obtained from social media platforms such as Twitter. The aim of classification and coding in this scenario could be to classify the descriptions into international or corporate statistical classification systems, such as Standard Industrial Classification (SIC), and Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) for easy understanding and quick analysis.

Image data is still a relatively new type of data for statistical organisations but there is a growing need for exploring how image data can be used for the production of statistics. These models could associate the variables of interest (e.g., building type, land cover type) with the images in the training data set and classify new images with reasonable levels of accuracy. Automation (or partial automation) of these tasks can allow a large volume of information in the image data to be processed in a reliable and fast way. The cost of deployment including the computation required is one of the major factors affecting the deployment of AI in an organisation. The other main challenge facing statistical organisations to advance the use of

AI in organisations is bringing together the required skills as AI requires people from Domain, Computer Science and Statistics; all working together on a project together for its meaningful use. The alignment of AI use cases with the vision of the organisation is the most important aspect of the adoption of AI. The development of AI should not be an ad-hoc process but a part of a well-thought-out strategy which has the support of the top management and confidence of all stakeholders as a tool for reducing their burden rather than replacing them or their work. (The writers are Dy Director Generals in the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS

India re-elected to IMO Council

India was re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council with the highest tally on Friday, and the term of council will be for the biennium 2024-25, according to an official statement. The statement said India's re-election falls under the category of 10 states with "the largest interest in international seaborne trade", alongside Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal said the highest votes are indicative of the government's determination to strengthen India's varied contributions to international maritime operations. The council is the executive organ of IMO and is responsible, under the assembly, for supervising the work of the organization. Between sessions of the assembly, the council performs the functions of the assembly, except that of making recommendations to governments on maritime safety and pollution prevention. According to the statement, under the MIV 2030 to enhance representation at IMO, India aims at appointing permanent representatives at IMO London.



Honda Cars to hike prices of its range

Honda Cars India plans to increase prices of its vehicles from January in order to partially offset the impact of rising input costs, according to a senior company official. The Japanese carmaker sells three models -- Elevate, City and Amaze -- in the Indian market. In an interaction with PTI, Honda Cars India Vice President (Marketing and Sales) Kunal Behl said the company will increase the prices of its models from next month due to pressure on input costs. "The model-wise amount of increase will be finalised by the end of this month. Our new model Elevate which was launched at an introductory price has been very well received by the market with very high customer consideration. The introductory price will be valid till December 23 and price will be revised from January 2024," he noted. Maruti Suzuki, Mahindra & Mahindra and Audi India have also announced plans to hike prices of their passenger vehicles in January 2024 citing reasons, including cost pressure driven by overall inflation and increased commodity rates. Besides, Tata Motors and Mercedes-Benz India are mulling increasing the prices of their models from January.



Pepe Jeans aims Rs 2,000 cr sales

Denim brand Pepe Jeans London is aiming for sales of around Rs 2,000 crore from the Indian market and plans to expand its retail network by adding over 100 stores in the next three years, its India MD and CEO Manish Kapoor said. Pepe Jeans London, owned by Spanish global fashion group AWWG, is "very buoyant" for the Indian market, and aims to grow at 18-20 per cent compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in the next three to five years, Kapoor said. As part of the strategy, Pepe Jeans is now focusing on the expansion of its network of brand stores and fast-growing e-commerce channels. Pepe Jeans expects 55 per cent of its business to come directly by selling to consumers from its own sales channels. Over Pepe Jeans' expansion plans, Kapoor said, "We will add 100 odd stores in the next three years and in terms of a turnover, we are looking at a CAGR growth of 18 to 20 per cent. So we should be almost around Rs 2,000 crore of consumer sales in three years." When asked about sales numbers, Kapoor said: "If I look at business in India, last year on a consumer sales revenue we did close to Rs 1,200 crore and book revenue of Rs 562 crore."



RBI to retain 6.5 % interest rate as economic growth comfortable

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank is likely to maintain the status quo on the short-term interest rate in its monetary policy review later this week, with inflation staying in comfort zone and economic growth moving at an accelerated pace, opined experts.

The RBI has left the benchmark policy rate (repo) unchanged in its past four bi-monthly monetary policies. The RBI had last increased the repo rate in February to 6.5 per cent, thus ending the interest rate hiking spree which began in May 2022 in the aftermath of Russia-Ukraine war and subsequent disruptions in the global supply chain resulting in high inflation in the country. RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das-headed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is scheduled to begin its three-day deliberations on December 6. Das would unveil the decision of the six-member MPC on December 8 morning. The MPC meeting is scheduled for December 6-8, 2023.

India retained the tag of the world's fastest-growing major economy, with its GDP expanding by a faster-than-expected rate of 7.6 per cent in the July-September quarter on booster shots from government spending and manufacturing.

On expectations from the RBI's monetary policy, Madan Sabnavis, Chief Economist,



Bank of Baroda, said the central bank is most likely to maintain the status quo on rates as well as stance this time.

"The high growth witnessed in Q2 in GDP will provide assurance that the economy is on track. The low core inflation numbers in the last few months will provide comfort that there is no need to increase rates even while headline inflation is likely to be volatile in the upward direction," he said.

Some direction on liquidity will be useful to the market as the system is in deficit for quite some time, he said, and added there can be some upward revision in the GDP growth numbers though will not be very significant.

Aurodeep Nandi, India economist at Nomura, also expects the MPC to unanimously vote to pause at its December policy meeting.

"Of particular interest will be RBI's commentary around OMO sales, which were announced in the previous policy meeting, but tight liquidity conditions have so far made the implementation difficult. Our baseline view is that the RBI will continue with the policy and stance pause for now," Nandi said.

The government has mandated the central government to ensure that the retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) stays at 4 per cent, with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

While anticipating the status quo on the key benchmark lending rate, R G Agarwal, Chairman of Dhanuka Group, said Indian agriculture must embrace technological advancements and implement farm mechanization to boost crop yields and improve farmers' livelihoods.

"This necessitates both public and private sector investments, which hinge on access to affordable financing. While both the Reserve Bank of India and the government have taken prior measures to address this issue, additional incentives, such as monetary and fiscal benefits, are required to promote farm mechanization," he added. The retail inflation eased to a four-month low of 4.87 per cent in October, mainly due to cooling prices of food items. The Reserve Bank's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), in its October meeting, projected CPI inflation at 5.4 per cent for 2023-24, a moderation from 6.7 per cent in 2022-23.

Mohit Jain, Managing Director, Krisumi Corporation, opined that this successive pause in interest rate hikes reiterates RBI's commitment to provide broad-based growth in the economy with financial stability.

"The policy decision will facilitate a stable ecosystem for economic activity. This will bring a sigh of relief for homeowners since they have been feeling the strain of increased interest rates on long-term loans. In the housing sector, a stable interest rate environment will not only foster confidence among potential buyers but also make housing loans more accessible & affordable," he added.

Half of Rs 1 lakh cr worth of FDI proposals cleared

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has received foreign direct investment (FDI) proposals worth about Rs one lakh crore since April 2020 from countries sharing land border with India and half of those applications have been cleared so far, a top official said.

The remaining are either pending or withdrawn or rejected by the government.

In April 2020, the government came out with a press note under which the Centre made its prior approval mandatory for foreign investments from countries that share land border with India to curb opportunistic takeovers of domestic firms following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Countries which share land borders with India are China, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar and Afghanistan. As per that decision, FDI proposals from these countries need government approval for investments in India in any sector.

After that press note, "proposals worth about Rs one lakh crore have come in and in that, 50 per cent have been cleared and the rest are either pending or withdrawn or rejected. So it's not a complete shutdown for that FDI. We are taking a nuanced view on those applications, depending on whether.

Mkts to focus on outcomes of polls, global trends

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Global trends, trading activity of foreign investors, outcome of state elections and RBI's interest rate decision are the major factors that will drive the movement in the domestic equity markets this week, analysts said.

"Global markets are currently in a fabulous mood. The US 10-year bond yield and the dollar index are also cooling off, which gives strength to the market. These factors will be closely monitored, as they have the potential to influence market sentiment," said Praveesh Gour, Senior Technical Analyst, Swastika Investmart Ltd.

On the political front, the results of assembly elections in five states are eagerly anticipated, Gour said.

"A stable political environment could boost investor's confidence and drive the markets higher. Domestic and global macroeconomic data, trends in global stock markets, the movement of the rupee against the dollar, and crude oil will also dictate trends," he added.

From the macroeconomic data front, PMI (Purchasing Managers' Index) data for the services sector will be announced on Tuesday. RBI's interest rate decision will be announced on Friday.

"Markets will react to



domestic and global macroeconomic data, global bond yields, crude oil inventories, movement of the dollar index, foreign institutional investors (FII) and domestic institutional investors' investment activities.

"Upcoming events this week will impact the market such as S&P services PMI data for major economies like India, the USA and the UK, the US initial jobless claims, employment rate, non-farm payrolls and India's interest rate decision," Arvinder Singh Nanda, Senior Vice President, Master Capital Services Ltd, said.

Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 1,511.15 points or 2.29 per cent, while the Nifty climbed 473.2 points or 2.39 per cent.

On Friday, the Nifty climbed 134.75 points or 0.67 per cent to settle at an all-time high of 20,267.90. During the day, the benchmark reached its intra-

day record high of 20,291.55. "Frenzied buying on the back of renewed optimism from FIIs and positive European market cues lifted the benchmark Nifty to a fresh record high.

"India remains a bright spot in an uncertain global economy as the recent data indicators such as strong GDP and manufacturing numbers along with external factors like falling US bond yields are keeping markets in good stead," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd had said on Friday.

Favourable macroeconomic data and continuous foreign fund inflows were the major drivers behind markets' rally last week.

"This week, investors' attention will mostly be directed towards the release of services PMI data from the US, India, and China. Also, the RBI policy meeting.

IOC raises Panipat refinery expansion cost by 10 %

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), the nation's top oil firm, has revised the estimates of cost of expanding the Panipat refinery in Haryana by 10 per cent to Rs 36,225 crore and pushed back completion deadline by more than a year to December 2025.

IOC is expanding its 15 million tonnes a year refinery, about 100-km north of New Delhi, to 25 million tonnes. In a stock exchange filing, the firm said its board has approved "revision in cost of the project for capacity expansion of Panipat Refinery from Rs 32,946 crore to Rs 36,225 crore and revision in completion schedule of the project from September 2024 to December 2025."

Besides expanding the capacity to turn crude oil into value-added fuels such as petrol, diesel and ATF, IOC is also setting up a polypropylene unit and a catalytic dewaxing unit.

Polypropylene is used in packaging, plastic parts for



various industries including the automotive industry, and textiles. Catalytic dewaxing is used in base oil production.

IOC owns and operates nine of the country's nearly two-dozen refineries. The total capacity under its operations is 70.1 million tonnes per annum. In its latest annual report, the firm says, "By 2026, our approved projects will significantly increase our crude oil refining capacity from the current 70.05 million tonnes per annum to 87.9 million tonnes."

In August, the company had awarded a contract to McDermott International Ltd to provide a suite of services for further expansions of olefins and polymers production at Panipat refining and chemical complex.

In a first, NSE - listed companies' Market capitalisation surpasses US\$ 4 trillion mark

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The market capitalisation of listed companies on the NSE has surpassed the USD 4 trillion (Rs 334.72 trillion) mark for the first time ever, with the benchmark Nifty hitting its all-time high of 20,291.55 last Friday.

The benchmark Nifty climbed 134.75 points or 0.67 per cent to settle at an all-time high of 20,267.90 on Friday. During the day, the benchmark reached its intra-day record high of 20,291.55.

The Nifty-500 index also touched an all-time high of 18,141.65 on the same day, indicating that the equity market rally is not restricted to only the large-cap stocks.

"The achievement of this milestone is a testament of the vision outlined for the Amrit Kaal which includes a technology-driven and knowledge-based economy with strong public finances, and a robust financial sector," NSE said in a statement on Sunday.

The journey of market capitalisation of listed companies rising from USD 2 trillion (in July 2017) to USD 3 tril-



lion (in May 2021) took about 46 months, whereas the last USD 1 trillion i.e., from USD 3 trillion to USD 4 trillion took only about 30 months, it said.

"NSE listed companies' market capitalisation surpassing the USD 4 trillion mark is an important milestone in the country's journey towards the USD 5 trillion economy. The positive sentiment in the economy has provided a thrust to the capital markets," Sriram Krishnan, Chief Business Development Officer, NSE, said.

The combined market valuation of all listed companies on the BSE also reached the USD 4 trillion-milestone for the first time ever on Wednesday (November 29).

The market cap of listed companies increased at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 17.5 per cent in the last 10 years, the exchange said.

The top three companies by market valuation - Reliance Industries Limited, Tata Consultancy Services and HDFC Bank - retained their positions when NSE's valuation hit the USD 2 trillion, USD 3 trillion, and USD 4 trillion mark, it added.

"While India ranks amongst the top five nations based on market capitalisation, the market cap of listed companies on the NSE to India's GDP stood at 1.18 or 118 per cent, which is lower as compared to developed markets such as the United States of America or

Japan," NSE said in the statement.

The share turnover velocity at NSE for the year 2023 as on date stood at 47 per cent, which is way below some of the global markets such as the US, Japan, South Korea, China and Brazil, it noted.

A very low percentage of companies listed on the exchange and comparative lower share turnover velocity, indicates an immense growth potential for deepening of the Indian market in the years to come, the NSE added.

While the USD 4 trillion market capitalisation is an important milestone, data suggests that only 0.35 per cent of the total private companies registered with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, are listed on the exchanges indicating an enormous number of companies which can tap the equity market for their funding needs, it noted.

The daily average turnover has seen a year-on-year growth of 27 per cent in the equity segment and 5 per cent in equity derivatives in this financial year as compared to the previous financial year.

Biogas blending with natural gas can cut LNG imports

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The proposed 5 per cent blending of biogas with natural gas supplies in the country can cut LNG imports worth USD 1.17 billion annually, says a study by the Indian Biogas Association (IBA).

The study comes against the backdrop of the government's recent mandate to blend one per cent biogas with piped natural gas (PNG) supplies in the country from April 1, 2025 under the compressed biogas blending obligation (CBO) scheme.

The biogas blending is proposed to be further increased to 5 per cent by fiscal year 2028.

29.

According to the study, this blending initiative gels well with the government's macro-level move to make India a gas-based economy, with a target to increase the current share of gas in the energy mix from 6 per cent currently to 15 per cent by 2030.

The IBA estimates show that 5 per cent blending of biogas with natural gas can reduce LNG imports worth USD 1.17 billion. This can also bring down per capita CO2 emissions by two per cent, benchmarked to the 2019 figure, which was 1.9 metric tonne of CO2 per person in India.

Additionally, the body says



preventing organic waste going to landfills can bring innumerable benefits.

The CBO scheme shall encourage investment of

around Rs 37,500 crore and facilitate the establishment of at least 750 compressed biogas (CBG) projects by 2028 29, as per government estimates.

This is going to improve India's energy security, as it is currently heavily reliant on imported natural gas to meet its energy needs.

Blending biogas with PNG and CBG can help reduce this dependence, which is invaluable.

Biogas blending has the potential to demonstrate a positive correlation with agricultural income growth too, which is the case with ethanol as well.

Every additional large-scale plant can ensure that almost 1,000 acre of nearby biogas plant area can be converted into organic agriculture.

Biogas can be produced

from various organic waste sources, such as agricultural waste, municipal solid waste, and food waste.

This can create new economic opportunities for farmers, waste management companies, and other stakeholders involved in biogas production. Blending of biogas with natural gas will streamline the market for biofuels, making it more investor-friendly by reducing capital and operational costs, the body says.

It also needs to be emphasised that selling biofuels in the market will become smoother, and the ecosystem will benefit from increased investor confidence, IBA stated.

Practro aims profitability next fiscal; plans IPO soon

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tencent-backed healthcare and diagnostics app Practro is aiming to turn profitable in next fiscal and is looking at a stock exchange listing with an initial public offering (IPO) soon, its co-founder and CEO Shashank ND said.

Practro is looking to enhance presence in smaller cities and towns and leverage AI to analyse data and provide much better analysis and outcomes in healthcare.

In an interview with PTI, Shashank said the startup is already cash flow positive. "This year we will grow by a

good healthy margin... Our EBITDA would have improved dramatically from last year. We will be near break-even this year and next year is when we really will be able to show significant profits."

Founded in 2008, Practro connects doctors with patients and offers several ancillary services such as telemedicine.

Income from diagnostic and consulting services formed 50 per cent of the total operating revenue. In the 2022-23 fiscal (April 2022 to March 2023), the Bengaluru-headquartered firm halved its losses to Rs 93.68 crore.



‘KADAK SINGH HAS ONLY 1% OF THE ‘PANKAJ TRIPATHI’ ESSENCE IN IT’



TEJAL SINHA

Never a dull moment every time he's on screen, Pankaj Tripathi makes sure to create a lasting impact on the viewers with his essence. Basically, one thing that unites all of his films, and series throughout the years: they have all featured a wide range of genres and characters. But there's for sure a pinch of 'Pankaj Tripathi' element within. And so did we thought, it would be in his upcoming project, *Kadak Singh* on Zee 5, on December 8. At least that's what it seemed like through its trailer. Isn't it?

But that's not the case this time! Because this time we gotta see him going slightly away from his comfort zone. "Aap sab sunayega, which you see in the trailer, is the only element you will see of 'Pankaj Tripathi', and that's just 1 %. Apart from that, there's nothing that you'll get to see of how it's been in my previous films. Luckily, that is something that has been put up in the trailer. There are two sets in this film, and one of them has a light reference touch of me for the audience, so they don't feel it's someone else. But then, altogether, it's a new story, a new character, and a very interesting film."

So, that's an obvious thing that we are going to see him in a never-seen-before character. And so does he feel, "This is an experiment that Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury made me do. This story was written by the producer, Viraf Sarkari 8 years back. He had it in his mind for 2-3 years that

no one else would play the character so I am grateful that he thought of me."

During our exclusive chat with the *Mimi* actor, he also revealed that it was during the quarantine that he read the script. In fact, he read the script in the night, and the next morning itself, he called the team to inform them that he'd be doing the film. Well, this also shows his dedication towards the art, and following the path of how people know him as an actor.

But with a whole different project and character—an experiment—was there any hesitation? We wondered. And he gleefully answers, "No, not at all. I loved the story and would connect with a story only then. The USP in this story was that I'd get to experiment. I'm not an actor who would not at all fear experimenting, and never think that this is not in my comfort zone or not anything of my image. For actors like us, there's complete freedom to experiment without fear and the result of that is amazing. And so has it been with *Kadak Singh*."

Kadak Singh delves deep into the enigmatic world of retrograde amnesia, intricately portrayed through its protagonist's journey. This central theme propels the character into a vortex of disjointed recollections and obscured realities. Talking to us about it, he reveals, "This medical term is used in just a couple of scenes. The entire story is based on this man; *Kadak Singh* (aka AK Srivastava), if he'll be able to recall or not, there seems no chance for it. And with all the chaos, how will the puzzle be solved is a big question. Some parts

of his past have been faded away from his mind. Like in the trailer, you get to see how his daughter comes, and he's like, 'I don't have a daughter' and she's like, 'I'm your daughter.' You can just not imagine a human drama where a dad does not remember having a daughter and what the daughter would be going through when her father is not able to recognise her." The actor who shares that he is not a 'Kadak' person in real-life, further goes on to recall how for a while his father couldn't recognise him: "I remember 6 months back, I had gone to my village and my dad in Bhojpuri asked, 'Hai ke ha?' (who is this). I was like, 'I'm Pankaj, your son, and he was like *Acha acha woh Bombay waale film wale* (Oh that Bombay film guy)." So he was able to recall a bit. But at that moment, mere paun ke tale zameen ghisak gayi (I was utterly dumbfounded). And I recalled that moment, and thought that the entire story is based on a somewhat similar situation. How much human drama can you even put into a situation where a father cannot recognise his daughter? This is a very interesting plot, and if, in the middle of seeing the movie, you end up reading even two WhatsApp messages, you'll have to come back and watch the film from the beginning. This film also needs the audience to pay attention."

An overwhelmed, twice-a-time National Award-winning actor who feels privileged to get the National Award from our president shares, "I've always kept all my awards very nicely. My dad used to really get proud. In

fact, there was a time when we used to do theatres and Manoj (Manoj Bajpayee) used to get awards; we used to think, 'Yaar humae kabhi milega kya award?' (Will we ever get an award?) So for me, it's like how you say a 'dream come true'."

In fact, during the ceremony, fortunately, he got to meet Waheeda Rehman. And an extremely excited Pankaj Tripathi says, "I got to have lunch with her. She told me that she really liked me, and I was really shocked. *Arey Waheeda ji Mujhe jaanti hai* (Waheeda ji knows me). I told her that I really loved her film, *Teesri Kasam*, which I saw 3-4 times, and I was speaking about it. Then there's a Satyajit Ray film called *Abhijan*. I have watched very few films, and out of those, were the films that I saw of her and I became a really big fan of her. And I was glad I got to meet her."

As we headed towards the end of this interesting tête-à-tête, we were really keen to know about the love he receives, irrespective of his low profile. He signs off the chat on a brighter note, saying, "I just try to show the people of my fraternity that *iske bina bhi acting ho sakti hai* (Acting can be done even without this) (welaugh). I'm a very private person and after my work, I do not want to be seen anywhere, and just go directly to my house and live my life. But then again this is a part of films, where you have to go to your own film screening. *Mujhe bass aisa hai ki kaam karro aur gayab hojao* (I just want to work and disappear.)"



COMING UP WITH AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT CHARACTER, NATIONAL AWARD-WINNING ACTOR PANKAJ TRIPATHI IS COMING UP WITH *KADAK SINGH* ON DECEMBER 8 ON ZEE 5. AHEAD OF ITS RELEASE, THE ACTOR, WHO IS ALL EXCITED FOR THE PROJECT, GETS CANDID WITH *THE PIONEER* SHARING SOME INTERESTING INSIGHTS ABOUT THE FILM AND MORE.

Fostering genuine emotions and empathy through art

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Her work is vibrant, playful, and full of life. She is working for some of the biggest brands in the country. We are excited to have Poornima Sukumar here to talk about his work, her career, and her creative process. Passionate about what she does, her latest venture Aravani Art Project—is allowing her to push her craft just by looking at things she wants to create. Dismantling societal taboos, the priority, she is more happier working on it.

For instance, she shared, "Walkers & Co. testifies to the idea that progress is not a solitary endeavor; it's a collective journey. It's about embracing identity, forging your path, and making a bold impact on the world as you keep walking. The upcoming campaign is yet another such step of enablement. As the founder of Aravani Art Project, the platform has provided us with the space to showcase my art on their billboards, offering unique and compelling perspectives on life, identity, and progress." Well, understanding the larger association with Johnnie Walker and the impact that her collective is creating across the society! Her stories of resilience and empowerment are some things he loved to talk about and worked on in his collaboration. Empowerment is key here. The world right now is in need of art and most importantly support and solidarity according to her.

She continues, "For the first time, we worked on huge cloth collages which depicted community, intersectionality, our oneness with nature, importance of togetherness, colours, flowers and birds. All of this amalgamated into huge pieces of artwork. This definitely pushed us beyond our comfort zone." In 2014 while working as a freelancer, she was approached by a documentary filmmaker who was making a film on the transgender community. It was this opportunity that changed Poornima's life. She recalls, it took about three-and-a-half years to finish the documentary and by then she was completely disgusted by how society turned a blind eye. The transgender community was a thriving pool of beautiful human beings but never seen as that.

"I met brave women and formed deep friendships with each one of them. I am still so moved by each of their struggles and how they face their miseries every single day, simply to be true to how they feel. It motivated me to see the positive aspect of their existence and their boldness to stand up against the rest of us," added the founder.

So after the documentary was completed, she felt guilty about taking so much from the community and hence, decided to give back. Using art she decided to take up public projects not just to get the community involved but also use



In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, Poornima Sukumar, founder of Aravani Art Project, gets candid about her art, creative process, and more.



the opportunity to observe them, understand their interactions with each other and be a part of their lives and challenges. The collective began to simultaneously resist the misogyny and to keep moving ahead creating spaces for ourselves and for the world to be a part of! "What is distinctive exactly? Our artwork is influenced by everyday life, people, patterns and there is a lot of extraordinary sights we can see in the ordinary. Slight glimpses of affection, kindness, laughter, joy and mystery. We tend to overlook this in our everyday life, but with regard to our artwork we like to focus on the things people tend to otherwise turn a blind eye to. Another set of elements are the lives and stories of the transgender people. We are always in awe and are inspired to create artworks with regards to their lives and stories."

The audiences and bystanders till now have been open to listening and observing what she has to say through her art. She believes in

humanity, acceptance and love towards all gender. When she paint in red light districts or in slums, she focusses on the stories that create a space to celebrate the similarities and appreciate the differences! "As a person I was an introvert—I slowly became an ambivert as years passed and have always had a keen interest to bridge the gap between art and social work. I have always been an empath and art allowed me to express myself and the need for the practical aspect to kick in. Being open to all sorts of opportunities growing up and landing up being part of a documentary, making friends with the transgender women and to start a collective and be a part of it for almost ten years now has been more than just shaping me. It has become a way of life and although we have a long way to go in terms of changing perspectives of people at large, a small part of me is happy that I am able to change minds of my immediate circle and educate them about gender, the stereo-

Changing your home's overall vibe with the right flooring

The choice of flooring in a home is akin to the selection of ingredients in a culinary masterpiece – it sets the tone and flavor of the entire experience. Beyond being a mere foundation, flooring has the remarkable ability to redefine the ambience of your living space. Let's explore the artistry behind this transformation and delve into the subtle nuances that make a house truly feel like a home.

THE SYMPHONY OF COLORS AND TEXTURES

Soft hues and natural textures can create a serene, welcoming atmosphere, while bolder choices can infuse energy and personality into a space. LVT flooring designs and patterns can be meticulously repeated, resulting in a strong aesthetic consistency. Step into luxury with the Embedded EMT? Core Technology, enhancing functionality, comfort, and aesthetics. Revel in vibrant designs with high color-fastness properties, a true blend of form and function. It's a dance of colors and textures that, when orchestrated with finesse, can elevate the overall aesthetic of your home.

COMFORTABLE FLOORING AND SERENE SOUNDS: CRAFTING A COZY HARMONY

Imagine stepping onto a floor that exudes warmth and comfort, turning your home into a cozy haven. Whether it's the soft touch of carpet or the warmth of wood, the right flooring invites you to kick off your shoes and relax. This tactile experience goes beyond visual aesthetics, creating a homey vibe that resonates in every corner.

Often overlooked, the acoustics of a room play a pivotal role in shaping its ambience. Flooring materials of superior quality adeptly soak up sound, diminishing echoes, and cultivating a tranquil environment. In the seamless incorporation of Luxury Vinyl Tile (LVT) flooring into your space, this unobtrusive yet impactful addition actively enhances the overall ambience.

RESILIENCE: BEAUTY THAT WITHSTANDS TIME

A home should be a testament to enduring beauty, and the selection of



flooring plays a pivotal role in achieving this vision. Enter Prime Tile, highly realistic, stylish, versatile, and eco-friendly LVT flooring that epitomizes the perfect fusion of aesthetics and durability. Crafted with the finest designs, featuring wood, stone, and captivating design lines, Prime Tile is a representation of timeless elegance. What sets it apart are its unique features, including the revolutionary EPTTM Shield, providing an extra layer of protection against wear and tear, and the EMTTM Core – 5L, ensuring stability and resilience in both commercial and residential settings. This robust composition guarantees longevity without compromising on style. The proven Click LVT, a part of Prime Tile, stands as an epitome of stability, seamlessly catering to heavy commercial and residential needs. It withstands the test of time, maintaining its allure even in high-traffic areas.

EFFORTLESS INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE: A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

In the masterpiece of home life, the last thing you want is a discordant note of installation and maintenance stress. The revolutionary 'Click'n go and Drop'n go!' joint systems of ECOCLICK+ ensures a breeze of an installation, prioritizing indoor air quality with low VOCs and non-phthalate technology. LVT flooring steps in as the virtuoso performer, requiring minimal upkeep. Its smooth surfaces resist stains and spills, and are remarkably water resistant. Also, the specially engineered flooring makes it a very hygienic product with anti-bac-

terial and anti-fungal properties, allowing you to spend more time enjoying your home and less time worrying about its upkeep.

RECYCLABLE AND ECO-FRIENDLY DESIGNS

The environmentally conscious homeowner will appreciate that the highly stylish LVT flooring is recyclable, making it versatile and eco-friendly. It features designs that showcase the finest wood, stone, and design lines, all while being slip-resistant.

INNOVATIVE FLOORING TECHNOLOGIES FOR LASTING PERFORMANCE

Embrace the future of flooring with cutting-edge solutions, where advanced technologies converge with innovative features for enduring performance. The proven Loose-Lay System, exemplified by products like ECOLAY+, ensures unparalleled dimensional stability with a 'No Stick, No Click, Just Lay' approach, simplifying installation and introducing sophistication through the HD design print layer. One of the standout offerings in the market, LOOM+, is embedded with EMT? Core technology, providing enhanced functionality and comfort. Revel in unique, vibrant designs with multiple tones and yarn thicknesses, a true design woven with technology. What sets LOOM+ apart is its commitment to well-being, boasting features like the absence of Nano-silver (known for controversial health concerns) and the incorporation of EPTTM, removing 99.9% of bacteria. These technological advancements underscore the commitment to delivering reliable and visually striking flooring solutions, setting new standards in flooring excellence.

In conclusion, the flooring you choose for your home is a silent maestro, conducting the ambience that defines your living experience. Whether it's the soothing tones of carpet, the timeless appeal of wood, or the discreet elegance of LVT flooring, each has its own unique way of contributing to the harmony of your home. So, as you embark on the journey of home design, remember that the floor beneath your feet is not just a surface but a canvas waiting to tell the story of your home.

(The author, Manoj Lohia, is the Director, of Merino Industries Ltd.)



Varsha



Karan, Kalpan and Nirav



Rauna Q yar Khan and Abdus Sami



Jabilli



LIMELIGHT
NOW IN HYDERABAD



Pooja Sheth



Dharmi



Nikita



Chandini Bhagwanani



PARTY

Limelight Diamonds, has flourished in South India with its new store in the city of Nizams - Hyderabad. The glamorous store launch was graced by actress Chandini Bhagwanani, along with prominent influencers of Hyderabad and discovered an avant-garde shopping experience of pure CVD diamond jewellery.



Gulshan



Manasa



Priyanka



Priya



Kusum



Actresses Priyanka Chowdhary and Priya Inturu, along with several fashion enthusiasts from the city and organizer Pavan Agarwal, graced the launch of the Desire Designer Exhibition at Hotel Taj Krishna in Banjara Hills




Msgr. Y. Bala Showreddy, vice chairman, along with Rev. Fr. G. Anthony, secretary of the Hyderabad Archdiocese Educational Society, inaugurated the XIII HAES Talent and Proficiency Competitions at St. Mary's High School in Secunderabad.




His Eminence Cardinal Poola Ant


ARCHIE




GARFIELD




NANCY



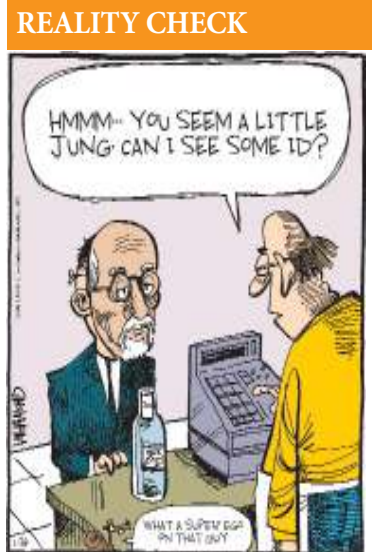
GINGER MEGGS



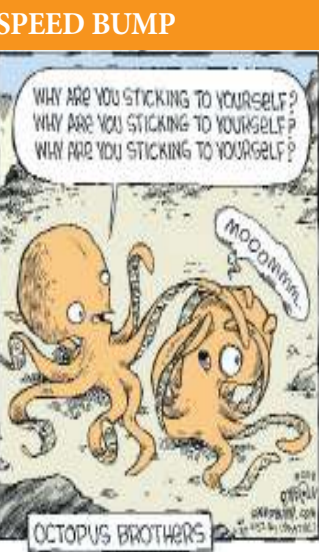
CALVIN AND HOBBS



REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD

	1	2	3	4	
5					6
7			8		
9				10	
			11		
12	13		14		15
17				18	
19					

SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

ACROSS

1 Gets better after illness to you

7 An item of furniture

8 Move

9 Painter or sculptor

10 At this place

12 Pleased

14 A meal outdoors

17 Arrive at

18 A large lifting machine

19 A bird's covering

5 People unknown to you

6 Made longer by pulling

11 Ring shape

13 Not asleep

15 Gets closer to

16 Closed

DOWN

1 A mechanical person

2 A mark from a fold

3 A holder for cut flowers

4 Lift up

SOLUTION

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

JANHVI KAPOOR ‘FEELS LIKE HOMECOMING’ WITH HER TELUGU DEBUT *DEVARA*

Janhvi Kapoor is indeed one of the most talented actresses in the young generation of actresses. Currently, the actress is gearing up for her Telugu debut titled *Devara* opposite Jr. NTR. The name of her character from the film was revealed ‘Thangam’ along with her first look that gave the exact resemblance of her mother late legendary actress Sridevi.

Talking about her Telugu dominance and how her mother played a significant role in the same, Janhvi said, “It’s my first Telugu film. So I had spent a lot of my time in learning the dialogues, as I don’t speak the language. My mum spoke to us in Hindi and English at home. But whenever we went to Chennai (Tamil Nadu), more often than not, she would speak in Tamil. I am more familiar with Tamil than I am with Telugu.”

Janhvi shares that working on the film feels like “homecoming”. “I feel like I have come back home. Everyone on set feels like my own. I don’t know if it’s because of my intense emotional attachment to mum or if I am feeling attached to her by doing a film down South. It’s spiritual,” she added further.

With her foot in both the entertainment industries; Hindi and South, Janhvi is indeed taking the legacy of her late mother, Sridevi. The way Sridevi gave blockbuster films in both South and Hindi cinema, Janhvi is also stepping up on the same road. While Janhvi has delivered some amazing films in Bollywood, she is now gearing up for her Telugu debut, *Devara*, which will be released in April.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Janhvi will next be seen in *Mr. and Mrs. Mahi*.



Gautham Karthik to play a key role in *Thug Life*

Ulaganayagan Kamal Haasan and esteemed director Mani Ratnam are poised to reunite after nearly 17 years for their upcoming project, *Thug Life*, currently in the dynamic stages of pre-production.

Amidst the anticipation, speculation has been rife on social media regarding Gautham Karthik, initially introduced to the industry by Mani Ratnam in Kadal (Kadali in Telugu), potentially playing a significant role in the film. However, an official confirmation from the team is still pending.

The commencement of filming for *Thug Life* is expected in February 2024. The stellar cast includes confirmed names such as Trisha Krishnan, Dulquer Salmaan, and Jayam Ravi, each set to bring essential characters to life in this biggie.

Produced jointly by Kamal Haasan, Mani Ratnam, R. Mahendran, and Siva Ananthi under Raaj Kamal International Films and Madras Talkies banners, the movie will feature music by the talented AR Rahman.



KATRINA KAIF: *MERRY CHRISTMAS* is by far the most difficult film I’ve done

Actress Katrina Kaif is currently in Jeddah for the Red Sea International Film Festival 2023. The actress even had a brief interaction about her career and her upcoming movie *Merry Christmas* with Vijay Sethupathi, which is helmed by Sriram Raghavan. During the interaction, Katrina Kaif said, “It was always on my bucket list and one of my dreams to work with him (Sriram Raghavan), and I got the opportunity in *Merry Christmas*, and it was phenomenal. This is, by far, the most difficult film I have ever done. Definitely, the character took a lot out of me, but the experience was something like he really challenges you as an actor. Also, it’s a bilingual film. We shot the film in Hindi and Tamil. In the Tamil version, I have actually spoken in Tamil. So it was two takes for whatever you were doing, and that was really challenging but exciting.”

Katrina Kaif also added, “My co-star Vijay Sethupathi is so phenomenal. When we would do the Hindi take, he would be fantastic, but when we would do the Tamil take, I would see a different actor.”

Produced by Ramesh Taurani and Jaya Taurani Sanjay Rouray and Kewal Garg’s *Merry Christmas* is a collaboration that combines the vision and expertise of Tips Films and Matchbox Pictures. The film is gearing up for a grand release on January 12, 2024.

Salaar makers to release new action-packed trailer

It is widely known that the trailer of the much-awaited film *Salaar* was released recently. *Salaar*’s trailer broke *KGF 2* records and created a new benchmark by receiving 110 million views in 24 hours. *Salaar* 2nd trailer release details have been doing rounds in the industry circles.

The first trailer of *Salaar* focused on the story plot, and Prabhas was also revealed after 2 minutes in the clip. The team plans to release the 2nd trailer, which is said to be an action trailer and is expected to be released on 16th December. So, the fans of Prabhas will have another massive glimpse of the film and be happy as the details of *Salaar*’s 2nd trailer release are out. Apart from this, Amid this, the discussions began on when Prabhas would be making an entry in the movie.

Of late, the filmmakers are cutting the trailer frames in the same order as the screenplay and cinema graph. The trailer has Prabhas entering only after more than two minutes in the trailer and that hints at the entry of him in the movie also will be a little late.

The hero entrance episodes could be coming after the childhood episode, Khansaar setup, and of course the conflict establishment. However, the fans are hoping to get high with Prabhas’ menacing action blocks without much delay after the movie begins.



Abhiram Daggubati to tie the knot in the scenic landscapes of Sri Lanka

Abhiram Daggubati, the younger son of esteemed producer Suresh Daggubati and the sibling of the renowned actor Rana Daggubati, is set to embark on a new chapter in his life as he ties the knot with Prathyusha Chaparala in a grand ceremony this December. The wedding will unfold against the breathtaking backdrop of Anantara Kalutara, a luxurious 5-star resort nestled in the scenic landscapes of Sri Lanka.

Scheduled for December 6 at 8:50 pm, this auspicious occasion promises to be a star-studded affair, with nearly 200 close friends, family members, and celebrities gracing the event. The guests are set to arrive in Sri Lanka today, eagerly anticipating the commencement of the joyous wedding celebrations.

The festivities will span three days, commencing with a lavish dinner party on Monday (Dec 4) at 8:30 pm. Tuesday will witness the vibrant Mehendi ceremony at 4:30 pm, followed by an enchanting dinner. On Wednesday, the day will unfold with the traditional Pellikuthuru ceremony at 10:30 am, paving the way for the main wedding ceremony at 7 pm. The auspicious Sumuhurtham is set for 8:50 pm. Upon their return to Hyderabad, the illustrious Daggubati family plans to host a grand reception, adding another illustrious chapter to the celebratory events surrounding Abhiram and Prathyusha’s union. This high-profile wedding is poised to be a memorable and glamorous affair, capturing the essence of love and tradition in a splendid setting.



‘I wanted a ballet like *Kasam Se*, which was missing in my album’

Armaan Malik, the Prince of Pop, took fans behind the scenes of his song *Kasam Se*, a standout track from his latest album *Only Just Began*. The album, comprising 8 diverse songs, showcases Armaan’s musical versatility, with *Kasam Se* emerging as a fan favorite for all the right reasons.

The song *Kasam Se* holds a special significance for Armaan as he created this song to propose to his then-girlfriend and now fiancée, Aashna Shroff. As soon as the song was released, there was curiosity among the listeners to know the back story of the song. Armaan who is currently busy promoting his album *Only Just Began* recently in an interview unveiled how he came up with this song. He shared, “I created this song intending to propose to Aashna. When the song was ready, it was so beautiful that I felt a ballet like this was missing from my album. I decided to add it to my album, making it a cherished memory.”

He added, “The ideation started with the word *Kasam*, which means promise. The essence of a proposal is making a promise to the love of your life. The way we say “*Kasam se tera hi hoon, Kasam se*, inspired me, so I approached Amaal and Kunal (Amaal Malik and Kunal Verma). I shared this moment and idea with them, asking them to create something beautiful, and that’s how *Kasam Se* came to be.”

The song *Kasam se* along with seven more beautiful songs is part of his album *Only Just Began*.

‘I was looking for an opportunity to work with Sandeep Reddy, and was selected by him only for *Animal*’



Veteran actress Indira Krishnan, who is seen essaying the role of Rajmata Durgavati in Fantasy Romantic Drama *Dhruv Tara – Samay Sadi Se Pare*, has shared her experience working in action-thriller film *Animal* directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga.

She said : “It was an amazing experience to be part of the film. I was looking for an opportunity to work with Sandeep Reddy. Interestingly, I was selected by him only. He wanted to cast all natural actors. He spotted me on TV screens. I played the role of Rashmika Mandanna’s mother in the story.”

Indira is known for featuring in movies like *Holiday: A Soldier Is Never Off Duty* and *Tere Naam* among many others.

Sharing her experience of sharing screen with Rashmika and Ranbir she continued: “Rashmika is just a beautiful doll, we shared a cute bond. Ranbir is again a sweetheart. The immense respect and dedication they had.”

“Rashmika used to ask me to help her at times, very down rooted. They would to stand and greet actors. The young generation should learn a lot from them. I enjoyed my association with the team throughout.”

The film also stars Anil Kapoor, Bobby Deol and Tripti Dimri.

MEENAKSHII CHAUDHARY KICKS HER ‘STRESS AWAY WITH FUN’ WITH MMA

Meenakshii Chaudhary, currently one of the most sought-after actresses, is experiencing the zenith of her career with notable projects such as *Guntur Kaaram*, *Thalapathy 68*, and other significant ventures under her belt.

In a recent Instagram post, she shared a captivating video, stepping into the realm of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) for the first time under the expert guidance of coach Nasar Bin Ahmed Alay. She commented that it helped her fight the stress. Meanwhile, the video is creating waves across various social media platforms.

Balancing her commitments, Meenakshii is actively involved in the concurrent production of both *Guntur Kaaram* and *Thalapathy 68*, both poised for release next year.



GUWAHATI HOSTS HALF MARATHON

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Thousands of runners from all across the country on Sunday participated in a 'Half Marathon' in the capital city of Assam, showcasing the grit, determination and enthusiasm of people. The 'Coal India Guwahati Half Marathon' was organised under the aegis of Eastern Command of the Indian Army in association with the Assam government and title sponsor Coal India Ltd. Nazeem Pulikkal and Phurba Tamang won the race in men's and women's categories respectively, an official said. Emphius Nongrum and Teiboklang Biam came second and third among the men, while Bandasharai Marwein and Fulmoni Urang won the second and third positions among the women respectively, he added. "The event witnessed participation of over 5,000 participants under the categories of 21 km, 10 km and 5 km in different age groups. The determination and grit shown by the differently

Over 5,000 participate



abled who participated in the 5 km run further added to the spirit of the event," Defence PRO Lt Col Mahender Rawat said. Over 800 women and girls participated in the run in various categories, reflecting 'Naari Shakti' in the true sense, he added. The Sarusajai sports complex was decked up in colourful themes, symbolising celebration and festival. The route of the run was interspersed with cheering zones, dance troupes and bands all along, thereby keeping the adrenaline of the runners pumping high. "The unwavering commitment and tireless efforts of Army's Eastern Command and the Assam government have laid the foundation for many such future events in Northeast India, forging a legacy that will be remembered for years to come," Rawat said. The run represented a shared dream of unity, fitness, sports adventure and above all peace and prosperity across the region, he emphasised.



Scheffler primed to win his maiden HWC title

Woods pleased with his recovery

PTI ■ NASSAU

World number one golfer Scottie Scheffler maintained his lead in the Hero World Challenge with a 7-under 65, his best round of the week thus far, on the moving day here on Saturday. Scheffler, who finished runner-up to Viktor Hovland in the previous two editions, had shot a 69 and 66 on the first two days. He will be challenged by Matt Fitzpatrick on the final day as the Englishman jumped three spots to be second with a 7-under 65. With the overall aggregate of 203, he is three shots behind 2022 Masters winner Scheffler. Justin Thomas is two shots behind Fitzpatrick after a 4-under 68 in the third round. Fitzpatrick's 46-foot eagle putt on the 15th stood out. Another big mover on the day was Jason Day who gained four spots to be Tied-4th alongside Tony Finau, who both have tallied 206 for the week. Tournament host and 15-time major winner Tiger Woods is way back in the 20-man field but he is happy with how his body has responded in his first event since April. He is Tied-16th alongside Hovland after carding a 1-under 71 on Saturday. Woods, who is 16 shots behind the leader, had managed 75 on the opening day before improving to a 70 on Friday. "I still have the game. It's whether or not the body can do it. I'm very pleasantly surprised at how I've recovered every day. My activations in the gym have been good," said Woods. "To be able to knock off some of the rust as I have this week and showed myself that I can recover each and every day, that was kind of an unknown. 'I've walked this far. I've done all my training. But add in

playing and concentration and adrenaline and all those other factors that speed up everything, I'm very excited how the week's turned out," added an upbeat Woods, who plans to play one tournament a month next year if his body permits. Leader Scheffler has been consistent through the week and is primed to win his maiden HWC title. He is particularly pleased with his putting having made a change to his putter this week. Scheffler was on fire from the get go and collected two eagles and four birdies before losing a shot on the 18th hole. "Like I said at the beginning of the week, I feel as if I'm much more clear in what I need to be working on and a lot of that has to do with how I'm set up over the ball. "When I'm set up in the right position, then I feel like my mechanics are really good. That's what I'm focused on. I'm not focused on setting up perfectly. "I have my feels that I'm trying to get to in the setup and then not trying to be perfect, just trying to hit good putts," he said. Scheffler is much better placed to lift the trophy having missed out on the last two years. He is backing himself to go all the way. "Yeah, I think I've been kind of on the outside looking in going into Sunday. I could be wrong, but I remember it being I had two really good back nines to give myself kind of an outside chance. "The first year was definitely outside chance. I think last year I maybe was one or two back going into 18. Like I said, I was kind of on the outside looking in going into the tournament - sorry, going in the back nine. "Yeah, it's nice to be in position this week to win," added the Texan.

Nantes supporter dies before game



AP ■ NANTES (FRANCE)

A supporter from Nantes died on Saturday following a fight that took place before the club's 1-0 win over Nice in the latest outbreak of violence to mar French soccer this season. Nantes said in a statement overnight that the fan was "fatally injured" close to the club's stadium. According to the L'Equipe newspaper, the fan was a member of the Brigade Loire, Nantes' main group of diehard fans. "In circumstances which are the subject of an ongoing judicial investigation, the 31-year-old collapsed, hit in the back," the club said. "Despite the intervention of emergency services, the fan could not be saved." Nantes said the public prosecutor's office has launched an investigation into voluntary manslaughter. Nantes public prosecutor Renaud Gaudel said the incident took place shortly before 8 PM local time when several private hire vehicles carrying Nice fans on their way to the match were attacked by groups of Nantes supporters. "The very first forensic investigations show that the victim had a wound on his back, possibly caused by a bladed weapon," the prosecutor said, quoted by French media. Local newspaper Ouest

France said the suspected assailant initially fled the scene before turning himself in at a police station. French sports minister Amélie Oudéa-Castéra expressed her "great sorrow" in a message posted on X, the social network formerly known as Twitter. "My thoughts are with his family, his loved ones and his friends in the stands," she wrote. Nantes coach Jocelyn Gourvennec, who was appointed this week, said he only found out about the supporter's death after the match. "I can't imagine how you can go to a soccer match, sometimes with your family, and be between life and death after a match," he said. "It's inconceivable. The players talked about it a lot in the dressing room, they were very touched." The French soccer league has been making headlines for all the wrong reasons this season following an upsurge of violence in stadiums over the past two campaigns. According to Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin, more than 100 police officers were injured in soccer-related incidents last season. In October in Montpellier, a match was stopped in added time after fans threw a firework from the stands that landed next to Clermont goalkeeper Mory Diaw.

AFI to stop national camps after Paris; will leave door open for public, private entities

PTI ■ AMRITSAR

In a significant development, the Athletics Federation of India on Sunday decided to stop running national camps for elite athletes after the Paris Olympics, leaving the door open for public and private entities to take care of the top players. "We have decided to wind up national senior training camps after Paris (next year). We have communicated this to the sports ministry, which has appreciated our move," AFI president Adille Sumariwalla said on the concluding day of the federation's AGM here. "There are so many good facilities at SAI NCOEs (National Centres of Excellence). Reliance, JSW, Tata and other private entities also have good facilities. They have made huge investments and appointed foreign coaches. "They can train athletes at their facilities. Not only the private entities, the Army Sports Institute, Railways, Air Force, Navy, ONGC, other public sector entities and even state governments can also train their athletes. "We have 5-10 SAI centres but we can have 200 such centres (for training with public and private entities' participation). The athletes will have more access, they can stay at their homes and not at camps for training." The AFI's move would mean that top athletes like Neeraj Chopra, Murali Sreeshankar and Avinash Sable will not train under the aegis of the AFI after 2024 Paris, though it will continue to monitor them. The athletes can now come directly under public and private entities, including states such as Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, which have also appointed foreign coaches. The AFI will, however, monitor the athletes through a team



of coaches. Currently, the AFI conducts centralised national training camps of around 130-150 elite athletes under the supervision of 50-60 support staff, mainly at NIS Patiala, Bengaluru SAI Centre and LNCPE in Thiruvananthapuram. Chopra mainly trains outside India while Sreeshankar is coached by his father S. Murali in Kerala. Both are supported by JSW. Sumariwalla said the idea is to decentralise the camps and spread them through the country so that the athletes can train closer to their homes. The AFI is, however, yet to chalk out the modalities of how the public and private entities will take charge of running the training camps and how the federation will monitor the athletes. Junior programme, 4x400m relay teams to remain under AFI The junior national training

camps, being held at the National Centres of Excellence (NCOEs) in collaboration with AFI, will remain with the federation. The AFI added that it will continue to train the men's 4x400m, women's 4x400m and mixed 4x400m relay teams. "The three relay teams will have to be under the direct supervision of AFI as the relay members cannot train separately as they need coordination. We will also continue to hold competitions," AFI Planning Commission chairman Lalit Bhanot said. The AFI will also take care of the athletes during foreign exposure tours. The federation's decision to stop running national camps would mean less control over dope testing of athletes. The AFI, while admitting this, said the pros outweigh the cons. One reason behind the move to

allow public and private entities to enter the training domain is to increase the size of the athletes' pool, which currently stands between 100 and 150. "If the training camps are spread across the country, they will be accessible to a lot more athletes. The pool of elite athletes will be more and the competition will be tougher. We hope this will produce more world beaters," said Bhanot.

It's in the best interest of athletics: Anju Legendary athlete and AFI senior vice-president Anju Bobby George said the exit of the AFI from running training camps was the right decision and the way forward to achieve more success on the international stage. "The study (academics) of athletes was also a major concern. If an athlete is training at NIS or Bengaluru or Thiruvananthapuram for 11 months in a year, it is very difficult for them to study. Now they can train closer to their homes and can also study properly," said the 2003 World Championships bronze medalist long-jumper on the sidelines of AFI's AGM. "Not just the athletes, the coaches also have to leave their families and stay at the national camps for 11 months in a year. They can now opt for training camps near their homes." She admitted that there could be issues during the initial months but it would take Indian athletics forward. "Currently, the AFI can call anybody from any part of the country for camps at NIS or Bengaluru. But now what will happen if for example an athlete from Tamil Nadu wants to train in Kerala? These kinds of things we will have to deal with initially but ultimately it will, hopefully, lead us to a better system," she said.

AP ■ LONDON

Ravaged by injuries and hurtling from a cruel VAR call in midweek, Newcastle was hardly in ideal shape as the same 11 players were sent out by manager Eddie Howe for a third straight game for the English Premier League meeting with Manchester United on Saturday. You'd never have known. Newcastle's dominant 1-0 win at St. James' Park was testament to the unwavering spirit in a squad being stretched to the limit as the Saudi-owned club challenges for trophies on all fronts. At the same time, it was a reality check for Man United after its recent revival in the league marked by narrow, scrappy wins and sensational goals. Anthony Gordon's 55th-minute goal proved to be enough for Newcastle, which - in the space of a week - has beaten Chelsea and Man United either side of being denied a famous Champions League win at Paris Saint-Germain because of a roundly condemned handball decision. "It's been a massive week for us," Gordon said. "The same 11 players have played three games on the bounce and we've pulled through.

Newcastle defies long injury list

To earn dominant win over Man United, Arsenal leads by 4 in EPL

"It's not just the guys who are injured - the guys who are playing are injured. We've got kicks and bruises all over." Indeed, injuries are really starting to bite. The list was already into double figures before goalkeeper Nick Pope went off in the 86th minute with a suspected dislocated shoulder, sustained when he dived to stop a shot that never actually reached him. The schedule doesn't get any easier, though. Newcastle doesn't have a midweek off in December, during which the team plays in the League Cup quarterfinals and finishes off its Champions League group campaign. Its remaining fit players are running on fumes but are still decently placed in fifth - seven points behind Premier League leader Arsenal, which beat Wolverhampton 2-1 on Saturday. United, which had won five of its previous six league games, dropped to sev-



enth place and had only one shot on target in a tired-looking display coming three days after a 3-3 draw at Galatasaray in the Champions League.

FOUR POINTS CLEAR Arsenal stretched its lead to four points after scoring early goals through Bukayo Saka and Martin Odegaard before

hanging on against Wolves. Manchester City and Liverpool - the teams who started the weekend placed second and third - are in

action on Sunday and can trim the gap back down to one point. Both of Arsenal's goals were well worked, with Saka scoring in the sixth minute after a buildup including Gabriel Jesus and Takehiro Tomiyasu and Odegaard converting a cross from Oleksandr Zinchenko from the left. Zinchenko was at fault for Wolves' goal, scored by Matheus Cunha in the 86th, and there were some nervy moments in stoppage time. "The team was extraordinary again today," Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta said of his players, who were coming off a 6-0 win over Lens in the Champions League in midweek.

15-SECOND GOAL

Jay Rodriguez got the ball rolling for Burnley in its 5-0 thrashing of 10-man Sheffield United by scoring inside 16 seconds, yet that wasn't his fastest goal in the league.

Almost 10 years ago to the day, the striker netted after just 13.58 seconds for Southampton against Chelsea. No other player in the competition's history has two goals that quick. It was a dismal start to a forgettable match for Sheffield United, which was 2-0 down by the time Oli McBurnie was sent off in first-half stoppage time for collecting two yellow cards. Both of them were for elbowing Burnley defender Dara O'Shea in the face. Burnley scored three goals in a seven-minute span from the 73rd to tie for the biggest ever league win by a team that started a match in last place. The win ended Burnley's record seven-match losing run at home to start this season. That losing streak at home was nine matches in total in the Premier League, taking in the final two games of the 2021-22 campaign when the team was relegated.

Sheffield United dropped to last place and has conceded 39 goals in 14 games.

EVERTON'S MISSION

Everton was plunged into the relegation zone on the back of its record 10-point deduction for financial mismanagement. The team is unlikely to stay there for long. A 1-0 win at Nottingham Forest gave Everton its first points since the sanction and lifted Sean Dyche's side to within two points of safety. With Luton - which lost at Brentford 3-1 - immediately above and Burnley and Sheffield United below, Everton can capitalize on there being three weak teams near the bottom of the league. Dwight McNeil scored Everton's winner at the City Ground, arrowing a diagonal shot into the top corner in the 67th minute to cap a strong display by the visitors. There were jeers from the home fans at the final whistle. Forest manager Steve Cooper joins Sheffield United's Paul Heckingbottom in being under big pressure after 14 games, with - somewhat unusually - no coaches having been fired so far this seas