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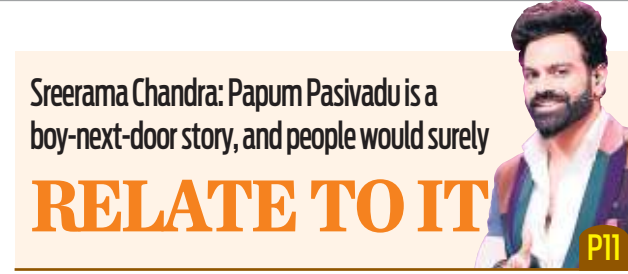
Published From: HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH BHUBANESWAR RANCHI DEHRADUN VIJAYAWADA



Kejriwal 'welcomes' CBI probe into bungalow renovation



GOVT INKS 8 MOUS WITH IBM TO PROVIDE CURATED COURSES



Sreerama Chandra: Papum Pasivadu is a boy-next-door story, and people would surely RELATE TO IT

QUOTE OF THE DAY
The pioneer

Passing the Women's Reservation Bill is like giving a post-dated cheque. We have signed the cheque. I am a very small first-time MP and first-time MLC kind of junior leader. So, nobody can convince the parties to ensure adequate representation of women. Wasn't Indira Gandhi an important voice in the party? Wasn't Sonia Gandhi the only voice in the party? The issue here is that you need to give policy protection to vulnerable sections of society which starts with women.

- Kavitha Kalvakuntla, MLC



DON'T MISS...

Environmentalist for strong...

Despite the rules laid down by the Telangana government and the orders of the Telangana High Court on the ban of Ganesh idols made out of Plaster of Paris (PoP), people are still continuing to use them. Several local Ganesh Committees, including the devotees purchased PoP idols and immersed them in water bodies thereby polluting them. Speaking to the Pioneer Correspondent...

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Indians now represent...

The US Mission in India on Thursday surpassed its goal of processing one million non-immigrant visa applications this year and said that Indians now represent over 10 per cent of all visa applicants worldwide, including 20 per cent of all student visa applicants and 65 per cent of all H&L-category (employment) visa applicants. The number of visa applications processed in India are 20 per cent more than the...

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Ban on rice export is regulation...

India has said that the export ban on rice is a regulation rather than a restriction and is crucial for securing the food security of 1.4 billion people, according to an official. This was stated by India in response to concerns raised by a group of countries including the US during a meeting of the WTO's Committee on Agriculture in Geneva on September 27. The Geneva-based official said that in the meeting, India reiterated its commitment...

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We deserved to win gold in...

Indian women's cricket team captain Harmanpreet Kaur on Thursday said they deserved to win the Asian Games gold medal, considering their domination over neighbouring teams, though she admitted that the expectations put a bit of pressure on the side. Playing in their maiden Asian Games in Hangzhou, India fulfilled the expectations on them and clinched the yellow metal, beating Sri Lanka by 19 runs in the final. "It was a great..."

-SPORTS

GRAND FINALE TO GANESHA

Sea of humanity sees off Gananatha

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The 10-day Ganesh festival concluded with great solemnity and grandeur at Hussain Sagar Lake on Thursday. Several Ganesh committees across the city gathered here to bid farewell to Lord Ganesha by immersing the idols in the water.

The Shobha Yatra of the famous Khairatabad 63-foot Bada Ganesh idol has begun with great splendour. With the aid of police forces, the Ganesh committee members were directed to start their yatra early in the morning from Khairatabad to NTR Marg.

Lakhs of devotees gathered along the way from the Secretariat to Tank Bund to get a final glimpse of the tall idol. The committee members put the idol on a trolley consisting of 26 tires that carried a weight of 55 tons. Police and Disaster Response

Forces were allocated at the assigned locations to maintain a peaceful procession. The traffic police strictly prohibited the commuters from entering into the locations and directed them to alternate routes. Following a five-hour procession, the Khairatabad Ganesh idol was immersed in the Hussain Sagar with the aid of a crane.

Many Ganesh idols of different sizes transported by the local Ganesh committees, including the idols carried by the devotees, were also immersed here.



Bandlaguda laddu fetches Rs 1.26 cr

HYDERABAD: Bandlaguda Ganesh laddu prasadam has entered history books on September 28, Thursday. It was auctioned for a staggering Rs 1.25 crore, while the iconic Balapur Ganesh laddu fetched Rs 27

lakh. This year Balapur laddu was auctioned by Dasari Dayanand Reddy. Meanwhile, a gated community in Bandlaguda Jagir on the outskirts of Hyderabad auctioned the laddu for a whopping Rs 1.25 crore.



Companies flock to TS sans summits

NAVEENA GHANATE ■ HYDERABAD

In the last nine years, Telangana has not conducted any investor summit. Even every week there are inaugurations and ground-breaking functions.

On Thursday, Industries Minister KT Rama Rao led the ground-breaking for the Kitex Group's second project in Telangana at Seetharampur in Rangareddy District. The Kitex group which was fed up with Kerala government decided to move out.

Likewise, the Wellspun group, which was supposed to set up business in Gujarat and Karnataka,

picked Telangana. In 2018, Wellspun had planned to expand in Gujarat. The equipment which was ordered for Gujarat was rerouted to Hyderabad.

Sintex BAPL Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of Welspun Corp Ltd, was supposed to go to Karnataka. But on Thursday, KTR did the ground-breaking for Sintex to set up a manufacturing unit with an investment of Rs 350 crore.

Likewise, the Lulu group announced on June 26 that it will launch its first mall and hypermarket in Telangana and by September 27, Hyderabad got its biggest hypermarket.



No irregularities in Group-1 Prelims: TSPSC



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The TSPSC has given details regarding the prelims exam held on June 11. Regarding allegations about the extra 258 papers, it said that the announcement was made based on information given by collectors on the day of the examination.

"We announced that 2,33,248 people wrote the exam. We told the same thing to the media. OMR scanning revealed that 2,33,506 people appeared for the exam," the

TSPSC said.

Group-1 prelims were conducted at 994 examination centres in 33 districts. Lakhs of candidates wrote the exam all over TS.

Minor variations in marks are normal when lakhs of people write an exam. After scanning the final number of candidates is announced. There is no opportunity to add answer papers after the exam. The TSPSC clarified that there was no irregularities in the conduct of the Group-1 Prelims.

How will BJP face elections?

Party leaders lash out Kishan Reddy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP leaders lashed out at state BJP president G. Kishan Reddy saying that they do not understand what the party is doing and how it is going to face the Assembly elections.

They said that they are spending money in their constituencies trusting the party, but the party leadership is just sitting in offices and holding meetings.

The BJP office bearers meeting was held on Wednesday night. It is reported that this meeting was held under rough conditions and that many leaders directed flak at Kishan Reddy.

But it seems that Kishan tried to avoid talking negatively at the party meeting. However, Sankineni Venkateswara Rao, a key leader, criticised Kishan saying that they don't know what to tell him as it is 10 years since he joined the BJP. It is reported that leaders said that



not many people came to the Narendra Modi Sabha held at Warangal and the Amit Shah Sabha held at Khammam. Kishan was asked to bring people in large numbers to Prime Minister Modi's meetings being held on October 1 and 3. On the other hand, the Telangana BJP's official spokespersons complained that they are not allowed to hold press conferences at the state office. They asked Kishan to explain their role as official spokespersons.

Will meetings attended by national leaders help TSBJP?

K VENKATESHWARLU ■ HYDERABAD

Will the meetings attended by the BJP's national leaders help the Telangana BJP?

This is the question that arises in the minds of Telangana BJP leaders as the BJP is thinking of organising 30 to 40 public meetings in Telangana which would be attended by the BJP's national leaders. The Telangana BJP is going to invite national leaders like Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP president JP Nadda and Chief Ministers of BJP-ruled states to these public meetings. It is learnt that the party is going to explain the social welfare schemes implemented in BJP-ruled states and the development projects executed in the nine years of rule by Modi.

'A post-dated cheque'

■ Kavitha on quota Bill



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Ruling BRS MLC in Telangana K Kavitha on Thursday alleged that the Women's Reservation Bill passed in Parliament is like a post-dated cheque, with no clarity on when it is going to be implemented.

Insisting that women should be given 33 per cent reservation in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies immediately, as per the bill passed in both houses of Parliament, Kavitha accused the NDA government at the Centre of not implementing it despite being able to do so.

"So, it's a very clear sign and signal to the women of this country that passing the Women's Reservation Bill is like giving a post-dated cheque. We have signed the cheque. The amount is written but we do not know when you can cash it. There is no point or purpose to this whole exercise. It just looks like tokenism to me," she told PTI video service here in an interview.

42% children spend up to 4 hours daily glued to screens

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

At least 42 per cent of children under the age of 12 spend an average of two to four hours daily glued to their smartphones or tablets while those in the higher age bracket dedicate 47 per cent of their day to screens, a new survey has found.

According to the survey conducted by Happinetz, a leading parental control filter box, with households having multiple devices, parents find themselves grappling with the challenge of managing their children's screen time and regulating their exposure to age inappropriate content.

The survey conducted among 1,500 parents found that a staggering 69 per cent of children aged 12 and above possess their own tablets or smartphones, giving them unrestricted access to the online realm. "Seventy-four per cent of them



Children dedicate a substantial portion of their time to their gadgets, whether to do their homework, chat with their friends or family or use apps to study.

turn to their screens to immerse themselves in the world of YouTube, while 61 per cent of those aged 12 and above gravitate towards gaming as their preferred digital pastime," the survey report said.

"This preference for screen-based entertainment inevitably leads to an increase in screen time, with 42 per cent of children under 12 spending an average of two to four hours daily

glued to their screens, and their older counterparts (those above 12) dedicating 47 per cent of their day to screens," it added.

Richa Singh, Co-Founder and CEO of Happinetz, said discipline is not the answer to the problem of unsafe internet experiences for children.

"With everything going digital, right from education to entertain-

ment, smart devices have become an accessory for children today, dictating their daily routines.

Children dedicate a substantial portion of their time to their gadgets, whether to do their homework, chat with their friends or family or use apps to study.

"As the survey denotes, screens are a reality for children today - as a way of education and leisure. And

yet parents do not have a definite way to monitor or create a safe internet experience for their kids. Discipline is not the answer to this problem, it is a hit and trial method," she said.

Happinetz offers a patented Parental Control Filter (PCF) Box that regularly monitors more than 110 million websites and apps, ensuring that more than 20 per cent or 22 million harmful adult sites and apps are permanently blocked.

Parents can choose from an array of 13 categories, including social media, chat and forums, online learning, and more, allowing them to finely tailor their children's internet access to their preferences. The result? Uninterrupted study sessions, child safety and overall well-being as families embrace a future where the internet is both a resource and a sanctuary," Singh said.



Mynampally, Vemula Veeresham, Kumbham Anil join Congress

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The former Malkajigiri BRS MLA, Mynampally Hanumantha Rao, and his son Mynampally Rohit Rao, former BRS Nakrekal MLA Vemula Veeresham and former Yadadri Bhongir DCC president Kumbham

Anil Kumar Reddy joined the Congress in the presence of AICC president Mallikarjuna Kharge on Thursday.

Kharge welcomed these leaders into the Congress by presenting them tricolour Kanduvus.



BRS brass trying to pacify discontented party leaders

SNCN ACHARYULU
HYDERABAD

Attempts to pacify discontented BRS leaders have picked up momentum. While the BRS leadership has taken the initiative to pacify discontented leaders at the state level it has told its candidates that it is their responsibility to pacify discontented leaders at the local level.

The BRS leadership has categorically told candidates that disgruntled leaders should be weeded out of their constituencies. For this, the BRS leadership has suggested that candidates should meet discontented leaders frequently and keep in touch with them.

After this suggestion of the party leadership, some candidates have started a programme of having "dinner with discontented leaders." BRS candidates are hosting dinners for local leaders and



keeping in touch with them. They are inviting leaders at the mandal and municipality levels like ZPTC, MPTC members and municipal ward members for dinners. Candidates are assuring them that they will look after their interests after coming to power. Meanwhile, the BRS leadership also has launched attempts to pacify discontented leaders.

for a long time. After the denial of the Assembly ticket Rajaiah openly expressed his discontent and said that he would see how Srihari would win in Ghanpur. Then KTR called both Srihari and Rajaiah and convinced them.

In the same way, Transport Minister Puvvada Ajay Kumar and BRS MP Nama Nageswar Rao held discussions with Vyra MLA Ramulu Nayak and managed to pacify him. In the last Assembly elections, Ramulu Nayak had won as an Independent and had later joined the BRS.

If BRS candidates are not able to pacify discontented leaders at their level the BRS leadership has directed district-level leaders to do so. The BRS leadership is trying to pacify discontented senior leaders like Rajaiah, Muthireddy Yadagiri Reddy and some others.

BJP appoints central committee for TS Assembly elections

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP has appointed a central committee with 26 members for the Telangana Assembly elections. The committee will have party leaders from Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Goa and Tamil Nadu.

Somu Veerajulu and Vishnuvardhan Reddy from Andhra Pradesh are in the committee. In fact, the party has appointed eight Union Ministers to the committee.

The BJP is going to entrust responsibilities like election campaign, extension of support to contesting candidates and the conduct of public meetings of national leaders to the committee. The party directed the committee to stay and work in Telangana till the Assembly elections are over.

It may be recalled that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tour to Telangana has been finalised. The Prime



Minister is attending a public meeting in the erstwhile Mahabubnagar district on October 1 and will attend a public meeting in Nizamabad on October 3.

Political analysts say that the BJP is entering the arena with the Prime Minister as he is going to blow the poll bugle at the Mahabubnagar meeting.

The state and central BJP leadership have been stating that this time the party is making all-out efforts to win power in the state. In addition to the PM, the BJP is also planning to bring Union Ministers to the state.

Bandlaguda laddu fetches...

Continued from page 1

This price is said to be the highest ever recorded in the Telugu states. As per the sources, the residents of Keerthi Richmond Villas collectively auctioned the laddu. This year's auction surpassed last year's auction which fetched Rs 60.08 lakh.

Residents of Richmond Villas say that the auctioned money will be used to support voluntary organisations involved in various charitable activities.

Attapur laddu has once again fetched a record price under the New Bhakta Samaj, which has become popular in Rajendra Nagar area.

TODAY
ALMANAC
Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha
Tithi: Purnima: Sep 28 06:49 PM to Sep 29 03:27 PM
Krishna Paksha Pratipada: Sep 29 03:27 PM to Sep 30 12:21 PM
Nakshatram: Uttara Bhadrabada: Sep 29 01:48 AM to Sep 29 11:18 PM
Revati: Sep 29 11:18 PM to Sep 30 09:08 PM
Rahukalam: 10:37 AM to 12:06 PM
Yamagandam: 3:05 PM to 4:34 PM
Varjyam: 10:13 AM to 11:40 AM
Gulika: 7:38 AM to 9:08 AM
Amritakalam: 07:00 PM to 08:26 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:42 AM to 12:30 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER
Forecast: Partly Cloudy
Temp: 31°C
Humidity: 77%
Sunrise: 6:06 AM
Sunset: 6:08 PM
Updated: September 28, 2023 5:00 PM

Mynampally...

Continued from page 1

Telangana Congress in-charge Manikrao Thakre, TPCC president Revanth Reddy and others participated in the programme which was held at Kharge's residence in New Delhi.

It may be recalled that Mynampally Hanumanth Rao quit the BRS as the Medak ticket was not given to his son Rohit.

Former MLA Vemula Veeresham too quit the BRS as the Nakrekal ticket was not given to him. Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy, who joined the BRS after quitting the Congress, re-joined Congress now.

Iconic agricultural scientist Swaminathan...

Continued from page 1

Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi, Chief Minister M K Stalin, leaders of farmers' bodies including P R Pandian consoled Swaminathan's death.

The Congress party described him as the key scientific architect of the Green Revolution and hailed his contribution to the agriculture sector.

Modi said on X: "Deeply saddened by the demise of Dr MS Swaminathan Ji. At a very critical period in our nation's history, his groundbreaking work in agriculture transformed the lives of millions and ensured food security for our nation."

Beyond his revolutionary contributions to agriculture, Dr Swaminathan was a powerhouse of innovation and a nurturing mentor to many. His unwavering commitment to research and mentorship has left an indelible mark on countless scientists and innovators.

"I will always cherish my conversations with Dr Swaminathan. His passion to see India progress was exemplary. His life and work will inspire generations to come. Condolences to his family and admirers. Om Shanti," he said.

Former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda expressed grief over the demise of Swaminathan and said he was greatly benefited from his advice on many occasions.

Singh said: "In passing away of Prof. Swaminathan, ends an era of agricultural research, education and extension that was full of disruptive innovation. If God appears to poor and hungry in form of bread as said by Mahatma Gandhi, that God is Dr. Swaminathan who should be worshipped by every citizen while taking daily meals." Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said Swaminathan was the key architect of India's Green Revolution.

Venkat keeps away from BRS leaders' induction function

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Congress leaders particularly Bhongir MP Komatireddy Venkat Reddy stayed away from the induction programme of BRS leaders Mynampally Hanumanth Rao, Vemula Veeresham and Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy in the presence of AICC president Mallikarjuna Kharge on Thursday.

Venkat was supposed to attend the induction of Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy as he belongs to the Bhongir Assembly constituency which is one of the Assembly segments of Bhongir Lok Sabha seat.

It is learnt that Venkat was angry with TPCC president Revanth Reddy for inviting Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy, who quit the party two months ago criticising Venkat severely.

Venkat was also not happy with the induction of Vemula Veeresham and had issued statements several times that the party will not induct any-



one without his nod. Venkat also said that BRS leaders were joining the Congress as BRS had not given tickets to them.

However, the party inducted Vemula Veeresham ignoring Venkat's objections. It is learnt that the Congress high command is serious about inductions.

It is learnt that the party made it clear to its Telangana leaders that it would induct any leader if they have winning chances without considering their background.

Venkat kept away from the induction of BRS leaders held at New Delhi on Thursday due to this, it is learnt.

No party likely to get majority in TS Assembly elections: Konda

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Senior BJP leader Konda Vishweshwar Reddy said that no party including the BJP, the BRS or other parties have the strength to win the Assembly elections on their own in the conditions that exist in Telangana. Some BJP leaders think that the BJP has more strength, but it can win only if it does what has to be done, he said.

Making it clear that he will continue in the BJP and will not join any other party, Konda Vishweshwar Reddy said on Thursday that he was not convening secret meetings. He said that he has been discussing with party leaders how to strengthen the party.

He said that the BJP has to use the anti-incumbency that the KCR government is facing. He said that he will meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah and explain these things soon.

Kisan Congress demands ticket for Anvesh Reddy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana wing of the Kisan Congress Cell has appealed to the party to give an opportunity to Kisan Congress Telangana Wing president Sunketa Anvesh Reddy to contest in the Assembly elections.

District presidents of the Kisan Congress Cell Telangana met Screening Committee members Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy and Madhu Yashki Reddy on Thursday. They submitted memorandums to these leaders asking them to encourage the Congress Kisan Cell by giving a ticket to Anvesh Reddy.

They explained to the Screening Committee that Anvesh Reddy is supported by the strong 'Guradi Kapu' community in the Balkonda-Armour area of Nizamabad. In addition to deciding the fate of MLA candidates in Balkonda-Armour, they said that if Anvesh Reddy, who is a strong force in Nizamabad district, is given a



ticket, Congress candidates will benefit a lot.

"Anvesh Reddy has applied for a ticket from his constituency, Balkonda, in the order in which the Congress recently invited applications. Therefore, we sincerely appeal on behalf of the Kisan Congress to give the Balkonda-Armour area of Nizamabad Assembly ticket to Anvesh Reddy. If it is not possible to give the Balkonda Assembly ticket under we appeal to give an opportunity to Anvesh Reddy to contest as the

Congress candidate from the nearby Armour Assembly seat. There are real estate traders and builders functioning as MLAs in Balkonda-Armour constituencies.

There is no one in the legislature who knows the plight of the farmers. Keeping in view these circumstances, we appeal to the party to give the ticket to Sunketa Anvesh Reddy, who belongs to a farmer family and is also a farmer himself, to contest from one of the Assembly constituencies in Balkonda or Armour," they said.

Meanwhile, leaders from the Medak Assembly constituency appealed to Bhatti Vikramarka to make the high command allocate the Medak ticket to Congress leaders who worked hard for the party.

They told Bhatti that wrong signals will go to the people if tickets are given to newly joined leaders. They also warned the party not to give scope for a repeat of the 2018 election results again in 2023.

Will meetings...

Continued from page 1

The party has also decided to explain the work done by the Centre in Telangana apart from attacking the BRS government.

However, one BJP leader from Hyderabad city expressed anger at the party. Responding to the party's efforts, he told 'The Pioneer' on condition of anonymity that "the party is trying to search for Dal in cooking utensils after losing it in the field."

"What is the use of conducting public meetings without doing the needful to infuse confidence among leaders, cadres and the people? The party was on a strong wicket some time ago, however, it lost ground due to mistakes like the removal of Sanjay and other issues. National leaders can work as catalysts in strengthening the party if the state leadership is in a strong position," he said.

Companies flock...

Continued from page 1

The Lulu group had withdrawn from the deal signed with the TDP government in Andhra Pradesh after the YSRCP came to power in 2019.

Amararaj Batteries Ltd planned to set up India's largest Lithium-Ion cell giga corridor in Andhra Pradesh but later it moved it to Divitipally in Mahabubnagar district involving an investment of Rs 9,500 crore.

In 2020, the Andhra Pradesh government had taken back the land that was allotted to Amara Raja Batteries Ltd which was intended for setting up the Giga factory.

Officials said that not just the ease of doing business but peace of doing business is also important. Industries Minister KT Rama Rao said that investors are coming to Telangana because of KCR's able leadership and stable governance.

AP govt files caveat petition in SC in skill scam

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a strategic move, the Andhra Pradesh government, led by Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, on Thursday, filed a caveat petition in the Supreme Court in connection with the multi-crore AP Skill Development Scam Case. The AP High Court had dismissed Naidu's quash petition in the alleged skill development scam.

TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu who is arrested in connection with the Skill Development Scam is currently in remand at Rajahmundry Central Prison. The AP government appealed to the Supreme Court requesting an opportunity to present their arguments in the case against Chandrababu Naidu.

The government claimed that it had adequate evidence on the Telugu Desam Party chief's role in the scam which involved misappropriation of about Rs 300 crore in the name of imparting training to students.

It also claims that funds involved were allegedly routed and encashed through shell companies and central investigation agencies are already probing the matter, with the GST department being the

'A post-dated cheque'

Continued from page 1

Yet, the passage of the bill is a good gesture which should be celebrated, she said.

On the demand for reservation for OBC women in the women's bill, she said the OBCs should get 33 per cent share in Parliament and state assemblies to begin with, and once OBC reservation is given, it will automatically reflect for OBC women as well.

Asked if the winnability factor is cited to stop representation for women, she replied in the affirmative and said more efforts are needed to enhance representation for women and other sections of society in the political system.

Kavitha, who is the founder of 'Bharat Jagruti', a cultural organisation, said she is keen on taking up workshops on leadership across the country to prepare women for roles at the helm.

Asked if she would convince her party BRS to ensure adequate representation of women, she, however, replied in the negative. "I am a very small first time MP and first time MLC time of junior leader. So, nobody can convince the parties. Wasn't Indira Gandhi an important voice in the party? Wasn't Sonia Gandhi the only voice with the party. The issue here is you

need to give policy protection to the vulnerable section of the society which starts from women," she said.

It could be upper class women, OBC women, Dalit or Adivasi women but women need policy protection, she said.

How soon the women's reservation legislation can be implemented and provide representation to OBC women is a larger fight, she said.

On parties like BJP questioning BRS on its friendship with AIMIM which was the sole opposer of women's reservation in Parliament, she said BRS and AIMIM are "friendly parties" and they have never been alliance partners.

The AIMIM is entitled to have its views, she said. The party's opposition did not stop the women's reservation bill, she added.

Asked if she saw Congress's momentum picking up in Telangana ahead of the Legislative Assembly elections, Kavitha, daughter of Chief Minister K Chandrababu Naidu, expressed confidence that the people would support the BRS having seen the rapid pace of development in the state. She said the BRS would come back to power in the coming elections as Telangana has witnessed transformative changes during the BRS

regime.

She alleged that Congress could not ensure basic needs like supply of drinking water and irrigation during its long rule in undivided Andhra Pradesh.

The BRS government worked for the people despite the Centre not supporting it, she claimed.

Referring to the Cauvery water row between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, she asked why Congress cannot make the chief ministers of the two states sit together and solve the issue forever as DMK is its partner in the INDIA alliance. Asked about the allegations against her in the Delhi excise policy case, she said it is the "modus operandi" of the BJP. "There is nothing special about Kavitha. It is just that Telangana is going to election, so they have to trouble BRS as a party," she said, speaking about the Enforcement Directorate questioning her in the case.

Not only she, but many other leaders of BRS are being "targeted" as well, she claimed.

Asked about her stance on the 'India-Bharat' debate, she said they are non-issues. The names 'India' and 'Bharat' have been loved and used interchangeably and both the names are equally important, she said.

Fervour marks shobha yatra

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

An amount of Rs 30 crore was allocated for civic works and transport for Ganesh Shobha Yatra and 90,000 idols have been immersed till date, said Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi. The Mayor supervised the arrangements for the immersion of Khairatabad Maha Ganesh at the Tank Bund on Thursday.

She said that Ganesh immersion was completed at the scheduled time before 1:30 pm. The Ganesh nimajnam at many places in the city concluded peacefully with the coordination of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) and other departments.

Following the immersion, she asked the sanitation staff to separate the puja materials and garbage. In all, 3,000 sanitation workers have set up 369 cranes for Ganesh immersion. The Mayor said that 48,179 lighting facilities have been arranged in the routes covering the Shobha



Yatra. The roads have been repaired in the required areas. There was one crane and 27 boats at the pools where the immersion took place and the staff worked in three shifts. Fresh water has been provided

to the people participating in the yatra by the Water Works Department.

Cutting of trees and branches was done on all the routes during Shobha Yatra. Roads and Buildings (R&B)

department has set up welcome stages to welcome the idols coming for immersion, the Mayor added.

Apart from this, she said that 74 ponds have been set up especially for Plaster of Paris idols, 250 swimmers and 400 DRF personnel were deployed in 33 ponds at Hussain Sagar and Saroor Nagar. Mobile toilets and static toilets have also been installed at the places where immersion took place.

Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) Commissioner Arvind, GHMC Commissioner Ronald Rose and Hyderabad City CP Anand, Disaster Response Force (DRF) chief Prakash Reddy, electricity department, water works department and tourism department and other departments worked in tandem with the Khairatabad Ganesh Committee and expressed their gratitude to all the people of the city for their cooperation.

Tight security deployed for shobha yatra

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

On the occasion of Ganesh immersion, 4,500 policemen were deployed on Thursday. Cyberabad Commissioner of Police Muthyala Stephen Raveendra had been monitored by the Public Safety Integrated Operation System (PSIOC).

He said, "In the limits of Cyberabad Commissionerate, immersion has been going on peacefully. As of now I visited baby ponds under the limits of Rajendra Nagar PS, Gangaram Cheruvu under Chandanagar PS, IDL lake under Kukatpally police stations. We have been cooperating with other public departments to move 3 the procession easily, along with GHMC, TSSPDCL, R&B, Road Transport, Fire Services, Irrigation, Medical and Health department."

A total of 1,0979 idols were installed in Cyberabad.

Environmentalist for strong policies on recycling PoP idols

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Despite the rules laid down by the Telangana government and the orders of the Telangana High Court on the ban of Ganesh idols made out of Plaster of Paris (PoP), people are still continuing to use them. Several local Ganesh Committees, including the devotees purchased PoP idols and immersed them in water bodies thereby polluting them.

Speaking to the Pioneer Correspondent, Environmentalist NSV Sarath Chandra said, "Making PoP idols is a source of income and employment for many people.

People often tend to portray large idols using PoP as they are cost-effective. It is not possible to make large idols using clay. So far, we have long started using clay



large PoP statues. Environmental activists must come up with large-scale awareness programmes to encourage people and motivate even local committees to restrain from using large PoP idols and use simple clay household idols, he added.

In regards to people's preference for large lakes in Hyderabad over small water bodies including artificial baby ponds, he said that due to deeply rooted culture, people prefer large lakes, especially Hussain Sagar.

Further, there is a strong element of cultural aspect with respect to the immersion of idols in Hussain Sagar which has been happening for decades.

Though artificial lakes have been in use recently, one needs to create more awareness among the public to use them preferably, he added.

Kitex facility trying to set Guinness Record in TS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Kitex will be setting up an integrated Fibre-to-apparel manufacturing cluster with a capacity of 7 lakh garments per day at an investment of Rs 1,200 crore.

Minister for Industries, ITE&C and MA&UD KT Rama Rao said that Kitex Group intends to create a Guinness Record by setting up the largest assembly line of 1.2 kilometer for its fibre-to-apparel manufacturing cluster- 2nd investment project in Telangana at Seetharampur in Rangareddy district.

Along with Minister KT Rama Rao, Minister for Education P Sabitha Indra Reddy and Minister for Mines & Geology and Information & Public Relations P Mahender Reddy participated in the ground-breaking ceremony for Kitex

Group's 2nd investment project on Thursday.

The cluster, expected to be spread over 250 acres in Seetharampur, will employ more than 11,000 people directly, more than 80% of whom will be women employees. The entire investment will be operational by December 2024. Kitex's first investment project in Telangana is coming up at Kakatiya Mega Textile Park, Warangal, where the construction of a similar integrated fibre-to-apparel manufacturing cluster is ongoing in full swing and expected to commence operations by December 2023.

The event was attended by G Ranjith Reddy, Member of Parliament from Chevella and Government officials from the Industries & Commerce Department and Handloom & Textile Department.

Cops grab people's hearts with a jig

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Amidst the joyful procession of the Ganesh idols, Hyderabad city police seized the opportunity to entertain the public

with their delightful dance performances at NTR Marg.

Policemen started vibing to the songs played by the local Ganesh communities while transporting their idols to Tank

Bund for immersion. On witnessing their performances, several devotees joined them thereby unfolding a heartwarming scene. Several onlookers captured these unexpected per-

formances by the police and uploaded them on various social media platforms.

Along with their duty, the police have successfully grabbed the hearts of the public.



SCR extends special train operations during Oct, Nov

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In order to clear extra rush of passengers during October and November 2023, the South Central Railway (SCR) extended the operation of special trains on Thursday.

Services of Train No. 07091 (Kazipet - Tirupati) and Train No. 07092 (Tirupati - Kazipet) will be extended from October 17 to November 28. Service of Train No. 07631 (Hyderabad - Narsapur) will be extended from October 7 to November 25, whereas services of Train No. 07632 (Narsapur - Hyderabad) will be extended from October 8 to November 26.

Services of Train No. 07643 (Hyderabad - Tirupati) will be extended from October 9 to November 27 while services of Train No. 07644 (Tirupati - Hyderabad) will be extended from October 10 to November 28. Moreover, services of Train No. 07185 (Machilipatnam -

Secunderabad) and Train No. 07186 (Secunderabad - Machilipatnam) will be extended from October 8 to November 26.

Additionally, services of Train No. 07481 (Tirupati - Secunderabad) will be extended from October 15 to November 26, whereas services of Train No. 07482 (Secunderabad - Tirupati) will be extended from October 16 to November 27.

Services of Train No. 07509 (Hyderabad - Tirupati) will be extended from October 12 to November 30 while services of Train No. 07510 (Tirupati - Hyderabad) will be extended from October 13 to December 1. Services of Train No. 07445 (Kakinada Town - Lingampally) will be extended from October 2 to November 29, whereas services of Train No. 07446 (Lingampally - Kakinada Town) will be extended from October 3 to November 30.

Bengaluru congestion has learnings for city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bengaluru's Outer Ring Road (ORR) witnessed massive traffic congestion on Wednesday due to various reasons, including protests against the Cauvery river water row, Ganesh visarjan and comedian Trevor Noah's show that was cancelled later.

Special Chief Secretary Arvind Kumar said that this congestion at Bengaluru has learnings for Hyderabad. He listed six learnings which include - More roads with parallel and easy alternatives for which government has taken up missing link roads, SRDP, effective storm water drainage to take care of 10 cms of rains, decongest and create

greenfield work stations away from downtown. This is through Budvel and Neopolis.

Staggered office timings, increase public transport - Metro/ light rail/ buses - making it easy and comfortable as a preferred option over private vehicles. Minimise parking on main roads that eats up crucial motorable lane. He acknowledged that Miyapur X Roads - Bachupally X

Roads -Mallampet - Gandhi Maisamma route are thickly congested -- school buses / long distance buses and office-goes in IT corridor. He said Mallampet intersection at ORR is ready / main road widening is taken up and new link roads are being planned.

Hyderabad recorded highest growth in residential prices

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad has recorded the highest growth in residential prices, followed by Bengaluru. Latest ANAROCK Research data shows that Q3 2023 saw housing sales across the top seven cities create another new peak with approx. 1,20,280 units sold, against approx. 88,230 units in Q3 2022.

Average residential prices in the top seven cities collectively saw a double-digit growth of 11% in Q3 2023 against Q3 2022. At 18%, Hyderabad witnessed the highest yearly average residential price growth, followed by Bengaluru with a 14% annual rise.

In the wake of rising input costs and the significant sales growth, average residential property prices across the top seven cities collectively regis-

tered double-digit yearly growth of 11% - from Rs 6,105 per sq. ft. in Q3 2022 to around Rs 6,800 per sq. ft. in Q3 2023. Among the top seven cities, Hyderabad saw the highest (18%) jump in average prices. On a quarterly basis, average prices in the top seven cities jumped up by 5%.

"City-wise, Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) also topped in new supply with approx. 36,250 units added in Q3 2023 - a modest 1% annual growth," says Anuj

Puri, Chairman - ANAROCK Group. "Hyderabad, on the other hand, saw a 60% yearly rise in supply with approx. 24,900 units added in this period."

Approx. 1,20,280 units were sold in Q3 2023 - yearly increase of 36% and a quarterly jump of 5%. NCR, MMR, Bengaluru, Pune, and Hyderabad together accounted for 91% of the sales in the quarter.

The key cities contributing to new supply in Q3 2023 were MMR, Hyderabad, Pune and Bengaluru, which together accounted for 87% of the total additions.

Hyderabad added approx. 24,900 units in Q3 2023 compared to 15,530 units in Q3 2022 - a yearly rise of 60%. On a quarterly basis, there was 138% increase in new launches in the city

City witnesses heavy rainfall

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad witnessed huge downpour covering North Hyderabad including Kukatpally, Miyapur, Nizampet, Qutbullapur, Gajularamaram, Bachupally, Lingampally and Patancheru.

This led to slowdown in the Ganesh procession. Areas in Shaikpet, Tolichowki, Attapur, Asifnagar spreading into Gachibowli, Kondapur, Lingampally, Miyapur and Patancheru also witnessed

rainfall.

As per the IMD, light to moderate rain or thunder-showers are very likely to occur at many places over Telangana over the next week. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning is very likely to occur at isolated places in a few districts of Telangana. As per the IMD, 65.4mm rainfall was seen in Hakimpet, followed by 26mm in Hyderabad and 10mm in Bhadrachalam.



City-based SmartBike gets national award

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad-based "SmartBike", the largest Public Bike Sharing (PBS) company in India, operating the "Chandigarh Public Bike Sharing System" was awarded the prestigious first prize under mobility category, by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, at the Smart Cities Conclave and Expo at Indore on Thursday.

President of India Droupadi Murmu, presented the award at the ceremony. Among the 100-odd smart cities in India with public bike sharing, Chandigarh Public Bike Sharing System, cornered the coveted recognition.

SmartBike will be launching its full-fledged operations in Hyderabad soon.

Sintex BAPL invests Rs 350 cr in TS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Sintex BAPL Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Welspun Corp Ltd, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Telangana to set up a manufacturing unit in the State with Rs 350 crore investment on Thursday. This company will be manufacturing water tanks and pipes. The unit will create 1,000 jobs in the Telangana region.

Minister for Industries and Commerce KT Rama Rao, said, "We are delighted with Welspun setting up this new facility. The progressive policies and world-class infrastructure offered by the Govt of Telangana have encouraged Welspun World to set up new facilities in the State."

Traffic diversions cause confusion among passengers

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Traffic diversion in view of Ganesh immersion caused confusion among RTC passengers in the city. Though diversions had been issued by the traffic police, some RTC buses went on their own way and could not enter their defined destinations, which caused inconvenience to the passengers.

Some conductors gave the tickets to the passengers to areas which the bus could not enter. When they came to know that the bus could not enter the destination, passengers had been dropped off in the middle.

In an incident which hap-

pened on Thursday at 3 pm, a bus was diverted at LB Stadium which had to go to Afzalgunj.

Passengers got the ticket to Afzalgunj, which the conductor gave to them. The bus which actually goes from Nampally to Afzalgunj was diverted.

Without knowing the diversion routes, the conductor issued the tickets. Passengers had to get down from the bus 3 km away from their destination.

Passengers blamed the RTC that without knowing the diversions they had created inconvenience to them. When the commuters had asked the conductor for a refund, the conductor didn't pay them.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW



Police officials on duty take an aerial view of the shobha yatra from a helicopter

Drinking water sachets provided to devotees

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A total of 33.50 lakh water packets and freshwater have been made available in drums wherever necessary along the paths where the Ganesh processions took off. On the occasion of Ganesh immersion, Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) MD M Danakishore inspected the drinking water camps set up by the HMWSSB in the vicinity of Tank Bund, Necklace Road and People's Plaza on Thursday.

He enquired about the details of water quality and chlorine tests from the officials and expressed satisfaction with them. Danakishore said that free drinking water was arranged for the devotees who came for Vinayaka

immersion, like in the previous years. As part of the programme, 122 special drinking water camps were set up in the city at strategic places.

Staff was appointed at the water camps in three shifts to provide 24-hour service to the devotees who came for immersion. The quality of water in these camps was regularly tested by QAT teams and steps taken to ensure that the chlorine content was at an adequate level. The officials were directed to check the chlorine levels from time to time. It is stated that preventive maintenance measures have been taken to prevent water leakages and sewage overflow anywhere in the areas where the Shobha Yatra and processions proceeded.

Will Naidu gain public sympathy enough to hit back at critics?

The arrest of Telugu Desam Party president and ex-chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu for alleged involvement in the 'AP skill development scam' has given rise to a theory that he could benefit significantly from the sympathy factor that has emerged as a fallout of the way he was put behind bars. The larger question is: Can he gain public sympathy that is enough to beat his opponent? That is a moot question because in the past riveting political dramas involving politicians did not yield expected gains. But Naidu's admirers insist that he will get public sympathy enough to gain an upper hand over his critics. Neutral political observers have, however, kept a stiff upper lip.

After Naxalites made an attempt on his life in October 2003, Naidu, then combined AP's chief minister,

with his hand in plaster cast, used to be greeted by a large number of people every day for a few days at his home. People who had poured into Hyderabad from different places across combined AP used to chant "long live Naidu" before dispersing. Despite the show of strength by people described by the party as Naidu's die-hard supporters, the TDP suffered a humiliating defeat in the subsequent Assembly elections that brought Congress party's YS Rajasekhara Reddy to power. YSR went on to become the most popular chief minister in the annals of combined Andhra Pradesh.

Now, with Naidu in Rajahmundry Central Jail, the scene is being repeated for obvious reasons. A section of the media is projecting the visit of the rich and mighty, IT professionals and oth-

ers to Rajahmundry amid the perceived sympathy wave across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Neutral political observers see the present predicament of Naidu as just another episode in his mission to grab power. When he was the chief minister, he embraced the new economic policies, thereby distancing himself from not only the poor but also farmers and agricultural economists. He was praised to the skies by a section of the foreign media whose representatives had visited the combined Andhra Pradesh on a conducted tour. His affair with the media ended when the Congress bounced back to power in the combined Andhra Pradesh with a massive majority under the leadership of YS Rajasekhara Reddy. Despite succeeding in bringing together all non-Congress parties, including



SRIRAMULU K

the Communists, to beat YS Rajasekhara Reddy, Naidu suffered humiliation. He could rebuild his political career only after the tragic death of YS Rajasekhara Rao and the arrest of his son YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

In the 2014 Assembly elections,

the missteps of Jagan Mohan Reddy took their toll on YSRCP. In just four years, the political fortunes of Naidu nosedived.

What happened in four years and what led to Naidu's humiliating defeat once again in 2018 is attributed to people's anger over his policies that did not allow the benefits of the growing economy to trickle down to the poor. This is also one of the assessments by agricultural economists.

Naidu was accused of transforming the police force into instruments of state repression when mounted police personnel used their horses to suppress protesting Anganwadi women. Naidu's admirers may not hold him responsible for such events, but these painful events remain fresh in people's minds.

Today, the police in Andhra

Pradesh are not seen as instruments of repression. He, however has given carte blanche to the special force, called the Crime Investigation Department, to target high-profile politicians. They are doing their job and how! Even at court, Naidu's lawyers, instead of repudiating the charge of his involvement in the Rs 360 crore skill development project scam, harped on the failure of the CID police get the mandatory prior sanction under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act before instituting criminal proceedings against the former chief minister.

Naidu owes people an explanation about the disappearance of his personal assistant P Srinivas, an aide to him for many years. Even the Income Department officials examined Srinivas. The IT

Department even served a notice to Naidu over unaccounted income totalling Rs 100 crore. The Jagan Mohan Reddy government too should explain why the CID has not issued a lookout notice for Srinivas so far.

Followers of YS Rajasekhara Reddy recalled how Telugu Desam Party leaders had mocked them when Jagan Mohan Reddy was arrested and how they tried to tarnish the image of YSR. The TDP leaders threw mud at YSR, though it did not stick to the departed leader.

Considering that the skill development case is sub judice, suffice to say that Naidu seems to have lost his capacity as a great strategist. It remains to be seen how he wriggles out of the current situation.

The writer is a senior journalist

'Oil palm cultivation can be backbone of rural economy'

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

State Election Commissioner (SEC) C Partha Sarathi on Thursday expressed the opinion that oil palm cultivation would become the backbone of the farmers' household local economy.

Addressing a two-day workshop on oil palm cultivation at Sri Konda Laxman Babuji Telangana State Horticulture University at Mulugu in Siddipet district, Partha Sarathi, who worked as Agriculture Secretary in the government, said that the State government was planning to increase the area under oil palm cultivation to 20 lakh acres from the current 2 lakh acres over the next five years. The area under oil palm was a mere 45,000 acres in 2014. To reach the goal by 2028, the government offered incentives to farmers. The state government has not only distributed



State Election Commissioner C Partha Sarathi speaking at a meeting at Sri Konda Laxman Babuji Telangana State Horticulture University at Mulugu in Siddipet district on Thursday

saplings free of cost but also extended an 80 per cent subsidy for drip irrigation equipment, he said.

He said the oil palm was in great demand and it was being used in different industries. The industries, such as oil, cos-

metics, factory lubricants, soaps, candles, biofuels, etc. use it.

Most of the households are using it as palm oil in India, he said. India was importing a huge amount of palm oil. The Centre was spending huge for-

The area under oil palm was a mere 45,000 acres in 2014. To reach the goal by 2028, the government offered incentives to farmers. The state government has not only distributed saplings free of cost but also extended an 80 per cent subsidy for drip irrigation

exchange reserves. The farmers, who take up palm oil cultivation, can get huge profits.

Horticulture Commissioner M Hanumantha Rao, University Vice-Chancellor Girija Prabhakar and others were present.

BRS leaders have no moral right to criticise Narendra Modi: Aruna

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

BJP national vice-president DK Aruna has maintained that the BRS leaders have no moral right to criticise Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Talking to the media here on Thursday, she berated the BRS leaders. She asserted that Narendra Modi would not go back on his promises made to the people. That is why, the whole world praised him. He is unlike the BRS leaders.

Telangana State is nobody's fiefdom, she said, questioning the BRS what right would they have to ask Modi not to come to Telangana.

The projections of the Palamuru-Ranga Reddy Lift Irrigation Scheme have been hiked to Rs 60,000-70,000 crore, deviating from the original cost of Rs 36,000 crore to dupe the public, she said. She questioned the rationale behind the cost escalation.

Chief Minister K



BJP national vice-president DK Aruna speaking to the media in Mahabubnagar on Thursday

Chandrashekar Rao is betraying the people. Out of 31 motors of the LI scheme, only one motor was switched on, but the BRS is claiming as though it completed the project, she pointed out.

Many farmers who gave their land for the project are yet to get compensation for the lands alienated, she said.

Claiming that many people are migrating to Mumbai and

other regions in search of livelihood, she said. "Cannot the Ministers see the migration of people to Mumbai and other places," she questioned.

To win the elections at any cost, the Congress has been making promises that are not realistic and the Congress leaders were trying to cheat the people, she alleged.

The people know how the

Congress was not able to implement the promises made to the people of Karnataka.

Implementing six guarantees within 100 days of the formation of the government in Telangana is nothing but duping the people of the state, she observed.

The public meeting to be addressed by Narendra Modi has been arranged at Amistapur near Bhutpur on October 1, she said, appealing to people of undivided Mahabubnagar district to turn out in large numbers and make the event a grand success.

The ruling BRS leaders have been shooting their mouths as they liked, she said.

BJP national executive member and former MP AP Jitender Reddy, State unit of BJP secretary Premender Reddy, state treasurer of the BJP Santi Kumar and other functionaries of the BJP were present.

Every drop of river water will be utilised: Niranjana

PNS ■ WANAPARTY

The Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) government has been making efforts to utilise every drop of water which flows through Telangana State. Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao with his visionary foresight launched irrigation projects, said Minister for Agriculture S Niranjana Reddy on Thursday.

Speaking to the media here, the Minister said that Minister for Information Technology KT Rama Rao, Minister for Panchayat Raj Errabelli Dayakar Rao and Minister for Civil Supplies Gangula Kamalakar would visit the district. He unveiled a coffee table book on the progress of Wanaparthy district on the eve of the visit of the Ministers.

Wanaparthy Market Committee chairman Gattu Yadav, vice-chairman Vakati Sridha, District Shepherd Association president Kurumurthy Yadav and others were present.

Niranjana Reddy said that plans were made to ensure that there was no drinking water



Minister for Agriculture S Niranjana Reddy speaking to the media in Wanaparty on Thursday

shortage in Wanaparthy in future. Mission Bhagiratha's works were executed at a cost of Rs 425 crore. A total of 1,500 double bedrooms were built and distributed to the poor and also those whose lands were acquired for road widening. Survaram Sahithi Kalabahavan was built at a cost of Rs 5.75 crore, he said.

Apart from them, an IT Tower was being built. A Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian Market was built at a cost of Rs 20 crore. A super-market too would be set up on the premises of the Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian Market.

Survaram Pratap Reddy Library has a collection of many books for the benefit of the unemployed, youth and students, he said.

Foundation stones would be laid for the bypass road at a cost of Rs 76 crore and Pebbair highway at a cost of Rs 48 crore. Rajaprasadam would be renovated at a cost of Rs 22 crore and reconstruction of the dilapidated polytechnic college hostel building, he said. He recalled that the Yedula Reservoir was completed in record time. The reservoir would provide water for irrigation and drinking, he said.

Minister distributes Rs 2.75 cr funds for development of churches

PNS ■ VELPUR

Roads and Buildings Minister Vemula Prashant Reddy on Thursday distributed funds for the development of churches to the church committee members at a programme held at Lakkora ANG Function Hall in Velpur mandal of Nizamabad district.

They thanked Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao for sanctioning Rs 2.75 crore funds among 40 churches in the constituency.

The Minister said that the Chief Minister was treating all religions and religious people equally and with equal respect. The fruits of schemes introduced by the government reached every household.

Prashant Reddy said that he would not be able to forget the love and affection showered on him by Christians of Balkonda

constituency. The Chief Minister sanctioned Rs 2.75 crore from the CM's special development funds. Earlier, the government spent Rs 1.50 crore for the development of churches, he analysed.

The Minister thanked Christians brethren, women and religious leaders and conveyed his special gratitude to them. In all, 2000 Christians attended the event from all parts of the constituency.

They vowed to support Vemula Prashant Reddy.

While returning to Hyderabad winding up his tour of the constituency, a couple fell off a motorcycle which skidded on the road. The Minister stopped the convoy and enquired about the welfare. The woman sustained minor injuries in the incident. The Minister made the couple get into his escort vehicle and sent him to hospital.

Congress accuses BRS MLA of making false promises

PNS ■ BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) general secretary Edavalli Krishna on Thursday told the media that local MLA was making false promises that houses would be allotted to the poor. The MLA was misleading the poor by promising financial assistance for the construction of houses.

The Congress leader demanded that the local MLA release a white paper on how

many house sites were distributed and how many poor were benefited. He alleged that house sites were distributed to ineligible people. He also alleged that the MLA and his son demanded commission from Dalit Bandhu beneficiaries.

Krishna said that he would submit a memorandum to the District Collector soon. He would bring to the attention of the District Collector's attention the misdeeds. He accused the Municipal Chairaman and

36th ward councillor of allotting house sites to outsiders.

Congress party town unit president Rayala Shanthaya, party Palvancha town unit president Mallikarjun, party mandal unit president Ranga Rao, party leaders Lakshmidevi and Venkates wara Rao, INTUC district unit president Jalil Chava Veeraya, Shankar Naik, Venkateswarlu Baddi, Kishore Sirangi Sheenu Koppula, Ramesh Panchala, Nagabhushan and others were present.



TPCC general secretary Edavalli Krishna speaking to the media in Kothagudem on Thursday

Poll observer asks EROs, AEROs to ensure error-free voters' list

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

Observer for preparation of voters' list and State public enterprises special secretary Bharati Lakpati Naik has asked the EROs and AEROs to ensure error-free voters' list. She was reviewing in depth the amendment of the list of voters at a special meeting held at the integrated district offices' complex on Wednesday.

She asked the officials to take precautions while striking down names of the dead and those who have migrated to other areas from the list. While removing the names of the dead, the death certificate should be insisted. Similarly, while enrolling the new voters the documents needed are Aadhaar and other documents.

Later, she visited the polling booths set up at high school

and Urdu Medium school on Gandhi Road on one town area of the town and inspected the measures initiated by the booth-level officers to amend the voters' list.

She also visited the ZPHS polling booth in Basavaipalli in Devarakadra Assembly constituency and inspected the applications received seeking amendment to the names, objections received on the list of voters and rectification of the errors in the list. Similarly, in Jachchela she visited polling booth at Kaverammappeta school and went through the applications received seeking amending the names in the list of voters.

Earlier, Collector G Ravi Naik explained the visiting dignitary the series of measures taken on directions from the Election Commission of India to amend the voters' list.

Tribal areas making rapid strides in development: Harish Rao

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Minister for Finance T Harish Rao on Thursday said that tribal areas in the State are making rapid strides on all fronts in the new State of Telangana. The fruits of development reached all sections of people even in the remotest tribal hamlets, he said.

Speaking at a function, shortly after laying foundation stones for a new medical college in Mulugu and 33/11 KV sub-station at Ramachandrapuram village, the Minister said that the Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) government upgraded Mulugu, which was the Nagara Panchayat, to the status of district headquarters. Minister for Women and Child Welfare and Minister for Panchayat Raj Errabelli Dayakar Rao were



Minister for Finance T Harish Rao speaking at a meeting in Mulugu on Thursday

also present. The government sanctioned Rs 180 crore for the medical college.

He also distributed Gruhalakshmi and Dalit Bandhu cheques to the poor in Jagannally village. He distributed certificates to 11 health workers for extending good services to the people.

Speaking on the occasion, Harish Rao said that Mulugu

district has been making rapid strides in terms of development. He recalled that former Zilla Parishad chairman Kusuma Jagadish had actively participated in the movement for a separate Telangana. He strived for the development of Mulugu district, he said.

He said that the government has strengthened the health sector to ensure that the poor people secure holistic healthcare. The institution deliveries rose to 76.8 per cent now from a mere 30 per cent in the past. The Mulugu District Headquarters Hospital recorded 87.1 per cent institutional deliveries, he said. The government appointed 28 doctors in the District Headquarters Hospital. Apart from them, there are now 15 primary health centres and 57 Palle Dhavakanas, he said.

One drowned, two rescued during Idol immersion

PNS ■ BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

One person drowned in the Godavari river during Ganesh idol immersion on Thursday. The incident happened when the three persons participated in the Ganesh idol immersion at the river.

According to police, three persons entered the river to take a bath while attending the immersion of Ganesh idols.

Alerted by people, the personnel of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) swung into action and rescued two persons. The third person, identified as Ganesh was missing. The youths came from Veeraya Tanda under Tekulapally mandal in the district.

Some forces in TS trying to undermine Sanatana Dharma: Union Minister

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Minister of State for Food Processing Industries Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti on Thursday said that some people were trying to undermine Sanatana Dharma even in Telangana now.

The Union Minister participated in the Vinayaka Swagata Vedita arranged at MJ Market under the auspices of Bhayanagar Ganesh Utsav Samiti, along with former minister Eatela Rajender.

On this occasion, Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti told the media, "Razakars tried to destroy Sanatana Dharma, however, they were defeated. Like Razakars, these forces who are trying to undermine Sanatana Dharma will also face defeat".

Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti said that along with 33 per cent reservation for women,

Narendra Modi is credited with building the temple of Lord Rama in Ayodhya. She said that the people would be able to have a darshan of Ayodhya Rama from January 2 next year.

"There are no caste and class differences among us, we are all one. The Modi government held the special Parliament session in the new Parliament Building in a manner that reflected Indian culture in a great manner. In 2012, I participated in the Vinayaka procession in Hyderabad city as an MLA. I am happy that I got an opportunity to participate in Vinayaka Shobha Yatra after 11 years", she said.

Eatela Rajender said that once Shobha Yatra was celebrated only in Bhayanagar, but now it was being held in the whole of Telangana.

INDIA CORNER

Jharkhand IED blast : 1 CRPF man dead, 1 injured

Two CRPF personnel were seriously injured in an IED blast in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district on Thursday and one of them died later in the course of treatment in Ranchi, police said. The two CRPF personnel belonging to its elite Cobra battalion were grievously injured in the blast near a forest between Tumbahaka and Sarjomburu villages in Torito police station area of district during a combing operation against the Maoists by security forces, the police said. CRPF constable Rajesh Kumar and Inspector Bhupendra Kumar were airlifted Ranchi for treatment, IG Police Operations Anil V Homkar told. Rajesh Kumar of 209 Cobra battalion succumbed to his injuries during treatment, he said. Bhupendra Kumar is undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Ranchi, the IG added. Apart from CRPF's Cobra battalion, Jharkhand Jaguar of the state police and district armed police were involved in the combing operation against the Maoists, the police said. Several security forces were injured in the past few months in such incidents.



Cricketer Kapil moves HC for stricter laws against cruelty to animals

Legendary India cricketer Kapil Dev and his wife have approached the Delhi High Court challenging certain provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act that allow destruction of stray dogs in lethal chambers and extermination or destruction of any animal under the authority of any law. The petition came up for hearing before a bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Sanjeev Narula which granted time to the petitioners' counsel to place certain judgments on record. The high court listed the petition for further hearing on October 13. Petitioners Kapil Dev, his wife Romi Dev and animal rights activist Anjali Gopalan, said the petition was being filed on account of repeated instances of barbaric treatment meted out to animals showing the "most brutal and cruel face of humanity" and the "utter effete" response of law and the law enforcing agencies.



SC refuses to entertain PIL alleging exorbitant air fare

The Supreme Court has refused to entertain a plea alleging exorbitant air fares from destinations like Dubai to Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala. A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra asked the Kerala Pravasi Association, which filed the PIL, to move the Kerala High Court with its grievances. The PIL also challenged one of the rules of the Indian Aviation Act which permits airlines to set ticket prices, and alleged it violated the citizens' right to travel and resulted in exploitation of Indian travellers. "Having regard to the nature of the cause of action in the present case, we are of the considered view that it would be appropriate for the petitioners to take recourse to the remedy under Article 226 of the Constitution of India. Granting liberty to the petitioners to do so, the Writ Petition is disposed of," the bench said in its order on Wednesday. The association alleged the air fare to and from Gulf destinations to Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram has been exorbitant.



India's preparedness, response to war under lens of Parl panel

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's strategic operational preparedness in view of the current security scenario, its response to the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the cyber-security scenario in the country will come under the scanner of parliamentary panels.

The Parliamentary Committee on Defence, chaired by BJP member Jugal Oram, will also review the working of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), examine the role of the Indian Army in ensuring defence of the country and also study the resettlement policies, health-care facilities and pensionary avenues for ex-servicemen, and the agnipath scheme in the Armed Forces.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs, chaired by BJP member P P Chaudhary, will examine the government's efforts in countering global terrorism at regional and international levels, India's position in ongoing climate



The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology, chaired by Shiv Sena leader Pratap Jadhav, will review the cyber security scenario in India, emergence of artificial intelligence, safeguarding rights of independent content creators on social and digital media.

change negotiations, Russia-Ukraine conflict, its global impact and India's response; concerns and issues pertaining Indian students studying abroad. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology, chaired by Shiv Sena leader Pratap Jadhav, will review the cyber security scenario in India, emergence of artificial intelligence, safeguarding

rights of independent content creators on social and digital media. The committee will also examine issues related to the emergence of OTT platforms, norms and guidelines for media coverage, review of the performance of schemes under universal service obligation fund implemented by the public and private sectors and regulation of cable TV in the country.

Three Iranians, two Indians held after boat reaches Gujarat's Okha coast

○ Heroin, satellite phone seized

PNS ■ DWARAKA

Five men, including three Iranian nationals, were arrested from Okha town of Gujarat's Devbhumi Dwarka district allegedly with a satellite phone and 10 grams of heroin, police said on Thursday.

While three fishermen from Iran and an Indian named Ashok Kumar Ayappan (37) were on a boat which arrived at Okha coast near the under-construction 'Signature Bridge' on Wednesday night, Ashok's younger brother Anand Kumar Ayappan (35) was on the coast to receive them, an official said.

Tamil Nadu native Ashok, who used to work in Oman, took help of these three Iranian fishermen to reach Gujarat coast as his passport was seized by his sponsor firm and there was no other way to come back to India, Superintendent of Police Nitesh Pandey said.

He identified the three Iranians as Mustafa Baluchi, Jashem Baluchi and Amir Hussain Baluchi, all residents of Bandar Abbas there, and



said the five accused have been charged under provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, The Passports Act and The Foreigners Act. Among other things, police found a satellite phone from Ashok and 10 grams of heroin from one of the Iranian sailors, said Pandey.

"Ashok used to work as a mechanical engineer while his brother Anand used to work as an electrical engineer at Muscat city of Oman. Due to a dispute, the sponsor firm at Oman had seized Ashok's passport, making it impossible for him to come back. As a solution, his Iranian friend suggested he reach Gujarat via the sea route," said Pandey.

Militants openly instigating mobs in Imphal valley

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/IMPHAL

The worst fears for security agencies seem to have come true as militants have been seen moving around openly and instigating mobs in Imphal valley which have been on a rampaging spree after pictures of two missing teenagers surfaced on social media.

According to officials, during attacks carried out on a police party Wednesday evening, armed men dressed in black uniform were seen giving directions to the agitated youths to attack the police and many vehicles were then torched. The security agencies have been warning that militants belonging to United National Liberation Front (UNLF), People's Liberation Army (PLA) and other banned groups had become part of the mobs and carrying out sneak attacks on security forces as well as giving directions to the agitators.

Recently, the presence of insurgents was found within a mob that carried out an attack on security forces injuring a Lt Col of army near Pallel in Tengenoupal.



AFSPA is no solution to Manipur crisis: Irom Sharmila

Kolkata: A day after AFSPA was extended in most parts of Manipur, rights activist Irom Sharmila said the "oppressive law" was not a solution to the problems or ethnic violence in the state. Sharmila, hailed as the 'Iron Lady of Manipur', told PTI in a telephonic interview on Thursday that the BJP-led government at the Centre should respect diversity instead of working for uniformity through proposals like the Uniform Civil Code. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act or AFSPA was extended by another six months in Manipur on Wednesday, barring 19 police

station areas in the Imphal valley and an area that shares its boundary with neighbouring Assam. "The extension of AFSPA is not a solution to the problems or ethnic violence in the state. The Centre and the Manipur government have to respect the diversity of the region," she said. "The values, principles, and practices of different ethnic groups must be respected. India is known for its diversity. But the central government and the BJP are more interested in creating uniformity through proposals like the Uniform Civil Code," she added.

Kejriwal 'welcomes' CBI probe into bungalow renovation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday "welcomed" the CBI's preliminary inquiry into alleged irregularities in the construction of his bungalow while asserting that nothing will come out of it as there "is nothing wrong".

He also targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi and claimed the action showed his "nervousness".

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered a preliminary enquiry to look into alleged "irregularities and misconduct" by unidentified public servants of the Delhi government in connection with the construction of a new official residence for the chief minister, officials said on Wednesday.

Reacting to the CBI action, Kejriwal told reporters, "The prime minister is nervous. This shows his nervousness. The inquiry against me is nothing new. So far, inquiries have been conducted against me in more than 50 cases in the last eight years."

"It was said that Kejriwal



committed scam in building schools, bus scam, liquor scam, road scam, water scam, electricity scam. I may have faced the maximum number of inquiries in the world. Welcome this new inquiry. Nothing was found in any case. Nothing will be found in this also. What will you get when there is nothing wrong?" he said.

Earlier in the day, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Manoj Tiwari at a press conference here said the CBI probe would disclose the facts related to the tendering process of Kejriwal's residence. Kejriwal said, "What else

can be expected from a fourth pass king? Just keep playing the game of inquiry-inquiry for 24 hours, or keep giving speeches. Don't do any work. He wants me to bow down before him. But I am not going to bow down before them, even if they conduct as many fake inquiries as they want or file as many cases as they want."

"I also challenge him - just as nothing was found in all the previous inquiries, similarly if nothing is found in this inquiry too, will he resign for conducting a false inquiry?" the chief minister said.

CAUVERY ISSUE

Normal life to be hit during Karnataka bandh

PNS ■ BENGALURU

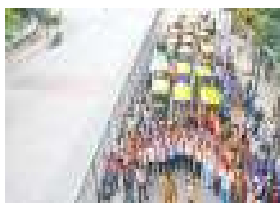
Normal life is likely to be affected, especially in the southern part of the state, with pro-Kannada and farmers' organisations calling for Karnataka Bandh' on Friday to protest the release of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu.

Kannada Okkuta', an umbrella organisation for Kannada outfits including factions of Karnataka Rakhshana Vedike, Kannada Chalavali (Vatal Paksha) and various farmers' bodies have given a call for the statewide dawn-to-dusk shutdown.

There will be a massive protest procession from Town Hall to Freedom Park in the city, in which people from all walks of life are likely to participate, the organisers said.

They have said that the bandh is for the entire Karnataka and that they will try to shut highways, toll gates, rail services, and also airports.

The opposition BJP and JD(S) too have extended their support to the bandh, as also



hotels, autorickshaws and hail riders associations in Karnataka.

"Autorickshaw Drivers' Union and Ola Uber Drivers and Owners' Association (OUODO) are supporting the bandh. We will take out a rally from Nayandahalli to the Freedom Park tomorrow," its president Tanveer Pasha told PTI.

An office bearer of the Karnataka State Private Schools' Association told PTI that they were extending moral support' to the bandh.

"We have told our association members to use their discretion regarding the bandh. We have communicated to our students that there are chances of schools remaining shut," the office-bearer said.

Swaminathan, the genius who sowed it right

PNS ■ CHENNAI

"I was really fortunate to have worked with him very closely from 2007 to 2014 when we formed a coalition for food and nutrition security..." Pradhan, research coordinator, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) South Asia region, told PTI.

"He truly revolutionised Indian agriculture, worked towards self-sufficiency in food production when India was grappling with the threat of food insecurity and transformed India from a net importer of food grains to being a lead exporter to the global food basket. He was always looking for solutions for sustainable farming and improving the lives of the farmers," Pradhan added.

Swaminathan was born in Kumbakonam on August 7, 1925. His father's involvement in the freedom movement and Mahatma Gandhi's influence inspired his passion for agricultural science.

He worked closely with former prime ministers of India, playing a pivotal role in the success of the Green Revolution, catapulting India from being a net food importer to a leading exporter and ensuring a "Hunger-free

India & World", according to his foundation.

Describing him "the greatest agricultural scientist the world has ever seen", Justin Mohan, former secretary of the National Biodiversity Authority, said Swaminathan's contribution to designing agricultural policies and schemes helped not only India but other countries as well. "I had the opportunity to work with him during my tenure in Sri Lanka after the end of the armed conflict to assist the farmers of Sri Lanka and also had an opportunity to implement the Kuttanad Package, a wetland development project, in Kerala which was conceived by him," Mohan, chief conservator of forests, Kerala said.

"His ideas were far ahead of his times, very practical, result oriented have helped to improve the production and productivity of cereals, pulses, millets, fruits, and vegetables. For example, the idea of issuing Soil Health Cards to farmers was first recommended by him in 2008 as part of the Kuttanad Project, which was later implemented across the country as the Central Soil Health Card Scheme during 2014-15," he said.

A Soil Health Card is used

to assess the current status of soil health and, when used over time, to determine changes in soil health that are affected by land management.

The tributes poured in. Environmentalist Sunita Narain took to X' (formerly Twitter) to thank Swaminathan for his vast contribution to the world.

"RIP #Professor MSSwaminathan. We will greatly miss your leadership, your insights, and your support. As chairperson of #CSE, you gave us strength and you taught us the value of humility and humanism. Thank you for all you did for us and for the world," Narain, director of the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) New Delhi, said in a post.

T Jayaraman, senior fellow - climate change, M S Swaminathan Research Foundation, remembered the many contributions of its founder and mentor.

"Prof. M. S. Swaminathan's many awards included the most prized one of all, the respect and affection of millions of Indian farmers, in his lifetime, for bringing his science to their service and welfare and that of farmers all over the world," Jayaraman tweeted on Thursday.

Exposure to air pollution linked to stroke risk

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Short-term exposure to air pollution may be linked to an increased risk of stroke, according to a study.

The meta-analysis, published recently in the journal Neurology, defined short-term exposure as occurring within five days of the stroke.

A stroke can cause lasting brain damage, long-term disability, or even death. Signs of a stroke can range from mild weakness to paralysis or numbness on one side of the face or body.

"Previous research has established a connection between long-term exposure to air pollution and an increased risk of stroke," said study author Ahmad Toubasi, from the University of Jordan in Amman.

"However, the correlation



"Previous research has established a connection between long-term exposure to air pollution and an increased risk of stroke," said study author Ahmad Toubasi, from the University of Jordan in Amman.

between short-term exposure to air pollution and stroke had been less clear. For our study, instead of looking at weeks or months of exposure, we looked at just five days and found a link between short-term exposure to air pollution and an increased risk of stroke," Toubasi said.

The analysis involved a review of 110 studies that included more than 18 million cases of stroke. Researchers

looked at pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide, ozone, carbon monoxide and sulfur dioxide.

They also looked at different sizes of particulate matter, including PM1, which is air pollution that is less than 1 micron (m) in diameter, as well as PM2.5 and PM10.

PM2.5 or smaller includes inhalable particles from motor vehicle exhaust, the burning of fuels by power plants and other industries as well as forest and grass fires.

PM10 includes dust from roads and construction sites.

People who had exposure to a higher concentration of various types of air pollution had an increased risk of stroke.

Higher concentrations of nitrogen dioxide were linked to a 28 per cent increased risk of stroke and higher ozone levels were linked to a 5 per cent increase, the researchers said.

Indians now represent over 10 % of US visa applicants

□ One million non-immigrant visas processed in 2023

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The US Mission in India on Thursday surpassed its goal of processing one million non-immigrant visa applications this year and said that Indians now represent over 10 per cent of all visa applicants worldwide, including 20 per cent of all student visa applicants and 65 per cent of all H&L-category (employment) visa applicants. The number of visa applications processed in India are 20 per cent more than the numbers processed in pre-Covid 2019 and 2022 and Indians made over one in 10 applications worldwide, the embassy said.

US Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti personally handed over

the one millionth visa to a couple, who will be heading to the United States to attend their son's graduation at MIT. Dr Ranju Singh, senior consultant, Lady Hardinge College was elated at receiving an email from the US Embassy about hers being the one millionth visa this year. Her husband Puneet Dargan, was granted the next visa. The couple will be travelling to the US in May 2024.

Greeting the couple as "Mr and Mrs One million", Ambassador Garcetti enquired about their travel plans to the US and made suggestions about what not to miss in the country as a tourist.

"I couldn't be happier today, happy for India, Indians and the United States. Prime Minister



(Narendra) Modi and President (Joe) Biden had said let's do a better job in moving faster on the visas and so the Ministry of External Affairs here approved more bodies in places like Hyderabad...more people who can work on these visas, we changed our systems, we worked harder and smarter and we hit a million visa applications processed this year," the ambassador said.

'Dummy schools' adversely affecting students: HC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Unchecked growth of 'dummy schools' is adversely affecting students who genuinely fulfil the 'local education' criterion and allows ineligible candidates to secure seats under the Delhi state quota, the Delhi High Court has said. The high court issued notice and sought the response of the Delhi government, Central Board of Secondary Education, Directorate General of Health Services, Delhi University (DU) and Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (GGSIU) on a petition against proliferation of dummy schools.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Big guns roll out

The BJP leadership is taking no chances in Madhya Pradesh, fielding 3 Union Ministers in Assembly polls

With elections to five Assemblies scheduled by this year end, political temperature is already on the rise. However, as the situation persists today, the battleground of Madhya Pradesh has taken the lead in evoking competition and wonderment more fierce than in the other four States. As the X factor in these elections for the BJP is the party's decision to bring back to fight the Assembly polls three Ministers from the Union Government, at least four sitting MPs representing the State and other senior party office bearers holding influence across castes, religion and region. The ruling party has come up with its second list of 39 candidates for Madhya Pradesh. This move comes as the party faces tough competition from the Congress. The BJP has made a bold move by fielding heavyweights, including Union Ministers, to maintain its stronghold in the State. Union Ministers Narendra Singh Tomar, Prahlad Patel and Faggan Singh Kulaste, along with party MPs Rakesh Singh, Ganesh Singh, Reeti Pathak and



Uday Pratap Singh, as well as general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya, will now contest the Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections. The inclusion of these prominent leaders as candidates has also opened up the field for chief ministership aspirants; Narendra Singh Tomar, Prahlad Patel and Kailash Vijayvargiya are now considered strong contenders.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan has held the CM's post for nearly 20 years, with a brief interruption after the 2018 elections. The BJP is concerned about fatigue setting in regarding Chouhan. During a recent rally, Prime Minister Modi did not mention Chouhan even once. Meanwhile, Congress is emerging as a formidable con-

tender under former CM Kamal Nath's leadership. This election promises to be a riveting showdown, with significant implications for Chouhan, besides the State's political future. Though Chouhan has served as the Chief Minister for multiple terms and is widely credited as a popular leader, his reputation and political future are now closely tied to this poll's outcome. If the BJP manages to secure a comfortable majority, it will consolidate his position within the party and strengthen his leadership in the State. On the other hand, a loss could raise questions about his ability to win elections and govern effectively. Kamal Nath, a seasoned politician, is working to consolidate the party's base and capitalise on anti-incumbency sentiments. The Congress' performance in recent byelections has been promising, boosting its confidence. The party is banking on issues such as unemployment, rural distress. Its campaign is centred on the promise of "change and improved governance". Meanwhile, the BJP's decision to field its stalwarts is an ominous sign for Chouhan and shows the party's dwindling faith in his leadership. Anti-incumbency and a number of unsavoury incidents have led to the erosion of his reputation which could cost the party an important State in the Hindi heartland. The BJP would not like that to happen just ahead of the 2024 general elections.

PICTALK



ISRO chief S Somanath with others at Aadi Jyotirlinga Shree Somnath Mahadev Temple in Saurashtra on Thursday PTI

Impact of menopause on sleep can be debilitating

It is imperative that both individuals and society recognise the significance of addressing sleep issues during menopause

Menopause is a phase that marks the cessation of menstruation and reproductive function. Beyond the widely known physical changes, menopause brings a range of challenges, and one often underrated area of impact is sleep. Sleep becomes elusive for many women during this phase.

Menopause and sleep Menopause typically occurs between the ages of 45 and 55, with the average age being around 46 for Indian women. As the ovaries cease producing estrogen and progesterone, various physiological changes occur, giving rise to a multitude of symptoms. One of the most common complaints is sleep disturbances. According to the National Sleep Foundation, about 61% of women going through menopause report experiencing sleep problems. The hormonal changes that accompany menopause have a direct impact on sleep.



Menopause can lead to shorter sleep durations. On average, women in their 40s and 50s sleep about 30 to 60 minutes less.

Daytime fatigue: The ripple effects of disrupted sleep patterns are felt during the day. Women undergoing menopause often report increased daytime fatigue, leading to reduced productivity and a diminished quality of life.

Strategies for improved sleep Despite the challenges, there are effective strategies that can help women improve their sleep quality during menopause.

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Strategies for improved sleep Despite the challenges, there are effective strategies that can help women improve their sleep quality during menopause.

● Create a sleep-conducive environment by keeping the bedroom dark, quiet, and comfortably cool. Invest in a comfortable mattress and pillows. Make sure to avoid any screen time for at least an hour or two before sleeping.

● Establish a regular sleep schedule by going to bed and waking up at the same time every day, even on weekends. This helps regulate the body's internal clock.

tion, deep breathing, and progressive muscle relaxation can help reduce stress and promote better sleep.

● Engage in regular physical activity but avoid vigorous exercise close to bedtime. Limit caffeine and alcohol intake, especially in the evening.

● Consult a healthcare professional if sleep disturbances become severe.

Menopause is a natural phase of life, and while sleep disturbances may seem inevitable, they are not insurmountable. By understanding the science behind these disruptions and embracing strategies to mitigate them, women can embark on a journey toward restful nights and energized days. From healthcare providers offering tailored guidance to workplaces providing flexibility to accommodate sleep-related challenges, collective efforts can foster an environment where women can navigate this transitional phase in a better manner.

(The writer is Co-Founder and Head of Health Outcomes and Programs, Elda Health; views are personal)



AMEEYA KULKARNI

ment. The Lancet study compared and analysed the PM 2.5 levels with levels of antibiotic resistance and made a disturbing discovery that the higher the pollutant level, the greater the antibiotic resistance. PM 2.5 are smaller than human hair and contains antibiotic resistance elements.

As these pollutants travel through the ambient air, they disperse antibiotic resistance elements, which can then be inhaled by humans which in turn sets in motion the resistance. The concerning aspect is that antibiotic-resistant bacteria can withstand antibiotic treatments, rendering the drugs ineffective against them.

The data for this research was collated from 116 countries utilising sources like ResistanceMap, the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control Surveillance Atlas, and the PLISA Health Information Platform. Overall, nine pathogens and 43 drugs were analysed. It was observed that the surge in antibiotic resistance among bacteria is largely attributed to the indiscriminate use of antibiotics. Repeated and widespread

antibiotic usage can empower bacteria to develop resistance over time, often facilitated by Antibiotic Resistance Genes (ARGs). Pathogenic bacteria, responsible for infections and diseases, can acquire antibiotic resistance through ARGs in a process known as horizontal gene transfer.

The Lancet health report concluded that the need of the hour is to address the PM2.5 levels. Without this, antibiotic resistance may increase by approximately 17%, with related deaths rising by 56% globally by 2050. Conversely, adhering to the World Health Organization's recommended PM 2.5 level of 5 µg/m³ could lead to a 17% reduction in antibiotic resistance and a 23% decrease in deaths. But this is easier said than done. Of the world's 30 cities with the worst air pollution, 21 are in India. Capital New Delhi is the worst with PM 2.5 being nearly 10 times higher than the World Health Organisation levels.

According to the CleanAir organisation India sees 2 million early deaths and a loss of 95 billion to the economy due to PM 2.5. Given these bleak conditions, India needs to cover a lot of ground to rein in PM 2.5 levels while there is still time. The National Clean Air Program (NCAP) is a deter-

mined step in the right direction, but it needs more grit and resolve behind it if the initiative has to succeed.

Some major steps are the need of the hour for India. Firstly, immediate curbs on ammonia release in farms are essential, this must be followed by a full ban on refuse burning. Apart from this rural brick kilns must be persuaded to shift to cleaner kiln-firing technologies. Urgent efforts also need to be made to convert coal-based power plants to clean energy, as this by itself will make a huge difference. To make this a reality, India must make a push for creating the correct financial architecture through investment funds with a dedicated green focus that can play an instrumental role in catalysing the growth of green industries and simultaneously addressing the twin problems of air pollution and climate change. These funds would combine a returns-driven strategy with the sustainability imperative and accelerate investment in green industries. Measures such as these can help India fight air pollution and prevent a calamitous future where common antibiotic efficacy is not held to ransom by polluted air.

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

Air pollution renders antibiotics ineffective

A 'Lancet' study has established a connection between bacterial antibiotic resistance and air pollution; inhaling PM 2.5 can lead to antibiotic resistance

There was a sense of palpable urgency to address climate change, air pollution and degradation of the environment at the recently concluded three-day G20 summit held in New Delhi. Led by India, the G20 nations agreed to urgently accelerate their actions to address environmental crises and climate change challenges with the help of a green development plan. This in a way reflects the prophetic warning to world leaders by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres at the 27th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) held in 2022, that humanity is on a "highway to climate hell with a foot on the accelerator". Because 80 per cent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions emanate from G20 nations, the member nations needed to understand the gravity of the problem and ensure meaningful progress in this regard.

As the stakes for mankind keep rising thanks to rising pollution and climate change, keeping global average temperatures below 2 degrees centigrade alone may not be the urgent goal of the nations. Newer and more perilous problems are arising due to unabated pollution levels. A recent study published in the health journal "Lancet" has established a connection between bacterial antibiotic resistance and air pollution, particularly PM 2.5. The study suggests that PM 2.5 contains elements of antibiotic resistance, and inhaling this pollutant can lead to an increase in the spread of antibiotic resistance. The authors of the study aimed to estimate the global premature death toll caused by resistance to antibiotics due to PM 2.5 pollution.

PM 2.5 refers to particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometres or smaller. These particles, consisting of solid and liquid elements, are of varying sizes, with some, like dust and soot, visible to the naked eye and others, such as PM 2.5, only observable under electron microscopes. Inhaling these pollutants can pose serious health risks, especially to the respiratory sys-



tem. The Lancet study compared and analysed the PM 2.5 levels with levels of antibiotic resistance and made a disturbing discovery that the higher the pollutant level, the greater the antibiotic resistance. PM 2.5 are smaller than human hair and contains antibiotic resistance elements.

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SOME MAJOR STEPS ARE THE NEED OF THE HOUR FOR INDIA. FIRSTLY, IMMEDIATE CURBS ON AMMONIA RELEASE IN FARMS ARE ESSENTIAL, THIS MUST BE FOLLOWED BY A FULL BAN ON REFUSE BURNING

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS

Sir — The 2nd Law Commission of India is poised to submit a report on the feasibility of conducting simultaneous elections in the country and is likely to recommend it for the 2029 elections. The Commission, led by Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi, has diligently worked on this final report since February 2023. The report, destined for submission to the Law Ministry, currently headed by Arjun Meghwal, arrives at a pivotal juncture. It coincides with the government's formation of a high-level committee, under the leadership of former President Ram Nath Kovind, tasked with examining and providing recommendations for simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha, state assemblies, municipalities, and panchayats, all in the name of 'national interest'. According to reports, there's a possibility that the government may forward the Law Commission's report to the Kovind-led committee for their consideration. The Law Commission is likely to propose synchronized elections within the next five years, with the goal of implementing simultaneous elections by 2029.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

IS BJP ANTICIPATING THE INEVITABLE?

Sir — Is the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) sensing the inevitable? If not, then why does the BJP's recent move in Madhya Pradesh (MP) signal the party's intention to contest the elections under collective leadership, with prominent figures from different regions in the fray? In a surprising development that has set political circles abuzz, the BJP has announced its decision to field seven Lok Sabha members, including three union ministers—Narendra Singh Tomar, Prahlad Singh Patel, and Faggan Singh Kulaste, as well as its national general secretary, Kailash Vijayvargiya. One can't help but wonder whether this move signifies that the BJP lacks strong candidates in MP, necessitating the deployment of Lok Sabha members, many of whom owe their electoral success to the Modi wave.

By fielding these seven sitting MPs, the

Dada Saheb Phalke Award for Waheeda



Congratulations to the versatile actor, Waheeda, who, at the age of 85, has earned the prestigious Dada Saheb Phalke (lifetime achievement) award for 2023. Her illustrious acting career spanning five decades, from 1955 to 1991 and then from 2002 to the present, not only showcases her exceptional acting skills but also highlights her endearing, friendly, and controversy-free persona. Beyond her acting prowess, she is a multifaceted personality—a generous philanthropist, a passionate advocate for education, and a dedicated worker for poverty eradication through the Rangade organization. Her cinematic journey has embraced various languages, including Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Bengali, Marathi, and English. Her latest endeavor, "Skater Girl" (2021), is a bilingual

film in Hindi and English, leaving us eagerly anticipating her next project in 2023-2024.

Waheeda has been rightfully honored by the Government of India with prestigious civilian awards such as the Padmashree (1972) and the Padma Bhushan (2011). Her contributions have been multidimensional, collaborating with two generations of iconic families in the film industry, including Raj Kapoor, Amitabh Bachchan, Sunil Dutt, Dharmendra, and many more. One might ask, with which distinguished actor or director did she not collaborate?

She has worked alongside all major heroes and directors of her time, such as Gurudutt ("Pyaasa," "Kagaz Ke Phool"), Manoj Kumar ("Aadmi"), Rajendra Kumar ("Kaala Bazaar"), Devanand ("CID," "Guide"), Dilip Kumar ("Ram Aur Shyam"), Dharmendra and Rajesh Khanna ("Khamoshi"), Sunil Dutt and Amitabh Bachchan ("Rashma Aur Shera"). Notably, she even took on a double role in "Man Mandir" (1971). We wish Waheeda, now 85 years old, a life filled with happiness, excellent health, peace, prosperity, and continued progress, along with her family. We eagerly await news of her next movie.

PV Srinivas Sreelekha | Secunderabad

INDIA-CANADA TIES

Sir — The recent discussions by Canada's Defence Minister regarding bolstering ties with India underscore the importance of nurturing strong international partnerships. In a world grappling with numerous challenges, collaboration among nations assumes increasing significance.

Canada and India share democratic values and common interests, making this relationship particularly noteworthy. Enhancing diplomatic, economic, and defense ties between these two nations can yield mutual benefits and contribute to global stability.

Md Maimul Safui | West Bengal

party aims not only to secure the weaker seats but also to influence neighboring constituencies through the continued presence of these seasoned politicians. It's worth noting that the BJP has employed a similar strategy in past assembly elections. In the 2021 West Bengal Assembly elections, the BJP fielded five of its sitting Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha MPs. Only two of them managed to secure victory in their respective constituencies, while the remaining three faced defeat. Nevertheless, it appears that the BJP faces an uphill battle in MP following the perceived misrule under Shivraj Singh Chouhan's leadership. Furthermore, Jyotiraditya Scindia has proven to be a liability, with most of his associates returning to the Congress fold. These factors could spell deep trouble for the BJP.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN RESPECT INDIA'S SOVEREIGNTY

Canada must not allow its soil to be used for anti-India activities



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

Story of agents executing transnational operations, intelligence agencies sharing crucial information, backchannel diplomatic conversations, political instability and every chapter from a racy spy thriller is playing out for the world audience, with Canada and India in the lead for the past few weeks. In a hurried and perhaps half-baked allegation Canadian PM Justine Trudeau blamed Indian agencies for carrying out extra-territorial executions of Canadian citizens.

India was quick to retort with a terse statement, which instead pointed out the long-standing issue of concern between the two countries in the form of Canada allowing Indian separatist groups to operate out of their country. The Indian statement said unequivocally "We have seen and reject the statement of the Canadian Prime Minister in their Parliament, as also the statement by their Foreign Minister. Allegations of the Government of India's involvement in any act of violence in Canada are absurd and motivated. Similar allegations were made by the Canadian Prime Minister to our Prime Minister and were completely rejected. Such unsubstantiated allegations seek to shift the focus from Khalistan terrorists and extremists, who have been provided shelter in Canada and continue to threaten India's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We reject any attempts to connect the Government of India to such developments. We urge the Government of Canada to take prompt and effective legal action against all anti-India elements operating from their soil."

What is happening in the bilateral relationship is not a recent development but has been brewing for decades. Nearly forty years back India had demanded the extradition of a terrorist from Canada, responsible for one of the worst plane bombings in history, killing everyone on board an Air India flight. The several convicts responsible for the act of terror were never convicted by Canada, despite repeated inputs from India abandoning victims' families chasing long winding court cases for decades.

The reason Canada allows or even nurtures these anti-India forces



on its soil leads through the corridors of domestic politics. Millions of Indians particularly from Punjab make a substantial chunk of the Canadian demography. While most of them earn an honest living and are peace-loving, some notorious elements have managed to sneak into Canada, working through well-oiled semi-government machinery. Over some time, these criminals and terrorists wanted by India, have managed to control important real estate through the Gurudwaras committees. These mafia-controlled gurudwaras also serve as a conduit for fulfilling the immigration dream of thousands of Punjab youth, working with their India handlers across Punjab and several other states of north India. The modus operandi for getting ground force for staging anti-India acts from Canadian soil starts with a letter issued by Indian handlers, about the youth facing discrimination, and persecution due to his religion, in India. This sets the ball rolling for the youth to get an easy Canadian citizenship, on mercy grounds and feeds into domestic political narratives. In the present case too, the trigger was PM Trudeau's falling political popularity. A few months back he accused China of meddling with domestic politics even as he was trying to warm up the India bilateral, through a trade deal.

Canada understands the rising importance of India in the new global order, especially with China and Russia facing flak. It understands that a powerful, resilient, democratic India is important for a prosperous Indo-Pacific region, which indirectly translates to bringing more prosperity to its citizens. However, the domestic political concerns rise above geopolitics, and retaining the chair as PM seems more important for Trudeau at the moment. It may be argued that several news reports have pointed to US intelligence aid in Canadian allegations against India, however, the US knows which way the wind is blowing.

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

Regulatory boost to self-sufficiency in energy



UTTAM GUPTA

Modi Government is giving considerable policy support for the exploration of hydrocarbons so that investors can earn assured return on their investments

Delivering the 75th Independence Day address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi set the country a target to achieve self-reliance in energy production by boosting the gas-based economy (besides giving a push to electric mobility and hydrogen production). Modi wants the share of natural gas (NG) in the total energy mix to go up from the current around 6 per cent to 15 per cent.

Currently, India imports 50 per cent of its NG requirement. This is because domestic production is hovering around a low of 28.6 - 34 billion cubic metres (bcm) in 2020-21 to 2021-22 (down from a peak of 52 bcm in 2010-11). There is a dire need to give a massive push to domestic output to meet the target. India has 26 sedimentary basins (SBs) covering an area of 3.4 million sq km that could be searched for hydrocarbon resources. Only six of the SBs are under commercial exploitation; these too are sub-optimally utilized.

Hydrocarbon exploration is a highly capital-intensive and technology-intensive business involving a long-gestation period. It is risk-prone especially when it comes to drilling in deep/ultra-deep and high-pressure/high-temperature (D/UD/HP/HT) fields in offshore areas such as the Krishna-Godavari (KG) basin. However, these areas offer maximum promise in terms of reserves.

Multinational companies (MNCs) such as ExxonMobil, Chevron Total etc. which have the technology and resources can be enthused to take long-term bets in the Indian hydrocarbon sector provided the government offers them an opportunity to earn an attractive return on their investment in a 'sustained' basis. This in turn, requires that their efforts in the discovery and development of NG fields don't face regulatory hurdles leading to the commencement of production within a reasonable time frame and that they can sell the gas 'freely' at a 'remunerative' price. In all three areas, the MNCs faced impediments in the past. In recent years, the Modi - government has made significant progress in removing these though, a lot more ground remains to be covered. Let us look at the regulatory landscape.

Nearly 50 percent of SB area or 1.73 million sq km lies offshore. Out of this, until recently 0.69 million sq km lay in the prohibited zone (fondly referred to as 'No go' area) due to security reasons. Now, the incumbent government has released a 0.67 million sq km sedimentary basin lying offshore. This should give a big boost to exploration and production (E&P) activity.

Until hitherto, E&P firms were getting lease rights for short tenure though extendable by 10 years for gas/oil & gas fields and by five years for oil fields. They had to go to the bureaucrats to seek approval for an extension of the lease which came in the way of undertaking long-term investment commitment.

Now, the government has granted E&P rights over the entire economic life of the allotted fields (this could extend up to 30 years, even beyond depending on the available reserves and the pace of their exploitation) instead of the extant system of allowing extensions. This will enthrone global firms to undertake long-term investment bets as they know for sure in



advance that they will get to operate the field for their entire economic life

The government has passed the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill, which says that seismic surveys (it is done in the initial stage to determine evidence of economically viable hydrocarbon resources below the ground) won't be treated as a non-forest activity. This implies that explorers would be granted prompt access to forest areas, thereby saving time spent on seeking permits.

Under the Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP), also known as the Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) launched in 2017, E&P firms are allowed to pick up a block of their choice unlike the earlier New Exploration and Licensing Policy (NELP) (launched in 1999) wherein they had to accept what the government offered. Besides, under OALP, an operator gets a composite license to search for hydrocarbon in whatever form; for instance, if it is 'shale gas', she won't need a separate license for extracting it.

For long, E&P efforts were hamstrung by cumbersome procedures, multiple approvals and bureaucratic red tape. Approvals were needed at every stage viz. preparation of field development plans (FDP) including its revision, and extension of the contract, drilling wells, conducting tests to determine the commercial viability of the field, annual work program (AWP), laying the pipeline, reviewing production and so on. As many as 37 processes and procedures were required to be followed by a firm-awarded block under NELP.

Team Modi has substantially liberalised and de-bureaucratised the approvals. It has identified 22 processes for which self-certification of documents by contractors is accepted. Besides, it has provided for pre-approved clearance of blocks which will substantially cut the time lost in taking approvals. The government is also keen to opt for globally recognised and accepted dispute resolution mechanisms and play-based exploration.

Moreover, the 'revenue sharing' model under the OALP (currently in vogue) allows the operator to share an agreed percentage of the revenue with the Government of India (GOI) unlike the production sharing contracts (PSC) under erstwhile NELP wherein she could fully recover the cost incurred in exploration and development of the field before sharing profits with the GOI. The former does away with an additional layer of approval which was intrinsic to the latter wherein the costs incurred at every stage were subject to official scrutiny.

Coming to the selling of NG and realisation therefrom, in respect of gas from fields given under HELP/OALP, the operators are allowed freedom of pricing and marketing. This is a big positive for E&P firms that are being allotted fields under this policy. Furthermore, supplies from the so-called marginal fields (there are a total of 149) previously with the central PSUs viz. ONGC and OIL auctioned to private entities during 2020/21 are also eligible for freedom of pricing.

However, supplies from the so-called Legacy fields which account

for the bulk of the current gas supply are subject to government control over price as well as the marketing of the produce. The Legacy staff includes fields given to ONGC/OIL on a 'nomination' basis, those given under NELP and pre-NELP blocks. There are two price ceilings.

One, call it 'normal' price. Based on the recommendations of the Kirit Parikh committee and in force from April 1, 2023, this price expressed on a per million British thermal units (Btu) basis is arrived at by taking 10 per cent of the monthly average of the Indian crude basket in the preceding month and notified every month. The price thus calculated is subject to a price band of US\$4-6.50 per Btu.

Second, there is a 'premium' price applicable to the difficult fields. These are deep/ultra-deep and high-pressure/high-temperature fields (the high-profile KG-D6 operated by Reliance Industries and neighbouring KG-DWN-98/2 operated by ONGC fall in this category). Technically though the price of NG flowing from these fields is market-determined, this is subject to a ceiling linked to the prices of alternate fuels, viz., fuel oil, naphtha and imported LNG.

Even as the committee has recommended de-regulation of difficult gas fields' price by January 1, 2026, and that of normal price by January 1, 2027, the government is silent on this. Having substantially liberalized the regulatory space, besides removing the remaining hurdles, Modi needs to take the next logical step of unshackling marketing and pricing for supplies from the Legacy fields.



TEAM MODI HAS IDENTIFIED 22 PROCESSES FOR WHICH SELF-CERTIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS BY CONTRACTORS IS ACCEPTED

(The writer is a Policy Analyst, views are personal)

Save that beating heart with positive vibes

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is one of the major causes of mortality. On this World Heart Day let us resolve to correct our lifestyle, and adopt positivity to be from heart ailments

Roughly more than 17 Million people die each year from cardiovascular diseases, an estimated 32% of all deaths worldwide. Heart Attack is rising rather steeply in our country especially among young people in their 20s & 30s. To a very large extent, heart attack is self-inflicted by our faulty lifestyle, which we adopt right from childhood. Genetics definitely play a role but it can be modified by lifestyle optimisation.

The prevalence of Coronary Artery Disease in adults in India in the urban population is 14 per cent, while in the rural population, it is 8 per cent. One should not have a heart attack, especially when he or she is in their prime years. In fact, we are the cause and we are the cure of



HK CHOPRA

(The writer is chief cardiologist, Medanta Moolchand heart Institute, New Delhi; views are personal)

this malady of a premature heart attack at a young age. A healthy heart is an expression of our own perceptions, thoughts, interpretations and choice-making. Enhancing awareness about prevention and timely prediction and treatment of heart attack is the only solution to reducing the rising menace of heart attack in our country. Women are fortunate to have a lower prevalence of coronary artery disease before the age of 45 i.e. menopause. After menopause, the prevalence of CAD is the same as in men. Over 25 million people die of Heart Attacks in our country every year. Out of these, 16 lakh die within an hour of a Heart Attack before even medical aid is available.

While the mortality rate

from cardiovascular disease (CVD) has decreased by 60% in Japan and Finland, 50% in the USA, Canada and Australia and 25% in Europe, according to WHO projections, there will be a significant rise in mortality from CVD in India. The female population is at greater risk because metabolic syndrome The risk is significantly high in India.

Prevention of coronary artery disease must begin earlier especially at a young age before being victimised by a faulty lifestyle including erratic eating habits, drinking, smoking, high levels of stressful life with lack of sleep and burning both ends of the candle at the same time, coupled with a sedentary lifestyle, uncontrolled hypertension, dyslipidemia and diabetes

which harden the arteries of the heart with increase tendency for clotting all of which establish the bedrock of heart disease.

The theme of World Heart Day this year is:

- Use your Heart to Beat CVD (Cardiovascular Disease)
- Work with your Heart, Know your risk factors
- Have Coordinated Efforts to improve your own Lifestyle and Diet
- Motivate yourself and others to reduce CVD Risks
- One Heart, One Home, One World
- Use your Heart to "Make Perfect Choices for a Healthy Heart for ourselves, our family, our community, our corporate, our society, our nation and the

world

The four sutras for an optimal Healthy Heart are love, compassion, peace and harmony" to make perfect choices for a healthy heart and beat CVD. These sutras (Suture or stitch) are possible through the regular practice of yoga, meditation and perfect lifestyle optimization, they connect the heart with the consciousness through a network of nerve fibres of the autonomic nervous system (Heart Plexuses) which are chemically mediated, nurtured with human values release natural opiates: endorphins, serotonin, dopamine acetylcholine, oxytocin and nitric oxide which preserve the endothelial functions, thereby maintaining the patency of coronary arteries and the har-

monious friendly biochemical environment within the blood vessel the heart thus remains healthy.

If kindness, compassion, love, peace and harmony are missing with cynical behaviour and hostility, then the heart is undernourished and stressed and the physiology changes to pathology. Fear, jealousy, hatred, anger, greed, lurking grief, vengeance, vindictiveness, bigotry, arrogance, greed, lust, ego and other negative emotions release jittery molecules (Chemicals) which comprise epinephrine, norepinephrine and cortisol which produce coronary artery diseases, alter the endothelial functions, agitate the platelets, oxidise Low-Density Lipoproteins (LDL). They may enhance the tendency of a vulnerable

plaque in the coronary artery to rupture, erode and ulcerate, thereby enhancing aggregation of platelets and enhancing thrombus (clot) formation thus leading to angina, acute Coronary Syndrome, Heart Attack, and even sudden Cardiac Death and Brain Attack. Just one fit of anger or negative stress can produce a massive heart attack

Emotions of love, compassion, peace and harmony are the most powerful sutras to have a healthy heart and may help in the prevention, regression and reversal of coronary artery diseases. This is possible by practicing perfect choices, and regular practice of meditation and yoga. Thus, the "Health of the Heart" is a matter of your own choice, and not a matter of chance.

MONEY MATTERS

Eveready relaunches Ultima brand to push premiumisation

Eveready Industries has relaunched its 'Ultima' brand in a new avatar to tap the dry cell battery market, a growing premium segment. Company managing director Suvamoy Saha said the company expects a double digit growth in the second half of the current fiscal driven by good monsoon. Emphasising on the company's focus on the dry cell battery segment, he said, "Our volume from the premium segment is currently just 4-5 per cent, but we expect it to double in the next 3-4 years." He attributed the growth to the increasing demand for high performance batteries driven by the penetration of new devices. The premium battery segment, which currently accounts for only six per cent of the total battery market, is rapidly expanding at a compound annual growth rate of 25 per cent. The total battery market is estimated to be approximately Rs 3000 crore and Eveready commands 53 per cent market share.



Emami acquires 26% stake in Axiom Ayurveda

Homegrown FMCG maker Emami on Thursday announced the acquisition of a 26 per cent stake in Axiom Ayurveda, which markets beverage products under the brand 'AloFruT', for an undisclosed amount, paving its entry into the juices segment. Through this strategic investment, the Kolkata-based leading personal care and healthcare maker has entered into the packed juice category by acquiring a 26 per cent stake in Axiom Ayurveda and its subsidiaries, according to a joint statement. "This investment is in line with Emami's strategy to invest in the Health & Wellness segment and will also help Emami to enter into this growing segment," said a regulatory update by the company. The acquisition of 26 per cent Axiom shares is "through primary infusion and secondary buyouts" and is expected to be completed within one month, the company said.



Net claims of non-residents on India rise to US\$ 379.7 billion

Net claims of non-residents on India increased US\$ 12.1 billion to US\$ 379.7 billion in the June quarter on account of higher rise in foreign-owned financial assets, according to RBI data released on Thursday. Increase in reserve assets, at US\$ 16.6 billion, was the largest contributor to the rise in Indian residents' foreign assets during the April-June period, followed by direct investment, loans and trade credit, as per the data on India's international investment position for June-end. "The rise in net claims of non-residents during the quarter was on account of higher rise in foreign-owned financial assets in India (US\$ 36.2 billion) when compared with Indian residents' overseas financial assets (US\$ 24.1 billion)," the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said. "Inward portfolio investment (US\$ 15 billion) and foreign direct investment (USD 8.9 billion) together accounted for two-thirds of the rise in foreign liabilities of Indian residents," it added.



Govt inks 8 MoUs with IBM to provide curated courses

Equipping youth with future-ready skills

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Agencies of the ministries of education and skill development and entrepreneurship have signed eight agreements with IBM under which curated courses will be provided to empower youth in India with future-ready skills. Minister of Education and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan presided over the signing of the MoUs on Wednesday. "The collaboration will focus on the co-creation of curriculum for skilling learners across school education, higher education, and vocational skills on emerging technologies like AI (including generative AI), cyber-security, cloud computing and professional development skills," the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship stated. Speaking at the MoU signing event, Pradhan said that India, with its vast and youth-



ful population, stands at the cusp of tremendous potential. To harness this demographic dividend, it is crucial to equip the youth with the necessary skills to excel in today's modern workforce. "This collaboration marks a significant stride toward our vision of a 'Skilled India' and in scaling up digital skills training and skill building in emerging technologies using IBM SkillsBuild platform," the minister stressed. He said the

partnerships will go a long way in making our learners harness the true potential of technology, making them future wealth creators and entrepreneurs of the society. The collaboration between IBM and Ministry of Education and Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship spans across three core levels of education. IBM will provide access to digital content from IBM SkillsBuild for high school

students, teachers, and trainers on cutting-edge skills in schools identified by the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS), National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS). This program will be offered online, via webinars and in-person workshops conducted by IBM's CSR implementation partners. In addition, IBM will refresh CBSE's AI curriculum for Grades 11 and 12, develop a cyber skilling and blockchain curriculum for high school students to be hosted on IBM SkillsBuild. IBM will continue its partnership with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and work closely with the Directorate General of Training and state vocational education and skilling departments to onboard job seekers, including long-term unemployed, and school dropouts to IBM SkillsBuild and enable them to gain the technical and professional skills required to re-enter the workforce.

India retains 40th rank in the Global Innovation Index 2023

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India retained its 40th rank out of 132 economies in the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2023 rankings, according to a report by the Geneva-based World Intellectual Property Organization. Government think tank NITI Aayog said in a statement on Thursday that India has been on a rising trajectory over the past several years in the GI -- from 81st position in 2015 to 40 this year. The consistent improvement in the GI ranking is owing to the immense knowledge capital, vibrant start-up ecosystem, and the amazing work done by the public and private research organisations, it added. According to the statement, the GI is a reliable tool for governments across the world to assess the innovation-led social and economic changes in their respective countries. Over the years, the GI has established itself as a policy tool for various governments and helped them to reflect upon the existing status quo, the statement added.

Ban on rice export is regulation, not curbs for food security

India to WTO's agri committee meet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has said that the export ban on rice is a regulation rather than a restriction and is crucial for securing the food security of 1.4 billion people, according to an official. This was stated by India in response to concerns raised by a group of countries including the US during a meeting of the WTO's Committee on Agriculture in Geneva on September 27. The Geneva-based official said that in the meeting, India reiterated its commitment to ensure food security in importing countries by granting exemptions to those in need upon their governments' requests. The Indian government has already allowed exports of non-basmati rice to Bhutan (79,000 tonnes), UAE (75,000 tonnes), Mauritius (14,000 tonnes) and Singapore (50,000 tonnes) through the National Cooperative Exports Ltd (NCEL).



On July 20 this year, India banned exports of non-basmati white rice to boost domestic supply and keep retail prices under check during the upcoming festive season. "The Government of India has the commitment that in case of food insecure, vulnerable countries and neighbouring countries request, it will provide with the required quantity of rice or wheat," the government official said. India has also argued that, in order to prevent private players from manipulating market

conditions, advance notifications were not provided in the WTO. Furthermore, these measures are temporary and are regularly reviewed to allow necessary adjustments based on domestic demand and supply situations. A group of member countries of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) including the US has raised concerns about banning the export of non-basmati white rice by India, saying the decision may impact import-dependent nations, the Geneva-based trade official said.

New investor registrations on NSE hit 1 cr in last 8 months

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Leading stock exchange NSE on Thursday said the number of new investor registrations reached 1 crore mark on its platform in the last eight months, taking the total to over 8 crore. These new investor registrations are not restricted to top-tier cities and cities beyond top 100 accounted for 45 per cent of new investor registrations, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) said in a statement. "The eight crore unique PAN investors correspond approximately to around 5 crore unique households in India amounting to around 17 per cent households directly investing in the Indian stock market via the NSE's extensive nationwide network of trading members," it said. Total number of unique client code accounts registered with the exchange was at 14.9 crore -- clients could register with more than one trading member and included all registrations done to date. In terms of regions, states from northern part of India accounted for 43 per cent towards the last 1 crore new investor registrations, followed by west (27 per cent), south (17 per cent) and east (13 per cent).

Brookfield, Axis Energy Ventures JV plan green energy projects

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Brookfield and Axis Energy Ventures announced on Thursday that their second joint venture aimed at establishing a renewable energy development platform. Axis Energy Ventures will contribute with its existing wind and solar power projects spread across the country. Brookfield, through the Brookfield Global Transition Fund II (BGTF II), has committed to provide equity capital of up to USD 845 million for the construction of power projects. Under this strategic partnership, both partners will lever-



age their expertise and resources to provide curated energy solutions to industry participants, including government entities, corporate customers and emerging industries like green hydrogen. Nawal Saini, the Managing Director of Brookfield said, "Building on our successful

collaboration, we are delighted to be partnering again with Axis Energy Ventures to develop high-quality renewable power projects. We foresee strong growth in India due to the Government's target of 500 GW of renewable energy by 2030, and its objective of energy security.

Credit growth may moderate to 13-13.5%: Report

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The credit growth is likely to moderate to 13-13.5 per cent this fiscal but will improve slightly to 13.5-14 per cent next financial year as the economic pace picks up, according to a report. The biggest factor driving the moderation is low demand in wholesale credit, which constitutes as much as 60 per cent of the overall credit. Wholesale credit is seen slowing to 11-11.5 per cent this fiscal from a decade high of 15 per cent in 2022-23, Crisil Ratings said in a report on Thursday. A key monitorable, which will determine credit growth going forward, is the extent to which deposit growth picks up for banks, Crisil Ratings said. The retail credit demand will



continue to go up in this fiscal but corporate credit demand is lagging, which is likely to pick up in the next fiscal on capex revival, the report noted. In absolute terms, overall bank credit stood at Rs 148 lakh crore in FY23, clipping at 15.9 per cent year-on-year, and this is likely to grow to Rs 168 lakh crore or 13-13.5 per cent this

fiscal and further grow to Rs 191 lakh crore or 13.5-14 per cent in the next, it added. According to the agency, the credit demand moderation this fiscal will be because of the following four key reasons -- gross domestic product growth is expected to fall to 6 per cent this fiscal from 7.2 per cent last fiscal, which will impact the

overall credit growth. Secondly, the easing of inflation with some softening in commodity prices. A significant part of the growth in wholesale credit (comprising corporates and micro, small and medium enterprises) last fiscal was driven by higher working capital demand in a high-inflation environment. Going forward, inflation levels are expected to be lower than the last fiscal. Thirdly, robust bond issuances in the first half of this fiscal with the changes in interest rates have seen a substitution of bank credit with debt capital, which also supported wholesale credit growth last year, especially in the first half. But this is not seen to the same extent this year.

FSSAI to food vendors: Don't use newspapers for food packaging

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Food regulator FSSAI has asked food vendors and consumers to immediately stop using newspapers for packing, serving and storage of food items citing significant health risks. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is closely working with state food authorities to monitor and enforce regulations in this regard. FSSAI Chief Executive Officer (CEO) G Kamala Vardhana Rao has "strongly

urged consumers and food vendors across the country to immediately stop using newspapers for packing, serving and storing food items." He expressed concern over the use of newspapers for wrapping or packaging food and also pointed out significant health risks associated with this practice. "The ink used in newspapers contains various bioactive materials with known negative health effects, which can contaminate food and lead to health issues when ingested," FSSAI cautioned on



Wednesday. Additionally, printing inks may contain chemicals, including lead and heavy metals, that can leach into the food, posing serious health risks

over time, the regulator said. "Moreover, newspapers are often subjected to various environmental conditions during distribution, making them susceptible to contamination by bacteria, viruses or other pathogens that may transfer to the food, potentially causing foodborne illnesses," FSSAI said. FSSAI has notified the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018 which strictly prohibits the use of newspapers or similar materials for storing and wrapping food.



Equity investors become poorer by Rs 2.95L cr as markets fall

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Investors' wealth eroded by Rs 2.95 lakh crore on Thursday as markets fell by nearly 1 per cent amid feeble global cues and unabated foreign capital outflows. The 30-share BSE Sensex fell 610.37 points or 0.92 per cent to settle at 65,508.32. During the day, it plunged 695.3 points or 1.05 per cent to 65,423.39. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms fell by Rs 2,95,144.09 crore to Rs 3,16,65,937.80 crore. In Asian markets, Shanghai ended in the green while Tokyo and Hong Kong settled lower. Trading was closed in South Korea for a holiday. European markets were trading in the negative territory. The US markets ended on a mixed note on Wednesday. Global oil benchmark Brent

crude dipped 0.38 per cent to USD 96.18 a barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 354.35 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data. "After a firm opening, markets lost ground immediately and plunged deep into the red in the second half, as IT, metals, FMCG and automobile stocks led the slump in key benchmark indices. Markets were range-bound in the last few sessions and one was anticipating a sharp fall, and the weak global factors have been weighing on investors' minds for quite some time. "If the US dollar and bond yields maintain their ascend, the downward trend may continue for some more time," Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Research (Retail), Kotak Securities Ltd, said.

ICO to help curb child labour in coffee plantations

PNS ■ BENGALURU

The International Coffee Organisation would focus on social sustainability in the coffee sector, especially farming, to ensure there is no child labour involved in it, its executive director Van sia Nogueira has said. The ICO is the main inter-governmental organisation for coffee, bringing together exporting and importing governments to tackle the challenges facing the world coffee sector through international cooperation. Its member governments represent 98 per cent of world coffee production and 67 per

cent of world consumption. "If we talk about social sustainability, we have very, very restricted laws in many of these countries. I'm not sure where we are doing a benchmark right now about the social part but that's our focus in the future," Nogueira told PTI in an interview on the sidelines of a World Coffee Conference here. According to her, there are some countries that are very strict about child labour, but there are also some others where the laws are more flexible. "There is a discussion for example, in terms of the child labour. There is a discussion



about what they call the family business. It is a part of your family, it is your sons, your daughters, then this is a family business, then this could

not be considered as a child labour but it has been questioned in a lot of countries," she said. Nogueira, however, pointed

out that sometimes child labour or children assist their parents in their family business in some countries but the ICO "would need to check how to do it." "...we need to be sure that the children will have access to school, they have to be inside the education system in the country. They need to have access to the house," she said. In her country Brazil, child labour is prohibited completely even for family-run businesses. To a question on rating coffee producing countries in terms of best practices in farming, sustainability and other benchmarks, she said

Costa Rica was doing well in the management of farms and the profitability of the business. "If you talk about productivity, then we will talk about Brazil and Vietnam; the productivity per hectare. These are the benchmarks for Robusta and Arabica," she said. Bengaluru hosted the four-day World Coffee Conference-2023, where representatives, businessmen and growers from over 80 countries took part, which concluded on Friday. According to Coffee Board of India officials, Karnataka contributes about 70 per cent of total coffee production in the country.



Amit Sadh embarks on a soul-stirring motorcycle travel

Actor Amit Sadh, who was on a month-long motorcycle trip, speaks of his experience of the trip, and also doing the best for the places he had visited.

PNS| HYDERABAD

Actor Amit Sadh recently completed his month-long motorcycle trip around the country, and it's not just about adventure for him. He's also very committed to protecting our natural beauty.

During his journey, he's been to many places like Balasinor, Ahmedabad, Jodhpur, Jaipur, Delhi, Chandigarh, Theog, Sangla, Kaza, Jispa, Purne, Padum, Kargil, and Leh. What's special about his trip is that he's doing his best to keep these places clean and beautiful. He's setting a good example for all travellers.

He stated, "I truly love my country and I'm deeply concerned about the environment. I don't want to see it being harmed. One remarkable stop on my journey happened in Rakchham, where I took a break but went beyond that. I voluntarily took the initiative to clean up the area, gathering the discarded garbage left behind by tourists. My actions reflect a profound belief that every traveller has a responsibility to preserve the cleanliness of our surroundings and minimize our impact on the environment."

When he geared up for a soul-stirring journey that promises to redefine the meaning of adventure, culture, and personal transformation. Armed with a motto that resonates with the hearts of bikers worldwide, that's when he embarked on a month-long motorcycle journey covering its entire length and breadth.

From Mumbai's Khar to the rugged terrain of Leh

Ladakh, he started his exhilarating journey from the bustling neighbourhood: his route took him through a captivating tapestry of diverse landscapes and cultures. Each destination had been carefully chosen to unravel unique aspects of India's cultural richness.

"The motorcycle journey is about more than just traveling a certain distance. It's a celebration of India's vibrant culture, with three compelling reasons driving my wanderlust. As I travelled through the heartlands, I immersed myself in local traditions, taste regional flavours, and connect deeply with the diverse people I meet. From enjoying a warm cup of chai at a roadside tapri to relishing hearty meals at rustic dhabas, he was determined to experience the authentic essence. At the core of this expedition is my unwavering passion for adventure, love for exploration, and camaraderie shared among fellow riders, embodying the true spirit of a biker."

Motorcycles are more than machines for Amit; they are agents of transformation and personal growth. This extraordinary journey was an opportunity for Amit to share his inspiring story of how biking has influenced his life, offering a testament to its profound positive impact.

Talking about the trip Amit added, "This journey was not just about riding; it was about

discovering the soul of India, one mile at a time. I wanted to meet the people of India, connect with them, and embrace the rich culture that defines our nation. From the smallest of interactions to the grandest of landscapes, this ride is about experiencing the essence. And motorcycles, they have been an integral part of my life. They have transformed me as a person, and I cherish every moment I spent on two wheels.

Whenever I get time from shooting, you'll find me riding. This journey was a celebration of that connection."

After a captivating encounter with Nawab Sultan Salauddinkhan Babi, the prince of Balasinor, Sadh's journey led him to Ahmedabad where he shared

moments of camaraderie. Talking about his experience Amit said, "Embarking on this journey has been driven by my deep love for people and my desire to connect with their stories and cultures. Ahmedabad, in particular, holds a special place in my heart. It's vibrant atmosphere and, of course, its delectable food, especially the Gujarati thali, has a unique charm. Sharing a meal with members with those who have supported my journey means the world to me. This experience, where we came together over the flavours of Gujarat and conversations about life, will undoubtedly be etched in my memory forever. It's moments like these that make this journey a transformative and soul-enriching adventure."

Amit Sadh's journey of self-discovery and cultural immersion is nothing short of extraordinary. Each location has

been meticulously chosen to unravel the intricate tapestry of India's cultural heritage.

On his journey, Amit made sure to interact with his fans on highways, farmers, villagers, truck drivers, and the royal family of Balasinor where he took a halt and dinner with them.

Also participating in another significant event, Amit graced the Outback festival which is India's annual adventure pilgrimage to the highest motorable adventure and music festival for bike enthusiasts. What made the trip more special was that he also cleaned several areas with villagers setting a good example for tourists and locals alike.

Talking about this one, Amit Sadh said, "I believe that life is an incredible journey, much like my month-long bike adventure across India. It's not just about the destinations we reach, but the experiences we gather along the way, the people we meet, and the cultures we embrace. Every twist and turn in the road is an opportunity for personal transformation."

Amit Sadh has two exciting projects lined up — the much-awaited second season of *Duranga* and a cameo appearance in *Sukhee* alongside Shilpa Shetty.

In his upcoming movie, *Main*, he portrays the role of an encounter specialist, demonstrating his versatility and unwavering commitment to his craft!



Busting myths around cardiovascular diseases

Cardiovascular disease, a non-communicable disease is also known as a silent killer. According to the World Health Organization, India reports for one-fifth of the deaths worldwide.

This World Heart Day, let us bust some of the common myths associated with this disease.

Myth #1: Chest pain is the only sign of a heart attack

Not always, although chest pain or discomfort in the chest is a common symptom, one can experience other subtle signs such as nausea, shortness of breath, or discomfort in one or both arms, the jaw, neck, or back. Do not ignore these early symptoms and consult your physician.

Myth #2: Patients with cardiovascular disease should not exercise

Many people are advised to slow down and take it easy once they are diagnosed with a heart-related disease. Whereas, a sedentary lifestyle is perilous. Physical activity strengthens the heart, improves blood circulation keeps it healthy. However, exercise is not advisable for acute heart stroke patients till the healing process for a stipulated time which may range between 4 to 6 weeks. Otherwise, it is advisable to stay active and practice at least 30-45 minutes of light exercise regularly. Engage in strength training and light weights and bands. Initially start with 10 - 15 minutes of exercise and gradually increase by 5 - 10 minutes a day. Exercise at least 3 times a week.

Myth #3: Heart Diseases run in the family, thus it's unavoidable

Almost 90% of the heart diseases are preventable. Distant from each other, one can reduce the occurrence of heart-related ailments. Apart from hereditary factors, lifestyle plays a larger role in heart disease than inheritance. Lifestyle modifications lower the risk factors such as high blood pressure, diet, diabetes, smoking, and work-life imbalance, which should be recognized and controlled to prevent or delay the onset of heart disease. Changing one's lifestyle, by engaging in exercise, healthy eating habits, and avoiding smoking or excessive alcohol reduces the risk of heart attack by more than 50%.

Myth #4: Cardiovascular diseases are more likely among men than women

Women under the age of 50 are more likely than men of the same age to succumb to a heart attack. The cardiovascular diseases are not gender biased, women are equally susceptible to this disease, the risk of heart-related ailments increase post menopause and if you are undergoing menopause, treatment for breast cancer, depression, endometriosis, and hypertension disorders during pregnancy.

Heart Healthy Diet to Prevent Cardiovascular Diseases

A healthy heart and a balanced diet are the same sides of the coin. Following a heart-healthy diet can lower your bad cholesterol (LDL) and increase good cholesterol (HDL). Some of the easy-to-follow tips for a heart-healthy diet are:

- **Limit sodium intake:** Watch sodium intake in your daily diet. Do not exceed 2.3 mg/day
- **Control portion size:** Portion size plays a crucial role in a heart-healthy diet. One should watch the quantity and quality of food that goes on the plate. It also helps in avoiding overeating, maintaining a healthy weight, and being mindful of what you are eating. A balanced meal will have all the nutrient values in the required portion
- **Eat an array of fresh vegetables and fruits:** Fresh fruits and vegetables are loaded with a variety of antioxidants, minerals, and multivitamins that are good for heart and overall health. Binge on fresh fruits and vegetables. Ensure you include a bowl of assorted vegetable salad and fruit in your daily meal
- **Select whole grains and high protein-based foods:** Whole grains are high in fiber. It helps in digestion and also play a vital role in cholesterol reduction. It also helps in controlling sugar levels and helps in weight loss.
- **Limit unhealthy fats and trans fats intake:** We need fat in our daily meals, however, all fats are not good for our health. Avoid trans fats and saturated fats that are not good for one's heart. Avoid consuming deep-fried food on a regular basis. Consume good fats/monosaturated fats like dry fruits, nuts, seeds, and clarified butter.
- **Treat yourself occasionally.**

(The author, Dr. Sanjay Bhat, is a Sr. Consultant - Interventional Cardiology, at Aster CMI Hospital.)

Vipin Sharma reveals 'not charging a penny' for few films says, 'My whole idea is to help & create cinema that makes a difference'

TEJAL SINHA

An actor who for not one or two, but had taken a break from acting for 15 long years, today, one might remember actor Vipin Sharma playing the character of the strict Indian dad Nandkishore Awasthi in *Taare Zameen Par*. And since then there's been no looking back!

So many years down the lane, he has become one of the actors bringing to us back-to-back releases and acclaimed projects *Sirf Ek Banda Kaafi Hai*, *Tiku weds Sheru*, *Guns and Gulaabs*, and *Haddi*, to name a few on the recent note. An excited Vipin Sharma, who feels great working on these films and some amazing filmmakers, calls it as a 'win-win' situation in all of the ways. May or may not, one of the fears an actor would have on the professional front could be being typecasted. And according to the Simmba actor, it would be the biggest fear. He recalls, "Post-*Taare Zameen Par*, I had to put in a lot of effort to say a NO to a lot of work and make some people unhappy. I didn't want to do the same kind of roles again and again. I'm glad that I was able to take that step and create a space for myself. Now I've been doing all kinds of roles. My desire is to always work with the right kind of people, people who are like-minded, and it's fun to work with them."

One of his recent works *Guns and Gulaabs* has been in the news for quite some time now. The reason — it was late actor Satish Kaushik's last project he had worked on! Any actor who had worked with him remember him for his jolly, down-to-earth, and happy-go-lucky nature that he'd always had with him, be it on sets, screen or in real-life. The last time that the *Kick* actor had met him was just a day before at the *Holi* party organised by Shabana Azmi and Javed Akhtar. "I had met him in a part long long ago and I felt really great about

Actor Vipin Sharma, known for bringing out his versatility every time on-screen, gets candid with *The Pioneer* about bringing back-to-back releases, recalling moments with late actor Satish Kaushik, mastering the art, and more.

him. When I got to know that I'll be working with him, I got very happy I finally got to work with him. During the shoot, since all my scenes are pretty much with him, up until his part, he always focused on his own dialogues, was very receptive to ideas, and had always shared anecdotes from his journey. It was great fun working with him. I was very much in shock about his death because I had met him the very before day before he passed away. He was very excited about *Guns and Gulaabs*. We chatted briefly and next day that news came out. It was a shock because I had just seen him and during the shoot also he was very cautious of his health, he used to tell me maine aaj 8000 steps kar liye. He was very religious about reading scripts in the morning. It was great to meet a person like him and learn from him and it was a fantastic experience."

There was also a phase in his life when he was having a 'fight it out situation' and hunting for challenging roles. He goes on to recall how in order for him to experiment with himself, get an idea about him, and do different kinds of roles, he did have to say a 'No' to a lot of people and projects. "What happens often is that when the film indus-

try has a certain idea of you, they want to see you in a certain light, they think this is the best for you but you have to turn around and say No because you need to be like let me choose. Once you are cast in a film, you are cast for a certain role and you can't say I want to do that role. It does become a bit of a struggle. I had to let down on projects where I wanted to do certain roles, but I was given something else. Everybody goes through that. It takes almost 10-15 years for an actor to settle down and people also understand what this actor needs and what kind of a role will attract this actor. So they end up coming to you with those roles which is happening to me now. They are now coming up with roles they think I can get excited about," shares the *Guns and Gulaabs* actor, who first tries to understand the style of the film that in the end would dictate your style of acting. He adds, "I think it's the style of the film that dictates your behaviour and I always follow that. I don't forget the style and do my own acting. That would actually harm the film. The world of the film is more important than



you as an actor fitting in it. I keep an eye on that and that helps me to be different. I always focus on my part and I'm also very respectful of the other actors that I'm working with. I've always made sure to not be in competition with anyone other than myself. Every role is a competition for me in itself. I don't overprepare myself."

While every actor has certain criteria they look for in a project, Vipin as an actor first tries to know about the film and the people associated with it. No matter if he just has a minute of screen space in the film, if the project according to him is good and important it's a 'yes-yes'. An alumnus of the National School of Drama, he often looks to work with new people, without looking into the projects they've done in the past. "I have done about 7-8 films without charging a single penny," he reveals in this exclusive chat and the reason he says, "They were really important films and quite a lot of them won national awards and great reviews. My whole idea is to help and create a cinema that makes a difference which is important to be made. I have compromised on certain things but whatever I do, I do it with utmost honesty. If something is not my kind of film, I'll never be dishonest with the film."

Now as we come to an end of the amazing chit-chat with the adept actor, he goes on to share about his upcoming projects. "I have absolutely two brilliant films coming up one is with Tarsen Singh from Hollywood. Filmmaker from Punjab making films and ads in Hollywood for almost 30 years. He has made his first Indian film set in Punjab based on a true honour killing. It is already running in a lot of film festivals and completion in British Film Institute. They are planning a big release in the US. The second film is called *Monkey Man* where I have a very different character in that, gearing up for a big release in North America," signs of the affable actor.

what's brewing?

LISTINGS

New Material Recover Facility launched

HDFC Bank and Centre for Environment Education (CEE), in partnership with Nirmal Municipal Council and ESREE Green Works Pvt. Ltd. (service provider) launched Material Recover Facility (MRF) in Nirmal. The Material Recover Facility (MRF) was launched by the Chief Guest Alolla Indrakaran Reddy, Minister of State

for Endowments, Law and Forest, Environment, Science and Technology of Telangana in the presence of Varun Reddy (IAS), District Collector along with the commissioner and other district officials from Municipal Council, HDFC Bank & Centre for Environment Education (CEE). The Material Recover Facility (MRF) is being established under the project 'Rural & Urban Landscape free of dry & plastic waste, which is an initiative of HDFC Bank, in partnership with Centre for Environment Education (CEE) and ESREE Green Works Pvt. Ltd. (service provider). The MRF will enable segregation of all types of dry waste; including plastic that will add value to the waste supply chain.

Hisense India elevates home entertainment

Hisense India unveiled its latest television models, the U7K, U6K and the E7K in India. These advanced smart TVs are now exclusively available on popular e-commerce platforms like Flipkart and Amazon, as well as at major retail stores like Croma and Reliance Digital across India. These televisions, each distinguished by unique features and capabilities, serve as a testament to Hisense's

steadfast dedication to providing unmatched viewing experiences. With extraordinary attributes such as Mini LED brilliance, billion-plus vibrant color palettes, and intelligent AI enhancements, these televisions are set to revolutionize the way we enjoy content. For a limited time offer, customers who buy the newly launched TV models from Hisense between October 1st and November 15th will receive an additional one-year warranty, in addition to the standard 2-year warranty. Furthermore, Hisense brings these technological advancements to consumers at compelling price points, with the U7K starting at just Rs 59,999/-, the U6K at an attractive Rs 26,990/-, and the E7K at an enticing Rs 24,999.

Chowman's now at Hyderabad

With its massive success spreading across Kolkata & Bangalore, and Delhi-NCR Eastern India's No 1 Chinese Chain of Brands "Chowman" now enters into the City of Nizams with its first dine-in for Hyderabad. Blooming amongst those cacophonies of Hyderabad, where people's love for Chinese rules the heart, Chowman's motto lays upon "Democratization of Fine dining and Neighbourhood Dining Experience." After reaching heights with its best of Oriental

Cuisines, comprising an array of traditional Chinese and Thai dishes today Chowman has entered one more city as it opens its 32nd outlet in Hyderabad. Having the largest delivery fleet & its very own Chowman App, the brand, finally makes a big leap with its first dine-in outlet covering an area of 1178 Sq. Ft at Plot No-532, Vivekanandanagar Colony Road Street, Kukatpally, Hyderabad-500007, Telangana St (Opposite Reliance Trends). With its cosy sitting area, a warm ambience dominated by the soothing, instrumental tune of the Chinese ethos, decors and interiors paralleling an ancient ambience of China, Chowman brings a world within itself.

HeartYourOwnHeart Campaign

In celebration of World Heart Day, MediBuddy, India's largest digital healthcare platform, invites individuals to take a moment to reflect on their heart health and encourages everyone to #HeartYourOwnHeart. MediBuddy motivates people to pause and

consider the essential organ that keeps them alive - the heart. This campaign urges individuals to prioritise their heart health and make lifestyle choices that promote a healthier heart. With this initiative, MediBuddy aims to spark a heartwarming movement that motivates people to embrace a heart-healthy lifestyle. It's a heartfelt reminder that by nurturing our hearts, we can enhance our well-being and the quality of life for our loved ones.

Welspun Foundation brings mega health camp

The Welspun Foundation, based in Chandanvelli, demonstrated its commitment to community welfare through a successful Mega Health Camp, held in collaboration with PMR Hospitals at

Mallareddyguda village in Chevella mandal. The event was inaugurated by Sri M. Mohan Reddy, the esteemed Gram Panchayat Sarpanch, and saw the participation of Sri A. K. Joshi, Director of Welspun Group. A team of dedicated medical professionals across seven different departments, including Orthopaedics, Ophthalmology, Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Dermatology, Psychiatry, and General Medicine, provided vital healthcare services to the beneficiaries.

Grab your fill of festive delicacies

It's time to indulge your soul and taste buds India goes into a festive mode. Head over to Soul of South with your near and dear ones and dig into a feast that celebrates the rich and vibrant flavours of Southern India. Be it Veg Thaalīs, Kodi Guju, or Maamsam Guju, at S.O.S., you

have the luxury of choosing authentic South Indian dishes from Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. Get entranced by the beautiful ambience, excellent service, and delectable food and ring in the festive season as we go into a celebratory mode, only at Soul Of South! **What:** Soul of South Festive Thaalīs **Where:** Soul of South, 1st Floor, Sujana One, 210, Road no 82, Film Nagar, Hyderabad - 33 Time: 12 PM - 3:30 PM **Price Starting from:** INR 499/-

UTI Mutual Fund to open new financial centres in AP & TS

UTI Asset Management Company (UTI AMC) announced a significant expansion in its distribution reach with the launch of 29 new financial centers. These offices will be inaugurated at the same time

on Friday, 29 September, 2023 across all locations. This strategic move reflects UTI AMC's commitment to providing better financial services and accessibility to investors, further strengthening our presence in the financial industry across India. UTI Mutual Fund always endeavours to reach out to its investors through its distribution network, comprising Financial Centers (FCs), Business Development Associates, Mutual Fund Distributors (MFD) and through tie-ups with Banks.

SMC Global Securities Limited partners with Ujjivan Small Finance Bank to offer 3-in-1 Accounts to its customers

SMC Global Securities Limited announced a strategic partnership with Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (Ujjivan SFB) to offer online trading services to the Bank's customers. This association will offer services comprising Savings, Demat and Trading accounts, providing a hassle-free and convenient trading experience to Ujjivan SFB's customers. The collaboration will enable SMC Global to expand its client base by tapping into Ujjivan SFB's extensive pan-India presence, serving over 76 lakh customers. In this arrangement, SMC Global will handle the relationship of Trading and Demat Accounts of Ujjivan SFB customers. SMC will offer full and discount brokerage services to the Bank's customers. Existing Ujjivan SFB customers can open a Demat Account through the Ujjivan SFB mobile banking app.



Director of Beauty Care Institute Pratyusha, along with the students, celebrated its second-anniversary celebrations at Papadam Restaurant in Kottapet, where students were given certificates of the completion of the course.



As the Official Exclusive Supplier of Mobile Phones at the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, vivo showcased a variety of cutting-edge products and extensive experience. Meanwhile, as the Official Esports Gaming Phones for the Asian Games in Hangzhou, iQOO continues to offer strong performance and fine-tuned control to aid esports athletes in achieving outstanding outcomes.



Ankura Hospital has recently received a certificate from the Great Place to Work Institute, highlighting its commitment towards employee's well-being with a clear focus on fostering a high-trust culture and a conducive work environment.



Kirloskar Oil Engines (KOEL) announced the launch of its range of CPCB IV+ compliant gensets. With a focus on delivering high-performance, fuel-efficient, and environmentally responsible solutions, the new gensets meet the latest emission norms set by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).



President of India Droupadi Murmu, presented the prestigious First Prize under the Mobility Category, by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India to the Hyderabad-based SmartBike, at the Smart Cities Conclave and Expo at Indore.

PARTY

Photos by - SV Chary

FUN

ARCHIE



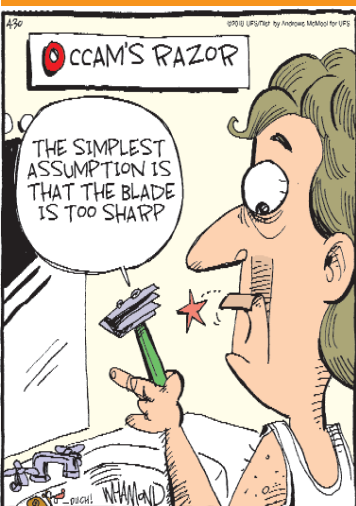
CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



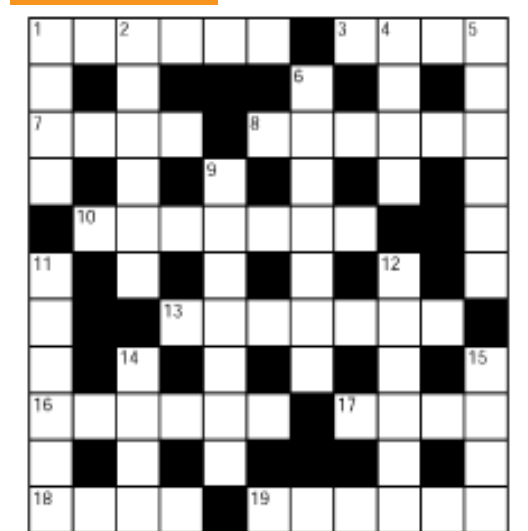
REALITY CHECK



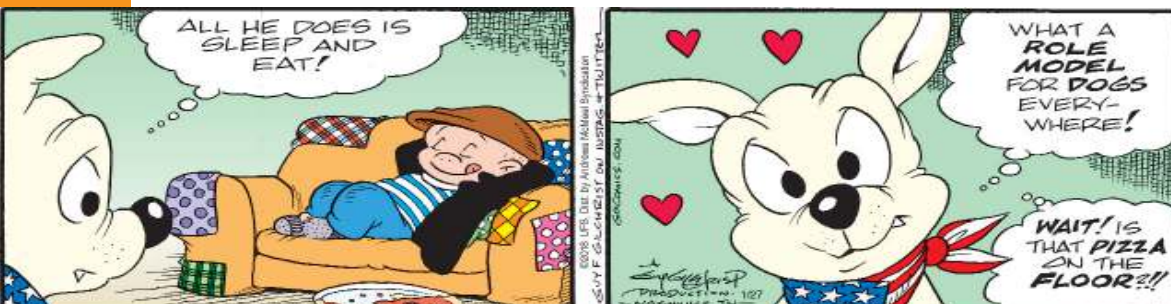
SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution
 6 7 2 8 3 1 5 4 9
 3 1 9 6 4 5 2 7 8
 5 4 8 7 9 2 1 3 6
 8 6 4 1 5 7 9 2 3
 1 5 7 9 2 3 6 8 4
 2 9 3 4 6 8 7 5 1
 4 3 5 2 1 6 8 9 7
 9 8 1 5 7 4 3 6 2
 7 2 6 3 8 9 4 1 5

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

ACROSS

- 1 A season
- 3 Strike with an open hand
- 7 Jump over
- 8 Having a sharp sour taste
- 10 Applauded
- 13 Bumped
- 16 Sleepy
- 17 A biting, jumping insect
- 18 Require
- 19 Something built over a river

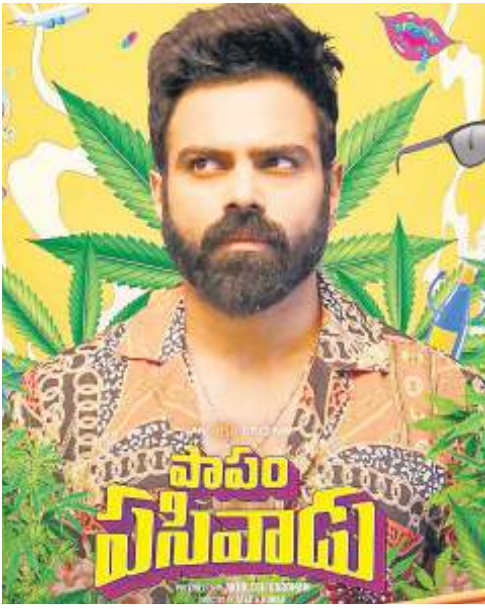
DOWN

- 1 Not sick
- 2 Just about
- 4 Overdue
- 5 A talking pet bird
- 6 A permit to drive
- 9 The language of Spain
- 11 Concealed from view
- 12 Shouted
- 14 Gown
- 15 A strong box for storing valuables



GINGER MEGGS





SREERAMA CHANDRA: Papum Pasivadu is a boy-next-door story, and people would surely relate to it

After wooing the audience with his melodic voice, Host-musician-actor Sreerama Chandra is all set to win hearts with his acting stints in *Papum Pasivadu*. The adept artist, who is exuberant for the show, gets candid with *The Pioneer* about the same, and trying his luck now on the acting front too.

TEJAL SINHA

Ending the month of September with a coming-of-age tale, Aha brings its new major release *Papum Pasivadu*, which is available on the platform from today. The weekly episodic web show is headlined by actor, host, and musician Sreerama Chandra. Meanwhile, Rashi Singh, Sri Vidya Maharshi, Gayatri Chaganti, Madee, and Ashok Kumar are the other actors in the show produced by Akhilesh Vardhan for the show. In fact, recently, Amitabh Bachchan shared the teaser on his Instagram and Twitter accounts, adding to the anticipation surrounding this promising series.

The show already making the right noise even before its premiere, marks Chandra's debut as a lead. If you've watched the trailer, it already gives you a hint about how the show revolves around the highs and lows in the life of a confused youngster, probably in his 20s. He falls in love with not one but three women and lands in trouble while struggling to find his true soulmate. He faces the wrath of cops, meets a godman, gets rejected by women, and is quite unprepared for what life throws at him. The star who has recently enraptured hearts with his recent song *O Rendu Prema Meghadala* from *Baby*, is super excited for *Papum Pasivadu*.

In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, the thrilled *Balma* singer shares, "I'm very happy, and for a change, I'm playing a lead in *Papum Pasivadu*. It's all

about a late 20-year-old guy and his crisis of finding a girl and confused about which girl to select and who would be right for him. It's more of a real-life story, probably. It's a boy-next-door story and every person at some point in time has this confusion in their life that Kranthi has. Kranthi is my character so everybody will be able to relate to this at some point. The entire series centres around this guy's confusion in life, how he deals with it, and the three distinct women who are in three different situations."

Once that the audience sees the show, the *Atu Ithu Ooguthu* singer is very confident about feeling related to the character and the story. "This story is about someone like me and you, a common man where having a partner or falling in love is everybody's part of life. In the show, you'd get to see how when you like someone, they don't like you or vice versa, or having some toxic relationship or one of the partners will not let you go from the relationship. These situations are something that people will definitely relate to and being from a lower middle-class family having a family where mom is saying yes and dad is saying no. All these situations brings *Papum Pasivadu*."

A much-realistic story indeed! *Papum Pasivadu* marks his second collaboration with the streaming platform after *Indian Idol* season 1 in 2022. During those days of the show, he recalls, "I used to play a different skit every episode back then and really enjoyed doing that. They surprisingly

saw the actor in me and thought I would fit really well for this character and that, I was doing a good job in acting. It was that when they approached me, I heard the story and I could really relate to it and it went well. I could feel it and I thought why not?"

And thus he ended up doing various workshops and took up learning it in some classes. He's one of those artists who justifies his work, no matter what it is; hosting, singing, and now we are sure acting as well. Initially, for the unversed, he made his Telugu debut in acting with the Nagarjuna starrer *Jagadguru Adi Shankara* and then went on to star in films like *Prema geema Jantha nai*, and *MMOF*. But now, it seems like just as he shares with us how emerging as the winner of *Indian Idol* Hindi was the beginning of his musical career, *Papum Pasivadu* is going to bring a twist to his acting career. Well, something he is looking forward to, and we hope the same. But has acting always been in his list? He enthuses, "I love life in a way where it's full of surprises and gives you the best that it can when you start investing. It's like an investment. When you start investing in life, it gives you an amazing return at some point in time. It could be a short-term or long-term return that I've experienced with my career in singing that I began in 2010 in *Indian Idol*. There was a lot of hard work put in during those years and then it started paying off in 2011. After that, I had done some amazing songs in Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada.

Down the lane in 2022-2021 is when I was on *Bigg Boss* and those efforts started paying off in 2022 in the form of anchoring and more opportunities in Telugu, redefining me as a person and a singer. I hope now my efforts would start paying off in acting soon."

The *Anaganaganaga* singer really hopes for people to watch the show, since he shares that as an actor he has put in a lot of efforts for *Papum Pasivadu*.

Ending the chit-chat on a brighter note, he feels that once people watch him in the show, he is positive about getting more opportunities, be it in films or web series. "Every one at some point has a start. It's not easy to suddenly pick someone and give them a movie or something. I am glad that Aha has seen that in me, understood me, learnt and have appreciated the actor in me. I have put in my heart, soul and a lot of hard work into it. I would definitely want people to watch it and let me know how they feel about it. After this, I would definitely want to get more opportunities in acting as well."



Kabhi Apne Kabhi Sapne poster hints on Bunny's official B'wood debut

Icon Star Allu Arjun is a massive star in Telugu films and the actor is currently gearing up for *Pushpa 2* which is touted to be the biggest film of his career.

But, here is a twist. Reports are rife that before *Pushpa 2*, the actor is set to collaborate with director Krish Jagarlamudi for *Kabhi Apne Kabhi Sapne*.

Trade analyst Ramesh Bala took to X (formerly Twitter) and shared a poster that is touted to be of the upcoming film. He captioned the post, "We were all waiting for #Pushpa2 but what is this surprise? Is this real? Is @alluarjun & @DirKrish combo on cards? Leaked?"

There are various rumors that Allu Arjun is going to make his Bollywood debut with this film under the direction of Krish. What is the secret behind this poster has become a big suspense.

In the past, Allu Arjun

made the film *Veda* under the direction of Krish. Once again the news that the combo of the two is set has become a hot topic in Tollywood. Allu Arjun *Kabhi Apne Kabhi Sapne* poster mystery will soon be clarified.

Allu Arjun recently won the National Award for Best Actor for his amazing performance as Pushpa Raj in the movie *Pushpa*. Along with Allu Arjun, Devi Sri Prasad won the National Award for Pushpa for Best Music Director. With National Awards, *Pushpa's* sequel was highly anticipated at the pan-Indian level.

Pushpa The Rule is currently shooting in Hyderabad. Rashmika Mandanna is playing the heroine and Malayalam super hero Fahadh Fazil is playing the villain in this movie. Jagapathi Babu, Anasuya and Sunil are playing key roles.

Mythri Movie Makers is producing this sequel.

Sudev Nair to play Kasi in TIGER NAGESWARA RAO

Many actors who are popular in Malayalam are being introduced to the Telugu audience by our makers. Fahad Faasil, who is recognized as a talented actor in Malayalam and also received the National Film Award, made his debut in Tollywood with the movie *Pushpa*. Also, another Malayalam actor Shine Tom Chacko was introduced to the Telugu audience through the movie *Dasara*. After that he acted in the movie *Rangabali*. Now acting in *Devara*.

Along with all these, another Malayalam actor Sudev Nair is now getting introduced to the Telugu film industry. That too, Mass Maharaja is making his entry as a villain with Ravi Teja's movie.

Tiger Nageswara Rao is being made under the direction of Vamsi with Ravi Teja as the hero. Abhishek Agarwal is producing this film under Abhishek Agarwal Arts banner. The film will release on October 20 as a Dussehra gift. Murali Sharma and Anupam Kher have already introduced the hero character from this movie through the teaser. However, today another new character has been introduced



from this movie. The same is the role of Kashi played by Malayalam actor Sudev Nair.

Introducing the character of Kashi, the film's unit released a poster today. Director Vamsi who posted this poster on X. Sudev Nair's amazing performance as Kashi will entertain everyone. Sudev Nair does negative roles in Malayalam. Last year Sudev Nair acted in 8 Malayalam movies including

Mohanlal's *Monster* and Mammooty's *Bhisma Parvam*. Also, acted in a Kannada movie. This year, he has already shone on the silver screen with a Malayalam movie called *Thuramukham*. Now ready to enter in Telugu. Sudev also accepted another project in Telugu. Sudev Nair is acting in the movie which is being made by the combination of Nitin and Vakkanntham Vamsi.

Selva Raghavan to play a key role in Ravi Teja's next film

Ravi Teja is doing back-to-back films in his career and is now busy with his latest film *Tiger Nageswara Rao* which will be out on the 20th of October. Apart from this film, the star hero will also do a film with Gopichand Malineni.

The film was announced a few weeks back and will be made on a massive scale. The casting is on as of now and the gossip in the film circles is that the makers approached Tamil director and actor Selva Raghavan to play a key role.

At Present, Selva Raghavan is busy acting in movies and is doing character roles. Gopichand Malineni felt that he would be a perfect choice for a key role in the film and has roped him in for the film.

Though an official confirmation is yet to be made, this news has gone viral all over. The film will go on floors early next year as per the news.



Non-theatrical rights of Varun Tej's Operation Valentines sold for a whopping amount

Mega Prince Varun Tej, whose recent film *Gandevadhari Arjuna* didn't perform well at the box office, is all set to thrill his fans with *Operation Valentine*, a Telugu-Tamil bilingual film directed by debutant Shakti Prapat Singh Hada.

The film has made headlines today as the non-theatrical rights, including satellite, digital, audio, and others for all languages, were sold for a staggering Rs 50 crores. This marks the highest price ever fetched for a Varun Tej movie. Additionally, the makers are receiving substantial offers for the movie's the-

atrical rights in Telugu and Hindi.

In *Operation Valentine*, former Miss Universe Manushi Chhillar portrayed a radar officer, while Varun Tej essayed an IAF officer, promising an exciting storyline. Aamir Khan and Siddharth Raj Kumar co-wrote the movie's screenplay.

Produced with the support of Sony Pictures International Productions and Sandeep Mudda from Renaissance Pictures, *Operation Valentine* is set to dazzle audiences on a grand scale. Save the date, as the movie is set to hit theaters on December 8, 2023.



Ranbir Kapoor-Sandeep Vanga's Animal packs a wild punch

There was a huge anticipation for the teaser of Ranbir Kapoor and Sandeep Reddy Vanga's crazy actioner *Animal*. After amazing us with the pre-teaser, the film's teaser has been dropped today, on the special occasion of Ranbir Kapoor's birthday. The two-minute, 26-second video is an action-packed one filled with intense and high-octane stunts, powerful dialogues, spectacular visuals, thumping score, and brilliant performances. The teaser gives a glimpse of the film's story which is a tale of father-son played by Anil Kapoor and Ranbir Kapoor

respectively. They seem to have always had a very difficult relationship with each other. But, despite the physical abuses from his father, the protagonist believes that his father is the "best father in the world." The protagonist grows up to become a gangster and becomes extremely violent. Bobby Deol is introduced towards the end of the clip as the antagonist. The teaser actually begins with a discussion between Ranbir and Rashmika Mandanna about having kids. He tells her she can ask him anything and he will be truthful, but she can never talk about his father.

Bloodshed, car chases, and intense elements make the narrative gripping and intriguing. Ranbir's transformation into a rebellious one leaves fans awestruck. The raw and action scenes describe the kind of hard work he has put in for the film. Director Sandeep Reddy Vanga shows his mark in presenting the character. *Animal* is produced by Bhushan Kumar & Krishan Kumar's T-Series, and Pranay Reddy Vanga's Bhadrakali Pictures. The film will be released in 5 languages - Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam on December 1st.

Suriya pays respect to a fan who passed away in an road accident

Suriya commands a massive fan following across industries in the South. This adulation, is mutual as Suriya, for several times in the past has come for his fan's help through various activities. Unfortunately, not all these interactions are done in a happy setting.

The Kollywood star recently got to know of the death of one of his fans in a road accident. He visited his parents to offer his respects at the fan's home. The actor offered all kinds of support to the bereaved family.

This visit comes right after the July incident where a couple of Suriya fans in



Palanadu, Andhra Pradesh were electrocuted while setting up banners for the actor. The fans were setting up banners on the occasion of Suriya's birthday and Kanguva motion poster reveal. The actor called up and spoke to the family back then.

Even last year something similar happened. A 27-year-old fan named Jagadish met with an accident and passed away. Jagadish was the secretary of Suriya's fan club in Namakkal, Tamil Nadu. Suriya visited Jagadish's family and offered condolences.

PLEASED PLAYERS RETURNING FROM INJURIES GOT 'GAME-TIME'

PTI ■ RAJKOT

India coach Rahul Dravid is relieved that key players such as Jasprit Bumrah, KL Rahul and Shreyas Iyer, who are all coming back from injuries, could get enough miles in their legs ahead of the ODI World Cup, starting in a week's time.

Bumrah, who was troubled by a back issue that kept him out for long, bowled his full quota of overs in Mohali and Rajkot — the two matches he played against Australia — but was a bit expensive in the series-concluding third ODI. The fast bowler had made a comeback during the T20 series against Ireland last month and also competed in Asia Cup in Sri Lanka.

Iyer, who is expected to bat at number four, struck a hundred in Indore and also contributed 48 in Rajkot.

Rahul not only batted in an impressive fashion, scoring two half centuries, he also kept the wickets, allaying concerns around his fitness. "For all those guys game-time was important. The fact that they have been able to get that is I think something that we are much better off for it," Dravid said after the third ODI that India lost by 66 runs.

"Jassi has been able to play a couple of games and bowl his quota of 10 overs, Siraj (was) suffering from a little bit of bug but he got back and was able to bowl," he said.

"(For) Ashwin, it was really nice to see the way he bowled in the first two games. KL as well, the keeping right through the 50 overs, he is coming off after almost 6-7 months. Shreyas has played a couple of really good knocks in the last couple of games. We know we have to keep improving but also hope that we carry this momentum into the World Cup," the India coach added.



Cup," the India coach added.

Off-spinner R Ashwin's inclusion in the squad for the Australia series had triggered speculation that he might be included in the final World Cup squad. However, David was non-committal.

All the teams are required to finalise their World Cup squads by Thursday.

"We have to wait for an official confirmation or a decision on that. The NCA is in touch with the selectors and Ajit

(Agarkar) so I will not make any comments on that. If there is any change you will get to hear about it officially, as of now there are no changes," Dravid said, hinting that Axar Patel will be retained in the 15-man squad.

The India coach expects India's full strength squad to assemble in Guwahati ahead of the first warm-up match against England on September 30.

India had only 13 players to pick their

final eleven against Australia here on Wednesday as some members Shardul Thakur, Hardik Pandya and Mohammed Shami returned home while Ishan Kishan missed the contest due to a bug going around in the group.

"The two practice or warm-up games, generally people play 15 versus 15, it is tough to sometimes get the intensity in those games but as we have seen in these three games, in hot conditions there has been a lot of intensity as well," Dravid added.

"There was a bit of juggling we had to manage in this game but I am hoping that we have got about a week, we have got a few days. We should have the full strength squad, hopefully the bug around the group has cleared out as well. It will be nice if that happens," the coach said.

Talking about the big loss in the Rajkot ODI, Dravid blamed it on giving away too many runs in the first half of the Australian innings.

"In the overall scheme of things probably 350 was 30 (runs) too many. We should have been chasing 320 if we had bowled better in the first half," he said.

Rohit Sharma (81) and Virat Kohli (56) added 70 runs but the team lost the plot after their partnership was broken. Dravid, however, was pleased to see the two senior batters were among runs right after a break.

"We were on par when Virat and Rohit were batting. We needed one of the top three to get 130 or 140. In these chases you need these kinds of scores," he said.

"Unfortunately it did not happen, but a good thing from our perspective is that both of them batted really well — that is a positive. They are coming off not playing cricket for a week so it was nice to get straight into it and get runs for us," he said.



Pakistan is a weaker team than India at this moment: Waqar

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Legendary pacer Waqar Younis rated India a better side over Pakistan going into the World Cup while basing his observation on the better preparation of the Rohit Sharma-led team ahead of the quadrennial big bash.

India had recently won the Asia Cup and handed a massive 228-run defeat to their arch-rivals in a Super 4 match at Colombo.

In the World Cup, India will face Pakistan on October 14 in Ahmedabad, and Younis said pressure will be there on both the outfits but said Men in Blue just could have an edge.

"As we all know, it (India vs Pakistan) will be the biggest game, mother of all the games.

So, when you play in Ahmedabad, you will have to control your nerves, and not only Pakistan will be under pressure since it is a weaker team as compared to India. "But India will also be under pressure because the crowd in the stadium will create pressure on both the teams," Younis told Star Sports. "However, if we judge purely based on the team's performance, India definitely will be a better team," he added. Younis was also mindful of the Pakistani's unstable form, and said the injury-enforced absence of pacer Naseem Shah could put them in a significant disadvantage.

"If I talk about Pakistan, they are a miss and hit this time. The absence of Naseem Shah will be a big disadvantage because

Naseem and Shaheen (Afridi) used to complement each other with new ball."

"Though Hasan Ali has been declared as his replacement; he has got a lot of experience and gave brilliant performances in the past, but I feel, to suddenly come and perform on this kind of big stage will not be an easy task for him," said Younis.

Analysing the Indian squad, Younis said the team has great spinners, while its bench strength is equally potent.

"If we only talk about ticking the boxes then we will see no other team can match India right now because they have good spinners, who are playing right now in the starting XI such as Kuldeep, Jadeja. But they also have strong bench strength."



We deserved to win gold in Asian Games: Harman

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian women's cricket team captain Harmanpreet Kaur on Thursday said they deserved to win the Asian Games gold medal, considering their domination over neighbouring teams, though she admitted that the expectations put a bit of pressure on the side.

Playing in their maiden Asian Games in Hangzhou, India fulfilled the expectations on them and clinched the yellow metal, beating Sri Lanka by 19 runs in the final.

"It was a great experience, we played really well. When we left for the Asian Games, we knew our team is pretty strong and we had in mind that we need to prepare like this for future tournaments. We deserved to win the gold," Harmanpreet said on the sidelines of a felicitation function organised by the Sports Ministry here.

"The team performed very well in Hangzhou and we managed to return with the gold. Before leaving we mentally knew that our team is very strong and

we can win the gold.

"We will approach future tournaments with the same mindset and prepare ourselves the same way we did before the Games," added the star cricketer.

Harmanpreet refused to compare the Commonwealth Games silver with the gold in Hangzhou, saying both the feelings were different.

"That moment was different because we could have won that match. Despite playing good cricket we got the silver. Here it was completely different because there was different sort of pressure on us as we have done well against the Asian teams.

"There was extra pressure on us because we have been dominating Asian cricket," she said.

Harmanpreet said the support provided by the government to the cricket teams in preparation for the Asian Games was very helpful.

"There are a lot of changes. As a sportsperson when you get so much support from all sides, it feels really motivating. This

year we witnessed a new thing

and that is the government has given us money for preparation. "These are the new things which never happened in cricket. As a sportsperson when you know there is not so much financial burden on you, you can play freely and that matters a lot," she said.

The skipper refused to compare rising pacer Titas Sadhu with legendary Jhulan Goswami but said the young Bengal bowler has a lot of promise.

"She (Titas) performed very well in Under-19 World Cup. She bowled really great there and whenever she gets a chance she is always ready to bowl for the team," Harmanpreet said.

"I can't compare her (Jhulan) with anyone but they are from the same state and I think Jhulan is working a lot on her, they keep on talking to each other."

During the ceremony, Sports Minister Anurag Thakur gave away cash awards to the shooting, rowing contingents besides the women cricketers, including Shafali Verma.

PTI ■ RAJKOT

All-rounder Glenn Maxwell will have a big role to play in the ODI World Cup for Australia as he brings a lot of balance to the side as the third spinner, said Mitchell Marsh.

Returning to top flight cricket after six months due to soreness to his ankle and birth of his son, Maxwell came up with career-best 4 for 40 to bowl Australia to a convincing 66-run win over India in the third and final ODI here on Wednesday night.

"It was a great spell. He came back after having not played much cricket for the last (few) months," Marsh said during the press-conference.

"It was great to see him back. It is the energy that Maxi brings to the team, his presence and the balance that he gives us.

"We obviously know that his batting is absolutely class but what he can do with the ball,

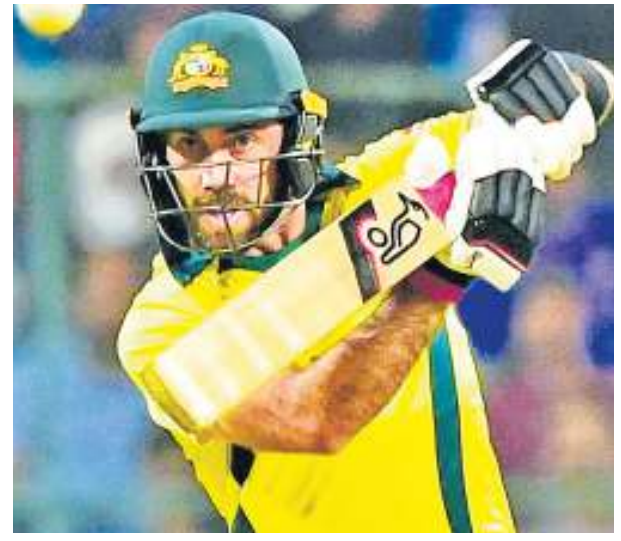
Mitchell Marsh backs Maxwell to play big role in World Cup campaign

and the options that he will give us with our all-rounders is vital for us going into the World Cup."

Talking about Maxwell's role in the World Cup, Marsh said, "There may be wickets where he's the third spinner through this World Cup.

"But just the ability for us to play the three quicks, a spinner and have Maxi who has the ability on the right wicket to bowl ten overs, think you see a lot of teams around the world have guys like Maxi; it gives you a lot of flexibility with the teams you can pick or the way you can structure your batting line-up."

Marsh, who struck a match-winning 96 in the first half, could not field in the second



innings as he was cramping up after batting in extreme heat and humidity.

"It was as tough as (anywhere) I have batted in. When I came off, I was absolutely exhausted, (had) full body cramp but obviously (it was) nice to contribute to a win like that. I thought we played outstanding (cricket)," he said.

"I wanted to (bowl), basically bowled a couple of balls (during warm up) but basically had cramps all the way up in my legs.

"It has been a big couple of weeks, I have played 10 out of a possible 11 games in the last three weeks so with what is to come, the staff said to cool my jets for the fielding innings," he said.

Shakib hints at retirement after 2025 Champions Trophy

PTI ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan wants to call time on his illustrious international career after the 2025 Champions Trophy in Pakistan.

He has also asserted that while he plans to retire from Tests following the forthcoming ICC Cricket World Cup in India starting next month, he is also likely to quit T20s after the ICC T20 World Cup next year in West Indies and the United States of America.

Talking to T-Sports, as reported by ESPNcricinfo, Shakib said, "The 2025 Champions Trophy for ODIs and the 2024 T20 World Cup for T20s. Tests may be sooner. Maybe (after the World Cup)."

"I will retire all at once, but I will stop playing each format one by one. I will announce my retirement after the 2025 Cham-



pions Trophy." Shakib will be leading Bangladesh during the World Cup, having also captained the side during the Asia

Cup earlier this month in Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It was his second stint as the unit's leader. Under him, the

Tigers did make it to the Super 4 of the Asia Cup, but failed to make it to the final. In the meantime, Shakib has

confirmed that his outing in the upcoming World Cup will be his last as the skipper and will be quitting captaincy as a whole.

"Given the current reality, I am captain only till the World Cup. Not a day more."

"I resigned from the captaincy on the 17th [of September]. The reasons were the same when I didn't want to captain ahead of the Asia Cup."

"I don't think my captaincy is adding value at this stage of my career. I wanted to just bowl my 10 overs, give my best in fielding, and do my batting." "The easiest thing to do for me would have been not to take the captaincy. At this age, I didn't want to take this pressure. I want to smile, enjoy my game, perform for Bangladesh," he added.

Bangladesh take on Afghanistan in its opening fixture of the World Cup on October 7 in Dharamsala.

We believe we can win ODI World Cup: Rabada

PTI ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

South Africa pacer Kagiso Rabada believes the Proteas have what it takes to shed the chokers tag and win their maiden world title in the upcoming ICC ODI World Cup in India.

Despite having some star players, South Africa has never progressed behind the semi-final stage of any of the World Cups till date but Rabada said this time they have the arsenal at their disposal to create history.

"One thing we have never lacked as South Africans is belief, so going into the tournament we do believe we can win it," Rabada was quoted as saying by ICC.

"We've got the players to do so, so hopefully we can make our

first final and win this competition. It's going to be hard, but it's going to be really enjoyable.

"It's exciting to have the best players in the world playing against each other, competing for one prize, and we are up for the challenge."

The Proteas failed to advance beyond the group stage four years ago but are yet to taste a series defeat in ODIs this year.

The four-time semi-finalists struggled in 2019 but have since risen to fourth in the men's ODI team rankings, and are full of confidence after a 3-2 series victory over Australia.



Bavuma returns home due to personal reasons

PTI ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

South Africa suffered a setback on Thursday with their ODI skipper Temba Bavuma returning home from India due to personal reasons ahead of the side's two warm-up games of the ICC Cricket World Cup.

The Proteas are scheduled to take on Afghanistan and New Zealand in their first and second warm-up games on here September 29 and October 2 respectively.

As per an update on South Africa cricket's social media handles, Bavuma has returned to South Africa due to personal reasons. T20I captain Aiden Mark-



ram will be leading the side in the two warm-up clashes in absence of Bavuma, who is likely to rejoin the team ahead

of their opening game. South Africa opens their World Cup campaign against Sri Lanka in New Delhi on October 7.