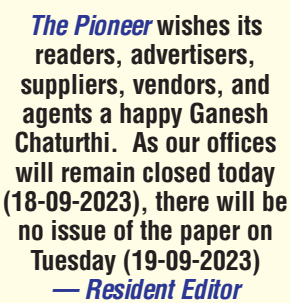




Published From: HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH BHUBANESWAR RANCHI DEHRADUN VIJAYAWADA



Hyderabad: "We should be aware of who we are fighting with. One should know about the forces working against us. The Congress is not only fighting the BRS but also the BJP and the AIMIM. The BRS, the BJP and the AIMIM are saying that they are separate parties but they are together. I saw BRS MPs in the Lok Sabha extending support to the BJP whenever it was needed. The BRS supported the Farmers' Bill after a wink of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," former AICC president Rahul Gandhi said. Addressing the Vijayabheri public meeting at Tukuguda on Sunday, Rahul said that the BRS government was stuck in neck-deep corruption. The Congress gave Telangana State sticking to its word and in the same manner, the Congress would implement its six assurances immediately after coming to power in the state, he said.

- ❖ Cheyutha Scheme will provide Rs 4,000 pension and the Rajiv Arogya Sri limit will be enhanced to Rs 10 lakh.

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao said that the Telangana government is taking a step forward to ensure that the increase in wealth is distributed to the needy. Formulating and implementing programmes with a humanitarian perspective and reaching welfare benefits to all at their doorsteps is our policy, he said. There is no family in the state today that has not benefited from government schemes, KCR said.

government schemes, today poverty in the state has decreased and per capita income has increased. The poverty rate in Telangana which was 13.18 per cent in 2015-18, came down to 5.88 per cent in 2019-21.

He saluted and paid tributes to the heroes who sacrificed their lives in the struggle to liberate Hyderabad state which includes modern-day Telangana, the Marathwada region of Maharashtra and many districts of Karnataka.

Harish tweeted regarding this on Sunday. He said that the Congress assurances made at the Vijayabheri Sabha are fake. Moreover, the guarantees Congress mentioned are also copied

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday launched Rs 13,000-crore PM Vishwakarma Yojana (scheme) for traditional artisans and craftsmen, and inaugurated the Rs 5,400-crore first phase of state-of-the-art India International Convention and Expo Centre (IICC) -- 'Yashobhoomi' -- at

The prime minister further said that today there is such a government in the country that provides recognition to marginalised people.

Give a missed call to 72868 55555 | www.congressabhayahastham.com



BRS sore over Parl session sans agenda

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BRS expressed displeasure over the all-party meeting held in New Delhi. BRS Lok Sabha Leader Nama Nageswara Rao expressed his anger saying that special meetings without an agenda cannot be understood.

Speaking to the media at New Delhi on Sunday, Nama Nageswara Rao said that the BJP said the Lok Sabha will hold a special meeting from Monday. But when all parties were called they did not tell us the entire agenda. They said that today is the 13th meeting. The first day is related to 75 years. They said that the next day will be a photo session. Out of the total five days of meetings, the agenda of only two days was told. Three leaders of other parties have also asked how will the days mentioned be enough. Three days will be spent here and we are not told what will be discussed at the special meetings. Members should be told what the special session is. But what is the secret agenda is not understood, he said.

“Our leader has already told us. We are going to demand the government to introduce Bills on women’s reservations and BC reservations. Apart from this, we are demanding a census. I don’t understand what special meetings are without an agenda. They say they will talk about the agenda in BAC. Let’s see what they will do. We will not know unless there is a BAC meeting. They will discuss the Bills passed in the last Assembly. Whatever their agenda is we will have our agenda. There is no telling when the meetings will be held,” Nama said.



Eight bills listed

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A session of Parliament is set to begin on Monday amid an intense buzz on whether the government will have some surprise item up its sleeve during the five-day sitting that will see a discussion on Parliament’s 75-year journey and House proceedings moving to the new building.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said a total of eight bills have been listed for consideration and passage during the session. Floor leaders were on Sunday informed at an all-party meet that a bill on the welfare of senior citizens and three related to SC/ST order have been added to the agenda.

The bills listed earlier include the one on the appointment of chief election commissioner and election commissioners. The bill was introduced in Rajya Sabha during the last Monsoon session and has drawn protests from the opposition as it seeks to put service conditions of the chief election commissioner.

CWC asks TS people to vote for Congress

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In 2014, the struggle of the people of Telangana bore fruit with the creation of the state of Telangana. The people of Telangana hoped for a Bangaru Telangana where they can set the course of their own future with Nidhili, Neelu, Niayamakalu, that is, resources, water, and employment for all.

The Congress Working Committee proudly recalls the key role of the Congress in the formation of Telangana state. UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh resolutely heeded the voices of Telangana’s people, consulting every stakeholder and surmounting every challenge.

Yet, nine years after Telangana was formed, the CWC notes with anguish that the promise of a Golden Telangana lies shattered, betrayed by governments both



in Delhi and Hyderabad. The dream for which people fought for Telangana has remained unfulfilled. The resources of the new state, meant for its people, have instead been siphoned off by those in power. Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao and his family have established family rule and are ignoring the voice of the people. Instead of the promised golden future, they have dragged the state into the past by ruling like the Nizams,

the CWC said.

The Congress has embarked on a mass contact programme against this misrule, starting with the Bharat Jodo Yatra, when Rahul Gandhi covered 405 km across eight districts. Tens of thousands of people shared their experiences of the governments of the BJP in Delhi and the BRS in Hyderabad, both enriching a chosen few at the cost of the poor, farmers, Dalits, Adivasis and minorities.

Farmers who battle risks of price and weather to make ends meet have been let down by poor insurance schemes, which have forced them into debt.

The Dharani portal is taking away land rights dating back to Indira Gandhi’s era, especially those of Adivasis, minorities, Dalits and OBCs.

Small entrepreneurs shut shop due to lack of support in a market tilted towards a few large corporations. Irrigation projects like Kaleshwaram have become income sources for BRS-affiliated contractors, draining huge resources but providing little water.

The Modi government’s relentless privatisation of public sector companies is reducing opportunities for youth. At the same time, the state government’s privatisation of schools, educational institutes and hospitals is depriving people of affordable education and health.

We asked KCR to float ‘Third Front,’ says AIMIM chief

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi said that he does not care about the INDIA alliance. He said that in reality there is a political vacuum in the country and that there is scope for a ‘Third Front.’

He said that he had suggested to Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao to set up a ‘Third Front.’ He said that INDIA failed to fill the political vacuum in the nation and that the gap could be filled by KCR and his ‘Third Front.’

He said that he does not care about INDIA for not inviting the AIMIM to join it. He said that the BRS, BSP and some other political parties from north-east states and Maharashtra have not joined INDIA.

“We have asked KCR to form a third front and take some parties in it. There is a political vacuum which can be filled if KCR takes the lead. INDIA is not able to fill this



vacuum,” he said on Sunday.

Speaking about AIMIM’s birth while participating in the Mujlis Tiranga rally on Sunday, he said that Qasim Rizvi did not float the AIMIM. He said that Abdul Wahid Owaisi established AIMIM.

He said that Union Home Minister Amit Shah doesn’t know the history of Hyderabad. The BJP has been stating that AIMIM leaders are the heirs of Razakars, but Congress has been stating that AIMIM leaders were the heirs of the Nizam. He said that the BJP targeted AIMIM as their tyres had punctured.

‘Changing country’s name is politicking’

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

CPI General Secretary D. Raja said that Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are in power now, but they may be out tomorrow. But the history of the country is forever. The issue of changing the name of the country was raised for political gain. The country is in trouble, Raja said.

“It is said that Modi became a celebrity after the G20 meetings. The Rupee will depreciate. Modi should answer this. In the last 10 years social and economic inequalities have arisen. Women and children are not safe.

Wrestling champions are fighting for justice in Delhi. Even if there is a double-engine government in Manipur why are riots taking



place? Parliament lacks accountability. The spirit of democracy is lacking. They are strangling the opposition. The Centre is putting state governments in trouble through Governors,” said D. Raja.

Participating in the meeting held at the Nampally Exhibition Ground on the occasion of Telangana Merger Day on Sunday, he asked where were the RSS and Jan Sangh at the time of Independence.

Modi launches...

Continued from page 1

He also unveiled 18 customised stamp sheets covering the 18 traditional trades whose workers are covered under the scheme, along with a toolkit e-booklet on the occasion of the launch of the Vishwakarma scheme.

The goal of the Vishwakarma scheme is to enhance the accessibility and quality of products and services offered by traditional artisans and craftsmen.

The scheme offers collateral-free enterprise development loans of Rs 1 lakh (first tranche for 18 months repayment) and Rs 2 lakh (second tranche for 30 months repayment).

Small works greater than big words: Guv

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Governor Dr Tamilsai Saundararajan said that small works are greater than big words.

Dr Tamilsai said that she was happy to celebrate Telangana Liberation Day and that Telangana Liberation Day celebrations symbolised freedom and unity. She said that many had sacrificed their lives for these rights.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion of Telangana Liberation Day organized at the Raj Bhavan on Sunday, Dr Tamilsai said that she will assure people that she will strive to take the state forward in all respects. She said that the Raj Bhavan is giving CPR training throughout the year.

BRS corruption...

Continued from page 1

“The BRS, the BJP and the AIMIM tried to block the Congress’ public meeting. Sonia gave Telangana as she promised.

KCR’s family is enjoying all the benefits of the formation of Telangana.

Sonia did not give Telangana to one family. Telangana was given to the farmers, women and students. BRS rule did not help the poor. Congress established Telangana as a guarantee for the people.

When Congress comes to power we will fulfil all the six guarantees,” Rahul said.

It is certain that the Congress will topple the BRS government in the next 100 days.

The poor did not get any help in the nine-and-a-half-

year BRS rule.

The Congress is giving six guarantees and it will implement them immediately after coming to power, Rahul said.

He said that the Congress government in Karnataka stuck to its word.

The Karnataka Congress government started implementing its assurances the day the Ministers took oath, he said.

Rahul said that Rs 1 lakh crore was siphoned off during the execution of the Kaleshwaram Project.

The government took back lands through Dharani Portal. Big farmers benefited through the Rythu Bandhu scheme.

There are two lakh posts vacant in Telangana government service.

Modi rule is similar to KCR’s rule in Telangana, Rahul pointed out.

Congress’ power...

Continued from page 1

AICC President Mallikarjuna Kharge said that both the BJP and the BRS are liars. Both the BJP and the BRS are criticising each other but they are extending cooperation to each other. He said the BRS is the B-Team of the BJP.

Addressing the Vijayabheri public meeting held on Sunday at Tukuguda, he said that Modi and KCR have a secret understanding though

they criticize each other openly.

He said that Modi spoke lies saying that he would bring back black money and deposit Rs 15 lakh in each person’s account. He alleged that all systems have been weakened in the last 10 years. Congress PMs established many ‘huge’ PSUs, but the BJP government has been ‘selling’ them, Kharge said. He said that KCR made Telangana which had a surplus budget a debt-riddled state.

Cong guarantees...

Continued from page 1

Farmers and industrialists are protesting as there is no electricity. Bus fares have been increased. Are you implementing the promises you made there? You are the one who burnt the raft. Will you provide Rythu Bandhu, Rythu Bima, Dalit Bandhu schemes across the country as it is given in Telangana?” he said.

You (Congress leaders) come here during elections. Who will implement the guarantees you gave? In 2014, Congress won 44 MP seats. In 2019, it won 52 MP seats. Rahul’s ignorance is a joke. We did not support the BJP in the Presidential election. If you want, you can check the newspapers. We supported Yashwant Sinha. Our party voted for him. We called Yashwant Sinha to Telangana and held a huge meeting. Ask your leaders. We did not support the BJP even in the Vice President election. It was Congress that brought the GST Bill. Is there GST in the states where you are in power? Why didn’t your Yatra go to Gujarat during the Gujarat elections? Don’t you know that if the Huzurabad and Assembly elections are held in our country, the

Congress will support the BJP directly without shame? The ED and the CBI are hounding our leaders like hunting dogs. Can’t you see that the BJP, the ED and the CBI harassed our ministers Mallareddy, Thalassani Srinivas, Gangula Kamalakara, Puvvada Ajay, MLCs Kalvaku ntl Kavitha, L. Ramana, MLA Manchi Reddy Kishan Reddy etc? Can you tell why your National Herald case is stuck? Why did the BJP government not take action regarding the irregularities of Robert Vadra’s companies? Why are there no ED and CBI cases against even a single Congress leader in Telangana? It is a matter known to the world that BJP and the Congress are hand-in-glove. The scandals that happened during your reign are many. You are the one who introduced the scam culture. Yours is not Congress but Scamgress. From Bofors to fodder and sugar scams, one...two...you are the care of address for corruption in the country. From any point of view, there is a scandal in the Congress. If Congress talks about corruption, it is like a wolf talking about vegetarianism. Telangana did not come due to anyone’s charity.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha

Tithi: Tritiya: Sep 17 11:09 AM to Sep 18 12:39 PM

Chaturthi: Sep 18 12:39 PM to Sep 19 01:43 PM

Nakshatram: Chitra: Sep 17 10:02 AM to Sep 18 12:07 PM

Swati: Sep 18 12:07 PM to Sep 19 01:48 PM

Rahukalam: 7:38 AM to 9:09 AM

Yamagandam: 10:39 AM to 12:10 PM

Varjyam: 06:07 PM to 07:50 PM

Gulika: 1:40 PM to 3:11 PM

Amritakalam: 04:23 AM to 06:06 AM

Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:46 AM to 12:34 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Partly Cloudy

Temp: 31°

Humidity: 67%

Sunrise: 6:04 AM

Sunset: 6:16 PM

Updated: September 17, 2023 5:00 PM

'People will teach a lesson...

Continued from page 1

Speaking on the occasion, Amit said that if it was not for Sardar Patel, Telangana would not have been liberated so soon. He said that he was prepared for a police action to unite the country.

He said that after the Indian military started ‘Operation Polo’, without shedding a drop of blood, Nizam prostrated before Bharat’s might. He said that the operation was carried out under the leadership of KM Munshi as per the orders of Patel. Amit reminded that many organizations like the Arya Samaj and the Hindu Mahasabha worked during the Telugana independence movement.

For 75 years, no government in the country has tried to tell our youth about Telangana’s freedom struggle and give this event in history

the regard it deserved. It was Prime Minister Modi who decided to officially organize this ceremony to inspire the future generations of Telangana.

The aim of the programmes held under the auspices of the Union Ministry of Culture is to remember the struggle of our elders and build the state they dreamed of. He said that the development of the state is possible only through the spirit of the freedom struggle.

Amit congratulated Prime Minister Modi on his birthday. He reminded people that the Prime Minister’s contribution is there for everybody to see and that it resulted in the country becoming the fifth largest economy in the world, and through G20, India’s culture and traditions have once again been conveyed to the world.

All TS families benefitted from govt...

Continued from page 1

On the other hand, Telangana is ranked number one in the country in terms of per capita income. By continuously strengthening all sectors of the state, we were able to show the nation what development means in no time, he said.

The saying ‘What Telangana practices – the country follows’ is true. Other state governments are copying our schemes and people there want the good governance in Telangana to continue in their states as well, he said.

KCR attended as chief guest the official programme organised on the occasion of National Integration Day at the Public Gardens in Nampally here on Sunday. The CM paid floral tributes to Telangana Martyrs at

the Martyrs Memorial at Gun Park.

Later, the Chief Minister accepted a police salute, hoisted the National Flag and addressed the people of Telangana. KCR explained the evolution of the state of Hyderabad which was under dynastic rule and was merged with the Union of India on September 17, 1948. The CM said Hyderabad State continued until it was forced to merge with Andhra Pradesh in 1956. September 17 is a special day in the history of Telangana. After India attained Independence, the then Indian government took up the official process of merger of the princely states outside the British administration with the Indian Union.

As part of that, our Hyderabad Princely State

became an integral part of India on September 17, 1948. With this, autocratic rule was replaced by parliamentary democracy in Telangana, he said. The Telangana Government decided to celebrate the merger of Hyderabad State with the Union of India as National Integration Day. Today we are organizing celebrations across the state by hoisting the national flag.

As part of the reorganization of the states in 1956, the Telangana and Andhra regions were merged and Andhra Pradesh was formed against the wishes of the people of the Telangana region. We all know its bad consequences. We started a movement to achieve a separate state of Telangana against the injustice meted out to the Telangana region.

Ganesh Utsav begins in great splendour

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

With the sounds of drums filling the air, the procession carrying colourful and creative Ganesha idols of various sizes captivated everyone. The love for Ganesh sprung up from the chest of people by filling the air with chants of Jai Ganesh, Gan Ganapataye Namah Namah in the air.

People across the city went to the market collected various herbal offerings such as bilva leaves, Bermuda grass, Arjuna leaves, rubber bush (Aak), and many more which denote connection to mother nature and symbolise the greatness of Ganesh. A majority of markets sold eco-friendly Vinayakas made out of clay except a few. They also sold decorative items such as umbrellas and flower malas.



Various local Ganesh communities across the city are setting up the mandap and decorating it prior to the pujas for the public. They also plan to conduct various fun events during the festival from September 18 to 28.

People started visiting the temple and the Ganesh mandaps to perform various pujas and offering homemade delicacies. Some of them, perform vehicle puja on this day and other rituals for the blessings of Ganesha and fulfilling their wishes.

Different forms of the Ganapati idols are worshipped on different days. The celebrations conclude on September 28 with Ganesh visarjan or immersion, which depicts Ganesh going back to his abode.

Hyderabad cops issue list of restrictions for Ganesh fest

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad police on Sunday issued a list of Dos and Don'ts ahead of Ganesh Chaturthi.

No idol shall be installed on roads and pavements. A temporary mandap should be prepared using good quality material; Playing of loud music in Ganesh pandals shall not be permitted, so that there is no disturbance to neighbours/students/people who are unwell. Mandap shall not be used as a place for drinking alcoholic beverages, gambling or any other unlawful and anti-social activities.

Use of loudspeakers would not be permitted after 10 pm; to safeguard the Ganesh mandap/idol and other articles, a minimum of three volunteers at any point of time shall be available round-the-clock at the pandal.

The names of the volunteers should be entered in the book maintained at the Ganesh mandap; The required number of volunteers shall be made available to maintain queues of the devotees who visit Ganesh



Use of loudspeakers would not be permitted after 10 pm; to safeguard the Ganesh mandap/idol and other articles, a minimum of three volunteers at any point of time shall be available round-the-clock at the pandal

mandap for darshan; Conditions imposed by the TSSPDCL shall be complied with; No serial lighting, decoration lighting or other decorations shall be made outside the Ganesh mandap; No lucky dips or lotteries or corrective collection of funds shall be allowed in the name of Ganesh mandap.

In view of the Ganesh festival in Hyderabad, the city police have decided to impose

a ban on bursting crackers in public places from 6 am on September 18.

Hyderabad Commissioner of Police CV Anand said that bursting or throwing firecrackers on roads and public places is strictly prohibited from 6 am on September 18 to 6 am on September 30. He appealed to all citizens to maintain peace and tranquility for the smooth conduct of the Ganesh festival and immersion processions.

Traffic curbs ahead of Ganesh idol installation at Khairatabad

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad police on Sunday released traffic restrictions ahead of Ganesh idol installation at Khairatabad.

The restrictions will remain in place from September 18-28. Traffic intending to go towards Mint Compound from Rajiv Gandhi statue will not be allowed and diverted at Rajeev Gandhi statue towards Nirankari Junction; Commuters moving from Rajdoot lane towards Bada Ganesh will not be allowed and diverted at Rajdoot lane towards Iqbal Minar.

Traffic moving from Mint Compound towards IMAX Theatre will not be diverted at Mint Compound towards Telugu Thalli junction; Commuters moving from Necklace Rotary towards Mint Compound will not be diverted at Necklace Rotary towards Telugu Thalli junction or Khairatabad fly over; Traffic coming from Khairatabad Post Office lane towards Khairatabad railway gate will not be diverted at Post Office towards Old



Saifabad police station junction.

Due to the large number of devotees visiting Bada Ganesh, traffic congestion is expected in the following junctions including Khairatabad, Shadan College, Nirankari, Old PS, Saifabad, Mint Compound and Necklace Rotary. Hence, the commuters are requested to avoid these routes.

Visitors coming for Bada Ganesh darshan through Necklace Rotary and NTR Garden should park their

vehicles at the parking place beside IMAX Theatre, NTR Ghat and NTR Garden parking places, or opposite IMAX in School premises; Visitors coming in their own vehicles for Bada Ganesh darshan must come through Necklace Rotary and avoid Khairatabad Junction Road and Rajdoot lane

The above restrictions will be imposed depending on the number of devotees coming to have darshan of Khairatabad Bada Ganesh Idol.

Be inspired by Hyd's liberation, students told

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Rashtrapati Nilayam concluded 75 years of Hyderabad Liberation Day at its premises on Sunday. Various competitions and activities engaged students from schools and colleges as well as regular visitors.

The three-day event culminated in a valedictory and prize distribution function on Sunday attended by Governor of Telangana Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan and Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) G Kishan Reddy, as the chief guests.

Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan said, "Hyderabad Liberation Day is a day to be engraved in golden letters. "Today is an inspirational day for the students who have stepped into the historic place of Rashtrapati Nilayam, and for many of them, this may turn out to be the first step in becoming leaders of the future."

Additional Secretary to the President Dr Rakesh Gupta and



Governor of Telangana Tamilisai Soundararajan and Union Minister for Culture and Tourism G.Kishan Reddy at the 75th Hyderabad Liberation Day celebrations at Rashtrapati Nilayam

Deputy Secretary Swati Shahi, conveyed their gratitude to the chief guests, other dignitaries, staff of the President's Secretariat, volunteers and participants on behalf of Rashtrapati Bhavan. Vice-Chancellor of Hyderabad Central University was also present.

The festivities included competitions like Rashtriya Raag (singing), Azadi Act (drama and skit), Prabelika (quiz), and Bharat Saraswatham (elocution), with registrations by over 10,000 students from Telangana's schools and colleges.

Additionally, there were photo archival exhibitions, art exhibi-

tions, open mike sessions, panel discussions, cultural performances, as well as food stalls and a children's corner for the convenience of visitors and participants.

In accordance with the vision of President Droupadi Murmu of deepening connection with citizens, Rashtrapati Nilayam was opened to the public on March 22, 2023, enabling visitors access to this historic premises year-round. Furthering this vision, student competitions and community events are regularly conducted at Rashtrapati Nilayam, which has drawn around 50,000 visitors to date.

Police monitoring social media posts

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In view of the forthcoming elections and Ganesh and Milad-un-Nabi festivals, the police in the GHMC limits are put on high alert keeping a hawk's eye on social media content besides maintain the law and order. The vigil on social media has been stepped up by the three police commissionerates in the city.

The police will identify those who post objectionable and inflammable messages on social media, morph photographs and post videos that vitiate the

law and order situation and take legal action against them.

Depending on the severity of the message, those who have posted the message would be brought to the book and sent to jail, according to reports.

Special teams have been constituted at the Command Control Centre at Banjara Hills.

The integrated social media surveillance wing, social media action teams would monitor the social media contents.

The three police commissioners have held meetings with peace committees as Ganesh festival and Milad-un-

Nabi are occurring the same day.

In view of the political parties vying with each other to hold meetings, the police have paid special attention on Ganesh festival celebrations.

The police will gather all posts appearing in political groups, media groups and social media groups. They will identify those who post morphed images and videos in connection with the festivals. The police have paid special focus on all social media groups, including those in the old city of Hyderabad.

The special action teams will closely monitor till Ganesh festival, Sobha Yatra and Milad-un-Nabi are over.

The police have started collecting information about 25,000 Ganesh pandals to be set up in the city from Tuesday last onwards. Besides maintaining the constant communication with organisers of Ganesh pandals in the city, the police are monitoring the social media along with peace committee members. They collect information posted in the groups. On the basis of the phone numbers the people behind

spreading of false news would be identified. As part of the exercise, each and every message being posted in social media platforms is being closely monitored.

The police are sensitising the people and asking them not to give credence to the false messages being spread through social media.

After the Ganesh idol immersion, the political activity is going to pick up in the state. The parties will make good use of the festivals -Ganesh festival, Dasara and Diwali - for the purpose their political propaganda.

HMDA creates record of distributing Ganesh idols

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

For four consecutive days, the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) distributed 1.5 lakh clay Ganesha idols in around 60 centres, bringing them closer to the people. It has created a record for distributing clay Ganapati idols for free on Sunday.

Municipal Administration Minister K T Rama Rao initiated the distribution programme of HMDA Vinayaka idols on September 17. Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MAUD) Special Chief Secretary, HMDA Metropolitan Commissioner Arvind Kumar handed over the HMDA Ganapati idol to Shanti Kumari, Chief Secretary of the



HMDA officials distribute Ganesh idols free of cost to the public

State Government. The administration took up and successfully completed the distribution of idols in the twin cities and suburbs.

HMDA Secretary Chandraya, Urban Forest Director Dr B Prabhakar, Chief Engineer BL Reddy, Estate Officer Kishan Rao, Planning

Directors Vidyadhar, Srinivas, Chief Information Officer SK Meera, Chief Accounts Officer Vijayalakshmi, Superintendent Engineer Paramjyoti, Land Acquisition Officer Pasonamba along with other officials, employees and staff have distributed the idols free of charge.

CALL TO PEOPLE ON NATIONAL INTEGRATION DAY

‘Fulfill aspirations of martyrs’

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC), VC Sajjanar, unfurled the National Flag at Bus Bhavan on Sunday.

He said that there is a need for everyone to fulfill the aspirations of the martyrs who sacrificed their lives in the people's armed struggle for the land, for Bhukti and for the liberation of the oppressed people.

He also said that a decade ago, when he worked in Warangal, Nalgonda and



Medak, people used to talk about the atrocities of Razakars and glorified Doddi Komuriah, the first hero to fall a victim to the Nizam's bullets. People of Kalyan, Karnataka and Marathwada, along with the people of Telangana have

stood as role models in this struggle.

When he visited Bhairanpally village as a Janagam ASP two decades ago as part of his visit to such areas, people expressed their issues to him.

He recalled the days that they suffered so much because of the acts of the rioters and the incidents of mass atrocity.

The Vice-Chairman of TSRTC said, "We should not forget the fact that we all have the responsibility to know the great history of Telangana till its merger with independent India and to inform future generations.

He asked everyone to work hard to achieve the aspirations of the martyrs of those days and pave the way for the progress of Telangana State and country.





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BRS CADRE NEED TO LEARN FROM DANA KISHORE

It is normal for the cadre of any political party to publicly praise their leader to the skies and deify him or her with the sole objective of catching their attention. At times, babus outdo them. The cadre of the Bharat Rashtira Samiti need to take a leaf out of the book of HMWSSB MD Dana Kishore on how to praise Minister K T Rama Rao. At an event where KTR addressed Maharashtra industrialists, the IAS officer, in his closing remarks, said that Minister KTR's speech was 'spellbinding'. He then recounted a private conversation he had had with his friends about KTR. He said, "Recently I met IFS batchmates at a party. They were asking 'How come your Minister talks like this so well?'. I told them, as bureaucrats we need to have good leadership for development. KTR is team leader, whatever work Arvind Kumar, Dana Kishore, and NVS Reddy are doing, it is because of his humongous, understanding leadership". He went on to say that he had never seen KTR with an angry face. "He just wants things to be done", Kishore summed up dutifully. Given the impending elections, bureaucratic circles are discussing whether it was a farewell speech.

THE CID CHIEF'S PRIORITIES WHEN IT COMES TO CLARIFICATION

After TDP president and former chief minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu was remanded to judicial custody by the Court, the TDP has been running a campaign against CID chief Sanjay for his press statements. In a slip of the tongue during one such pressers, Sanjay misidentified Nashik as Ganga's birthplace. A little bird told us that Sanjay wanted to give a clarification on this as it seemed to have called into question his GK. For newbies, TDP and its followers are hanging on to everything that the CID chief says and do not miss an opportunity or mince words to attack him for misstatements. A wag commented: "When TDP attacks Jagan, there are social media warriors to defend him, but officials, however, are left helpless".

BUREAUCRATS FORM GINGER GROUP

Ginger groups are common within parties or movements. But if they are formed within a bureaucratic circle, whatever be the level of convergence of the participating members' interests, the

larger question is: Who is their target? Former AP Chief Secretary L V Subramanyam, along with a handful of retired IAS and IPS officers, has formed what they call 'Save Democracy Forum'. They believe that democracy is peril. But the forum is yet to pinpoint where it is in peril: in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, or Delhi? That apart, the larger question is: Against whom are they joining hands? N Ramesh Kumar, who had been at logger heads with the Jagan Mohan Reddy government and was shunted out, is part of the group. So, one can imagine the target. Whoever it may, it would be interesting to see what this ginger group is up to.

INTERROBANG IN PLACE OF INTERROGATION

Hyderabad Commissioner of Police C V Anand, himself a cricketer, takes time out to give commentaries on cricket matches. Not far removed from interrogation, he recently shared with an interrobang: "Our team has developed the ability to let down the entire country at the most required time". He remarked that he did not feel like celebrating India's win. "It has not won a single ICC Trophy, in T20, One-dayers, or the Test championships in the last ten 10 years? Can u believe it! They do well like a flash in the pan and when the entire country is watching, they fall like 9 pins". While India won the match, he said: "Team India, not impressed at all! U need to do more, prove it in the World Cup next month".

TROLLING NO BAR TO TRANSPARENCY IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Trolling does not bother those who know how to take social media comments in their stride. The trick is simple: jhukna nahin. The quintessence of this among officials is CMO Secretary Smitha Sabharwal. Very active in social media, Smitha Sabharwal's posts at times become controversial. Yet she airs her views fearlessly. Due to her sincerity even in social media posts, she has many fans and close followers, almost on par with those of cine stars and sport personalities. Some of these followers do criticise her bitterly. But Smitha Sabharwal, who does not mind sharing her private moments on social media platforms, including a reel that created a sensation recently, seems to have decided to stick to her guns, come what may.

-- Yours truly

CHILD SAFETY

TS Police wins FICCI smart policing award

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Police won the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) smart policing award for child safety on September 14.

Amongst 117 entries received from 23 organisations, including 17 State police forces and 6 CAPFs and other central agencies, "Worksite schools" project of Rachakonda Commissionerate initiated by former Commissioner Mahesh M Bhagwat was short listed for Smart Policing Award under child safety category. On September 15, at FICCI federation House, New Delhi, award ceremony was conducted.

Padmashree Awardee BSF DG Prakash Singh, Manjari Jaruhar, retd DG, CISE, Arvind Gupta, former Deputy National Security Advisor, presented

Mahesh M Bhagwat with Smart Policing award.

In January 2017 during Operation Smile, 370 Odisha migrant worker's children were rescued from Brick Kilns in Choutuppal and Bommalararam mandals of Bhongir-adadri district under Rachakonda Police Commissionerate. As part of their rehabilitation Bhagwat involved other agencies like District Collectors of Yadadri-Bhongiri, Ranga Reddy and Medhcal Malkajigiri to provide mid-day meal scheme and government classrooms; Brick Kiln Owners Association involved to provide school uniforms for children and local transportation facility civil society.

Aide et Action led by Umi Daniel and Suresh Gutta involved to provide teachers from Odisha and Maharashtra to teach children rescued from



Telangana CID Director General Mahesh M Bhagwat with Telangana DGP Anjani Kumar

child labour in their Oriya and Marathi mother tongue. These worksite schools were running from January to May every year and after that with the integration certificate children are going back to their native states

Inflict defeat on divisive forces: Harish to people

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

Minister for Finance T Harish Rao on Sunday called upon people to inflict a decisive defeat on the forces indulging in politics of polarisation.

Addressing the gathering, shortly after unfurling the national flag on the occasion of the National Integration Day celebration here, the Minister appealed to the people to join in the fight to protect the unity and integrity of the country.

Scores of freedom fighters sacrificed their lives liberate the country from the yoke of foreign rule, Harish Rao said. Telangana State was always prosperous. It had surplus budget between 1948 and 1956. After Telangana was merged with Andhra, the people in the region had undergone untold sufferings till statehood was achieved.

The movement for separate Telangana arose because the Andhra leaders had denied funds and humiliated Telangana people and their language. He said that Chief Minister K



Minister for Finance T Harish Rao at the National Integration Day celebrations in Siddipet on Sunday

Chandrashekar Rao achieved statehood for Telangana after he waged fight for 14 years. Telangana set an example for other States and also country in the implementation of developmental activities and welfare schemes under the leadership of the Chief

Minister.

Later, the Minister distributed eco-friendly Ganesh idols here on Sunday under the aegis of Amarnath Annadanam Trust. He said that what is needed are blessings of the deity but not colourful idols.

BJP is behind the arrest of Naidu: CPI

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Communist Party of India (CPI) former general secretary Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy on Sunday said that the BJP was behind the arrest of TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu. Suravaram alleged that Naidu was arrested as per the agreement between Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy. He said that the BJP is plotting to come to power in Andhra Pradesh state and hence it targeted first

Naidu and then Jaganmohan Reddy.

He stressed the need to drive out the BJP to ensure that the people belonging to all religions live in harmony.

While participating at a meeting held at Nampally Exhibition Grounds on the occasion of Telangana Merger Day celebrations on Sunday, Sudhakar Reddy said, "Communists waged Telangana armed struggle. No one has the moral right to speak about it.

Arthroplasty Arthroscopy Summit held

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Apollo Hospitals in association with the Apollo Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (AIMSR) on Sunday hosted the Seventh Arthroplasty Arthroscopy Summit 2023 (AAS) under the aegis of the Telangana Orthopedic Surgeon's Association (TOSA) and Twin Cities Orthopedic Society (TCOS), today at AIMSR, Jubilee Hills.

Dr Mithin Aachi, Course Director, AAS and senior ortho and Joint Replacement Surgeon, Apollo Hospitals, Secunderabad; briefed media about the latest techniques discussed at the summit.

The summit was attended by over a hundred orthopaedic surgeons from across Telangana including several young ortho professionals.

KCR aiming for sympathy by getting Kavitha jailed: Revanth

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC President Revanth Reddy said that KCR is aiming to win the election using sympathy and wants to get his daughter arrested for that. Revanth made the sensational comment that KCR has made an agreement with Modi to put Kavitha in Tihar Jail to get sympathy and that KCR is helping Modi for this.

He said that KCR and Kishan Reddy are not different and that Kishan is actually a follower of KCR. Does Kishan know why BJP leaders made him the president, he asked.

Revanth was addressing a media conference at the Taj

7 Kakatiya Medical College students booked for ragging

The KMC is once again in the news for the wrong reasons

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Even as the incident of the suicide of first-year postgraduate student D Preethi is still fresh in people's mind, a shocking incident of ragging in Kakatiya Medical College (KMC) came to light on Sunday again in Kakatiya Medical College (KMC).

The Warangal Police registered a case against seven MBBS third-year students for allegedly ragging a second-year MBBS student in the college. The police registered cases under various Sections of the IPC and Prohibition of Ragging Act.

KMC principal D Mohan Das reportedly inquired into the alleged ragging incident. He questioned 15 students on the incident on September 14. The next day, the student, who was allegedly subjected to ragging lodged a complaint with the police. The complaint alleged that 10 students had attacked him. The third-year students allegedly tortured the second-year student.



Prohibition of Ragging Act of 1997. The case is under investigation, he said.

Speaking to the media, the principal said that there was no incident of ragging at the college. The senior students beat the junior students during a clash between the groups. However, the anti-ragging committee took a serious view of the incident and called the student groups for an inquiry. The Anti-Ragging Committee meeting would be held on September 19 to go into the incident and decide the future course of action.

Some student unions demanded suspension of the KMC principal for failing to rein in ragging in the college.



Krishna Hotel on Sunday.

He said that the BJP, the BRS and the AIMIM are attacking the Congress as a group without being able to face the Congress on their own. He said that the meetings and programmes of the three parties today are proof of that.

The BJP and the BRS are

Telangana civilisation dates back to BC: Govt Whip

PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL

Government whip Guvvala Balaraju has greeted the farmers who led Telangana armed struggle against the landlords.

Participating as the chief guest in the celebrations held at the parade grounds here, he unfurled the national flag.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that the day in 1948 saw the State getting merged with Indian union. He inspected a guard of honour presented by the police.

He said that Telangana dates back to BC.

In thousands of years of history of the region, many ruled the region. There were instances of people worked as slaves under the landlords. Many struggles were waged to resist

the exploitation. One of them is the Telangana armed struggle started in 1946. Many people sacrificed their lives during the struggle. By 1947, at least 500 princely States were merged with Indian union with the exception of Hyderabad.

The then Hyderabad rulers – the Nizams – sought recognition as an independent country. The national tricolour fluttered over the region due to the police action merging the region with the country.

The Palamuru-Rangareddy LI Scheme inauguration is a red letter day in the annals of Mahabubnagar district. The Chief Minister inaugurated the scheme which would irrigate 12.30 lakh acres in Mahabubnagar district, he said.

Four persons die as vehicle falls into gorge

PNS ■ AMRAVATI

Four persons from Telangana were killed and as many injured after the vehicle they were travelling in fell into a gorge in Maharashtra's Amravati district on Sunday morning, the police said.

The accident occurred near Motha village on the Paratwada-Chikhaldara road, Superintendent of Police Avinash Bargal said.

Citing preliminary information, the SP said eight people from Telangana were travelling in a vehicle when it fell into a gorge. Visibility was poor due to fog at the time, the police official said.

TS has achieved tremendous growth in all fields: Srinivas

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

Minister for Prohibition and Excise V Srinivas Goud on Sunday said that the Telangana State has been making rapid progress and achieved tremendous growth.

The Minister unfurled the national flag on the occasion of National Integration Day celebrations held at the District Collectorate here.

Speaking on the occasion, Srinivas Goud pointed out that the Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) government introduced several welfare schemes for the welfare of the downtrodden. The government also introduced many schemes like Rythu Bandhu, Rythu Bhima, KCR Kit, nutrition kit, Amma Vodi, Kalyana Lakshmi, Shaadi Mubarak, Aasara pensions, distribution of sheep and others.

Apart from it, the State government has been extending financial assistance to Dalits, Backward Classes and Minorities and built double bedroom houses for the poor. The student hostels in the



Minister for Excise V Srinivas Goud at the National Integration Day celebrations in Mahabubnagar on Sunday

State were being given superfine rice for the benefit of the students.

The government, he said, has established medical colleges in districts. A super-specialty Hospital is coming up in Mahabubnagar. The people need not go to Hyderabad for expert medical services after the super-specialty hospital was completed.

Srinivas Goud asserted that the Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Scheme (PRLIS) would be completed and drought would be driven out of the erstwhile undivided Mahabubnagar district. The government allotted Rs 35,200 crore

for the PRLIS. The launching of the wet run by Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Ro was a success, he said.

The number of pensioners in the district increased from 79,000 in the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh to 1.40 lakh. He also referred to the setting up of KCR Urban Echo Park and other developmental activities. A total of 291 schools were renovated with an investment of Rs 149 crore and renovation works started in 280 more schools.

On the occasion, the Minister felicitated freedom fighter Vakhl Bheemaiiah and presented a shawl to him.

Hyd CP reacts to cops' wedding shoot in police station

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Commissioner of Police CV Anand on Sunday reacted to police couple's wedding shoot on the police station premises.

Anand said such actions are not permissible and that the couple should have sought prior permission regarding the shoot. The incident took place on the premises of the Panjagutta police station. A video of the shoot went viral on social media.

Shot very cinematically with slow-motion shots and dance sequences, the video instantly gained traction. The video starts with the couple getting down from their police vehicles at the Panjagutta Police Station in a filmy style.

The couple also performed in front of scenic locations like the Charminar and the Laad Bazaar for the music video. Anand took to twitter and said, "I have seen mixed reactions to this. Honestly, they seem to be a little overexcited about their marriage and that's great news, though a little



embarrassing. Policing is a very very tough job, especially for ladies. And finding a spouse in the department is an occasion for all of us to celebrate. The fact that it's two police officers, I find nothing wrong in them using the police department property and symbols. If they had informed us earlier we would have definitely given consent for the shoot. Some of us may feel outraged, but I feel like meeting them and blessing them, though they didn't invite me for their wedding. Of course, I advise others not to repeat this without proper permission."

Fake call centre busted, four held

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Cybercrime Police on Sunday busted a fake call centre styled as "HW Outsourcing & Marketing PVT LTD." The police arrested four persons on charge of cheating people of Rs 45, 78,760.

The arrested were identified as Ramendra Kumar, senior manager, Sunil, manager, Rishab Tiwari, assistant manager and Kavi Prakash. The police also issued notices to 85 tele-callers associated with the call centre. The accused posed as representatives of PNB MetLife Insurance and Bharti AXA General Insurance companies.

The accused obtained insurance details of the victims and provided the data to their telecallers of their call centre. The telecallers contacted the people in the list and collected personal information and forwarded details of interested persons to their managers and team leaders. The managers persuaded the people to deposit money in fake bank accounts.

Tummala's entry into Congress wrecks Sharmila's plans

SNCN ACHARYULU ■ HYDERABAD

After former minister Tummala Nageswar Rao joined the Congress what will be the future of the YSR Telangana Party President YS Sharmila?

It is clear that the Congress has given more importance to Tummala than YS Sharmila. There were speculations that the merger of the YSR Telangana Party with the Congress would happen during the CWC meeting which was held in Hyderabad.

Before this meeting, Sharmila met Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shiv Kumar who is looking after the entry of YS Sharmila into the Congress.

This has strengthened speculations that the YSR Telangana Party will merge with the Congress. But surprisingly the Congress reportedly set aside temporarily the merger of the YSR Telangana Party with their party.

Another issue is that Sharmila wants to contest from Palair in the erstwhile Khammam district. Tummala also wants to contest from this

seat as he had won from this constituency. So the Congress prefers Tummala to YS Sharmila Palair.

In this situation, if Sharmila joins the Congress or merges her party with the Congress there will be no chance for her to get the Palair Assembly seat.

Sharmila has now stopped her party's programmes and is concentrating on joining the Congress or merging her party with the Congress. Sharmila met DK Shiv Kumar regarding this several times. Recently Sharmila met Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi also in New Delhi.

After the meeting, Sharmila gave positive signals about her joining the Congress. But Tummala wrecked Sharmila's plans by joining the Congress.

Political observers think that if Sharmila does not join or merge her party with Congress she will lose credibility. At the same time, the YSR Telangana Party will also lose credibility.

It appears that the latest developments indicate that Sharmila needs more support from the Congress than the Congress needs her support.

INDIA CORNER

Three women sucked into sinkhole following land subsidence in Dhanbad

Three women were sucked into a crater following land subsidence in a colliery area of Jharkhand's Dhanbad district on Sunday, police said. The incident happened at an outsourcing project site in Gondudih colliery, around 190km from state capital Ranchi, in the command area of Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL), police added. The women were reportedly walking on a makeshift road, built for coal transportation, when a portion of it suddenly caved in, they said. Dhanbad superintendent of police (rural) Kapil Chaudhary told PTI, "Three women are trapped in a deep crater after a portion of land caved in. Rescue operations are on but they could not be traced yet." The women were identified as Parla Devi (55), Thandi Devi (55) and Mandwa Devi (60), all residents of Chhotki Bouwa Basti. Colliery project officer BK Jha told reporters that the crater would be around seven-feet wide and 15-feet deep.



Manipur joins nationwide launch of PM Vishwakarma Scheme

Manipur on Sunday joined the nationwide launch of the PM Vishwakarma Scheme in the presence of Union Minister Nityananda Rai and Chief Minister N Biren Singh here. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Rs 13,000-crore PM Vishwakarma Yojana (scheme) for traditional artisans and craftsmen in Delhi. He also unveiled 18 customised stamp sheets covering the 18 traditional trades whose workers are covered under the scheme, along with a toolkit e-booklet on the occasion of the launch of the Vishwakarma scheme. Speaking at a function, Rai said the prime minister has always been giving priority to the Northeastern states when it comes to development. "The scheme has been started covering 18 traditional crafts including carpentry, boat-making, blacksmith, weaving, etc" and that "it will facilitate the development of small-scale craftsmen across the country."



Doctor couple held in UP for negligence in death of pregnant woman, child

A doctor couple running a private clinic in Risra here were on Sunday arrested for alleged medical negligence leading to the death of a pregnant woman and her child during delivery, police said. An employee of the clinic has also been arrested in connection with the case, they added. In his complaint, the deceased's husband Chandan Prasad said he admitted his wife Poonam Devi to the clinic for delivery on Saturday evening. Deputy Superintendent of Police Mohammad Faheem Qureshi said. However, due to the negligence of the doctor couple and their employee, his wife and newborn child died during labour, Prasad alleged in his complaint. Based on Prasad's complaint, a case was registered against doctor Vinay Kumar Singh, his wife, who is also a doctor and a male employee of the clinic, the DSP said. An investigation has been launched into the matter, he added.



'PM Modi working towards empowering marginalised'

PNS ■ PATNA/GAYA/MUZAFARPUR (BIHAR)

Union minister and Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party supremo Pashupati Kumar Paras on Sunday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been assiduously working towards empowering the poor and marginalised.

Paras, the Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, was speaking at the launch of the PM Vishwakarma scheme in Muzaffarpur.

"The scheme will help make our artisans not only vocal but truly global... their standard of living will improve and they will get recognition," he said.

Wishing the PM on his 73rd birthday, Paras said, "Modi ji remains the most trusted leader in the world who has been working assid-



uously towards empowering the poor and marginalised."

RLJP is part of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance.

Another Union minister and senior BJP leader Giriraj Singh, who attended the inaugural function of the scheme in Patna, attacked the Nitish Kumar government as no rep-

resentatives of the state administration were present at the programme.

"It is an insult to the traditional artisans and craftspeople belonging to the backward strata of the society," he said, adding that a large number of poor will benefit from the scheme.

Wishing Modi on his 73rd birthday, Singh said, "The PM's tireless efforts to uplift India are truly commendable. Under his leadership, the country has made significant strides in various sectors, from economic reforms to infrastructure development."

Union Minister of State for Education, Annapurna Devi, while speaking at the inaugural function of the scheme in Gaya, said that the initiative aims at enhancing the quality of products of the traditional artisans and craftsmen.

A total of 18 traditional crafts have been covered under the scheme.

Meanwhile, BJP workers, clad in t-shirts with Modi's slogans and images, celebrated the PM's birthday by distributing sweets and cutting cakes in different parts of the state.

India facing economic slowdown, PM not worried about youth unemployment: YC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The country is facing an economic slowdown but the prime minister is "not worried about employment for the youth", the Indian Youth Congress alleged on Sunday.

Srinivas BV, the organisation's national president who led a protest at the Indian Youth Congress' office in central Delhi, said, "We mark this day -- September 17 -- as 'national unemployment day'. Scores of youngsters are unemployed across the country and yet the Centre and the prime minister refuse to acknowledge the problem."

September 17 is the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who turned 73 this year.

Srinivas further alleged that crores of people applied for central government jobs in the past nine years and "yet, a large number of youngsters are unemployed".

Legal profession will thrive depending on integrity: CJI

PNS ■ CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR

Our profession will continue to thrive or it will self-destruct based on whether we do or do not maintain our integrity, Chief Justice of India Dhananjay Chandrachud said here on Sunday.

Integrity is the core of the legal profession, the CJI asserted.

Integrity is not eroded by one thunderstorm, it gets eroded by small, little concessions and compromises made by lawyers and judges, the CJI said while speaking at the an event on the theme 'Enhancing collaboration between Advocates & Judges: Towards strengthening legal system'.

"Our profession will continue to thrive or it will self-destruct based on whether we do or do not maintain our integrity. Integrity is eroded not by one thunderstorm, it erodes by small little conces-



sions and compromises which are made by lawyers and judges," he said.

"We all sleep with our conscience. You can fool the whole world but can't fool your conscience. It keeps on asking questions every night. Integrity is the core of the legal profession. With integrity we will either continue to survive or we will self-destruct," the CJI added.

Lawyers get respect when they respect judges and judges get respect when they respect

lawyers, and the mutual respect takes place when there is realisation that both are part of the same wheel of justice, he said.

Talking about women in the judiciary, he said gender is not a woman's issue alone and it was equally a man's issue.

"I believe one significant challenge before the Indian legal profession is to create an equal opportunity profession. Because the composition of the legal profession today will define it 30 or 40 years down the line," CJI Chandrachud said.

"When I am asked why we don't have enough women judges, I tell them don't look at the collegiums today because it has to select among the talent available at the bar. You have to look at the status of our society 30-20 years ago. The judges who are entering higher judiciary today are members of the bar from 20-25 years ago," he said.

Bharat Mandapam, Yashobhoomi to promote trade, employment: Goyal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The two world class convention and exhibition centres -- Bharat Mandapam at Pragati Maidan and Yashobhoomi at Dwarka -- will help promote trade, industry and employment, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Sunday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the first phase of India International Convention and Expo Centre -- 'Yashobhoomi' to the nation at Dwarka on Sunday, while the ITPO's Bharat Mandapam was inaugurated on July 26.

India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO) is an arm of the commerce ministry.

"Bharat Mandapam and Yashobhoomi will promote trade, industry, export and employment. Yashobhoomi will promote MSME sector, farmers and artisans and provide new opportunities and markets for them," Goyal said. He added that steps to make

laws simpler, supporting startups, and increasing trade will help to promote the country's economic growth.

On PM Vishwakarma Yojana, Goyal said that the prime minister has recognised the hard work of artisans and the scheme will honour and strengthen them.

Modi launched Rs 13,000-crore PM Vishwakarma Yojana (scheme) for traditional artisans and craftsmen, and inaugurated the Rs 5,400-crore first phase of state-of-the-art India International Convention and Expo Centre (IICC) -- 'Yashobhoomi' -- at Dwarka.

The goal of the Vishwakarma scheme is to enhance the accessibility and quality of products and services offered by traditional artisans and craftsmen. The scheme offers collateral-free enterprise development loans of Rs 1 lakh (first tranche for 18 months repayment) and Rs 2 lakh (second tranche for 30 months repayment).



Couple robbed of Rs 40 lakh, gold jewellery at Delhi home

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Four people, including two women, were arrested for allegedly robbing a couple of Rs 40 lakh cash and gold jewellery at gunpoint in east Delhi, police said on Sunday.

Rajender Kumar alias Bittou, Mukesh Kumar, his wife Deepa and Rachna have been arrested while two others -- Deepak and Ashu Balyan -- are at large, they said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Shahdara) Rohit Meena said on Monday when the complainant returned home in Jagatpuri police station area around 8:15 am after dropping his son at the school, three people entered the parking area of his house.

"They overpowered him and took him at gunpoint to the fourth floor of the apartment building," he said

After entering his apartment, the trio tied up the complainant and his wife and robbed them of approximately Rs 40 lakh in cash and around 35 to 40 tolas' of gold jewellery.

According to the police, the mastermind behind the armed robbery was Rachna who is a cousin of the complainant. "During the investigation, CCTV footage of the area was examined.

Minister hits out at Bengal govt for 'not executing' Kusum scheme

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Union minister R K Singh on Sunday criticised the West Bengal government for "not implementing" the PM Kusum scheme, which could have helped farmers by way of lower power costs.

The scheme envisages installation of solar panels for running irrigation pumps, which are usually operated with diesel.

Singh, the Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy, said under the scheme, the Centre provides 30-per cent assistance as viability gap funding.

"With this viability gap funding, solar power generation costs would come down and farmers can benefit from lower electricity tariff... But the



Bengal government has not implemented it," Singh said here.

The electricity distribution company of the state government would only have to invite bids from private agencies, which set up solar panels, and then buy power from them, he said. The agency with the lowest bid would be awarded the contract. It would also be able to provide electricity at the cheapest rate, the minister

said. "There are no financial implications on the part of the state government," Singh said.

He was in the city to witness the launch of the Rs 13,000-crore PM Vishwakarma Yojana in Delhi, via the virtual mode.

Singh said West Bengal has an important role to play in the successful implementation of the scheme.

The goal of the Vishwakarma scheme is to enhance the accessibility and quality of products and services offered by traditional artisans and craftsmen.

It offers collateral-free enterprise development loans of Rs 1 lakh (first tranche for 18 months repayment), and Rs 2 lakh (second tranche for 30 months repayment), officials said.

Anurag Thakur slams INDIA bloc leaders

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Union Minister Anurag Thakur hit out at the opposition INDIA bloc on Sunday for opposing the "one nation, one election" concept and said it appears that the alliance neither has any ideology nor a leader.

He described the alliance of opposition parties as an "amalgamation of egoists and opportunists" and alleged that it is "bent upon harming Sanatan Dharma".

"Is it that the INDIA bloc does not want the time and money of the country to be saved by one nation, one election or is it afraid of facing the polls?" Thakur asked while talking to

reporters here.

The minister, who participated in various programmes organised by the Bharatiya Janata

Yuva Morcha (BJYM) here to mark Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday and distributed fruits among patients at the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital, said even after four meetings, the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) has not been able to project a leader or appoint a convenor.

He said, "This amalgamation of egoists and opportunists, which has neither any ideology nor a vision for the nation, is bent upon harming Sanatan Dharma".



Govt's schemes reflect mutual trust: Rajnath Singh

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday alleged that under previous governments loans were indiscriminately given to 'friends and relatives' of those in power, while the needs of artisans and small and cottage industries were ignored.

Addressing a gathering held here to mark the launch of PM Vishwakarma Yojana, Singh recounted various initiatives

criminate way loans were given before the BJP came to power. "Our government is not the kind in which one's friends and relatives are given large amounts of loan from banks. Our

government is the government of the people of this country. There is an unbreakable bond of trust between us and the people. We trust the public and the public also trusts us," Singh said.

Invoking Mahatma Gandhi, the defence minister said, "Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi had dreamt of economic prosperity of the country through small workers of India.

their needs. He said the BJP government has been steadfastly striving to provide the small-scale sector opportunities to develop and prosper.

"During previous governments, loans were given only to certain people. They were more kind to the people who were closely associated with the government," he alleged.

The minister claimed the country is still suffering the consequences of the indiscriminate way loans were given before the BJP came to power.

"Our government is not the kind in which one's friends and relatives are given large amounts of loan from banks. Our

government is the government of the people of this country. There is an unbreakable bond of trust between us and the people. We trust the public and the public also trusts us," Singh said.

Invoking Mahatma Gandhi, the defence minister said, "Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi had dreamt of economic prosperity of the country through small workers of India.



Anti-GPS jamming devices nearing completion

PNS ■ JAMMU

Two projects to develop devices for protecting all GPS enabled assets from jamming and identifying friendly forces during counter-terrorism operations along the LoC and hinterlands are nearing completion, officials said.

Seven major projects, including these two ventures of anti-GPS jamming and Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) devices, are part of the design and development being undertaken by IIT Jammu and CST Advanced Systems Private Limited in a joint collaboration.

"We have a collaboration with IIT Jammu in which we are working on six to seven

projects. Two of these projects are reaching completion," CST Advanced Systems General Manager Colonel (Retd) Anil J Alex said on Friday.

He said one of the two projects reaching completion is an anti-GPS jamming device, which will "save our drones, vehicles and other GPS enabled devices from the enemy" jamming them.

The anti-GPS jamming device is a small-sized, light weight, low powered device suitable to be retrofitted to protect any navigation system, officials said.

Colonel (Retd) Alex said the second project nearing completion is the IFF device, which will help the Army in detecting its own forces in the bat-



tlefield during counter-insurgency or counter-terrorism operations.

"It works on RF (Radio Frequency) mesh. It operates in any condition whether it is day or night, and even in bad

weather ow low visibility. We can detect our troops in all such situations," he said.

Designed for the integrated and complex battlefield, the IFF device identifies the friendly forces through the

use of GPS data, sensors and RF communications, the officials said.

It is aimed to identify its own forces in conventional trans International Border (IB), Line of Control (LoC) operations and in counter terrorism operations during raids, patrols, ambushes and specialised operations, they added.

The officials said the IFF device unit can be mounted or attached to personnel, vehicles, tanks, drones and helicopters.

Colonel (Retd) Alex said the CST designs and develops communication and surveillance equipment for the forces.

"We have been supplying them with equipment since 2018," he added.

HE WILL LEAVE ALLIANCE IF AMBITION NOT FULFILLED: CHIRAG

INDIA bloc doesn't trust Nitish

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ (UP)

Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) president Chirag Paswan on Sunday alleged that the opposition INDIA bloc does not trust Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar who will "definitely leave the alliance if his ambition is not fulfilled".

Interacting with reporters at the airport here, he said the term 'jungle raj' was used by Nitish Kumar during Lalu Prasad Yadav's rule in Bihar and these two leaders have been opposed to each other all along.

"Today, they have come together only out of greed for



power," Paswan said and termed the RJD-JD(U) tie-up in Bihar an "alliance riddled with contradictions ('virodhabhasi')."

"Bihar Chief Minister

Nitish Kumar betrayed the NDA, the 'Mahagathabandhan' (Grand Alliance) and everyone. This is the reason why even the so-called alliance of opposition parties -- INDIA -- does not trust him.

"Till now he has not been given the responsibility of even a coordinator, whereas Nitish ji had come into this alliance with the claim for the post of prime minister," he said.

He said, "If Nitish Kumar's ambition is not fulfilled, he will definitely leave this alliance also. The aggressive manner in which he was trying to forge this alliance is no longer visible."

FIRST COLUMN

YAMA AND NIYAMA: THE ETHICAL FOUNDATION

They provide moral compass to Ashtanga Yoga on which the entire system rests



SWAMI CHARANSHRIT

Maharishi Patanjali in his treatise Patanjali Yoga Sutra, wrote, Tado drash-tulu swarupe avastham, (Sutra 3), implying that the seer then rests or remains in his/her own nature. This exalted state can be achieved by a disciplined mind. It would be worthwhile to perceive and comprehend Sutra 4; Ashtanga Yoga, often referred to as the Eight-Limbed Path, is a comprehensive system of yoga practice that encompasses various facets of life, ranging from physical postures (asanas) to meditation and spiritual realization. At its core, Ashtanga Yoga is built upon a solid foundation of ethical and moral principles known as Yama and Niyama. These principles provide practitioners with a framework for leading a balanced, harmonious, and spiritually fulfilling life.

Yama: The Five Moral Restraints

Yama, the first limb of Ashtanga Yoga, consists of five moral restraints or ethical guidelines that help individuals navigate their interactions with the external world. These principles are:

1. Ahimsa (Non-Violence): Ahimsa teaches us to cultivate a deep sense of non-violence, not only in our actions but also in our thoughts and words. It promotes compassion and empathy towards all living beings.
2. Satya (Truthfulness): Satya encourages us to be truthful in our words and actions. It involves not only speaking the truth but also being honest with ourselves and avoiding deception.
3. Asteya (Non-Stealing): Asteya teaches us to refrain from stealing or coveting what belongs to others, both materially and emotionally. It promotes contentment and gratitude for what we have.
4. Brahmacharya (Moderation and Self-Control): Brahmacharya emphasizes moderation and self-control in our physical and emotional desires. It encourages us to channel our energy towards spiritual growth rather than indulging in excessive sensual pleasures.
5. Aparigraha (Non-Possessiveness): Aparigraha teaches us to let go of attachments and possessiveness. By reducing our attachment to material possessions, we free ourselves from unnecessary burdens and distractions.

Niyama: The Five Observances

Niyama, the second limb of Ashtanga Yoga, consists of five observances or personal disciplines that guide our inner transformation. These principles are:

1. Saucha (Purity): Saucha emphasizes cleanliness and purity, both externally and internally. It involves maintaining a clean physical environment, as well as purifying the mind and heart through practices such as meditation.
2. Santosha (Contentment): Santosha encourages contentment and acceptance of the present moment. It teaches us to find joy and satisfaction in what we have rather than constantly seeking external sources of happiness.
3. Tapas (Austerity): Tapas involves cultivating self-discipline and inner strength. It includes practices like fasting, self-reflection, and intense self-study to remove impurities and distractions from the mind.
4. Svadhyaya (Self-Study): Svadhyaya encourages the study of sacred texts, self-reflection, and introspection. It guides us on a journey of self-discovery and self-realization.
5. Ishvara Pranidhana (Surrender to a Higher Power): Ishvara Pranidhana teaches us to surrender our ego and will to a higher power or divine consciousness.

The Importance of Yama and Niyama: In Ashtanga Yoga, the principles of Yama and Niyama are the moral and ethical cornerstones upon which the entire system is built. They provide a roadmap for individuals seeking to live a life of integrity, compassion, and inner fulfillment. By incorporating these principles into their daily lives, practitioners of Ashtanga Yoga can enhance their physical health and mental well-being.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher. The views expressed are personal)



Time for 100 per cent FDI in retail sector



UTTAM GUPTA

One hundred per cent Foreign Direct Investment should be permitted to all retailers, online or offline, big or small, for the growth of this sector

During discussions with representatives of e-commerce firms and a domestic traders' body viz. Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) held on August 2, 2023, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry made a presentation on the 'fundamentals' of the proposed e-commerce policy. The policy is being deliberated since 2018.

The DPIIT highlighted seven salient features of the proposed policy: unambiguous demarcation between the marketplace model where foreign direct investment (FDI) is allowed and inventory model where FDI is prohibited; making the policy congruent with the consumer protection rules; inclusive growth of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs); enabling free and informed choice by consumers; exports promotion; determining responsibilities of e-commerce entities; and stricter compliance to regulatory measures.

The government's main objective is to harmonize the interests of three key stakeholders viz. foreign investors, MSMEs and consumers. But, the manner in which various contours of the policy have evolved since the DPIIT made its first move on FDI in e-commerce in 2016, it is unlikely that this would happen.

E-commerce is the process of selling goods and services over the Internet. In early 2016, the government allowed 100 percent FDI under the so-called marketplace model. The marketplace is a platform where vendors sell their products to consumers even as its owner merely acts as a facilitator by providing services such as booking orders, raising invoices, arranging the delivery, etc. She can't hold inventory or undertake direct selling.

The policy intent was abundantly clear. The foreign investor in the marketplace wasn't supposed to invest in inventory model. The 'demarcation' between the two models was intended when DPIIT came out with its Press Note (PN) in 2016. But, a clever bureaucrat blurred this demarcation while drafting the fine print. The PN (2016) prescribed two conditions. First, the foreign entity owning marketplace cannot permit more than 25 percent of total sales on the marketplace from one vendor or its group companies. Two, it cannot directly or indirectly influence the sale price.

In the absence of specifying as to who that vendor should be, it made way for a company linked to the owner of marketplace to get in. The latter could set up four companies (call them subsidiaries or JVs) and control 25 percent each of total sales on the platform. Contrary to the policy intent, which prohibited foreign investor in e-commerce, the fineprint did just the opposite.

Having allowed its entities to control almost all of the sales made on the marketplace, the second condition that the latter can't directly or indirectly influence the sale price is laughable.

The MSMEs who were impacted the most by this backdoor entry of Amazon, Walmart/Flipkart etc in direct selling complained to the government. In response, on December 26, 2018, the DPIIT clarified "the owner of the marketplace or its subsidiary or its joint ven-



AFTER SUCCESSFULLY STEERING THROUGH THE TURBULENT TIMES CAUSED BY CORONA PANDEMIC IN 2020-21, THE GOVERNMENT KEPT UP THE MOMENTUM OF INVESTMENT IN THE FOLLOWING TWO YEARS TO LEAD GROWTH FROM THE FRONT

(The writer is a policy analyst)

ture (JV) with an Indian company can't have ownership of the seller." Further, "a seller on the platform can't source more than 25 percent of its inventory from a firm connected with the latter." It is possible for foreign investors to circumvent the first rider by having less than 50 percent shareholding in the seller firm and arguing that they have no control (majority) over the latter. The marketplace owner can also sell his 'own' product - albeit through its wholesale arm - on the platform. All that the wholesale arm needs to ensure is to restrict supplies to the seller within the 25 percent threshold.

It isn't just a case of boundaries getting blurred. The official notes recognize and give legitimacy to the connection between marketplace owner and the seller. These don't prohibit foreign firms from keeping inventory and engage in direct selling to consumers. They are doing it at the cost of millions of small traders. For instance, only three dozen firms out of the 400,000 sellers on the Amazon platform account for 67 percent of sales on it. In this backdrop, one wonders as to how the new policy will promote inclusive growth of MSMEs.

The government is keen on making the policy congruent with the consumer protection rules. In 2020, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, issued the Consumer Protection (e-commerce) Rules, under Section 101 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019. The rules bar affiliated entities from selling

on e-commerce platforms, restrict 'flash sales,' and disallow sellers from using the name or brand associated with the marketplace e-commerce entities for the promotion of goods.

In 2021, DCA made amendments to restrict business-to-business, or B2B, sales in e-commerce and a provision to prevent an 'abuse of dominant position' by e-commerce firms.

Making the new policy compatible with these rules would require establishing a total disconnect between the owner of the platform and the seller on it. In other words, the government wants to undo all that was done by the commerce ministry earlier. It will be tantamount to a retrospective change of policy and send a wrong signal to foreign investors. No wonder, large e-commerce companies are resisting the proposed changes.

A fourth feature of the proposed policy is to enable 'free' and 'informed' choice (albeit for consumers). This would have been possible only when a large number of entities were able to sell on the platform in a 'fair' and 'non-discriminatory' manner. But, this isn't happening as the foreign major controls all the levers. Apart from its subsidiaries or joint ventures dominating the platform, even amongst others, the foreign firm decides as to 'who gets how much space and visibility'.

As for exports promotion, the MNCs are here to avail of the ever-expanding opportunities in the Indian market and our policy makers have so far helped them by providing an enabling environ-

ment. The talk of promoting export through this route (read: e-commerce) doesn't pass muster.

Fixing responsibilities of e-commerce entities assumes significance in the backdrop of multiple instances of consumers being duped. The foreign majors often get away from their responsibility to protect consumer by saying that they are 'intermediaries', hence they are not liable if any consumer is duped. The extant vague rules (2016/2018 press notes) enable them assume the role which suits them depending on the prevailing situation.

Finally, as for stricter compliance to regulatory measures, to ensure this, the rules need to be crystal clear in the very first place. When, these are vague and susceptible to varied interpretations, it will be difficult to prove violation. That apart, so far the government hasn't even mooted the idea of setting up a regulatory authority.

The present mess owes it to the very idea of marketplace which is flawed. When, the government expects foreign company to do almost everything that a retailer does viz. booking order, raising invoice, arranging delivery, accept rejection and so on, how can the former deny the latter right to sell? The way forward is to shun this idea; instead allow 100 percent FDI in retail.

In fact, the bureaucrats had already done it but in a 'subtle' way. The government should make it obvious and straightforward. Moreover, 100 percent FDI should be permitted to all retailers, online or offline, big or small for a level playing field.

India's G20 presidency has shown the way forward

The G20 Summit in Delhi has definitely given an impetus towards resolution of almost all global challenges confronting humanity as of today

India's G20 Presidency has shown the Way forward. The G20 summit in New Delhi has been truly historic in many ways, for it paved the way for the African Union to be a permanent seat holder. Hence, G20 is no longer G20, but G21 now. This is the first time that an expansion of this nature has happened since 1990 when the intergovernmental forum was established. India has emerged as a nation with an ability to bring countries together to facilitate real change in the existing world order. The joint communique, which included 83 paragraphs and not a single note of dissent, speaks volumes of how remarkable India's presidency has been; something that global leaders are already reckoning with. The inclusion of the



UMANG KOHLI

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African Union as part of the G20 has opened up possibilities for the growth of the Global South like never before. The forum has become more inclusive and multilateral emphasis on sustainability will help in giving a boost to balanced growth. Global initiatives in empowering women, digital landscape, strengthening emerging markets, green development have also been taken and will go a long way in progress of humanity and welfare of all. In a word that is highly polarised right now, this summit has helped in fostering consensus on vital subjects like climate change and war in Ukraine. India has shown remarkable astuteness in forging a consensus, something that many did not anticipate to come about during the sum-

mit. The noteworthy aspect about the summit was that it managed to throw up some important questions to the world community and humanity in general. Some of them were: Are we willing to walk the talk on sustainable development goals (SDGs)? Can the entire world work together to stop climate change, which for sure is one of the biggest challenges confronting humanity in the long run? Is the world ready to include the Global South in its policy making process? Can the entire world progress together and work with each other rather than working in silos to bring prosperity for its citizens? Will the new trade route enable countries to shun the debt trap of China? Will the transfer of technology

benefit the Global South? Have democracies across the world strengthened? And have the nations who propagate war become weaker? These are some of the questions that the G20 summit has not only raised, but also tried to address to some extent. At the G20 summit, Bharat called on leaders to work together ahead of the COP28 Summit to reduce their respective countries' carbon emissions and also support economies of the Global South to deal with the consequences of climate change. The formation of the Global Biofuel Alliance and the pledge to work together to achieve net zero carbon emissions will go a long way in dealing with climate change. The summit has definitely set the agenda for COP28. The US and the EU

have backed an ambitious plan to build an economic corridor, linking Europe with the Middle East and India via rail and sea. The launch of the corridor involving Saudi Arabia, UAE, the US and India is a long awaited trade route which works in the direction of One Earth. It will help counter China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and also the nation's effort to practice debt-trap diplomacy. The corridor will definitely help in connecting the Global South with the western world and it will also foster prosperity for the world. The inclusion of the African Union as a permanent G20 member has huge strategic and geopolitical ramifications. Africa is potentially the next global growth hub, however, it had little say at the glob-

al high table. It is this imbalance that has now been addressed. This is also a huge win for India, as it looks to counterbalance the Chinese outreach and influence in Africa. India also intends to transfer technology of digital payments to the African subcontinent. This looks like a giant step towards inclusion of Africa and the first step towards equitable distribution of resources among the various stakeholders. This statement is a vision for the future, a vision for a better world. Other SDGs like health and gender equality were also mulled over and direction to achieve them was deliberated upon. India's G20 Presidency focused on consolidating the existing digital health initia-

tives and fostering equity in healthcare by incorporating tools like telemedicine and artificial intelligence. As per the agenda of G20 Presidency, women must be at the centrestage of the development stories, as women are not just passive subjects, but agents, collaborators and decision-makers in the transformative socio-economic change. This is a change from the past. The G20 summit in Delhi has definitely given an impetus towards resolution of global challenges confronting humanity, even if many questions about their complete resolution remain unanswered. A roadmap has been given and the direction has been shown, it remains to be seen if the world is willing to walk on this road.

MONEY MATTERS

Finmin seeks applications for post of whole time IRDAI Member

The finance ministry has invited applications for the post of Whole Time Member (Distribution) at insurance regulator Irdai. The applicant should preferably have at least 25 years of experience in the relevant area with a minimum of three years experience at a senior level, the Department of Financial Services said in an advertisement. The applicant should not be below the rank of a Chief General Manager of the Reserve Bank of India or equivalent that place in other financial institutions or regulatory bodies, it said. The department, under the finance ministry, said the applicant should have a minimum of two years of residual service as of the date of vacancy, that is March 4, 2024, and the applicant's age should not exceed 60 years on the said date. The term of the office of the member will be in accordance with the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act. No person will hold the office of the Whole Time Member after attaining the age of 62 years, it added.



Odisha govt signs MoU with Gopalpur Port for expansion

The Odisha government signed an MoU with Gopalpur Port for further development and expansion of the facility in Ganjam district, an official said. The Odisha government on Saturday handed over more than 119 acres of land to Gopalpur Port after the signing of the MoU. The MoU was signed by Director Ports and Inland Waterway Transport, Commerce and Transport department, Padmalochan Rou and CEO, Gopalpur Port Private Limited in the presence of Commerce and Transport minister Tukuni Sahu on Saturday. The Gopalpur Port was operated by the Odisha government as a seasonal lighterage Port from 1986-87. The Port was awarded to Gopalpur Ports Private Limited for transforming it into an all-weather direct berthing port in PPP mode. The Concession Agreement between the Odisha government and Gopalpur Ports Private Limited was signed on September 14, 2006.



CBI arrests Bridge and Roof Company chairman's secretary

The CBI has arrested the executive secretary to the CMD of Bridge and Roof Company (India) Limited (BRIL), a PSU, and six others in connection with the alleged bribery of Rs 20 lakh to favour a Gujarat-based firm to bag a Rs 56-crore tender for an Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS) in Odisha, officials said on Sunday. Asish Razdan, the executive secretary to the chairman and managing director of BRIL, Hetal Kumar Pravinchandra Rajyaguru, the proprietor of a Rajkot-based private firm, and five others -- Shashank Kumar Jain, Somesh Chandra, Veer Thakkar, Rajiv Ranjan and Tarang Agarwal -- have so far been arrested in the case, they said. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had received information from a source that Kolkata-based middleman Jain, allegedly working for BRIL officials, asked his co-conspirators Chandra and Ranjan to find a suitable party for the EMRS project, according to the FIR.



India, Brazil begin talks to resolve sugar-related issue

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and Brazil have started talks to mutually resolve a sugar related trade dispute at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and as part of the solution the South American nation may share ethanol production technology with New Delhi, an official said.

Brazil is the largest producer of sugarcane and ethanol in the world. It is also a leader in the technology used for ethanol production.

"Few rounds of talks have been held as part of our efforts to resolve the dispute. We have also held inter-ministerial meetings here. Brazil is saying that they will share with us technology for ethanol (production). It is a positive thing," the official said.

Ethanol is used to blend with oil to power vehicles. Use of ethanol, extracted from sugarcane as well as broken rice and other agri produce, will help the world's third largest oil consumer and importing



country cut its reliance on overseas shipments. India currently is 85 per cent dependent on imports for meeting its oil needs. Also, it cuts carbon emissions. There is a target of 20 per cent ethanol blended petrol by 2025.

India would also have to offer something as part of the mutually agreed solution (MAS) to resolve the dispute at the Geneva-based multi-lateral body. Recently India and the US have ended six trade disputes and have also agreed to terminate the seventh case. As

part of the solution, while New Delhi removed retaliatory duties on 8 American products like apples and walnuts, the US is providing market access to Indian steel and aluminium products without levying extra duties.

The official said that India is also following a similar process for other complainants of the sugar dispute at the WTO.

In 2019, Brazil, Australia and Guatemala dragged India into the WTO's dispute settlement mechanism alleging that New Delhi's sugar subsidies to

farmers are inconsistent with global trade rules. A WTO dispute settlement panel on December 14, 2021, ruled that India's support measures for the sugar sector are inconsistent with the global trade norms.

In January 2022, India appealed against the panel's ruling at the WTO's appellate body, which is the final authority to pass rulings against such disputes. The appellate body, however, is not functioning due to differences in the countries on appointments of members of the body. Brazil is the largest producer and exporter of sugar in the world. India is the world's second-largest producer.

Brazil, Australia and Guatemala, which are members of the WTO, had complained that India's support measures to sugarcane producers exceed the de minimis level of 10 per cent of the total value of sugarcane production, which according to them was inconsistent with the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture.



Sidbi to raise Rs 10,000 cr from rights issue

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Small Industries Development Bank of India (Sidbi), which refinances SME loans, plans to float a Rs 10,000-crore rights issue next fiscal to expand its equity capital as it expects to grow assets to Rs 5 lakh crore by March 2024 from about Rs 4 lakh crore in March 2023, a top official has said.

The central government owns 20.8 per cent in Sidbi, while State Bank of India holds 15.65 per cent and Life Insurance Corporation 13.33 per cent. The rest of the equity is held by other public financial institutions and banks. The shareholders will subscribe to the proposed rights issue.

The lender's loan growth optimism comes from the demand for direct financing that is growing by leaps and bounds, which two years ago was only 7 per cent.

Production of 40 C295 transport aircraft in India will be 'game-changer'

PNS ■ SEVILLE (SPAIN)

The production of 40 Airbus C295 medium tactical transport aircraft in India will be a 'game changer' as it would facilitate the creation of a world-class aerospace ecosystem in the country that would help in manufacturing other planes in the long-run, Indian Ambassador to Spain Dinesh K Patnaik said here.

The Indian Air Force received the first C295 aircraft on Wednesday, two years after New Delhi sealed a Rs 21,935-crore deal with Airbus Defence and Space to procure the planes.

Under the deal, Airbus will deliver the first 16 aircraft in 'fly-away' condition from its final assembly line in Seville by 2025 and the subsequent 40 aircraft will be manufactured and assembled by Tata Advanced Systems (TASL) in India as part of an industrial partnership between the two companies.

"The C295 project will be a game-changer project as it

will create a world-class aerospace ecosystem in India," Patnaik told PTI in an interview.

The first 'Make in India' C295 is set to come out of a production facility in Vadodra in September 2026 and the final aircraft is expected to be delivered to the IAF by August 2031.

It will be the first military aircraft to be produced in India by a private consortium.

Officials said India is looking at procuring more C295 aircraft to replace the Indian Air Force's ageing transport fleet.

After Airbus handed over the first plane to the IAF, Patnaik said the C295 project is not only about procurement of the aircraft but it carries much more significance in terms of the creation of an aerospace eco-system in India.

"We still do not have a private aerospace eco-system in India whereas all major countries have such ecosystems.

Nine of top-10 firms together add Rs 1.80L cr in mcap; TCS biggest winner

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The combined market valuation of nine of the top-10 most valued firms rallied by Rs 1,80,788.99 crore last week, amid an overall buoyant trend in equities, with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) emerging as the biggest gainer.

Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 1,239.72 points or 1.86 per cent. The 30-share BSE Sensex rallied for the 11th day running on Friday.

The 30-share BSE benchmark had jumped 319.63 points or 0.47 per cent to settle at a record closing of 67,838.63 on Friday.

During the day, it rallied 408.23 points or 0.60 per cent to hit its fresh all-time intra-day high of 67,927.23.

Hindustan Unilever Limited was the only laggard from the top-10 pack. The list of winners had Reliance Industries Limited, TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Infosys, ITC, State Bank of India, Bharti Airtel and Bajaj Finance.

Closely monitoring demand for battery electric vehicles: JLR India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Jaguar Land Rover is closely monitoring the demand for battery electric vehicles in India and depending upon the emerging scenario will 'strategise' the entry of more models into the country, according to a top company executive.

In an interaction with PTI, Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) India Managing Director Rajan Amba said the domestic market is distinct in its demands for a variety of factors. "And as such we are closely monitoring demand for battery electric vehicles (BEVs). As luxury consumers become more discerning in their choices and adoption of new technology, we are committed to delivering exceptional vehicles that exceed their expectations along these lines," he noted.

The company currently sells just one electric model -- Jaguar I-Pace -- in the country. Globally, JLR will open bookings for the new Range Rover BEV by end of this year, built upon the success of existing modular longitudinal architecture (MLA), which currently underpins the ICE (internal combustion engine) Range Rover and Range Rover Sport models.

The MLA platform gives the company the flexibility to produce ICE, hybrid, and BEV Range Rovers as required, tailored to meet the demands of different markets, Amba noted.

Diesel sales fall in September, petrol consumption up



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Diesel sales in India fell for the second straight month in September as rains dampened demand and slowed industrial activity in some parts of the country, preliminary data of state-owned firms showed.

While diesel sales by three state-owned fuel retailers fell year-on-year in the first half of September, petrol sales were up marginally.

Consumption of diesel, the most consumed fuel in the country accounting for about two-fifths of the demand, fell 5.8 per cent to 2.72 million tonnes between September 1 and 15, compared to the year-ago period. Consumption had fallen by a similar proportion in the first half of August.

Month-on-month sales were up 0.9 per cent, when compared with 2.7 million tonnes of diesel consumed in the first half of August.

Diesel sales typically fall in monsoon months as rains lower demand in the agriculture sector which uses the fuel for irrigation, harvesting and transportation. Also, rains slow vehicular movements.

Consumption of diesel had soared 6.7 per cent and 9.3 per cent in April and May, respectively as agriculture demand picked up and cars yanked up air-conditioning to beat the summer heat. It started to taper in the second half of June after the monsoon set in. It fell in the first half of July but picked up in the second fortnight of that month.

Petrol sales were up 1.2 per cent to 1.3 million tonnes in the first fortnight of September, when compared with the same period last year.

Consumption had dropped 10.5 per cent in the first fortnight of July but picked up in the latter half. It had fallen by 8 per cent in the first half of August. Sales in the first half of September were up 8.8 per cent month-on-month, the data showed.

India's economy has demonstrated remarkable resilience and is likely to have surpassed the performance of most major economies during the first half of 2023. This is helping fuel demand grow.

NCLAT says IBC not a recovery mechanism

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code is "not a recovery mechanism", observed the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal, while dismissing a plea against United Telecoms Ltd filed by one of its operational creditors. This is the second such observation from the Chennai bench of the insolvency appellate tribunal this month, after declining to entertain the petition from operational creditors.

Earlier, it had refused to entertain an insolvency petition against Wipro Ltd after observing that the bankruptcy law cannot be used as a means to recover debt against solvent companies.

Circular Design Challenge announces worldwide expansion

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the aim to give a global platform to fashion design talent across the world, Circular Design Challenge (CDC) has announced its worldwide expansion that culminates at the upcoming season of Lakm Fashion Week in association with FDCI (Fashion Design Council of India).

"Presented by R|Elan, the next-gen fabric brand of India's largest conglomerate Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), in association with the United Nations in India, CDC aims towards a greener and more sustainable future globally by promoting the eco-conscious creatives of the fashion industry," a company statement said.



Five years ago, RIL pioneered the concept of the Circular Design Challenge, driven by a vision to raise consciousness for sustainability and circular practices across every facet of the fashion industry. This endeavour saw partnership between RIL, the UN in India, and Lakm Fashion Week which strive to

across the UK, EU, and APAC regions, extending invitations to designers around the world.

Hemant D Sharma, Sector Head - Polyester, RIL said, "The CDC has nurtured, mentored, and promoted environmental champions leading circular and innovative collections using sustainable and recycled materials. The Challenge has established itself as the largest sustainable fashion award in India.

The initiative has played a crucial role in promoting circularity and sustainability in the Indian fashion industry, and after four editions in India, we are now going international to promote sustainability, and circular economy adoption globally".

FPIs take out Rs 4,800 cr from equities

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have pulled out close to Rs 4,800 crore from equities in the first fortnight of September on rising US bond yields, a stronger dollar, and concerns over global economic growth.

Before the outflow, FPIs were incessantly buying Indian equities in the last six months from March to August and brought in Rs 1.74 lakh crore during the period.

In the coming days, FPIs are likely to press sale as the market is at record highs and valuations are high, V K Vijayakumar, Chief



Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said. "With high bond yields in the US (the 10-year is at 4.28 per cent) and the dollar index above 105, FPIs are likely to sell more," he added.

According to the data with the depositories, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) pulled out a net

sum of Rs 4,768 crore from the equities so far this month (till September 15). This figure includes bulk deals and investments through the primary market. This came after FPI investment in equities had hit a four-month low of Rs 12,262 crore in August.

"The net outflow (in September) was mainly due to uncertainties surrounding the global interest rate landscape, particularly in the United States, and concerns regarding global economic growth," Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research, Morningstar India, said.



Indian entrepreneur's UK start-up using AI to transform services

PNS ■ LONDON

An Indian entrepreneur's new start-up is sparking worldwide investor interest as among the first companies of its kind globally to offer consumers the option to book plumbers, electricians and other services using its unique conversational artificial intelligence (AI) software.

Opened for a funding round recently, Anuj Gupta's GreenVan uses a simple WhatsApp interface. It is designed as an Amazon of Services' offering that intends to transform the way people book essential tasks online.

It was born out of Gupta's own experience of relocating from the US to the UK around five years ago and finding the experience of sourcing reliable trade people a rather cumbersome word-

of-mouth process.

"We were often left in the lurch when chasing trades people and were hit with a system that was too idiosyncratic," Gupta, in his mid-40s, told PTI in an interview.

"As I delved deeper into the industry, I could only find more and more problems largely because 87 per cent of it was driven by mom-and-pop shops which is classically one owner and one or two members of staff. It's very, very fragmented, more so than even the mini cab industry in the pre-Uber days," he said.

His research showed that he had hit upon a highly lucrative marketplace with immense profits, despite all the inefficiencies. In the UK, it is estimated as a USD 120 billion market with USD 20 billion of profits, he said.

SBI to send chocolates to borrowers who may default

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The nation's largest lender State Bank of India is adopting a novel way to ensure timely repayments, especially by its retail borrowers, by greeting those likely to default on monthly installments with a pack of chocolates.

According to the bank, it has been found that a borrower who is planning to default will not answer a reminder call from the bank. So the best way is to meet them at their homes unannounced.

The move, aimed at ensuring better collections, comes amidst rising level of retail

lending in the system coupled with increasing delinquency levels on the back of the upward movement in the interest rates.

SBI's retail loan book grew over 16.46 per cent to Rs 12,04,279 crore in the June 2023 quarter from Rs 10,34,111 crore in the year-ago period, making it the largest asset class for the lender whose total book stood at Rs 33,03,731 crore, growing at 13.9 per cent on-year.

In fact for the entire system, the double-digit loan growth of around 16 per cent has been led by retail loans only.

"With two fintechs which



use artificial intelligence, we are piloting a novel way of reminding our retail borrowers of their repayment obligations. While one is doing

conciliation with borrowers, the other is alerting us on the propensity of a borrower to default. And to such borrowers who are likely to default,

the representatives from this fintech will visit them, carrying a pack of chocolates for each of them, and remind them of the forthcoming EMIs," Ashwini Kumar Tewari, managing director in-charge of risk, compliance and stressed assets at SBI, said here over the weekend.

According to Tewari, this novel method of carrying a pack of chocolates and personally visiting them is adopted because it has been found that a borrower who is planning to default will not answer a reminder call from the bank. So the best way is to meet them at their own homes

unannounced and surprise them. And so far, the success rate has been overwhelming, he said.

Tewari refused to name the fintechs saying the move is just at the pilot stage and has been put into place just about 15 days back and "if successful, we will formally announce it".

"We are also talking to a few other fintechs to improve our collection efficiencies and hopefully by the end of the year, we will have formally tied up with at least half of them," he said, adding, "we want to continue the pilot for at least four to five months."



KAVITA SETH

It's a 'big vardan' that independent singles are being used in the films

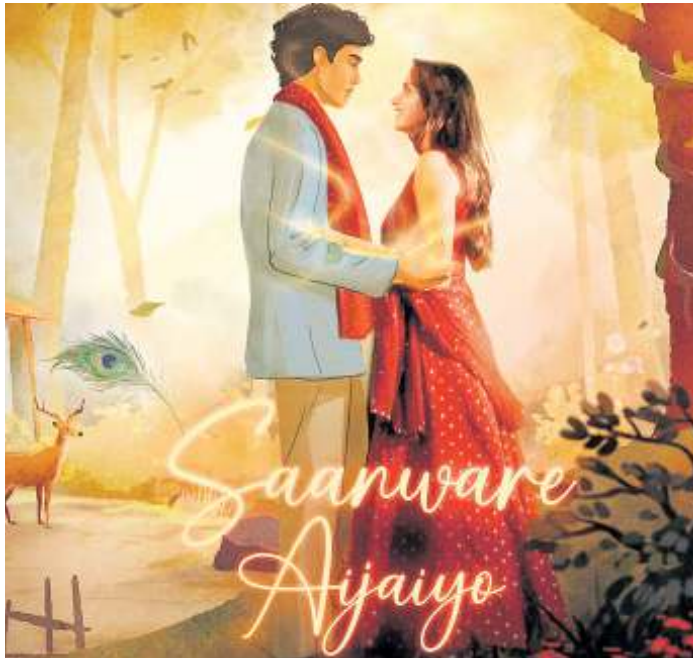
TEJAL SINHA

Music—something that touches us emotionally where words alone can't. Well, we've heard of it so many times; nothing new. But for many, music is a spiritual 'Sadhana'. Similar is the case for singer Kavita Seth, known for her soulful tracks including *Iktara*, *Jeete Hain Chal*, *Rangisaari*, and *Tum Hi Ho Bandhu*, to name a few. To her, music has always been a 'Sadhana', and every time that she sits down to sing, she always hopes from God that she can sing with honesty, heal people with her music, and be an aid for people to get them away from their difficulties. No doubt, to date, her songs have been more like meditations that dive into the beauty of the song.

Rattle on her music, and one of the aspects we can think of is that she's been one of the artists who does not make music just for the sake of it, and every time that she comes with a song, it's a BANG! The vocalist has been one of those in the industry who prefers quality over quantity. In fact, she reveals that there have also been songs that she's rejected. "The songs or poetry that I myself don't feel connected to, I don't sing them," enthuses the *Iktara* singer, adding, "Not that it's bad or something, but I don't feel connect-

ed to them. But with the ones that I am connected to, I feel that music is something that helps you connect to the divine. With whatever song or poetry that I am connected to, that in itself goes and reaches heights that even I'm not aware of. But it's just the energy jisko eeshwar bolo, param satta kuch bhi naam de sakte ho, uske saath jab connect ho jaate ho, so all those songs connect through different energy and that reaches the ones who'd need it, and this is what I believe."

The chanteuse, along with her son Kanishk Seth, recently released their new track, *Saanware Aajaiyo*. The musical composition is a touching tribute to the enduring love that Radha and Krishna shared, deftly fusing tradition with modern sensibilities. This soulful track was recently released on her birthday, September 14, and this could be nothing more than special for the duo. *Saanware Aajaiyo* is a beautiful traditional bandish, which she used to hum, and then the mom-son duo decided to work on this song. "I wanted even Kanishk to sing this song, so I immediately wrote a poem for him that he sang, 'Radha gori aai jaaiyo', which turned out really well. Luckily, both the audio and video complement each other, making it a masterpiece. I hope the energy of this song also heals people and brings 'Sukoon'. This is how we imagine Radha Krishna in this modern era; that's a story that we try to bring out through this. I feel the main thing is the connection, jisme aap connection feel karte ho. That song itself goes kahan se kahan tak in a way that you can't imagine. Sometimes when you're like, I want to make 10 to 15 songs and want to work in bulk, that becomes a work,



and the artistic element of it fades away and the emotions go away from it. It becomes like you have a body but without a soul."

It is no surprise that independent music has created a niche for itself in the Indian music market. So much so that, today, many independent singles are being used in films too. For instance, her own single, *Rangisaari*. And she feels it's like a 'big vardan' that singles are being used in films.

"When we released *Rangi Saari* initially, it was already a hit, and when it went to the movies, it became a massive hit. If the audience likes independent music, and when it goes to the films, it reaches the masses, which is a very good sign for

an artist, so it's going to be a very good thing if more of our songs go that way (she laughs)."

She further goes on to highlight how important it is for one to do their 'Riyaz', and work on their 'Sur', to reach the audience.

While the industry has had several duos, Kavita and Kanishk have been the first mom-son duo to create a history of their own. As we asked her, she just laughed out loud and said, "Kya Kahein Hum toh! Socha nahi tha, but we are creating history with every song (she giggles). Even though we never thought that we would work together like this, it's an amazing bond with Kanishk, and so we are making so many songs and releasing them, and

the biggest thing is that people love this bond. There's no such bond in the industry. So we are enjoying it and people like it; we are thankful for that."

Folk music has been growing in its own way lately. In fact, today, fusion has become a much better option, which has helped the original folk music reach the ears of new generations as well. And agreeing to the same, she said, "According to me, folk music has been growing of late and coming forward. For instance, Mame Khan! He's become such a big artist, gaining all the fame and name I am just talking about Rajasthani folk music; otherwise, in UP folk music, Malini Awasthi, and in every folk music, there are at least one or two big names, so everyone is working on it and people are loving it, and that's what I feel. Yeah, when you add fusion to it, you also attract a young audience, but still, people love folk music the way it is. I just hope, as much as it is meant to come forward, it should, and people give it the importance that it deserves because that is our root."

There have been several reports that claim that she began turning down dance numbers when you were flooded with them after the success of *Tumhi Ho Bandhu* (Cocktail 2012) because you weren't comfortable with their lyrics and the innuendos in them. As a composer, are there any deal-breakers? She gleefully laughed and said, "Back then, when I refused to sing dance numbers, it was nothing else but poetry, and it has always been that for me. If there's good poetry and if they try to create it in a dance number, I would definitely sing. Even if I get to compose, I'd surely do it with nice poetry."

Sonal Joshi: My mum happened to mention Shilpa Shetty for the role

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Debutant director Sonal Joshi's upcoming film *Sukhee* is about to release featuring the star Shilpa Shetty Kundra. The film perfectly harnesses the feeling of her character of a tired mom who takes a vacation from her routine life to rediscover her zest for life into a groovy and positive, with a filmy touch of life. And, let's be honest! With a movie like this self-care is just sometimes not enough to fix the burnout wives go to. So Shilpa just packs her bag and goes for a reunion according to the plot of the movie. We needed some more interesting details and the director was on board with us for the same.

She reports, "Feeling extremely 'sukhee' on the professional front. I have managed to put so many tiny pieces of my aspirations together and this gigantic dream of mine is coming on celluloid now. As a filmmaker, I usually don't think of casting superstars for the sake of not compromising on originality. So for *Sukhee*, I shared a script narration with my mum and she's always busy watching *India's Got Talent*. She happened to mention Shilpa. I gave a thought, and she was the only actress I gave a narration to and she was seeing eye to eye with me."

She is making this movie to make a point—stop putting pressure on women. They have a life of their own too! Sonal concurs stay-at-home moms don't even have a Sunday to themselves. Just get out of that mental labor. She continued, "I see a lot of my mother in the story. And I like the feel-good genres from childhood. It was really important for Shilpa



Shetty to get into the character's psyche or we would have broken down."

Now Kusha and she go a long way because the director narrated, "We were college friends. We did nukkad natak together! With this movie, we were reconnecting again and sharing that bond for fine arts. The bonding got so easier with Shilpa's badass attitude, and Kusha's jokes. Because it's my first film, even the challenges seemed very fond to me. This is never going to happen again."

The director is hoping she hears those meaningful conversations happening post her release—for instance, help yourself first. Self-care is not selfish, women. It's okay to move away from mundane activities and discover what you used to be passionate about.

"Women empowerment was in my mind while writing the script for *Sukhee*. Women shouldn't be judged! Let them prioritize themselves," added the director.



Debutant director Sonal Joshi, who is all excited about her upcoming film *Sukhee*, that's already making the right noise, gets candid with *The Pioneer*, and shares some interesting insights about the film.

Upgrading your bedroom decor that express your style

The bedroom is the most significant area of a home since it provides a haven where one can relax, find energy, and find comfort despite the demanding needs of daily life. It is a place where one may express their individual tastes in fashion, wishes, and level of comfort, making the choice of suitable bedroom furniture design all the more important. A good night's sleep is crucial to overall wellbeing, and the correct bedroom furniture design may improve the room's beauty as well as function. Whether it is minimalist, contemporary, or classic, each person's choice of furniture expresses their taste and individuality.

Tejpal Singh Shekhawat, Founder & CEO, of Kalyanam Furniture, shares the best bedroom furniture ideas can give your room vitality and let you express your personal style.

BED: Let's start with the bed, which is the focal point of every bedroom. The appropriate bed design may establish the mood for the entire room, whether you like a low floor design that delivers a contemporary charm or a solid wood master bed that adds timeless culture. Contrarily, upholstered beds offer a touch of velvety luxury and a variety of design alternatives to suit



your tastes. Your bedroom will undoubtedly transform into the space of your dreams with the help of these bed designs.

OTTOMAN: The ottoman comes to the aid of individuals looking for cosy and defining pieces for modest bedroom designs. These adaptable pieces serve as both seating and a platform at different times of the day. Ottomans are a practical way to express your style while also saving space, thanks to the variety of designs and materials available.

DIVAN BEDS: Divan beds are the ideal bedroom furni-

ture style to have if you have a large bedroom to furnish. Divan beds blend practicality and aesthetics with their cosy appeal and generous storage space below. A divan bed can help you create a regal ambience by giving your bedroom a sense of cosy function in addition to its majestic appearance.

BEDSIDE TABLES: Bedside tables are a perfect example of how the devil is in the details. These extremely practical yet understated additions enhance the aesthetics and utility of your bedroom while preventing clutter from being visible. Bedside tables, which come in a variety of styles and

materials, complement your mattress well by adding personality and convenience. Place your bedtime necessities nearby, and to finish the appearance, garnish these tables with chic accessories.

DRESSING TABLE: In addition to enhancing the overall character of your bedroom, a dressing table is a necessary piece of furniture for personal care. As you decorate and arrange your bedroom around this magnificent piece of bedroom furniture, use your imagination. Dressing tables represent your personality in addition to providing storage for your requirements for looking good.

CABINETS AND SIDE STORAGE: Regardless of the size of your bedroom, sideboards and cabinets can significantly alter the space. They offer a clever substitute for full-size wardrobes for smaller rooms, keeping your space clutter-free while maximising storage. Cabinets and sideboards provide larger bedrooms with a hint of complexity and serve as the decor's centrepiece. With these multipurpose bedroom furniture designs, embrace the potential of effective organisation and space optimisation.





Sudha Naidu



Mamta Trivedi



Anisha



Padmavathi



Indu Agarwal



Sneha Chowdary

Mamta Trivedi, founder of Mrs India Telangana, unveiled the crown of its 2023 grand finale, which will be held on September 24. The theme of the event for 2023 is promoting handlooms, and supporting weavers.



Priyanka



Pooja



Rihana



Sulagna



Zeeniya



Mariyam

Actress Kamakshi Bhaskarla, along with the organizer of Sutraa fashion and lifestyle exhibition Umesh Madhyan, and other fashion enthusiasts, graced the inauguration of its 3-day Dussehra, and Ganapati special exhibition. The exhibition will end today (September 18), at HICC- Novotel.



Arjuna Awardees, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty join hands with PNB MetLife JBC as Mentors, for its upcoming PNB MetLife Junior Badminton Championship 2023 (JBC), which will be hosted across 10 cities in India.

LISTINGS

Unacademy launches UNSAT 2023

Unacademy, India's largest learning platform announced the third edition of the Unacademy National Scholarship Admission Test (UNSAT), its biggest scholarship test supporting the growing aspirations of IIT JEE and NEET UG Learners. It kicked off its launch in Hyderabad, on September 8, providing students with an unparalleled opportunity to excel in their career dreams of cracking NEET and JEE. Key Features of UNSAT 2023: **Exam Dates:** 1st, 8th, and 15th October (Two Slots: 1 - 2 PM & 6 - 7 PM) **Exam Mode:** Online & Offline **Eligibility Criteria:** Class 9 to 12, 12th passout IIT & NEET Aspirants **Exam Fee:** Online - Free, Offline - Rs. 100 **Result Declaration:** 2nd November 2023 For more details about UNSAT 2023, exam specifics, and registration details, please visit <https://unsat.unacademy.com/>.

Arzoo unveils Gostor.com

Retail tech platform Arzoo strengthens its vertical play in consumer durable space with the launch of GoStor.com, making home appliances e-commerce more customer friendly. With the festive season approaching, this launch will help Arzoo establish a seamless connection between Indian shoppers and offline retailers. GoStor.com embeds the unique in-store experience in its platform that's designed for Home Appliances buying journey. The platform allows consumers to get expert assistance and product demonstration via live video to make informed purchase decisions with right product.

HTech brings HONOR90 5G in India

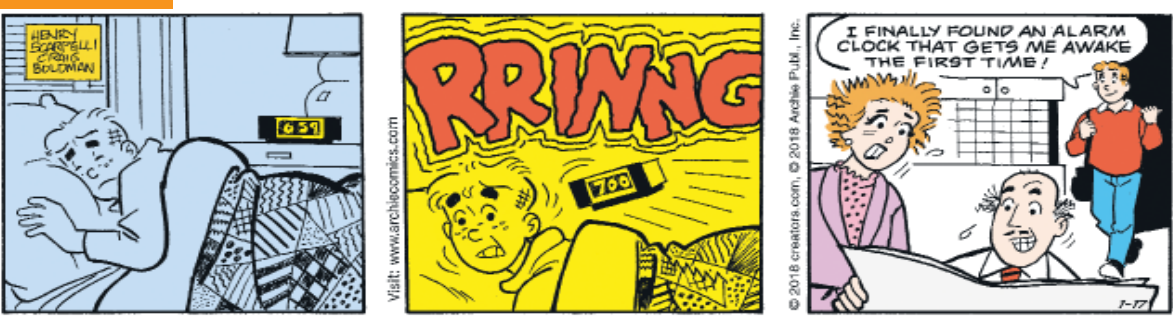
HTech, a comprehensive solutions provider, announced the launch of HONOR 90 5G in India. Equipped with a stunning 200MP Main Camera featuring AI Vlog Master and industry-leading Quad-Curved Floating Display with 3840 Hz PWM Dimming technology, the HONOR 90 5G packs groundbreaking hardware and software into one device to empower the always-on generation with personalised experiences and human-centric solutions. Market availability HONOR 90 5G will be available for sale in three colors - Emerald Green, Diamond Silver and Midnight Black from today (18th September, 2023 12 Noon) onwards across Amazon and retail channels. The smartphone will come in two storage variants 8+256 GB and 12+512 GB priced at INR 37,999 and INR 39,999 respectively.

Yoga Bar has a brand-new baby- 'Yoga Baby'


Yoga Bar is expanding its differentiated product portfolio with a heart-warming addition to their product family. Say hello to Yoga Baby - a wholesome new range, thoughtfully crafted to meet the unique nutritional needs of the youngest members of families. This new range of delectable porridge mixes comes in five variants - Sprouted Ragi & Mango, Sprouted Ragi Strawberry, Sprouted Ragi, Saffron & Oats and Oats, Dates & Millets. Most parents, have experienced that magical moment when focus shifts from "me" to "my kid." The desire to provide the best care supersedes their own wants and needs, and the attention naturally goes towards the well-being of their little ones. In the journey of keeping a child healthy, happy, and growing, numerous factors come into play.

FUN


ARCHIE



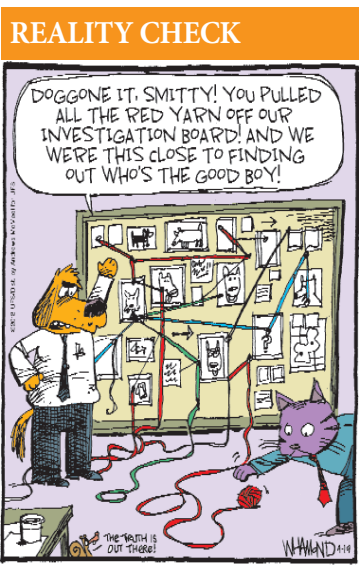
CALVIN AND HOBBS




GARFIELD



REALITY CHECK




SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8		9		10
			11	
			12	
13				
14		15	16	17
				18
19				

NANCY



SUDOKU

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


Yesterday's solution

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

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.

GINGER MEGGS



ACROSS

6 Television advertisement
8 Group of eight
10 A black and white animal in China
13 A kind of small glass tube for showing temperatures
14 Time of darkness
17 Comes to a standstill
19 Rang up

DOWN

1 Mislead
2 Leave out
3 Put paper around something
4 A large African cat
5 A very large seabird
7 Lucky

9 Our planet
11 Watchful, ready for anything that might happen
12 Plaything
15 A very strong wind
16 Adhesive strip
17 Shortly
18 Unlock

SOLUTION

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



Harsha Sai starrer *Mega's* teaser hits the right cord

Popular YouTuber and philanthropist Harsha Sai who has millions of followers on social media is making his big screen debut with a film being made at a Pan India level. Written and directed by Harsha Sai himself, the film is produced by Mitraaw under the banner of Shree Pictures. Mitraaw is also the heroine of the movie. Padavala Balachandra is the co-producer, while Kalvakuntla Vamshidhar Rao presents the film. On Sunday, the makers hold a press meet to announce the film's title through a teaser. This Pan India movie is mounted on a big scale and is titled interestingly, *Mega* with a tagline- Lo Don. The teaser introduces us to the premise of the movie.

The teaser begins with a doctor explaining to his driver how hazardous a massive bell hanging there is. The protagonist was tied

with ropes with a massive crowd around him. If a person is tied and hung upside down and when the bell rings, he will die of brain injury. But the protagonist never admits defeat. Comparing the hero to a whale, it is said that he has the force of 100 lions. He is introduced as Mega Lo Don. The story is about a kingly man who shakes a sea full of monsters. His intelligence is immense.

Harsha Sai is given enough elevations in the teaser and we can assume the power of the character through it. The youngster makes a great impression on his debut. The person who takes up the task of killing the protagonist appears like an alien. Overall, the teaser blows our minds for the concept and presentation.

While speaking at the teaser launch event, co-producer Balachandra said, "We thank CM KCR's brother's son Kalvakuntla

Vamshidhar Rao garu for launching the teaser. I would like to thank my entire team for all the support."

Producer Mitraaw said, "This wouldn't have happened without the support of Kalvakuntla Shashidhar Rao garu. I learned a lot during the making of this movie. It started as a small idea. But the scale increased as it was developed into a full script. We got the opportunity to work with DOP Karthik Palani who worked for Adipurush. We're blessed enough to have such a brilliant technical team. It's a fortunate thing for Shree Pictures to present your real hero Harsha Sai as a reel hero. I wish he would win your hearts with the movie."

Hero and director Harsha Sai said, "When I started from the hotel, a person asked me to show the teaser before its launch. After watching the teaser, he asked me why I chose cinema. We can't

remember the lessons we studied in school. But we always remember the stories we heard and the movies we watched in childhood. Human brains are designed to remember stories, nothing else. The biggest medium at present to narrate stories is cinema. That's the reason for me to choose the cinema. We're using this medium to interact with people. It started one year ago. An individual told me that I would earn more money if I could make successful movies. It's true. If I want to give more, I need more money. The other reason for me to do movies is to encourage and young talent. I hope you all liked the title teaser. Karthik Palani's cinematography and Anji master's fights are exceptional." Karthik Palani handles the cinematography, while Vikas Badisa scores the music for this high-budget entertainer which will arrive in cinemas in 2024.

KALKI 2898 AD TO HIT CINEMAS IN MAY 2024

The upcoming sci-fi *Kalki 2898 AD* stars Prabhas in the lead. The buzz is that the film will hit the cinemas in May 2024. Vyjayanthi Movies is in the news for its decision to take legal action against the VFX company responsible for a recent Prabhas image leak. Producer C Aswini Dutt

wants to teach the company a lesson, considering the astronomical stakes involved. He doesn't want to take the leak lightly. Another pan-India film fell victim to a recent leak as a song from Ram Charan's *Game Changer* surfaced on the internet. Recently, producer Dil Raju lodged a police complaint

against the suspect who did the mischief. Coming back to Prabhas' movie, the film is directed by Nag Ashwin. Starring Deepika Padukone, Amitabh Bachchan and Kamal Haasan in other roles, the film also features Dulquer Salmaan in a special role, which has not been made official so far.



After Abhishek Nama, Natti Kumar pick out on VD

When producer Abhishek Nama openly tweeted to hero Vijay Devarakonda regarding the losses of *Dear Comrade*, a film that is distributed by Abhishek Pictures in Nizam, the hero's fans have

trolled the distributor for seeking recovery from the hero rather than the producer of that film. In fact, this happened after Vijay D announced that he would share Rs. 1 crore from his remuneration to 100 families that need it. Here comes another producer-distributor taking the same stand as Abhishek Nama.

"Our Film Industry is accustomed to the habit of 'use and throw' and everyone is getting a taste of it these days. Films like *Liger*, and *Dear Comrade* caused huge losses to distribu-

tors, and even *Kushi* did 3 crores loss in the Vizag area. If hero Vijay Devarakonda garu has real concerns, he should first think about saving his distributors but not his fans. No matter how much you act in the film, you need distributors and exhibitors to take the film to the audience" said Natti Kumar on record today. In the wake of Devarakonda distributing the cheques of 1 lakh to 100 families the other day, these comments made by Natti Kumar have gained attention. While Vijay's father levelled 'blackmail' comments on Abhishek Nama earlier, we have to see if they will respond to Natti Kumar's demands as well. On the whole, it looks like distributors who lost money with these big-ticket movies are unhappy with the way producers and star heroes are treating them.



'I will undoubtedly consider making a sequel,' said director Atlee on *Jawan* sequel

With Shah Rukh Khan's *Jawan*, Atlee successfully reestablished himself in Bollywood after dominating South Indian cinema. The action movie, which debuted on September 7, is smashing box office records, taking in more than Rs 700 crore internationally in just 10 days. The renowned director has since revealed in an interview that he will make a sequel to the movie, although he hasn't yet thought of a release date.

In a recent interview, when asked if he had a character in mind for a spin-off, Atlee grinned and mentioned Vikram Rathore, who plays Shah Rukh's senior version in the film. As for a sequel, the director said that while most of his movies have open endings, he would only decide to make one if he had a compelling idea.

"I never considered doing a sequel to any of my films; however, I gave each one an open arc, and if something compelling occurs to me, I will undoubtedly consider making a sequel. Let's see," said Atlee. Additionally, Atlee reaffirmed that his team is considering streaming a longer version of *Jawan*. While the movie had the ideal balance of emotions, he claimed that a new rhythm is being considered for streaming. He continued by saying that he has been working on it and hasn't even

taken a vacation as a result. The director was also asked about the alleged Thalapathy Vijay cameo in *Jawan*. He stated that he was explicit about not include him in the movie because he had longer-term goals in mind. He wants to work with SRK in a sizable two-hero movie. There's a reason I refrained from requesting a cameo from Vijay's side. I'll put something together for Vijay and Shah Rukh. They both gave me the best career arc I've ever experienced. One day, I'll write a story for both of them, and they'll appear together in a single film," he said.

Additionally, he projected that the movie will undoubtedly gross more than Rs 1500 Cr at the box office whenever the two superstars collaborate.



Rakesh Varre to play titular role in *Jithender Reddy*

Director Virinchi Varma, known for his work on films like *Uyyala Jampala* and *Majnu*, is making a comeback after a 7-year hiatus with the political drama *Jithender Reddy*. A few days ago, director Deva Katta unveiled the first look poster, keeping the cast details a secret. According to the latest buzz, Rakesh Varre, renowned for his roles in *Mirchi* and *Baahubali*, will be playing the title role in the movie. An official announcement will be made shortly.

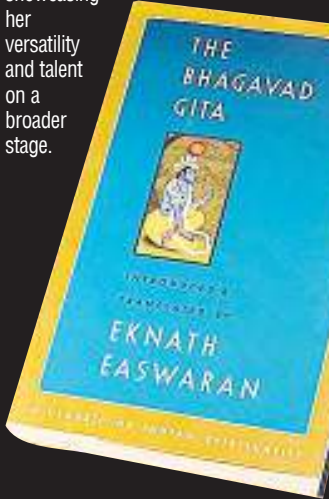
Ravinder Reddy, under the Muduganti Creation banner, is producing the film, with Gnanasekhar VS as the cinematographer and music by Gopi Sundar. Stay tuned for more updates on the cast, crew, and release date.



SAM GOES THE SPIRITUAL WAY; DIVES DEEP READING BHAGAVAD GITA

Samantha, recognized for her exceptional acting, is presently on a break, focusing on her health and preparing for myositis treatment abroad. She has taken a step back from the film projects she had committed to and has even returned the remunerations. Despite her recent social media silence, Samantha has started sharing motivational quotes on her Instagram, along with images of her immersed in reading the Bhagavad Gita, specifying the portions she is delving into. Notably, Samantha recently captivated audiences with her performance with *Kushi*, directed by Siva Nirvana, where she starred opposite Vijay Deverakonda. Their on-screen chemistry was notable, and the film's songs gained traction among music enthusiasts.

Looking ahead, Samantha is set to appear in the film *Citadel*, directed by Raj and DK, in a powerful role. The movie is eagerly anticipated and marks her foray into Bollywood, showcasing her versatility and talent on a broader stage.



Kiran to play a postman for a pan-India period drama

Kiran Abbavaram is committed to doing a pan-India period drama in which he will be seen in the role of a postman.

The untitled flick, whose cast and crew details are yet to be made official, will be set in a fictional village. In a recent interview, the SR Kalyanamandapam actor said that the kind of movies he is going to do from now onwards will be different from the kind he has done thus far.

The *Vinaro Bhagyamu Vishnu Katha* actor took a break from shootings for about five months earlier this year. Come October 6, Kiran will be seen in a youthful family entertainer titled *Rules Ranjann*. Starring Neha Shetty of *DJ Tillu* fame as the heroine, the film is presented by AM Ratnam.

"We have made the film purely for the purpose of entertainment," Kiran said recently. Vennela Kishore, Hyper Aadhi, Viva Harsha, and Nellore Sudharshan will be seen in funny roles in *Rules Ranjann*.

BEST IN ASIA

Performance like this will be cherished for very long time: Rohit

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Indian skipper Rohit Sharma on Sunday hailed his team for an emphatic performance in the Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka, saying the effort will be “cherished for a very long time.” Mohammed Siraj bowled one of the most devastating spells by an Indian fast bowler, taking six for 21, as Sri Lanka were bowled out for 50. The visitors knocked off the runs in 6.1 overs without losing any wicket.

“It was a great performance, especially to come and play like that in a final. Shows the mentality of the team. Very clinical. A performance like that will be cherished for a very long time,” Rohit said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

However the skipper was astonished to see the kind of movement that his bowlers, especially Siraj, got off the surface.

“Our seamers are actually working really hard for many years, so it’s pleasing for the side to see them get rewarded like that. I never thought the ball was going to be doing that much,” the skipper said.

The conditions must have been helpful but it also takes high level of skill to put up a performance like that in a summit clash.

“Again, it comes back to the skill-set of individuals. That’s



very rare, you don’t see many guys (like Siraj), who can move it in the air and off the pitch. And the other guys also who took part at various stages, they all played their part.”

With three match series against Australia and two more warm-up games before the World Cup opener, Rohit feels that the team is moving in the right direction.

“We took all we can from this series, quite pleasing to move in this direction with this kind of confidence.”

Having ticked most boxes

that they wanted to tick, Rohit looked back at the team’s run over the past couple of weeks.

“The first game against Pakistan under pressure, four down, how Hardik (Pandya) and (Ishan) Kishan batted in that pressure got us to that total. And then KL and Virat getting that hundred was brilliant to see.”

“Also Gill, he’s in terrific form, he’s a batting freak. He likes to keep batting and it’s something that works for our team. A lot of the guys at various stages bailed the team out in pressure situations,” the skipper

added.

SHREYAS 99% FIT

India captain Rohit Sharma on Friday said left-arm spinner Axar Patel is likely to miss the first two ODIs against Australia next week while middle-order batter Shreyas Iyer is “99 percent” match-fit.

Axar had suffered a left quadriceps strain during the inconsequential Super 4 match against Bangladesh on Friday and was ruled out of the Asia Cup. Washington Sundar was drafted in as Axar’s replacement

in India’s Asia Cup squad.

“Axar had a small tear. It looks like maybe it will take a week or 10 days (to heal), I don’t know. We have to see how that injury progresses. Some guys recover quickly, and I hope that’s the case with him,” skipper Rohit didn’t seem too confident about the speed of recovery for the Gujarat all-rounder.

“I am not sure whether he will be able to play the first two games against Australia at home. But we will wait and see,” said Rohit, who didn’t want to fully commit.

Iyer had suffered back spasm ahead of India’s Super 4 game against Pakistan, and since then he did not take part in the Asia Cup.

Rohit said Shreyas did not tick off certain parameters set for him, hence he was not included in the playing 11 for the Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka.

“Shreyas was not available for this game because certain parameters were kept for him to tick off. I think today, he completed most of it. I should say he is alright 99 percent as of now.”

“But he looks good, he batted and fielded for long hours, and he was on the ground long before we came to the ground. I don’t think it is a worry for us,” said Rohit.

Even though Washington was included in the India squad as replacement for Axar, Rohit said even veteran spinner R Ashwin is very much within the India’s scheme of things as a spin bowling all-rounder.

“As a spinner-all-rounder, Ashwin is in the line. I have been talking to him on the phone. The injury happened to Axar at the last minute. Washington was available, so he had to come and perform the role for us,” said Rohit. “He (Washington) was cricket-fit because he was part of the Asian Games camp (in Bengaluru). I have been very clear with players about their roles. Everyone is in the loop,” he added.

List of records that tumbled as India decimate Lanka

PTI ■ COLOMBO

against Lanka in ODIs.

Records tumbled as India prevailed over hosts Sri Lanka by 10 wickets in the final of the Asia Cup to lift the title after a gap of five years.

Batting first, Sri Lanka were shot out for a paltry 50, thanks to pacer Mohammed Siraj’s magical six-wicket haul. In reply, India got the job done easily in 6.1 overs.

Here is a look at the records that were scripted during the match.

■ Sri Lanka registered its lowest ODI score against India after the fall of its fifth wicket (12 for 5).

■ At 12 for 6, Lanka recorded the lowest ODI score at the fall of the sixth wicket by an ICC full-member nation.

■ Siraj scalped his 50th ODI wicket in this game, which arrived in 1,002 deliveries, the second fastest by any bowler in the format. The record is held by Ajantha Mendis (847 balls).

■ India grabbed six wickets in the opening ten overs of the contest, which is the most for the side in the format till date.

■ Siraj is only the second bowler after Mendis to grasp a six-for in an Asia Cup ODI.

■ Lanka’s total score of 50 in this fixture is the lowest versus India in the format. Also, it is the lowest in any ODI final to date.

■ Siraj’s figures of 6 for 21 is the best by any bowler

in the competition’s ODI history that the pacers held all ten wickets in a clash. The other instance also happened in this edition when Pakistan seamers achieved the feat against India in a washed out group match.

■ Sri Lanka has become the full-member Asian side to be dismissed in the fewest overs of an ODI (15.2).

■ Siraj’s figures are also the best by any Indian pacer in an ODI final, besides being the second best after Anil Kumble’s 6 for 12 in the 1993 Hero Cup Final.

■ Siraj also became the first Indian to get four wickets in an over in international cricket.

■ Siraj took just 16 balls to seize his fifth wicket of the encounter, the least by any bowler in an ODI.

■ Siraj is only the second man after Ashish Nehra to clutch a six-for in an ODI versus Lanka.

■ India has become the only team to win an ODI final by ten wickets on two occasions, with the other being against Zimbabwe in Sharjah in 1998 (197 for 0).

■ It is also the biggest ODI win for the Indians in terms of balls to spare (263), besides also being the biggest in an ODI final.

■ It is the briefest ODI involving India, with only 129 deliveries being bowled.



You get what is in our destiny: Siraj

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The complex questions that Mohammed Siraj asked during his dream spell of 6 for 21 was mostly due to the simple things that he was able to do perfectly on what turned out to be a Super Sunday for the Indian cricket team.

Perhaps, he was destined to have a day like this, said the Hyderabad as India geared up to the World Cup by winning the Asia Cup for a record eighth time.

“Jitna naseeb mein hota hai wahi milta, aaj mera naseeb tha (You get what’s in our destiny, today it was my destiny),” Siraj summed up the mood while talking to the broadcasters in the mid-innings break.

He was particularly referring to the third ODI in

Thiruvananthapuram during Sri Lanka’s tour of India where he got four wickets early but could not manage a five-for as Sri Lanka folded for 73 while chasing a stiff 391.

“Last time, I did the same against Sri Lanka at Trivandrum. Got four wickets early, couldn’t get the five-for.”

“I’ve been bowling well since a long time but missing the edges and finally got them today. I did not try too much today. I have always looked for swing in white-ball cricket and did not find much in the previous games.”

“But today it was swinging, and I got more wickets with the outswinger. Such was the swing I was getting on this wicket that I tried to entice the batter to go on the front foot and make them drive.”

PTI ■ COLOMBO

India head coach Rahul Dravid on Sunday hinted that injuries to the likes of Shreyas Iyer and Axar Patel could cost his team going into the ODI World Cup and makes the task of managing players “trickier”.

Iyer could only play the first two games of the Asia Cup due to a back spasm and this was after a six-month injury lay-off.

Left-arm spinner Axar was ruled out of the Asia Cup final due to a left quadriceps strain. Both the players are in India’s World Cup squad.

“All teams are in a similar position, injuries so close to the World Cup could really cost you. We just need to keep our fingers crossed, trust our processes.”

“We are in a tricky situation where some guys need to be



South Africa post 315 in decider

AP ■ JOHANNESBURG

There was redemption for Australian leg-spinner Adam Zampa but Aiden Markram and David Miller hit half-centuries as South Africa posted 315 for nine in the series-deciding fifth one-day international at the Wanderers Stadium on Sunday.

Zampa bounced back from conceding a world record-equalling 113 runs in the fourth match in Centurion on Friday when he bowled Heinrich Klaasen for six. Klaasen slammed 174 off 83 balls in Centurion and was particularly harsh on Zampa but on Sunday he was beaten by a quicker ball from Zampa which deceived the batsman.

Zampa took two more wickets in the 48th over to finish with three for 71.



Australian captain Mitchell Marsh sent South Africa in for the third match in a row despite his team having lost the previous two - but his reading of conditions proved correct as his pace bowlers extracted movement from the pitch for most of the innings.

Markram (93) and Miller (63) put on 109 for the fifth wicket and lower order batsmen Marco Jansen and Andile Phehlukwayo took the total past 300 with some big hitting towards the end.

Jansen hit three sixes in scoring 47 off 29 balls and Phehlukwayo cleared the boundary four times in his unbeaten 39 off 19 deliveries.

Brief scores: South Africa 315-9 (H. van der Dussen 30, A. Markram 93, D. Miller 63, M. Jansen 47, A. Phehlukwayo 39 not out)

Brook replaces Roy in England’s ODI WC squad

AP ■ LONDON

Jason Roy has been axed from England’s World Cup squad, with Harry Brook drafted in in his place, after the selectors made a dramatic late amendment to their 15-man squad for the tournament in India which gets underway in just under three weeks’ time.

Roy, 33, was an integral member of the England squad that won the World Cup in 2019, and had been named in England’s provisional squad for the defence of their title, ahead of their four-match series against New Zealand this month.

However, he was unable to feature in any of the four games after suffering a series of back



spasms. In his absence, Roy’s rival for the opener’s role, Dawid Malan, made an unequivocal case for a starting role in the tournament, finishing as Player of the Series with 277 runs at 92.33 in three games, including a matchwinning century at Lord’s.

Consequently, it will be Malan and Jonny Bairstow who will open the batting for England when their tournament gets underway against New Zealand on October 5.

Australia ODIs crucial for Shreyas, Surya

PTI ■ COLOMBO

India’s three-match ODI series, starting with the first match on September 22 at Mohali, will be a litmus test for Shreyas Iyer and Suryakumar Yadav albeit for different reasons.

The fitness of Shreyas will be watched closely, while Suryakumar will have to produce an impact innings to vindicate his inclusion in the World Cup squad.

However, Shreyas’ progress will be more pressing from the management perspective.

The middle-order batsman spent about half an hour at nets and then engaged in fielding drills for around 15 minutes, heightening hopes around him playing the Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka here on Sunday.

But Iyer was not included in the playing 11. It might be an indication that the team think tank felt the need of giving him more time to recuperate from the back spasm that forced him to sit out of India’s Asia Cup Super Four match against



Pakistan.

Iyer had made his much-anticipated return to international cricket during India’s Asia Cup league match against Pakistan at Pallekele, and he made 14 before getting out. He also played against Nepal but didn’t get chance to bat.

“It will be an important series for him as he needs to bat and field for the full duration of the match, something he has not done since his return. He has made a good recovery but maybe the team does not want to rush him.”

“We have some more days for the Australia ODIs, and he

can make proper recovery before that series,” a source following the development told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

Suryakumar offers a different case. The team management has placed a lot of faith in him to replicate his T20I explosiveness in ODIs. However, Suryakumar has not been able to live up to the expectations so far in the one-dayers.

The Mumbaikar failed to build on the start against Bangladesh in the Super Four match on Friday, making a 34-ball 26.

The manner of his dismissal too has not gone down

Smith, Maxwell & Starc return for India ODIs

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australia has brought back Steve Smith, Glenn Maxwell and Mitchell Starc in its 18-man squad for the forthcoming three-match ODI series in India.

The trio were nursing injuries and missed their recent tour of South Africa.

Top-order batter Travis Head missed out after suffering a fracture on his left hand in South Africa and has been replaced by Matthew Short, who is yet to make his ODI debut.

well with the top brass, playing one too many sweep shots, a high-risk shot when the ball grips and turns.

The form KL Rahul and Ishan Kishan might console the think-tank, but Suryakumar needs to make an impression

Aaron Hardie, Tim David and Michael Neser also missed out, while all-rounder Ashton Agar is on paternity leave.

While pacer Spencer Johnson retains his place, Marnus Labuschagne also finds himself in the squad, having scored an unbeaten 80 and 124 in the opening two ODIs against the Proteas.

The three ODIs will be played in Mohali, Indore and Rajkot on September 24, 28 and October 1, respectively before the ODI World Cup, starting October 5.

sooner rather than later to keep his ODI dreams afloat.

While the management might not be mulling any imminent changes to their World Cup squad at present, they have time till September 27 to rethink after weighing all options.

ACC and SLC announce \$50,000 award for curators and groundsmen

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The entire team of ground-staff, who worked tirelessly to get the grounds in Colombo and Pallekele match-ready for the Asia Cup in midst of full-blown monsoon season, will be rewarded with a prize money of USD 50,000, Asian Cricket Council chairman Jay Shah announced on Sunday.

“Big Shoutout to the Unsung Heroes of Cricket! The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) and Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) are proud to announce a well-deserved prize money of USD 50,000 for the dedicated curators and groundsmen at Colombo and Kandy,” Shah wrote on ‘X’, formerly twitter.

USD 50,000 will roughly be 16 million in Sri Lankan rupee. “Their unwavering commitment and hard work made the Asia Cup 2023 an unforgettable spectacle. From pitch perfection to lush outfields,



they ensured the stage was set for thrilling cricket action.”

“This recognition highlights the critical role these individuals play in cricket’s success. Let’s celebrate and honour their yeoman services!” added Shah.

The tournament was originally supposed to be hosted by Pakistan before India’s reluctance to play in the neighbouring country, forced ACC to organize the event in ‘Hybrid Model’ with nine games allot-

ted to Sri Lanka.

However, Lanka’s weather conditions soon became a challenge, especially for their curators and groundsmen, as they constantly struggled to get the ground ready on time.

While India’s opening fixture against arch-rival Pakistan in Pallekele was washed out, a couple more encounters throughout the competition saw rain interruptions bring the Duckworth-Lewis method into effect.

