





## Govt releasing funds only after cutting 'R' and 'B' taxes: Judson

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Questioning Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to tell where the Rythu Bandhu money of Rs 7,000 crore was diverted, Congress expelled leader Bakka Judson said that Finance special chief secretary K Ramakrishna Rao is releasing funds cutting 'R' tax and 'B' tax only if Megha Krishna Reddy's brother writes a 'chit'. Judson asked the Congress government to tell who is the Finance Minister; whether it is Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka or Megha Krishna Reddy? Speaking to the media on Wednesday at Somajiguda

Press Club, Judson alleged that TPCC president and Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was the reason for his suspension from the Congress party. Judson alleged that Revanth Reddy destroyed the Congress by indulging in erasing the Congress roots and idealism. Judson said that he is going to float 'Telangana Vanarula Rakshana Samithi' (TVRS) soon. Judson said that people voted the Congress to power due to the harassment of the BRS party, which looted the State assets and which behaved atrociously against the poor, weaker sections.

## BRS wants to defeat defected leaders in LS polls

SNCN ACHARYULU ■ HYDERABAD

The BRS is concentrating on the defeat of defected leaders in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections. It appears that the policy of BRS is 'win or defeat.' The defected BRS MPs and leaders are contesting from the BJP and the Congress in the coming Lok Sabha elections. The BRS wants to defeat such defected leaders at any cost. For example from Warangal Lok Sabha constituency from the Congress Kadiyam Kavya and from BJP Aroori Ramesh are contesting. Earlier, the BRS has announced Kadiyam

Kavya, the daughter of BRS MLA Kadiyam Srihari, as its Warangal Lok Sabha candidate. But both of them joined the Congress. While resigning to the BRS, Kavya has written a letter to BRS leadership why she was not contesting from BRS as MP candidate. The reasons mentioned by Kavya damaged the BRS more than the resignations of Kadiyam Srihari and his daughter. After joining the Congress, Kavya was selected as Warangal Lok Sabha candidate by the party leadership. The BRS tried till last minute to prevent its leader Aroori Ramesh from joining the BJP. However, finally Ramesh joined the BJP and got

Warangal Lok Sabha ticket. Under the circumstances, the BRS has concentrated on Kavya who damaged the party image. The BRS sitting MPs Ranjith Reddy joined the Congress and P Ramulu joined the BJP. Ranjith Reddy is contesting from his sitting Chevella Lok Sabha seat from the Congress. BRS MP P Ramulu and his son Bharath joined the BJP and Bharath has got Nagarkurnool Lok Sabha seat from the BJP represented by his father P Ramulu. In the same way, Zaheerabad BRS MP BB Patil joined the BJP and BRS MLA Danam Nagendar joined the Congress. The BJP has given Lok

Sabha ticket to BB Patil from Zaheerabad represented by him at present. Danam Nagendar was given Secunderabad Lok Sabha seat by the Congress. The BRS wants to defeat these two candidates. From Malkajigiri Lok Sabha seat, from the BJP Etala Rajendar and from the Congress Patnam Sunitha Reddy, the wife of BRS MLC and former minister Patnam Mahendar Reddy, are contesting. In Malkajigiri, the BRS wants to win by defeating both former BRS leaders. In the recent Assembly elections, Etala was defeated by BRS candidate Padi Koushik Reddy.

## Will not stop taking action against corruption: Modi



PNS ■ KOLKATA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said he remains committed to taking action against corruption, emphasising that those engaged in corruption have two options: jail or bail. Modi, while virtually interacting with BJP workers from West Bengal through NaMo app, said the entire country has witnessed how the

Trinamool Congress (TMC) has resorted to violence to stop BJP workers, but the saffron workers fearlessly stood their ground. "The corrupt have come together and have formed an alliance and keep abusing Modi. But let me make it clear that Modi will not stop taking action against corruption. For corrupts, only two options are left: jail or bail," he said. Referring to poll violence, Modi said electoral violence is the biggest challenge in Bengal. "The biggest challenge in West Bengal elections is electoral violence, but the Election Commission has made arrangements for the security and safety of the people.

## 'Modi ki guarantee' failed, does not reach people: Kharge



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi talks about 'Modi Ki guarantee' but it is "unsuccessful" and does not reach people, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge alleged on Wednesday as he launched his party's 'Ghar Ghar Guarantee' initiative under which it aims to reach out to eight crore households across the country. Kharge launched the initiative from Usmampur, Kaithwada in the North East

## Rahul files nomination; Holds roadshow in Wayanad

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday kicked off his election campaign for the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat by filing his nomination papers, holding a massive roadshow and attacking the BJP and the RSS by accusing them of 'trying to destroy' the Constitution and democratic nature of India.

Rahul, who arrived in this hill district of Kerala by helicopter from Kannur in the morning, held a roadshow Delhi parliamentary constituency and distributed pamphlets on the Congress's 'Paanch Nyay Pachees Guarantee'.

Party general secretary Jairam Ramesh said it is

from Kalpetta new bus stand to Civil Station here where he addressed a massive crowd which included party workers and supporters. The Congress MP from Wayanad, accompanied by his sister Priyanka Gandhi and other senior party leaders including AICC general secretary K C Venugopal, later submitted his nomination papers to the Wayanad District Collector who is also the Returning Officer.

important to note that the "Ghar Ghar Guarantee" initiative is being launched from a place from where, in 1978, the Congress used the "hand" symbol for the first time. Interestingly,

## IF YOU CAN'T GIVE WATER Supply through tankers must be free: KTR

NAVEENA GHANATE ■ HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K T Rama Rao on Wednesday blamed the drinking water problem in the state on the state government's inefficiency. He said, "Hyderabad city did not vote for the Congress; so, Revanth Reddy is seeking revenge. That is why drinking water is not being provided even though there is water in the projects. The Chief Minister, who is supplying water through tankers, in 12 hours should tell why the water in actual tankers has to be supplied whether it is a failure of the government or not. There are double tankers running in

the city than before. Today about two lakh 30 thousand tankers are being booked. The Congress party has put the burden on the people through these tankers. Whether Revanth Reddy will bear this burden or the Congress party will bear it. We demand that if you can't supply water, at least deliver water through tankers for free". He reminded that in Bangalore people were being fined if they waste water. KTR said, "If fined for wasting water, how many fines should be imposed on Revanth Reddy who dried crops by not lifting the water from the Kaleshwaram. Turn on the Kaleswaram project pumps and fill the reservoirs.



## 'Not time to celebrate but struggle'

AAP leader Sanjay Singh walks out of jail

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after being granted bail by the Supreme Court in the Delhi excise policy case, AAP MP Sanjay Singh walked out of Tihar jail on Wednesday and said it was not a time to celebrate but struggle as scores of party workers gathered to greet him. Singh had been lodged in the high-security prison in the national capital since October 13, 2023. He came out through the gate number three. Jail officials said he was released after the completion of bail procedure. A large number of AAP supporters assembled outside the jail and raised the slogans of 'dekho dekho kaun aaya, sher aaya, sher aaya' and 'Sanjay Singh zinadabad'.

## 7 killed, 22 hurt in reactor blast..

Continued on Page 1

He asked the District Collector and SP to ensure the best possible treatment for those injured in the blast. Governor of Telangana CP Radhakrishnan has expressed his deep shock and dismay over the tragic fire incident. He extended his heartfelt condolences to the grieving families. The Governor has instructed the State Administration to mobilize its machinery to provide all needed support.

## Inducements worth Rs 69.66 cr seized in TG

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Election Commissioner Rajeev Kumar, Election Commissioners Gyaneshwar Kumar and Dr Sukh Bir Singh Sandhu held a video conference with Chief Secretaries of all states and Lt Governors of Union Territories on Wednesday. Telangana has a border

of 860 kilometers with four states and 154 check posts have been opened. Police, Excise, Commercial Tax and Transport departments have held co-ordination meetings with the border states. So far, Rs 69.66 crore was seized, out of which Rs 27.38 crore in cash, Rs.10 crore worth of liquor, Rs 16.14 crore worth of drugs, narcotics and metals have been seized.

## Cyber criminals' vain bid to Congress candidates

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Seeking to strike while the iron is hot, some cyber criminals tried to con some of the Congress candidates by tapping Gandhi Bhavan staffers on Wednesday, it is learnt. In view of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, the Gandhi Bhavan is these days teeming with party leaders, their followers and the cadre every day. The cyber criminals in question made phone calls

to certain Gandhi Bhavan staffers, claiming to be callers from the Delhi AICC office. They sought details of the party's MP candidates. Due to work pressure, some of the Gandhi Bhavan staffers shared details sought by the commoners, believing they were indeed AICC big wigs. The matter came to light when the cyber criminals started making calls directly to the MP candidates whose details they had obtained.

## 'Drought ..

Continued on Page 1

So, AP should not be allowed to withdraw any water from Nagarjuna Sagar Project and Srisaillam. Apart from this, as AP has already used 76 TMC more than its entitlement, that much amount should be left to Telangana. Sources said that what this means is that the BRS government let the YSRCP govt take water from the Krishna basin beyond what AP had been allocated.

## 'Thata Theestha'..

Continued on Page 1

He alleged that the BRS party had been feigning concern for farmers only for the sake of the Lok Sabha elections. He asked BRS leaders to spell out whether they had helped farmers any time. The Revenue Minister made it clear that their government is ready to implement the 6-guarantees as well as other schemes. He said that the Congress government would implement the Rs.2 lakh loan waiver scheme. Sridhar Babu alleged that

Bharat Rashtra Samithi and the Bharatiya Janata Party were enacting dramas in regard to phone tapping. He said that as per the Indian Telecom Act no one had the right to tap others' phone calls. He said that the Centre had the right to initiate action against the persons involved in phone tapping. Sridhar Babu questioned the Centre as to why it was not using its powers and initiating steps taking suo motu notice of the phone tapping case that took place in Telangana.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha

Tithi: Dashami: Apr 03 06:29 PM to Apr 04 04:14 PM

Ekdashi: Apr 04 04:14 PM to Apr 05 01:28 PM

Nakshatram: Shravana: Apr 03 09:47 PM to Apr 04 08:11 PM

Dhanishta: Apr 04 08:11 PM to Apr 05 06:06 PM

Rahukalam: 1:51 PM to 3:22 PM

Yamagandam: 6:11 AM to 7:43 AM

Varjyam: 11:51 PM to 01:18 AM

Gulika: 9:15 AM to 10:47 AM

Amritakalam: 10:29 AM to 11:59 AM

Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:54 AM to 12:43 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Mostly Sunny

Temp: 40°

Humidity: 32%

Sunrise: 6:08 AM

Sunset: 6:30 PM

Updated: April 3, 2024 5:00 PM

## Emergency ..

Continued on Page 1

From Godavari drinking water supply scheme, due to non-completion of Mission Bhageeratha pipeline work, HMWSSB forced to supply its water to Mission Bhageeratha segments. Even today HMWSSB supplied 149.47 Mld to Gajwel, Aler-Bhongir and Medchal segments served under the Mission Bhageeratha. During last year, on restriction of water draws from Osmansagar and Himayatsagar reservoirs, only 4 Mgd supplies was made. Whereas this year from Osmansagar and Himayatsagar reservoirs presently 24 Mgd is being provided and further it is planned during May-2024 to enhance up to 40 Mgd, which is the maximum design capacity from these reservoirs.

## 'Experienced hunger..

Continued on Page 1

confidence, hope and success to poor children in their own countries." Lauding the work done by the Foundation, Murthy said that Akshaya Patra raises "our confidence that good things can indeed happen in India". The Infosys founder emphasised that India has been making good economic progress due to the success of the government's economic policies, vision and the hard work of Indian entrepreneurs and citizens as well as the foreign direct investment from multinationals. He noted that the government of India runs the world's largest food security programme, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), which

benefits over 800 million people.

As part of it, the school feeding programme PM POSHAN (Poshan Shakti Nirman) scheme directly benefits over 118 million children. "Akshaya Patra is a proud addition and a proud partner of this fantastic initiative of the Government of India," Murthy said. "Poverty is not unique to India. It is there in every society. Akshaya Patra makes the future of India safe by bringing inclusivity to the country's growth and making the poor people enthusiastic partners in our quest towards prosperity," Murthy added. He stressed that Akshaya Patra is a worthy example of a 'successful public-private partnership'.

## Centre asks..

Continued on Page 1

"It is also known that the general election 2024 is at its doorstep in which wide public participation is expected and without public participation this great event will not be complete. While ensuring public participation in this, it is the responsibility of all of us to take care of health," he said. Keeping the above in mind, a meeting was held with all the stakeholders and instructions have been given to the ministry to take appropriate action immediately in coordination with the states, he said. He stressed on taking special care of children and the elderly at home. In case of symptoms of heat stroke, one should go to nearest community health centre, Ayushman Mandir.

## LS contest is between..

Continued on Page 1

KTR said "Konda Vishweswar Reddy is a man of no trust. Ranjith Reddy is not... Running Reddy. Ranjith Reddy cheated very badly. Mahender Reddy's wife made Anand lose in Vikarabad. Mahender Reddy and Ranjith Reddy did dramas in Parigi meeting together. If Oscar is given for acting, it should go to Mahender Reddy and Ranjith Reddy. KCR made Mahender Reddy a minister. Our leader made the anonymous Ranjith Reddy an MP. Teach a lesson to those who cheated KCR and the party. Make Kasani win; he was the one who had come forward to contest when the party was in a difficult time". KTR said, "Let's pray to Rama... Let's trample BJP.

BJP is trying to do politics with Ram. Nothing has been done for the country and the poor and that's why BJP is doing politics in the name of God". KTR said that the Congress came to power by telling lies. "It is a competition between 10 years of truth and 100 days of lies. Let's make the previous defeat a stepping stone to victory. Revanth Reddy said that he will do Rs 2 lakh loan waiver on December 9. But now he is saying don't take it seriously. Without shame, he is saying the administration is not in my hands now. He says it is in the hands of the Election Commission. Chief Minister Gumpu mestri, Prime Minister Tapi mestri. Both of them are working together to build a tomb for Telangana."

## KTR denies..

Continued on Page 1

Later, at a press conference, he clarified that he had no role whatsoever in the case relating to the alleged phone tapping. He said that the Telangana government should order a probe into the allegations made right from 2004 as some Ministers, who were then MPs, suspected that then chief minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy was tapping their phones. He said even officers such as B. Shivadhar Reddy, who was in the Intelligence Wing, former DGP and now TSPSC chief M Mahender Reddy and DGP Ravi Gupta, who was Home Secretary, V C Sajjanar, who was also in the Intelligence, were working during this period. He said: "Aren't these officers responsible? Why are they not being probed?"

# EVM's first randomisation process complete: DEO

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

District Election Officer Ronald Rose said that the first randomisation process of Control Unit (CU) and Ballot Unit (BU) and voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) was completed on Wednesday as part of the arrangements for the Lok Sabha elections.

The finalised list by randomisation was handed over to the representatives of the political parties and the returning officers of the two parliamentary constituencies. There are 3,986 polling centres in 15 Assembly segments. As per the ECI instructions, 25 per cent additional CUs, BUs and 40 per cent of VVPATs will be kept in reserve.

Hyderabad Returning Officer Anudeep Durishetti, Secunderabad RO Hemant Keshav Patil, Secunderabad Cantonment Returning Officer Madhukar Naik and Additional Election



DEO Ronald Rose, along with other election officers discussing about randomisation of EVMs at GHMC head office on Wednesday

Commissioner Alivelu Mangatayaru participated in the randomisation process.

The DEO said that enforcement teams in the district from 6 am on Tuesday to 6 am on Wednesday seized Rs 1.72 crore, Rs 49.90 lakh worth of valuables and 91.17 liters of liquor. In 24 hours, three FIRs have been registered and 28

licenced weapons have been deposited.

Ronald Rose said that since the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) came into force, so far Rs 5.04 lakh and Rs 1.64 crore worth of other material items was seized, 130 cases were registered, 129 people were arrested and 2,269 licenced weapons were deposited.

## Hyd CP holds review ahead of LS polls

Hyderabad Commissioner of Police Kothakota Sreenivas Reddy on Wednesday took stock of critical polling stations under the Hyderabad and Secunderabad parliamentary constituencies. The review meeting was attended by Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Commissioner Ronald Rose, Additional Commissioner of Police (L&O) Vikram Singh Mann, Hyderabad Collector Anudeep Durishetti and DCPs South and East zone, along with all Addl.Nodal Officers, Sub Nodal Officers, ROs and AROs pertaining to Assembly segments of Hyderabad and Secunderabad.

## VOTER AWARENESS INITIATIVES

# Vikas Raj inks pact with railway, postal and petroleum officials

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

With the Lok Sabha elections round the corner, Vikas Raj, the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Telangana, on Wednesday entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with representatives of Railway, Postal, and Petroleum sectors to improve voter awareness in the State and help enhance voter turnout on poll day.

These MoUs aim to bolster the democratic process by promoting voter education programmes and initiatives, leveraging the extensive infrastructure of these ministries to enhance inclusivity, information dissemination and participation in the electoral process. Subsequently, Vikas Raj delineated the terms and conditions of the MoUs, underscoring the pivotal role of officials in spearheading voter awareness activities.

Dr PVS Reddy, Chief Postmaster General, Telangana State, highlighted the ongoing voter awareness endeavours



CEO Vikas Raj releasing a poster with representatives of Railways, Postal and Petroleum departments at a meet on Wednesday

within the postal department, including digital outreach, special stamp creation and employee sensitisation. Representatives from the petroleum sector - HPCL, BPCL, and IOCL - elucidated their efforts in disseminating voter awareness messages through hoardings across major petrol bunks.

P Bhasker Reddy, Dy. Chief Commercial Manager, SCR, outlined the railway department's initiatives, focusing on digital displays and railway announcements.

Addressing logistical challenges, the Chief Electoral Officer emphasised the expo-

ration of avenues for expanding awareness activities, including discussions on pro-bono hoarding space provision as directed by ECI. The collaborative spirit and commitment showcased in the meeting reflect a shared dedication to fostering informed and participatory democratic processes.

The session commenced with Bhavani Shanker, Consultant (SVEEP), delivering the opening remarks, followed by a welcome from Sarfaraz Ahmad, Joint CEO, who emphasised the significance of collaboration and the execution of MoUs.

# 'Demand for tankers due to ground water depletion'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) Managing Director Sudharshan Reddy said that the demand for HMWSSB tankers has arisen due to the depletion of underground water in Outer Ring Road (ORR) areas.

The government has decided to build new water treatment plants (Vertical Water Treatment Plants) in Gandipet, Kokapet, Puppulaguda and other areas to avoid water problems. These vertical water treatment plants will be constructed on the Gandipet conduit to treat excess water supplied from the Himayat Sagar and Osman Sagar reservoirs.

On Wednesday, MD Sudarshan Reddy inspected the suitable site for constructing three modern vertical water treatment plants with a capacity of 3 MLD in Gandipet, Kokapet and Puppulaguda areas on Gandipet canal.

# Forum for IT Employees work to enhance voter turnout

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

IT professionals in the city have voluntarily stepped up to raise awareness about the significance of voting and elevate voter turnout in Hyderabad. The Forum for IT Employees, working for the welfare of the IT employees, is embarking on the challenge of tackling the persistently low voter participation rates in the Twin Cities and neighbourhood. As part of their initiative, they facilitated the release of a poster by the Bharatiya Janata Party State President Kishan Reddy on Tuesday at Bharatiya Janata Party State office.

The Forum, besides sensitising the city voters, will reach out to voters in the IT companies, gated communi-



BJP State president Kishan Reddy, along with the members of the Forum for IT Employees, holding the poster

ties and residents residing on the outskirts of the city.

Kishan Reddy commended the initiative of the Forum in raising awareness about the importance of every citizen exercising their fundamental right to vote. He said, "The very essence of democracy is every citizen exercising his franchise."

BJP State organising secretary Chandrashekar Sharma, Rajendranagar Assembly convener Mallesh Yadav, Forum for IT Employees president C Vinod Kumar, members B Sriram, Avinikant Pandey and Krishna from the Forum were present on the occasion.

# TG Haj panel selects 8 volunteers for Haj 2024

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Haj Committee on Wednesday conducted a draw of lots to select Haj volunteers for assisting pilgrims during Haj 2024.

Addressing the media, Shaik Liaqat Hussain, the executive officer of the Telangana State Haj Committee said, "On February 29, 26 Haj volunteers were selected and three were put in the waiting list. This was done to fulfill the requirement of one volunteer per 300 pilgrims. The latest circular from the Union ministry states that one volunteer is required per 200 pilgrims. Hence, 10 more applicants could get a chance to accompany the pilgrims for Haj this year."

"Among the 10, one volunteer will be nominated by the Haj committee and the another will be nominated by the Waqf Board."

From the original list of applicants, 118 eligible candidates entered the draw of lots and eight were selected. Additionally, four persons were put on the waiting list; this was done to keep applicants on standby.

Following the draw of lots, Special secretary to Telangana Minority welfare department Tafseer Iqbal said, "The people who have been selected are Rashid Ali Mohammed of the education department, Shaik Kalem Ahmed of the Panchayat Raj department, Mohammed Abdul Subhan of the South Central Railways, Mohammed Sadiq of the medical and health department, Syed Arif of the police department, Syed Masood Ahmed of the education department, Shaikat Ali Mohammed of the police department of Mahabubnagar and Mohammed Khundmir of the Hyderabad.

## PRCI'S 20TH FOUNDATION DAY

# Communication skills in traditional and digital media discussed

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) celebrated its 20th Foundation Day on Wednesday, hosting panel discussions on traditional media and digital media. Mass Communication students from across the city were engaged in the programme, involving in questions and gathering valuable points.

The panelists said, regardless of whichever platform is utilised, creating appropriate content and delivering messages effectively is crucial. Communication must be strategic, purposeful and capable of evoking emotions from the target audience.

The digital era empowers the youth to connect with their audience by creating captivating and entertaining content.

The panelists said, despite the variety of tools available, both print media and outdoor campaigns remain useful. The most important concern is how effectively the brand connects with its audience. Many students interacted with the panel, realising the long-lasting value of both traditional and digital media in reaching audience.

Speaking about the event,



PRCI panelists release a special edition of Chanakya magazine

Shakeel Ahmed, Chairman of PRCI, Hyderabad Chapter, said, "Our 20th Foundation Day celebration stands as a testament to PRCI's remarkable journey and its significant contributions to the field of public relations.

We are thrilled to host this event, uniting industry experts, thought leaders and aspiring professionals to honour this milestone." The celebration lived up to its promise, bringing together PR professionals, enthusiasts and industry stakeholders in a lively gathering, commemorating two decades of excellence and innovation in public relations.

PRCI's Chief Mentor Emeritus MB Jayaram and

National President Geeta Shankar applauded the efforts of PRCI Hyderabad Chapter for organising the event. The national body also felicitated the founders of PRCI, including MB Jayaram, RT Kumar, Geeta Shankar, Dr T Vinay Kumar and BN Kumar.

PRCI recognised the outstanding professionals in the field of public relations with Samvahana Awards and released a special edition of Chanakya magazine during the event.

National executive members Michael and Rajender, along with Hyderabad Chapter members Jacob Ross, Philip, Robin Noel, Prakash Jain, Ghisulal Jain and Aparna participated in the event.

# Follow admission schedule: TSBIE warns private institutes

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Board of Intermediate Education (TSBIE) warned the private institutions to conduct admissions in accordance with the admission schedule released by the board.

The board has informed that it has not issued an admission schedule for the ensuing academic year 2024-25. Hence, students and parents are informed not to take admissions in the junior colleges, prior to the admission schedule from the TSBIE. Parents should note that their children should be admitted only in affiliated junior colleges.

It also informed all the managements of private junior colleges that admissions should be conducted strictly in accordance with the admission

schedule announced by TSBIE. Any deviation from this schedule is a violation of established norms and will be dealt with seriously and appropriate action will be initiated as per the applicable provisions.

Hence, ensure the strict compliance of your institution with the rules and regulations. Also, it told the stakeholders that the provisional affiliation process is still under process for the academic year 2024-25.

The list of provisionally affiliated junior colleges will be displayed on the official websites of TSBIE i.e., tsbie.cgg.gov.in and acadtsbie.cgg.gov.in

All the District Intermediate Education Officers are hereby instructed to strictly comply with the instructions of the board.

# BNI Hyd launches first Telugu Chapter to break language barriers

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In order to break language barriers to do business, Business Networking International (BNI) Hyderabad region launched BNI Akshara, a Telugu chapter and held its first meeting with 128 visitors at SVM Grand Hotel, Nagole on Wednesday. The chapter has 46 entrepreneurs from different business categories as members where they introduced their businesses and services and exchanged 80 business referrals among themselves.

The programme enables the members to communicate and conduct their business conversation and transactions conveniently in Telugu language. This is the first Telugu chapter organised by BNI Hyderabad.

It witnessed five new members being inducted into the chapter, who were administered the oath on BNI code of ethics by Sanjana Shah, Executive Director, BNI Hyderabad



Group photo of BNI Executive Director Sanjana Shah, along with BNI team members

region. Two of the new members, Venugopal Rao Peechara and Nagendra Kumar inducted over six members each to the chapter and were presented the Gold pin.

Sanjana Shah said, "Often entrepreneurs are more comfortable conversing and transacting their business in their mother tongue, Telugu. They shy away from joining BNI due to their not so good English communication skills, as BNI meetings are conducted in English. They are apprehensive of not striking a chord with

other members due to this communication gap, which they believe could impact their ability to leverage the platform effectively and generate business.

BNI believes language can't be a barrier to do business. However, to make such members comfortable and be a part of BNI, the first Telugu Chapter, BNI Akshara was launched. We will be launching more Telugu chapters in the days to come to provide the benefit of this platform to Telugu-speaking entrepreneurs."

# Farmer trampled to death by elephant

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A tragic incident of a farmer trampled to death by a male elephant has sent shockwaves among the people of Burepalli village, Koutala mandal, Asifabad on Wednesday.

Based on the information given by Maharashtra officials, an elephant herd entered Gadchiroli forest two days back and this elephant later separated from the herd and moved to the southern part of Maharashtra. The elephant entered Telangana village crossing Pranhita.

Also, the elephant ventured into the agricultural fields of Burepally village and killed the farmer Alluri Shankar. S/o Bikaru at around 3 pm.

# GHMC collects Rs 1,971 cr property tax during 2023-24

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

GHMC Commissioner Ronald Rose said that in the last financial year 2022-2023 property tax collection was Rs 1,660 crore, while the tax collection for the year 2023-2024 was Rs 1,971 crore, which is Rs 261 crore more than last year. On the last day of the financial year, March 31, GHMC collected Rs 129 crore.

As the GHMC has collected more property tax, the officials organised a felicitation programme at Banjara Bhavan in Banjara Hills on Wednesday. At the meeting, Ronald Rose said that the GHMC has achieved a record collection of stipend collections of taxes. Compared to last financial year to this year



more than Rs 261 crore of property tax has been collected. He congratulated the GHMC officers and staff for their efforts in record property tax collection.

He said that implementation of One Time Settlement (OTS) scheme on property tax

arrears up to the financial year 2022-23 has given good results. The tax collection of more than Rs 300 crore has been done this year as the officers and special officers had taken special care and encouraged the taxpayers.

Ronald Rose said, "With the implementation of the 'Early Bird Scheme', the revenue of Rs 740 crore was generated in the last financial year and it is estimated that the revenue of Rs 800 crore will be generated this financial year."

Hyderabad District Collector Anudeep Durishetti, Additional Collector Hemant Keshav Patil, Additional Commissioners of GHMC, Sneha Shabarish and others participated in this programme.

# Cyber awareness drive on OTP frauds

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Cybercrime police on Wednesday conducted an awareness programme on OTP frauds at SR Nagar.

The programme emphasised on methods to protect oneself from investment, job frauds, Fedex and social media frauds. Addressing the hostel dwellers, Cybercrime DCP D Kavitha said, "Don't reveal the OTP, debit and credit card details and personal information to unknown persons. Ensure your system is up-to-date. Use a secure Internet connection. Use strong password; Beware of fraudulent emails and pop-ups. Protect yourselves from identity thefts."

The public is cautioned not to invest money in links available on social media and WhatsApp platforms on trading, investment, part-time jobs, etc.



T-Hub CEO Mahankali Srinivas Rao with MEIC Vice-President Divya Prakash Joshi after signing an MoU

T-Hub, India's leading startup incubator, on Wednesday announced its strategic partnership with Medtronic, global leader in healthcare technology. The collaboration marks a significant leap forward in fostering innovation and growth within India's dynamic health-tech startup ecosystem.

This collaboration is anchored by Medtronic Engineering and Innovation Centre (MEIC) in Hyderabad, which is also Medtronic's largest R&D centre outside the US. With this partnership, MEIC will foster industry collaborations and participate in events like CXO roundtables and innovation workshops to build thought leadership in health-tech R&D, thus ensuring deep immersion into the dynamic landscape of health-tech innovation.

T-Hub's startups will also receive invaluable mentorship, sponsorship and expert guidance from MEIC, propelling

their ventures towards success. In addition, MEIC employees will also have the opportunity to participate in tailored entrepreneurship workshops curated by T-Hub.

Mahankali Srinivas Rao, CEO, T-Hub said, "Through our partnership with Medtronic, T-Hub continues its mission of nurturing startups and propelling innovation within the health-tech sector. We are confident that together, we will accelerate the growth and enhance the impact of health-tech startups, paving the way for a brighter and

healthier future for all."

Divya Prakash Joshi, Vice President & Site Leader, MEIC said, "For over a decade, MEIC has contributed to excellence in global healthcare from Hyderabad and our dedicated team of engineers has put innovative ideas to work to generate solutions for better patient outcomes.

Through this strategic partnership with T-Hub, we aim to leverage our expertise and resources to empower health-tech startups in India, fostering a culture of innovation and driving sectoral growth."

# Acute shortage of water hits beer production hard

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Acute shortage of water in the current summer has led to scaling down of beer production in Telangana disappointing tipplers.

The breweries are unable to match the growing demand for supply of beer. The Excise Department has already earned Rs 1,458 crore through excise tax on the sale of 48,71,668 beer boxes. The production of beer is going to be hit hard in the next two months due to shortage of water.

The microbreweries permitted in the early days of the TRS coming to power in Telangana, the beer production taking place in cities. However, the supply of beer to rural areas has come down due to shortage of



water.

The unprecedented shortage of water in the manufacture of beer was unheard of during the past four years. As a result, the production has been hit denting revenue of Rs 1200 crore to the state exchequer. The receding water levels in main reservoirs around the city is going

to affect the beer production.

Such shortage of water surfaced earlier once for a short period in 1999. The State government supplies 44 lakh liters of water from Singuru reservoir for a nominal price to four multi-national breweries.

The allocation of drinking water from these projects was

alleged to be not proper. Doubts are being expressed how can the government supply water from Singuru to breweries instead of satiating thirst of the people.

It has come to be known that supply of 44 lakh safe drinking water from drinking water project to the breweries is inevitable as borewell water is not fit for manufacture of beer. The water level in Singuru and Manjira reservoirs has receded further due to prevailing drought and acute shortage of drinking water. HMWSSB rules out procuring water from private sources is difficult. Therefore, it is not able to supply water to SAB Miller India, United Breweries Limited, Carlsbird India and Crown Beers.

## ‘Congress trying to convert Hyd as centre for Rohingyas’

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Nizamabad BJP MP Dharmapuri Arvind on Wednesday alleged that the Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy intended to transform Telangana as the Centre for the Rohingyas.

While speaking to the media at BJP office in Nizamabad on Wednesday, Arvind criticised the Minister for saying that the State would not implement the CAA and NRC Acts. Arvind said that the Congress leaders were speaking as they wished for the sake of minority votes. Uttam Kumar Reddy has been behaving like he has been provoking the communal differences. Moreover, the Congress leaders were insulting the Constitution.

Arvind asked Minister whether Telangana will bring Article 786. He wondered how a Minister can make such statements that the State government would not implement the Central acts. Arvind alleged that former CM KCR transformed the Bodhan as a fake passport centre.

# Democracy is in danger in India: Uttam Kumar Reddy

The Irrigation Minister said that BJP-led Central government has been destroying democratic institutions one after another

PNS ■ SURYAPET

Irrigation Minister Capt N Uttam Kumar Reddy emphasised the importance of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. He expressed concerns over the state of affairs under the BJP rule, stating that what had been preserved for over 75 years was now at risk under the BJP government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He said that parliamentary democracy was in danger, with attacks on fundamental rights, democratic procedures, systems, and principles. He pointed out that all pillars of democracy had been damaged under the Modi regime.

Uttam Kumar Reddy stated that the Congress party, which had fought for the country's independence, established democratic systems, and eradicated poverty and hunger, was now being harassed, with its bank accounts being frozen to create hurdles for the campaign.

He mentioned that the



Tukkuguda meeting would be historic, where Congress leaders would unveil the agenda and a plan to protect democracy and ensure the growth of all communities.

He denounced the BJP for failing to deliver on its promise. He contended that not only did the promised jobs fail to materialise, but existing employment opportunities dwindled during Modi's tenure.

Addressing a press conference at Suryapet on Wednesday, Uttam Kumar Reddy said that the Congress party would not only launch its election campaign for the upcoming Lok Sabha elec-

tions from the massive public meeting in Tukkuguda but also unveil its manifesto for the forthcoming elections. He mentioned that the public meeting would be addressed by senior Congress leaders including Rahul Gandhi, and AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge among others.

He appealed to Congress workers, fans, and sympathisers to participate in the Jana Jata Sabha at Tukkuguda on April 6 in large numbers.

He said that the State government was establishing 7,149 procurement centres across Telangana to purchase paddy, ensuring that the entire paddy would be procured at the minimum support price. He emphasized that severe punishment awaited anyone attempting to buy a single grain below the MSP.

He criticised the former Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao for resorting to falsehoods to target the Congress Government over power and water supply.

## ACB registered 42 cases in three months of new regime

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

The ACB has intensified raids to unearth illicit assets allegedly amassed by the officials during the BRS regime, it said. In fact, 42 ACB cases were registered in the first three months of the Congress government.

These include the case the ACB registered against the HMDA former director Siva Balakrishna, Jammikunta former Tahsildar Rajini are prominent among other cases. Ever Since CV Anand was appointed Director General of ACB, he is showing his mark in exposing corruption at high levels.

The Deputy Superintendents of Police in

districts have been swinging into action with CV Anand daily reviewing the progress with them.

On an average, at least one ACB raid is taking place at one or the other place in the state. The sensitised public have been coming forward to get the corrupt officials trapped by the ACB.

In majority of the ACB trap cases, majority of the raids were carried out against Revenue and Municipal officials. Officials resorting to irregularities in registration of agricultural lands and houses and those seeking bribe to approve building plans and issue of birth, death and other important certificates were trapped so far.



## 20 monkeys found dead in water tank

PNS ■ NANDIKONDA

Carcasses of 20 monkeys were found in a water tank in Nalgonda district of Telangana, police said on Wednesday.

The monkeys had fallen into the water tank located in Nandikonda Municipality of the district, while trying to drink water in it and drowned, they said.

The water tank is an old structure with tin roof which was slightly opened, they added.

People residing in the vicinity alerted the authorities after a foul smell emanated from the tank.

Later, municipality workers found the monkeys dead inside the tank and removed



the carcasses.

A case was registered and investigation is on, police said.

# BRS has no intention of destabilising Cong govt: Harish

PNS ■ YADADRI

Former Minister and Siddipet BRS legislator T Harish Rao on Wednesday made it clear that there was no intention on the party of the opposition party to destabilise the Congress government. The Congress government may fall under its own weight, he quipped.

Addressing the media here on Wednesday, he alleged that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy in the name of implementing Mahalakshmi scheme took the people for a ride. He failed to deliver on six guarantees in 100 days. Harish Rao appealed to people to defeat the



Congress in Lok Sabha elections. If the BRS candidates are elected in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, they would bring the Congress government to its knees and ensure that six guarantees are implemented.

As soon as former Chief

Minister K Chandrashekar Rao set out to meet the farmers in districts, the Revanth Reddy ordered officials to release water for irrigation into canal.

Further, he alleged that the Congress has lacked candidates to contest in the Lok Sabha elections. Therefore, the Congress party is luring the BRS leaders into the Congress fold, he reasoned.

He expressed the fear that the Congress government would revise the power tariff once the elections are over. He said that the BJP leaders have been politicising the Ayodhya Ram temple issue by building the temple there and distribut-

ing “talambarlu.”

He predicted that BRS leaders Danam Nagender, Kadiyam Kayya, Patnam Sunita and Ranjit Reddy who joined the Congress would be pushed into third position in the Lok Sabha elections.

He demanded that the state government procure paddy from farmers at Rs 2,500 a quintal. As long as Telangana exists the BRS will be there in politics. The BRS would not spare any politician who deserted the BRS during the hour of crisis and the doors of the party were closed for them forever even if they were to fall at the feet of KCR, he warned.

## NEWS FROM ANDHRA PRADESH

# ‘Will bring back volunteer system’

## CM Jagan calls Naidu a ‘sadist’



PNS ■ PUTHALAPATTU

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has called TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu a ‘sadist’ for stopping the volunteers from delivering the pension on people's doorstep, and asked the public to take revenge on TDP on May 13 (Polling Day), during the public meeting held near Puthalapattu as part of his Memantha Siddham Yatra on Wednesday.

Addressing the huge crowd, the Chief

Minister said, “Seeing the elderly people suffer today since they couldn't walk to collect their pensions, I can't help but wonder if Chandrababu Naidu possesses any humanity or if he's a sadist since he stalled the volunteers from disbursing the pension by approaching the Election Commission.”

He asked the crowd whether they were ready for this war to protect the future of the poor. “Go to every household and ask them if they have benefited from the welfare schemes,” said

Jagan while noting that YSRCP would reinstate the volunteer system if they come back to power.

“This is a war between Chandrababu Naidu, who is a habitual liar and cheat, and Jagan on the other side, who does everything for the people. Are you ready to help me win 175/175 Assembly seats and 25/25 Lok Sabha seats to defeat the corrupt? Are you ready to help me with a double-century government?” CM Jagan asked the energetic crowd.

“People gave them (TDP) an opportunity in the past to do good but did they fulfill it? Have an open discussion amongst yourselves and make a conscious decision. People should discuss what they (Chandrababu's government) provided in their 10-year rule. Check your bank statement from earlier years. Were you able to find even a single scheme through which Chandrababu deposited one rupee in your account,” said Jagan.

The Chief Minister also explained the schemes introduced by the YSRCP government from village secretariats, revolutionising government schools,

village clinics, DBT to women beneficiaries, Rythu Bharosa Kendras to help farmers to other doorstep delivery services to help the people.

“We are the only State which provides pensions to 66 lakh people. Further, we gave Rs 34,370 crore to the farmers (Rythu Bharosa), and free crop insurance of Rs. 7,800 crore was paid. Through input subsidy, the farmers were given Rs. 3,262 crore. And in total, only through DBT, Rs 2.7 lakh crore was directly deposited in the beneficiary accounts under various welfare schemes,” said the Chief Minister.

On the seventh day of the Memantha Siddham Yatra, the Chief Minister started his road show from Sadum mandal in the morning and proceeded via Kallur, Damalacheruvu, Gundlapalli, Talaupulapalli, Tenepalli to Pulalappattu where he addressed the public meeting. After the meeting, he started towards the night halt at Renigunta in Tirupati via Gollapalli, Gadanki, Kongaravari Palem, and Mamanduru.

# CPM demands Rs 25,000 compensation per acre

PNS ■ NALGONDA

CPM-M state secretary Julakanti Ranga Reddy has demanded that the State government pay a compensation of Rs 25,000 per acre to the farmers who sustained crop loss due to drought-like situation.

Taking part as the chief guest in the party district secretariat meeting here on Wednesday, he said that the government should expedite the procurement of paddy from farmers. Speedy procurement of paddy would help the farmers, he said, demanding payment of Rs 500 bonus per quintal of paddy. He also demanded that the government pay immediately to the farmers upon procurement of paddy. He alleged that the rice millers are not procuring the paddy at the MSP and wanted the government to take action against such millers.



CPM-M leader Julakanti Ranga Reddy speaking at party meeting in Nalgonda district on Wednesday

Besides the paddy crop, horticultural crops have been drying away, he said. The teams of revenue, agriculture and horticulture officials should conduct a survey on the crop loss so that the government would be able to pay suitable compensation to the farmers.

He also demanded that the authorities release the dues of wages of agricultural workers deployed in NREGS. He suggested keeping available drinking water and medical kits at

work place.

CPM-M district secretary Mudireddy Sudhakar Reddy demanded authorities to fill tanks in the district by releasing water to irrigation canals. He suggested holding medial camps in villages to check the spread of viral diseases.

CPM district secretariat members – Tummalala Veera Reddy, Nari Ilaiiah, Banda Srisaalam, Paladugu Nagarjuna and Ch Lakshminarayana were present at the meeting.

# Cop-turned realtor hauled in ‘land grabbing case’

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former IPS officer and Telugu Desam Party leader Mandra Sivananda Reddy has been cooperating with the Central Crime Station police probing a land grabbing case dating back to 1994. Sivananda Reddy is also accused of grabbing 50 acres of government land and forging documents, the police said.

In 1994, the then Andhra Pradesh government assigned 281 acres of land to at Budvel village under Rajendra Nagar mandal in RR district 66 people belonging to the Scheduled Castes. A group of 82 people encroached upon the remaining government land.

When the landowners gave their land on lease to SK Developers in violation of the conditions of land assignment,

the then Chevella Revenue Divisional Officer cancelled all their assignment pattas. The Revenue officials resumed the land as per the rules and handed over that land to HMDA and Tourism Department. However, the assignees approached High Court and the court gave direction to the then RDO to dispose of the case after giving due hearing to the assignees.

Even as the matter was pending, a group of persons, including TJ Prakash, Koneru Gandhi, Dasharatha Rama Rao and others allegedly abetted the petitioners to settle the matter by bribing government officials, the police said.

The petitioners signed agreements and paid some amount in order to get the land registered; however the accused cheated the assignees.

In 2021, assignees

approached Dayanand who is a local real estate broker to help them in getting the house plots. TJ Prakash, through Dayanand approached Reddy, who resigned from police department as non-cadre Superintendent of Police in 2008 and established real estate and construction business by then.

Reddy promised the assignees to sort the allotment using his influence. He offered them Rs 12,000 per sq yard while the market rate of the land in the nearby area was way higher.

During the period between 2021-2022, the accused handed over cheques of Rs 5 lakh and Rs 10 lakh to the assignees, which clearly establishes the beginning of a conspiracy with an eye on grabbing assigned land.

## PENSION DISTRIBUTION

# HC backs EC order

### Wonders why there is a need for volunteers for distribution of pensions

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

While the pensioners across the State are facing inconvenience in receiving the pensions after the volunteers were kept away from door delivering pensions as per the orders of Election Commission of India (ECI), the Andhra Pradesh High Court on Wednesday endorsed the ECI decision.

After hearing the arguments

over a public interest litigation challenging the EC directions, the High Court wondered why there was a need for volunteers for distribution of pensions to the beneficiaries.

“Why should the pensions be distributed only through volunteers? Is Andhra Pradesh the only State to distribute social security pensions? Every other State government does it. Nowhere else the volunteers' system is there, yet pensions



are being distributed,” the High Court pointed out.

The High Court said the EC had taken a decision not to involve volunteers in the distribution of beneficiaries only after taking into consideration the allegations against them that they are acting as ruling party agents.

The court pointed out that the EC had already instructed the State govern-

ment to see that pensions are distributed at the government offices including village secretariats.

In case of those who are not in a position to go to the offices, the village/ward secretary staff should go to their houses and distribute the pensions, it said. The High Court, thus, struck down the PIL and instructed the government to take all steps for the distribution of pensions without any hassles.

INDIA CORNER

## 'Sagar Kavach' conducted off Lakshadweep Islands

A two-day exercise involving all maritime security agencies of the country was conducted off the Lakshadweep Islands from April 1-2, officials said on Wednesday. During the exercise, validation of the effectiveness of coastal security mechanisms while dealing with asymmetric threats emanating from the sea was undertaken, they said. Assets of the Indian Navy, Coast Guard, Marine Police, fisheries, customs and other security agencies were engaged in the coastal security exercise -- Sagar Kavach 01/24. "Validation of effectiveness of coastal security mechanism while dealing with asymmetric threat emanating from the sea were undertaken," a senior official said. The exercise witnessed enhanced preparedness, response mechanism, surveillance capabilities and coordination between the coastal security stakeholders, the officials said.



## Man robbed in moving auto in Gurugram

A Bihar native was robbed by four people in an auto near IFFCO Chowk Metro Station here, police on Wednesday said. The accused snatched his mobile and transferred Rs 58,000 from his UPI account before leaving him on a roadside. According to the complaint filed by Rahul Kumar Bhagat, a native of Siwan district in Bihar, the incident happened Monday evening when he was returning home in an auto. "One of them took my mobile password and forced me to reveal the UPI PIN. After that, they dropped me on the way and took off with my phone. Later I found they transferred Rs 58,000 from my account in two transactions," Bhagat, who lives in Sector 33, said, according to police. Following his complaint, an FIR was registered against four unnamed people under sections 379 (theft) and 420 (cheating) of the IPC at Sector 29 Police Station on Tuesday, police said. A police officer said that they are trying to identify the auto and the accused with the help of footage from CCTVs in the area.



## Andaman cops develop chatbot for effective policing during polls

Two young officers stationed at a remote district of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (ANI) have brought pride to the entire Union Territory police department with their in-house chatbot named 'Election Mitra'. Developed by North and Middle Andaman SP Geetanjali Khandelwal (IPS) and Rangat SDPO Rahul L Nair (IPS), 'Election Mitra' has been trained on all handbooks of the Election Commission of India (ECI) pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of police. It provides prompt and accurate responses to user enquiries by referencing authentic sources, an official said. This initiative underscores the emphasis placed by DGP Devesh Chandra Srivastava on the development and utilisation of state-of-the-art technology in everyday policing, the official added. Khandelwal, a former army captain, is renowned not only as an excellent team leader, but also for her involvement in various social initiatives.



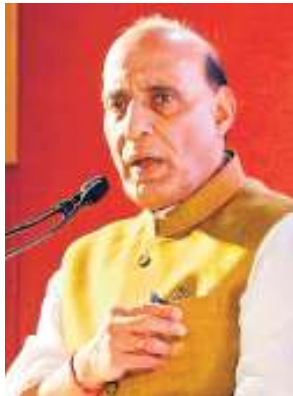
# No Muslim living in India will lose citizenship: Rajnath Singh

Says Opposition creating confusion on Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019

PNS ■ GHAZIABAD

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday said no Muslim living in India will lose his or her citizenship and accused the opposition parties of creating confusion in the community about the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. Addressing an election rally in support of the party's Lok Sabha candidate Atul Garg in Ghaziabad, he said the BJP does not engage in politics on the basis of caste, creed and religion but stands for nation-building. "We said that if our government is formed, we will make a citizenship law. And I want to tell you that after becoming the Home Minister (in 2014), I started this process by talking

to the prime minister but due to a lack of clear majority in the Rajya Sabha, that bill could not be passed there whereas it was passed in the Lok Sabha," Singh said. Later, when Amit Shah became the Home Minister, he took this responsibility on his shoulders and the bill was passed with full majority in both the Houses of Parliament, he said. The rules for the implementation of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, were notified in March this year, four years after the contentious law was passed by Parliament to fast-track citizenship for undocumented non-Muslim migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who came to India before



December 31, 2014. "Now the opposition people try to create this illusion among our Muslim brothers that now you will be thrown out of the country. I want to tell my Muslim brothers that rest

assured we believe in the concept of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', i.e. the whole world is our family. No matter what caste or creed one is born in or a follower of any religion or sect, we consider everyone as a member of our family," Singh said. "Sisters and brothers, anyone who is a Muslim living in India is not going to lose their citizenship. This kind of confusion is being created by our opponents. You go and tell our Muslim sisters and brothers about this," the BJP leader told the gathering. The minister said the BJP has delivered on what it promised in its manifestos since the days when the party was known as Jana Sangh, whether it was the issue of Ram

temple in Ayodhya or abolishing triple talaq. "I only want to say one thing for the BJP, we do what we promise. I want to remind you that when we worked as Jana Sangh, we had then said in our manifesto that the day we get a clear majority in Parliament, then no power in the world would be able to stop us from making a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya. This was part of our manifesto 1984 onwards," Singh said. "We had talked about abolishing triple talaq and we did it. Congress workers would say to us why we are poking our nose into other religions. Whether it's the women of Hindu community, or Muslim, Christian, Parsi, we look at everyone with respect.

## BETTER HEATWAVE MANAGEMENT

# Continuous efforts necessary to generate awareness

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Continuous efforts towards generating awareness is necessary for better management of heat waves, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Wednesday and added effective addressing leads to effective management. Mandaviya, who chaired a meeting to review public health preparedness for the management of heat-related illnesses, highlighted the importance of timely action as soon as India Meteorological Department (IMD) alerts are received in the states. "Timely, advance and wide awareness among the people on the preventive measures will hugely support in reducing the severe impact of such heat waves," he said. Highlighting the lack of accurate data from the ground, Mandaviya noted the impor-



ance of creating a central database with inputs from states to share field-level information on heat waves, including deaths and cases, so that a realistic assessment of the situation can be made. He also advised senior officials to meet with states for better coordination and understanding, highlighting the importance of collaborative efforts in the efficient management of heat-related illnesses.

Union Minister of State for Health Bharati Pravin Pawar stressed on the formation of state- and district-level committees for information and awareness campaigns. She also highlighted the importance of equipping Ayushman Arogya Mandirs with water coolers, ice packs and other basic necessities. She emphasised the need for states to accelerate field-level implementation of state action plans for addressing the effects of heat waves. A granular status and analysis of overall heatstroke forecasting, pattern, climatology and vulnerable zones in India and areas most prone to increased heat waves was made by IMD officials, covering the trajectory of rainfall patterns, humidity and forecast of transition from El Nino to El Nino-Southern Oscillation.



## AAP leaders to go on fast against Kejriwal's arrest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Wednesday gave a call for a nationwide collective fast on April 7 at Jantar Mantar against the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, party leader Gopal Rai said on Wednesday. Addressing a press conference, Rai, who is also the Delhi state convener of AAP, said the party has decided that on April 7, a nationwide collective fast will be observed to garner maximum support from the public for Kejriwal's fight. "Those who are against the arrest of Arvind Kejriwal, who want to save the country's democracy, and stop injustice and dictatorship, are urged to observe collective fasts in their homes, villages, neighbourhoods, block headquarters, tehsils, districts, and state capitals," he said. On April 7, a collective fast will be observed at Delhi's Jantar Mantar, where all Delhi ministers, MLAs, MPs, councillors, officials, and workers of Delhi will participate. Rai also urged people to either collectively pray or listen to the devotional song "Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram" on YouTube. "You can sing it collectively. Together, we will pray for Kejriwal to receive strength and fight against tyranny while he is in jail. We can fight to bring the truth to light," he added. Rai, who is also a minister in Delhi cabinet, asked people to send pictures to the website kejrivalkoashirvaad.com. "This fight is not Kejriwal's personal battle. His fight is to save the country and its democracy from dictatorship, oppression, and excesses," he added.

## Kejriwal lost 4.5 kg since arrest, alleges AAP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has been rapidly losing weight since his arrest on March 21, senior AAP leader Atishi claimed on Wednesday and accused the BJP of putting his health at risk by keeping him in jail. She said the Aam Aadmi Party will seek legal help over the chief minister's health condition. However, the administration of Tihar jail, where Kejriwal is lodged till April 15, said his weight has been constant since his judicial custody began. A senior Tihar jail official said the chief minister's vitals are normal. "Upon arrival on April 1, Kejriwal was examined by two doctors and all vitals were normal. Also, his weight is constant at 65 kg till date. Home-cooked food is being provided as per court order," the jail administration said in a statement. As per official records from the Tihar jail, Kejriwal's weight was 65 kg, sugar level 139 (random blood sugar) and blood pressure (BP) was recorded 120/82 on April 1. The weight remained at 65 kg, sugar level increased to 182 (RBS) and BP stood at 121/83 on April 2. His weight was recorded at 65 kg, sugar level at 140 (RBS) and BP was 116/82.

## Man slits his throat in front of Chief Justice in K'taka HC

PNS ■ BENGALURU

A man tried to end his life on the premises of Karnataka High Court on Wednesday by allegedly slitting his throat with a knife in front of Chief Justice Nilay Vipinchandra Anjaria in Court Hall One, police said. According to the police, Srinivas, who reportedly hails from Mysuru, handed over a file to security staff at the entrance of Court Hall One, and before anyone could realise what was happening, he had slit his own throat in the presence of Chief Justice Anjaria. The security personnel

responded immediately and rushed Srinivas to Bowring Hospital, where he is now under treatment, a senior police officer said. "We don't know why he took such an extreme step. He entered Court Hall One and slit his throat with a knife. Our security staff deployed inside saw it happen and immediately rescued him. He is hospitalised," he said. No suicide note was found at the spot, he added. Chief Justice Anjaria expressed concern about the security lapse on the high court premises and asked those in charge how the man managed to being a sharp object

inside court. He also ordered police to conduct a panchnama (record of findings and evidence) of the spot and told them not to touch the knife. The contents of the file that Srinivas gave to the security staff are unknown, and the court has said it would not check the documents as it was not presented to court by a designated advocate. The high court also said that the authorities must not receive any documents without the court's order. Police are still ascertaining the reason for the man's suicide attempt and are waiting to record his statement once he is declared fit by doctors.

## Criminals in UP are now scared of going to jails, says UP CM Yogi Adityanath

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Slamming the previous Uttar Pradesh governments over law and order, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday said the criminals are now scared even to enter the state's jails. The BJP leader said unlike the Congress and the Samajwadi Party (SP)-led governments in the state, his government follows a "zero tolerance" policy towards crime. "You stop indulging in

criminal activities or be prepared to pay the price," he said, addressing a "Jan Chaupal" at Fatehpur Sikri in Agra. Adityanath referred again to his government's claim that the criminals were earlier getting their bail cancelled so that they could stay safe in jails. "Now they are saying don't even send us to jail. We are afraid to go there too," he said, according to a statement issued here. His remark comes days after jailed gangster-politi-

cian Mukhtar Ansari died of cardiac arrest in Banda's Rani Durgawati Medical College. The five-time MLA had been behind bars in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab since 2005 and had over 60 criminal cases against him. A post-mortem report confirmed that he died of cardiac arrest. However, a magisterial inquiry was ordered as the opposition parties raised questions over Ansari's death amid allegations by his family that he died due to "slow poisoning" in the Banda jail.

## ASSERTS MODI HONOURED PEOPLE'S SENTIMENTS

# SP, Congress didn't want Ram temple in Ayodhya: Amit Shah

PNS ■ MUZAFFARNAGAR/MORAD-ABAD (UP)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said the Samajwadi Party and the Congress were not in favour of the Ram temple being constructed in Ayodhya. Addressing a public meeting in Muzaffarnagar to seek votes for BJP candidate Sanjeev Balian ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, Shah said it was the Narendra Modi government that honoured the sentiments of people and built the temple. He also said that the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh has stopped the migration of people from western Uttar Pradesh by improving the law and order situation and it is the criminals who are now leaving the state. "Akhilesh Yadav ji's party (SP) and the Congress never wanted the Ram temple to be built in Ayodhya. The Congress kept the issue of Ram Janmabhoomi stuck for 70 years but Modi ji won the

case, performed bhoomi puja and also the consecration of Ramlalla," Shah said. The SP and the Congress have formed an alliance in Uttar Pradesh for the general election. Criticising the INDIA bloc, he said, all those who were part of the opposition alliance were involved in scams. "Those part of the arrogant alliance are the ones involved in scams and corruption worth Rs 12 lakh crore... they (INDIA bloc) held a rally where they talked about giving protection to the corrupt," Shah said. "Today I am telling the entire people of Uttar Pradesh from this platform that in 2014, Modi ji said that those who have committed corruption will go to jail and in 2024 also he is saying the same thing. The aim of the opposition is to make people from their family chief ministers and prime ministers. The aim of Modi ji is to make the poor, farmers, helpless, Dalits and tribals strong and stand on their feet," he added.



## Airborne human DNA aid forensic test

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Airborne human DNA could be used in forensic analysis of crime sites that have been wiped clean of fingerprints and trace evidence, a new research has found. Offenders are unlikely to totally prevent their DNA from being released into the environment, as human DNA can be found in the air after people have spoken or even so much as breathed, researchers explained. While collecting trace DNA, comprising human cells, is common in criminal investigations, researchers said "environmental DNA" (eDNA) from solid surfaces, soil, water and air are providing new avenues for gathering evidence. Comparing samples taken from air-conditioning units in offices and homes, the research team, led by Flinders University in Australia, found that human DNA could be collected on the surfaces of these units and from the air, with air samples likely representing more recent occupation and surface samples representing prior occupation. "Our study also showed that air circulating through air-conditioning could collect human DNA, which further supports the idea that human DNA can be found in the air and settle on surfaces," said Emily Bibbo, a PhD candidate at Flinders University's College



of Science and Engineering, and author of the study published in the journal Electrophoresis. Biological material is routinely collected from crime scenes and exhibits, and these new methods have potential in

identifying the usual users of a room as well as visitors, said Mariya Goray, senior lecturer in forensic science, Flinders University. "It is very unlikely that an average offender, even with forensic awareness, could total-

ly prevent their DNA from being released into the environment," said Goray. "We now know that eDNA and eRNA shed from sources such as skin or saliva can be detected in the environment, including soil, ice, air and water." "We may be able to use (eDNA) as evidence to prove if someone has been in the room, even if they wore gloves or wiped surfaces clean to remove the evidence," said Bibbo. The researchers recommended follow-up studies that can determine the best location for air collection devices, along with the appropriate time after a crime to test and acquire DNA of interest, if it is present.

## EC reviews law and order, security situation for LS polls

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Wednesday directed the chief secretaries and directors general of police of all states as well as the heads of central agencies to ensure peaceful and inducement-free Lok Sabha polls and maintain a strict vigil along the interstate and international borders to plug the inflow of illicit liquor, cash, drugs and arms. Preemptive measures to address communal tensions based on past experiences and the imperative of securing porous borders against

illegal activities were also discussed. Recent violence and turmoil in Manipur and its ramifications in the conduct of a peaceful election were also addressed, with the EC urging for swift action to assist internally-displaced persons and ensure their participation in the electoral process, the poll panel said. The EC had convened the meeting to bring all the stakeholders concerned on one platform for a seamless coordination and cooperation among the officials of neighbouring states and Union ter-

ritories. Other key issues discussed at the meeting included a diligent deployment of central forces, logistical support for the movement and transportation of the security personnel and identification and monitoring of flashpoints in border areas that might have ramifications for the election process, the poll panel said. The commission underscored the importance of strict vigilance to curb the movement of contraband items, including narcotics, liquor, arms and explosives, across the international borders.

## Air turbulence

Vistara faces flight disruptions due to crew shortage; DGCA demands daily updates

Flight operations of Tata Group's Vistara Airlines, which has earned a reputation for its premium services and reliability in the Indian aviation sector, have of late been marred by cancellations and delays. Vistara, a joint venture between Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, has attributed the disruptions to a shortage of flight crew. Passengers have been left stranded and inconvenienced, with some facing difficulties in rebooking their travel plans at short notice. Vistara's troubles come at a time when the aviation sector is recovering from the impact of the pandemic, with domestic travel demand showing signs of revival. The airline industry has been navigating a delicate balance between scaling up operations to meet growing demand while managing operational constraints and ensuring passenger safety. In response to the crew shortage crisis, Vistara has assured passengers that it is working diligently to address the issue and minimise disruptions to flight services.



The airline is actively recruiting and training additional crew members to augment its workforce and improve operational resilience. For passengers affected by flight cancellations and delays, Vistara has offered options for rebooking or refunding tickets, along with assistance in making alternative travel arrangements. The airline has reiterated its commitment to prioritising customer satisfaction and minimising inconvenience caused by the disruptions.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has stepped in, demanding daily reports from the airlines regarding the status of flight operations, crew availability and measures taken to mitigate the impact of disruptions on passengers. The crew shortage issue highlights the challenges faced by airlines in managing their workforce in the midst of evolving dynamics of the aviation industry, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Domestic flights have been reporting disruptions, including layoffs, furloughs and changes in travel demand patterns, much to the consternation of passengers. The incident underscores the importance of effective workforce management and contingency planning for airlines to ensure smooth and uninterrupted flight operations. As the aviation industry strives to rebound from the challenges posed by the pandemic, maintaining a robust and adequately trained workforce is critical to meeting the evolving needs of passengers and sustaining growth. This is what DGCA must be concerned about and has taken up on priority. As Vistara endeavours to overcome the crew shortage crisis and restore normalcy to its flight operations, the incident serves as a reminder of the complex and dynamic nature of the aviation industry. Effective collaboration among airlines, regulators and stakeholders is essential to address challenges promptly and ensure the seamless functioning of the aviation ecosystem.

### PICTALK



Devotees at BAPS Hindu Mandir, in Abu Dhabi

## The escalating perils of global terrorism

The recent ISIS-K attack outside Moscow has elicited widespread condemnation and intensified global anxieties surrounding terrorism

The recent ISIS-K (Khorasan) claimed attack outside Moscow, resulting in over 130 deaths and more than 100 injuries, warrants strong condemnation. Khorasan, a splinter unit of ISIS with roots in Iran, Turkmenistan, and Afghanistan, highlights four critical lessons. Firstly, politics, as observed by Thomas Hobbes in 'Leviathan', remains deeply intertwined with human nature, with greed and fear driving conflicts. Despite global changes, power struggles persist, leading to conflicts like World War I and II. The post-World War II era witnessed the emergence of non-state actors, exacerbated by the Cold War and subsequent conflicts. Secondly, intervening in internal conflicts, such as Russia's support for Assad against ISIS, can breed enmity and fuel terrorism. Thirdly, while international terror groups may appear subdued, they can resurge with renewed vigour, forming clandestine links in Central Asian Republics. Lastly, any retaliation against ISIS should involve cooperation with neighbouring countries to prevent spillover effects. This attack is reminiscent of past incidents in Russia, such as the 2002 Moscow theatre hostage crisis and the 2004 Caucasus hostage tragedy. The recent attack underscores vulnerabilities in Russia's security apparatus, with terrorists exploiting the ability to choose the time and place of their attacks for maximum media impact.

The global criticism of the attack reflects widespread concern over combating international terrorism. The US, despite geopolitical tensions, has shown commitment to addressing terror threats worldwide. However, trust deficits between major powers hinder cooperation efforts. While Ukraine denies involvement, the Federal Security Agency (FSB) is apprehensive about Ukrainian links to the attack, potentially complicating the ongoing conflict. China's expanding influence in Central Asia further complicates regional dynamics. Central Asian Republics (CAR) face increasing terrorism threats, with non-state actors exploiting cultural ties for nefarious purposes. This underscores the need for multilayered security cooperation and technological innovation to combat terrorism effectively. Despite efforts by intelligence and security agencies, challenges remain in dealing with terrorists driven by religious misinterpretations. The influx of refugees from neighbouring countries adds complexity to the security landscape. Efforts to combat terrorism through collaboration, such as the Samarkand meeting, offer hope for regional stability. However, economic disparities and inconsistent Government policies contribute to vulnerabilities in the region. The presence of international Islamist terrorist organisations like Hizb Ut-Tahrir poses significant security challenges. Despite anti-terrorist drives, Central Asian states have attempted to export terrorism to conflict zones like Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria. The recent influx of illegal migrants and increased terrorist activities have compelled China and Russia to seek cooperation in tackling transnational terrorism. Rise of fundamentalism in Central Asia poses an international reality, fueled by disgruntled groups and external influences. Central Asia's strategic importance and rich resources



SUDHIR HINDWAN

MODERN TERRORISTS ARE HIGHLY ORGANISED AND PROFESSIONAL, NECESSITATING A SHIFT TOWARDS MORE VIGILANT AND ASSERTIVE INTELLIGENCE, POLICE AND PARAMILITARY NETWORKS

make it crucial for global security. The US has recognised CAR's strategic significance for regional stability. Efforts to improve economic prowess and security capabilities in Russia and CAR require coordinated action and cooperation. Economic transformation hinges on fighting inflation and developing robust anti-terrorism mechanisms. It's crucial to recognise that the issues of law and order differ from those of terrorism, despite often being conflated. Policymakers must understand the diverse security threats facing nations today and adapt strategic policies accordingly. Modern terrorists are highly organised and professional, necessitating a shift towards more vigilant and assertive intelligence, police, and paramilitary networks. Many recommendations from various committees may not align with current realities, especially considering India's struggles with terrorism, naxalism, and insurgency. It's outdated to attribute terrorism solely to societal conditions or structural adjustments. Instead, a thorough analysis of the psychological factors driving terrorism can offer deeper insights and guide effective counterterrorism strategies. Understanding the financial links between terrorism,

organised crime, arms dealers, drug traffickers, and smugglers is crucial. Special forces should be deployed to counter terrorist activities in regions where violence is endemic. Collaborative efforts among nations are essential to develop strategic mechanisms for combating international terrorism, with the United States and India playing pivotal roles. Addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by terrorism demands a nuanced approach that differentiates between law and order issues and acts of terrorism. Policymakers must acknowledge the evolving nature of security threats and adapt strategic policies accordingly. Vigilant and assertive intelligence, police, and paramilitary networks are vital in countering the sophisticated tactics employed by modern terrorists. Understanding the financial networks that sustain terrorism is equally crucial for effective counterterrorism efforts. As terrorism continues to pose a global threat, collaborative efforts among nations are essential. In this endeavour, the US and India can play pivotal roles, leveraging their resources and expertise in the fight against terrorism. (The writer is recipient of the Bharat Gaurav Award, is a Professor and strategic affairs expert; views are personal)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### KATCHATHEEVU CONTROVERSY

Madam — Apropos news article "Katchatheevu takes centre stage in TN" published on April 02, this is my response. It is indeed hilarious to note how the powers demanding "farsightedness" enough to predict 400 plus seats in their favour (even before the first vote is cast) by gauging the "national mood," blatantly resemble a bunch of drowning lot clutching at a straw! So despite India and Sri Lanka being bound under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties 1969 revolving around the Katchatheevu island; how ridiculously can it be brought into the discourse by making a mockery of mutually accepted international agreements framed around half a century ago?

Instead of making a mountain out of a molehill, amidst the waters of Palk Strait, located outside the maritime boundary of India; would the "nationalists" act "kind" enough to enlighten the country about the latest status of Chinese occupation in Ladakh following the fatal assault upon Indian soldiers in Galwan! Why doesn't the self-declared "patriotic" brigade concentrate its time energy and resources to protect the North-West boundary of the nation to ensure that Pathankot Gurdaspur Uri Pulwama does not get repeated on Indian soil in future? Last but not the least. Would the current powers care to applaud the stalwarts of Congress for ensuring the inclusion of Jammu & Kashmir Goa Daman Diu Sikkim into the Indian fold, though the said regions were not part of the national territory at the stroke of independence?

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

#### SC REPRIMANDS PATANJALI

Madam — Apropos news article "Patanjali advertisements: SC comes down hard on Ramdev, Acharya Balkrishna for 'absolute defiance'" published on April 02, this is my response. If the product that Yoga Guru Ramdev and Patanjali's MD Balkrishna are making is about as good and authentic as they say it is, then they didn't have to apologise and could have won the case on its

#### RBI's role and challenges



Apropos news article "PM: Growth should be RBI top most priority next decade" published on April 02, this is my response. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), established in 1935, has been instrumental in guiding India's economic trajectory through various transitions. From steering the country towards a market-oriented economy to embracing digitalization, the RBI has demonstrated adaptability in the face of numerous challenges. Despite setbacks like the 2008 financial meltdown and the implementation of demonetization, the RBI has implemented measures such as the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code to address

issues like bad loans, showcasing its resilience and proactive approach to crisis management. It is crucial to address evolving macroeconomic and regulatory challenges. Specifically, enhancing banking regulation and supervision and improving oversight mechanisms is imperative, especially in light of recent episodes involving financial institutions like YES Bank and Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services Ltd. Transparency in dealing with regulated entities, such as Paytm Payments Bank, also remains a significant concern. Looking ahead, empowering the RBI with necessary legal changes for effective banking regulation and respecting its institutional position will be vital. Additionally, maintaining low fiscal deficits is essential to prevent potential fiscal dominance of monetary policy, thus ensuring the RBI can effectively fulfil its mandate of maintaining price stability and fostering economic growth.

Amarjeet Kumar | Hazaribagh

merits. They were scamming people in the name of Ayurveda. Like law-abiding citizens, the Supreme Court also wondered and pulled up the Centre, asking why the Ministry of AYUSH "chose to keep its eyes shut when Patanjali was going to town saying there were no remedies for COVID in allopathy?"

Ramdev was promoting his concoction CORONIL for the treatment of COVID when India was entering the most lethal COVID wave which killed thousands. People expected that the SC would give exemplary punishment to Patanjali in its next hearing on 10 April, instructing both Ramdev and Balkrishna to be present.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

#### CANCER AMONG WOMEN

Madam — Apropos news article "Taboos fuel breast cancer silence" published on April 01, this is my response. For years breast cancer has been a major health issue among Indian women. It accounts for 14 per cent of all cancers among our women. Statistically, one in every 28 women in

India is at risk of developing breast cancer in her lifetime. And, unfortunately, in our country, the number of breast cancer cases reported each year is rising at higher rates than ever. Numerous studies have shown that regular screening of women with no symptoms of breast cancer has lowered the number of women who die from the disease.

Increased body weight and weight gain as an adult, are linked with a higher risk of breast cancer after menopause. The American Cancer Society recommends women stay at a healthy weight throughout their life and avoid excess weight gain by balancing their food intake with physical activities. Diet plays a very small but measurable role in breast cancer prevention. However, women who adhere to a healthy diet should still take other preventive measures, such as having regular mammogram tests.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)

## Synergy between man and machine

Ambient Computing brings many positive workplace outcomes, from reducing operational costs to human creativity and innovation in production

Industry 4.0 is enabling new concepts and technologies that make factories smarter. It begs the question: how do we create stronger synergies between humans and machines to improve production efficiencies, while progressing the creative cognition of human potential? This question gained traction after the global pandemic. The industry started to emphasise socio-technical considerations to enable new use cases around asset management, workplace well-being and process control, requiring ambient computing at the manufacturing edge.

**What is Ambient Computing:** Ambient computing is a form of ubiquitous computing, a subset of edge computing. It uses computing power to exhibit human-like intelligence in perceiving, processing and taking actions based on available data and information. In simple terms, ambient computing enables a smart agent - think of an Alexa and Siri optimised for manufacturing processes - to collaborate with people, operational technologies and assets, such as machines and



autonomous mobile robots, to mitigate disruptions at the manufacturing edge. The fusion of AI into the manufacturing edge also helps drive continuous improvement and introduces innovation of new products and services.

**Working with People, Assets and Processes:** Ambient computing let organizations focus on growth and innovation by bringing agility to the manufacturing edge where people, assets and processes are working together in unison to deliver required yield and throughputs.

**Cybersecurity and Industry 4.0:** Industry 4.0 essentially has three components: How machinery communicates in a production process, how into a system, and how information is shared throughout the manufacturing lifecycle. Learn how your cybersecurity needs to account for all three.

**Ambient computing can be applied to the following :** Assets monitor themselves and schedule maintenance based on wear and tear.

A smart meter system (water, air, gas, electricity and steam) manages the production environment to reduce waste and drive efficiencies by automatically adjusting its end devices such as thermostats and valves. Automated guided vehicles and mobile robots self-manage routes and tasks based on product, people and environment.

Production and assembly floor environments monitor themselves to ensure safety and security of people, products and assets. Smart devices such as notebooks, phones, tablets, wearables and stand-alone devices collaborate with people on risks, issues, continuous improvement and production optimization. By transforming the manufacturing floor to be automated and self-sustainable, ambient computing can reduce operational costs, improve product quality and time-to-market and empower employees to work smarter.

With access to real-time information, organizations can improve how they handle market and ecosystem disruptions with better and faster collaboration between humans and systems.

**Adopting Ambient Computing:** It requires seven core elements to fully embrace ambient computing, fostering data availability and enhancing collaboration across people, applications, assets, and devices:

1. Edge computing for real-time decision-making and collaboration.
2. Data-as-a-service to meet evolving needs.
3. Digital twins for predictive insights.
4. Cognitive automation for continuous learning.
5. Connectivity to facilitate constant communication.
6. Quality of experience (QoE) to cater to diverse needs.
7. Trusting systems to perform reliably.

Ambient computing represents a transformative concept that are propelling Industry 4.0 towards the realisation of smarter factories.

(The writer is cofounder Raising superstars; views are personal)



ANIL SETHI

FIRST COLUMN

ADHERE TO DHARMA AND SATYA

Dharma and Satya have profound implications on our actions and beliefs



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

These two words sometimes confuse about what they convey. What is the relationship between these two? Don't they sound similar? They do. Then, there is 'kartavya' (duty). This word also is inter-linked with these two. I will try to unravel their mystery in this article. Beginning with their definitions, dharma is what applies to everyone. For example, the nature of fire is to burn and cause it to burn. Similarly, dharma sustains life, virtue and moral duties on the planet Earth. The word Satya simply means facts like the Sun rising in the East. Some examples will shed more light on these two words. Starting with dharma, what is our svadharma or duty (kartavya)? Lord Krishna has explained that when we are born we have certain qualities due to which we are suitable naturally to do certain activities. (4.13) This is our svadharma, i.e. our dharma. Some children are naturally inclined to play sports, and if allowed to do so excel. This is his dharma by which he entertains others and also earns his livelihood. Arjuna, who was a Kshatriya had a specific dharma due to his birth, which he was supposed to uphold. He spoke about protecting family dharma (values). If not practised, it could have caused many horrible consequences. (1.38-1.45) Svadharma defines an individual's duties. Dhrtarashtra was born blind. Therefore, he was unfit to rule even though he was the elder brother. His younger brother Pandu was enthroned by the king. Upon his untimely death, Dhrtarashtra was made a stopgap king till the eldest son of Pandu gained adulthood. This was a factual position, ie. Satya. Dhrtarashtra's lineage was not entitled to be made king. But he refused to accept this fact, which was against dharma even though his eldest son Duryodhana was unfit to be made king. This resulted in the Mahabharata War, and his family was justly punished for trying to undo dharma. Dharma is worth practising for our good. It is meant for everyone to honour; one should follow it as far as feasible. Dharma is supreme; it is above everything. Satya has also many dimensions. It is a fact that all are similar souls. Satya should be used for correct behaviour, i.e. our activities should be based on it. For example, God should be worshipped by one and all. Satya is frequently situational. For example, children should study in school, but once at home should play. It changes or appears to change in our eyes or vis-à-vis our resources. For example, how much to eat? If not so hungry eat less and if quite hungry more. Similarly, if there is scarcity, the use of resources should be restricted. We have to always see what suits us and is appropriate. Our behaviour should match with the prototype in this matter. Truth is also what we perceive. Because we are too small to know the truth in its entirety, reality or essence. Truth can be known from scriptures like the Bhagavad-Geeta. Still, truth is limited; knowledge takes us to the level of humility, to be modest – a high quality. Now let us turn to the relationship between dharma and Satya. Truth is an instrument; dharma is the system. Truth should always support dharma because truth is the basis of dharma. Earlier, i.e. in Sattvayuga and Treta yuga, truth and dharma were synonymous. Lord Krishna changed it in Dwaparyuga and made dharma superior to truth because truth is not habitually spoken in this yuga. That is the reason Yudhishtir was asked to speak the confusing truth – "Ashvathama hatha it; narova kunjaro-va". Because dharma was at stake. The same rule applies today. We must always go by dharma; truth can be sacrificed for it. Let's, therefore, make dharma the basis of all our acts. What is the conclusion? Both dharma and truth are important, but dharma is more important. Truth can be sacrificed for the sake of dharma, but only temporarily, not permanently. (The writer is a spiritual teacher, views are personal)

The rise of ‘water aunties’ and sustainable solutions

There is a critical correlation between clean water access, conflict, cooperation and climate change; water for all is imperative



POORNAM SEWAK

This year, the theme for World Water Day is ‘Water for Peace’. It renews the world's focus on clean, safe, and affordable drinking water and its complex relationship with conflict, cooperation, and climate change. About 2 billion people still lack access to safe water worldwide. India, too, has been addressing the water needs of its citizens with the promise of tap water in each home, especially in the last decade, where nearly piped water access has reached 75% of India's homes. Community-based water treatment plants help purify groundwater to serve such civilian needs. Decentralised Safe Water Enterprises (SWEs), popularly called Water ATMs, have provided low-cost, 24x7, safe (SWN), through its Water ATMs called iJal Stations, helps provide safe water access to over 1.3 million people in India across Telangana, Maharashtra and Western Uttar Pradesh. In 2023, consumers bought over 350 million litres of water from its iJal stations, which had an uptime above 98 per cent around the year. Nearly 56 per cent of these 350 Water ATMs are managed and operated by women affectionately called Water Aunties by their communities. The consumers collect safe water in their 20-litre cans from these iJal Stations. This prevents the scourge of single-use plastic bottled water, provides freedom and livelihood to low-income communities, negates the endless wait for the water tankers, and serves localities with contamination-free potable water. “The stations have proven to be an oases, especially in the scorching heat and severe drought conditions,” said Sinduja, a Water Auntie in Telangana. India is now home to around 65,000 Water ATMs set up by 30 national-level implementers and State Governments. **The Cost Burden** The buck does not stop just with the provision, access, or management of safe drinking water. For instance, the revenue from these Water ATMs is turning out to be unsustainable for many of the implementers at the grassroots level, according to a report of the three-year project named Sustainable Enterprises for Water and Health (SEWAH) carried out by SWN in collaboration with United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and data from ten other implementers. The study found that the water revenue in these water ATMs, priced affordably at Rs 1 per litre and Rs 5 per 20 litre, barely met the current local operating costs, such as raw water, electricity, and operator salaries. The field service costs, such as the technician's fee and high-value spare parts, overburden the operator's expenditure. The implementers also do not cover expenses relating to cluster supervision, quality monitoring, equipment or facility upgrades, etc. Time For An Uptime Model The SWN's report, called Financial and Operating Performance of Water ATMs in 2023, warranted a relook at the sustainability of Water ATMs in India. This time, through a new lens, that would shift the total cost burden away from the operators and onto the taxpayers' rupee for govt-funded systems or CSR grants of willing companies for grant-funded systems. The report specifically proposed a result-based funding model in which SWEs received funding depending on the volume of water sold, facility up-time or revenue collected, and quality compliance. A global result-based funding organisation, Uptime Catalyst Facility, selected SWN's iJal Stations for a sustainable performance-based incentive model for the implementers. The ideal Stations proved to be apt differentiators because their remote monitoring system and water metres provide real-time data on plant performance, the volume of water produced and sold, and the revenue collected. The revenue collected is easily monitored since the water is purchased using pre-paid RFID cards, digital QR codes, or coin dispensing. Looking at over a decade of operating experience, the Government of Karnataka selected SWN to help operationalize more than 18,000 Community Water Treatment Plants (or Water ATMs) in the state by training the village Panchayat, operators, contractors, and the Rural Development and Panchayati Raj staff at the district level. The project brought in the best practices of training, monitoring, and operating the plant for four years during the peak of COVID, starting in 2019. A Digital Platform is now tested across states, and hundreds of systems are now export-ready on parameters that include physical and training components and Information Education and Communication campaigns to train at the grassroots level where semi-skilled operators. It is poised for replication in 17 countries, West Africa and five South Asian countries. SWN also has vast experience and training materials for training last-mile operating professionals for Water ATMs. (The writer is vp of programmes & Partnerships, Safe Water Network India; views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS

DVC seeks single regulator for uniform tariff

The Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) on Wednesday said it has sought a single regulator to ensure uniform tariff for both Jharkhand and West Bengal command areas, an official said. Currently, the respective electricity regulatory commissions of both the states decide upon their end-consumer power tariff. During an interactive session with the Merchants' Chamber of Commerce here, DVC Chairman S Suresh Kumar said the difference in tariff is causing issues among consumers of the same discom but residing in different states. "We want uniform tariff for our command area, which covers parts of Jharkhand and West Bengal. We have already sent our proposal to the Ministry of Power and are awaiting a response," said Kumar. The generation and transmission tariff is fixed by the central regulator CERC, but distribution tariffs are finalised separately by the West Bengal and Jharkhand state electricity regulatory commissions, he added.



NCLT initiates insolvency proceeding against MEP Infrastructure

The National Company Law Tribunal has initiated the corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) against MEP Infrastructure Developers Ltd on a plea filed by Bank of India and appointed an interim resolution professional to take control of the company. The Mumbai bench of the NCLT admitted the plea under the IBC filed by the public sector lender, claiming a default of Rs 127.86 crore. "The factum of the existence of financial debt and its default stands proven on record. It has also been established that the petition is within time. Considering the facts placed before us and the fact that the Corporate Debtor owes the Financial Debt in excess of Rs 1 crore, which is in default. "This bench is of the view that in such circumstances, it is imperative that the CIRP be initiated in the matter of the Corporate Debtor (MEP Infrastructure)," said a two-member NCLT bench in its 9-page order passed on March 28, 2024.



Bharti Hexacom's IPO gets 34% subscription on Day 1 of offer

Bharti Hexacom's initial public offering received lukewarm response from the investors as it received 34 per cent subscription on the first day of bidding on Wednesday. This is the first public issue of the financial year 2024-25. The initial share sale of Bharti Hexacom received bids for 1,41,08,328 shares against 4,12,50,000 shares on offer, according to the NSE data. The category for Retail Individual Investors (RIIs) got subscribed 48 per cent, while the quota for non-institutional investors received 36 per cent subscription, and the portion for Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) got subscribed 29 per cent. On Tuesday, Bharti Airtel's arm Bharti Hexacom said it has collected about Rs 1,924 crore from anchor investors. The company had fixed a price band of Rs 542-570 per share.



100-DAY AGENDA FOR NEW GOVT

GTRI enlists key steps for easy e-commerce

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Simplification of e-commerce rules, disbursement of duty refund scheme in cash, and setting up of a national trade network, and publishing a report on the effectiveness of India's trade pacts should be part of the new government's 100-day agenda, GTRI said on Wednesday. The economic think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) also suggested the use of blockchain technology for tracing mechanisms for major fruits and vegetable products, allowing special economic zones to sell goods in the domestic market on duty foregone basis, and reducing reliance on China for important imports such as Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients, solar cells, EV batteries, and mobile phone components.

"The first 100 days represent a critical window (for a new government) to set the tone for governance and policy direction," GTRI Founder Ajay

Srivastava said.

The seven-phase Lok Sabha polls, the world's biggest election exercise, will kick off on April 19 with the counting of votes set to take place on June 4. It further recommended the



On e-commerce, it said that India has more than 20 lakh firms that produce good quality products and services but less than a lakh of these exports.

preparation of an action plan for countering the adverse effects of European climate regulation; building alliances, strengthening partnerships for better results at the WTO (World Trade Organisation); highlighting how several WTO laws are discriminatory and need change; and standardising incentives in manufacturing schemes.

It said that a National Trade Network (NTN) would help

enable all export-import related compliance online, besides centralising the submission of all required documents and information online, eliminating the need for separate interactions with customs,

Departments, are slow to evolve and cannot handle comprehensive processes efficiently. "An NTN, with a redesigned business process, is necessary for India," he said. It added that India has 14 comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and six smaller trade agreements and the new government should disclose how these pacts have fared over time. "This analysis could offer insights into the FTAs roles in boosting exports and inform ongoing trade negotiations," the GTRI said.

It also said the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) scheme incentives are issued in the form of an e-scrip which can be used for imports. Small firms need to sell these at discount to get cash.

RoDTEP scheme is the refund of un-refunded taxes much like the Drawback scheme and hence like drawback, the incentive must be paid in cash and not scrip, it suggested.

Advocating for the NTN, Srivastava said that the current systems, focused on specific

Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), shipping companies, ports, and banks.

"It would intelligently distribute information to the relevant agencies, bound by a service agreement to ensure responses within 2-5 hours, allowing online permissions," the think tank said. Advocating for the NTN, Srivastava said that the current systems, focused on specific

ments have delivered the highest return for it worldwide, and the investment in reality, which made it the largest landlord in the country, has also delivered well. "We plan to invest around USD 2 billion every year in India," its senior managing director Amit Dixit told reporters here.

Brigade Group partners with United Oxygen

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Realty firm Brigade Enterprises Ltd has signed a joint development agreement (JDA) with United Oxygen Company Pvt Ltd to develop an office project worth Rs 340 crore in Bengaluru.

The project will be located on ITPL Road, Whitefield, in East Bengaluru. It will have a leasable area of 3 lakh sq ft and a Gross Development Value (GDV) of about Rs 340 crore.

Brigade Enterprises Joint Managing Director Nirupa Shankar said, "Bengaluru continues to be the most favoured office leasing market, and demand continues to improve in the Whitefield micro market."

India's first small & medium REIT may be launched in six months

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's first Small and Medium Real Estate Investment Trust (SM-REIT) is expected to be listed on stock exchanges within the next six months, enabling small investors to have fractional ownership of rent-yielding properties by investing as low as Rs 10 lakh, according to NAREDCO.

Addressing a webinar on Wednesday, realtors' body NAREDCO President G Hari Babu said, "We are expecting the launch of first SM-REIT by September-October."

Last month, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) had notified the framework for SM REITs. Investors can now have frac-

tional ownership of rent-yielding real estate assets by making a minimum investment of Rs 10 lakh, with markets watchdog Sebi notifying the amended regulations for real estate investment trusts.



Hari Babu highlighted the benefits of SM-REITs and said small investors can now invest in rent-yielding real estate assets and earn both rental income as well as capital appreciation.

NAREDCO Chairman Niranjn Hiranandani hailed

the new framework for SM-REITs, which he said has come after the success of REITs.

There are three REITs backed by office assets -- Embassy Office Parks REIT, Mindspace Business Parks REIT and Brookfield India Real Estate Trust --- and one retail asset backed REIT named Nexus Select Trust.

NAREDCO Vice Chairman Rajan Bandelkar said the real estate sector has changed a lot and become more organised. He said SM-REITs will benefit retail investors a lot.

Amit Kumar Kedia, Director of Kedia Corporate Advisors Pvt Ltd, gave a detailed presentation on SM-REITs.

He expected the first SM-REIT to get listed within 3-4 months.

Shrimp exporters follow robust regulatory, safety regime; aim exports worth Rs 1 Lcr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian shrimp exporters follow a robust regulatory and safety regime, as it helps them to ship quality marine products to developed regions like the US and Europe, a senior government official said on Wednesday.

India is aiming to increase seafood exports to Rs one lakh crore in the next two years by increasing its processing capacity and shifting to higher value-added products, the official added. Debunking certain reports of poor working conditions and safety standards, the official

said India's 548 seafood units are regularly inspected and monitored by various government agencies.

"These units follow world-class quality and standards, and the major export destinations are developed nations," the commerce ministry official said.

Some reports that are alleging food safety and bad labour conditions in the Indian shrimp industry are wrong and baseless, the official noted.

All units are registered with MPEDA (Marine Products Export Development Authority) and FSSAI (Food



Safety and Standards Authority of India), and approved by EIC (Export Inspection Council) as mandated by the law.

The production and processing systems are regularly monitored by regulatory agencies in India and are subject-

ed to audits by inspectors of the US FDA (Food and Drug Administration), European Commission, GAC of China, Export Inspection Agency, MPEDA, etc, in addition to scores of private and certification audits.

The pre-processing and processing units follow a HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point)-based food safety management system as per the US Code of Federal Regulations. To promote the safety of products, the usage of pharmacologically active substances has been banned in aquaculture since 2002.

Blackstone to invest US\$ 2 bn every year

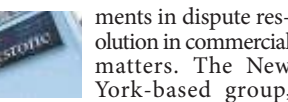
PNS ■ MUMBAI

Global private equity major Blackstone Group is confident of investing USD 2 billion annually in India, a top official said on Wednesday.

Its chief operating officer Jonathan D Gray pitched for a slew of measures to improve the

Wants quicker M&A clearances

ease of doing business for firms like it in India, including quicker approvals on mergers and acquisitions, easier privatisation of listed companies, and improve-



ments in dispute resolution in commercial matters. The New York-based group, which has been operational in India for nearly two decades, said Indian PE invest-

ments have delivered the highest return for it worldwide, and the investment in reality, which made it the largest landlord in the country, has also delivered well. "We plan to invest around USD 2 billion every year in India," its senior managing director Amit Dixit told reporters here.

Sensex, Nifty close lower amid profit-booking, mixed global cues

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty settled lower for the second straight session on Wednesday due to profit-booking in select banking and auto stocks amid mixed trends from the global markets and outflow of foreign funds.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined by 27.09 points or 0.04 per cent to settle at 73,876.82 in a volatile trade. During the day, the index oscillated between the high of 74,151.21 and the low of 73,757.23.

The broader NSE Nifty declined 18.65 points or 0.08 per cent to 22,434.65, with 30 components of the 50-share benchmark ending with losses.



"Nifty remained volatile throughout the day after an initial weak start due to negative global cues," said Rupak De, Senior Technical Analyst, LKP Securities.

He further said that the index may trend towards 22,650. "Support is positioned at 22,350 on the lower end." Among the

Sensex constituents, as many as 16 stocks closed with losses with Nestle India, Kotak Mahindra Bank, IndusInd Bank, Bajaj

Finserve, Titan and JSW Steel being the major laggards.

Index major Reliance, Hindustan Unilever, Maruti and Tata Steel also declined due to selling pressure.

In contrast, NTPC, TCS, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finance bucked the trend and ended the day in green. Axis Bank, Bharti Airtel, Mahindra & Mahindra and Tata Motors also defied the trend.

"Market is focused on the US FED chair's speech, later today, for more hints. A statement in-line with the last policy is predicted to bring back a respite to the global market," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

Vistara cancels 26 flights, holds meeting with pilots to address issues

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Amid flight cancellations due to non-availability of crew, Vistara's top officials on Wednesday held a meeting with pilots where discussions were held on new contracts and rostering issues, according to sources.

The Tata Group airline cancelled around 26 flights on Wednesday, the sources in the know said.

With a section of pilots reporting sick to protest against the revised pay structure, Vistara cancelled over 100 flights in the last two days and



aviation regulator DGCA has asked the carrier to submit a daily report on the cancellations and delays.

The sources said top officials of Vistara, including CEO Vinod Kannan, held a virtual meeting with pilots to discuss their problems.

Officials of human resources among other departments attended the meeting.

Ambani breaks into global top 10, ranked at in Forbes 2024 list

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Oil-to-telecom conglomerate Reliance Industries Ltd head Mukesh Ambani continues to be the richest Indian and has now broken into the world's top 10 wealthiest persons in the latest Forbes 2024 Billionaire List.

Ambani, 66, is ranked 9th on the list with a wealth of USD 116 billion, up from USD 83.4 billion in the 2023 ranking, according to Forbes.

Gautam Adani is the second richest Indian and is ranked at No.17 on the global list. He is worth USD 84 billion, up from USD 47.2 billion in 2023 when his apples-to-airport conglomerate was rocked by a damning report by US short-seller Hindenburg Research. Adani group has denied all allegations in the report.

Adani, 61, was worth USD 90 billion in 2022 ranking.

The Forbes 2024 Billionaires List features 2,781 individuals, an increase of 141 names from last year's list. The billion-



aires, according to the list, are richer than ever, worth USD 14.2 trillion in aggregate, up by USD 2 trillion from 2023 and USD 1.1 trillion above the previous record, also set in 2021.

Two-thirds of the list's members are worth more than a year ago; only one-fourth are poorer.

Fashion and cosmetics giant LVMH's Bernard Arnault is at the top of the list with USD 233 billion wealth, followed by Elon Musk with USD 195 billion and Amazon's Jeff Bezos with USD 194 billion.

Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg comes next in the list with a net worth of USD 177 billion.

Ransomware attacks continue to loom large over Indian cyberspace: Kaspersky

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India, which detected over 2 lakh ransomware attacks in 2023, is likely to see similar onslaughts, cyber security firm Kaspersky said on Wednesday.

Kaspersky General Manager for South Asia Jaydeep Singh said researches conducted by the firm have shown that India is consistently among the top 12 targeted countries and territories for Advanced Persistent Threats (APTs).

"For three years in a row, file encryption has been the top problem faced by enterprises and organisations worldwide



and in India. From the basic ransomware attacks like the Wannacry in 2017, we have reached the era of Ransomware 3.0 where we see triple extortion in the form of distributed denial-of-service (DDoS),

reselling of data, and public blackmailing.

"This form of attack has a wider impact on the financial and reputation aspect of Indian companies," Singh said.

Kaspersky claims to have

detected over 2 lakh ransomware incidents on businesses in the country in 2023.

According to the company, major ransomware groups such as Fonix and LockBit targeted global as well as Indian organisations in various sectors, including manufacturing, retail, agriculture, media, and healthcare.

Singh said amid the evolving threat of ransomware against the IT and OT systems in India, Kaspersky highlights the urgent need for stronger cybersecurity defences through deploying threat intelligence capabilities.

PhonePe users can now make payments through UPI in Singapore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Fintech firm PhonePe on Wednesday said its users can now make payments through UPI in Singapore under a pact signed by the company with The Singapore Tourism Board.

The collaboration has been built upon the existing Unified Payments Interface (UPI) linkage between India and Singapore, which allows customers to instantly make cross-border transactions between the two countries directly from their existing Indian bank accounts.

"Singapore Tourism Board



(STB) and PhonePe enter a two-year strategic partnership to promote UPI payments for Indian visitors in Singapore," PhonePe, a decacorn, said in a statement. Privately-held companies with a valuation of over USD 10 billion are termed as decacorn.

As part of the partnership, STB and PhonePe will invest in

joint marketing efforts across India and Singapore, to promote seamless UPI experiences across key tourism hotspots.

"This partnership exemplifies our dedication to enhancing the Singapore visitor experience for discerning, tech-savvy consumers," STB Chief Executive Officer Melissa Ow said.

Under the collaboration, Indian travellers can now use the PhonePe app for instant, seamless, and secure payments across over 8,000 merchants in Singapore, enhancing their experience in the island city.

NDMC's revenue collection for 2023-24 FY exceeds target

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The New Delhi Municipal Council's revenues for the 2023-24 financial year exceeded its target, with property tax collection crossing the Rs 1,000-crore mark for the first time in its history, officials said on Wednesday.

The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) collected a revenue of Rs 3,795.30 crore from receipt sources such as property tax, licence fees, commercial revenue (water and electricity) and parking fees, it said in a statement.

## PROTECTING ENVIRONMENT BY TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

SUBODHINI PUROHIT

One of the biggest problems faced by the mankind is climate change, for which we must find a collective solution or suffer the consequences. Thus with an aim to create a climate neutral, ecological and environmentally conscious world with its initiatives has been the World Environment Organisation.

Established in 2000, they are a team dedicated to safeguarding the environment and fostering sustainability. Through the engagement of students and other volunteers worldwide, this international environmental organisation endeavours to address climate change and enhance environmental conditions for the betterment of humanity.

In a world driven by currency, the environment often takes a back seat, despite its critical role in sustaining life and economies. WEO, founded by visionary environmentalists, challenges the status quo.

Operating globally, it unites individuals to address pollution, plastic waste and advocate for sustainability. Their initiatives reminds us of our responsibility to question and act for a healthier planet, with a commitment that extends beyond rhetoric, bridging schools, startups, and investors. It facilitates partnerships, aligns capital with causes, and fosters sustainable growth. Through its efforts, it elevates environmentally conscious companies, catalysing a ripple effect that transcends financial metrics. Together, they weave a tapestry of purpose-driven prosperity, where environmental stewardship is the currency that sustains life itself. Inspiring enough, isn't it?

So this week for our weekly column of Community Wise, *The Pioneer* connects with the founder Dr Ch. Bhadra, and he shares, "Our commitment goes beyond words. We roll up our sleeves, organising cleaning drives in neglected areas like Warangal and upcoming endeavours in Hyderabad. We're actively engaged in organising pollution checks and collaborating with marine companies to integrate cleaning tech-



The World Environment Organisation is on a quest to create a climate neutral and environmentally conscious world. *The Pioneer* quickly connects with the founder of the organisation, who shares with us more in detail about their initiatives.



nologies, all in a pledge to safeguard our oceans and restore ecological balance. Our mission extends to schools, where we train principals to instill environmental consciousness in students, nurturing a generation that lives and breathes environmental responsibility."

He believes that together, we can turn the tide and leave a lasting impact on our planet. They had recently hosted the National Business Awards, where 1000 individuals, including 500 members of the Teacher Union, united to champion environmental awareness. Each teacher aimed to inspire 40 students, creating a ripple effect beyond classrooms. However, he also believed that maintaining consistent environmental efforts poses challenges. It is then that initiatives like the One-Minute Program face difficulty sustaining participation over time. Now you might wonder what is the program all about. The One-Minute Program encourages simple yet impactful actions that can benefit both the environment and our daily lives. For example; In just a minute, you can make a difference by turning off lights when not needed, and thus similarly, it takes a minute for one to opt for a jute bag instead of plastic.

So that makes it obvious that the solution may lie in integrating environmental consciousness into daily routines, fos-

tering lasting change. Businesses offering preservative-free millets contribute positively to the environment and promote healthier choices.

"We conducted an entertainment event that showcased environmentally supportive short films. Our initiative to replace plastic with steel items in 80 schools is underway. Additionally, we've launched the 'A Minute a Day' program. We partner with individuals passionate about the environment, acting as a conduit between them and employers. For instance, a Kerala-based company collaborates with us to recruit employees, fostering mutual benefits. Principals play a pivotal role by identifying students keen on volunteering, further amplifying our environmental initiatives," he shares.

The organisation, with a team including vice-president Prasanth, general secretary Nikal Sai, joint secretary Rajesh, and treasurer Md. Rizwan, along with their volunteers, will be organising the below upcoming events:

**Environmental June:** Throughout June, environmental advocates, policy-

makers, and industry experts will convene during Environmental June. This event focuses on sustainable practices, climate action, and environmental stewardship. Attendees will explore strategies to address pressing environmental challenges and promote a greener future.

**Sustainable Music Event:** The Sustainable Music Event promises a harmonious blend of music and eco-consciousness. Artists, music enthusiasts, and sustainability advocates will come together to enjoy performances while raising awareness about environmental issues. From eco-friendly stages to waste reduction initiatives, this event aims to set a positive example for the entertainment industry.

**School Environmental Programs (September):** As September approaches, the spotlight shifts to school environmental programs. Educational institutions will collaborate with environmental organizations to implement impactful initiatives within schools. These programs may include workshops, tree planting drives, waste reduction campaigns, and fostering environmental literacy among students.

Apart from these, the team at WEO is also going to organise the prestigious International Business Awards in July. This global event celebrates excellence, innovation, and impactful contributions across industries.

## ROAD TO RECOVERY POST-COLON SURGERY

Colon cancer, also known as colorectal cancer, begins in the colon or rectum, the two of which are part of the digestive system. It usually starts as small, noncancerous clusters of cells called polyps, which may lead to cancer. If left untreated, these tumors can spread to other parts of the body. Changes in bowel patterns, blood in the stool, discomfort in the abdomen, and unexplained weight loss are some of the symptoms of the disease.

Early detection through screening tests like colonoscopy can greatly improve the chances of successful treatment. Undergoing colon surgery, whether for colon cancer or other gastrointestinal diseases, is an important step toward healing and better health. The success of surgery goes beyond the operating room; it is heavily dependent on the quality of post-operative care and the patient's dedication to recovery. These surgeries remove tumours, polyps, or damaged sections of the colon while keeping it functional. While surgery is important, the recovery time is important for long-term success and well-being.



To better understand the key to recovery, below are some essential ways for post-operative care:

**Follow post-operative instructions:** It's important to follow the surgeon's and the medical team's post-operative instructions to the point. These instructions usually cover wound care, food restrictions, giving medications, and activity limitations. Neglecting or failing to follow these recommendations could lead to issues and extend the healing period.

**Effectively manage pain:** To maintain comfort and encourage healing during the recovery phase, pain management is important. Painkillers will be prescribed by the doctor to help with discomfort. It's important to take these drugs as prescribed and to let the doctors know right away that you notice any concerns or negative effects. Also, complementary, and additional pain relief can be obtained from alternatives to drugs such as guided visualisation, heat therapy, and relaxation techniques.

**Proper diet:** Sufficient water and nourishment are necessary for the recovery after colon surgery. But initially, certain changes in diet could be required, like switching from clear

liquids to solid foods gradually as allowed. To support the repair of tissues and increase immunity, a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, lean meats, and whole grains must be consumed in a balanced manner. Also, drinking lots of water to stay hydrated helps avoid constipation, which is a typical side effect following colon surgery.

**Physical activity:** Rest is important during the initial phases of recovery, but to improve circulation, avoid blood clots, and rebuild strength, one must return to physical activity. As accepted, progressively increase the intensity and length of the activities. Gentle activities to start with include quick walks and mild stretching exercises. However, until the doctor gives the all-clear, patients must refrain from hard lifting and challenging activities.

**Attend follow-up sessions:** It's necessary to keep track of progress and address any issues or complications that may surface throughout the recovery by scheduling follow-up meetings with the doctor. Make sure that show up for all of the appointments on time, and be honest with the doctors about the signs, your experience recovering, and any doubts or questions they might have.

(The author, Dr. Aniket Paygude is a Consultant: Surgical Gastroenterology, at Manipal Hospital, Baner, Pune)

## Rashi Mal on the quest for 'good work' she resonates with

Rashi Mal, who dons multiple hats of being an actor, singer, and also a dancer, gets candid with *The Pioneer* for a quick fun chat on her journey, her recently released EP, and more.

TEJAL SINHA

A multifaceted performer—Rashmi Mal is that one talented bunch of star, who has been renowned for her skills, be it as an actor, singer-songwriter, or even a dancer. Now what sets her apart—she has been equally involved in working towards mastering all her skills. Making it obvious, she has had an interesting journey so far, wondered how? She has had the privilege of working with some of the best names out there while she continues to make her own place. It has not been devoid of challenges, but looking back at how far she has come, she says, it has certainly been rewarding.

"The arts in totality have been my first love," shares the *Helicopter Eela* actress as she continues, "Acting, dancing, and singing each occupy an important place in my life. Acting gives me emotional liberation, dance gives me physical expression, and singing gives me a voice. So each liberates me in a very different way. They are all different facets of self-expression at the end of the day."

Rashi hails from a family with no background in either of the skills she has mastered, yet she has been so proficient in the same. Having the privilege of working with good people, just like many others, she shares, she too has made mistakes. However, she managed to learn quickly and with each step, moved on to bigger and better things.

"It definitely takes time to understand how this industry works. There is no fixed path to follow and talent is viewed subjectively by each person. There are also so many more considerations than just your talent," she recalls

adding that the initial challenges she has been through are to be seen. For instance; to show people what you have to offer as an actor or as a performer. However, in this profession, "you constantly have to reinvent yourself and compete for eyeballs in a way, no matter what level you reach. But once people become acquainted with your work and what you can do, it does become a little easier."

For the unaware, she has been a part of TV shows like *Gulmohar Grand*, which still hold cult status, and now she has eventually explored different mediums to movies. Rashi says she enjoys all the mediums. "The movies are magical and grand, television has tremendous reach, the web allows you to experiment a lot more, which is why, as you see, I have not shied away from any platform. I look for good work that resonates with me. I like working with people who care about what they do. The rest is incidental."

Rashi Mal, who captured people's hearts with her portrayal in the 2013 smash series *Paanch: 5 Wrong Make A Right*, returned to the big screen in 2018. She played Riddhi Sen's onscreen girlfriend in the 'adventurously humorous' flick in *Helicopter Eela*. She has had the pleasure to not only work with Kajol in the film, but also, with Bollywood's darling couple Alia and Ranbir, Amitabh Bachchan, and the cast of *Brahmastra* in the film. "Working with people who are good at their jobs

elevates your own work," she says adding, "You bring your best foot forward to match theirs. These are all people I have grown up watching. I consider myself lucky to now be a part of this artistic tapestry I admired from afar for so long."

Apart from her acting, as a matter of fact, singing was the first art form she fell in love with but was the last addition as far as formal training went. "I was always that kid at family functions who was asked to sing. I have been training my voice in Western classical techniques for several years now and have also studied songwriting at Berklee College of Music. I have also previously been one half of the musical duo Sachhi Savitris and have written, sung, and composed for films, ads, and for my own songs," says the Misaal singer.

Recently, she has also announced her first Extended Play, *Rashionality CH.1*, which is her virtual alias, including that on her social media. "I felt it lent itself well to my Musical persona as well. CH.1 because I feel I am still in the 1st chapter of my musical journey. This is my first EP, so it is very close to my heart. Each of the 3 songs is personal and heart-felt."

### RASHIONALITY CH.1 HAS 3 SONGS REPRESENTING 3 DIFFERENT TYPES OF LOVE

**Yoon Hi:** This song is everything good about romance—the anticipation, the butterflies and the contentment that comes with being with your perfect someone.

**Chalo:** This is her love letter to self. For all those times when you are feeling down and lost, this is the song to get you up and get you moving again.

**Naariyan:** This is her love letter to all the women, to remind them of their own power and to honour all the strong women who came before to afford us the lives we now live.

"I write from experience," shares the *Buri Buri* singer, as she speaks of her song-writing process. "I am a sensitive person whose emotional intake from the external world is generally higher than that of the average. So songs become one of the mediums of self-expression that help me channel and release these emotions healthily."

Her most challenging project as an actor, she says, was that of Samaira Jal in the series *Hindmata* (Eros). "I had to tread a fine line between ditzy and naive, being selfish yet likable. The brief was Alexis Rose from *Schitt's Creek* meets *Legally Blonde*. So it was challenging but also super fun to play a protagonist who was so complex yet super so glamorous," she says adding, in singing, "my most challenging project was writing and singing the song *Baaton Mulakaton main* for my film *Culture Vulture* because the song had to fit a specific context and it had to represent the voice of the character I was playing. It was challenging but also super exciting."

On the work front, she has two films slated for release: *Culture Vulture* with Nagesh Kukunoor and Suchitra Pillai, and *Death in the City* co-starring Javed Jaffrey. Meanwhile, on the musical front, she has two songs up for release; one from the film *Culture Vulture*, and *Baaton Mulakaton main*, an independent original called *Stay* (English) or *Na Jaa* (Hindi). The same song will be released in 2 languages, and so she is all excited for the same.

"I don't think any of the characters I have played so far have been exactly like me and yet they all have something of me. You always find something to relate to in each part and each story. It is about taking that one trait, that one emotion and amplifying it," says the talented star on the concluding front.

*what's brewing?*

BNI Hyderabad region, launched the world's first Telugu Chapter, BNI Akshara at Nagole. The Telugu Chapter which has forty six entrepreneurs from different business categories as members, held its first meeting with 46 members and 128 visitors at SVM Grand Hotel, Nagole. BNI Akshara will be hosting its Chapter meeting every Tuesday for its members to exchange referrals and business.

Additionally, the company has been ranked 9th in the overall BFSI sector and 121st in a list of 1000 brands across sectors. Aviva Life Insurance is renowned for its comprehensive range of life insurance products tailored to meet the diverse financial needs of its customers, including guaranteed saving plans, term plans, child plans, investments, and retirement plans.

Sleepfresh Mattress has announced a dynamic new partnership with Bollywood superstar Vidya Balan. This strategic collaboration marks a significant step forward for Sleepfresh, leveraging Vidya's immense popularity and influence to champion the importance of quality sleep and elevate brand awareness nationwide. Vidya Balan, a household name in Indian cinema, transcends her captivating on-screen presence and versatility as an actress. Celebrated for her dedication to health and well-being, Vidya perfectly embodies Sleepfresh's mission of promoting quality sleep as a cornerstone of a healthy lifestyle. This shared commitment to holistic wellness makes her a natural fit as the brand ambassador of Sleepfresh.

Looking ahead to the academic year 2024-2025, BBG is committed to reaching out to even younger students, particularly those in primary schools, with a focus on enhancing their physical and mental well-being. To achieve this, BBG is actively collaborating with various third-party organisations and planning to provide essential services such as self-defence training, spoken English skills, and primary medical check-ups to assess the physical and mental health of the young girls, whom we affectionately term as 'Bangaruathali.' Additionally, in an effort to expand the reach of our 'Pancharatnas,' BBG is identifying central locations in both Telugu states, including Hyderabad, Karimnagar, Warangal, Khammam, Nizamadab in Telangana, and Nellore, Kurnool, Vijayawada, and Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. These centers will serve as hubs for empowering both primary and high school girls through the engagement of freelance trainers.

LET'S FACE IT: YOU AND I MARCH TO DIFFERENT DRUMMERS!

HE'S MINE! OKAY, RINGO?!

THE CAT IN THE HAT'S LEARNING LIBRARY: THE CAT IN THE HAT'S DRUM

© 2005 BY HOLT RINEHART AND WILSON

ARE Y'SURE, GINGE? THIS LOOKS REAL DANGEROUS!

I'M SURE! IT'S NOT DANGEROUS!

WELL, I MEAN, MAYBE IF YOU FALL OFF.

IF BAD PRESENTS ARE OFFENDED, WHAT RESENT BAD ACTIONS GINGER? [WWW.GINGERMEGGS.COM](http://WWW.GINGERMEGGS.COM)

DATE: BY ANDREW NABELE BRONKHORST

THIS SCENT IS YOU?  
YOU DON'T LOOK  
AT ALL LIKE I  
PICTURED YOU!

[illegible]

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

- 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.

1 Beard  
7 Movements of the sea  
caused by the moon's  
pull on the Earth  
8 A sour oily fruit from a tree  
9 One of the continents  
10 An alcoholic drink  
12 Look at something for a  
long time  
14 Me  
17 A type of small bird  
18 A clothing size  
19 A chart of months and days

- 1 Broader
- 2 A six-legged creature
- 3 Round handle

4 Lift up  
5 People not known to  
you  
6 Extremely frightened  
11 An eye's cover  
13 A striped animal  
15 Mistake  
16 A joint in the leg

N	O	S	T	R	I	L	S	A	
I	T		T	U	X				
G	R	O		C	O	B	W	E	B
H	O		H	J					U
T	A	L	K	S		H	E	A	R
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R			T	U			C		R
E	M	B	E	R	S		B	E	E
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# ‘I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD PLAY LEAD ROLE; WAS MORE KEEN ON WRITING’

AHEAD OF THE RELEASE OF THE UPCOMING CRIME FILM *BHARATHANATYAM*, THE LEAD ACTOR OF THE FILM, ACTOR SURYA TEJA, SHARES SOME INTERESTING DETAILS ABOUT BAGGING THE LEAD ROLE, MAKING THE WRITING RELATABLE, AND MORE.

K. RAMYA SREE

Actor Surya Teja is making his acting debut with the film *Bharathanatyam*, directed by KVR Mahendra of Dorasani. Produced by Payal Saraf, Meenakshi Goswami is playing the female lead in the film, which is set to hit the big screens on April 5.

As the release date approaches, the makers are busy promoting the project. While we recently got an opportunity to converse with the director of the film, we have today the lead actor, Surya, from the film, who narrated his journey to movies. He shared, “I always wanted to get into the film industry, not as a hero but as a writer. Even for this film, when I wrote the story, I didn’t want to play it. Any hero would’ve looked good in that character. But when I narrated the story to KVR Garu and our producer, it was they who thought I would be a good fit to play the lead role in the film. Even while writing the script, I never considered

myself; I was considering Sree Vishnu or Sundeeep Kishan to play this part.”

His passion for movies grew even more because of his father, who worked as a publicity designer in the film industry for many years. “I have done fine arts and masters in painting. I write movie titles. I am experienced in designing and editing, and I got into writing after COVID,” he mentioned.

From the conversation we had with the director earlier, we learned that *Bharathanatyam* is a crime-genre film. It is a fictional story but is relatable. How did Surya make the writing relatable? He answered, “The point of this movie is what happens when a man takes a shortcut. I wrote about the struggles that were felt personally in a comical way. Commercially, this film is a very good entertainer. When I gave KVR the draft script, he was at that point looking for a crime-genre film, and he liked the story. KVR Mahendra and the team were very friendly and gave us a lot of freedom to develop the story further.”

Having learned about the story and the genre, we were wondering why they named it *Bharathanatyam*, and this actor responded by saying the film’s story would justify the title, and he asked the audience to watch the movie in theatres to know it.

Moreover, this film has some of the finest lyric writers like Kasarla Shyam, Anantha Sriram, and Bhaskara Batla on board to write the songs, and the whole journey has been very memorable. Surya is happy that a small film like this is getting a lot of positive response and support. He in fact thanked his producer for all the support he has been getting, and he is very confident that the audience, especially the family audience, will love this film because of the way it has turned out finally.

Going forward, he doesn’t mind if he is a writer or an actor; all that matters is that he is in the film industry, as the actor shared in conclusion.



## Director Trinadha Rao returns to production after 9 years

Director Trinadha Rao Nakkina had forayed into production with the 2015 film *Cinema Chupista Maava*. Although the film performed well at the box office, the director did not announce any other project as a producer. Now after almost 9 years, he has announced the details about his 2nd production venture.

He made it official on Wednesday that his next film is with actor Vikram Sahidev Lagadapati, who rose to fame as a child artist. Bankrolled under the banner Nakkina Narratives, the movie will be directed by Vamsee Krishna Malla.

With Esther Anil as the female lead, the yet-to-be titled movie officially took off on Wednesday, with actor Sundeeep Kishan clapping the board and Thrinadha Rao handing over the script to the director. This is

The movie that is going to be high technically has cinematography by Maaya V. Davzand of Eagle fame, who is the music director, while Prawin Pudi is the editor and Raghu Kulkarni is the production designer. Naresh Tula and Rajendra Prasad penned the dialogues, whereas Thrinadha Rao Nakkina, Naresh Tula, and Uday Bhagavathula wrote the screenplay.

## Yash-starrer *Toxic* to begin shooting in Karnataka

A new exciting update about Rocking Star Yash’s highly anticipated pan-India films, Rocking Star Yash’s *Toxic: A Fairy Tale For Grown-Ups* is here!

According to the latest updates, the actor will soon kick-start the shoot of the mass entertainer in Karnataka.

Confirming the same, the film’s producers revealed, “Due to the lack of optimal facilities, all our big films end up being shot outside the state. Rocking Star Yash has long expressed that concern, and to change that, we at KVN Productions and Monster Mind Creations are kicking-starting the shooting of *Toxic* in Karnataka. We have already erected massive sets, creating many job opportunities and avenues for people at ground level, technicians, and budding talent in the state. We are



working towards making a film of global potential. As producers, we had options from various locations in India and abroad. The film has onboarded actors and technicians from multiple industries, even international talent, and setting up a base there would have been more economical. However, Yash and KVN took the initiative to establish *Toxic* HQ in Karnataka before we shoot parts of the film in locations elsewhere, and showcase the tremendous potential of our people.” Helmed by Geetu Mohandas and Co-Produced by Venkat K Narayana’s KVN Productions and Yash’s Monster Mind Creations, *Toxic: A Fairy Tale For Grown-Ups* is one of the most interesting collaborations of all time. The film is scheduled to hit the screens on April 10, 2025.



## Chamundeswari: Chiranjeevi dutifully assumed the role of my mother’s ‘Pedda Koduku’

Megastar Chiranjeevi recently presented the book *Savitri Classics* with his wife Surekha in front of much pomp and the presence of Vijaya Chamundeswari, the daughter of Mahanati Savitri, as well as other superstars like Brahmanandam and Jayasudha, to mention a few.

Savitri’s daughter revealed some intriguing things and made some insightful remarks during this conversation.

“Megastar Chiranjeev has a habit of looking at my mother Savitri’s picture, that’s there in his bedroom, as soon as he wakes up every morning. He showed me the image to prove it because he felt I might not believe

it. He is a man of virtues and vices in addition to words. I can proudly say that he is my mother’s ‘Pedda Koduku,’ (elder son), and he has dutifully assumed that role by bringing this book to a large audience today,” said Chamundeswari, speaking at the event. During the same event, Megastar recounted how he first got to know the renowned Savitri, who was a major character in his first movie, *Punadi Raallu*. Additionally, Megastar’s wife Surekha, has a strong friendship with Chamundeswari, having grown up in the same Madras neighborhood in the past. Surekha took the interviewer role for the first time at the event, asking Chamundeswari some thought-provoking questions.

## Anjali: *Geethanjali Malli Vachindi* will be better than *Geethanjali*

Actress Anjali’s 2014 film *Geethanjali* is having its second outing now, ready for release on April 11.

Titled *Geethanjali Malli Vachindi*, the second part features the same cast as the first one and its trailer was launched on Wednesday in the city. Directed by Siva Thurlapati, the movie is produced by Kona Venkat in association with MVV Cinemas. This is a big-budget horror-comedy film which has a completely different story than the first part.

Speaking at the trailer launch event, actress Anjali shared, “I loved the trailer of *Geethanjali Malli Vachindi*. This movie is hundred times better than this. I wanted my 50th film to be very special. That wish was fulfilled when this movie was made. My entire team made this movie with their soul and heart. We made the film with the intention of entertaining everyone, and I thank Kona Venkat for making it happen. We also shot a special song, which we will release soon.”



## RAKESH VARRE: I left two projects for *Jithender Reddy*

Muduganti Creations production venture *Jithender Reddy*, directed by Virinchi Varma, had its glimpses released on Wednesday in a grand ceremony in Hyderabad.

Actor Rakesh Varre, who became popular after appearing in movies like *Baahubali*, *Evanikee Cheppoddu*, and *Peka Medalu*, is playing the lead role in the film. Rakesh Varre, who started off his journey as a character artist in Tollywood, is elated that he is playing the protagonist in the film. Expressing his happiness, he shared, “I started as a character artist, and got close to the audience with the



Mirchi Baahubali movies and later, got a good recognition with the movie *Evanikee Cheppoddu*.” Calling his producer Muduganti Ravinder Reddy, director Virinchi Varma, DOP Gnana Shekhar, and Uma and Vani as the four pillars of the film, he shared, “Shekhar garu suggested me for this film. Having already accepted two films, I liked the story told by Virinchi Varma and decided to leave those films aside to do this film. Producer Ravinder Reddy’s eagerness to tell the story of his elder brother *Jithender Reddy* to the people was very much appreciated. I hope that the audience will like this movie and it will be a success.”

## ‘I AM DEDICATING FAMILY STAR TO MY FATHER’

Actor Vijay Deverakonda and Mrunal Thakur starrer *Family Star* is all set to hit big screens on April 5.

It is reported that the film cleared its censorship formalities on Wednesday, where it got a U/A certificate. However, the board members have suggested 5 cuts. The film will have a total runtime of 2 hours and 43 minutes. Meanwhile, the lead cast, director, and producer are very busy promoting the film. They have been attending many events to let people know about the film.

Actress Mrunal Thakur, who made her debut in Tollywood with *Sita Ramam*, has instantly become popular among the Telugu audience, and her second outing, *Hi Nanna*, too, was widely appreciated by the people. She shared, “I am dedicating the movie *Family Star* to my family star - my father.”

The actress, who is extremely happy with the response she has been receiving from the Telugu audience, expressed, “You all have accepted me as a Telugu girl. After *Sita Ramam* and *Hi Nanna*, you are now showing your support for *Family Star* is incredible. Thanks to Director Parasuram for giving me such a great opportunity. Acting as this character was difficult for the first 15 days. After that, I felt happy, realizing no one could do this character better than me. Everyone loves Vijay. I really enjoyed acting with Rohini Bamma, and we all had lots of fun shooting with the kids in the film.”





# Rayudu blames RCB title drought to senior players

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

If a title triumph has eluded Royal Challengers Bengaluru since the inception of the Indian Premier League (IPL), it is because highly-paid international stars have always buckled under pressure, leaving the juniors to do all the heavylifting, says former India batter Ambati Rayudu. Rayudu, who has won multiple IPL trophies with both Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings, didn't take any names but probably he was hinting towards team's three premier batters - Virat Kohli, Glenn Maxwell and Faf du Plessis. RCB have lost two out of their three IPL games this season and while Kohli has scored 203 runs at a strike-rate of 140 plus, he hasn't exactly set the stage on fire during Powerplay. Du Plessis has managed 65 runs in four games while



Maxwell has contributed only 31 runs so far in as many games. "RCB's bowlers always

concede over par runs and their batting unit performs under par," Rayudu told Star Sports after RCB lost to LSG

on Tuesday. "Who are all batting in pressure situations? The young Indian batters and

Dinesh Karthik. The big international names, who are supposed to take the pressure, where are they? All

are back in the dressing room," Rayudu said. He was referring Mahipal Lomror, who has come in as Impact Sub in a few games and scored at a strike-rate of 230 plus and Karthik, whose cameo was instrumental in their only win of the season so far against Punjab Kings. Rayudu termed it as a convenient option for senior batters, who are consuming all the Powerplay overs, where scoring runs is easy with field restrictions in place. "Sixteen years. This is the same story of RCB, when there is pressure, no big name is ever found standing. All youngsters are playing at the back-end and all the big guns bat at the top of the order and they whip off the cream from the cake and that is the reason this team has never won IPL," said the 38-year-old firebrand batter, who played 55 ODIs and six T20Is for India between 2013 and 2019.



## Mayank impresses all with raw pace, accuracy

SAMAR PANDEY ■ NEW DELHI

The sensational 21-year-old Mayank Yadav from the Lucknow Super Giants has stormed into the limelight of the Indian Premier League with an extraordinary start to his career. With two consecutive Player-of-the-Match awards in his first two IPL games, Mayank has already carved a place for himself in elite territory, showcasing his exceptional talent and skill on the ground. Mayank has also etched his name in the IPL record books by consistently bowling deliveries exceeding the 155 kilometers per hour mark. His lightning-fast pace was evident in his delivery clocked at 156.7 kilometers per hour, which stands as the fourth fastest in the history of the IPL.

Mayank's recent match-winning performances against the Punjab Kings and the Royal Challengers Bangalore have been nothing short of sensational. His searing spell of 3 for 14 in four overs at the Chinnaswamy Stadium left the opposition batsmen in awe, including the dismissals of hitters like Glenn Maxwell and Cameron Green, as well as the well-set Rajat Patidar. Reflecting on his early success, Mayank expressed his delight in contributing to his team's victories and emphasised his long-term aspiration to excel for his country. Despite his individual achievements, Mayank remains focused on the collective goal of winning matches for his team, highlighting his maturity and dedication to the sport. Speaking about his favourite wicket, Mayank recalled the dismissal of Cameron Green, where a lightning-fast delivery rattled the stumps and cleared the boundary on the first bounce, showcasing the sheer pace and power of his bowling. Mayank attributed his ability to bowl at such high speeds to a combination of factors, including his disciplined diet, sleep, and his training regimen. He emphasised the importance of maintaining perfection in every aspect of his preparation, including post-match recovery routines such as ice baths. KL Rahul, captain of the Lucknow Super Giants, has praised Mayank for his remarkable perseverance and dedication. He highlighted Mayank's resilience in overcoming previous injuries and his continuous pursuit of self-improvement. Fellow teammate Quinton de Kock praised Mayank's express pace and simplicity in approach, highlighting his ability to remain focused and deliver under pressure. Despite his youthful age, Mayank has shown maturity beyond his years, earning the respect and admiration of his peers and opponents alike. RCB captain Faf du Plessis acknowledged the challenge of facing a young fast bowler with a unique action, noting the difficulty for batsmen to judge and adjust quickly. Du Plessis commended Mayank's pace and accuracy, underscoring his potential to become a formidable force in the cricketing world. As Mayank continues to make waves in the IPL with his exceptional performances, cricket fans eagerly anticipate witnessing his continued growth and success on the international stage. With his raw talent and determination, Mayank is assured to leave a permanent mark on the world of cricket for years to come.

## Mavi ruled out of IPL due to injury

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow Super Giants' pacer Shivam Mavi has been ruled out of this season's Indian Premier League after he failed to recover from his rib injury. The 25-year-old, who last played competitive cricket in August 2023, missed the entire domestic season for Uttar Pradesh but did turn up for Lucknow Super Giants' pre-season training only to be told that he would not play any part in this edition. He had suffered a rib stress fracture in August last year. "The talented right-arm fast bowler joined us after the auction in December and has been part of the camp from pre-season. He has been a key part of the squad for the season, hence we as well as Shivam are disappointed that his season has come to an end so soon," the press release from LSG stated. Mavi, who has played six T20



Internationals for India, also didn't get to play a single game for Gujarat Titans in 2023, and in the last auction, LSG roped him for Rs 6.4 crore to fill the void created by Avesh Khan leaving for Rajasthan Royals. "The franchise will continue to support Shivam and is committed to aiding him in his recovery process. We wish him a swift and complete return, and are sure he will be back fitter and stronger," LSG

stated. Mavi, on his part, vowed to come back stronger. "I thought I will play matches and do well for my team but unfortunately I have to go because of injury. "A player needs to be mentally strong and also know what are the areas one needs to focus on during rehabilitation. We have a good team here," he said in a video posted on LSG's official 'X' handle.

## Suryakumar clears most fitness tests, to play either on April 7 or 11

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mumbai Indians will soon get the much required batting boost as the world's No.1 ranked T20 batter Suryakumar Yadav has cleared almost all the fitness tests at National Cricket Academy and is very close to playing his first IPL game of the season. Suryakumar had undergone multiple surgeries — one for grade 2 ankle tear and another for sports hernia — and he last played in the T20 series in South Africa. "Surya has cleared all but one routine tests which are mandatory to get RTP (Return To Play) certificate from the NCA. There is one more test left to be conducted on Thursday, after which a clearer picture would emerge," a senior BCCI source told PTI on the condition of anonymity. "He is batting comfortably and has done all simulations," he added. Asked if Suryakumar will be



able to play the Mumbai Indians' home game on April 7 against Delhi Capitals, the source said: "The clearer picture will emerge after tomorrow's tests. There's still three days before the next game but since it's a comeback after a long time, it could also be April 11 at home against RCB." The swashbuckling batter has been MI's most prolific performer for the past four to five seasons and his absence from the playing XI has been felt by the team that has lost its

first three matches this season. His replacement Naman Dhir, the player from Punjab, is yet to measure up and beleaguered skipper Hardik Pandya would certainly need 'Mr 360 degree' to stem the rot. As far as the BCCI's medical team is concerned, the clear mandate was to ensure that India's premier T20 batter is completely fit for the T20 World Cup in the USA and West Indies, and also make sure that there are no premature breakdowns during the IPL.

## Could have been handled better with clear communication

### SHASTRI ON PANDYA CAPTAINCY ROW

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former India coach Ravi Shastri feels the fan backlash towards Hardik Pandya could have been avoided had Mumbai Indians shown "clarity in communication" while announcing him as captain. Shastri also advised Pandya to stay calm and weather the storm with solid performances. "This is not the Indian cricket team that's playing. This is franchise cricket. They have paid top dollar. They are the bosses. It's their entitlement as to who they want as

captain. Okay, where I think this could have been handled better was with more clarity in communication," Shastri told Star Sports' "Cricket Live Show". "If you wanted Hardik Pandya as captain, then say that we are looking at the future. We are looking to build. Rohit has done a fabulous job, as everyone knows, and we want him to help out Hardik in these next three years as the team progresses. "That communication, that clarity should have come out a little more for all this to die down. So it's not a case of you saying, 'No, we don't want



Rohit Sharma,' or 'He was treated badly,' and all the things that are coming out in social media," he added. Shastri expects the tide to turn once Mumbai Indians start winning. The team is currently on a three-match losing streak. "So, my advice to Hardik would be to be calm, patient, ignore, and just focus on your game. Get a couple of performances going. Mumbai Indians is a terrific side. If they get on a roll, they win three or four matches on the trot, everything will subside," he said. "At the end of the day, nothing beats

results. You win matches, and things will change. There's a lot of bull crap out there as well. You know, and some of the stories are just planted. A lot of it is just planted on other people's names, including my name," he added. Former Australia batter Matthew Hayden also felt that fans' affection for Rohit is understandable given his 11-year tenure as MI captain. "See the fans are the biggest stakeholders in this and they often don't have the politics, the insights, but they want to understand this, they love Rohit Sharma."

## Punjab Kings batters to face different challenge against Gujarat Titans

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Bruised by Mayank Yadav's scorching pace, Punjab Kings' batters will face an altogether different challenge when Gujarat Titans' bowling unit tries to take the pace off deliveries on a slightly tricky Motera track in their IPL match here on Thursday. The Kings have lost their last two away games and another slip-up against Titans will lead to further loss of momentum which tends to shift very quickly due to lack of turnaround time. Titans, on the other hand, are brimming with confidence after beating Sunrisers Hyderabad comprehensively by seven wickets in their last game. In the previous match, Kings were completely undone by

Mayank's speed and most of their top-order batters looked ill-equipped to face the fast bowler, who was regularly clocking 150 clicks and more importantly, aiming to bowl into the body of the batters. However, the scenario will be completely different when veteran Mohit Sharma comes calling at the back-end, presenting a palate of variations. Mohit uses knuckle balls, slow bouncers and wide yorkers to good effect and this year's IPL trend has shown that save Mayank, all speedsters, who have been able to take pace off their deliveries, have been more successful. It will pose a different kind of challenge for the likes of Shikhar Dhawan, Jonny Bairstow and Jitesh Sharma, all of whom like



the ball to come on to the bat. If Liam Livingstone is unavailable for Thursday's match after sustaining a hamstring niggle in

the last game, it will spell doom for Punjab as they would then happen to lose their key enforcer during the death overs.

Punjab will also have to deal with the accuracy of the incomparable Rashid Khan and the guile of Noor Ahmed, former's left-arm alter-ego. The third Afghan in the line-up, Azmatullah Omarzai's all-round skills will also be a challenge for the team. More than Punjab's batting, it is their bowling, especially at the death, that has been a cause for concern. Harshal Patel, one of their million dollar buys, has had a pathetic season so far going for an economy rate of 11.41 runs per over, having bowled his quota in all three games. Equally disappointing has been leg-spinner Rahul Chahar, who has conceded runs at an economy rate of 11.37, and hasn't been able to complete his quota

of overs. Arshdeep Singh, India's designated death overs yorker specialist, has also been profligate to a certain extent and it has once again compounded Kings' worries. For Titans, the performance against defending champions Chennai Super Kings could be termed an aberration as they have executed their plans pretty well. The batting is yet to fire in unison but the bowling unit has shown its wares by defending well in opening game and restricting a rampaging SRH to a manageable score in the last game. Teams (from): **GUJARAT TITANS:** Shubman Gill (c), David Miller, Matthew Wade, Wriddhiman Saha, Robin Minz, Kane Williamson, Abhinav Mandhar, B Sai Sudarshan, Darshan Nalkande, Vijay

Shankar, Azmatullah Omarzai, Shahrukh Khan, Jayant Yadav, Rahul Tewatia, Kartik Tyagi, Shshant Mishra, Spencer Johnson, Noor Ahmad, Sai Kishore, Umesh Yadav, Rashid Khan, Joshua Little, Mohit Sharma and Manav Suthar. **PUNJAB KINGS:** Shikhar Dhawan (captain), Matthew Short, Prabhsimran Singh, Jitesh Sharma, Sikandar Raza, Rishi Dhawan, Liam Livingstone, Atharva Taide, Arshdeep Singh, Nathan Ellis, Sam Curran, Kagiso Rabada, Harpreet Brar, Rahul Chahar, Harpreet Bhatia, Vidwath Kaverappa, Shivam Singh, Harshal Patel, Chris Woakes, Ashutosh Sharma, Vishwanath Pratap Singh, Shashank Singh, Tanay Thyagarajann, Prince Choudhary, Rilee Rossouw.